CHAPTER – VII

INDO-PAK RELATIONS – PROCESS OF NORMALISATION
The debris of Partition of India has clouded Indo-Pak relations since 1947. The tragic wars that followed thereafter led to a climate of mutual suspicion and distrust. Over the years these conflicts, disagreements and mutual suspicions have risen and fallen. The same pattern has continued over the past more than six decades. Their mutual relations since their creation have been engulfed in a number of issues and problems which are divergent as discussed in the preceding chapter invariably defining and shaping their mutual interaction and dealings. Sadly enough, these issues are mostly of contentious nature and have pushed the neighbours into a perpetual state of conflict and dispute. Their relations had reached the lowest point since the time of two – nation theory exerted by the Pakistani leaders and the partition of India and took a worst form after the Kargil war and the parliament attack in 2001 which virtually brought both the nations to the brink of full fledged war. As on other side of the issues and problems these two countries have also realized the importance of mutual talks, negotiations and confidence building measures to solve the issues. This chapter dealt with the efforts made in the direction of normalization of relations and effecting confidence building measures between these two countries since the partition of India. Soon after independence India and Pakistan established diplomatic relations. Subsequent years were
marked by bitter periodic conflict and hatred. Number of Confidence Building Measures (CBMs) have taken between the two countries during the past ten years. These measures one may recall included scores of high-level meetings, parliamentarians visits, rounds of dialogues, exchange of friendly gestures, people to people contacts, spots events, media conferences, and a lot of activities by non-Govt. organizations (NGOs) along with a number of tracks – II initiatives as discussed below.

**Indo – Pakistan war of 1947: UN Intervention:**

This is also called the first Kashmir war. The war started in October 1947 when the Maharaj of the princely state of Kashmir and Jammu was pressured to accede to either of the newly independent states of Pakistan or India. Tribal forces prompted by Pakistan attacked and occupied the princely state forcing the Mahraja to sign the “agreement to the accession of the princely state to India”. The United Nation was then invited by India to mediate the quarrel. The UN mission insisted that the opinion of the Kashmir must be ascertained. The UN Security Council passed “Resolution 47 on April 21st, 1948. The war ended in December 1948 with the Line Of Control dividing Kashmir into Territories administered by Pakistan (Northern and Western area) and India (Southern, Central and North Eastern Areas).”
The Security Council, which debated the issue, adopted two resolutions in January 1948. The first asked the parties to help in easing the tension and to inform it of any material change. The second resolution wanted a three-member commission to investigate and mediate in the matter. As the second one was not implemented, another was adopted in April 1948 regarding mediation, but it was not accepted to both India and Pakistan. The United Nations Commission for India and Pakistan (UNCIP), after its visit to both countries, submitted its report in August 1948. It suggested a cease fire as a first step. Then it stressed the need of Pakistan to withdraw its force (there tacitly admitting Pakistan's active involvement in the invasion, though that country was not named as aggressor inspite of the evidence) and the Indian forces were to be withdrawn gradually, leaving behind however enough forces to maintain law and order. Thirdly the Commission wanted the holding of a plebiscite in Kashmir, after the first, two were implemented. While India accepted the provision of the report, Pakistan did not. Again in January 1949, the UNCIP submitted another proposal which was resolved upon by the Council, according to which a plebiscite would be held under a plebiscite administrator appointed on the recommendation of the United Nations, after the first resolutions of the August 1948 were implemented. Both India and Pakistan accepted this proposal. But the plebiscite could not be conducted as the truce agreement was not finalized.
Between 1949 and 1951 three mediators were appointed by the Council but none of them could help to solve the issue or break the deadlock. Then Francis P. Graham of the United States suggested direct negotiations between the parties. The Prime Ministers of India and Pakistan tried to negotiate with each other on this question between 1953 and 1955 but could not make any headway. Certain developments in the international scene, particularly the Cold War between the USA and former Soviet Union prevented this. As a result since 1947, this issue remained unsolved to the satisfaction of both the parties which resulted in wars between these two neighbouring nations.

