Chapter 4
Data Analysis and Interpretation – I
(The Indian Press)
Data Analysis and Interpretation - I: The Indian Press

Thematic and Qualitative Content Analysis (Event-wise analysis)

4.1 AGRA SUMMIT

4.1.1 The Times of India (Mumbai edition)

Analysis of coverage on the Agra Summit in The Times of India’s (TOI) Mumbai edition was carried out spanning over a period of two months (June 15 to August 15, 2001). The following key-words were used for analysis - ‘Agra Summit’, ‘Summit between India and Pakistan’, and ‘President Musharraf meets Prime Minister Vajpayee’. A total of 176 articles were derived from a step-wise screening cum sorting of data.

A comparative analysis of the nature of coverage – pre and post summit has emerged from major themes and content categories derived from data.

June: The major themes and content categories emerging from the analysis of coverage in the month of June were related to both fact-based news stories and opinionated pieces about prospects of success and failure of the summit. Announcement of the summit in June created visible excitement in the policy circles in both countries. Press coverage was devoted to a discussion about the surprise invitation for talks to General Musharraf by Prime Minister Vajpayee. The following content categories and themes emerged prominently in this newspaper from June 15 to June 30, 2001.

- Category I – Factual details about the Summit

Stories and commentaries in this category carried routine details about nature of the summit, its location and duration, agenda and proceedings as well as other factual details. Such stories elaborately outlined the program and planning related to the summit, security arrangements proposed for talks and an extensive
reportage of intricate details surrounding the summit. The sources for such news stories were usually government officials namely, The Ministry of External Affairs which sent out the official invite for the summit. For example, *Entire day set aside for Agra summit meet* (June 24, pg 1) contains details about proceedings of the Summit, Musharraf’s plan of visit and gives a clear indication of probable disagreement between the two parties.

- **Category II – Political developments in Pakistan**

  Announcement of the summit coincided with political developments in Pakistan during which General Musharraf (seen in the Indian press as the architect of the Kargil war) assumed the position of the Chief Executive of Pakistan. This development was framed in the Indian English press as detrimental to the prospects and possibility of democratic rule in Pakistan. In this newspaper, there was a hint towards this development’s impact on the summit. Dissidence witnessed in Pakistan around the appointment of Musharraf as president was also a point of discussion. For example, *Musharraf comes in for flak from Commonwealth, UK* (June 21, pg 12) expressed dissatisfaction on part of both, the U.K. and Commonwealth towards Musharraf’s efforts to anoint himself as President of Pakistan. Questions were raised on whether Musharraf was indeed a legitimate representative of Pakistani people and their aspirations at the summit. An opinion piece by K. Subrahmanyam (*Beneath the clam, there could be a storm building up in Pakistan* – June 23, pg 1) delineates prospects of the summit based on prevailing political situation in Pakistan, conflict of opinion with the army and the legitimacy of Musharraf to be able to strike a deal with India. The writer tries to interpret and comprehend how the internal political scenario in Pakistan would impact fate of the summit.

- **Category III – Role of external actors**

  Keen interest was generated in the press about role and involvement of third parties in bilateral discussions between India and Pakistan. Since the Pakistan President had expressed keen interest in meeting leaders of the All Party Hurriyat Conference (APHC), the press discussed possibilities of their involvement in summit talks. The pre-summit coverage delved extensively on a
possible role of Hurriyat in the Indo-Pak standoff. Coverage reflected differences in opinion emerging from the Indian and Pakistani governments over role and extent to which a third party could be consulted for talks. For instance, in Seema Guha’s story, *Pakistan plays safe, keeps Hurriyat card close to its chest* (June 28, pg 1), official sources were quoted to express India’s displeasure at Musharraf’s possible meeting with Hurriyat leaders. Indian insistence on bilateral dialogue and Pakistani stand on consulting Hurriyat on Kashmir emerged as a signifier of deep differences between the two sides even before the summit had begun.

• **Category IV – Summit prospects and impact on the conflict**

  Pre-summit, press commentary in this newspaper accommodated positive and negative opinions from various quarters such as scholars, experts, civil society, peace activists and opposition parties in both countries. Prospects of the summit and its impact on tensed relations between India and Pakistan were subject of this commentary. Varied opinions, right from extreme negativity about upcoming talks at the summit (*Agra summit will not yield any worthwhile result: Thackeray*, June 28 – pg 5) to an expression of hope and positivity in results that the summit would yield (*Agra summit may herald the end of deadlock era* – June 29 & *Indo-Pak talks may lay pipeline to peace* – June 30), were found in this newspaper. Coverage in this newspaper also served as a window to the views of stake-holders on the ‘other’ side. For example, Rashme Sehgal’s story on June 29 (pg 12) - *Agra summit may herald the end of deadlock era*, included views from major political parties in Pakistan whereas Siddharth Varadarajan’s piece on June 30 (pg 1) - *Indo-Pak talks may lay pipeline to peace*, called for greater cooperation in soft areas like trade and economy and conveyed a possibility of positive and tension free relations as a result of the summit.

**July:** Analysis of press coverage in July was divided into two key phases. The first phase spanned from July 1 to 16, marking the pre-summit coverage as well as stories and commentaries published, as the summit was taking place. Second phase was the post-summit coverage between July 17 and 31. News content categories in this period revolved around the following themes:
- **Routine stories** – These stories carried details about Musharraf’s plan and programme during the summit, details of who would comprise his official delegation, choice of Agra as a venue for the summit and details about security arrangements made for the visit. For example, a story about where Musharraf would be staying during the summit (*Musharraf is likely to have a room with a good view*, July 4 – pg 7) outlined details of the visit. Such minute details found expression for the summit was under constant media glare and media made every effort to cover the most intricate details about the president’s visit. Examples of other stories in this category are – *Agra is off-limits for travelers and visitors* (by Bhaskar Roy, July 13, pg 9) and *63-member Pakistan delegation will accompany Gen Musharraf* (July 6, pg 8).

- **Discussion on contentious issues** – Commentaries and opinion pieces highlighted upon several contentious issues in the Indo-Pak relationship. Diverse range of issues related to Kashmir, Siachen, no-war pact, nuclear risk reduction and low intensity conflict were a part of the discourse in this newspaper. However, among these the Kashmir issue and opinions on it were at the centre-stage. Stories were devoted to discussing probable solutions of the Kashmir issue, and at the same time nationalistic opinions on Kashmir also found space in news coverage. For instance, *Kashmir’s like Jerusalem but easier to solve* (July 8, pg 14) and *Kashmir’s status is non-negotiable, asserts Jaswant* (July 13, pg 1). Thereby, difference in opinions emerged with regard to nature of deliberations on Kashmir. As the summit drew nearer, Kashmir became the focus of commentary and a nationalistic stance was repeatedly asserted.

- **Cost-benefit analysis, summit related expectations** – Stories and commentaries that outlined expectations from the summit, both positive and negative were a regular feature of coverage. Among stories that raised positive expectations were those that offered a realistic account of summit proceedings. Critical opinions about the summit, especially of those opposing it and predicting its failure were accommodated. For example, *Agra summit is a futile effort, says Altaf Hussain* (July 2, pg 12), *Kashmiri Pandits, Mahesh Bhatt condemn Indo-Pak summit* (July 12, pg 2).
Cultural & economic cooperation, summit impact – Several stories reported from a human perspective highlighted the importance of people to people contact, cultural and economic relations between India and Pakistan. Discussion about the summit’s impact on other ‘soft’ areas of cooperation also found space. This was in line with the official stance of the Indian side, which was keen to discuss Confidence Building Measures (CBMs) other than Kashmir. Such stories highlighted commonality of interest between the two countries and emphasized cooperation. For example, Wagah border hots up ... with pre-summit warmth (July 12, pg 7) encapsulated people’s views on re-establishment of cultural, social and travel linkages between the two countries.

Apart from the above discussed content categories that appeared predominantly during the coverage, stories covered wide ranging issues such as questions over the legitimacy of General Musharraf’s ability to represent aspirations of Pakistanis at the summit, role of third parties such as the U.S. and Hurriyat leaders (Agra summit has ‘made in U.S.’ tag attached to it, July 7 – pg 7 and No NDA party will attend Pak tea party, July 12 – pg 1). Media’s role was also discussed in run up to the summit, especially in terms of the nature of media coverage, strategies used by media and competition among media houses to cover the summit. However, there also were critical commentaries on media hype built around the summit. A few op-ed pieces, especially those by Siddharth Varadarajan (Not Just Pakistan, India Too Needs Success at Agra, July 12 – pg 10) criticized extreme positions taken by the two governments.

