

# Chapter 4

## India-Pakistan Relations: The Heightened Confrontation after the Military Coup in Pakistan

### *Introduction*

India and Pakistan, since their independence from British colonial rule, have carried over a strong antagonism to each other that was brewed and strengthened in the process of the partition. Kashmir, whose acquisition was not determined at the time of independence, has become the main source of conflict between the two countries as both have territorial claims to Kashmir.

After independence, India and Pakistan were engaged in war in 1948 and 1965 over territorial possession of Kashmir. The India-Pakistan war of 1971, which was fought over the independence of East Pakistan as Bangladesh, amplified the antagonism between the two countries<sup>1</sup>.

During the Cold War era, India and Pakistan were involved in conflicts between the opposing camps. While India gradually tilted towards the Soviet Union, Pakistan strengthened ties with the U.S.A. and later with China. This situation further cooled India-Pakistan relations.

The Soviet Union's military invasion into Afghanistan in 1979 intensified the tension between India and Pakistan. The U.S.A. saw Pakistan as a frontline state to resist the Soviet Union's forces in Afghanistan, and intensified economic and military assistance. India was nervous and irritated at the prospect of strengthened ties between Pakistan and the U.S.A. and that the resulting build-up of military equipment in Pakistan could be used against India.

The end of the Cold War did not bring about any improvement in the relationship between India and Pakistan. Basic conflict between the countries not only continued but the tension intensified. India and Pakistan grew suspicious of each other's nuclear and missile development. India suspected Pakistan's support of the anti-Indian armed Muslim groups in India's Kashmir. On the other hand, Pakistan raised the issue of suppression and violation of human rights by the Indian military and security forces in Kashmir. There was intermittent contact between India and Pakistan and hopes of improving relations surfaced occasionally, but the results were disappointing. India and Pakistan's nuclear tests in 1998 and the armed conflict at Kargil in Kashmir in 1999 made the matter worse.

The military coup in Pakistan coincided with the establishment of the government by the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in India who won the 13th Lok Sabha (Lower House) elections. While the military government of Pakistan displays a strong anti-India posture, India's BJP government keeps a cautious and reluctant position. There has been no sign of resumption of talks. The summit of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) which was scheduled to be held at Kathmandu, in November, 1999, was cancelled, as India declined to be associated with representatives of the military regime of Pakistan. The manner in which India refused even this remotest chance of contact, because of the presence of the military regime in Pakistan, shows

that there are many hurdles in the path to the resumption of talks between India and Pakistan.

In this chapter, firstly, the background and the development of the relationship between India and Pakistan are described briefly. Secondly, we look at India's response to the military coup in Pakistan and finally, future prospects for the India-Pakistan relationship are examined.

#### *4.1 India-Pakistan Relations in Retrospect*

##### **4.1.1 Widening Gap**

During the partition of India and Pakistan in 1947, the Dogra Princely State in Kashmir decided to join India, ignoring the fact that nearly 80 percent of the population in the state consisted of Muslims, many of whom expressed the desire to join Pakistan, not India. Pakistan objected to the accession of the Kashmir State to India and claimed the areas where the majority of the population was Muslim. The matter was not resolved at the time of independence.

Both India and Pakistan had claims over Kashmir. The first Indo-Pakistani war over Kashmir started in October 1947 just after independence<sup>2</sup>. The war escalated in 1948 and was brought to an end by United Nations intervention. India and Pakistan accepted the truce reached with United Nations mediation in August 1948<sup>3</sup> and the cease-fire was attained on January 1, 1949. And further, both countries accepted the resolution by the United Nations Commission for India and Pakistan of January 5, 1949<sup>4</sup>. The resolution states that the question of the accession of the State of Jammu and Kashmir to India or Pakistan will be decided through the democratic method of a free and impartial plebiscite. On July 29, 1949, the military representatives of India and Pakistan agreed to establish a Cease-fire Line in the State of Jammu and Kashmir<sup>5</sup>.

Thus Kashmir was divided into India's Kashmir and Pakistan's Kashmir by the cease-fire line in 1949. Yet each continued to claim the entire State of Jammu and Kashmir as its own integral territory. On its side of the cease-fire line, Pakistan divided Kashmir into two areas: "Azad Kashmir" (literally "Free Kashmir") in the south-west and the Northern Areas (Gilgit and Baltistan). Azad Kashmir has been institutionally treated as an independent state within Pakistan but Pakistan actually controls most of the political and administrative functions of Azad Kashmir<sup>6</sup>.

India and Pakistan, however, could not agree on matters concerning how to conduct the "free and impartial" plebiscite. For example, while India insisted on the withdrawal of Pakistan's military forces from Kashmir as a pre-condition for holding the plebiscite, Pakistan demanded to conduct the plebiscite first. In the course of time, India started to take constitutional as well as institutional steps in the hope of establishing Kashmir's de facto accession to India. Pakistan, on the other hand, kept up demands to hold the plebiscite in Kashmir based on the United Nations Resolution of January 5, 1949 with which both India and Pakistan agreed.

India and Pakistan waged war again in September 1965 over the possession of Kashmir<sup>7</sup>. On September 20, The United Nations Security Council passed a resolution that demanded India and Pakistan cease fire and withdraw forces back to the positions held before 5 August, 1965, the time when the Indian government announced that a major infiltration had taken place in Kashmir and that regular Pakistani troops had been firing across the Cease-fire Line. The cease-fire was agreed upon but violated repeatedly. The U.N. Security Council had to pass another resolution on September 27 in which it demanded both countries honor the cease-fire commitment.

This disquietening situation was settled by the Soviet Union's intervention. On January 1,

1966, discussions were held between Mohammad Ayub Khan, the President of Pakistan and Lal Bahadur Shastri, the Prime Minister of India, at Tashkent, under the initiative of A.N. Kosygin, the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the U.S.S.R. The outcome of the meetings was the Tashkent Declaration of January 10, 1966.

