CHAPTER - II

INDIA - PAKISTAN
One prime geo-political reality as a product of the 1971 Indo-Pak war was the recognition of India as the "dominant power" of the region. More often in the euphoria of the victory in this war, it was argued that Pakistan's losses automatically India's gains. Some analysts even put forward the view that in the wake of 1971 war, Pakistan's ability to pose any security threat to India would be only an exercise in futility.

However, the pertinent point to be noted here is that Pakistan's position in the post 1971 phase in terms of security turned out to be better than projected generally.

While it is undeniable that India gained a dominant position in the radically altered geo-political context of South Asia, what has to be


understood is that Pakistan also improved its security position, albeit, in negative manner through dismemberment.  

East Pakistan was "a liability" for West Pakistan, right from the inception, in administrative, political, financial and finally strategic terms. As a perceptive analyst puts it, "the loss of East Pakistan was if anything, a strategic gain for the remainder of Pakistan and may have been a financial benefit as well. There had been a de facto neutralisation of that area (basically indefensible any way)... and its loss simplified strategic planning in Pakistan".  

Even Z.A. Bhutte firmly emphasised that the dismemberment of Pakistan in 1971 in no way reduced the "importance" of Pakistan in international politics. Rather, he saw it as an opportunity to renew his pleas and demands for building and strengthening the "new Pakistan". In this context, he said that "the severance of East Pakistan...... was but the climax of a long series of hostile

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3. For a perspective analysis that confirms that Pakistan was better off in the post-1971 phase, see K.R. Malkani, "Partition will do Pakistan Good", Motherland (New Delhi), 19 May 1971.

and aggressive acts of India against Pakistan since the establishment of the two as sovereign and independent states." This remark still proved that Pakistan had in no way lowered its "anti-India" profile. ⁵

Thus Pakistan in the seventies emerged with a clear identity of interests, with reduced security management problem, a manageable but cohesive economy and still with the same convictions and perceptions that were part of its foreign policy since its independence. ⁶

The Simla Agreement signed on 3rd July 1972 brought a new wave of expectations in the context of beleagured Indo-Pak relations. The Indian perception of the Simla Agreement was that it indicated a change in Pakistan's attitude towards India. Naturally this would lead to more stability and peace in the region. India further assumed that with the loss of East Pakistan as well as convincing defeat in the 1971 war, Pakistan would


⁶ For an account of the Pakistan's foreign policy under Bhutto within the context of Indo-Pakistan relations, see Lawrence Ziring, "Bhutto's Foreign Policy, 1972-73", in Henry J. Korson, ed., Contemporary Problems of Pakistan (Leiden, 1974), pp. 56-80.
think twice before acting against India's interests and image. 7 All these assumptions were belied as the developments in the seventies revealed that whatever may be its position, Pakistan would continue to hold an inherent and inalienable threat perceptions concerning India. Thus the Pakistan's continued quest for parity with India even in post 1971 phase nullified the chances of any realisation of the provisions of the Simla Agreement.

To elaborate Pakistan's threat to India's security during the period from 1972 to 1979, the following elements have to be analysed.

These are : (a) the continued impact of Pakistan's domestic politics on India's security, (b) the nuclear policy and arms build-up of Pakistan and India's security perceptions, (c) Pakistan's relations with the Muslim world and its impact on India's security and (d) Pakistan's linkages with the

7. For a critical account of loop-holes in Simla Agreement and related details, see G.S. Bhargava Success or Surrender? The Simla Summit, (New Delhi, 1972), pp. 109-22.
United States and China and India's strategic concerns.

II

Most of India's security concerns stem from Pakistan's threat perceptions vis-a-vis India which have their roots in the domestic politics of Pakistan.

In this context, an erudite scholar on Indo-Pak relations applied comments, "logically one should begin to view in detail the mileus in which foreign policies are formulated by looking at the domestic environments, particularly those components of Indian and Pakistani domestic environments which directly or indirectly affect foreign policy making in New Delhi and Islamabad. History has taught us that change in the domestic environments which affect Pakistan and Indian foreign policies can be of paramount importance as far as their policies towards each other are concerned." 8

From its inception, Pakistan's policy perceptions and the decision-making process have been affected by its domestic politics. The situation succeeding the 1971 war was no different from the earlier position of Pakistan.9

However, in the post-1972 situation, the domestic politics of Pakistan were quite different from that of the United Pakistan. Pakistan during the period under study continued to suffer from the problems of nationality dilemmas, integration, cohesion in Baluchistan, N.W.F.P. and Sind regions. But the real problems of Pakistan's national integration in the period under study were not so divisive as in the case of East Bengal. So Pakistan had lesser incentive to play "anti-India" card to build up the solidarity of the nation.

