"Kashmir is unique among all the crisis points along the Indo-Pakistan border in that a marked escalation of the fighting - both insurgency and regular - is virtually inevitable"\(^1\) observed Yossef Bodansky while writing on Pakistan’s Kashmir Strategy, and the latest manifestation of this two level strategy was vividly exemplified in the Kargil conflict of May-July 1999. The parallelizing of the Kargil conflict with that of the Bay of Pigs incident is because of the strange likeness between the two, and therefore a brief explanation is called for.

On 17 April, 1961 the United States of America sponsored on abortive invasion of Cuba at the Bay of Pigs, on the Southwestern coast, the invading force consisted of 1,500 (approximately the same number were used by Pakistan in Kargil) anti Castro Cuban mercenaries and US Army marines dressed as civilians. The invasion was planned by the CIA (as in the manner in which the Kargil Operation was planned by the ISI). The wisdom of proceeding with it had been debated within the newly inaugurated administration of President John F. Kennedy before it was finally approved and carried out (as the Nawaz Sharif Government of Pakistan did in case of Kargil). The operation failed, leading to higher levels of tension between Cuba and USA.\(^2\) (Similar was the outcome of the Kargil conflict).

**Origins of the Kargil Plan**

The Kargil plan was not an on the sport creation. It was planned much in advance and resources for it were catered for. As has been highlighted earlier, the plan was a part of ‘Operation Topac’ engineered by Gen. Zia. According to Altaf Gauhar, the once powerful information secretary to President Ayub Khan in the 1960’s, while writing in the Pakistani newspaper, ‘The Nation’ states, “that all Pakistani operations against India were conceived

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and launched, on the basis of one assumption: that the Indians are too cowardly and ill-organised to offer any effective military response which could pose a threat to Pakistan... the 1947-48, 1965 and the 1971 wars all started on this assumption... the Kargil intrusion, was authorised by Gen. Zia-ul-Haq in 1987... (while ‘Operation Topac’ was ostensibly being planned) the same plan was put before Mr. Sharif this year... It is believed Mr. Sharif gave the go-ahead to the plan before signing the Lahore declaration..."³

The Karachi Urdu-language weekly “Takbeer”, quoted in ‘Tribune’, reported “The Pakistani Army had planned the invasion of the Kargil-Dras region 14 years ago... the brain behind this strategy was the then Brigadier Azizuddin who was given charge of a Pakistani brigade in occupied Kashmir in 1985, (during Gen. Zia’s regime)... the shrewd brigadier conceived the invasion plan after intensive tour and study of the topography of occupied Kashmir... In 1994 he was promoted and sent back to Pakistan occupied Kashmir as head of Northern Command. It was the time that he finalised his intrusion plan. In 1998, when Major General Azizuddin, became Chief of General Staff, officers in the Northern Command (Pakistan’s) thought that now was the ripe time to implement the plan... this plan was already under implementation when Indian Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee visited Lahore in February this year (1999).”⁴ Friday Times, the leading Pakistani English weekly reports “The Kargil operation was put on the drawing boards by competent military minds many years ago... Kargil was subsequently presented as a military ‘do-able’ option, when the time was ripe partly as military revenge for the loss of Siachen and partly as a political device to spur the Kashmir mujahideen towards greater sacrifice and heroism.”⁵

These plan’s were dusted off the shelves and given a new life. “Six months of planning must have gone into setting up the posts on rugged snow bound mountain tops at altitudes ranging from 16,000 to 18,000 feet.”⁶ As, such a military campaign required specialized high altitude mountain warfare training, equipment and massive logistic backup, that, could only be provided by the Pakistani Army.

³ The Times of India (New Delhi), 13 September 1999, p.1. (Brackets mine).
⁴ Tribune (New Delhi), 16 June 1999, p.9. (Brackets mine).
⁵ Friday Times (Lahore), July 30, 1999, (editorial).
The Plan

Major Gen. (Retd.) Afsir Karim, of the Indian Army and a renowned defence and security expert, has reconstructed Pakistan’s operational plan in Kargil. He writes, “a reconstruction of the events and pattern of deployment of Pak troops shows that three groups were launched by each brigade, as follows:

- 62 (Pak) Brigade located at Skardu provided one group for crossing the LoC at Batalik.
- 82 (Pak) Brigade located at Minimarg was to provide a group for Kargil-Drass sectors.
- 232 (Pak) Brigade located at Dansam was to launch operations across the LoC in Turtuk, South of Siachen Glacier.

Each group was provided artillery, engineering and logistic support by the respective brigades. All the groups were supported by elements of Pakistan’s Special Service Group (SSG) comprising highly specialised commando troops of the Pakistan Army. The main phases and objectives of the offensive appeared to be as follows:

- Designated groups were to occupy unheld areas or those vacated by the Indian Army during winter by stealth in Chorbat-La, Batalik, Kaksar, Dras and Mushkoh valley.
- Interdiction of the Srinagar-Leh road (the national highway, NH1A) between Dras and Kargil by artillery fire and physical occupation wherever possible.
- Attack on Turtuk to facilitate operations in the Shyok Valley against logistic bases supplying Siachen.

Phase II

- Highly trained mercenaries supported by SSG elements were to enter Kashmir Valley across the great Himalayan Range to create disturbances and subvert the administration.
- Prepare the ground for the occupation of the Pahalgam-Anantnag belt in the valley.

Phase III

- Liberation of Sonamarg, Pahalgam and Anantnag districts by irregular forces led by Afghan war veterans and Pakistan Army troops posing as Mujahideen.
Phase IV

- Liberation of the Doda-Kishtwar belt by armed mercenaries.
- Cutting of logistic support routes to Siachen.

It was expected that operations in the valley and Doda would catch the Indian Army on the wrong foot as most Army formations would now be engaged in Kargil sector. It was hoped that UN intervention at this stage would become inevitable. In this situation, Pakistan would bargain from a position of strength and largely achieve its political objectives in Kashmir.

This operational plan was obviously over ambitious and unrealistic as Pakistan was in no position to dislodge the Kargil brigade or stop reinforcements from reaching this area. No major operations can be sustained beyond Kargil, much less across the Great Himalayan Range without the capture of Kargil. Mercenaries and terrorists could, however, be infiltrated in greater number into the Kashmir Valley and Doda-Kishtwar areas... The Pakistani troops operating across the LoC were identified, to be from the 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th and 6th Battalions of the Northern Light Infantry. These battalions were augmented by Afghan war veterans and Islamic militants trained by the Lashkar-e-Taiba and Harkat-ul-Mujahideen etc. Twenty artillery batteries provided supporting fire for the offensive.7

This then was the perceived military plan of Pakistan in Kargil and was in tune with its two level strategy in Kashmir and not too different from its earlier plans of 1947-48 and 1965, vintage. (Details of this plan also appeared in the Pioneer of June 24, 1999 at Page 4).8

The Chronological Kargil Calendar

Before dissecting and analysing Pakistan’s strategy in Kargil and its overall impact on Indo-Pak relations, a brief chronological re-cap of important events will put the entire issue in the correct perspective, for further discussion.

- May 8-15 : Pak intrusion into the Kargil sector detected by Indian Army Patrols.

8 “The task of carrying out the objectives was given to 4th Northern Light Infantry (NLI) at Gilgit, 6th NLI battalion at Skardu, 5th NLI battalion at Minimarg and 3rd NLI at Dansam. Two companies of SSG... were distributed in these four units. With 20 Pakistani batteries places to provide fire support, the main body of personnel was broken into groups of 30 to 40 for multiple intrusions by about 250 sent into Batalik, 100 in Kaksar, 250 in Dras and 200 to 300 in Mushko Nullah.”
May 26: Army acknowledges that 600-800 infiltrator are lodged in the Drass-Kargil-Batalik-Turtok sector. The total linear extent of the infiltration is about 112 to 120 kms with a few gaps. The depth of the penetration, when detected, was about 8 to 15 kms. Thus the infiltrators had succeeded in quietly occupying 1000 to 1500 sq. kms of Indian territory without a bullet having been fired. Incidentally this is more than the territories lost in the 1965 or 1971 wars.9

May 27: MIG-27 piloted by Flight Lieutenant K. Nachiketa flames out, he is taken a prisoner. A MIG-21 piloted by Sqn. Leader Ajay Ahuja is shot down and the Pilot killed by Pak ground troop. Srinagar Airport closed.

May 28: An Indian Mi-17 helicopter shot down. Four crew killed. Defence Minister Fernandes states Sharif and ISI have no hand in Kargil episode.

May 31: Government of India declares it as a ‘warlike situation’.

June 1: George Fernandes offers “safe passage” option to intruders, raising controversy. Diplomatic favour to India begins to build up. PTV banned.

June 3: Nachiketa returned to India by Pakistan.

June 6: Indian Army launches major offensives in Drass and Kargil sectors, accompanied by airstrikes to secure Leh-Srinagar highway.

June 10: Pakistan returns mutilated bodies of six soldiers of Indian Army who had earlier been captured. India enraged.

June 12: First meeting between foreign ministers of both countries held. Pakistan firmly told no talks till intruders completely withdraw.

June 13: Crucial Tololing peak captured by Indian Army. War’s turning point. Vajpayee visits Kargil.

June 15: President Clinton of USA urges Sharif to pull out from Kargil, praises India’s restraint. Jaswant Singh briefs Chinese leaders.

• **June 17-18**: Indian security advisor Brajesh Mishra goes to Geneva to meet G-8 leaders, hands over Vajpayee’s letter to Clinton aide. USA promises action in ‘days’ not ‘weeks’.

• **June 20**: With the capture of Point 5140, complete Tololing ridge in Indian hands. G-8 wants intrusion to end.


• **June 28**: Diplomatic noose tightens, Sharif dashes to China for support, gets no favourable response. Cuts short visit, returns.

• **July 4**: Tiger hill captured by Indian troops. Sharif dashes to USA meets Clinton, is told to pull out intruders immediately and get back to talks. Joint statement issued.

• **July 11**: Pakistan infiltrators commence withdrawal from Kargil. India captures key heights in Batalik, set deadline of 16 July for total withdrawal.

• **July 12**: Sharif addresses his nation on television explaining pull out, proposes talks with his Indian counterpart.

• **July 14**: Indian Government declare ‘Operation Vijay’ a success. Government sets conditions for talks with Pakistan. Wants it to recognise the Line of Control as sacrosanct and to stop cross border terrorism at once.

In 74 days of high drama therefore, the Kargil War comes to an end, with India emerging victorious at the cost of 407 all ranks killed, 584 others injured and six missing. Pakistan’s reported lost 696 intruders. The total cost of war is reported to be Rs.1,110 crores, at Rs.15 crores being the daily lost.¹⁰

The Kargil misadventure was a classic example of the application of Pakistan’s two level strategy in Kashmir. It was also the first time since the 1965, Indo-Pak war (Operation Gibraltar) that the Pakistan army resorted to this strategy. Air Commodore Jasjit Singh, observes in the same vein “Every single attempt by Pakistan to take over Kashmir has been marked by the use of irregular forces strengthened by regular troops to create turbulence under which a regular military offensive was launched. This is the history of the 1947-48 and

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¹⁰ *India Today* (New Delhi), July 26, 1999, pp.21-32.
1965 wars.\textsuperscript{11} Replying to a question by a ‘Frontline’ magazine interviewer, Lt. Gen. Krishan Pal, commanding the Srinagar-Kargil-Leh Corps said “Perhaps the linkages are more with the proxy war it is waging in Kashmir... what has happened seems similar to what Pakistan did in 1947 and 1965 when it used the facade of Mujahideens and Kabailis. The tactics are identical, too, with what was done in Afghanistan.”\textsuperscript{12} Kargil conflict also reaffirms the reality of ‘Operation Topac’, as has been illustrated earlier at in this dissertation.

The Kargil story and the application of the two level strategy in Kargil commences with the Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee embracing Nawaz Sharif the Prime Minister of Pakistan on the Indo-Pak Border at Wagah on 20 February 1999. “That Nawaz showed great enthusiasm in welcoming the Indian Prime Minister, was a ploy to foretell the world that Pakistan wanted peace with its neighbour.”\textsuperscript{13} “Islamabad had carefully played its political chess game. Nawaz Sharif had Lulled the Indians into complacency with the Lahore Declaration.”\textsuperscript{14} Meanwhile, a force of ‘Mujahideens’ followed by elements of Pakistan’s regular units from Northern Light Infantry and Special Service Group (SSG Commando’s) dressed in local tribal attire so as to depict them as ‘Mujahideens’ (as was done by them in 1947-48 and 1965 operations) were busy intruding into vacant unheld areas in Kargil, Drass, Kashgar, Mashko valley, Batalik and Turtok. With a view as the Army Generals told Nawaz, that, “once the peaks were captured it would be near impossible for the Indians to dislodge the Pakistani intruders. India would be forced to accept the new altered LoC, providing logistic advantage to Pakistan. Moreover, once the plans... were successful, Pakistan could well cut Ladakh from the Indian main land... Let the international community step in and we would internationalise the Kashmir issue.”\textsuperscript{15} This then was not only the aim of Pakistan in Kargil but a succinct declaration of its two level strategy - use of external force, both military and diplomatic at one level and employing subversion, deceit and proxy war at another.