With the Tashkent Declaration, India and Pakistan agreed to create good neighborly relations and to settle disputes through peaceful means in accordance with the United Nations Charter. Both sides agreed that all armed personnel of the two countries should be withdrawn to the positions they held prior to August 5, 1965 and both sides should observe the cease-fire terms on the Cease-fire Line. The declaration lightly touched upon Kashmir which was the source of all the conflict, as if it were merely a supplementary subject. On Kashmir, the declaration only said that "Jammu and Kashmir was discussed, and each of the sides set forth its respective positions." In another place, indirectly implying Kashmir, it said that both countries had agreed to "continue meetings . . . on matters of direct concern to both countries." The declaration did not mention any proposal to solve the disputes over Kashmir because of the wide gulf that existed between the claims of the two countries. While the Tashkent Declaration deferred the decision on Kashmir, the most crucial issue between India and Pakistan, and remained at best a cease-fire agreement, it gave ample space to the Soviet Union to involve itself in South Asian affairs through Indo-Pakistan conflicts.

War between India and Pakistan broke out again on December 3, 1971. The third Indo-Pakistani war arose out of the independence struggle in East Pakistan. India, supporting the independence struggle of East Pakistan, went to war with Pakistan<sup>8</sup>. Preceding the war, declaration of independence of East Pakistan as Bangladesh was an-

nounced in April.

The third Indo-Pakistani war ended in India's victory. On December 16, Pakistani armed forces in East Pakistan surrendered to India. Pakistan also suspended the military operation in western Pakistan, along the Indian border. During the war, on December 6, India recognized the new nation Bangladesh. India's military victory resulted in the breakup of Pakistan and the transformation of East Pakistan into independent Bangladesh. Pakistan lost the war and lost the eastern part of the country.

As the third Indo-Pakistani war ended with India's victory, the post-war arrangement was determined not by United Nations intervention, but by direct agreement between the two countries. The Simla Agreement<sup>9</sup>, taking its name from the place where it was signed by Indira Gandhi, the Prime Minister of India and Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, the President of Pakistan, expressed the will of both countries to put an end to conflicts and to work for the promotion of friendly relations. And in order to achieve these objectives, both sides agreed to observe the Charter of the United Nations, to resolve their differences peacefully by bilateral negotiations, to resolve peacefully the basic issues and causes of conflicts which have bedeviled relations between the two countries for the last 25 years (read "the Kashmir issue"), and to withdraw their forces to their respective sides of the international border. On Jammu and Kashmir, it was agreed that the Line of Control resulting from the cease-fire of December 17, 1971, should be respected. Besides the decision on this Line of Control, a major point of the agreement is the emphasis on "bilateralism."

After the Simla Agreement, India's basic standpoint became that the unsettled issue of Kashmir should be resolved through bilateral negotiations with Pakistan. India kept this stand and rejected any third party involvement in the Kashmir issue, claiming that it was a matter to be dis-

cussed by India and Pakistan. On the other hand, Pakistan tried to handle the Kashmir issue within the United Nations Charter and sought the support of the international community for the earliest realization of the plebiscite in Kashmir in accordance with the United Nations Resolution.

The widening gap between the two countries made Pakistan seek more international support. Pakistan started to bring up the Kashmir issue in various international arenas and talks with other countries. India took Pakistan's move of "internationalizing Kashmir" as a serious violation of the Simla Agreement that, in India's opinion, set bilateral negotiations as the basic principle in dealing with the Kashmir problem. In India's opinion, due to the Simla Agreement, the new starting point for the Kashmir issue was "bilateral relations," implying that the plebiscite issue had become an issue of the past. With such a wide difference of opinion on bilateral relations and the Kashmir issue, it was not possible for either country to expect any progress in their mutual relationship.

The relations between India and Pakistan since 1972 have been relatively peaceful, although there have been several outbursts of tension and trouble, like India's first nuclear explosion test in May 1975, India's persistence in blaming Pakistan for supporting anti-India Sikh militants in India's Punjab and the frequent military skirmishes between India and Pakistan in the Siachen Glacier area in Kashmir. This relative tranquility finally ended due to a series of international political developments. The Soviet Union's military invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979 and its withdrawal in 1989, the collapse of the Soviet Union and finally the end of the Cold War created a big change in the Indo-Pakistani relationship.

The Soviet Union's invasion of Afghanistan alarmed the U.S.A., who attached great importance to Pakistan as a front-line state in the defense against the Soviet threat in Afghanistan. America increased

military and economic assistance to Pakistan. India worried that the strengthened ties between America and Pakistan might weaken India's position in its negotiations with Pakistan and that India and Indian Kashmir might become the target of the increased military capacity of Pakistan. As a matter of fact, the Muslim militants' anti-India movements became active in the Indian part of Kashmir at this time. India recognized this as proof of Pakistani involvement. India suspected that Pakistan might have diverted the arms accumulated during the Afghanistan conflict to Kashmir.

Pakistan, after losing its position as a front-line state against the Soviet Union, had to look for another way to gain international support in their struggle against India. They adopted the strategy of "internationalizing Kashmir" – the purpose of this strategy was to keep international concern in the area by creating trouble in Kashmir and thereby demonstrating the volatile situation in Kashmir to the international community, and consequently to contain India's movement. This strategy succeeded in disturbing India to some extent but at the same time it invited India's strong rebuff. India's distrust and caution regarding Pakistan was amplified.

Pakistan's loss caused by the collapse of the Soviet Union was India's gain. The end of the Cold War era became the beginning of the re-organizing of international relations. The U.S.A. started to reconstruct its international strategy and reviewed policies towards South Asia. The U.S.A. examined the importance of India in South Asia and re-oriented its policies regarding India and Pakistan, by shifting its stance more favorably to India. The Indian government's economic reforms, started in 1991, encouraged America's interest in India. The U.S.A. wanted to expand economic and political ties with India.