In 1952 the elected and overwhelmingly Muslim Constituent Assembly of Jammu and Kashmir, led by the popular Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah, voted in favour of confirming accession to India. Thereafter, India regarded this vote as an adequate expression of popular will and demurred on holding a plebiscite. After 1953 Jammu and Kashmir was identified as standing for the secular, pluralistic, and democratic principles of the Indian polity. Nehru refused to discuss the subject bilaterally until 1963, when India, under pressures from the United States and Britain, engaged in six rounds of secret talks with Pakistan on "Kashmir and other related issues". These negotiations failed, as did the 1964 attempt at mediation made by Abdullah, who had been released from a long detention by the Indian government because of his objections to Indian control.
Indo – China War – Talks with Pakistan:

The Indo – China war of 1962 gave an opportunity for Pakistan to continue its ‘hate India’ campaign. In fact Pakistan tried to put pressure on some of the western powers, who supplied arms to India to meet the Chinese attack, and even threatened to quit the membership of military pacts with them, all to obtain some concession on Kashmir. The Pakistan factor prevented India from getting a $500 million US. military aid to revitalize its army. Pakistan applied such pressure that the U.S. official Chester Bowles admitted, that America forced Nehru to open a dialogue with Pakistan on Kashmir.³

Thus six rounds of talks took place between the Foreign Minister of India and Pakistan, Swaran Singh and Z.A Bhutto during 1962 – 63. In respective these talks it appeared that both sides were willing to change their position to Kashmir and look for a political solution for it involving the division of Kashmir. While India was willing to compromise Pakistan’s control over the territory of Kashmir it had occupied and also give a little more, Pakistan on the other in Nehru’s words, in a forgotten moment of generosity wanted India to retain an area roughly coinciding with the district of Kathua in Jammu.⁴ The Swaran Singh – Bhutto talks naturally failed.
Indo – Pakistan War – 1965:

This war started following of Pakistan's operation 'Gibratter' which was designed to infiltrate forces into Jammu and Kashmir to precipitate an insurgency against rule by Indian. India retaliated by launching an attack on Pakistan. The five week war caused thousands of causalities on both sides and was witness to largest tank battle in military history since world war – II. It ended in a United Nations mandated cease-fire and the subsequent issuance of the Tashkent declaration.

Taskhent Declaration:

On September 17th 1965 Russia offered her good offices and prepared to convene a meeting at Tashkent to enable the two countries to begin talks. The offer was accepted and four days later the ceasefire was announced. President Ayub Khan and Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri finally met at Tashkent from January 3 to 10, 1966. The two countries were convinced that their outstanding problems could be solved through negotiations only. As Russia was deeply interested in preserving peace in the sub-continent she refrained from blaming either side for starting the conflict and tried her utmost to bring peace between the two countries. Soviet efforts ultimately yielded results and the historic Tashkent Declaration was signed on their solemn resolve to restore normal and peaceful relations between their countries and to promote understanding and friendly relations between their peoples. They also affirmed their obligation under the Charter not to have
recourse to force and to settle their disputes through peaceful means.

The two countries agreed to withdraw their armed personally by 25th February, 1966 to the positions held by them prior to August 5th, 1965. They also agreed to observe the terms of the cease fire along the line of division in Jammu and Kashmir.

The leaders of the two countries acknowledged with deep appreciation and gratitude of friendly and noble part played by Soviet Union in arranging the Taskkent meeting.

The Tashkent declaration was widely welcomed. It signified the victory of the principle of setting international problem by peaceful means by direct and frank negoitatons between the leaders. Soon after signing the Tashkent declaration, Shastri met with a tragic death. The new Government under Indira Gandhi pledged to honour the death declaration in letter and spirit and to work for lasting peace in the sub-continent. 5

Bangladesh Liberation War and Simla Pact:

In December 1971, following a political crisis in East Pakistan, the situation soon spiraled out of control in East Pakistan and India interned in favour of the rebelling Bengali populace. The conflict, a brief but bloody war resulted in the independence of East Pakistan. In
the war, the Pakistani army swiftly fell to India, forcing the independence of East Pakistan which separated and became Bangladesh. The Pakistani military, being a thousand miles from the base and surrounded by enemies, was forced to give in.\(^6\)

At the end of the war a summit meeting was arranged at Simla from June 28\(^{th}\) to July 2nd, 1972 where the famous Simla Agreement was signed by Indian Prime Minstesr Indira Gandhi and Pakistan President Zulfikar Ali Bhutto.