Figure 4.1: Front page Agra Summit (The Times of India)
An examination of the photographs on front page reveals Musharraf’s India connection (on his visit to Neharwali Haveli). The handshake was focused upon stands as a sign of optimism. Both images reflect positive and vibrant mood during start of the summit. Such positive media images established an upbeat mood and contributed to raising public expectations from the talks.

**July 17 to July 31:** This was a crucial period because of the culmination of the summit as well as emergence of the post-summit scenario. As the summit progressed, this newspaper started reporting positively and explored the possibility of a joint statement. Positive stories about impact of the summit on other spheres of Indo-Pak relations were also reported.

For example, A story by Bhaskar Roy – *Summit effect gives bounce to cricket pitch* (July 16, 2001) predicted the resumption of cricketing ties between India and Pakistan as a result of positive atmosphere around the summit.

Commentaries post July 17 focused on breakdown and failure of the summit. Major content categories derived through an analysis of news coverage in this period were:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reasons of summit’s failure</th>
<th>Blame-game and criticism of government</th>
<th>Post-Summit opinion in Pakistan</th>
<th>Post-Summit opinion in International and South Asian quarters</th>
<th>Future prospects of Indo-Pak relations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Coverage focused on an analysis of what went wrong at the summit, what could be the reasons for failure of talks and why the two sides could not</td>
<td>Post-summit coverage reported stories where both Indian and Pakistani official machinery blamed the ‘other’ for the</td>
<td>Opinions and extracts from Pakistani media in the post-summit scenario were also found in this newspaper. This gave a window to</td>
<td>Opinions about the post summit scenario among the western countries as well as in India’s immediate neighborhood were reported in this newspaper.</td>
<td>A broader category of media deliberations on future prospects of relations between the two countries emerged in</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.1: Mid-July Coverage in The Times of India
come down to a draft joint declaration that eventually led to initiation of a blame game from both sides. Terms such as ‘disagreement’, ‘impasse’, ‘failure’, ‘deadlock’, ‘fiasco’ were used in headlines. Media agenda thus shifted from pinning positive hopes about the summit to analyzing reasons behind its failure.

**For example:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How the Agra summit lost its way (July 18, pg 1)</th>
<th>How India lost the propaganda war (July 20, pg 8)</th>
<th>Agra PR disaster: Jaswant seen as the villain of the piece (July 22, pg 8)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>summit’s failure. Special reference was made to President Musharraf’s breakfast meeting with Indian editors. Blame game gained momentum as statements from the Indian leadership citing Pakistani intransigence for the summit’s failure surfaced in this newspaper. <strong>For example:</strong> Sushma blames Musharraf for derailing summit (July 21, pg 12), Generalspeak makes clear why summit failed (July 21, pg 1) and Indian trio scuttled summit, allege Pakistani officials (July 21, pg 1).</td>
<td>Indian readers about opinion prevalent in Pakistan. Articles that were sourced from Islamabad post the summit contained the Pakistani view, which usually revolved around criticisms leveled against President Musharraf over his non-achievements in the summit. <strong>For example:</strong> Musharraf’s visit was a political gimmick (July 19, pg 11), PPP, PML swear by Simla, Lahore pacts (July 22, pg 9).</td>
<td>International opinion about the summit’s achievements was framed with a positive undertone, whereby an air of optimism was expressed by US, UK and other countries about progress made in Indo-Pak relations after the summit. Opinions of important stakeholders such as the Hurriyat (whose meetings with the Pakistani president had invited criticism from the Indian side) were also incorporated in the coverage. <strong>For example:</strong> Disappointing summit, but it has broken the ice: Lankan media (July 19, pg 12), U.S. pushes for continuing engagement to deal with India-Pakistan imbroglio (July 19, pg 11).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Post-summit analysis continued through the last week of July, wherein media’s role in the talks was dissected and viewed through a negative prism. The role of media in the summit was assessed for its contributions as well as failures related to international negotiations and diplomacy. While the Indian media came in for a lot of criticism, the Pakistani side was heaped with praises for its media management. Towards the end of July, one could witness stories with an aggressive pitch intending to convey a tough message to Pakistan which was obvious fallout of summit’s failure.

**August 1-15:** This fifteen day period in August was devoted to a scrutiny of the summit on lines of introspection, blame game and criticism by various forces over the conduct of the summit. The dominant theme that emerged during this period was the rising level of violence in Jammu and Kashmir. This was significant in the post-summit scenario as rise in violence was seen to be directly linked to the summit’s failure. Letters by readers during this period were devoted to dissecting the role of media and communication machinery in the summit (*Face off*, August 3 – pg 12). Commentaries in this period discussed the nature and dynamics of Pakistani politics in light of the summit (*When Hawks Coo: Sell a Peace Deal to Pakistan’s Army*, August 1 – pg 10).

**Inferences:**

Aided by Gadi Wolfsfeld’s ‘Political Contest Model’ that seeks to understand the news media’s role in conflict in terms of a competition among conflicting parties for political control, following inferences were derived at the end of analysis:

- Though the coverage of the summit by this newspaper fluctuated extensively, focus on the Kashmir issue found prominence throughout. This may be

---

1 ‘Fire will be met with fire, PM warns Pakistan’ (July 27, pg 1) – Reflection of the aggressive and nationalistic stance adopted by the Indian PM, clearly showing that the outcome of the summit was not as had been anticipated by the national leaders. Another example is: ‘PM placates BJP members, lashes out at Musharraf’ (July 29, pg 1) – Reflection of the hard-line and nationalistic position adopted by the Indian govt. in the post-summit scenario.
interpreted as a failure to reflect the stand of the Indian government and consequent corroboration of Pakistan’s agenda. The tone of coverage in this newspaper began with being extremely positive to raising hype and expectations from the summit to finally gaining realistic ground after the talks culminated.

- In the competition of control over news agenda, the Pakistani side emerged as a clear winner. Though in the driver’s seat, the Indian side failed to put across a clear cut agenda via news media, resulting into accusations of poor media management and public relations failure. In fact, Indian media was regarded as a party to the summit’s failure, especially for raising unnecessary expectations and failing to emphasize India’s position on contentious issues.

- It was certainly statist agenda that drove coverage in this newspaper. However, the pre-summit coverage did show signs of drifting from a state-led agenda. Post-summit scenario reflected the confused state in which government and media found themselves. Both failed to opt for a firm stand. Discussion on the core issue of Kashmir was negligible in the pre-summit coverage though it gained prominence as the summit started approaching.

- Specifically for this newspaper, the researcher observed a trend of speculative articles which indulged in speculations about fate of the summit. Unwavering reliance on official sources was also observed, though news sources at many times were not clearly identified. Post-summit coverage was in-depth and wide ranging in contrast to pre-summit views.

- Through the coverage, one could gather that the Pakistani side remained firm and did not label the summit as a failure. The Indian side remained confused and could not decide how to label the summit i.e. it failed to determine if the summit was a success or a failure.

- Through special columns such as ‘News Analysis’ and ‘Summit Solutions’, The Times of India’s coverage offered varying perspectives on Indo-Pak relations – from offering solutions to contentious issues in the relationship to prescribing advisories to the state on how to deal with negotiations during the
summit. Thus, the coverage went beyond stating already known facts and brought to readers various complex political and historical dimensions of the troubled relationship.

- The coverage in this newspaper incorporated views from the ‘other’ i.e. the Pakistani side readers were sensitized towards political dynamics in Pakistan and opinions of various stakeholders in that country.

- Few stories in this newspaper made extremely simplistic assumptions about complex issues in the Indo-Pak relationship. Coverage trivialized and sensationalized statements out of context. Along with serious reportage and intellectual columns, space was also given to other information in the form of cartoons, graphics and special columns.

4.1.2 The Indian Express (Delhi edition)

For the Agra summit, the Delhi edition of The Indian Express (IE) was analyzed from July 14 to 29, 2001. A total of 101 articles were procured for analysis. Due to limitations of archival availability and enormous volume of articles, the above mentioned period was selected for analysis.