Another change in Pakistan's politics was the transformation in the character and composition of ruling elite in the post-1972 phase. The entrance of Pakistan's people's party (PPP) headed

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by Bhutto, attempted to drastically cut down the size and influence of the army in foreign policy decisions. The civilian government which was in power till 1977 was not so much in need of "legitimacy", as the case of army rule in the domestic politics. 10

However, since the military was still an important and major institutionalized group operating upon the decision-making machinery, the confrontationist policy with India remained as an important element in Pakistan's foreign policy.

In 1977, there was a drastic change in the power structure of Pakistan politics. Bhutto was overthrown and Gen. Zia-ul-Haq came over to replace civilian government by Martial Administration. When Gen. came into power, the Indian bogey was once again raised and acquired a new urgency. 11

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Another issue that has to be considered is the emphasis on "Islamization" in Pakistan during this period. In the years from 1972 to 1979, one consistent factor in Pakistan's politics has been the overuse of Islamic plank. This was the feature of both Bhutto's and Zia's regimes; despite the fact that their styles and modus operandi differed in the relative exploitation of the Islamic plank, their ends were ultimately directed towards the consolidation Pakistan's position vis-a-vis India. 12

The "Islamic revivalism" that was initiated in Bhutto's period, reached newer peaks and dimensions in Zia's regime. The more the emphasis on Islamisation of Pakistan, the lesser the level of prevailing cordiality between India and Pakistan, as deeply-divided religio-politico-cultural systems, often leading to mutual recriminations. 13


The picture of domestic environment affecting the foreign policy perceptions could not be complete unless there is complementary survey of the changes in India's domestic politics which affect India's perceptions.

After the emergency and with the Janata Party coming to power following the 1977 elections, subtle variation was evident in the dynamics of Indo-Pak relations. The new approach of the Janata party saw the scaling down of Pakistan factor in India's security considerations and the emphasis on restructuring and getting India back on the rails of "genuine non-alignment":

Janata Party's foreign policy was slightly less-Pak oriented and accommodative. Its threat perceptions were also of not that intensity as viewed by the congress party. The best illustration of cordiality between India and Pakistan in Janata period can be found out in the signing of Salal Dam pact in 1978. It, of course needs pointing out here that even during the years 1975 to 1977, India kept a low profile of threat

perceptions vis-à-vis Pakistan. This can be largely attributed to India's relaxed attitude towards Pakistan in the wake of the 1971 war and still lingering memories of the victory. As far as Pakistan's perceptions are concerned, the replacement of Mrs. Gandhi — who was viewed as imperious — by Janata Party was quite appreciated and welcomed by Pakistan as strengthening Indo-Pak relations. 15

Again when Mrs. Gandhi returned to the helm of affairs, Pakistan adopted an almost paranoid stance. A Pakistani Scholar in this context remarked that "with the return of Mrs. Gandhi to power, the process of normalization has not stopped but some of the old fears and misunderstandings have reappeared. This is because of Mrs. Gandhi's one-sided stand on Afghanistan and her phobic reaction to Pakistan's rearmament." 16

Another issue having a continued bearing on India's perceptions is the Kashmir problem. In


the initial years of Bhutto's period, the Kashmir problem was deliberately played down but Bhutto did not close the issue. Immediately after assuming his office as new President, he referred to the issue of Kashmir as "still open" and yet to be settled to the satisfaction of both parties. At the same time, Bhutto conceded that Pakistan could not wage any more wars for the settlement of Kashmir issue. He candidly admitted the futility of resorting to force tactics with a "dominant India" and said "now, that position (of confrontation) does not exist any more; I know it better than others. It is not going to exist in future also".

By the outcome of Simla Agreement of 1972, one could judge that India improved its position comparatively on the Kashmir issue. India compelled Pakistan to revise, the old Cease-Fire Line (CFL) imposed by the United Nations to the new Actual Line of Control (ALC), thereby keeping for itself the strategic points in the vital Kargil sector.