By this agreement the two countries agreed to settle their difference peacefully through bilateral negotiations without resorting to force. Both the countries also agreed to respect the territorial integrity and sovereignty of each other. They expressed their faith in the principle of peaceful co-existence, and non-interference in each other's internal affairs. For further normalization of their relations the two countries pledged to resume communications, promote travel facilities, co-operate in economic and allied matters, and have exchanges in the field of culture and science. Finally they also agreed to withdraw their forces to their respective international border in Punjab and Rajasthan. However, in Jammu and Kashmir, the position that obtained after the 1971 cease fire was to continue and neither of the parties was to make efforts to alter it unilaterally or by force.\(^7\)
With the assumption of power by Janata Government efforts were made to improve relations with Pakistan. External affairs Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee paid a visit to Pakistan with a view to lay foundation for a new and mature relationship. As a result of this visit the two countries agreed to permit facilities for the flow of information between two countries well as free visits between peoples of two countries. This process of normalization of relations with Pakistan was continued by Mrs. Indira Gandhi when the returned to power in 1980. In 1982 the two countries agreed to set up an Indo-Pakistan Joint Commission. They also signed an agreement under which the consular representatives of the two countries were permitted to visit the Jails in each other country to meet their nationals.

The Joint Commission of India and Pakistan was formally established in March, 1983 and worked out various contracts for increasing economic, trade, industrial, educational, health, cultural, tourism, information and scientific cooperation. In December, 1985, President Zia of Pakistan and Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi declared that they had agreed to give mutual undertaking not to attack the nuclear installations of each other. This was done to set at rest the misgivings prevailing in Pakistan that India may attack Pakistan's nuclear installations.
In the economic sphere the relations showed an improvement in January, 1986, they reached an agreement whereby Pakistan agreed to lift an eight years old embargo on private sector trade with India and permitted private sector to import 42 items from India. The two countries agreed to double their trade in public sector. The presence of Soviet troops in Afghanistan also obliged the Pakistan leaders to improve relations with India. In this task the U.S. leadership also played an important role and exerted necessary pressure on Pakistan to improve relations with India.8

In the mid-and late 1980s India – Pakistan relations settled into pattern of ups and downs. Despite the signing of an economic and trade agreement, little progress was made in concluding a comprehensive, long-term economic, agreement to have nondiscriminatory bilateral trade. In addition, New Delhi charged Islamabad with arming and training Sikh terrorists in Punjab. The government's 1984 white paper on the Punjab Agitation stated that India's strength, unity, and secularism were targets of attack. The December 1985 visit of Zia to India, during which both sides agreed not to attack each other's nuclear facilities, ushered in a brief phase of cordiality evaporated in early, 1986, with further Indian unhappiness over Pakistan's alleged interference in Punjab and the bungled Pakistani handling of the terrorist seizure of a Pan American airliner in which many Indians died.
For its part, Pakistan was disturbed by anti Muslim riots in India, and Zia accused India of assisting the political campaign of Benazir Bhutto.\textsuperscript{9}

**Confidence Building Measures: (CBMs)**

Since inception both Pakistan and India have been suspicious of each other. Both have seen tensions conflicts and even wars between them. The best option for the conflict resolution for both is to go for CBMs and also deal with various constraints and challenges in the way of CBMs. The CBM terminology was first applied to India-Pakistan relation after the 1987 Brasstaks crisis. The process of CBMs however, had already existed between India and Pakistan. In 1949 Karachi agreement, the Liaquat Nehru pact of 1950, the India Pakistan Border Ground Rules Agreement of 1960 establishment of Hotline between Military Agreement of 1966, and the Simla Agreement of 1972 are cases in point.\textsuperscript{10}

In the Lahore Declaration, the two prime Ministers recognized that the nuclear reality of the subcontinent gives each nation the responsibility to avoid conflict. The document indicates that they were convinced of the need for mutually agreed CBMs to improve the security environment.\textsuperscript{11} Seven of the eight points in the MOU signed by the foreign secretaries of India and Pakistan on that occasion concerned nuclear risk reduction, an issue that was being addressed for the first time.\textsuperscript{12} An item alluding to the prevention of incidents at sea

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has added significance since India has announced intentions to nuclearize its navy and Pakistan has established the Naval Strategic Force Command.\textsuperscript{13}

Rajiv Gandhi, continuing the foreign policy bequeathed by Indira Gandhi and carrying it forward took several timely initiatives to cultivate and promote friendship and co-operation among India and her neighbours in general and in particular between India and Pakistan. Seeking the friendship, co-operation and goodwill of other countries has always been India’s policy. Rajiv Gandhi who succeeded his mother continued is time tested policy. Since 1983 Indo – Pak relations did not make much progress because of Pakistan acquiring disproportionately large quantities of military hardware and weapons from U.S. Pakistan’s active support, moral and material to the subversive and destabilizing extremist in Punjab, and its attempts to go nuclear (not for peaceful purposes), were some of the reasons.