\textsuperscript{12} Frontline, (Chennai), August 27, 1999, p.36.
\textsuperscript{13} Virender Kumar, Rape of the Mountains: Kargil, (Delhi: Anil Prakashan, 1999), p.35.
\textsuperscript{15} Virender Kumar, Op.cit.
The Pakistani strategy in Kargil needs to be studied in more detail as it is a spitting bantam image of the overall larger picture of their strategy in Kashmir which eventually is the ‘raison d’etre of this study. The probability, as history stands witness, of the same being implemented on the larger canvass of the entire J&K, sometime in future, cannot be ruled out and hence its importance thereof. In any case the proclamation of Pakistan of creating many more Kargils’ need not be taken lightly. As Nawaz Sharif himself said, “Kargil is an aspect of Kashmir issue... If the Kashmir issue is not resolved according to the wishes of Kashmiri people, many more Kargil - like issues can crop up.”16

Pakistan’s Level One Strategy

Subversive activities in a defined area are one of the first signs of impending militancy, terrorism and proxy war. In the case of Kargil too, early signs of the impending crisis were visible, but perhaps, the authorities failed to acknowledge them in the right perspective. “Whatever inputs that were given by the intelligence bureau (IB) and the RAW on the border build up in March’99 were ignored by the National Security Council. According to the reports from a section of the press, last October the IB operators in Leh reported that 300 odd irregulars were being trained in two camps in Olthingthang (opposite Kargil)... Officials in Srinagar claimed that their reports to Delhi clearly stated that groups were to infiltrate in ‘Kargil in April’. Later, IB reported Pakistan’s use of remote-piloted planes to monitor the Leh-Kargil Area... A Hizbul operative, Azhar Shafir Mir was nabbed by the Border Security Force in Poonch on December 20. He is reported to have revealed that he and 110 others were trained in Munsher-Gilgit to cut off the Srinagar-Leh supply line (National Highway 1A)....” In ‘98 Pakistan bought 50,000 pairs of snow boots from a Brussels firm. The RAW man there was hardly aware of the big deal. But when India placed orders a week later, stocks had run out... surprisingly the RAW desk in Islamabad did not monitor the local Urdu papers, which since March 99 were full of details about intrusions presented as victories in the Kargil sector.”17

Be that as it may, the bottom line remained that “we were caught unawares, out in the cold”. Inactivity prevailed even when one of Intelligence Bureau’s “undercover agents,

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16 The Time of India (New Delhi), 21 June 1999, p.16.
Ibrahim left Turtok village along with his family, crossed over to Pakistani side in 1944 and started living there and reportedly started working for them. Did he not make frequent visits to this side to recruit agents for the enemy and also to bring arms and ammunition and leave them here in safe custody with dependable sympathisers whose loyalties had been won over by Pakistan. Is it not a fact that early June Ladakh Police arrested 24 Pak agents from Turtok and 3 nearby border villages and seized large cache of arms and ammunition? If not nabbed this could have become a major base for insurgency in this crucial part of Shyok valley.18

Pakistan had been carrying out subversive activities in the Kargil region for long. Even during the Kargil war "The connivance of a mule supplier of the Indian Army and two policemen posted at Drass has now been revealed. Also, the pinpointed shelling of certain key installations on the Indian side of the Line of control points to subversives being active... There are also indications that at least some of the Pak posts on the Indian side of the LoC may have been stocked with help of men and material from the Indian side.” So writes Kanwar Sandhu from Srinagar.19 The blowing up of the Kargil ammunition dump on 9 May 1999, during the most critical phase of the battle, is a clear act of sabotage by the subversives. Even during the height of war radio intercepts revealed the activities of Pakistani subversives in Kargil, who remained in constant touch with then controllers in Pakistan via wireless sets. Besides passing intelligence to their benefactors, they were reported to be even directing artillery fire. Intelligence sources revealed that a number of women were also involved. The subversives communicated in Pushto, English, Urdu, Farsi and Dari. The last two being spoken in Afghanistan only.20

The Kargil plan became operational when Pakistan facilitated the insertion of well trained, well equipped and highly motivated militants to occupy vacant heights in the Kargil sector. These militants primarily belonged to three major mujahideen groups, the Lashkar-e-Taiba, the devil seed spawned by “Markaz-e-Dawa-Wal Irshad” a school responsible for producing highly motivated Islamic fanatics, the “Harkal-ul-Ansar” (HUA) which was declared a terrorist organisation by the US government because of its hand in kidnapping and

killing foreign tourists in Kashmir and is also responsible for the hijacking of the Indian Airlines flight from Katmandu on 24 December 1999, this group has now been renamed “Harkat-ul-Mujahidden”, the third organisation is the “Hizb-ul-Mujahideen, which is the armed wing of the Jamaat-e-Islami. “But of the militiamen, the most effective seem to be those from Gilgit Baltistan and the higher regions of Pakistan occupied Kashmir. This means that they are acclimatised to the high altitudes where the current conflict is raging on, and are also used to actual warfare in those conditions. That’s the reason the ISI has been relying heavily on these men.”

Lt. Gen Javed Nasir, a former ISI Chief wrote an article in the Pakistani English daily, “The News”, “Mujahideen with minimum five years of combat experience were selected for the Kargil operation, with preference being given to veterans of the Afghan ‘Jehad’. They occupied the vacant Kargil heights as early as January-February this year (while some media reports state the period of occupation as April-May) and kept building stock and improving defence for the next four months”. He further writes he had “implored the army to interdict, the Srinagar-Drass road to make things more difficult for the Indians in Siachen”. According to him, the militants had “executed a brilliant plan. They did not believe in the interdiction of Indian lines of communication by artillery alone. They moved in physically and are now overlooking Kargil-Drass road to interdict it permanently”. Making it clear that the Mujahideen were different in many ways, principally the additions in their armoury he said “the militants now possessed surface to air missiles, grenade launchers and multi-barrel rocket launchers gifted by the Afghan Mujahideen.”

During the early stages of the Kargil operations the morale of the leadership of Pakistan based secessionist groups appeared to be high as proved by their remarks in the Pakistani media. On June 1, Harkat-ul-Mujahideen Chief Maulana Fazlur Rahman Khalil claimed that his men were responsible for the Kargil offensive and commenting on the Indian Defence Minister’s offer of ‘safe passage’ to the militants, out of Kargil, said: “we will give the Indian Army safe passage out of Kargil”. On June 7, Hafiz Mohammad Sayeed, the

\[22\] The News, Islamabad (Pakistan), 26 June 1999 (Brackets mine) (Also, extracts reproduced in an Army Headquarter booklet titled “Islamisation of Pakistan’s Military”, USI Library, Accession No.C-8984, 17 August 1999).
supreme leader of the Lashkar-e-Toiba’s parent body, the Markaz Dawa Wal’Irshad said “Our Mujahideen will not withdraw from Kargil or Drass. We will not stop until we liberate all of Kashmir”. Mohammad Yusif Shah, better known by his pseudonym as Syed Salahuddin and the Jihad Council’s head said that “the struggle for the freedom of Kashmir has entered a final phase. Internally, economically and diplomatically the issue of Kashmir has entered a decisive stage and within a couple of years it is going to be decided according to the wishes of the people. The activities of the Mujahideen are spread all over.”

Apparently, this ‘high’ of the militant leadership was because they felt that now the J&K issue having been sufficiently internationalized will attract foreign intervention leading to J&K’s partition along communal lines.

The hand of Osama bin Laden the Saudi millionaire in exile in Afghanistan and considered by experts to be one of the leading terrorists in the world was also purported to be visible in Kargil, specially when he told reporters that Pakistan should allow the setting up of military camps and open up its borders so that volunteers could launch a “jehad” to liberate Kashmir. Significantly intelligence report speak of Bin Laden having moved to the Pakistan occupied Kashmir area at about the time the Indian Prime Minister was in Lahore. It was also reported that the personal bodyguards of Bin Laden, better known as “Al Quaida” were reported to be fighting in Kargil and Drass. “The bodyguards are fighting along with Harkat-ul-Ansar, Lashkar-e-Toiba and Al-Badr groups, beside Pakistani Army regulars. Nearly 500 personal bodyguards of Laden have fled from Jalalabad in Afghanistan after the US tightened its grip to arrest the fugitive. The source, however, did not rule out the presence of Laden in these areas but said there was no concrete proof yet even though US agencies have also provided a tip off about Laden’s suspected presence in the Kargil area.”

Detailed reports of Laden financing the Kargil intrusion are also available - “The Indian estimate is that a significant portion of the finances for the infiltrators are coming in from the ISI and other foreign agencies at the behest of Bin Laden, especially for the Harkat and Lashkar, while military support and training is a distinct possibility in some cases a certainty. In fact, the money being handed out to the infiltrators for the Kargil intrusions, say sources, is five to ten times what they were getting for a tour of duty (lasting three to six months) in the valley. The

24 The Indian Express (New Delhi), 28 June 1999.
figure being quoted is $20,000... leader elements among these organisations are said to have trained for Kargil operation alongside Northern Light Infantry (NLI, a Pak army regular unit) personnel on the slopes of K2, the world second highest mountain.”

Deceit, Subversion and Intrusion

Kargil started with Nawaz Sharif inviting Vajpayee to Pakistan on the, now historical, bus ride across the border. The two day visit terminated with the signing of the Lahore declaration. However, a closer scrutiny of what happened in Lahore would have indicated to a discerning mind and eye, that something, somewhere was amiss, for starters: “Pakistan Army Chief General Pervez Musharraf, the main protagonist of the Kargil misadventure and the Chiefs of Pakistani Air Force and Navy were conspicuous by their absence... It was inexplicable then. It was against the protocol that the Pakistani Prime Minister is going to Wagah to receive the Indian Prime Minister on the Attari-Wagah land border and the three services Chief’s were not present... The Pakistani military was clearly against talking peace with Vajpayee. A meeting of Pakistani’s cabinet committee of Defence was told a few days before Vajpayee’s scheduled visit. The meet was stormy. Musharraf said without mincing words that he could not, salute, the Prime Minister of an ‘enemy’ country - The mood in Pakistan was clear... Despite these not so subtle signals Vajpayee government believed in Sharif’s words. The army patrolling on the Line of Control, particularly in the Kargil sector, was reduced.”

Later, when on May 10, skirmishes between the intruders and Indian troops commenced, Sharif, when contacted by the Indian Prime Minister, feigned total ignorance of whatever was happening in Kargil. Some political critics rightly observed, with a touch of sarcasm, that the Indian Prime Minister was ‘taken for a ride’ by the Pakistanis.

Pakistani treachery, deceit and betrayal was proved later, first by a report in a leading Indian daily quoting from the famous, international magazine called ‘Asiaweek’ published from Hong Kong. It said “The Nawaz Sharif Government was in full knowledge of the operations to infiltrate mercenaries and Pakistani Army regulars into Indian territory... The Prime Minister, Mr. Nawaz Sharif, not only ‘Knew about the operation in advance but was kept well briefed about its details... the infiltration was planned for months in advance by the

Army and the Inter Service Intelligence (ISI)... a series of meetings took place in recent months, as a sort of ‘kitchen war cabinet’ comprising Mr. Sharif, top military and intelligence officers and senior defence and foreign Ministry officials.”

Similar reports appeared in other dailies Hindustan Times quoting a report from London states “There is no question of the Prime Minister being unaware of plans for such a large scale intrusion... Sharif would have been supervising this operation at the same time that he was shaking hands with Indian Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee.”

Even the Pakistani media reported that Sharif was in the picture of the Kargil plan from the beginning. The popular Pakistani daily ‘The Nation’ states “Mr. Sharif has been kept in the broad picture of Pakistan’s Kashmir policy whose basic contours he himself approved. The report further said that Kashmir was discussed extensively in a series of high level meetings... The basic aim of the Kargil operation, which had been decided at these meetings was that “Pakistan has to bring India to the negotiating table...”. The report further said the argument that the army leadership could have made moves outside the parameters of the policy laid down by Sharif is “not correct” because “they (army generals) had the mandate from Sharif”. The report justified Prime Minister Vajpayee’s statement that he had been back-stabbed by Sharif.”