17. STATESMAN (New Delhi), 27 March 1972.
and also keeping its legal claims on the Kashmir alive. 18

Two more developments saw to it that Kashmir issue was not allowed to affect the Indo-Pak relations. They are (a) Pakistan's efforts to modify the constitutional status of Pak-Occupied-Kashmir (POK) thereby implying Pakistan's acquiescence to India's accession of Kashmir, (b) the agreement concluded between Sheikh Abdullah and Government of India on 25 February 1975 to break the impasse on the Kashmir status in the Indian Union. The Indian position on the Kashmir issue seemed to be accepted implicitly by Bhutto and in his time the references to the Kashmir issue were very moderate. 19

But this complacent position of Pakistan was altered radically by 1977 with the military junta take over. Unlike Bhutto, Gen. Zia had little trouble in raising up the Kashmir issue in various international and national fora, much

19. ibid, pp. 165-8.
to the chagrin of Indian leadership. Gen. Zia was obviously trying to keep the Kashmir issue alive for the consumption of domestic politics. He stated clearly, "in India, it may be or may not be difficult; But in Pakistan what has for the last thirty five years been done, I cannot undo; for 35 years Pakistan got wrapped up (the Kashmir issue) in its internal politics. I can not unwrap it even if I had all the intentions." 20

Thus, even at the end of the seventies, the issue of Kashmir still remained as a major strategic dispute, whose acquisition is sought by both India and Pakistan for political, religious and prestigious reasons.

It is quite clear from the foregoing that the domestic politics of India and Pakistan tend to affect their mutual security perceptions and strategic relationship.

A vital factor in the discussion of India's security concerns vis-a-vis Pakistan is the nuclear

20. quoted by Sawhney, N.11, p. 87.
dimension. In relation to this nuclear dimension there are three major developments in the period under study. They are: (a) the peaceful Nuclear Explosion (PNE) in 1974, by India and its security fall-out on India's relations with Pakistan, (b) the "islamic bomb" of Pakistan and its implications for India's security and (c) the politics of Nuclear weapons Free Zone (NWFZ) proposal for South Asia and India's security perceptions.

Initially Pakistan and India shared similar stance on certain issues of nuclear programme. For instance, both of them accepted the ban on the nuclear tests for military purposes. Both signed the partial test Ban treaty (PTBT) of 1963. (Pakistan while being a signatory to PTBT unlike India, did not ratify it later on). India and Pakistan had expressed strong support for the proposal of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT). 21

This initial complacency and acquiescence towards one another's nuclear policies was shattered by the Indian atomic test of 1974. It is obvious

that this nuclear test of India has ramifications beyond the Indo-Pak security scenario; But it is Pakistan that was the most concerned of all about India's nuclear capability. 22

From the Indian point of view the nuclear test was conducted for harnessing nuclear energy for peaceful purposes and to effectively demonstrate the pitfalls of Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and its underlying discriminatory provisions. This nuclear explosion was the most important event in the Indian security considerations after the Bangladesh war during the period under survey. After this test, there was an elevation, easily discernible, in India's status position and prestige, mostly psychological, a vital component for the achievement of objectives of national security in the long run. It is notable that the majority of security obsessions in Indian policy were made lighter in the wake of this nuclear test. 23

22. For a study of India's nuclear test, see Dieter Braun "Implications of India's Nuclear Policy for the Region" in Abbas Amiris, ed., The Persian Gulf and Indian Ocean in International Politics (Teheran, 1975), pp. 197-226.

Expectedly Pakistan was greatly distressed by the addition of nuclear power to the already dominant position of India. Pakistan cited it as an instance of India's hegemonic designs and demonstration of its hostile and aggressive intentions. Munir Ahmed Khan, the then Chairman of Pakistan's Atomic Energy Commission projected the nuclear test of India as a great blow perhaps a fatal one, to all international efforts for containing the spread of nuclear weapons”. Azia Ahmed, the then Minister of State for Foreign Affairs and Defence in Pakistan's Cabinet, while attending the June 1974 Conference of Islamic Countries' Foreign Ministers' Conference at Kuala Lumpur tried to internationalize the fears of Pakistan by referring to the "unfortunate Indian nuclear test" setting precedent for Israel and South Africa going the Indian way and pleaded for international support by arguing that "it is

therefore not a matter which concerns Pakistan alone or only the non-nuclear nations in India's neighbourhood. It concerns the entire world community.25 (emphasis added)