Coverage of the summit in this newspaper began with positive expectations around the event. A front page story on July 14 (Good morning, to a possible day in history) contributed to creating an optimistic air around the event. The following content categories figured prominently in the coverage:

- **Factual and routine news stories** – Under this category, summit related developments were covered with vast amount of detailing. Coverage in this newspaper devoted print space to scrutiny of the summit in form of routine stories, analytical commentaries and special summit related features. News and information about other events was on the backburner during this period. Stories that were not directly related to political negotiations, but provided interesting information about the summit also found space. For example, Their job: to strike the right chords (July 14, pg 1) referred to the use of culture and cultural programs during such official visits to create a positive mood. Another story on front page spelled out details of the two men who were given
The responsibility of guarding Gen Musharraf (The two men in Agra who will guard the Guest). The activities of the General and his wife on the sidelines of the summit were also reported in detail (Sehba Musharraf’s day out in Delhi, July 15 – pg 2).

- **The Summit and Kashmir** – Stories and analysis related to the Kashmir issue appeared prominently in this newspaper. Of the four categories, this surfaced as the most dominant and recurring theme. Coverage juxtaposed mood surrounding the summit at three locations – in the capital i.e. Delhi, Agra, (where the summit was taking place) and Jammu and Kashmir. In many commentaries about the summit, the valley was placed at centre stage to examine opinions and expectations surrounding this historic event. Coverage of the summit was somehow directly linked to the issue of Kashmir. Stories reflected hopes and aspirations of people in the valley and discussed impact of the talks on the political future of Kashmir. Stories were reported from the human interest point of view wherein role of the military was criticized and human rights violations were condemned.

For instance, a special and dedicated column – “Meanwhile In The Valley …” reported stories from Jammu and Kashmir in light of summit related developments. Sentiments and opinions of ordinary Kashmiris were accommodated in these stories.

- **But evening here is a ghostly blackness** – July 14, pg 1
- **30 years after husband vanished, she builds dreams along LoC** – July 15, pg 5
- **In Jamat’s home town, the General is a tourist** – July 15, pg 3

- **Human-centric stories and historical nostalgia** – Coverage in this newspaper served an educative purpose as factual information and analysis of historical events between India and Pakistan were referred to repeatedly. A reference to historical events was made in order to provide context to the coverage, especially because the summit was not a one off event in India-Pakistan relationship. Providing factual as well as historical information to readers about past declarations and agreements between the two nations served
to build a backdrop for the coverage. For example, a column titled “Summit Special” (July 15, pg 7) provided intricate details on the history of Kashmir and previous agreements signed between the two.

Figure 4.2: July 15, page 7 (Historical and Educati ve coverage in The Indian Express, outlining details of contentious issues and already signed agreements)
Human interest stories from the Kashmir valley also emerged as a dominant theme in the coverage. Stories narrating the plight of families divided by the border, their inability to meet relatives on the other side and consequent human suffering served as a reminder to readers that Indo-Pak relations were more than mere political differences. Narrations of people facing visa related difficulties, conditions of Prisoners of War (PoWs), nostalgic references to events of the past were found repeatedly.

For example, *Split by border, they hang on each word – July 16 (pg 3)* is a story of families divided across the border, praying for success of the summit and resultant peace in the region. Other similar examples are:

- *Train to Sialkot: Nostalgia dies hard for some Jammu veterans* (July 16, pg 4) refers to memories before and during the partition. It highlights troubles that people face when they have to travel across the border.

- Stories accounting pitiable plight of PoWs in both nations and hardened official attitudes that ignore issues of humanity (*PoW relatives to confront General with spy accounts, Pak rights panel admits existence of Indian PoWs* – July 15, pg 5).

- Human interest stories from the remotest corners of Kashmir were reported in order to bring to limelight sufferings of ordinary Kashmiris at the hands of Indian military. Such stories adopted a critical tone towards the armed forces and held them responsible for brutality and atrocity in the valley (*The day General came, his ‘core’ issue got her face – July 16, pg 1)*.

**Opinion from Pakistani and International Press** – Coverage in this newspaper widely reflected opinions in both the Pakistani as well as the international press. This enabled readers to gain a comprehensive view of summit proceedings. Contributions and reportage from English and Urdu newspapers in Pakistan such as Friday Times, Jang, The News and Nawa-e-Waqt were incorporated in the coverage. Columns such as “Simply Summit”, “Dateline Agra”, “Pakistan Periscope”, “Ear to the ground”, “Summit Scribbling”, “The Spoilers”, were specifically devoted to summit related
coverage and information. These columns brought a wide range of opinions from the press in Pakistan, the Urdu press in Kashmir as well as the international press. These contained interesting trivia about the summit and exposed Indian readers to international coverage of the summit. Opinions of several Pakistani media persons who were in Agra to cover the summit found space in this newspaper, along with contributions from well known Pakistani opinion-makers such as Najam Sethi, Farhan Bokhari and others.

Post the summit, few other significant content categories that emerged were – dissection and scrutiny of the summit’s failure and successes, gains and losses; critical commentary on media’s role, opinions and summit related analysis from Pakistan. A critical analysis of the summit was carried out post July 17 in which the Indian side was severely criticized for its mishandling of events, especially poor news media management and opaqueness of the official information system. For instance, the front page on July 17 laid out a very gloomy picture of the post-summit scenario with a photograph of an isolated media centre and the use of phrases such as these - “It’s over in Agra”, “one reason for the failure in Agra tonight ....”, “In the valley, there hadn’t been much hope to begin with. So when the news of the summit’s collapse reached here ...”- Post the summit there were both positive as well as negative news stories and analysis from experts, some of whom reinstated hope and faith in the troubled Indo-Pak relationship (E.g.: July 24, pg 8: Beijing to Kargil to Agra by Mani Shankar Aiyar & Who calls the summit a failure – July 20, pg 8 by Saeed Naqvi).
Amidst disappointments, the front page in IE wrote off the summit, except for a bleak glimmer of hope as expressed in the bottom-most story with the Pakistani media pinning hopes on the summit’s success.
Inferences:

- Analyzing the coverage in The Indian Express under the framework of Political Contest Model revealed interesting insights about media-state relationship during a peace event. As opposed to the statist agenda, The Indian Express was critical in its coverage of the summit. It opposed the status quo that prevailed in Indo-Pak relationship and tried to examine summit related developments from a critical perspective. Coverage ventured beyond routine news stories and delved deeper into analytical considerations, offering a wide-ranging perspective on issues related to the summit.

- Initial coverage in this newspaper showed signs of being event driven and personality centric, as on the whole coverage was overwhelmed by leaders on both sides. Excessive importance given to description of Musharraf’s clothes, gestures, moods and his body language (“And his clothes are the medium ......”, “the salute”, “the general relaxes”, “the sartorial savvy”) demonstrated media intrusion and influence of political events on news media.

- Coverage in this newspaper revealed news media’s dependence on historical narratives in order to provide context and backdrop to its coverage of an important political event. In case of India-Pakistan conflict, it is inevitable to refer to past events to help readers connect with current developments in the relationship. A historical standpoint to coverage lends different layers to the analysis of significant political events.

- Pre-summit coverage in this newspaper was exhaustive and demonstrated an eye for detail, while incorporating both positive and negative opinions. Whereas post-summit coverage dealt with in-depth analysis and commentary bringing to the reader ground realities\(^2\) surrounding the talks and their

\(^2\) Here, ground realities refer to the realistic atmosphere after the talks culminated and failed to bring about a joint declaration between the two parties. Post the summit, media coverage did not proceed on a hype and information excess drive as the actual happenings at the summit talks had dawned upon the media with differences between India and Pakistan becoming more than evident.
consequent breakdown. Jubilant pre-summit coverage can be contrasted with gloomy but hopeful post-summit coverage, reinforcing Wolfsfeld’s contention that role of the news media in political conflict varies over time and circumstances.

- Kashmir was the central focus of many stories covered in this newspaper. This was quite contrary to official Indian agenda for the summit, which evidently shied away from accepting Kashmir as the centre-point of discussion. Focus on Kashmir related stories both in terms of people’s expectations from the summit as well as a critique of human rights violations by Indian army presented a shift from the statist agenda. This newspaper worked overtime to put forth the Kashmiri viewpoint and frame the summit around happenings in the valley.

- Coverage in The Indian Express was holistic and comprehensive in nature since it was a mix of routine news stories, fact based information analyzed from a historical lens, analytical commentaries by experts and innovative special feature columns that brought forth interesting, exclusive and little known details about the summit. Well-nuanced opinions from the Pakistani side were presented by Pakistani journalists, commentaries from Pakistani opinion makers and clippings from Pakistani newspapers.