The involvement of the super powers in the affairs of South Asia, particularly south – West Asia and the Gulf, and the presence of the Soviets in Afghanistan added to India’s apprehension of the danger of destabilization of peace in this region. Therefore Rajiv Gandhi decided to revive the process of Indo-Pak talks to secure a better and more mature understanding, friendship and co-operation between the two countries. Pakistan’s decision on 25th January 1985 to put the hijackers
of two Indian Airlines aircraft's on trail, to which it had not agreed for quite some time, seemed a good and a positive step to revive the dialogue between the two nations which had not taken place since mid-1984. Early in April 1985 India's Foreign Secretary was sent to Islamabad to hold talks. His talks with his Pakistani counterpart and with General Zia resulted in a general agreement to review and also step up efforts to increase mutual understanding and co-operation. However no concrete proposals to resolve the pending problems between them could be reached. The gain made by this visit was the agreement 'to change the atmosphere of tension and hostility step by step'. The wish which had been expressed on earlier occasions and put into practice though fitfully, namely to establish people to people contacts and promote exchange at different levels was once again reiterated.

In the three-day second meeting of the Indo-Pak Joint commission held in New Delhi between 2 and 4 July 1985 (two years after the first meeting of the Commission had taken place in June 1983) – in which the Foreign Ministers of India and Pakistan participated and a number of proposals were discussed in an atmosphere of 'friendship', constructive co-operation and mutual accommodation, as it was officially described. Some agreements were reached. Among the things agreed upon were provisions of additional telephone facilities between the two, extended later to other places, rail bookings of seven
pairs of designated railway stations on either side, and bilateral agreement for co-operation and collaboration in agricultural research and development through the India Council for agricultural Research and Pakistan Agricultural Research Council. A further encouraging factor was agreement upon promoting people to people contact, checking smuggling activities (especially the smuggling of drugs), and promoting, cultural contacts between the two countries.

This meeting however, could make little progress in the field of trade. Pakistan's decision not to buy wheat from India and keep on its drive to acquire sophisticated weapons from the U.S. inspite of India's protests influenced the meeting adversely. Another irritant was the armed clashes between the two countries in the Siachen Glacier. The 76 km. long glacier on the Ladakh region is not a demarcated area. Situated to the north-east of occupied Kashmir it is strategically important to India, Pakistan and China. It had not become an area of conflict even in the wars of 1965 and 1971. But in June 1984, Pakistan tried to occupy it staking its so called claims over it. Having failed in the first attempt, it tried once again in February 1985 when the fighting lasted for 17 days. Since then one more irritant has been added to the Indo-Pak relations. On the whole, though the second meeting of the Joint Commission would not yield any far reaching and durable agreement, it enabled keeping up the dialogue to understand each other's point of view.
Another round of talks took place in the last week of July 1985 at Delhi between the foreign secretaries of the two countries, over the relations between them. The talks were friendly and cordial but without results. Writing on the outcome of these talks between the Secretaries Rajinder Sareen said that ‘they failed to make any headway in their quest for evolving a framework of peace and harmony between the two countries’. However they resolved to ‘continue efforts aimed at the conclusion of a comprehensive treaty’ between them. Both could not attain any worthwhile measure of approximation in their perceptions. At the same time they accepted the political compulsion to continue their efforts.14

In January 1986 the Finance Ministers of the two nations signed a memorandum of understanding for increasing bilateral trade. According to this agreement, the private sector in Pakistan could import 42 items from India. In the public sector the quantum of trading during 1986-87 was to be doubled. This step seemed to give a boost to Indo-Pak economic relations as well as help in their search for a framework of mutually beneficial bilateralism. But in actual practice the progress achieved through this trade accord was very limited.

At this point a brief account of the emergence and establishment of the South Asian Association for Regional Co-operation (SAARC) is discussed, since by the time this new body had emerged and seemed to hold out opportunities for both India and Pakistan to keep their
bilateral relations in order. Because of India’s unique position in the region, geographically and otherwise, co-operative arrangements bilaterally between India and her neighbours, particularly Pakistan in view of the special relationship it has with India, would benefit the parties and the region as a whole.

The genesis and the growth of SAARC:

One of the notable features of South Asian countries is that they are not included in any of the customary unions, common markets and economic co-operation formed by the industrialized nations. The modest beginning made in the formation of Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) in 1967, did not bring about any worth while economic cooperation. Members countries were not able to evolve a common strategy in terms of development. As such, ASEAN became essentially a common political forum of six nations with a security perception. The political objective of the third world countries engaged in regional cooperation was to change the socio-political, economic conditions of their people and to redress the unequal nature of their relationship with the developed countries.