Bhutto also tried to exploit the fall-out of the Indian nuclear test for twin purposes: (a) to put forward a strong case for Pakistan being strengthened in the defence aspects in the wake of Indian nuclear tests, (b) and to utilize India's nuclear test to serve his domestic political compulsions.26

As a keen analyst of Pakistani affairs observes it, the main objectives of Pakistan's protests to India's nuclear test were threefold: (a) to internationalise Pakistan's security psychosis by building up anti-India feeling in international politics and thereby derive and mobilise the case for Pakistan's external assistance - politically, militarily and economically, particularly from the U.S., (b) to put forward the case of flouting the NPT provisions by Indian nuclear test and hence the plea that the "aid line" from the West towards

25. Quoted by Mukerjee, N. 24, p. 263.
26. ibid, p. 266-8.
India should be cut off, (c) finally to serve its own domestic and foreign political needs. Most of Pakistan's propaganda was clearly directed towards South Asian states and major powers. 27

Despite all these efforts by Pakistan, it was clear that India's emergence as a regionally dominant power in the post - 1971 phase was reinforced by the 1974 nuclear test. In this regard, an Indian strategic analyst observes that with this nuclear test, the Indian military potential, strike capability and assault strength were enhanced considerably vis-a-vis than those of Pakistan. 28 This nuclear test particularly helped India in meeting its requirements of influence and political leverage over the major powers.

Even though much of the discussion on Pakistan's nuclear capability was talked about only in the wake of India's nuclear test, the nuclear programme of Pakistan started much before the Indian nuclear test. Pakistan's nuclear programme

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can be traced from 1958 itself.  

Bhutto was the major figure in Pakistan's nuclear policy. He himself confessed that Pakistan's nuclear programme was slated to progress forward for bomb-making.

From Indian security consideration, the "Islamic bomb" of Pakistan had considerable significance. If Pakistan goes ahead in the acquisition of nuclear weaponry, the options before India would be drastically curtailed. India's nuclear options thus at one level are conditioned by Pakistan's nuclear postures and intentions also. However

29. For an historical account of the Pakistan's efforts to acquire nuclear efforts see P.B. Sinha and R.R. Subramanian, Nuclear Pakistan: Atomic Threat to South Asia (New Delhi, 1980); Kaushik and Mehtostra, n. 87, pp. 33-89; D.K. Palit and P.K.S. Namboodri, Pakistan's Islamic Bomb (New Delhi, 1979), pp. 3-44.

30. Z.A. Bhutto, If I am Assassinated.... (New Delhi, 1979), pp. 133-7.

even considering that both Pakistan and India, possessing the nuclear arsenal, India's position in the event of a nuclear war would be far better than that of Pakistan's. An analyst pertinently observes, "Given the Indian nuclear superiority which may be augmented in 1980's, it is unlikely that a Pakistani first strike against India would be able to destroy India's nuclear response capability. Pakistan may be able to damage India but the Indian response would probably cause a greater damage to Pakistan as a result of starting a nuclear war with India. This damage is likely to be much greater to Pakistan and probably even greater than what it has at stake. As a small country with centralized industry and population, Pakistan is very vulnerable to nuclear destruction, even if a limited number of bombs are used. It is likely at least in the short run that Pakistan would have a vulnerable nuclear force with only a first strike capability. In a situation of conflict, especially during a conventional war, which might be going badly for Pakistan, if India expects Pakistan to use nuclear weapons, they might pre-empt and destroy its nuclear installations.

Thus eventhough Pakistan's nuclear arsenal would definitely pose a threat to India's security, in the ultimate analysis, it is Pakistan which will be heavily incapacitated for a long time to come, in the case of outbreak of a nuclear war. Thus, Indian position has an edge because of its size, economy and capability to sustain the attack and more vitally, the ability to return the strike.

Another element in the nuclear issue in Indo-Pakistan relations is the Pakistani backed nuclear weapons free zone for South Asia. Pakistan proposes this immediately after the Indian nuclear test i.e. in 1974; India promptly rejected this proposal. Since then Pakistan has been persistently campaigning both at the regional and international levels for its proposal. 33

India consistently objected to the Pakistan's proposal for declaring South Asia as a nuclear weapon Free zone on the following grounds: (a) in Indian perceptions, the ideological underpinnings of both NPT and NWFZ were one and the same.