- What was seen as clearly emerging from the coverage is a competition over control of news media by both sides that becomes a key determinant of how the event progresses. A competition among both parties for media control and information supremacy persists both before and after the event, in order to achieve political influence.

4.2 ATTACK ON INDIAN PARLIAMENT

4.2.1 The Times of India (Mumbai edition)

A total of 262 articles (news stories and commentaries) were derived from Proquest Historical Newspapers for the Mumbai edition of The Times of India. The period of analysis spanned from December 14, 2001 to January 31, 2002. Out of the 262 articles, sixteen were not relevant to the subject of the study and seven
stories/commentaries incorporated opinions from Pakistan. Entman’s Framing Theory is employed to analyze press coverage and elicit themes/content categories. Below presented are dominant content categories that emerged from the analysis.

- **Security** – Immediately after the attack, stories and commentaries on the theme of security dominated coverage in this newspaper. Opinions related to national security, defense and intelligence failure, security lapse and security threats emerged as sub-categories under this theme. A heightened sense of security in the wake of attack in different parts of the country was emphasized by highlighting the need to beef up security arrangements. India’s callous approach to security was vehemently criticized in commentaries and opinion pieces (*Security Faultlines: Our MPs Need ‘House’ Training*, December 15 – pg 10). Overall, this newspaper adopted an extremely critical posture and came down heavily on the government for its failure to protect the temple of Indian democracy. In context of security, the coverage was also critical of resistance by political elites to security checks and their perception of being above the established law (*Parliamentary stickers provide a ticket to ride*, December 14 – pg 8).

- **Debates on POTO** – A debate on POTO (Prevention of Terrorism Ordinance, 2001) prominently figured in the coverage during initial days. This debate was linked to state security in the context of increasing incidences of terrorism. Wide ranging opinions on POTO’s effectiveness to deal with terrorism found space in this newspaper. A polarized opinion about this law was expressed in terms of some favouring its enactment whereas some opining that it would be rendered meaningless in the midst of already existing laws on terrorism. For example, *Intelligence, not POTO* – December 14, pg 10; *Govt may exploit attack to push through POTO bill* (December 14, pg 9).

- **Terrorism** – After ‘security’, the content category of terrorism was found to be pre-dominant in coverage. Sub-categories under terrorism included stories on counter terrorist activities, opinion pieces critical of the government’s soft posture on terrorism, hard-line and nationalistic statements by leaders calling
upon people to unite against terrorism, developments in the international security environment in post 9/11 scenario and international support to India’s stand against terror. Stories and commentaries under this category pushed the blame on Pakistan for exporting terror to India, singling out evidences in support of India’s stand on terror and mobilizing popular opinion against terrorism. For instance - *Don’t test our patience, PM tells terror sponsors* (December 17, pg 7), *Pak anti-terror efforts not enough, says UK* (Jan 2, pg 9) and *Confront terrorism with the full might of the state* (December 16, pg 14). Tone of coverage in this category was critical of India’s policy with regard to terrorism and framed India as a weak, powerless entity fighting against terror.

Figure 4.4: December 16, page 14 (The Times of India)

Newspaper discourse discussed the do’s and don’ts the state should adopt in dealing with terrorism and provided suggestive measures as a counter response to increased terrorist activities.

- **Investigation of the attack** – From the coverage in this newspaper, it could be inferred that media posited itself as a parallel agency investigating the attack. Vivid and excruciating details of the manner in which the attack was carried out, the process of investigations into the attack were spelled out...
during coverage. Speculations about who could be involved in the attack, its motive and other possible targets of the attackers were debated with help from official sources namely police and intelligence officials (*PM may have been target*, December 14 – pg 1). Nature of the attack as well as the possibility of involvement of terrorist groups from Pakistan was discussed extensively. Though, many news stories under this category failed to clearly identify sources of information instead opting to use terms such as ‘highly placed sources’, ‘investigating agencies’, ‘officials’ etc. For instance, *Suspect’s former landlady wanted to evict him* (December 20, pg 9). Progress, twists and turns in on-going investigations were a major part of this category.

- **International opinions** – Under this category, reactions from prominent leaders in the US and the UK were covered. Stories expressing international support to India in the wake of terror attacks prominently figured under this theme (*Hong Kong papers urge India to seek international mediation*, December 23 - pg 9, *Diplomacy may be the best option, France tells India*, December 24 - pg 9). Role of the US in Indo-Pak stand-off as well as American concerns towards conflict escalation in the region also found space. Commentaries in this section discussed the attack in reference to post 9/11 strategic and security environment.

Other content categories derived were:

- Human interest stories about security personnel who laid down their lives in the attack and opinions of their grieving relatives, impact of Indo-Pak tensions on ordinary citizens.

- Impact stories related to security, trade, politics, culture and diplomatic relations between the two countries.

- Feature stories narrating experiences of Members of Parliament (MPs) during the attack.

- War of words, diplomatic exchanges and increased hostilities between India and Pakistan in the context of troop mobilization.
• Reactions of the Indian and Pakistani leadership, Pakistani involvement in the attack.

Inferences:

• Entire coverage in this newspaper was framed within the dominant paradigm of ‘security’. The issue of security permeated every aspect of coverage in this newspaper, ranging from possible security threats in the future to security precautions after the attack to a critique of Indian state’s approach to security issues. Coverage sharply criticized the attitude of political elites in the country towards security and impressed upon the fact that Indian state was least concerned about security of its people. Coverage contributed to security hype after the attack and succeeded in creating panic among citizens; first through heightened security concerns and then by upping the ante in terms of war with Pakistan. However, the coverage did attempt to express concerns on behalf of citizens with regard to security for the political elite versus security for ordinary people.

• In the initial days of coverage in TOI, Pakistan was not figured explicitly as a source that could be blamed for the terror attack. However, as coverage gained ground, Pakistan’s name appeared in news stories and reports. Early coverage contained indirect references to Pakistan and its involvement in the attack. These references were mostly subtle in the beginning and assumed nationalistic overture as investigations into the attack progressed. Coverage was given to hard-line and nationalistic sentiments expressed by Indian leaders, pointing fingers towards a possible Pakistani involvement in the attack. For instance - *Don’t test our patience, PM tells terror sponsors* (December 17, pg 7). Articles sourced from Pakistan in this newspaper were weak; they were neither detailed nor did they effectively provide the Pakistani counter-view. Reference to Pakistan was framed simplistically, either in terms of ‘Kashmir’ (not very frequent) or in terms of ‘terrorism’ (with repeated emphasis).

• Nature of sources used in the coverage of issues signals media’s dependence on information from official (state based) sources like police officials,
investigating officials, intelligence personnel and elite leadership of the country. This offers an extremely skewed picture of the issue concerned wherein official narrative stands out as dominant. There is no scope for an alternative understanding to emerge as the issue is viewed within the domain of ‘security’, ‘state’ and ‘terrorism’, wherein any sympathetic reference to anti-state activities/elements is considered unpatriotic. Lack of clarity and transparency towards sources employed in stories is clearly evident in face of non-attribution and non-identification of quotes. Speculative undertone to the coverage is particularly observed in this newspaper especially when investigations into the attacks proceeded. One story for instance predicts that such attacks will lead to incidences of communal disturbances in the country. Considering the magnitude and nature of the attack, it is quite clear that media indulge in speculation.

• Through its coverage, this newspaper tried to project the Parliament attack as a threat to Indian democracy. Calls for national unity were expressed in the coverage with terrorism framed as a threat that the entire country faced *(Country must be united in its fight against terrorism, December 15 - pg 5)*. The platform of this newspaper was used to exhibit solidarity of Indian public opinion, unity and integrity of the country in wake of a threat posed by the enemy. Thereby, media serve as a vehicle for mobilizing public opinion during such incidents.

• Though critical of political elite, TOI rarely challenges versions of investigation offered by the police and intelligence agencies. Security lapse was projected as a prominent theme compared to intelligence failure. As far as investigation of the attack was concerned, mostly official line was toed. Criticism of the government’s foreign policy response (diplomatic offensive) was mild, and not admonishing. Few follow-up stories were reported on issues related to investigation and the range of Pakistani perspectives was limited and restricted to official statements.

• A pre-dominantly western perspective was employed to frame the attack along with concerns for national security/interest. Stories and commentaries were
presented through a western perspective in context of an international security
environment in the post 9/11 scenario. News of the attack was framed in terms
of role of the US in the Indo-Pak stand-off as well as the impact of this stand-
off on the US led war against terror. A post 9/11 standpoint majorly informed
the coverage in this newspaper.