Recently, Pakistan’s chief executive Gen. Musharraf, while giving an interview to Times magazine, when asked about whether he was responsible for last summer’s conflict with India over Kashmir said “Everyone was on board, including the Prime Minister who was very much aware of the whole package”. Gen. Musharraf reiterated the same stand while giving an exclusive interview to ‘The Hindu’ on 16 January 2000 at Islamabad stating, “Everyone was on board, I still stand by it, whatever was happening in Kargil, everyone knew what was happening”. The taped intercepts of the conversation between Generals Musharraf and Aziz leave no doubt that Sharif was in the know of the whole thing from the beginning when General Aziz from Pakistan tells General Musharraf,

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28 The Hindustan Times (New Delhi), June 12, 1999, p.24.
30 The Tribune, (New Delhi), December 1, 1999, p.8.
31 The Hindu, (Chennai), January 17, 2000, Front Page.
who was in China, that a briefing to Mian Saheb (Sharif) was held in the PM’s office regarding the Kargil operation.\textsuperscript{32}

The other issue that Pakistan had continued to deny was the presence of regular Pakistan army in Kargil. They had continued to harp that it were the ‘mujahideen’ who were involved. This lie later got exposed and Pakistan was forced to accept the fact that its troops were involved in intrusion into Kargil. This aspect has been discussed in more details later in the chapter, so as to emphasise the continuity of Pakistan’s strategy in Kashmir. This tactics again was similar to the one they followed during the 1947-48 and 1965 conflicts, when, initially, they continued denying the presence of their regular army inside J&K, but later were forced to admit the presence of their regular troops in J&K. This aspect has already been brought out clearly in chapter III and IV of the study.

**Pakistan’s Level Two Strategy: Use of Military Force**

Pakistan, on its part continued to deny their direct involvement in the episode, save for reiterating their political, diplomatic and moral support for the ‘freedom fighters’. However, irrefutable circumstantial, direct and indirect evidence did prove that as on early occasions and according to their time tested strategy Pakistani regulars, some dressed in civilian dress to look like locals were cleverly inducted along with the mujahideen into Kargil. An operation of this magnitude, in one of the most inhospitable terrains in the world, would require tremendous planning and logistic support which the mujahideen by themselves cannot even dream to organise, Michael Krepon, President of Henry L. Stimson Centre, Washington writes “Pakistan’s claim that this is the handiwork of ‘mujahideen’ have not been accepted here (USA). Afghans and other jihadists may well be involved in this operation, but they could not, by themselves, have managed to seize the mountain ridges dominating the road to Ladakh and the base camps to Siachen. The scope and planning of this operation - as well as the equipment logistics, artillery and communication support necessary to carry it out - all point to the direct involvement of the government of Pakistan, its army and intelligence services.”\textsuperscript{33}

The recovery of bodies and highly sophisticated military equipment used by Pak army at Siachen Glacier was later recovered by the Indian army from the heights recaptured in Kargil, thereby proving these postulations. The direct involvement of Pak regular army has been irrefutably proved not only by India but the international community. Times of USA reports that "Islamabad insists that the soldiers on the Indian ridges are Islamic Mujahideen, or holy warriors, fighting for the freedom of Kashmir. That was the alibi Pakistan used for its military advance. Men from the Northern light Infantry Regiment and later the Khyber Rifles were used because of their high altitude experience and because they are from the region. They were encouraged to look like mujahedin and they discarded their uniforms for traditional 'Shalwar Kameez', grew beards and wore traditional white religious skull caps (As they did in the 1947-48 and 1965 wars)... But ask Pakistani soldiers why they are on, India's side of the Line of Control... you're unlikely to get a clear answer."\(^34\) This is the traditional lie that Pakistan has continued to espouse during all its conflicts with India.

This reporter (of Times) goes on to interview a regular Pakistani army soldier who had returned after spending 77 days on Indian territory. His story contradicts Islamabad's official claim that it has never sent troops across the Line of Control in Kashmir, for obvious reasons the soldier spoke to Times on conditions of anonymity. He says "In February, I was ordered to cross the Line of Control and climb some mountains that the Indians controlled. My commanding officers would not allow me to take my AK47 rifle.... we were told it was for the sake of secrecy. It took us three days of walking and climbing to reach the Indian posts near Kargil. We found they were empty, and our job was to prepare some makeshift bunkers. All we had were tents. The skirmishes with the Indians started in May."\(^35\) This interview in itself reveals that one, Pakistan regular troops were involved, two, the Pakistani army did cross the LoC and occupied unheld heights in the Kargil sector, three, the infiltration commenced in February of 1999 but was discovered by the Indian Army in May, 1999 when the actual skirmishes began.

Even the media in Pakistan, while criticizing the government for the Kargil misadventure, accepted Pakistan's direct involvement in Kargil. Zaffar Abbas writing for the


\(^{35}\) Ibid., p.21 (An interview published under the title "In Enemy Territory: A Soldier's Story").
Herald states, “It was a brilliant military manoeuver. Carried out with the help of religious militants backed by the para military Northern Light Infantry... The Pakistan Army and the foreign office still maintain that it was an indegenous action by the Kashmiri Mujahideen, and that Pakistan had nothing to do with it. But once the so called ‘withdrawal deal’ was struck, it put the brave faced spokesmen of these institutions in a highly awkward situation... However what the official could not explain was the role of Pakistan Army’s director-general military operations (DGMO), whose meetings and agreements with his Indian counterpart eventually resulted in this ‘disengagement’... A survey of the articles and columns written by various defence analysts in the country also leaves little doubt that Pakistan was, indeed, directly involved at the highest civilian and military levels. For example, articles written by the former army chief, Mirza Aslam Beg, and former ISI supremos such as Javed Nasir and Asad Durrani, clearly point to direct Pakistani involvement... Defence analyst Ikram Sehgal went a step further to openly say that there was direct Pakistani involvement. ‘The Kashmiri mujahideen in Kargil were well supported by the Northern Light Infantry (NLI) troops backed by artillery observation posts’. 36 Kamal Matinuddin writing for ‘News’ of August 7, 1999, states “The government has to strive harder now to achieve the aim for which over 200 of our brave soldiers and several hundred mujahideen laid down themselves.”37

The Indian media also extensively reported about the presence of Pakistani regular army in Kargil. Colonel Bikram Singh, the Army spokesman during the Kargil crisis press briefings said that by mid June, 1999, three regular units of Pak army had been identified, he said, “So far 3, 4 and 6 Northern Light Infantry Battalions along with subunits of the Special Service Group and elements of supporting arms and services of the Pakistan Army have been identified in the pockets of intrusion.”38 These identifications were obtained from identity cards, documents and equipment recovered by the Indian Army from captured areas, as also from the tactics adopted by the “so called Mujahideens”. Tribune reports “the intruders atop mountains are dressed in tracksuits or Pathan suits... It is now clear that men of Pakistan’s North Light Infantry are operating here. Among 13 intruders killed at Point 5140 on Sunday...

37 Ibid., p.1489.
38 Asian Age (New Delhi), 16 June 1999, p.1.
was the body of Subedar Sayyed Mohammad Shah of 6NLI, a resident of Skardu. He is the first Pakistani Junior Commissioned Officer (JCO) to be killed on this side of the LoC by the Indian Army.” The Indian Army Soldiers fighting at Tololing said “The way they fought, the manner in which they coordinated their fire the way they counter attacked, all shows that they were trained soldiers of a regular army. And they are highly motivated. They fought to the last. Brigadier Amar Aul, in charge of the Army operations in the Dras sector, says there is no doubt that the enemy operating in the area are regular Pakistani soldiers (“We have not come across any trace of mercenaries or the Taliban here”).

The truth is, that it is only a military man who can authoritatively differentiate between mujahideen and regular soldiers. The basic training and battle tactics followed by the two opposing armies is exactly similar. The concept of fighting static defensive battles in mountains, followed by Pakistanis was copybook military type. The mujahideen, do not, and cannot be trained to fight copybook military defensive battles. Their training, psyche and motivation is only suited for ‘hit and run’ tactics. Their actions rely on quite, surprise and fast short term offensive actions and not pitched defensive battles, with coordinated fields of fire and launching of counter attacks, as was done in the mountains of Kargil.

The Times of India quoting a report published in Pakistan’s English daily “The Nation” said, “Pakistan Army’s Director of Military Intelligence (DGMI) while briefing the military attaches of more than 35 countries on May 31, 1999, at Army Headquarters at Islamabad, told them that a “number of strategic post overlooking the crucial Srinagar-Leh highway were captured by the Pakistani army regulars and soldiers... the Kashmiri fighters were fighting the Indian on their own on the slopes of these high peaks and had not nothing to do with the fight going on between Indian and Pakistani troops atop these mountains... Islamabad based western diplomats now believe that Pakistan sent in its troops in Kargil in September last year, the paper (The Nation) said. These diplomats also dismiss Islamabad’s denial of its links with the Mujahideens... the army briefings make it clear that fighting is going on between regular Pakistani troops and the Indian forces.”

The latter part of the statement is not only unconvincingly ridiculous but grossly unbelievable. How can the

40 The Times of India (New Delhi), 25 June 1999, p.11.
Kashmiri fighters be fighting on their own in such an inhospitable and treacherous terrain where well equipped and highly trained regular soldiers find it difficult even to survive - who gave them such exclusive training and equipment, how did they manage to slip through territory occupied by Pakistani troops across the LoC in Kargil, who provided them the heavy artillery fire support, helicopter support and other logistics to carry on the fight. The statement that “they had nothing to do with the fight going on between Indian and Pakistani troops atop these mountains” sounds even more ludicrous, firstly the statement amounts to an open acceptance of the fact that Pakistani army, was involved in the Kargil war, secondly, if the so called mujahideen’s had nothing to do with the fighting between Indian and Pakistan troops then what were they doing on the Kargil heights? surely they were not there on a pleasure trip?

Further proof of Pakistan army’s involvement came in the shape of the capture of Naik Inayat Ali of 5 NLI battalion, on 2 July 1999, in Batalik Sector and Sepoy Humaz Shah also of the same battalion. The Indian army recovered 249 dead bodies from the areas of operation. This included the dead body of captain Karnal Sher of 12 NLI battalion. Five bodies were accepted by Pakistan, the ceremonial burial accorded to captain Karnal Sher Khan was covered by Pakistan television and seen all over the world. A plethora of documents were recovered from various positions occupied by the enemy. These include identity cards issued by the Government of Pakistan, pay-books of soldiers (these belonged to Havaldar Afraz Gul, Sepoy Abdul Rauf, Sepoy Taqi, Sepoy M. Aman, Lance Havildar Fazal, Sepoy Gular Haidar, Subedar Muhamad Hussain Naik M. Noor, Sepoy Ibadat Ali, Havildar Syed Hussain Shah, Naik Syed Muhammad Shah, Sepoy M. Yousaf, Sepoy Gulam Nabi, Sepoy Ismail Shah, Sepoy Fida Hussain, Sepoy Iqbal Hussain and Sepoy Mehboob Ali). Leave certificates in respect of Lance Naik Ismail Shah of 5 NLI battalion and Havildar Syed Hussan Shah of 12 NLI battalion, a mess bill of captain Sajid Hussain of 12 NLI battalion amounting to Rs.493/- was also recovered, personal letters of Major Saed Ahmed Nagra of 60 Baloch Regiment (on deputation with 12 NLI battalion) who lost his life in Drass sector, were also recovered, letters written by Subedar Ghulam Abbas of 8 NLI battalion, Sepoy Javed Akhtar of 12 NLI, money order form filled up by Lance Naik Ismail Shah of 12 NLI, a military hospital laboratory examination form in respect of Sepoy Syed Ghulam of 6 NLI and
personal diary of Lieutenant Md. Maaz Ullah Khan Sumba! of 8 NLI, and many other incriminating documents were recovered from captured areas by the Indian army.41

The foregoing facts about Pakistanis army’s involvement have been substantiated by Mr. J.N. Dixit, former Indian Foreign Secretary and Ambassador, he states, “over the last week I have visited Indian army establishments where evidence of direct Pakistani military involvement is on display. These are arms and ammunition captured from regular Pakistani army troops with markings and numbers of the units to which the weapons belong. There are a large number of well-thumbed pay books with green covers and official emblems of Pakistani military officers and soldiers killed in battle... We have captured a sufficient number of the operational and battle diaries kept by the Pakistani military personnel. More importantly, we now have the battle plans and order of battle directions given to Pakistani field commanders during the conflict which they had noted in their diaries. We have identity cards uniforms and military divisional and battalion shoulder patches of Northern Light Infantry and other units of the Pakistani army. Most revealing and poignant are the letters written to the soldiers by family.”42