The vast potential for regional cooperation were not fully exploited as most of the South Asian countries were engaged in trivial issues. The South Asian nations are Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Bhutan, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Maldives and Burma. But hectic efforts were made by seven of the nations to integrate their economic through
regional grouping. The idea behind the formation of such regional body was to thwart the sluggish economic growth of these countries.\textsuperscript{16}

In order to meet the new economic challenges, the initiative for organizing a regional forum called "South Asian Regional Cooperation", to explore the possibilities of promoting regional cooperation was initiated in 1979 by the late President Zia-ur-Rahman of Bangladesh who sough cooperation of his counterparts in India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka, in the light of his consultations the need to explore the possibility of establishing some institutional arrangements for regional cooperation at the highest level.\textsuperscript{17} A suitable name for such a grouping of South Asian countries was sought. Various names were proposed, of which South Asian Regional Cooperation (SARC) appeared suitable.

Thus the idea of South Asian Regional Cooperation concretely emerged in 1980, and was proclaimed in 1983 in New Delhi. It was formally launched in August, 1983. But the preliminary meetings were held in Colombo in 1981, Islamabad in 1982 and Dhaka in 1983\textsuperscript{18} and then followed by series of meetings.

In the First SAARC Summit Conference held in Dhaka, in Bangladesh on 7\textsuperscript{th} and 8\textsuperscript{th} December, 1985 the Dhaka Declaration, enumerating the Charter of the organization was accepted.\textsuperscript{19} Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi talked to General Zia-ul-Haq on the measures to strengthen mutual relations. The second summit conference was held at Bangalore, on 16\textsuperscript{th} and 17\textsuperscript{th} November, 1986. This meeting called
for cooperation among the member countries for the elimination of terrorism from the region. Involvement of the people for successful regional cooperation. Greater contacts among the people of the region through frequent exchange of scholars, academicians, artists, authors, professionals and businessmen.\textsuperscript{20} The SAARC held its third summit at Kathmandu in Nepal, from November 2\textsuperscript{nd} to 4\textsuperscript{th}, 1987. In that summit the participants including Rajiv Gandhi reiterated their desire for promoting peace, stability, amity and progress in the region and Non-Aligned, particularly respect for the principles of sovereign equality, territorial integrity, national independence, non-use of force and non-interference in the internal affairs of other states and peaceful settlement of disputes.

The three-day Fourth summit meeting of the SAARC, began on 29\textsuperscript{th} December, 1988 at Islamabad. The Islamabad summit provided an opportunity of talks between Prime Ministers of India and Pakistan, and brightened the hopes for a new phase of relations between the two countries.

The sudden death of Zia in an air crash in August 1988 and the assumption of the Prime Ministership by Benazir Bhutto in December 1988 after democratic elections provided the two countries with an unexpected opportunity to improve relations. Rajiv Gandhi’s attendance at the SAARC summit in Islamabad in December 1988 permitted the two prime ministers to establish a personal rapport and to sign three
bilateral agreements, including one prescribing attacks on each other's nuclear facilities. Despite the personal sympathy between the two leaders and Bhutto's initial emphasis on the 1972 Simla Accord as the basis for warmer bilateral ties, domestic political pressures, particularly relating to unrest in Sindh, Punjab and Kashmir effectively destroyed the chances for improved relations in 1989 and 1990. For her part, Bhutto backed away from her comments on the Simla Accord by continuing to press the Kashmir issue internationally, and India public opinion forced Rajiv Gandhi and his successor, V.P.Singh, to take a hard line on events relating to Kashmir.21

In the early 1990s, Indian-Pakistani relations remained troubled despite bilateral efforts and changes in the international environment. High-level dialogue on a range of bilateral issues took place between foreign ministers and prime ministers at the UN and at other international meetings. However, discussions over confidence-building measures, begun in the summer of 1990 but as a response to the Kashmir confrontation, were canceled in June 1992 following mutual expulsions of diplomats for alleged espionage activities. In June 1991, Pakistan Prime Minister Mian Nawaz Sharif proposed talks by India, Pakistan, the United States, the Soviet Union, and China to consider making South Asia a nuclear-free zone, but the minority governments of Chandra Sekhar and subsequently that of Narasimha Rao declined to participate. Nevertheless, negotiations concerning the Siachen Glacier
resumed in November 1992 after a hiatus of three years. By the mid-1990s, little had occurred to improve bilateral relations as unrest in Jammu and Kashmir accelerated and domestic politics in both nations were unsettled.22

The Fifth SAARC Summit Conference was held at Male in Maldives in November 21st to 23rd, 1990 to provide an another opportunity to the Heads of States Governments of South Asia to develop personal interaction.23