4.2.2 The Indian Express (Delhi edition)

Articles for coverage of The Parliament Attack in The Indian Express were
sourced from the newspaper’s archival office at Chandigarh. Approximately
seventy media commentaries were examined and analyzed from December 14,
2001 to January 14, 2002. These were inclusive of articles reported from Pakistan
and commentaries by Pakistani columnists. Due to limitations of archival
availability, only a few pertinent commentaries were selected as part of the
sample. The analysis below provides a generic overview of themes emergent from
the content.

Table 4.2: Major themes in The Indian Express (Parliament Attack Coverage)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Security</th>
<th>Nature of the attack</th>
<th>Investigations into the attack</th>
<th>Pakistani reaction to the attack</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sub-themes</td>
<td>Security lapse/failure</td>
<td>Detailed discussion on the way in which the</td>
<td>Details of the investigation carried out</td>
<td>Pakistani reaction to the attack was incorporated through coverage to the statements and official reactions emerging from the Pakistani press and opinion published in the Pakistani press (column titled “Pakistan Periscope”).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Debate on the security</td>
<td>the attack was carried out</td>
<td>into the attack</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>arrangement s post the attack</td>
<td></td>
<td>Opinions and views from investigating agencies (in the form of quotes)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Discussion on issues of</td>
<td>Nature of the threat emerging from the attack</td>
<td>Speculations about the identity of the attackers,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>national security in terms</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>of terror threat and weak</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

E.g.: Unprecedented coverage was given to Gen. Musharraf’s speech both pre & post January 12. The speech was framed
foreign policy response to terrorism | the attackers | Pakistani connection to the attack and claims of evidence demonstrating Pakistan’s involvement | as a historic development which could alter the course of Indo-Pak ties. The front page on January 13 was devoted to an analysis of the speech from various quarters thereby contributing to a hype of the General’s statements and raising expectations from the same.

Views expressed by Pakistani writers/columnists/experts

Table 4.3: Major themes in The Indian Express (Parliament Attack Coverage)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pre-dominant themes (Set II)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Themes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-themes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Pakistani non-cooperation on the issue of extradition of terrorists demanded by India

Repeated references to Pakistan’s role in promoting and supporting terrorism in India.

The war of words that ensued among the leaders of the two countries was framed as heated difference of opinion.

Diplomatic exchanges between the two countries.

in countering terrorism.

This provided a multiplicity of perspectives and strengthened the discourse on policy options to be looked at.

Opinions elicited from those holding key positions in government, defense strategists, retired army generals and former diplomats on the Op-Ed page.

Reactions of world leaders (through a column “Barks and Bites”) and international (read US) support to India’s stance.

Opinions elicited from those holding key positions in government, defense strategists, retired army generals and former diplomats on the Op-Ed page.

Reactions of world leaders (through a column “Barks and Bites”) and international (read US) support to India’s stance.

---

Figure 4.5: Front page coverage in Indian Express after General Musharraf’s speech (January 13, 2002)
Inferences:

- Indian response in this newspaper has been framed as anti-Pakistan with an evident dose of tough and hawkish statements from official machinery of the state. Reactionary statements, drastically opposite reactions emerge from the coverage, thereby serving as a platform for a war of words between the conflicting parties.

- Information about investigators, investigating agencies and sources was shrouded in secrecy for which terms like “highly placed sources” were used. In case of sensitive issues involving the foreign office and army, identity of sources was not revealed.

- Headlines in this newspaper were framed in an extremely metaphorical manner with use of dramatic language to attract reader’s attention. By choosing to address the issue at stake rather creatively (not through the use of mundane expressions), media’s attempt at employing innovative communication strategies is evident. Framing of story headlines was carried out in a manner meant to convey eventuality of war/conflict between the two nations. For instance – Cold war heats up as Delhi fires its second round (Dec 28, pg 1), Convincing US: Delhi wins Round One (Dec 23, pg 2). This is manifest through the use of words such as ‘stage’, ‘drama’, ‘call to patriots’, ‘fire’, ‘retaliation’.

- Terrorism as a news frame is posited in terms of ‘binaries’ or ‘opposites’. In this dichotomous framing, India is identified as ‘victim’ of terrorism and Pakistan as ‘perpetrator’. There is no scope for an alternative narrative to emerge as the discourse repeatedly reinforces enemy image associated with Pakistan. There is no reference to the terrorist attacks in Pakistan and Pakistani people suffering in the same. A subtle anti-Pak agenda is forwarded through identification of the Pakistani state as an abettor of terrorism, the dominant frame being devoted to exposing Pakistan’s lies and anti-India sentiments. Opinions from the Pakistani press also offer limited perspectives dominated by conspiracy theories hinting at India’s self-engineering of the attacks to malign Pakistan (Pakistan Periscope, Dec 21 – pg 9).
• Coverage in this newspaper is driven by events in India-Pakistan standoff over the course of the attack. Centre of coverage shifts from blaming Pakistan to war like situation to demand for extradition of terrorists to the SAARC summit and finally to the much hyped address by General Musharraf. Focus on the past is lost as one event follows the other, which speaks a lot about media’s inability to contextualize its reportage of events.

• Terrorism as news frames were built in very narrow terms, as a problem that afflicted only India. The failure to adopt a South Asian perspective to it (and also to the Vajpayee-Musharraf meeting at the SAARC summit) signals unwillingness on media’s part to bring foresight and vision to coverage of conflict.

• International opinions about the event majorly reflected views and role of the US. These were framed to impress US support and approval of Indian demands for Pakistani accountability. More than opinions generated in South Asia, it is the US perspective that was considered significant.

4.3 MUMBAI TERROR ATTACKS

4.3.1 The Times of India (Mumbai edition)

For coverage of the Mumbai Terror Attacks in The Times of India, a total of 167 articles were procured through The Times of India’s e-paper service. The period of analysis spanned from November 27, 2008 to January 31, 2009. Analysis was carried out under the framework of ‘war’ and ‘peace’ journalism propounded by Johan Galtung (1998) in order to find the dominant frame employed by this newspaper. The following coding categories were used to place articles under either the ‘war’ or ‘peace’ journalism frame:
Table 4.4: Galtung’s (1998) coding categories for frames

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>War Journalism</th>
<th>Peace Journalism</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Elite-oriented</td>
<td>People-oriented</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Differences-oriented</td>
<td>Reports on the areas of agreement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focuses on here and now</td>
<td>Reports causes and consequences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dichotomises the good and bad</td>
<td>Avoids labelling of good guys and bad guys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partisan</td>
<td>Non-partisan</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

War and Peace journalism emerged as competing frames in coverage of the conflict. Based on the above five coding categories, news stories and commentaries were classified into war, peace and neutral frames. Out of 167 articles analyzed, 157 were placed under the ‘war’ frame, 7 in the ‘peace’ frame and 3 in the ‘neutral’ frame.

**War Journalism Frame:**

Table 4.5: War Journalism frames in The Times of India’s coverage of Mumbai Terror Attacks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dominant frame</th>
<th>Details about the attack</th>
<th>Blame game</th>
<th>Terrorism</th>
<th>Impact of the attacks</th>
<th>International /Elite political opinion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sub-frames</td>
<td>Details of the attack were spelt out in the coverage even as the attack was going on.</td>
<td>Internal blame game. Who is to be blamed for the attack? Statements from opposition parties blaming the</td>
<td>Terrorism emerged as a major concern expressed in the opinion pieces.</td>
<td>Impact on the city of Mumbai</td>
<td>International opinion surrounding the attack was presented from a dominatively US perspective.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modus operandi of the attack</td>
<td>government</td>
<td>Terrorism perpetrated by the ‘other’.</td>
<td>Resilient spirit of Mumbai after the attacks</td>
<td>Diplomatic churning going on between the Indian and Pakistani governments</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nature of the attack and how it was different from previous attacks</td>
<td>Blame on external elements</td>
<td>India as a ‘victim’ of terrorism.</td>
<td>Impact on India-Pakistan relations</td>
<td>Statements and opinions of leaders and government officials from the US</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speculations about the identity of the terrorists</td>
<td>Threat of Islamic terrorism (terrorism linked to religion)</td>
<td>Terrorism as a threat to national security and unity.</td>
<td>Impact on people to people contact, confidence building measures, cultural relations</td>
<td>Statements from western leaders accepting Pakistani complicity in the attacks</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information and details about the lone captured terrorist</td>
<td>Attack framed as an act of war against the ‘idea of India’</td>
<td>Steps to be taken to counter terrorism, Indian policy against terrorism.</td>
<td>Impact on the ‘War on Terror’</td>
<td>Statements from Indian leaders in the government and opposition conveying threats and warnings to Pakistan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Apart from the above discussed war journalism frames, frames pertaining to national security lapse and intelligence failure, expression of popular national mood in the country (anti-Pakistan sentiments among people) and issues of local complicity i.e. involvement of home-grown terrorists in the attacks also figured in coverage.