Once Pakistan was confronted by the international community notably by America, regarding evidence of Pakistan army having crossed LoC in Kargil “Pakistan decided ultimately to come clear and own publicly that Pakistan army was really involved in the Kargil war. First, they admitted that their troops had crossed the LoC in January 1999 and occupied some commanding heights... At the same Press Conference, the Pak Federal Minister for Information, Mushahid Hussain admitted that in Kargil war 267 army personnel had been killed, 204 were wounded and 24 were still missing. With this also came, a day later, admission by Pak Finance Minister Ishaq Dar who told BBC that Pakistan had spent on Kargil war over US$700 million which according to him was nearly 20% of Pakistan’s current years defence budget”.43 Pakistan also publicly acknowledged the role of its armed forces in Kargil, when it gave gallantry awards to 64 officers and soldiers for bravery during

42 Express, editorial, “Logistics of Pakistani aggression: If proof still were needed” by J.N. Dixit, New Delhi, 22 July, 1999.
43 Sati Sahni, op.cit., p.458.
its independence day celebrations on 14 August 1999. “President Muhammad Rafiq Tarar at a special investiture ceremony decorated with gallantry awards the officers and soldiers who participated in the Kashmir (Kargil) conflict... Also to be decorated were two air defence personnel, Nasir Ali Shah and Muhammad Kamal, for shooting down an Indian MI17 helicopter gunship on May 28. Pakistan had earlier denied downing the gunship claiming it had been done by the ‘mujahideen’. The highest military award of Nishan-i-Haidar was conferred on Captain Karnal Sher Khan and Private Lalak Jan for conspicuous courage and supreme sacrifice made for the honour of Pakistan. (The body of Captain Karnal Sher Khan which was recovered from the Batalik sector was handed over to Pak authorities. He was given a ceremonial burial, attended by General Parvez Musharraf).44

Pakistani perfidy, by now stands proved, is an integral part of its overall strategy against India in general and in Kashmir in particular. A continuous thread of lies concerning the participation of their regular armed forces, posing as raiders, infiltrators or mujahideens, has thus existed, starting from 1947-48, 1965 and now in 1999. The use of overt military force in Kashmir in a rogue manner is as much a part of its strategy, as is the use of diplomatic force in a similar manner.

The important role played by General Pervez Musharraf in the Kargil episode needs to be also investigated and brought on record as it will have vital linkages with the Pak Army’s involvement in the Kargil war. As has already been brought out that the Kargil plan had been a part of ‘Operation Topac’ scripted by Gen. Zia Ul Haq in 1987-88 and that the plan was reactivated and implemented now, during General Musharraf’s tenure as the Pak Army’s COAS. Why was it implemented by him now, must be seen against the backdrop of his past.

Musharraf belongs to a Mohajir family originally from Azamgarh in UP and was only the second Mohajir, after General Mirza Aslam Beg, to be appointed to this highest Army office. Born in Delhi in 1943, Musharraf joined the Army (Regiment of Artillery) in 1964, after his family migrated to Pakistan and made Karachi, their new home he had held various staff and command appointments in the army including two tenures totalling to 10 years service in the Pak army commando unit, the Special Service Group (SSG). Michael Fathers

44 The Times of India (New Delhi), Sunday, 15 August, 1999, p.13 (Brackets mine).
and Syed Talat Hussain reporting for 'Time' magazine say about him “He’s mentally quick... But he is not an intellectual or a deep thinker... He’s also a man of action... he likes taking on daunting tasks... and looking for quick solutions. He is impetuous... He takes risks and believes that anything is achievable.”

His personality profile thus explains his decision to take on India in Kargil. During his career he was associated with the training of Mujahideen groups during the Afghan war, where it is reported that beside perfecting the ‘proxy war’ techniques “he also came in contact with Osama bin Laden” Selig Harrison writing for International Herald Tribune states: “Recent information makes clear that the newly installed Chief of Army Staff (COAS), Gen. Pervez Musharraf, has long standing links with several Islamic Fundamentalists groups”.

He has commanded Pak Army’s Siachen Brigade during Gen. Zia’s time and is considered to be an expert on high altitude warfare. Air Commodore Jasjit goes on to say “Musharraf is also known for his ruthless handling of dissent not very different from Tikka Khan’s methods, except that he seems to rely more on suppression by proxy forces. Musharraf was put in change of the forces to deal with the Shia revolt in Gilgit in May 1988. He transported a large number of Wahhabi Pakhtoon tribesmen from Afghanistan and the North-West Frontier Province of Pakistan under the command of Osama bin Laden to suppress the revolt. In May 1988, low intensity political rivalry and sectarian tension ignited into full-scale carnage as thousands of armed tribesmen from outside Gilgit district invaded Gilgit along the Karakoram Highway. Nobody stopped them. They destroyed crops and houses, lynched and burnt people to death in the villages around Gilgit town. The number of dead and inured was put in the hundreds. But the numbers alone tell us nothing of the savagery of the invading hordes and the chilling impact it has left on these peaceful valleys.”

Maj. Gen. Afsir Karim (Indian Army) quoted in ‘Outlook’ magazine also states the same thing: “during the time of Gen. Zia, Musharraf was put in charge of a band of Sunni tribesmen to put down a Shia uprising in Gilgit. He was absolutely ruthless in suppressing the

47 Ibid.
48 Ibid., p.138.
rebellion. I know that he is a very aggressive man and I know nothing else that is distinguished about him.”

*Musharraf’s ‘Sumdrong Chu’ in Kargil*

Perhaps a new angle to General Musharraf’s Kargil war linkage can be established by tracing its origin all the way to China. The common factor between Musharraf and China was the period 1986-87, and the event was the Sumdrong Chu incident in Arunanchal Pradesh, when China intruded about 7 kms. into the Wangdung area of the Sumdrong Chu river valley, across the McMahon Line into Indian territory. The similarity between this intrusion by China in 1986, and the Kargil intrusion by Pakistan in 1999 is so similar that a recounting of the event would be necessary “Since 1984, India has established a ‘seasonal’ (to be occupied in summers only) observation post in the Wangdung area on the south bank of the river. A mixed complement of 10 intelligence officials and soldiers would make the arduous two day walk from their permanent base camp at Tawang after collecting their pay on July 1 and occupy the primitive hut they had constructed to observe Chinese movements across the river till October when the weather drove them back to civilisation (Just the case as in Kargil)... on July 3, (1986), when the Indian observation team arrived at their post they found the place occupied by about 100 Chinese soldiers and government agents; 4 Km further north was another camp of about 500 Chinese soldiers. They had constructed a jeepable road right up to the camp and built a helipad... As matters stand, there is little the Indian army can do. Between Tawang and the Chinese camp is a desolate, windswept area with no access for vehicles. Short of an air-drop, which would be suicidal with no logistic support, the Government is faced with a 'fate accompli'”.

The same article also states “since then, South Block has clamped a tight lid on the issue with neither the ministers nor senior officials willing to discuss the subject”. “The Chinese unit based at Wangdung in Sumdrong Chu valley... is building permanent shelters, defences and stocking up food, fuel and ammunition for the winter... This winter they are

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49 *Outlook* (New Delhi), November 1, 1999, Vol.XXXIX, No.41, p.54.
50 *India Today*, (New Delhi), August 31, 1986, p.91 (Brackets mine).
going to maintain posts in areas no one ever bothered about in the past." Was it not the same tactics that Pakistan applied in Kargil?

While China was busy doing the ‘Wangdung’ on India, perhaps Gen. (then Brigadier) Musharraf encouraged by Chinese tactics and supported by the Pakistani armies traditional belief that ‘Indian’s cannot fight’, was plotting to do a ‘Kargil’ on India at some future date. At that time (1986-87) Gen. Musharraf was posted at Khapalu in the Skardu sector (opposite the Kargil sector) of Pakistan. He was commanding a Special Services Group base there. Air Commodore Jasjit Singh, the noted defence and security analyst and director of IDSA writes “In 1987, as a brigadier, Musharraf took over the newly raised SSG (Special Services Group) base at Khapalu which is the key support base for the Siachen and Kargil sectors.” Being the Commander of an area opposite Kargil, it is but natural that he must have had first hand knowledge of the terrain and weather conditions and also of the vast unoccupied gaps that existed on the Indian side of the LoC, and as has been already stated, it is during this very period that the Chinese intruded into Wangdung and the Indian’s did not retaliate. Perhaps, it would not be too unwise to analyse the whole situation and assume that expecting the same inaction by India, Musharraf, while he was the Chief of the Pakistani army, planned and executed the Kargil intrusion. Afterall the terrain, weather and the enemy was the same that confronted the Chinese in 1986-87 at Wangdung.

Another interesting comparison between the two events pertains to the nexus between the regular army’s maneuvers and its co-relationship between the prevailing states of militancy in these parts of the country. In 1986, during the Wangdung incidence there definitely was a greater game plan of the Chinese pertaining to the existing state of militancy and insurgency in the Northeastern states of Nagaland, Mizoram, Arunanchal Pradesh, Assam and Tripura. In the same way, it was during the Kargil incursion by Pakistan. A journalistic quote will be self-explanatory, “There is also reason to believe that the Chinese activity on the border is part of a greater design to pressure India - ‘we took some time putting two and two together but it was no coincidence that Nagas staged three ambushes killing 11 of our Jawans just when Sumdrong Chu was making the headlines - says an army

51 India Today, (New Delhi), December 31, 1986, p.103.
52 Air Commodre Jasjit Singh, Ed., op.cit., p.137.
officer. Nagaland had a spate of bank robberies, the last one on November 12 this year, resulting in the loss of Rs.1.7 crore and the death of an eight man police escort... The guerrilla leaders have also been telling their supporters that the time is not far when the route to Yunnan will open again. The rebel traffic across the Tirap, Corridor in Arunanchal Pradesh, the Naga's favourite access route to Burma has also increased... in a recent interview, Thungalin Muikah, leader of the pro Beijing Naga rebels, talked in terms of a concerted campaign with other similar movements in the country... Intelligence services believe that he is being instigated by the Chinese. Alongside, has come the rash of strikes by the United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA), a group loyal to Muikah. With trouble brewing in Tripura as well...

The Kargil incursion was definitely more intricately entwined with the concurrent militancy in J&K. The aims and objectives of the Chinese and the Pakistan armies must also have been similar. The only dissimilarity was in time and geographical location of these events.

With this as the background, there is sufficient reason to believe that the operational planning for the Kargil war was finalized sometime during the summer of 1998, at Headquarters X Corps of the Pakistan Army (which is operationally responsible for the Northern region, including the Kargil sector) being commanded by then Lt. Gen. Pervez Musharraf, under whose command later Pakistan launched the Kargil operation in the beginning of 1999, when he became the COAS. Another curious incident occurred during the later half of 1998, which also may substantiate the fact that Gen. Musharraf was indeed responsible for the Kargil crisis and that was the sacking of Gen. Jehangir Karamat, the then COAS of Pak Army, by Nawaz Sharif, and being replaced by Gen. Pervez Musharraf after superseding three Generals who were senior to him. It is commonly believed by many defence experts and Pak watchers that one of the reasons for the sacking of Gen. Karamat could be the fact that he expressed reservation as to the sagacity and viability of implementing the Kargil plan. The appointment of Gen. Musharraf as the new COAS by Sharif after superseding three senior Generals, did not come about because of some special relationship between them but because of the 'daring do' attitude and experience of Musharraf which assured Sharif that he is the man willing and capable of pulling the whole thing off. Air Commodore Jasjit Singh observes "For Nawaz Sharif, who certainly was at the head of

53 India Today, (New Delhi), December 31, 1986, p.103, [op.cit., p.14(b)].
government that gave the green signal to launch the Kargil war, the plan would have given powerful leverages, if not unprecedented success to make him an immortal figure in Pakistan's history. The temptation indeed must have been strong enough to believe that differences with a gung ho army chief could be managed... A failure could be ascribed to the Army's leadership under the pretence that the political leadership had been kept out of the (full) picture." Sharif's plan almost worked when India's Defence Minister, George Fernandes, during the first week of the Kargil war, absolved Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and the ISI from the Kargil villainy, and put the blame on Gen. Pervez Musharraf's Army. With India's propaganda victory, the world has since believed it. Sharif did not contradict it and the Pakistan army came to be seen as a "rogue army", worse still, the Pakistani public too began to believe it.  