As a result, the relationship between India and Pakistan inevitably had to change. In short, the

new relationship was the one formed between confident emerging India and resisting weakened Pakistan. The India-Pakistan relationship in the 1990s has developed into one where India's position gets better and better while Pakistan resists and revolts against India through every conceivable means. Naturally, skirmishes have frequently occurred, mutual distrust has increased and ultimately the crises came with the nuclear tests by India and Pakistan in May, 1998 and the military clash at Kargil in Kashmir in Summer 1999 which was described as a "near war situation."

#### **4.1.2 Indo-Pakistani Relations in 1990s: Rivalry over Nuclear and Missile Development**

Confrontation has continued, directly and indirectly. Anti-India Muslim militant groups intensified their armed struggle in and around 1990<sup>10</sup>. The battle between the militant groups and Indian armed security forces intensified and while India strengthened security forces in Kashmir, anti-India feelings spread among the people, alienated them and further radicalized the struggle. In this vicious cycle, the number of victims increased, many of whom were ordinary people unlucky enough to get caught up in the battle.

Pakistan pounced on any situation that could be termed "a violation of human rights of the people of Kashmir" by the Indian security forces, and used it as a means to appeal to the international sphere. To this India reacted sharply, stating that the source of the problem lays in Pakistan's support of the terrorists in Kashmir<sup>11</sup>.

One such example of "internationalizing Kashmir" by Pakistan occurred at a session of the United Nations Human Rights Commission in Geneva in 1994. Pakistan raised the issue of human rights violation by the Indian security forces in India's Kashmir, citing excessive activities by the

forces and proposed a resolution condemning India in this matter. At the meeting, India tried to counter Pakistan's allegation by pointing out the issue of the latter's support of the terrorists in Kashmir. While India's claim was not strong enough to convince other countries, Pakistan, finding difficulty in obtaining sufficient votes for its proposal, finally withdrew the resolution. India was saved by this, but Pakistan succeeded in drawing international attention to the Kashmir problem.

While Pakistan's strategy to "internationalize Kashmir" had some effect, it encouraged India to consolidate its position on Kashmir. India attempted to quicken the process to integrate Kashmir into the rest of India, legally as well as politically. India conducted elections for the state assembly of Jammu and Kashmir in September 1996, after the lapse of 9 years. As a result, National Conference, a local Muslim party, won a landslide victory and established the state government<sup>12</sup>. The elections were held under a very tight security arrangement by the armed and security forces of India and there were even reports that coercive steps were taken to drive voters to the voting booths. In any case, the Indian government's primary aim was accomplished. The aim was that the process of normalization of Kashmir had to be attained by holding elections and an elected government in the state had to be established to show that the will and desire of the people of Kashmir was reflected. Pakistan, as a matter of course, dismissed the process.

Military clashes occurred many times in Kashmir. Since 1984, Indian and Pakistani forces exchanged fire intermittently in the Siachen Glacier areas<sup>13</sup>. In September 1989, the Border Security Forces of both countries clashed at Pooch close to the Line of Control. Between April and August 1991, Indian and Pakistani forces exchanged fire along the Line of Control. It was widely assumed in India that the reason for these military offenses on the part of Pakistan was that the political insta-

bility in Pakistan compelled its government to take a strong posture towards India and to warn the Pakistani people in order to suppress the domestic opposition movement. Also the Pakistani forces needed to demonstrate their importance in the country in order to retain political influence in the post-Afghanistan situation in Pakistan.

There were some signs of improvement in the relationship. In December 1988, India and Pakistan agreed not to attack each other's nuclear facilities. In April 1991, they signed two agreements, one was for prevention of air space violations and for permitting fly-overs and landings by military aircraft and another was for advance notice on military exercises, maneuvers and troop movements. However, these agreements were not necessarily taken as positive steps towards improved relations. The background to these agreements was that Pakistan needed to show an amiable attitude to issues like nuclear matters in which the U.S.A. had taken a strong interest. The U.S.A. had suspended economic and military assistance in 1990 on the grounds of Pakistan's suspected nuclear development.

There were several related developments. In June 1991, the Prime Minister of Pakistan proposed a five-nation conference in order to discuss non-proliferation issues and to discuss the possibility of converting South Asia into a nuclear free zone. The five nations were the U.S.A., Russia, China, India and Pakistan. Pakistan made this proposal as an attempt to mitigate America's suspicion of Pakistan's nuclear development. India rejected the proposal raising two points: first was the China factor in India's security concerns and second was the worry that the nuclear powers, U.S.A., Russia and China intended to narrow down India's nuclear option.

The Americans viewed nuclear and missile development by India and Pakistan as a disturbing obstacle in the process of constructing their world order in the post Cold War era. America's primary concern in South Asia was nuclear non-

proliferation and missile development in India and Pakistan. India rejected the proposal for five-nation conference, firstly because it was a proposal by Pakistan, secondly, India had maintained a policy to keep their "nuclear option open," and thirdly, India recognized nuclear development as a sovereign matter.

The most dangerous aspect of the Indo-Pakistani confrontation was the potential of the two sides to obtain nuclear weapon capacity. The U.S.A. carefully watched for any sign of nuclear development in South Asia. The U.S.A. strongly urged India and Pakistan to sign the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and to allow international inspections into their nuclear establishments. The response of the two countries was negative. Pakistan insisted on India's signature as a pre-condition to Pakistan's signing the NPT. India refused to sign the treaty, claiming that the NPT in its present form was discriminative against the non-nuclear powers and there was no consideration for the security of these states.

Nuclear development in India and Pakistan was not only a matter of concern for the U.S.A.; it was a more immediate concern for both India and Pakistan. It generated a mutual suspicion between India and Pakistan and antagonism increased.