**Peace Journalism and Neutral Frames:**

Table 4.6: Peace Journalism & Neutral frames in The Times of India’s coverage of Mumbai Terror Attacks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dominant frame</th>
<th>Impact of the attacks</th>
<th>Views from the international and regional Indian press</th>
<th>Media’s role in the wake of the attacks</th>
<th>People to people contact, strong relations between the two countries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sub-frames</td>
<td>Dilemma faced by Indian Muslims in the post Mumbai scenario</td>
<td>Views of the western media about the attacks</td>
<td>Criticism of the Indian media’s role in the wake of the attacks</td>
<td>Stories about the importance of sustaining people to people contact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Examining the attacks from a citizen’s view point</td>
<td>Views from the Urdu press – to depict solidarity of Muslim opinion</td>
<td>Role of the media in issues related to national security and defense</td>
<td>Impact on Confidence building measures and cultural relations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Inferences:

- Coverage in this newspaper was reflective of war journalism since it revolved around elite opinion, focused on differences between the two parties, remained limited to an analysis of the present conflict situation and labeled India as a ‘victim’ and Pakistan as the ‘perpetrator’ of terrorism. Coverage was driven by an agenda to put Pakistan in the dock over its role in the attacks.

- Attacks were framed as a ‘war’ on the Indian nation-state, as a threat to the sovereignty and integrity of the country and as a conspiracy driven by a largely anti-western agenda. They were depicted as the worst and the bloodiest in India’s political history. An overtly nationalistic position was adopted with regard to the threat of terrorism faced in the country. Commentaries focused on devising and suggesting policies to counter terrorism (*India’s war on terror has to be fought with multiple weapons, including coercive diplomacy*, Dec 14).

- In line with coding category no. 4 (labels of ‘good’ vs ‘bad’), coverage put forth dichotomy of expectations, response and reaction by the two conflicting parties. Indian response was framed in strong terms of demanding action against perpetrators, while Pakistani response was framed in terms of denial to cooperate on issues that affected both countries. E.g.: *Pak U-turn: Jaish chief not under house arrest*, Dec 18 & *Stop denying, get tough on terror, Pranab tells Pak*, Dec 19.

3 A few news stories were carried under the news title ‘Warfront Mumbai’.

4 ‘Us’ versus ‘Them’ discourse permeated coverage through allegations and counter allegations. Coverage sought to distinguish between ‘our’ and ‘their’ terrorism.
• Reflection of highly polarized sentiments, call for national unity against the enemy and reinforcement of anti-Pakistan mood among citizens served to legitimize official response to the attacks. An expression of popular mood was observed in a story titled - *Snap ties with Pakistan* on December 11.

• The Indian government was portrayed as a helpless victim fighting Pakistan backed terrorism. Rarely were any harsh questions and critical concerns raised about the government’s stand on issues like national security, terrorism, possibility of the involvement of home-grown terror elements.

• Representation of views from the Urdu press served the purpose of framing Muslim opinion in terms of the community’s ‘unity with the country in crisis time’, ‘their opposition to the attacks’ and ‘their condemnation of Pakistan backed terrorism’. This can be viewed as an attempt to unite Muslim opinion with mainstream political opinion. For example articles such as *Terror strike an attack on sovereignty: Urdu Press* (Dec 1), *Muslims find faith under fire in Mumbai* (Dec 3), *Snuff out Pakistan terror: Muslims to Government* (Dec 4) can be seen as an exercise in reinforcing the ideal of Muslim loyalty to India and delinking religion from terrorism.
NIGHTMARE: Taj, Oberoi, CST, Santa Cruz Airport, Colaba And 2 Hospitals Among 8 Places Attacked By Terrorists, Killing 78 And Injuring 900 | Three Senior Police Officers, Including ATS Chief Hemant Karkare, Killed | 40 People, Including Foreigners, Taken Hostage | Firing By Terrorists Continues At Hotels, Cinema & GT

IT'S WAR ON MUMBAI

People were rushing out screaming, 'blast, blast'

Birla succession plan revised again

Grandson Kumar’s Share Shrinks, BK’s Daughters To Get More

THE TIMES OF INDIA

Page 149
4.3.2 The Indian Express (Mumbai edition)

Out of a total 173 articles analyzed for coverage of the Mumbai Terror Attacks in The Indian Express, 164 articles were placed under the ‘war frame’, while six were placed under the ‘peace frame’ and three under the ‘neutral frame’. National solidarity, united face against the enemy and commitment to nationalistic positions were reaffirmed through news frames.

News frames pertaining to war journalism consisted were:

- Blame on Pakistan for carrying out the attacks
- Intelligence failure, crisis in internal security
- Pakistani response to the incident
- Role of the US and impact on ‘War on Terror’
- Speculations about possibility of military confrontation
- Details of investigation, confessions of arrested terrorist
- Criticism of government’s weak response to terrorism
- Opinions – International, domestic and popular
- Anti-India sentiments, hard-line opinions in Pakistan

The above mentioned war journalism frames made repeated references to direct involvement of the Pakistani state in the attacks. Not only were the terrorists identified as Pakistani, the Pakistani state was also indicted. Pakistan’s initial agreement to send the ISI (Inter-Services Intelligence) chief to India and backtracking on the same later was heavily criticized and framed as a proof of Pakistan’s guilt. Pakistan’s offer of cooperation in probing the attack (at a later stage) was ridiculed. Belligerent statements emanating from the Indian leadership were also found in this newspaper (Vaghela for Kargil-like operation against Pak, Dec 5). Pakistan’s response to the incident remained limited to official discourse and mainstream press narratives. Among an array of international opinion, only opinion of US leaders and government officials surfaced dominantly. US response
was framed to convey both solidarity with India and provide legitimacy to Pakistan’s diplomatic overtures. As opposed to TOI, coverage provided voice to anger and public resentment over issues of intelligence and security failure.

News frames under the ‘peace’ and ‘neutral’ category were as below:

- **People’s opinions on India-Pakistan tensions** (E.g.: *61% vote in Valley, one wish: India, Pakistan must not go to war*, Dec 1)

- **Informative and educative commentaries** (*Highs and lows in Indo-Pak ties*, Dec 1). Though the piece made no attempt to address the causes behind the standoff and plainly provided a chronological understanding of events in the history of the relationship.

- **Impact on Confidence Building Measures** (*LoC Trade may go off track*, Dec 1). The peace news frame discussed the impact of tensions in the relationship on softer areas of cooperation such as trade, culture, people to people contact.

- **Positive framing of the ‘other’** (*Pak bloggers show solidarity with Mumbaikars*, Dec 1). Reflection of support and solidarity from people across the border was depicted under this frame. In an attempt to present a positive side of the ‘other’, this news frame demonstrated humane and empathetic opinions of Pakistanis. This demonstrated that despite an acrimonious state of relations, a show of solidarity across national boundaries was possible. Another example is a story on how both countries can learn from each other’s experiences of violence to successfully deal with similar threats (*Terror-hit hotel in Pak has tips for Taj, Oberoi*: Dec 7).

- **Terrorist violence in Pakistan** (*26 killed in Pakistan blasts, NWFP tense*: Dec 6). Frames relating to terrorism in Pakistan were rarely addressed in the coverage since dominant frames had already established binaries related to ‘victim’ and ‘perpetrator’ in the discourse on terrorism. Even neutral category frames did not forward the idea of cooperation in dealing with terrorist violence.
**Inferences:**

- Pakistan’s response to the attacks was framed in terms of denial and an attitude of non-cooperation.

- Attacks were not examined from the perspective of victims and how the threat of terrorism was impacting common people; lack of human interest stories was visible.

- Issues related to nuclear security were viewed from an official prism; not from the perspective of dangerous consequences of nuclear fallout. Grave issues such as nuclear arms race, religious extremism and political intolerance in South Asia were brought to public domain only through statements by political elites. No attempt was made to sensitize readers to the dangers of nuclearization.