As India had never accepted the nature of provisions of NPT, the same stand applied to NWFZ also.\(^3\) (b) Indian rejection of "nuclear guarantee" from external sides, as the "nuclear hegemonism" is inconsistent with the idea of NWFZ, (c) India also perceived that the viability and practicability of NWFZ was very much doubtful, (d) India wanted the chinese and the Indian ocean dimensions to be included within the South Asia NWFZ to make it geographically effective and to the satisfaction of the regional powers concerned,\(^3\) (e) India in line with its policy on peaceful nuclear explosion (PNE), considered the idea of NWFZ as superfluous and redundant; and (f) finally the Indian nuclear options would be definitely cut down in the event of South Asia being a nuclear weapon free zone without taking into account the global forces operating and intervening in South Asian affairs. So India believed that his proposal was only mooted

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35. For the Indian considerations in this regard, see T.T. Poulose, "The Politics of Nuclear Free Zones and South Asia", Pacific Community, vol. 8, no. 3, April 1977, pp. 541-60.
As India had never accepted the nature of provisions of NPT, the same stand applied to NWFZ also, \(^{34}\)

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\(^{34}\) For an Indian perspective on this NWFZ, see P.S. Jaya Ramu, "Nuclear Weapon Free Zone, Non-Proliferation Treaty and South Asia", in K. Subramanyam, ed., Nuclear Myths and Realities: India's Dilemma (New Delhi, 1981) pp. 71-86; D.K. Palit and P.K.S. Namboodri, Pakistan's Islamic Bomb (New Delhi, 1979), pp. 123-31.

\(^{35}\) For the Indian considerations in this regard, see T.T. Poulose, "The Politics of Nuclear Free Zones and South Asia", Pacific Community, vol. 8, no. 3, April 1977, pp. 541-60.
with a design to "restrain India from exercising its nuclear options". 36

Pakistan's sincerity in this regard was also quite suspicious. Its intentions behind the proposal for NWFZ are summarised by an analyst in the following manner: "Pakistan will continue its efforts to embarrass India in international forums by demanding that South Asia be made a nuclear free zone of peace; that India should open its nuclear installations to international inspection and that India should never undertake the production of nuclear weapons. By making these demands, some of which are unacceptable to India, Pakistan hopes to gain international support for its position and provide an excuse for going nuclear itself at a later date." 37 (emphasis added) Thus the proposal for NWFZ remained more on the diplomatic level and instead of reducing the misconceptions in Indo-Pak equation, rather helped in escalating them.

36. Palit and Namboodri, n. 34, p. 123.
Another related issue in India's security perceptions is the arms build-up of Pakistan and India's legitimate concerns on it.

Given the nature of mutual misperceptions and the strained relations between the two nations, the impact of the arms build-up of Pakistan on the Indian security perceptions is quite obvious. So it is not surprising that from time to time, the arms build-up and the military balance between the two countries have often become a source of considerable anxiety.

The Table (APPENDIX I) gives a panoramic view of comparative positions of India and Pakistan from 1972 to 1979, illustrating the trends in terms of military expenditures, respective military strengths, GDP's share in defence expenditure and so on.

From the study of the given table, one can easily see the rising level of expenditure on the

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arms build-up on the part of Pakistan during the period under study. Both India and Pakistan increasingly spent on arms purchase considerable part of their state exchequer in the period 1972 to 1979. Of the two it was obvious that in relative terms Pakistan was bent on increasing considerably the defence expenditure share in over-all government expenditure. 40 To illustrate the point under analysis, Pakistan spent 5.8% of its GNP on defence in 1970 and by the end of 1979 it still spent 5% of its GNP, in between years the highest being 6.7% of GNP. In the same period, India spent 3.0% of GNP in 1970 and by the end of 1979 its defence share in GNP remained constant at 3.0%, the highest being 3.5% only that too in 1971-72 in which the Indo-Pak war took place.

If the ratio between the CGE and ME is observed, the difference will be glaring showing the extent of Pakistan's spending spree in terms of

defence allocations. In the period 1970-1979, Pakistan spent 31.9% CGE on military in 1970 and it was 21.7% by 1979, in between the highest being 43.6% comprising almost half of the government expenditure on military only. In the same period the highest for India was 21.6% of CGE in 1971; while it was mere 18.8% in 1970, by 1979 it further came down to 16.9% of the Central Government expenditure (C.G.E.) (vide column 6 of table).