Nuclear development in Pakistan appeared to be progressing as early as 1987, when Abdul Qadir Khan, the head of Pakistan's nuclear research program, reportedly told an Indian journalist, Kuldeep Nayar, in an interview, that Pakistan had acquired the capability for making an atom bomb<sup>14</sup>. In October 1991, the ex-Prime Minister of Pakistan, Benazir Bhutto, stated that Pakistan had acquired nuclear weapon capacity<sup>15</sup>. In February 1992, Pakistan's Foreign Secretary, Shahryar Khan, admitted to the *Washington Post* that his country had the technology to devise a nuclear bomb. Further, on March 1994, it was reported that Pakistan had managed to make six to twelve bombs of

Hiroshima Type<sup>16</sup>. In August 1994, Pakistan's ex-Prime Minister, Nawaz Sharif, was reported to have stated that Pakistan had developed a nuclear weapon. And on December 15, 1995, the front-page story of *New York Times* reported that American intelligence experts, after reviewing recent recordings by spy satellites, had come to the conclusion that India was preparing for its second nuclear test in 20 years<sup>17</sup>. From these statements and reports, it is possible to see the level of antagonism reached at the stage when both countries were frantically racing for the status of nuclear weapon states.

The change in the nature of debates on nuclear development inevitably drew attention. India, leaving the old standpoint of keeping the nuclear option open, began to discuss national security matters, taking in the nuclear and missile strategy factors. Issues related to nuclear and missile development by India and Pakistan were frequently discussed. Reports on India and Pakistan's missile development<sup>18</sup>, and reports on China's exports of ballistic missiles to Pakistan attracted considerable attention. The above-mentioned *New York Times* report of December 15, 1995 and the speculated report that Pakistan was considering counter measures created tensions. The missile development issue was also focused on. When India tested a 150 to 200 km range ballistic missile, Prithvi, in January 1996, Pakistan reacted strongly. On January 5, 1996, there was a report that in 1995, China, had exported ring magnets that could be used for uranium enrichment to Pakistan<sup>19</sup>. Furthermore, it was reported that Pakistan had deployed Chinese M-11 missiles (300 km range) and its nuclear development capacity might have reached the final stage of manufacturing nuclear weapons<sup>20</sup>. In August, the U.S. intelligent agency was reported to have come to the conclusion that a M-11 missile-manufacturing site was under construction in Pakistan with Chinese assistance<sup>21</sup>. At

the same time, these reports reflected America's concern over India and Pakistan's nuclear and missile development and also over the China-Pakistan nuclear cooperation. But the fact that these reports appeared repeatedly, implied that they were more than sheer conjecture and that nuclear and missile development in both countries as well as technology transfer from China to Pakistan were in fact, established information.

The U.S.A. urged India and Pakistan to promise to suspend and freeze nuclear development. But India refused to sign the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) on the grounds that the treaty was discriminative against the non-nuclear countries. Pakistan too rejected the treaty on the grounds that India was not a signatory.

However some change was recognized in America's attitudes to this problem, especially since 1995. The U.S.A. seemed to downplay the CTBT-NPT campaign. In January 1995 when the U.S. Defense Secretary, William Perry, visited India and Pakistan, he left an impression in India that the U.S.A. were not strongly urging India to sign the CTBT and the NPT<sup>22</sup>. The shift, from the Indian viewpoint, was said to be primarily due to consideration of India's economic reforms that had been intensified since 1991, generally with the aim to widen and strengthen U.S.-India cooperation by complying with the ultimate world strategy of the U.S.A. The U.S.A. saw India as being in a position to provide significant commercial opportunities and hoped to develop a more regular, higher profile commercial policy dialogue with India and consequently to create a better atmosphere in which America could achieve both its economic and strategic purposes. It was the time that a larger strategic framework was formulated by the U.S. Commerce Department to engage the "big emerging markets" including India in the global economy. Following Perry's visit, the U.S. Commerce Secretary Ron Brown, visited India as the

head of a 25-member business delegation. These visits were observed as part of the plan to strengthen America's relationship with India through economic and political exchanges. As for Pakistan, the U.S. administration decided to resume military and economic assistance of 368 million dollars in January 1996. America's intention was to contain India and Pakistan's nuclear and missile development by extending them either economic or military cooperation. However, as the nuclear and missile development race between India and Pakistan was rooted in the deep, strong antagonism between the two, it was difficult even for the U.S.A. to attain the goal in such a way.

#### *4.2 Process of Failure: From Nuclear Tests to Kargil Conflict via Lahore*

##### **4.2.1 Difficult Dialogue**

In the 1990s, the relationship between India and Pakistan turned from "cool" to "cold." The two countries were in severe opposition over Kashmir. India was alarmed by the nuclear and missile related technical transfer from China to Pakistan and also by U.S. moves of resuming arms sales to Pakistan. Pakistan put all its effort into its nuclear and missile development in order to confront India.

There were, however, some dialogues between them. When the United Front Government was established in India in June 1996, the Prime Minister of Pakistan, Benazir Bhutto, sent a letter of felicitations to Deve Gowda, the new Prime Minister of India and proposed to resume the bilateral talks. But India did not respond to it positively, as there was a phrase in Bhutto's letter about dialogue aimed at "a settlement of the core issues of Jammu and Kashmir" and other outstanding matters in accordance with "internationally established principles." Prime Minister Deve Gowda

counter-suggested to the Pakistani Prime Minister to revive the meetings between foreign secretaries of India and Pakistan as a first step towards a wide-ranging comprehensive dialogue emphasizing the "bilateral approaches and agreements, which have been devised earlier," thus omitting to refer to the "core issues of Jammu and Kashmir" and rejecting the United Nations resolutions on Kashmir, but instead stressing bilateral comprehensive dialogue spelled out in the Simla Agreement of 1972. This shows that India could not engage in talks with Pakistan primarily on Kashmir, leaving other outstanding issues aside and, at the same time, Pakistan had not given up its view on the United Nations resolutions at all. The opinions of the two were far apart.

Later in 1997 when Nawaz Sharif assumed the office of the Prime Minister of Pakistan, optimism for dialogue surfaced. On February 26, the new Prime Minister of Pakistan proposed a meeting of foreign secretaries for "meaningful discussions" between the Prime Ministers of the two countries in his reply to the letter of felicitations from his Indian counterpart. The Indian Prime Minister, in his letter to Nawaz Sharif, showed "willingness for wide-ranging and comprehensive talks on all issues of mutual concern." By calling for a dialogue, Pakistan made it clear that "all issues of mutual concern" included the core issue of Jammu and Kashmir, and that its primary objective was to ensure "some progress on the core issue of Jammu and Kashmir"<sup>23</sup>.