- Post-Mumbai discourse was laden with official statements that revolved around Pakistan and the problem of terrorism. Coverage was an extension of governmental interaction between the two countries.

**4.4 LoC BEHEADING/BORDER CLASHES**

**4.4.1 The Times of India (Delhi edition)**

Analysis and interpretation of coverage of border clashes on the Line of Control (LoC) in the Mendhar sector of Jammu & Kashmir (2013) in The Times of India’s Delhi edition was carried out using Entman’s Theory of Framing. TOI is a partner in the ‘Aman ki Asha’ peace journalism campaign with The Jang Group in Pakistan since 2010. In this context, the researcher dwelled upon contradictions in coverage of a border clash and the newspaper’s peace journalism objectives. A total of 112 articles from January 6-March 6, 2013 were analyzed.

---

5 An in-depth analysis of the Aman ki Asha website and Facebook page has been carried out in Chapter 6 under the domain of evaluating new media’s role in conflict mediation.
## Emergent Themes:

Table 4.7: Sub-frames under the category of Cross-border tensions in The Times of India’s coverage of Soldier’s beheading/LoC Confrontations between India and Pakistan in early 2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dominant Theme</th>
<th>Sub-Themes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cross-Border tensions</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Response from the military and political elites on both sides</td>
<td>Blame on Pakistan for violating the ceasefire and giving rise to conflagrations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anti-Pak sentiments amongst people, rhetorical demands for action against Pakistan</td>
<td>Impact of border tensions on sporting events, cultural relations and trade ties, impact on peace process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statistical details of cross border violations</td>
<td>Dichotomy of official views on both sides</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sacrifice of Indian soldiers, emotional undertones to their bravery</td>
<td>Nationalistic spirit and aggressive popular sentiments over cross border violations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opinions of political stakeholders in India</td>
<td>Impact of border tensions on people to people contact (E.g.: suspension of bus service)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malicious intentions of Pakistan</td>
<td>Border disputes and peace in South Asia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Call for revenge against Pakistan, Indian anger against Soldier’s beheading (E.g.: provocative statements by the Indian leadership)</td>
<td>Perspectives and opinions of the Indian Army (E.g.: Army as the prime information source for news)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistani factor in Indian elections and politics, domestic political compulsions over India’s Pakistan policy</td>
<td>Protests over participation of Pakistani players in Hockey India League and performances of Pakistani theater groups in India (E.g.: BJP to oppose Pak writers at Jaipur lit fest, Jan 22 – pg 13)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4.8: Sub-frames under the category of Terrorism and Kashmir in The Times of India’s coverage of Soldier’s beheading/ LoC Confrontations between India and Pakistan in early 2013.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dominant Theme</th>
<th>Sub-Themes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Terrorism &amp; Kashmir</td>
<td>Indian army’s blame on Pakistan as an abettor of terrorism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Indian demand for action against Pakistan as a state that supports and sponsors terrorists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Blame and counter-blame over the ceasefire violation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Criticism of the government’s Pakistan policy (Politically incorrect, Jan 20)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tough statements by the Indian leadership on countering terrorism, strong Indian response</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Inferences:

- News framing of LoC confrontation was framed within a nationalistic paradigm. Since armed forces are the closest to action in such cases, discourse dominantly reflected their viewpoint.

- Coverage referred to past confrontations with Pakistan to depict cruel and inhuman behavior of the enemy. Beheading and mutilation were highlighted to prove this point. For example, provocative headlines that reflected aggressive
stance of the Indian leadership were present (‘Bring 10 heads from Pak if Hemraj’s not returned’, Jan 15 – pg 17).

- Coverage forwarded the view that Pakistani army was playing an active role in encouraging terror across the border. Reference was also made to past events of a similar nature, past tensions on the border to reinforce India’s desire for peace and Pakistan’s non-commitment to it (Pak may force us to look at other options: IAF chief, Jan 13 – pg 1).

- The ‘other’ was portrayed as an aggressor who could not be trusted. This lent legitimacy to a military solution and frame peace as a disillusioning process that would not yield any results. For example, Government should rethink CBMs with Pakistan: Congress, Jan 12 – pg 11.

- Blame on Pakistan and its links to terrorism, ‘reaction & counter-reaction’ frame emerged dominant in the coverage. Terms such as ‘angry India’, ‘brutal attack’, ‘unprovoked killing’ and ‘brutalization of their bodies’ conveyed a sense of outrage over the incident.

- Indian response to the incident was framed as accommodative and tolerant whereas Pakistani response was framed as adamant and non-cooperative. For example, Indian reluctance to international mediation and Pakistan’s repeated emphasis on involvement of an outside party.

- People centric stories such as the ones on visa regime (Visa on arrival at Attari from today, Jan 15) were not woven in context of event related coverage.

- Valorization and personalization of soldier’s sacrifice made him an entity for media to celebrate. The soldier was portrayed as the nation’s pride and an instrument to challenge the enemy. His sacrifice was extended to that of his family through a reinforcement of their commitment towards the nation. Examples from coverage on January 11 are, ‘Sar kaat sakte hain woh log, sar jhuka nahi sake’ (They can kill our body, but not our spirit) & ‘Will send more men to border’.
Pak troops kill two jawans, behead, mutilate one of them

NEW DELHI: An Indian soldier was beheaded and another killed by Pakistani troops after they crossed over into Indian territory in the Mendhar sector of Jammu & Kashmir on Tuesday, in a grim reminder of the brutality perpetrated during the 1999 Kargil conflict which can make peace making even more difficult.

The "border action team" of the Pakistani Army took advantage of the thick fog in the thickly-forested mountainous region to sneak 500 to 600 metres across the Line of Control (LoC) before they were driven back after a fierce gun-battle and even close-quarter combat with Indian troops that went on for over 30 minutes shortly before noon on Tuesday.
4.4.2 The Indian Express (Delhi edition)

From among 75 news stories that were analyzed from January 6-March 6, 2013 in the Delhi edition of The Indian Express, the following frames were derived:

- Elite reactions from both India & Pakistan – mainly from the military and political elite
- Diplomatic conduct, actions, exchanges and overtures
- Blame by each conflicting party on the ‘other’ through a repetition and emphasis on official statements
- Condemnation and denial from each side with regard to the ceasefire violations
- Anti-Pakistan sentiments and the heroism of soldier’s sacrifice
- Indian anger and unacceptability over beheading and mutilation
- Solidarity and strength of India in the hour of crisis
- Pakistani response to Indian accusations
- Subtle hints towards war preparations
- Views from the western world
- Right wing outfits and their anti-Pak stance
- Impact on bilateral relations and future course of Indo-Pak engagements after the beheading incident
- Adjudging impact of ceasefire violation on continuation of CBMs and peace process

Inferences:

LoC confrontation in this newspaper was framed in terms of ‘blame game’ between the two sides. An evident contradiction in views emerged as coverage became a platform for trading accusations on each other. The confrontation was framed as a clear handiwork of Pakistani army whereas the beheading of Indian

---

6 New Delhi summons Bashir to protest, Pak says let UN probe (January 9)
soldiers was framed as inhuman, barbaric and unacceptable\(^7\). News stories appeared repetitive and reiterated official accounts. Statements of important leaders and diplomats were given due space\(^8\). Number of routine stories was more than analytical opinion-based commentaries. Coverage was reduced to elite driven barrage of hostile and belligerent statements from both sides\(^9\). Scant attention was paid to human suffering as result of ceasefire violations (Example: impact of shelling on residents of border villages). Larger issues of human suffering as a consequence of hostile relations were ignored.

The Indian side referred to the attack as ‘gruesome’, ‘barbaric’, ‘inhuman’ and a ‘grave provocation’. Indian response to the incident was projected as strong, firm and decisive. The beheading incident was framed in terms of soldier’s sacrifice and martyrdom and labeling Pakistan as ‘inhuman’ and ‘barbaric’\(^10\). Media became a platform for mobilizing and legitimizing anti-Pakistan sentiments in the public domain. Official response in media is framed as aggressive boost to the government’s image as guardian of territorial integrity and national security. Beyond a point, news frames appeared repetitive and lacking in fresh perspectives.