To resume the account of Indo-Pak relations during the tenure of Rajiv Gandhi and President Zia-ul-Haq during the remaining years of the term, which abruptly ended on 17th August 1988, when he died in an air-crash. During 1986 relations between India and Pakistan made only a tardy progress, although India continued its efforts to work for a step by step normalization of relations.24

In December 1986, India’s Home Minister with a delegation went to Pakistan for talks with his counterpart. Both sides reaffirmed their commitment to the Simla Agreement and to seek solutions to illegal border crossings, terrorist menace, smuggling of narcotics across the borders etc. They agreed to strengthen their border security forces and to take specific measures such as joint surveillance of the border etc., to contain such activities as would go against internal peace, stability and territorial integrity of the other state. But the foreign secretaries of the two countries who also met in December could not resolve their
differences over the issue of no-war pact/treaty of peace and friendship
the drafts of which were expected to be merged according to the talks
between President Zia and Rajiv Gandhi in January 1986.25

In spite of informal contacts among the people of the two nations
and frequent enough meetings and exchanges between secretaries and
ministers, there were precious little improvement in Indo-Pak relations
during President Zia’s regime.

**Exchange of LIST of nuclear installations:**

India and Pakistan, through diplomatic channels simultaneously
at New Delhi and Islamabad, exchanged lists of nuclear installations
and facilities covered under the Agreement on the Prohibition of Attack
against Nuclear Installations and Facilities between India and Pakistan.
This agreement was signed on December 31, 1988 and entered into
force on 27th January 1991. Under the Agreement, the two countries,
on first January of every calendar year, are to inform each other of
Nuclear Installations and Facilities to be covered by the Agreement.
The First such exchange of lists took place on 1st January 1992. This is
the seventeenth consecutive time that both countries have exchanged
such a list.26

**Indo-Pak Agreement:**

In the Sixth Round of SAARC Summit held in 1991 two more
agreements were signed in April 1991, an agreement on advanced
notice of military exercise, manoeuvres and top movements, as well as
an agreement on prevention of Air Space Violation and permitting over
flight and landing by military Air Crafts.\textsuperscript{27}

In January 1994, the seventh round of Foreign Secretary level
talks between India and Pakistan represented by J.N.Dixit and Pakistani
counterpart Shahiryar Khan were held for three days. But the talks
resulted in the failure to reach agreement on Siachen or break the ice of
the issues. The talks' most positive outcome was that New Delhi and
Islamabad agreed to make "sincere efforts to resolve the Jammu and
Kashmir problem". India has since offered to make new proposals in
two to six weeks' time on Siachen and five other disputed issues. But
there were signs that both sides might be slipping back into their war of
words and might even delay the next round.

\textbf{Gujral Doctrine:}

Mr. I.K.Gujral, as Prime Minister of India in 1997, outlined a
bolder regional policy which came to be known as the Gujral Doctrine.
He was wiling to go the extra mile to resolve problems with neighbours
without insisting on reciprocity. The Gujral Doctrine was on principles
that no South Asian country would allow its territory to be used against
the interest of another country of the region, none would interfere in the
internal affairs of another, all South Asian countries would respect each
other's territorial integrity and sovereignty, and all of them would settle
all their disputes through peaceful bilateral negotiations.\textsuperscript{28}
However, the adversarial and confrontatinist approach of Pakistan towards India continued during the tenure of the United Front government, thus impeding the normalization of relations. The Indian Government closely monitored these developments and their bearing on the security environment in the subcontinent. All measures were taken to safeguard national interest and security, though India remained committed to building a relationship of trust, friendship and cooperation with Pakistan and sought to resolve all outstanding issues through bilateral negotiations, as envisaged in the Simla Agreement.

**Track-II Diplomacy:**

To create a positive atmosphere and promote people-to-people relations, the Indian government took a number of unilateral steps, including issuing greater number of visas to nationals of Pakistan and enhancing interaction between intellectuals, scholars, journalists and academicians. India believed that development of people-to-people contacts and enhancement of trade and commercial ties would contribute to laying the foundation on which constructive relations between the two could be built and which remains our objective. This came to be known as Track II Diplomacy. There were continuing high political level interactions with Pakistan. Between May 1997 and January 1998, Prime Minister Mr. I.K.Gujral met his Pakistani counterpart on four occasions. He conveyed India’s desire to establish a relationship of trust, friendship and cooperation with Pakistan. India’s
concerns regarding Pakistan’s activities which impinged adversely on its legitimate national security interests were made clear.