On March 1977, India and Pakistan's Foreign Secretaries met at Islamabad, after 39 months<sup>24</sup> and then in April, Indian Foreign Minister I.K. Gujral and Pakistan's Foreign Minister Gohar Ayub Khan, held talks at the time of the Non-Aligned Foreign Ministers' Conference in New Delhi. At the talks, India stuck to the reference for talks on all outstanding matters, and Pakistan put primacy on the core issue of Kashmir, however both agreed to con-



tinue the dialogues on all outstanding issues. On May 12, the Prime Minister of India, I.K.Gujral<sup>25</sup> and the Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif met at the time of the SAARC summit in the Maldives on May 12, 1997 and agreed that all outstanding issues including the Kashmir issues should be settled in a peaceful manner, and for that purpose they agreed to set up joint working groups on "various subjects" which would be identified by the Foreign Secretaries of the two countries at their next meeting and also to reactivate a dormant "hot line" between the two Prime Ministers. Among other decisions taken by them was that the civilian prisoners held by both sides would be exchanged.

Following the Prime Ministers talks, Foreign Secretary-level talks were held in Islamabad, in June 1997. It was agreed to address all outstanding issues of concern to both sides including (1) peace and security, including confidence building measures, (2) Jammu and Kashmir, (3) Siachen, (4) Wullar barrage project / Tulbul navigation project, (5) Sir Creek, (6) terrorism and drug-trafficking, (7) economic and commercial cooperation, (8) promotion of friendly exchanges in various fields, (9) setting up a mechanism, including working groups at appropriate levels, and to address all these issues in an integrated manner. It was also agreed that the issues at (1) and (2) would be dealt with at the level of Foreign Secretaries.

It seemed to be a departure from the stringent position of India that it agreed to talk on the Kashmir issue with Pakistan. But actually there was a wide gap in their perceptions on the agreement. Pakistan claimed that the Kashmir issue was recognized as the major outstanding issue to be taken as a priority. India insisted that the mechanism to address all these issues should be established before the individual issue was discussed. There was no place in India's understanding for the idea of "firstly Kashmir and later other issues" that was

promoted by Pakistan. India rather liked to talk on outstanding issues other than the Kashmir issue. The Foreign Secretaries meeting in September in New Delhi revealed that the gap was irreconcilable<sup>26</sup>.

Irreconcilability was observed repeatedly. On September 22, attending the United Nations Annual General Assembly, the Indian and Pakistani Prime Ministers met the U.S. President Bill Clinton separately and the two Prime Ministers had a talk on the following day. But they were at cross-purposes. While India valued the words from the American President to the Indian Prime Minister, that the U.S.A. had no intention of intervening in the India-Pakistan disputes, the Pakistani Prime Minister, when he met the Indian Prime Minister, did not refer to the proposals of a no-war pact and military curtailment pact he made in his speech at the General Meeting on the previous day.

#### 4.2.2 Nuclear Tests by India and Pakistan

On May 11 and 13, 1998, India carried out five underground nuclear tests at the same site where it made its first nuclear test on May 15, 1974. As it was widely known that India had accumulated considerable nuclear technology and that India faced increasing international pressure to come under the NPT-CTBT regime, there was speculation that India might someday exercise the "nuclear option" to demonstrate its nuclear capacity. It had been argued widely in India that just keeping the nuclear option open was not of much significance, and that the time would soon come when it became impossible for India to exercise the option<sup>27</sup>. The tests were decided on and carried out by the government led by the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) which came to power only on March 19, 1998, winning the 12th Lok Sabha (Lower House) elections. BJP consistently advocated a tough line on national security issues par-

ticularly on the nuclear issues. It had already declared in its election manifesto that it would “re-evaluate the nuclear policy and exercise the option to introduce nuclear weapons<sup>28</sup>.” Another factor that might have influenced the BJP government's decision was the test launch of the mid-range Ghauri missile by Pakistan on April 4. It was reported that the Indian Prime Minister A.B.Vajpayee, decided to conduct the nuclear tests two days after the missile test by Pakistan.

Pakistan reacted sharply to India's nuclear tests. The Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, when he talked on the phone with the U.S. President Bill Clinton, stressed that Pakistan would take appropriate steps in order to protect the country's sovereignty and security, apparently implying Pakistan's nuclear tests. Pakistan conducted nuclear tests on May 28 and 30. It claimed to have carried out five explosion tests, the same number as India did. Pakistan needed to perform the test for its national prestige and security against its neighbor, the belligerent India. Also the lukewarm sanctions imposed on India by the developed countries helped to convince Pakistan to go ahead with the tests.

The international community, alarmed by the prospect of a nuclear arms race between India and Pakistan, strongly urged both countries to have dialogues. The appeal made by Pakistan that Kashmir was the core issue in India-Pakistan's hostility begun to penetrate and the Kashmir issue was frequently taken up at international meetings such as the United Nations Security Council, the Non-Aligned Movement, the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), and the ASEAN. This was not a desirable situation for India, who wanted to deal bilaterally with Pakistan without other countries involvement. India was compelled to have dialogues with Pakistan in order to avoid the involvement of third parties. Reconciliation was attempted.

#### 4.2.3 Lahore Declaration

After the nuclear tests, the first encounter of the two Prime Ministers was made in July 1998 at the time of the SAARC summit in Colombo. The Foreign Secretaries of both countries also held talks.

Then the negotiations developed. In September at the Annual General Assembly of the United Nations, both Prime Ministers separately in their speeches touched upon the talks being held between India and Pakistan and showed their willingness to sign the CTBT. Then the two Prime Ministers met on September 23 and agreed to hold the Secretary-level talks in Islamabad on eight issues which were identified for the negotiations in June 1997. The important point of the new agreement was that the Kashmir and the security issues were prioritized. India, by giving in to Pakistan's demand that the two issues should be taken up firstly, agreed to the “2 + 6” formula.