### 4.5 THE HANGING OF AFZAL GURU

#### 4.5.1 The Times of India (Delhi edition)

Execution of Parliament attack convict Afzal Guru was carried out by the Indian government on February 9, 2013. Coverage of this hanging was preceded by rising tensions between India and Pakistan, owing to border conflagrations. While coverage of border tensions continued, news discourse shifted focus to the

---

\(^7\) Pakistan troops breach LoC, brutally kill 2 Indian soldiers, chop off heads, and carry one away (January 8)

\(^8\) Pakistan Army should be pressurized to return Hemraj’s head: Gen Bikram Singh (January 14)

\(^9\) India engaging in war mongering: Hina Rabbani Khar (January 16)

\(^10\) PM says can’t be business as usual with Pakistan after ‘barbaric act’ (January 15)
execution as tensions in Kashmir rose following this incident. Themes emergent in the post-hanging scenario examined the execution from three perspectives namely that of the Indian state, Afzal Guru’s family and civil society. Major themes addressed were:

- **Security**
  - Heightened security situation in Kashmir/tension in the region
  - Impact of the hanging on peace in Kashmir
  - Security situation in the country
  - Increased threat of terrorism post the execution
  - Clashes between protesters and army in Kashmir

- **The execution itself**
  - Debate and controversy surrounding the hanging
  - Opinions in support of and against the execution
  - Rhetoric of political one-upmanship

- **Human Rights**
  - Concerns expressed over human rights violation
  - Critical and dichotomous frames over human rights and statist accounts of the execution

Coverage in this newspaper, post the execution was driven with an intention to place government in the dock. Repeated questions were raised about the manner in which the execution was carried out (*No Politics Please*, Feb 11 - pg 14 – Editorial). Coverage also demonstrated difference in discourse led by the Indian state and opinions generated in Kashmir. A front page story titled ‘*Terror Guru Hanged, Remains In Tihar*’ on February 10 reported an account of Guru’s involvement in the Parliament attack and examined the execution from the prism of national security. Another story on the same day gave voice to anti-government
sentiments in the valley (Government violated law, human rights: Geelani (pg 17)). Over-emphasis and exaggeration of the situation in the valley post the execution was found. For instance, statements such as “In a space of few hours, Kashmir seems to have turned back 10 years” (Fear, Anxiety Return to Haunt Kashmir, Feb 10 – Times Nation) reflected extreme versions surrounding the issue. A few stories were misleading since they deviated from the stated headline (Gulzar cuts short visit to Pakistan, skips Karachi lit fest, Feb 14 and Right-wingers clash with protestors, Feb 10). An overview of coverage of border clashes/beheading incident followed by the execution of Afzal Guru revealed media’s affinity towards ‘selective nationalism’. An outpouring of overtly nationalist sentiments was visible in reports on border confrontation, whereas discourse on Guru’s execution subtly emphasized on human rights.

4.5.2 The Indian Express (Delhi Edition)

Following themes were elicited from coverage of Afzal Guru’s execution in The Indian Express.

- **Reactions to the execution**
  - Hostile reactions from several groups in Pakistan
  - Reactions from political stakeholders in India
  - Reactions from political stakeholders in Jammu & Kashmir
  - Anti-India sentiments in Pakistan (opinions of extremist groups in Pakistan)
  - Critical posture of right-wing organizations in India with regard to Pakistan

- **Kashmir & Terrorism**
  - Linkage of execution to the Kashmir dispute

---

11 Protests in Pak over Afzal Guru’s hanging (February 9)

12 Pak-based outfit looks to revive J&K militancy (February 24), On Afzal Guru (February 16, Op-Ed)
Impact of execution on the security and political scenario in Kashmir

Security related tensions in Kashmir after the execution

Pakistani hand in abetting terrorism in Jammu & Kashmir

• Miscellaneous

Discussion of politics behind the execution

Sectarian tensions, terrorism, constitutionalism and democracy in Pakistan

Link between Guru’s execution and the dispute in Kashmir emerged as dominant in the coverage\textsuperscript{13}. Pakistan’s condemnation of the execution and its linkage to repressive Indian regime in Kashmir was also found (\textit{Pakistan reacts cautiously to Guru’s execution}, Feb 11). The Indian Express also incorporated right-wing and left-wing perspectives to the execution in op-ed pieces. For instance, \textit{Guru’s execution} (February 19) comprised an extract from publications of leftist organizations criticizing the execution. Apart from this, coverage included statements of blame-game, reactions from political elite and commentaries that offered insights into democracy, extremism, and political ideology in Pakistan.

4.6 INTERPRETATION AND CONCLUSION

4.6.1 Comparative inferences – TOI & IE

Systematic analysis of reportage in two major Indian newspapers, i.e., The Times of India and The Indian Express was carried out as part of this chapter. Comparative inferences derived as a result are as below:

\textbf{The Times of India}

In-depth coverage of four major events in India-Pakistan relationship was carried out in The Times of India. TOI is a pan-Indian newspaper popular among

\textsuperscript{13} Behind hanging of Afzal, dragging talks on Kashmir (February 12)
masses, and hence coverage is event and reader driven. Despite nationalist news framing of events, counterviews from Pakistan were given adequate space. Coverage adopted wide range of communication strategies to fulfill its dissemination function. For instance, there were special columns dedicated to coverage of Agra Summit, attack on Indian Parliament and Mumbai Terror Attacks. It was a blend of regular stories, readers’ opinions and expert commentaries. Despite a diverse range of views, coverage ended up reinforcing and advocating a nationalist line. Opinions critical of government action were given due space. However, demonization of the ‘other’ was quite evident. Frames on national security, terrorism, Kashmir, India’s victimhood, international opinions, blame-game and reactions & counter-reactions dominated the coverage. Since 2010 TOI has been at the forefront of a peace journalism campaign called ‘Aman ki Asha’ (Hope for Peace) in collaboration with The Jang Group in Pakistan. For the study period, however, very few stories from this peace campaign were found. There were few stories with a peace undertone especially during coverage of border confrontations. TOI’s coverage limited frames of opinion to those already dominant in the India-Pakistan media discourse.

**The Indian Express**

Compared to TOI, The Indian Express provided for richer and nuanced coverage on issues relating to India-Pakistan conflict. IE has a reputation of catering to a wide range of opinion. It serves the needs of political elite, civil society and intellectual community. Coverage in IE provided detailed and richer insights on issues of conflict. Its attempt at coverage offered a comprehensive account of issues that plagued India and Pakistan. Its efforts at bringing forth opinions from across the border were far more consistent and nuanced than TOI. Regular contributions from Pakistan’s opinion-makers, extracts from Pakistan’s press found space in IE. Even today, it continues to present Pakistan’s perspective on contentious issues through columns such as ‘Pakistan Periscope’. Opinions and commentaries were a regular feature of coverage along with news stories. There was more emphasis on human interest stories about impact of conflict as opposed to TOI. However, frames on demonization, national supremacy and blame game were also present. In its coverage, IE was both informative and educative since
there was an effort to provide backdrop to readers on conflict realities. It was also extremely critical of government’s dealings with Pakistan, something that was missing in TOI.

Commonly derived news frames as shown in the table below demonstrate media’s adherence to similarity in coverage despite differences in objectives and modes of communication.

Table 4.9: Overview of prominent coverage frames in TOI and IE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Routine and Factual stories about conflict and peace related developments</th>
<th>Impact of conflict on bilateral relations</th>
<th>Diplomacy, Politics, Elite reactions to the conflict</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kashmir, National Security, Terrorism, Human Rights, Victimhood, Blame-game</td>
<td>Human angle to the conflict, human suffering and impact on civilians</td>
<td>Media’s role in conflict – both positive and negative aspects of the role</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role of Third Party Mediation</td>
<td>International Opinion on the conflict</td>
<td>Internal political developments in Pakistan</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Notes

1 Coverage of cross-border violations reinforced frames of the ‘other’ as perpetrator. Border conflagration and beheading of Indian soldiers were accorded an overtly nationalistic colour. Coverage was supportive towards India’s aggressive stance and evoked sympathy from readers. Most news reports contained official versions provided by political elite and military officials. Subtly framed was the need for a stern response to Pakistan in order to safeguard national security and territorial integrity. As opposed to this, coverage of Guru’s execution was not overtly nationalistic and raised concerns over state action vis-a-vis human rights. Coverage of these events signifies that media choose to either adopt a ‘nationalistic’ stance or strike balance between opposing demands depending on their own agenda and political circumstances of the time. This is what the researcher refers to as ‘selective nationalism’ since nationalism is a choice that media make.