De-Sanctifying the Line of Control (LoC)

Another, and perhaps a new lie that Pakistan came up with during the Kargil war was the question of the existence of LoC which had clearly been demarcated by senior army representatives of both the armies and had been sanctimoniously followed by both for 27 years. It was now being questioned by Pakistan, Pakistani's foreign minister Sartaj Aziz in an interview to Imtiaz Gul which was published in outlook, first gave voice to this lie, when he said "First to ascertain what's actually happening in Kashmir. Since the LoC is not exactly demarcated, we must ascertain whether somebody has at all crossed the line." Michael Fathers, writing for the Times, New York stated: "Pakistani military spokesman said the positions lie on their side of the line of Control. Sartaj Aziz, the country's foreign minister, had noted earlier that the Line of Control was well defined on maps but not on the ground." India's foreign minister Mr. Jaswant Singh immediately retorted "This questioning of the Line of Control is an ingenious, attempt to disguise aggressive action... the sanctity of the Line of Control must be restored and respected."
In order to disprove this lie, it would be pertinent to go back in the past and refer to the delineation of the Line of Control in J&K resulting from the cease-fire of 17 December 1971, in accordance with the Simla agreement of 02 July 1972, signed by the Prime Ministers of both countries. As per this agreement the military delegations of both the countries conducted nine meetings between 10 August 1974 to 11 December 1972 at Suchetgarh and Wagah. The Indian delegation was lead by Lt. Gen. P.S. Bhagat, PVSM, VC, while the Pak delegation was led by Ltd. Gen. Abdul Hameed Khan, SPK, SQA. The Line of Control was reproduced in two sets of maps prepared by each side, each set consisting of 27 map sheets formed into 19 mosaics. Each individual mosaic, with the Line of Control marked on them had been signed by the representative of the Chiefs of Army staff of India and Pakistan and each side had exchanged one set of signed mosaics as required by the Simla agreement. The relevant extract [Para 2 (ii)] pertaining to the Line of Control reads “In Jammu and Kashmir the line of control resulting from the cease-fire of December 17, 1971 shall be respected by both sides without prejudice to the recognized position of either side. Neither side shall seek to alter it unilaterally, irrespective of mutual differences and legal interpretations. Both sides further undertake to refrain from the threat or the use of force in violation of this line.”

Evidence to disprove Pakistan’s contention that the line of control is not delineated is; firstly, jointly attested map mosaics of the line of control, duly signed by the commanders of both the delegations are held by both the countries; secondly, a Pakistani map, scale 1:50,000, sheet No.43N/15, first edition published under the direction of Major General Anis Ali Syed, Surveyor General of Pakistan with the Correct line of control duly printed, was recovered from one of the recaptured positions; thirdly, Satellite Imagery/Air Photographs of the area of operations, taken during October 1998, reveals that there was no military activity or intrusion in the area. Air Photographs of the area also highlight the regular posts on both sides of the line of control, thus they were aware of the alignment of the line of control; and finally, Pakistan in the last 27 years, has never disputed the delineation... as such, this is a deliberate attempt to mislead and cover up the armed intrusion across the line of control by Pakistan Army”.

60 Ibid., p.21.
Pakistan's play to muddle the existence of the line of control in Kargil did not find favour with any country of the international community. Even China, its long time supporter and political ally made it amply clear that the two countries should solve the Kashmir issue "through negotiations and consultations" and that the sanctity of the line of control must be respected. Pakistan, perhaps, for the first time in the recent history of Indo-Pak conflict on Kashmir got such a neutral response from China. In the realm of international diplomacy on Kashmir, Pakistan has usually managed a more favourable response. But on the Kargil issue it found the tables turned on it. Global opinion clearly acknowledged India's stand that the Pakistan backed intruders had violated the line of control (LoC). "The G-8, a grouping of the world's leading industrial nations whose leaders met at Cologne in Germany on June 18, 1999, also wanted Pakistan to end the aggression on the LoC." Even the joint statement issued by the President of USA and Prime Minister of Pakistan after the July 4, 1999 meeting at Blair house clearly pointed at the maintenance of the sanctity of the line of control. The Joint Statement read "President Clinton and Prime Minister Sharif share the view that the current fighting in the Kargil region of Kashmir is dangerous and contains the seeds of a wider conflict. They also agreed that it was vital for the peace of South Asia that the line of control in Kashmir be respected by both parties in accordance with the 1972 Shimla accord. It was agreed between the President and the Prime Minister that concrete steps will be taken for the restoration of the Line of Control in accordance with the Shimla Agreement. The Prime Minister and President agreed that the bilateral dialogue begun in Lahore in February provides the best forum for resolving all issues dividing India and Pakistan, including Kashmir. The President said he would take a personal interest in encouraging an expeditious resumption and intensification of those bilateral efforts, once the sanctity of the Line of Control has been fully restored. The President reaffirmed his intent to pay an early visit to South Asia." The statement clearly brings out the fact that the USA was absolutely clear about the existence of the LoC on ground and its infringement by Pakistan. The hand of USA's satellite surveillance and intelligence agencies in determining this aspect cannot be ruled out. The withdrawal of all Pak regulars and the so called Mujahideen to their side of the

61 The Times of India (New Delhi), June 12, 1999, p.1.
62 India Today (New Delhi), June 28, 1999, p.36.
LoC following the joint declaration itself reveals the Pakistani lie about the demarcation of the LoC on ground.

The diplomatic dimension of the conflict is being covered separately, in which, details about Pakistan’s and India’s diplomatic moves and counter moves leading to the ‘end-game’ of issuing of the above mentioned joint statement and the unceremonious withdrawal of Pak forces from Kargil, are being clearly brought out.

Diplomacy and the Kargil War

Traditionally, as has already been seen, Pakistan has always held an upper hand in the employment of diplomacy as a force multiplier against India, specially during wars and conflicts. Perhaps it is due to international sympathy for the underdog - the ‘small boy’ being bullied by the big boy, or the Western bloc’s, (led by the USA) perception of Pakistan’s strategic importance, or the cold war era, or Pakistan’s adroit diplomacy - call it what you want - India is not only, ‘showed’ down but also ‘let down’ time and time again. In 1947-48, despite the fact that India took the case to the UN the world tacitly sided with Pakistan. In 1965, as the Indian Prime Minister was signing the Rann of Kutch agreement, Pakistan was busy preparing and planning “Operation Gibraltar”, during the ensuing war, Pakistan boasted of open support from more countries of the world than India, Russel Brines writes, “President Ayub paid tribute to Peking’s ‘moral support and the diplomatic backing of Indonesia and five Middle Eastern nations. Turkey pledged a symbolic amount of arms, and Iran promised petroleum... on the other hand, India had no active supporters and few sympathisers”.

In 1971, despite having lost the war, Pakistan won the Shimla agreement, except for agreeing to make Kashmir exclusively a bilateral issue, Bhutto was able to procure the release of his more than 90,000 POWs, and also reneged on his promise of resolving the Kashmir issue, infact, the Kashmir issue formed a miniscule part of the overall talks. Above all, the Kargil war also diluted the bilateral part of the agreement, by questioning the validity of the LoC.

Pakistan’s standard diplomatic strategy during all Indo-Pak wars has been two fold, firstly, it has insisted that the conflict in Kashmir is an internal uprising, the raiders or infiltrators or militants or mujahideen’s are all locals and the uprising is an indigenous affair

64 Russel Brines, op.cit., p.353.
and their intent is the liberation of their brethren from foreign yoke. They are not under their control at all. Secondly, the aim of fermenting trouble in J&K is to Internationalise the Kashmir issue by involving the UN and/or third party intervention, nuclearisation of both the protagonists have added a new dimension to this aspect, with Pakistan constantly playing its nuclear card and calling Kashmir a nuclear flashpoint.

During the Kargil war, though Pakistan was able to garner limited diplomatic support from a few countries, notably members of the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) and to a limited extent from China, majority of international community and opinion remained with India. It successfully managed to exert leverage where it mattered, in order to ensure a dramatic swing in global public opinion in its favour. Kargil has been an exception only because Pakistan has forfeited much of its global sympathies by its conduct in the neighbourhood over the last decade. The fundamental cause of this erosion of credibility has been Pakistan’s cynical and bloody minded role in the demise of Afghanistan as a State.

Commencing from becoming the instrument of American Geopolitical interest in Afghanistan, and exporting a massive “proxy war” there, followed by becoming a sponsor of peace in that region to being a patron of the destruction of the truce that it had brokered and finally to the promoter of a dangerous political system based on religiously fanatic Talibanism. Pakistan’s role in Afghanistan has done nothing to inspire the confidence of the international community as a nation which has the ability or inclination to live in peace with its neighbours. India used the Taliban card to good diplomatic use when the Kargil conflict began, Naresh Chandra, Indian Ambassador to the US said: “We don’t want the Talibanisation of Kashmir... But if you use these guys as guest terrorists of the Pakistan Army, what would be the consequences.”

The other cause of Pakistan earning the disapproval of global opinion was its well known policy on the spawning of militant islamisation, ‘Jehad’, globally speaking, is not a well liked word. No non-Islamic country in the world, including Pakistan’s trusted ally China, likes to hear it, therefore, the cries of Jehad in Kargil and Kashmir raised not only eye-brows but also hackles in most of the countries of the international community. USA is specially sensitive to this form of terrorism having become its victim many times over. About the

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65 Frontline (Chennai), July 16, 1999, p.10.
recent bombings of its embassy’s in East Africa. "Osama Bin Laden has declared war on the USA. Beginning in August 1996 and as recently as February 1999 he has issued Fatwas (religious decrees) declaring Jihad against USA. He has stated that the USA is the enemy of Islam and repeatedly stressed that the USA must be evicted from Saudi Arabia and the Persian Gulf region. He is the prime suspect for the August 1998 US embassy bombings in East Africa and has threatened more terrorist attacks." Not surprising then, that Bin Laden is one of the most wanted men in USA directly impinging on American foreign policy. The fact that he is being sheltered by Taliban in Afghanistan under the advice and protection of Pakistan, makes things difficult for Pakistan at this stage.

In today’s context, economics has come to play a major role in international politics and diplomacy - regrettably, Pakistan has far less to offer to the global community in this regard than India. Pakistan’s economy was in a chaotic mess. Its debt servicing had been rescheduled, a $280 million IMF loan had been postponed and the fourth tranche of $1.6 billion funding programme from ESAF/EFB had been postponed because of Kargil. The foreign reserve situation of Pakistan stood at its worse ever. In short Pakistan, during Kargil, stood tethering over the brink of a fatal economic abyss. Finally, the world is increasingly becoming wary of wars and a conflict which has the critical ingredients to go nuclear is certainly an absolute taboo, Pakistan increased its diplomatic isolation by constantly harping on the fact that Kargil could turn into a nuclear flashpoint. Teresita C. Schaffer, the director of the South Asia Program at the Centre for Strategic and International Studies, in Washington says, “sympathy for Pakistan’s claims on Kashmir was virtually wiped out by the international perception that Pakistan’s leaders flirted with nuclear disaster in Kargil.”

Ashley Tellis of Rand Corporation rightly describes it as a “a classic form of nuclear coercion.”