The Secretary-level talks started from October 16 in Islamabad. On October 16, the issues related to security and confidence-building measures were discussed and on the next day Kashmir was taken up. Both sides presented their opinions and discussions were reported to have gone deeply into serious areas but they were not able to go beyond the point where any concrete outcome could be manifested. It was revealed that the difference between them was too wide to be easily bridged, for the matters discussed were the root of their antagonized relationship. Adding to this, the nuclear dimension regarding security concerns further complicated the relationship between the two countries. However there was some progress in several areas. One of them was the final agreement on the commencement of a bus service between Lahore, Pakistan and Delhi, India. This set up the “Bus Diplomacy” which commenced in February 1999.

Indian Prime Minister Vajpayee visited

Lahore, Pakistan, from February 20 to 21, 1999, on the inaugural run of the Delhi-Lahore bus service. Prime Minister Vajpayee took the bus at Amritsar, reached the Wagha border point after driving 37km and was received by the Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif there. Then they went to the Punjab Governor's residence where they had the first discussion<sup>29</sup>. A declaration was signed after their talks on February 21<sup>30</sup>. With this declaration, both countries confirmed commitment to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and to the Simla Agreement, commitment to universal nuclear disarmament, the importance of mutually agreed confidence building measures for improving the security environment, and commitment to attend to all outstanding issues including Jammu and Kashmir. The Joint Statement issued at the end of Vajpayee's visit declared that the two Prime Ministers decided to discuss all issues of mutual concern, including nuclear related issues. The Memorandum of Understanding signed by the Foreign Secretaries of India and Pakistan, after reiterating the commitment to the U.N. Charter and the Simla Agreement, stated that the two sides would engage in bilateral consultations on security and nuclear related matters, that they would provide each other with advance notification in respect of ballistic missile flight tests, that they would take measures to reduce the risks of accidental or unauthorized use of nuclear weapons, that they would continue to abide by their unilateral moratorium on conducting further nuclear tests and that they should review the implementation of existing confidence building measures.

India was very confident about this "Bus Diplomacy" and saw it as their new political stand towards Pakistan in the post nuclear test era. India had high expectations of the outcome of these negotiations<sup>31</sup>. On March 15, the Prime Minister A.B. Vajpayee, in his Lok Sabha speech, showing satisfaction over his bus journey and the Lahore Dec-

laration, reiterated India's willingness to resolve all outstanding issues with Pakistan through talks and stressed that as both countries had nuclear weapons, they had no option but to live together in peace. He also stressed that the Lahore Declaration committed India and Pakistan to the Simla Agreement<sup>32</sup>. But ironically, the Lahore peace process suffered a severe setback after just a few months when armed groups invaded India's Kashmir crossing the Line of Control from Pakistan in May 1999. One of the interesting things about Vajpayee's Lahore visit was a conspicuous absence of the three military chiefs of the Pakistani armed forces at the Wagha border when Vajpayee arrived. There was speculation even at that time that there was a difference of opinions between the Pakistani Prime Minister and the military chiefs over Vajpayee's visit and the country's policy towards India. Later, it was revealed that at the time of Vajpayee's visit, the military invasion was in the process of being prepared. The failure of India's Lahore Peace Process, which had inspired so much confidence, dented India's policy towards Pakistan and left a deep suspicion of Pakistan.

#### **4.2.4 Kargil Conflict**

In early May, India proposed to Pakistan that Foreign Secretary level talks be held in June to discuss the "2 + 6" issues agreed in September 1998 based upon the agreement of June 1997. India believed in what was agreed in the Lahore Peace Process.

But just after this, news of armed conflicts at the Kargil sector in Kashmir started to come in. At the beginning it was reported that they were the anti-India Muslim militants crossing the Line of Control. But the size and pattern of attacks were different from those of the usual infiltration of the militants. On May 24, the Indian government announced that the intruders from across the Line

of Control were militants trained by Pakistani forces and their aim was to occupy strategic positions. Brajesh Mishra, the Special Secretary to the Indian Prime Minister, spoke of the possibility that at the time of the Lahore talks Pakistani forces were preparing the infiltration<sup>33</sup>.

The tension escalated to the extent that an Indian military aircraft was shot-down by a Pakistani missile on May 26. On May 29, India declared that the intruders consisted of Pakistani irregulars and troops and alleged that some Taliban forces of Afghanistan were involved<sup>34</sup>. And on June 1, Pakistan admitted its military involvement in the warfare by the statement that Pakistani forces had successfully struck back three offences by Indian forces near the Line of Control<sup>35</sup>.

While the Indian troops gradually recovered their positions, Pakistan began to lose diplomatic points as it was proved that its military had crossed the Line of Control<sup>36</sup>. The world community, without naming Pakistan, started to condemn the intruders across the Line of Control. For Example, the G-8 Summit of June 20 expressed concern about the military conflicts in Kashmir by the armed intruders and condemned any military operation to change the status-quo. The Summit also urged the immediate suspension of such military actions, the restoration of the Line of Control, and the resumption of dialogues based upon the Lahore Declaration. It was in fact a strong condemnation of Pakistan. It was also noticeable that it referred to the Lahore Declaration as the basis of the dialogues.

The U.S.A. also expressed its displeasure to Pakistan. The U.S.A. sent Gen. Anthony Zinni, head of the U.S. Central Command, to Pakistan on June 24. The U.S.A. called for Pakistan's withdrawal from India's Kashmir. The European Union and China followed, urging Pakistan to suspend military action<sup>37</sup>. On July 1, a Chinese Foreign Ministry Spokesman announced that China had asked India and

Pakistan to respect the Line of Control and resume dialogue based upon the Lahore Declaration. This statement is important because not only was it the first time that China talked about the Line of Control but also it called for the resumption of dialogues between India and Pakistan based on the Lahore Declaration.