The bilateral official dialogue was resumed at India’s initiative and the Foreign Secretaries of the two countries held three rounds of discussions during the year. On the conclusion of the second round of Islamabad in June 1997, a Joint Statement was issued which identified the subjects which would be taken up in a broad based dialogue and provided suggestions for setting up a mechanism for the talks, the modalities and details were under discussion with Pakistan. Contrary to this spirit in which the dialogue had been resumed, Pakistan’s support to cross-border terrorism showed no signs of abatement and continued its vicious and baseless propaganda against India.

The most difficult task of the Indian Government under Prime Minister Mr. A.B. Vajpayee was the containment of Pakistan which was based upon the assumption that the ruling establishment in Pakistan was committed towards unremitting war on terror against India. The objective of this policy was to engineer, through external pressures, an international transformation of Pakistan that puts an end to the sources of compulsive hostility towards India. At the same time, India continued its efforts to build a relationship of trust and confidence with Pakistan to put in place a stable structure of cooperation, and address outstanding issues through peaceful bilateral negotiations. India emphasized the
value of reactivating a sustained and comprehensive dialogue, which would not be issue-fixated, but which would enable the relationship to move forward in a broad-based manner. The first round of the renewed Composite Dialogue was held in October-November 1998 to discuss the eight identified subjects i.e., Peace and Security, including CBMs; J&K, Siachen, Tulbul Navigation project, Sir Creek, Trade and Economic Cooperation, Terrorism and Drug Trafficking and Friendly exchanges in different fields. These talks indicated common ground on some issues – such as Peace and Security including CBMs, economic/commercial cooperation and Friendly Exchanges in various fields, but agreement could not be reached to reflect this jointly in public statements. India reiterated its constructive approach to the Complete Dialogue.30

India had conveyed its concerns regarding Pakistan’s continued, and active involvement in instigating and sponsoring terrorism in Jammu & Kashmir and other parts of its territory, several occasions previously and reiterated it during the Composite Dialogue, and conclusive evidence to this effect was also presented. It was emphasized that India’s resolve to defeat cross-border terrorism and to safeguard its security interests was total. India advised the abandonment of this activity, and full respect for their commitments under the Simla Agreement, including avoidance of provocative acts.
across the Line of Control (LOC) and hostile propaganda, were essential steps to be taken by them.

**Vajpayee-Nawaz Sharif Meet:**

The Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee and Pakistan Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif met at New York in September 1998. It was decided that Foreign Secretary level talks would be held between India and Pakistan, and a direct bus service between Lahore to Delhi was proposed. The talks at Foreign Secretary level held in October and November 1998 did not make concrete advances on major issues. Yet the fact that talks took place held promise for future interaction.

**Lahore Visit:**

Continuing with his viewpoint that a country can choose its friends but not the neighbours, Prime Minister Vajpayee took the historic initiative of traveling to Lahore, on the inaugural run of the Delhi-Lahore-Delhi Bus service on February 21st 1999. This was the most significant high level engagement between the two countries in over a quarter of a century. In his talks, the Indian Prime Minister reaffirmed India's commitment to friendship and cooperation with Pakistan. He also highlighted the futility of the path of violence. The Lahore Declaration, the MOU on CBMs and the joint statement issued during the PM's visit, represented in their totality, a vision for the development of the relationship. They spell out concrete steps to be taken by the two countries in translating this vision into reality, including in particular, a
joint commitment to work through a bilateral process in the framework of the Simla Agreement – for establishing a durable structure of cooperation, of building confidence and of resolving outstanding issues through peaceful, bilateral negotiations. It is noteworthy that the two Prime Ministers agreed on the need to combat terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. Also significant was the decision that in addition to the continuing official dialogue, there would also be regular interaction at the political level – to impart momentum and direction to the dialogue. This envisaged regular meetings between the two Foreign Ministers.32

**Kargil Intrusion:**

However, the trust shown by Prime Minisiter Vajpayee was betrayed by the Kargil intrusion of the Pakistani army in May 1999. The Pakistani chief of Army staff, Gen. Parvez Musharraf, had got the Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif to sign on the papers authorizing the Kargil invasion before the signing of the Lahore Declaration with Prime Minister Vajpayee. The Indian armed forces began Operation Vijay on 26th May 1999 with the objectives of completely evicting Pakistan’s armed intrusion and aggression. While the operation was on, the External Affairs Minister also received the Foreign Minister of Pakistan for talks in New Delhi on 12th June, 1999. The Pakistan Foreign Minister was told clearly that Pakistan’s armed intrusion and aggression was completely unacceptable, that it constituted a blatant violation of the Line of Control and the Simla Agreement and that there
was no question of any talks on this issue without Pakistan first addressing itself to vacating its aggression against India and restoring status quo ante on the LOC. India's outrage at the inhuman and barbaric treatment meted out to its soldiers in Pakistani custody was also told that Pakistan's aggression was a grave breach of trust and while its territorial aggression against India would be evolved, it would be extremely difficult to restore the trust and confidence that had been damaged by Pakistan's betrayal.33