Even in other indicators like armed forces per thousand people, Pakistan showed steady increase while India's figures were almost static (see col. 11 of the table). Same is the case with the per capita military expenditure of both these countries (see column 10 of the table).

On the whole, it is clear that while Pakistan did not hurt the immediate Indian security interests, but it succeeded in putting India in a corner by its enhanced defence expenditure and arms build-up in the years 1972-1979. 41

41. A.G. Noorani, India, the Super Powers and the Neighbours: Essays in Foreign Policy (New Delhi), 1985, see pp. 2-10 and 168-88.
It has been mentioned earlier that Pakistan's external linkages have a vital bearing on the Indo-Pak security equation. First to deal with of these linkages is the Pakistan's relations with the Muslim world particularly with the West Asian Countries.

By the turn of 1972 Pakistan had emerged with clear identity of interests and clarity of its geo-political orientations with the Muslim world. Pakistan's increasing efforts during the period under study to make itself an integral part of the Muslim world had a clear cut objective. Pakistan's dissatisfaction with the West particularly with the United States in the context of 1971 Indo-Pak war on the one hand and the increasing influence and clout of the oil-rich Arab world compelled Pakistan to revise its strategy towards the West Asian Countries. Pakistan expected that this geo-political reorientation would help in strengthening its position vis-a-vis India. 42

42. For an analysis of the foreign policy of Pakistan in the wake of 1971 war, see Shrin Tahir-Khali, "Foreign Policy of New Pakistan," Orbis, vol. 20, no. 3, Fall 1976, pp. 733-60.
It is interesting to note that Pakistan's leaders who once considered these Muslim ties as "Zero" now fervently sought the same ties in order to recapture its image and status. In other words these ties became a refuge for a vanquished Pakistan following the 1971 war. Throughout the seventies, Pakistan continued its efforts to forge stronger links with other Muslim countries.

The withdrawal of Pakistan from SEATO in 1973 and its active participation in Regional Cooperation for Development (RCD) - were intended to drive home the point that for Pakistan, hereafter, the ties with the Muslim world are a vital priority in its foreign policy. The Muslim nations in South-West Asia, responding to Pakistan's overtures, gave solid financial support to Pakistan. To illustrate, from 1973 to 1976, Pakistan gained over 1 billion dollars from the assistance of these countries. The notable point here is not the quantity of the financial amount that Pakistan obtained, but the quality and nature of the aid and support it elicited from the Muslim countries.

43. Figures quoted by Tahir-Kheli, N.42, p. 752.
Pakistan realised in the aftermath of 1971 war that banking on the West would deprive it of any flexibility in its foreign policy operation. Further the credibility of the West was very much suspect in the light of 1971 war. In order to strengthen its weakened position, Pakistan repeatedly made a bid to identify itself with the oil-rich Arab countries. 44

Given this context of Pakistan's relations with the Muslim countries, India was quite apprehensive of the resultant implications of these ties. India was very much concerned about the consequential impact on its position due to Pakistan's intensive efforts to enlist the moral and material support of the Muslim countries. When 1971 war was in its mid-course, the Shah of Iran had reportedly "offered Pakistan military aid, not only to quell the internal rebellion but also to protect itself from an Indian attack. This created the Indian perception

44. For an account of Pakistan's efforts, see M.G. Weinbaum and Gautam Sen, "Pakistan Enters Middle East", Orbis, vol. 22, no. 3, Fall 1978, pp. 595-612.
that Iran was about to utilize its newly procured arms (from the United States) to intervene in the affairs of the sub-continent and thus be a partner in the U.S. - China - Pakistan axis vis-a-vis India. India's suspicions grew further when Shah of Iran was reported to have said that any invasion on Pakistan would be tantamounted as an invasion on Iran.46

While in Bhutto's period, Iran played an important role, in Zia's regime, it was Saudi Arabia which started playing the role of the "Islamic benefactor". Prince Fahd of Saudi Arabia while visiting Pakistan declared that the security of Pakistan was "synonymous" with that of Saudi Arabia.47


46. Howard Wriggins, "Changing power relations between the Middle East and South Asia" ORBIS, Vol. 20, No. 3, Fall 1976, p. 799.