Notwithstanding the foregoing, the greatest victory for Pakistan, in the diplomatic arena, was bringing Kashmir back into international spotlight (this assumption in itself is debatable, as will be seen later). Whether the global community supported or condemned

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Pakistan's intrusion into Kargil, the fact is that everybody got up to take notice of Kashmir which had been practically shelved by the world for a long time. The mediation/facilitation by President Clinton himself, the involvement of G-8 nations and the issuing of a joint statement by them, the involvement of Russia and China in the Kargil affair, point to the fact that, if not now, sometimes in future the possibility of "the entire Kashmir issue being taken up by the UN Security Council", 69 is very much alive. To the international community, the Indian position is infinitely more complex than Pakistan's which states that there would be many more Kargils if the root cause, the Kashmir issue, is not tackled with a finality. "The world had forgotten Kashmir, Pakistani diplomats point out, thanks to Kargil, it is once again an issue... To this extent, Pakistan's claim that the Kashmir issue is non irretrievably internationalized sounds legitimate." 70 After Nawaz Sharif's trip to USA, a meeting of Defence Committee of the Cabinet (DCC), the highest decision making body of Pakistan, was called. The DCC decided to term the Kargil conflict "a significant victory in terms of ensuring international mediation in finding a solution to the Kashmir crisis. It also praised the so called Mujahideens for their courageous action on the Kargil front." It further went on to say, "the Mujahideens action had once again focussed the international community's attention on the just cause for the Kashmiri right of self determination... The responsibility of the international community in this respect was now to emphatically assert itself on the side of the Kashmiri people for a successful outcome for their legitimate and just cause, which alone would guarantee durable peace and stability in South Asia." 71 The content of Nawaz Sharif's address to the nation given on PTV on 12 July 1999, was also the same, relevant extracts are; "The basic intention of the Mujahideen to focus international attention on the Kashmir issue had succeeded, their action has proved that Kashmir issue has now become a nuclear flash point." 72

India, meanwhile denied that the Kargil war has internationalised the Kashmir issue. Verinder Kumar himself goes on to say: "Those who believed that the Kargil venture had internationalized the Kashmir problem were living in a fool's paradise because neither the

69 Frontline, op.cit., p.15.
70 Virendra Kumar, Rape of the Mountains: Kargil (the untold story),
71 Ibid., p.92.
72 Ibid.
Indians had agreed to accept mediation of a third party, nor Clinton had undertaken to compel the Indians to accept mediation of any kind. On internationalisation of the Kashmir issue, India’s foreign minister, Jaswant Singh while giving an exclusive interview to Sunil Narula said; “On Internationalisation, lets be clear that in this day of instant televised news from any part of the world, international interest will get focused on however localised a conflict. Second, if the two sides involved have nuclear weapons capability, the world will sit up and take note. But if we equate this interest to internationalising, by which I mean restrictions upon India’s freedom of action, then perhaps we are making an error. Internationalising is not a synonym of international concern. The way we look at internationalising is that it amounts to so constricting India’s freedom of action that we are thereafter not able to subserve our national interests. But that is not the case here. We’ve made our positions very clear to the world that in the context of J&K, of which Kargil is another manifestation of a totally different variety, there is no place for mediators, intermediaries, for facilitators or whatever, because Pakistan and India speak the same language, because we know this matter better than anyone else. We do not need interpreters. Besides, I am clear in my mind that when you have a situation of any third country involving itself, then the third country comes to the situation with its own set of prefixed agendas. There’s no place for that here.” When asked by the interviewer that the US has acted as a sort of a facilitator, Jaswant Singh said: “I think that would be a simplistic way of reading it. The red line has been clearly drawn and accepted by the US. Besides, if you reflect on the sentence that was used in the bilateral statement issued by President Clinton and Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, it runs something like that President Clinton shall take personal interest in facilitating the resumption of dialogue on all outstanding issues, including Kashmir. So you see, it is about resumption of dialogue.”

Even some of the Pakistani media, political thinkers, analysts and writers have unilaterally stated that Pakistan failed diplomatically during the Kargil war and were unsuccessful in internationalising the Kashmir issue. Their contention is that Pakistan failed to garner support of the entire international community on the Kargil issue and consequently found itself totally isolated. USA and Bill Clinton came into the scene at the insistence and panicked requests of Pakistan. Instead of internationalising the issue, the joint statement

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73 Ibid., p.99.
74 Outlook (New Delhi), August 16, 1999, p.42.
issued by Clinton and Sharif and the subsequent pull out of Pak forces from Kargil have further confirmed to the world the complicity of Pakistani army and politicians in the embroglio, as also, have given legal sanctity to the LoC. Newsline, a Karachi based English daily in an article titled “Beating a hasty retreat” says; “Opposition political parties, particularly the right wing Islamic Organisations, have rejected Sharif’s claim that the US brokered agreement has helped bring the Kashmir issue on the international agenda... Pakistani and American officials confirmed that Sharif had pursued a meeting with President Clinton only to secure the face saving he so desperately needed. Some reports suggest that the US President only agreed to receive Sharif after he assured Clinton that Pakistan was prepared to pull out from Kargil... One of the main objectives of Sharif’s Washington visit was to internationalise the Kashmir issue and to cover up the reversal. Most observers however agree that the Washington agreement did not fulfil any of these objectives and has put the government in a politically awkward position.”

Pakistan’s efforts may have been to internationalise the Kashmir issue, but most experts agree, that if at all any internationalization has occurred, it has been along India’s preferred path. Firstly, India was not a party to the agreement, yet it was able to achieve its military objective of expelling armed infiltrators from its territory, secondly, it was able to get its policy of bilateralism endorsed by the world community, thirdly, the joint statement enjoined Pakistan to accept the sanctity of the LoC thereby putting a stamp of approval on it as forming a ‘de facto’ boundary between India and Pakistan from the previously accepted ‘de jure’ status; fourthly, India, by not crossing the LoC has secured international approval for its restraint and maturity; fifthly, Pakistan by ensuring the vacation of Kargil has sent a signal to the world community that it controls the mujahideen’s perpetrating the ‘Proxy War’ in Kashmir. Kamal Matinuddin writing for ‘News’ says, “The meeting was not to discuss the Kashmir issue but to resolve the immediate conflict... There was no talk of finding a solution to the Kashmir dispute... US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright has made it clear that Washington has no intention of acting as a mediator unless India agrees to accept involvement of a third party (India vehemently denies any third party involvement).”

75 Newsline, Karachi, July 1999 (As reproduced in Strategic Digest, vol.XXIX, no.9, New Delhi, September 1999), pp.1445, 1446).

76 News (Islamabad), August 7, 1999, (Reproduced in Strategic Digest, New Delhi, September 1999, p.1489).
Mediation in the orthodox sense did not take place during the Kargil crisis, as Sunanda K. Datta Ray, former editor of the Statesman, writes: "Nothing came of media’s suggestions that a role awaited China or the European Union. Or of Sharif’s attempts to involve Kofi Annan, the United Nations Secretary-General, appeals by Pakistan’s Foreign Secretary, Shamshad Ahmad, to western diplomats in Islamabad to send monitors to Kashmir and beef up the United Nations Military Observer Group, which has about thirty personnel watching the LoC, or of Pakistan’s complaint to the Security Council. The European Union Presidency advised India and Pakistan to act in accordance with existing undertakings and commitments, and the Group of Eight, which upheld the LoC and called for a resumption of the bilateral dialogue, condemned “military action to change the status quo” as “irresponsible”. Neither was quite forthright as the Americans or the British Prime Minister Tony Blair who praised India’s measured response to provocation, but no one supported direct third party intervention.” True, the American President did play an important part in defusing tensions but merely facilitated the bringing about of peace in the region. To be sure, the State Department and the President are distancing themselves from any mediatory role in Kargil or the larger Kashmir issue. Analysts there too concur that the US should not involve itself beyond aiding Indo-Pak dialogue... a State Department official was forced to mark out this minimal position, “we are not being pulled in as a mediator. We are aware of people’s desire to have us involved, but we know we won’t be able to do anything, if both parties don’t want us”.

Stephen Cohen of Brookings Institute takes it forward: “The US has a specific role between the two sides - facilitating. There is a such thing as a facilitator without being a mediator.” Michael Krepon of the Henry L. Stimson centre agreed with the distinction: “It's about trying to be helpful in the context of a bilateral framework.” Thats the message Islamabad has received not just from Washington but from Beijing, London, Moscow and the E.U. Leo Rose of the University of California, Berkeley, says its: “Interesting that both the US and China have carefully avoided the idea of mediation in difference to New Delhi. Mediators try to set the lines and terms of a settlement and try to get the parties to agree to these. A facilitator wouldn’t set terms. This role would be better for the US.”

We may, therefore, be permitted to assume that the Kargil crisis did not internationalise the Kashmir

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77 Outlook (New Delhi), July 19, 1999, p.28.
issue but drew world focus on Kargil as any media interesting episode does. Nor was there any third party mediation involved. A brief look at the views and responses of some leading countries of the International Community to the Kargil war will further put the international perspective in the right frame, for the reader to analyse and arrive at the correct conclusions.

Pakistan's diplomatic campaign revolved round two basic assumptions. Firstly, Pakistan had not crossed the LoC, but had captured posts and peaks located on the LoC; secondly, the demarcation of the LoC was not clear and could have led to some confusion.

**China and Kargil**

China, as has already been brought is, perhaps the strongest ally of Pakistan, both diplomatically and militarily. Thus, during the Kargil crisis, it was towards China that Pakistan had to turn for support. During the first week of May, Pakistan's foreign minister, Sartaj Aziz dashed off suddenly to China to apprise them of the Kargil situation and to enlist their support. But to their surprise Pakistan found Beijing's attitude neutral and quite firm at that. This was the first time that China had refused to support Pakistan on an Indo-Pak issue. During the first week of June Sartaz Aziz, Pakistan's foreign minister, had dashed off to a non-scheduled parley with China. This was a day before he was to visit India and his going there was a pretence for 'seeking guidance'. But the statement that China gave at that time was totally neutral and therefore not in favour of Pakistan. China stated that the two countries must resolve the dispute through mutual talks. It also said that since Kashmir was a complicated issue, both India and Pakistan should exercise restraint and peacefully try to find the solution to this problem. Though the Chinese attitude shocked Pakistan, they maintained that China had expressed solidarity with them.

Media reports also suggested that Nawaz Sharif had held a hurried meeting with the Chinese ambassador in Islamabad, while the high level US team comprising of General Anthony Zinni, Commander-in-Chief of the US Central Command and Mr. Gibson Lanpher, Assistant Secretary of State were on a visit to Pakistan to persuade them to withdraw the intruders from Kargil. PTI report states "Nawaz Sharif in an unusual gesture met the Chinese ambassador at the latter's residence and discussed the Kargil issue... Mr. Sharif held the meeting with the Chinese ambassador over an informal dinner and discussed the prevailing
tensions between India and Pakistan, the ‘Nation’ daily reported without giving any detail.” 78 The earlier visit of Sartaz Aziz to China, the US team’s pressure on Pakistan to withdraw from Kargil coupled with the fact that the Prime Minister of a country deemed it necessary to visit the house of an ambassador instead of the other way round as the correct protocol dictates, indicates the panic that had set in at the highest level of governance in Pakistan and it was now trying to clutch at straws as a drowning man. Clearly Kargil had misfired and by June end Pakistan’s leadership was suddenly faced with the truth of the horrific folly against India.

It was now dawning on Pakistan that its long time ally, China was not going to support it on Kargil. Still, in order to salvage something face saving from the wreck, Nawaz Sharif embarked on a preplanned six day tour of China, reaching Beijing on 28 June. He had talks with Chinese Premier, Zhu Rongji, on 28th June, 1999, the next he briefed Legislative Chairman, Li Peng and met the Chinese President Jiang Zemin. Even this high level politicking produced no support. China remained objective in its approach to the Kargil issue and insisted that both countries must diffuse the tension immediately and that peace and prosperity must bless the subcontinent. It is reported that Chinese Premier Zhu Rongji told Sharif, “China sincerely hopes that Pakistan and India will ease the tensions between them soon through dialogue, to ease the current situation and ensure peace and stability in South Asia.” 79 Seeing the Chinese response Nawaz Sharif cut short his visit to China and returned after two days. Former foreign secretary J.N. Dixit talking to Star T.V., said that “there could be three interpretations of Sharif’s flight back home. First he had been snubbed by a “neutral” China; Second, he had achieved his purpose within 24 hours; Third, Pak is planning a major military offensive against India for which his presence is required in the country. Asked which of the possibilities he would give weightage to, Mr. Dixit said first and third.” 80 As it turned out it was the first possibility that actually came true, this is proved by the fact that there was no joint statement at the end of the talks, as is customary and the later statements of the Chinese leaders proved it.

78 Asian Age (New Delhi), 25 June 1999, p.2.
80 Ibid.
China's unexpected response was perhaps guided by the facts: firstly, since the late 1980's the Chinese stance on Kashmir has changed and its leaders have consistently advocated a bilateral approach to the Kashmir problem. Possibly the Chinese feel that post Kosovo, internationalisation of the Kashmir issue could set a dangerous precedent in regard to Tibet also; Secondly, a conflict between two neighbours possessing nuclear capabilities on its southern borders was not acceptable to it; Thirdly, the world opinion by then had already turned anti Pakistan and China did not want to draw a unfavourable world opinion by being the 'lone man out'; Fourthly, India-US relations seemed to be undergoing a strategic metamorphosis, post Pokhran II, seeing USA's clear tilt towards India during the Kargil crisis, perhaps, China did not want to be seen as a solitary prop for Pakistan's adventurism in Kargil, as, such a wrong step could have boosted American influence in India and cemented an alliance between the two to the disadvantage of China; Fifthly, China was also concerned about militant Islamic reaction in its Northern province of Xinxiang and therefore did not desire to support such Islamic 'Jehad' anywhere else, lest it emit some wrong signals. Much later, it was revealed that the, "US President Bill Clinton had close consultations with Chinese Premier Jiang Zemin during the Kargil crisis... the US President spoke several times with the Chinese premier - before and during the visit by Mr. Nawaz Sharif to Washington... both the US and China agreed that Taliban inspired Islamic militants posed a serious threat that needed to be handled with urgency."81

During India's foreign minister, Mr. Jaswant Singh's two day visit to Beijing during the third week of June (a couple of days after Sartaz Aziz's visit), the Chinese foreign minister provided his Indian counterpart details of his talks on the Kargil issue with the Pakistani foreign minister. The Indian foreign minister briefed his counterpart on the Indian version of the events that led to Kargil. Indications were both the countries were reluctant to discuss the issue relating to Pakistan. However, "China has urged both India and Pakistan to exercise restraint... and resort to peaceful bilateral dialogue to sort out contentious issues."82

The above is just one side of the coin. China, possibly being the shrewdest and the most cunning country, politically, in this part of the world, played a double game with India.