On July 4, Nawaz Sharif rushed to Washington to meet the U.S. President and to ask for U.S. intervention. It was an unsatisfactory discussion for Pakistan. Clinton urged Pakistan to have bilateral talks with India to ease the tension and Nawaz Sharif was made to agree to withdraw from India's Kashmir over the Line of Control. The U.S.A. at the same time reminded Pakistan that the Line of Control should be respected and the Lahore Declaration should be the best forum to attend to all the problems between India and Pakistan. Furthermore, the Joint Statement after Sharif's visit was not favorable for Pakistan. It said that both sides agreed on the importance of the Line of Control being respected in the spirit of the Simla Agreement of 1972 and Pakistan would take "concrete measures" to restore the Line of Control<sup>38</sup>.

On July 10, the Pakistani cabinet discussed and decided on the withdrawal which was completed in the middle of July.

#### **4.2.5 India and Pakistan after Kargil**

The Kargil conflict changed the nature of the Indo-Pakistani relationship. Pakistan suffered a serious setback due to the failure at Kargil. To an extent, with the warfare at Kargil, Pakistan succeeded in showing the international community that the Kashmir problem was the most dangerous outstanding issue between two new nuclear-states, India and Pakistan. But the way the Kargil conflict developed and came to an end suggests that Pakistan could not use this process of military operation in order to gain favor with the world

regarding the Kashmir problem. It might even be possible that Pakistan would be isolated if it kept on pushing the Kashmir issue in this way. The Kargil conflict after the “Bus Diplomacy” and the Lahore Declaration naturally drove India to harden its policy towards Pakistan but it also limited Pakistan’s diplomatic options in its Indian affairs. India, on the other hand, gained sympathy by being restrained during the Kargil conflict. India also gained some room to maneuver in dealing with Pakistan by obtaining international support for the Lahore Declaration.

*Conclusion: Reconciliation Receding due to Pakistan’s Coup*

India had been carefully watching Pakistan’s internal affairs and the Pakistani Army’s movements, as it expected that the tension between the Army and the Nawaz Sharif government would sharpen over the handling of the Kargil conflict. Yet it was not totally expected that the situation would go so far as the Chief of Army Staff, General Pervez Musharraf seizing power by dismissing the Sharif government on October 12, just when the new BJP coalition government led by A.B. Vajpayee was about to be established. The major issue of the first Cabinet meeting turned out to be the military coup in Pakistan.

Pakistan’s Chief of Army Staff, General Pervez Musharraf, in his first address to the nation on October 17, announced that he would reduce forces along the international border with India and offered to resume the stalled dialogue with India. At the same time, Musharraf emphasized that India had to stop the oppression in Kashmir and respect the United Nations Resolution.

These promises were far short of India’s expectations. India took the withdrawal of Pakistani troops from the international border as propaganda, since it did not cover the Line of Control in

Jammu and Kashmir, in spite of the fact that the Directors-General of Military Operations of the two countries had already made an agreement covering this area on July 11.

India’s stance on the relationship with Pakistan shifted after the Kargil conflict, and then again after the military coup in Pakistan. India’s stance became increasingly strict. India began to insist more strongly that it would resume talks with Pakistan only after the latter ceased to support cross-border terrorism. India made it clear that it was not in a hurry to engage in any substantive dialogue with the military regime. This attitude was reciprocated when General Musharraf, who assumed the post of the Chief Executive, said at his press conference on November 1 that “hostility from India would be met with hostility<sup>39</sup>,” and that Pakistan favored the resolution of the Kashmir issue first and foremost among all other outstanding issues with India. The statement was not at all the kind that would enable either country to reopen dialogue. On November 6, General Musharraf expressed even more hawkish views by stating that the Lahore Peace Process and related components of the dialogue with India would have to be renegotiated<sup>40</sup>. On November 8, the Foreign Minister Abdul Sattar, addressing a press conference, elaborated on Pakistan’s view of the Lahore Process: “the Lahore agreement of February 1999 was one among many between India and Pakistan.” He went on to say that it did not have any special significance. To India, remarks made by Musharraf and other officials in his regime confirmed Pakistan’s aggressive posture towards India and also its negative response to the Lahore Peace Process on which India had put the highest importance for the resumption of talks with Pakistan. India became convinced that the military regime of Pakistan was reluctant to have dialogue with India in any form. India rejected Pakistan’s claim by declaring that the onus was on Pakistan to fa-

cilitate the restoration of trust that was breached by Pakistan's armed aggression at Kargil.

India was fully aware of the serious situation that the army, which had been basically hostile to India, would remain as a dominant factor in Pakistan. Both countries were far apart on conditions to reopen the dialogue after the Kargil conflict. To make matters worse, the military coup in Pakistan aggravated the already deteriorated relationship between the two countries. The hijacking of an Indian Airlines aircraft that took place at the end of December further worsened and complicated the situation. India condemned Pakistan's involvement in the hijacking.

Pakistan's military coup invited international concern and criticism. That gave India some room to maneuver its Pakistani affairs. On the other hand, Pakistan seems to be in a fix. A lack of flexibility and realism in Pakistan's policy towards India could lead to increased stiffness regarding India and make Pakistan insist even more on resolution of Kashmir related problems. This would be a difficult situation that might involve the risk of Pakistan isolating itself and could lead to another deterioration in Indo-Pakistani relations.

The road to dialogue has been blocked. In such a situation, India also faces a difficult problem. As long as India's relationship with Pakistan remains cold and hostile, India's international affairs have to stay in fetters. Without making any concrete progress in the Kashmir issue, India would be unable to attain its desire to free itself from Pakistan's spell and establish a desirable position in the international community. While more than fifty years have passed since India and Pakistan's independence, the Kashmir issue not only has been unsolved but also has aggravated tension and developed into a "near-eternal misfortune and tragedy" evenly shared by both countries. It is important for India and Pakistan to start from the point that both should recognize the simple

reality that "Kashmir is the root of the problem" that needs to be solved, and should determine as early as possible to share the responsibility of solving it, however difficult it seems to be.