For India's security considerations, Pakistan's efforts to forge an alliance with the Muslim nations had two major strategic implications: (a) the transfer of military hardware to Pakistan via the Arab world, and (b) India's continued need for vital trade links with the oil-rich Arab world. 48

One of the traditional linkages of Pakistan that continued to influence the perceptions and position of Indian security during the period under survey was that of the United States and Pakistan. The examination of the U.S. - Pak relationship in the context of India's security should be predicated on the realistic assumption that as a super power, the United States has greater influence over what a regional or small power like Pakistan has in a bilateral relationship. Accordingly, it is mainly the United States' interests that determine the dynamics of the U.S. - Pak relationship.

In the immediate context of Pakistan's defeat in the 1971 war, the United States attention

48 For a perspective analysis of Pakistan's rationale behind its Islamic campaign and its impact on India's position, see Shirin Tahir-Kheli, "In Search of an Identity: Islam and Pakistan's Foreign Policy", in Added Dawisha, ed., Islam in Foreign Policy (London, 1983), p. 75, see also Tahir-Kheli, N.42, pp. 68-83.
towards South Asia was lowered considerably. This does not imply that the United States denied itself of its perceived status in the South Asian affairs. The Nixon-Kissinger perception of the strategic importance of the "middle-East-Pakistan-China" link kept the United States' interests in South Asia in tact.49

It must be noted here that in this period, the relations between the United States and Pakistan remained in low key partly because the United States' attention at this juncture was concentrated on the Middle Eastern affairs mainly.

Despite the markedly lower profile of the United States relationship with Pakistan, one issue continued to affect the Indian security considerations i.e. the United States arms supply to Pakistan. Even though the U.S. arms aid to Pakistan during the period under study remained in very low key, the Indian perceptions about the impact of the U.S. arms supply to Pakistan remained unchanged.

49. For American perspective in this connection, see Henry A. Kissinger, The White House Years (New Delhi, 1979), pp. 700-28.
What affected India's security in terms of the U.S. arms supply to Pakistan was not merely the quantitative aspect of the arms, but the resultant instability and tension-building due to the newly equipped Pakistan army. Every time, Pakistan got a set of new weapons from the U.S., the impact on the equilibirium, political and military, between India and Pakistan, got disturbed and forced India to take counter-vailing measures.

When questioned about the issue, the then Foreign Minister, A.B. Vajpayee, stated in Lok Sabha in 1977 that "the government of India has normalized relations with Pakistan and seeks to explore the possibilities of increasing beneficial cooperation between the countries of this region. We have brought to the notice of the U.S. Government, our concern at the danger of arms sales which could upset this process."

Even this complacent equilibirium between India and Pakistan prevailing at this time was


displaced by tension and mutual fear by the three events that took place at the end of 1979. These changes are: (a) the fall of Shah of Iran and the collapse of CENTO which affected the United States interests in the Middle East with the loss of frontline state in the form of Iran, (b) the entrance of the Soviet forces in Afghanistan creating the possibility of Soviets intruding into the Persian Gulf which scared the United States and (c) the replacement of moderate Carter regime by traditionally hawkish and Conservative Republican Reagan presidency. These led once again to the resurrection of the U.S. - Pakistan alliance, flow of the military aid and assistance to Pakistan and consequently the revival of traditional fears on the Indian side, affecting its security sensibilities. 52

VI

Another relationship that had influence on the Indian security considerations was the Sino-

Pak linkages. Unlike the U.S. - Pak relations, the Sino-Pak relationship has no alliance or commitment or treaty to underpin it. Nevertheless, the bonds between Pakistan and China were strong enough and the objectives of the relationship were sufficiently beneficial to each of them to sustain the relationship throughout this period.  

Pakistan courted with China as it was the only big power in the vicinity of India which was favourably inclined to Pakistan. Ironically, despite lack of any concrete support from China in the 1971 war, Pakistan continued to attach importance to its relations with China to deal with and strengthen its position vis-à-vis a more powerful and dominant India in the wake of 1971 war.  

When the Sino-U.S. normalization process was on the anvil, Pakistan played a very crucial role.

53. Here the Chinese dimension was analysed only in the context of Indo-Pak relationship as a separate chapter is to study the China's impact on India's security. So this should be kept in mind while observing the curtailed description.

role. In response to this, China took very pro-Pakistan stance in the Bangladesh crisis and afterwards also. Even though it did not help militarily, China made war-like noises and its support to Pakistan was in consistence with its past record of relations with Pakistan.