81 Hindustan Times (New Delhi), 7 September 1999, p.12.
82 Frontline, op.cit., p.127 (July 16, 1999).
While announcing its neutral stand on Kargil on one hand, it resorted to the use of force on the Sino-Indian borders, on the other, in order to exert pressure on India during the Kargil crisis with Pakistan. Therefore, to say that China remained totally neutral during Kargil, would, maybe, understating the truth. It may be recalled that, it carried out a similar exercise in 1965, and in the same areas.

During July 1999, in the Leh sector, while the Kargil crisis was at its height, China commenced construction of a road in the Daulat Beg Oldi sector, not far from the Turtok sector. This action forced the Indian army to move a Brigade to the forward area, as precaution against any mischief by the Chinese. Praveen Swami reports from Leh, "Last month, ITBP (Indo Tibet Border Police) troopers discovered that a group of 40 Chinese soldiers had begun to construct a road near a forward position called Track Junction in the general area of Daulat Beg Oldi. The road was built some 4 km into the territory claimed both by India and China and unheld by both." China was not only exerting pressure and provocation in J&K, but also in the North East. In Arunanchal Pradesh and Sikkim, where the 1962 war was fought, the Chinese forces enhanced their military presence and provocation, forcing the Indian army to go into a state of high alert. Outlook reports, "The Chinese may have diplomatically remained neutral during the Kargil crisis, but on ground, its forces continue to needle the Indian side in the Tawang area of Arunanchal Pradesh... In the Sikkim sector, too, there has been Chinese activity... in one such incident in end March, a small force of Chinese soldiers intruded 3 to 4 km inside Indian territory across the border in North Sikkim... In the wake of the Kargil crisis, field commanders under 4 corps thought it prudent to reorient the troops for their primary task: guarding the border against the Chinese... several battalions involved purely in counter - insurgency operations are being rotated and relocated in the Arunanchal mountains to keep them in a state of readiness for any eventuality."

**Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC) and Kargil**

The OIC foreign ministers meeting was held at Burkina Faso, a West African state, on June 29. The OIC comprises of about 55 Islamic countries and is currently being chaired by Iran. Since the meeting was coinciding with the ongoing Kargil crisis, Pakistan stepped up

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its diplomatic offensive to garner support of the OIC with the aim of internationalizing the Kashmir issue. Pakistan’s Minister for Kashmir Affairs, Lt. Gen. Abdul Majeed Malik (retd), who led the Pakistani delegation to Burkina Faso said before leaving from Islamabad: “India should come to the negotiation table to discuss the issue (Kashmir) in totality and not just Kargil and Dras or the LoC for that matter.”\(^85\) Before, going to Burkina Faso, he went to Morocco, Rabat, Jordan, Lebanon, Qatar, Kuwait and Tunisia in order to solicit their support on Kashmir against India. In Morocco he said: “My visit to Morocco aims to explain the situation in Kargil... Because it is quite serious... We are asking our brothers in the Muslim countries to use their influence so that the current situation does not lead to a military escalation and war.”\(^86\)

The OIC meet, expectedly passed two resolution at the insistence of Pakistan, both had an anti India tenor. The resolution on Kargil expressed its “grave concern over the serious escalation caused by the heavy Indian artillery shelling and air strikes across the Line of Control and welcomes Pakistan’s diplomatic initiative for defusing the situation, it expresses deep concern over the dangerous escalation along the LoC caused by Indian military deployment and violation of the LoC” the other resolutions makes no mention of Pakistan’s role in the conflict except to “Urge India to exercise restraint and respond to Pakistan’s diplomatic initiative for defusing tension.”\(^87\) This was the only anti India reaction expressed by the world community and not surprising at that, OIC members had little choice but to support a fellow Islamic state i.e. Pakistan. Even in the past OIC has always sided with Pakistan on Kashmir. However, these resolution did not bother India too much - as they were on expected lines and also, OIC as an organisation has scant credibility, not only in the world community, but also, within the Islamic states themselves. “The divisions within the 55 member OIC were evident this time too, from the fact that ultimately, the contact group members disassociated themselves from the resolution on Kargil, and asked Pakistan to send the resolution separately to OIC Foreign Ministers itself.”\(^88\)

\(^85\) The Tribune (New Delhi), 24 June 1999, p.1.
\(^86\) The Pioneer (New Delhi), July 3, 1999.
\(^87\) The Indian Express (New Delhi), July 2, 1999.
\(^88\) Ibid.
Pakistan Briefs Foreign Defence Attaches on Kargil

As a part of its diplomatic offensive, to try on gain some support from foreign countries, Pakistan arranged a briefing on Kargil on May 31, 1999. The Director General of Intelligence (DGMI) of the Pakistani army briefed Military attaches of 35 countries and tried to convince them that a number of strategic posts over looking the crucial Srinagar-Leh highway were captured by Pakistani Army regulars and soldiers, but these posts were on the LoC and not in Indian territory, he also stressed that the LoC was not clearly demarcated. Similar briefings were being given to the diplomatic corps in Pakistan by the Director General, Inter Services Public Relations (DGISPR).\(^8\) The effect of such diplomatic propaganda can be gauged from the fact that the countries of almost the entire world openly condemned Pakistan for armed intrusion into Indian territory. Apparently, the reports sent by the foreign missions, based in Islamabad, to their respective countries had helped these countries to arrive at this conclusion.

G-8 and Kargil

The G-8 summit meeting was held at Cologne, Germany, beginning 18 June 1999. The G-8 or the developed countries are the USA, UK, Canada, Italy, Japan, France, Germany and Russia. Since the meet coincided with the ongoing Kargil crisis, it was expected that the issue would be discussed and a declaration would follow. In view of the profile of the G-8 countries it was but natural that Pakistan and India would mount a diplomatic blitzkrieg to put forth their respective points of view and to try and swing the G-8 consensus in their respective favour. Much before the summit, Pakistan activated its lobbyists and support groups within these countries and even sent their emissaries there to plead their cause. Pakistan's foreign secretary, Shamshad Hussain, went to USA, Mr. Riaz Sami the Pak High Commissioner to UK led his charge there. Mr Khurshid Kasuri, Sharif's special envoy was despatched to Europe to call for their support, by highlighting the dangers of a nuclear conflagration and asking for separation of Indian Kashmir, he said, "It is madness to comprehend a war between two nuclear armed countries where there are 1.2 billion people.

living... What we ask the international community is to get India to honour its obligations to
give us a time frame within which Kashmir will be separate."

However, Pakistan’s efforts did not bring much cheer to it, as Indian diplomatic
efforts, based on straight forward portrayal of facts and truth managed to bring the G-8
opinion to swing towards it. First, the G-8 foreign ministers had met in Cologne on June 9-
10, as a precursor, to the main summit. In its June 10 statement the foreign ministers meet
issued a statement, “We are deeply concerned about the continuing confrontation in Kashmir,
following the infiltration of militants across the Line of Control. We call upon India and
Pakistan to respect the Line of Control, to work for an immediate cessation of the fighting and
to return to the negotiation table in the spirit of the Lahore Declaration.”

The final joint communique of the G-8 nations went a step further than the G-8
foreign ministers statement which took a seemingly neutral stand and supported the Indian
stand more. It stated: “we are deeply concerned about the continuing military confrontation in
Kashmir following the infiltration of armed intruders which violated the Line of Control. We
regard any military action to change the status quo as irresponsible. We therefore call for the
immediate end of these actions, restoration of the Line of Control and for the parties to work
for an immediate cessation of the fighting, full respect in the future for the Line of Control
and the resumption of dialogue between India and Pakistan in the spirit of the Lahore
Declaration.” Though the statement does not directly blame Pakistan for the Kargil conflict,
the reference to Islamabad was clear, in view of the actual situation on ground, as well as
statements of individual countries of G-8 (referred to later on). The reference to Pakistan is
also clear from the way the statement is worded, referring as it does to “armed intruders”
violating the LoC and the military action to change the status quo. Except for naming Pakistan
as the initiator of the conflict, the entire statement is in line with the Indian line of thinking.
Even the Pak press admitted defeat at G-8. The “Dawn” writing from Cologne said,
“However, diplomats (Pakistani) acknowledged that they were likely to be disappointed at the
G-8 stance... Western nations have largely accepted India’s allegations that Pakistan is
funding armed intruders and even sending regular Pakistani troops into Kashmir. There is

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90 The Pioneer (New Delhi), July 3, 1999.
91 Indian Express (New Delhi), 18 June 1999, p.9.
little sympathy for Islamabad’s arguments that the infiltrators are freedom fighters and that Pakistan has no control over their activities." 93

Pakistan’s diplomatic failure at the G-8 summit provided a great set back to their plans in Kargil and was eventually responsible for Pak’s isolation in the international arena. It also hastened Pak’s decision to withdraw from Kargil.

**United Nation’s and Kargil**

After India unleashed its air force on the intruders in Kargil on 25 May, 1999. Sartaj Aziz, Pak’s foreign minister said that their Government has called for UN intervention. 94 Pakistan’s appeal to the UN was with the intent of internationalising the issue and resurrecting the defunct UN resolutions on Kashmir. Its efforts did meet partial success when UN Secretary General Kofi Annan reportedly called the Indian Prime Minister four times to ask him if he could send a special envoy to South Asia to monitor the situation in Kargil. Mr. Vajpayee politely refused. This was as a part of India’s efforts to keep the situation at the bilateral level. 95

India quickly mounted a diplomatic counter offensive to nullify Pakistan’s attempts to take the Kargil issue to the UN. Consequently four permanent members (out of five) of the Security Council assured India that the matter would not be taken up in the UN. The Defence Minister of India said that Mr. Jaswant Singh, External Affairs Minister, had spoken to his counterparts in the US, Russia, France and UK over the issue, “All of them made it clear that they would not take up the matter in the UN Security Council”. 96 Mr. Jaswant Singh also personally spoke to Ms. Madeleine Albright and Mr. Robin Cook, foreign secretaries of USA and UK respectively and was assured that the US and the UK had apparently emphasised that the tensions between India and Pakistan must be resolved in a bilateral framework. 97 This diplomatic breakthrough wrecked Pakistan’s hopes of internationalising Kargil which was not taken up in the UN meeting held in September 1999.

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94 *Indian Express* (New Delhi), 27 May, 1999.
97 *The Hindu* (Chennai), May 31, 1999.
UK and Kargil

Britain’s initial reaction on the Kargil issue was one of even-handedness, though along India’s stand of working within a bilateral framework. Unlike the US which was clear from the beginning that it was Pakistan that needed to be blamed for Kargil, Britain advised both sides to resolve their differences peacefully. In response to a question in the House of Commons, the British Prime Minister, Tony Blair said, “We know that the source of those differences in Kashmir, but it is important that they work out a solution in the interest of everybody. That is what we are doing, and we are also using the influence we have in international institution like the UN to put pressure on them to do so.”

Soon after making this statement Britain changed track and joined US and Germany in holding Pakistan responsible for the crisis in Jammu and Kashmir. British High Commissioner to India Mr. Rob Young told newspapers that any solution to the Kargil crisis would not be possible without the withdrawal of the Pakistani intruders. He said Islamabad would continue to be given “tough messages” by UK and other developed countries on the issue. He said, “The simple solution to the present crisis is that the intruders should withdraw... The UK and other countries have given some tough messages to the Pakistan government and we will continue to do so.” On July 6, 1999, while on his way back from USA Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif went to London to meet Tony Blair, “Sharif waited in London for more than ten hours to meet Tony Blair. When he did see him the message was loud and clear - do what you have committed with the United States.” After a 30 minute meeting at 10 Downing Street a joint statement was issued, which read; “both leaders had agreed on the importance of implementing swiftly the actions proposal in the joint statement (issued in Washington).” The change in UK’s attitude could be because of pressure from the other G-8 countries notably US, France and Germany.