#### Notes:

1. For Kashmir issues, see Sumit Ganguly, *The Origins of War in South Asia: Indo-Pakistani Conflicts since 1949*, Vision Books, New Delhi, 1999, Takenori Horimoto, *Nanajuu-nendai ikoo no kashimiru mondai* (Kashmir since 1970s: in Japanese), Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government of Japan, March, 1992 and Takenori Horimoto and Mari Izuyama, *Kashimiru mondai* (Kashmir Dispute: in Japanese), March 1998, The Japan Institute of International Affairs.
2. Ganguly says that neither side made a formal declaration of war, it is difficult to pinpoint when the war started. Ibid. Ganguly, 1999, p.13. It is commonly observed that the war started when Pathan tribesmen crossed the Kashmir-West Pakistan border on October 22, 1947. See Sisir Gupta, *Kashmir: A Study in India-Pakistan Relations*, Asia Publishing House, Bombay, 1996, pp.110-111.
3. United Nations Commission for India and Pakistan (U.N.C.I.P.) Resolution of August 13, 1948. The resolution refers to "cease fire" and "withdrawal of troops."
4. U.N.C.I.P. Resolution of January 5, 1959 (S/1430, Para 143).
5. Agreement Between Military Representatives of India and Pakistan Regarding the Establishment of a Cease-fire Line in the State of Jammu and Kashmir dated 29 July, 1949 (Annex 26 of U.N.C.I.P. Third Report: S/1430 and Add 1 to 3).
6. For the detailed discussion on Azad Kashmir, see Aeka Inoue, "Aazaado-jamu-kashimiiru wo meguru indo to pakisutan no kankei ni tsuite" (India and Pakistan Conflicts over Azad Kashmir: in Japanese) *Ajia keizai*, Vol.40, No.12, 1999, Institute of Developing Economies, Tokyo.
7. The second war also started without a formal declaration. It is held that the war began with the infiltration of Pakistan-controlled guerrillas into Indian Kashmir around August 5, 1965. Ganguly 1999, p.47.
8. India and Soviet Union signed a [Treaty of Peace,

- Friendship and Cooperation between the Republic of India and The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics] on August 9, 1971. In Article IX, it is stated that "[E]ach high contracting party undertakes to abstain from providing any assistance to any third party that engages in armed conflict with the other Party. In the event of either Party being subjected to an attack or a threat thereof, the High Contracting Party, shall immediately enter into mutual consultations in order to remove such threat and to take appropriate effective measures to ensure peace and the security of their countries." The inclusion of this article means that the treaty should be recognized more as a mutual defense treaty than as a treaty of mere peace, friendship and cooperation.
9. Agreement on Bilateral Relations between the Government of India and the Government of Pakistan.
  10. In Kashmir, as early as 1983, militant elements appeared in the struggle for independence as well as in the pro-Pakistani movement.
  11. India's claim is that Inter-Services of Intelligence (ISI) which is under Pakistan's Defense Division supported militant groups in Kashmir.
  12. National Conference, however, boycotted the elections to the Lok Sabha held in April and May in the same year.
  13. The Line of Control has not been drawn in the Shiachen Glaciers.
  14. The interview was made on January 28, 1987 and reported in *the Observer*, London, in the first week of March 1987. Khan subsequently denied having said any such thing.
  15. *Asiaweek*, November 11, 1991. In December 1992, Bhutto disclosed in a TV program on the NBC network that bombs were assembled without her knowledge.
  16. *The Los Angeles Times*, March 20, 1994.
  17. *New York Times*, December 15, 1995. On December 19, Pranab Mukherjee, the Foreign Minister of India denied that India was planning a nuclear test. Later it was confirmed that India was very close to conducting an underground nuclear test at that time.
  18. India launched an Agni middle-ranged missile on May 22, 1989. Following this, Pakistan tested Hatf-I and Hatf-II missiles.
  19. *Washington Times*, February 5, 1996.
  20. *Washington Post*, June 13, 1996.
  21. *International Herald Tribune*, August 26, 1996.
  22. India and the U.S.A. signed minutes on defense co-operation on Perry's visit.
  23. Both must have had in their mind the approaching 50th anniversary of independence of the two countries.
  24. The last meeting was in January 1994.
  25. I.K. Gujral became the prime minister in the second United Front Government.
  26. On returning from India, Pakistani Foreign Secretary condemned India for deviating from the June agreement. *The Hindu*, September 19, 1997.
  27. Muchkund Dubey, "Exercising the nuclear potion," *The Hindu*, May 18, 1998.
  28. *Vote for a Stable Government and an Able Prime Minister, Election Manifesto 1998*, Bharatiya Janata Party 1998, p.31.
  29. After the discussion a banquet was held where Nawaz Sharif spoke at length of Kashmir as the root of the problem with India.
  30. The Lahore Declaration is generally understood to consist of three documents, namely Declaration, Joint Statement by the two Prime Ministers and Memorandum of Understanding signed by the Foreign Secretaries.
  31. The External Affairs Minister Jaswant Singh described the significance of Vajpayee's visit to Lahore as "a path-breaking event." *The Hindu*, February 9, 1999.
  32. *The Hindu*, March 16, 1999.
  33. *The Hindu*, May 25, 1999. The political instability and confusion of the Indian government since the end of 1998, especially the BJP coalition government's collapse on April 17, 1999, might have been an important factor for Pakistan in deciding to launch the military operation.
  34. *The Hindu*, May 30, 1999.
  35. *The Hindu*, June 2, 1999.
  36. India's charges of Pakistani aggression during the Kargil crisis gained considerable international credibility when the government released the tapes of conversations between Gen. Pervez Musharraf, then Army chief, in China, and his deputy, at Rawalpindi in late May 1999.
  37. The Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif made a visit to Beijing from June 27 to 29.
  38. On July 5, Indian Foreign Affairs Ministry explained

that it had been informed from the U.S. that what the "concrete measures" in the Clinton-Sharif Joint Statement meant was the withdrawal of Pakistani forces from India's Kashmir across the Line of Control. *The Hindu*, July 6, 1999.

39. *The Hindu*, November 2, 1999.

40. *The Hindu*, November 7, 1999.

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