Pakistan derived diplomatic support from China in the wake of emergence of Bangladesh. China severely denounced Indian actions in this regard as "expansionist" and criticised India for being in "collusion" with "Social Imperialists" of the Soviet Union. The outcome of the 1971 war was considered a big blow to the Sino-Pak relationship. 55

China continued to support Pakistan's actions even after Indian victory in the 1971 war. Conceding the demands of Bhutto, China did not even recognise Bangladesh until 1975 while Pakistan itself recognised Bangladesh in 1974 itself. China even stalled the admission of Bangladesh as a Member of the United Nations. 56


When India conducted peaceful Nuclear Explosion (PNE) in 1974 and made Sikkim as an integral part of its federal set-up, both China and Pakistan took an identical stand on these events and denounced India as a destabilizing force in the region.  

The 1974 India's nuclear test solidified the strategic consensus between China and Pakistan that India would be a security menace to both of them, if it acquired nuclear weaponry. Despite this strategic consensus and Pakistan's eagerness to have technological exchange of nuclear know-how from China since 1964 (China conducted its first nuclear test in 1964), there was not any actual material help from China to Pakistan until 1976. This was partly due to the fact that till then Western countries were assisting Pakistan. At the same time China supported Pakistan's proposal for Nuclear Weapon Free Zone for South Asia.

57. Mehrotra, N. 54, p. 71.

It was clear that Pakistan always viewed the "anti-Indian" stance as the strongest bond that China and Pakistan continued to share. Bhutto himself stressed this point when he termed the hostility towards India as a "fundamental common interest" between Pakistan and China. In line with this view, Pakistan continued its efforts to establish the Sino-Pak relations on a firmer basis in the seventies.

When Bhutto visited China from 31 January to 2 February 1972, China agreed to meet the immediate military requirements and arms needs, other financial concessions and liberal aid to strengthen "the depleted Pakistani defence". In the period from 1972 to 1977, China supplied arms worth more than 300 million dollars to Pakistan. Since 1972, there were number of exchange visits by military personnel, including one by the respective army chiefs. It was reported that Pakistan received not merely weaponry but also training facility for their air crew.


60. Ziring, N.6, p. 62.

61. For detailed account of the Chinese military delegation's visit to Pakistan, see K.N. Tamachandran, "Chinese Military Delegation to Pakistan", Strategic Analysis, vol. 1, no.1, April 1977, pp. 30-32; For some more details, see, Mehrotra, N. 54, pp. 70-77.
Besides all these things, the most alarming development from India's point of view was the construction of Karakoram highway (very near to Indian border) by China and Pakistan, passing through Gilgit of Pak-occupied Kashmir to serve their "political and strategic interests". This was perhaps the most serious of all the Sino-Pak actions that caused intense alarm in India's security considerations.

In 1974, the then premier of China, Hua Kuo-Feng, while giving a speech on the visit of Bhutto said "the Chinese government and people would as always" firmly support the government and people of Pakistan in their just struggle in defence of national independence, state sovereignty and territorial integrity and firmly support the people of Jammu and Kashmir in their just struggle for the right of self-determination."62 India could derive scarce comfort from this comment by a top Chinese party and government official which amply reflected the nature of Sino-Pak collusion vis-a-vis India.

62. Quoted by Mehrotra, N. 54, p. 70.
By 1979, China alarmed by the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan, further tried to cement its relationship with Pakistan to build up "a counter-force" to Soviet designs. When Foreign Minister of Pakistan Aga Shahi, met the then Chinese Foreign Minister in this period, the latter while not agreeing for a defence alliance, declared that China would assist Pakistan in meeting its "defence needs in the wake of altered circumstances". This "categorical assurance" by China was also to let the Indian leadership know that Sino-Pak relationship had acquired new dimensions by this period.63

Thus the Sino-Pak linkages continued to remain a major source of security concern for India during the period 1972 to 1979.64

63. PATRIOT (New Delhi), 21 January 1980.

64. For an account of the commonality of India factor in Sino-Pak relations, see Mohammed Ayoob, "India as a Factor in Sino-Pakistan Relations", International Studies, vol. 9, July 1967 - April 1968, pp. 279-300.