98 The Times of India (New Delhi), June 18, 1999, p.14.
100 Col. Ravi Nanda, AVSM, op.cit., p.109.
Russia and Kargil

Pakistan kept up its diplomatic offensive and went to the extent of asking Moscow to mediate in the Kashmir issue. The Interfax news Agency reported that: "Khurshid Kasuri, a legislator with the ruling Pakistan Muslim League, told a news conference that he had invited Russian Government members to visit Islamabad and New Delhi to understand the dispute better."102 This must have been done with the assumption that Russia, out of all other countries, enjoys a special diplomatic relationship with India and their mediation might make the Indian’s loosen their hold on the Kargil situation. A kind of desperation seems to have forced Pakistan to resort to such an extreme step, knowing that Russia would be the last country to act counter to Indian interests.

Russia on its part, had from the beginning of the conflict, been telling Pakistan to withdraw from Kargil. The Russian foreign ministry had issued a statement denouncing attempts to resolve the Kashmir problem "through force and terrorist methods". The Russian Government expressed its serious concern at the infiltration by foreign militants into Jammu and Kashmir."103 In June, the Russian foreign ministry again urged Pakistan to withdraw its troops from Indian-controlled territory in Kashmir: "In connection with disturbing reports from this region, the Russian government expresses concern over continued tension along the (cease fire) line in Kashmir". The ministry said the tension was caused "above all" by the infiltration by Pakistani fighters into Indian controlled strategic heights in Kashmir, and urged Pakistan to withdraw the troops.104

The Russian viewpoint was understandable not only from the Indo-Russian relations point of view but also from the fact that Russia faced similar Islamic threats in Kosovo, Dagestan and from the newly formed Central Asian Republics, and therefore it wanted to also make a policy statement on such issues.

France and Kargil

France has been supporting India in the International fora on numerous issues in the past. During post Pokhran II nuclear test, France had been supportive of India’s position and

102 The Pioneer (New Delhi), July 1, 1999, p.1.
had worked hard to ensure that collective sanctions were not imposed by the European Union. During Kargil, France was forthright in its views. During early May 1999, it issued two statements in a matter of two days that contained a thinly veiled warning to Pakistan to desist from increasing tensions along the Line of Control in J&K. A statement issued by the French foreign ministry said, "we are very concerned by the continued conflict over the Line of Control in Kashmir. It will not be possible to create trust between the two countries unless an end is put to the violations of the LoC and intrusions of the past week... we once again call upon India and Pakistan to show restraint in the spirit of the Lahore Declaration." France therefore recognised the fact of intrusions and called for an end to the actions that Pakistan had taken to disturb the momentum of improved relations between the two countries, in line with the Lahore Declaration. France also went a step further by putting a ban on the previously agreed supply of Mirage aircrafts to Pakistan.

**Germany and Kargil**

Till mid June 1999, Germany held an ambivalent position on Kargil. However, on June 17, Germany crystalised its stand and said "It had the information that apart from Afghan militants, Pakistan Army was also involved in the intrusion in Kargil violating the Line of Control (LoC). Mr. Wolfgang Massing of the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs said that Pakistan had violated the LoC which was an irresponsible behaviour to change the status quo. Mr. Massing also emphasised that Germany and the European Union were aware of the fact that the Pakistani intrusion was the main cause of the present crisis in India-Pakistan relations." This perhaps was the clearest statement, apart from the USA, that any country had made since the commencement of the Kargil crisis and must have gone a long way in helping clarifying the stand of other European G-8 members, on the Kargil issue, since the G-8 summit was being held at Cologne under the aegis of Germany, the host countries clear cut views on the subject must have swung the opinions of the other member countries.

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USA and Kargil

It was, perhaps, USA which was singularly most effective and influencing to ensure the eventual outcome of the Kargil crisis, in a manner that was clearly advantageous to India. Having commissioned itself as the self appointed ‘global marshal’, after the collapse of USSR, and the ushering in of an era of unipolarity in the arena of international politics, it was only the American ‘muscle’ that could influence such an outcome of the Kargil embroglio. Also, the ‘Clinton Doctrine’, according to which USA is committed to do whatever in its power to stop sectarian or ethnic genocide, wars and conflicts within or beyond other nations borders even when US interests are not at stake and even at the cost of bypassing the UN authority, as it did in Kosovo, may have induced USA to play such a prominent role in the sub-continent.

Why has America’s South Asia policy undergone such a change within one year - from the Pokhran nuclear blast in 1998, to the Kargil crisis in 1999. The answer is not difficult to find. Firstly, the Lahore declaration and the mature way that India handled the Kargil issue by limiting and localizing the conflict to its own side of the LoC must have not only impressed USA but would have conveyed the political and military maturity and stability of India, vis-a-vis Pakistan; Secondly, with nuclearization of both the countries and the potentially dangerous nexus of nuclear China-Pak-North Korea in the Asian region, USA found India to be the most stabilizing and influential factor; Thirdly, Pakistan’s image, that of a sponsor of international Narco-terrorism, promoter of Islamic fundamentalism and Talibanism and above all, with Afghanistan and Osama-bin-Laden, exporter of both these explosive philosophies targeted at USA in particular an the rest of the West in general, made America to do a quick re-think of its policies in South Asia. Pakistan’s former foreign secretary Niaz Naik, speaking in Colombo on 2 February 2000, commenting on USA’s shift in policy said; “There is a shift in American policy from Pakistan in favour of India”. This, he said, was plain from what Charles Brown, director of strategic planning in the US state department, whom he had met in Islamabad, told him and what four other visiting US officials had earlier said. They clearly said that the US has entered into a strategic relationship
with India, and wants a robust relationship with Pakistan but on four conditions - signing of CTBT, end to sponsoring of terrorism, checking drug trafficking and Osama Bin Laden."\(^{107}\)

Bill Clinton, despite his involvement with the Kosovo crisis took time off to personally address the Kargil issue. Besides, personally speaking and writing to the Prime Ministers of both the countries. He despatched his personal envoys to both the capitals with the aim of getting them to diffuse the tension on the border, which eventually led to the Blair house meeting between Nawaz Sharif and Bill Clinton on July 4, 1994 and to the end of the crisis.

President Bill Clinton and USA were convinced, through their satellite intelligence, that Pakistani troops and militants had occupied mountain features across the Line of Control. The 'Washington Post' as quoted by the Statesman writes, “On 9 May, however, Pakistan-backed infiltrators grabbed the attention of US intelligence analysts, when they blew up an Indian ammunition dump near Kargil... It soon became clear that upto 700 Pakistan backed troops - either Muslim militants, regular army soldiers or a combination of both - had seized positions on the Indian side of the cease fire line... As US intelligence reports of impending war set off a frantic diplomatic scramble at the highest levels of the Clinton administration, the President wrote to and called Mr. Vajpayee repeatedly, striving to allay fears that Washington would tilt towards Pakistan. By mid June, officials made it clear they regarded Pakistan as the aggressor leaking evidence that Pakistani regulars were behind the incursion. It was then that Mr. Sharif appeared to be looking for a face saving exit.”\(^{108}\)

On 25 June, Gen. Anthony Zinni Commander in-Chief of US Army's Central Command along with the US Assistant State Secretary Gibson Lanpher, were despatched to Pakistan to tell them to withdraw from Kargil. Pakistan's former foreign minister Abdus Sattar writes, “It is our guess that Zinni must have put before Musharraf satellite images taken over Kargil to prove the point that the Americans were repeatedly making. Together with this, he must have painted the scenario where a cash-strapped Pakistan had a choice to say good-bye to all the handouts that were due from the IMF and the World Bank. Plus the

\(^{107}\) The Times of India, (New Delhi), February 3, 2000, p.1.

threat to declare Pakistan a terrorist state, since Osama Bin Laden is still to be handed over to the US."109

The sending of a top military man to Pakistan may have been intentional for three reasons. Zinni, the Commander-in-Chief of USA's Central Command; was the right man to send to Islamabad as, this is the US Army organisation that deals with Pakistan on a military level, and therefore has more authority and acceptability there. This action conveys more urgency and imparts a military touch to an issue that is more military than political, thereby conveying the resoluteness of the US in forcing an issue down Islamabad's throat. The Pakistan army, which actually was the perpetrator of this incident would understand the language of a senior US Army General better than that of any other civilian. And truly so, Zinni perhaps did not mince his words and must have firmly told Pakistan that the only way out for them is a unilateral withdrawal.

Few people are in doubt that this weekend of 26-27 June was the beginning of the 'endgame' for Pakistan. On June 27, the Sunday Telegraph reported in London that the mechanics of a negotiated withdrawal by Pakistan inspired forces occupying the heights of Tiger Hill, Marpola and Batalik was a topic of conversation between Zinni and Musharraf. In Karachi, where Musharraf himself was to make that statement, 'Dawn', the oldest of English dailies in Pakistan, went further and wrote: "Pakistan had insisted on reciprocity. For example, a promise by the Indians for time bound discussions on Kashmir in return for assisting the mujahideen to home bases."110 On 27 June itself Gen. Musharraf casually told the waiting press persons that Sharif would soon be meeting Clinton, this was said over a week before the actual meeting took place.111 Apparently, the framework of the meeting seems to have been worked out between Gens. Zinni and Musharraf. A political analyst has said of this: "The key negotiations took place not between Sharif and Clinton, not even Sartaj Aziz and Strobe Talbot, but between Musharraf and Zinni."112

110 Frontline, (Chennai), July 30, 1999, p.18.
111 Ibid., pp.18-19.
112 Ibid., p.21.
It is reported that the Indian Prime Minister also played a hand in the frantic interest that US was displaying at this stage. "The Washington Post" revealed that during the G-8 summit, Vajpayee had sent a special message to Bill Clinton through the US representatives which was delivered by Mr. Brajesh Mishra the Security Advisor to the Prime Minister. "According to the Washington Post this letter contained two facts which compelled the USA to expedite its actions. Prime Minister had written that the bodies of the Jawans arriving from Kargil front were causing a wide spread anger in the country and the pressure was mounting on the government to take some big action... It asserted that if Pak intruders were not soon called back, India might be compelled to penetrate into Pakistan".113

During this period Lanpher Gibson and Niaz Naik, the retired foreign secretary of Pakistan, also visited India Mr. Naik conferred with Brajesh Mishra and Vajpayee, who also now knew what Zinni had been offered and what Washington's view of that was going to be. On his return back to Pakistan, Naik gave a statement to BBC that soon the directors of military operations of both countries would meet to diffuse the tension through mutual talks. Mr. Gibson on the other hand told the press that "he had in his briefings to the senior leadership here only reiterated that Washington was "continuing to lean heavily on the Pakistanis". That he had "brought no proposals on safe passage or anything else from Islamabad". He said he had come only to brief the Government about the visit of US Gen. Anthony Zinni to Pakistan last week."114 Lanpher also met the Principal Secretary and Security Advisor to the Prime Minister, Brajesh Mishra and other officials of the MEA. USA, in the meantime was seen to be busy indicting Pakistan on the conflict. The Washington Post was quoted as saying: "as the instigator, Pakistan will have to figure out how to restore the status quo ante on the LoC quickly. Quick compliance is essential... The paper said Washington had also rejected Pakistani claims that Kashmiri militants and no Pakistani troops were fighting Indian troops in the Drass and Kargil sectors. There may be a handful of the Islamic militant irregulars known as mujahideen along with the troops, but most of the invaders are regulars from the 10th Corps of the Pakistan Army."115

113 B.K. Chaturvedi, op.cit., p.174 (The same aspect is reported in the Frontline of July 30, 1999, p.20).
114 Indian Express (New Delhi), June 28, 1999, p.1.
115 Ibid., p.9.
We therefore see a flurry of activity initiated by the US, starting from mid June 1999. "Clinton’s first calls to Sharif and Vajpayee came on June 14 and 15. On June 25 General Zinni and Lanphor visited Pakistan. On June 26 he (Lanphor) visited India. Mr. Niaz Naik also visited India the same day, he returned to Pakistan on 27 June 1999, the day Musharraf announced Sharif’s Washington visit. Sharif cuts short his visit to China, in view of his impending visit to Washington. Clinton modifies his vacation plans to hold the meeting at Blair house on July 4, 1999, on July 11, 1999 Pak troops commence withdrawal from the Kargil sector".116 The crisis is over, with India, once again emerging victorious in the fourth war with Pakistan.

116 Ibid.