India responded with full military force on its own side of the Line of Control (LoC) and got its territory evacuated from Pakistan. The unambiguous call from the United States to restore the status quo ante unconditionally, China's reluctance to help Pakistan in any meaningful manner and the lack of support from Saudi Arabia also helped in pushing the Pakistani authorities to a ceasefire. Both the countries agreed to a ceasefire in July 2000, but there was a political stand off between the two countries. The Indian decision not to cross the LoC won widespread international acclaim in contrast to the criticism of the Pakistani adventurism. While India was seen as a state offering the prospects of a successful economy, Pakistan was being seen as a failing state.

It was India that had initiated the composite dialogue process. The Prime Minister's visit to Lahore was a path breaking attempt to reach out to Pakistan and permanently transform our relations. It was
also a manifestation of India’s desire to take them in a positive and constructive direction. Pakistan embarked on a venture that constituted betrayal of trust and revealed abiding hostility.

The damage that Kargil Intrusion had done to mutual relations was compounded by Pakistan’s continuing sponsorship of terrorism against India as a matter of state policy. Pakistan came under what amounts to martial law following the military coup of 12th October, 1999. The coup had its own implications for India’s security interests. Pakistan had to restore mutual trust and confidence through concrete and tangible action including the cessation of cross border terrorism and hostile propaganda against India. The sponsorship and instigation of cross border terrorism by Pakistan in Jammu & Kashmir and elsewhere in India constituted a violation not only of the LOC but also of the Simla Agreement. India called upon Pakistan to adjure this brazen encouragement and abetment of terrorism and dismantle the entire network that was set up in Pakistani territory for this purpose. Continuous calls for jehad and the high-pitched propaganda against India, instances of which were rife in the daily life of Pakistan, did not inspire confidence in Pakistan’s interest in dialogue. The international community also recognized that all outstanding issues between India and Pakistan should be settled bilaterally in a peaceful manner and that there was no place whatsoever for any third party mediation in this process.
In the meantime, an Indian Airlines aircraft IC814 was hijacked to Kandahar by the persons on 24th December, 1999. The Indian Foreign Minister, Mr. Jaswant Singh, personally went to Kandahar and secured the safe release of passengers, crew and the aircraft in exchange for three terrorists, including a Pakistani national. This act of the Indian External Affairs Minister drew a lot of criticism from the opposition parties. The hijacking of this aircraft was an example of international terrorism at its worst. There was firm evidence that it was engineered by Pakistan and fundamental groups that were based in Pakistan and were under its command and control. The Indian authorities had also been able to identify the hijackers who were all Pakistanis. Further, the majority of the terrorists whose release was earlier sought by the hijackers were also Pakistanis. The destination of the hijackers as well as of the three released terrorists was Pakistan.

Though in December, 2000, Pakistan announced a policy of maximum restraint along the Indo-Pakistan border by bringing down the level of unprovoked firing and claiming to withdraw some of its troops, it continued to support cross border infiltration and terrorist operations in India. This was demonstrated by Pakistan sponsored attacks on the Red Fort in New Delhi and the airport in Srinagar and an aborted attempt on the life of the Chief Minister of Jammu and Kashmir. This was also indicated by the improved quality of the weapons, communication equipments of the terrorist groups such as Jaishe-e-
Mohammed, the Lashker-e-Toiba and the Harkat-ul-Mujahideen. It also persistently sought to sabotage any prospect of peace in Jammu and Kashmir whenever any initiatives were taken in this regard. The July 2000, unilateral cease fire by the Hizbul Mujahideen was sabotaged through enhanced violence and massacres of civilians in Jammu and Kashmir on 1st and 2nd August, 2000 and similarly, the Prime Minister’s initiative of November 19, 2000, giving directives to security forces not to launch any combat operations against the militants was eroded through the above mentioned terrorist attacks. Despite all this, India desired to resume the Composite Dialogue Process, which was started at its initiative in 1988, but Pakistan made no effort to create a proper environment free of terrorism and false propaganda so that the dialogue could resume.34

The political stand-off was broken after two years when Prime Minister Vajpayee extended an invitation to President Musharaf to visit India which was readily accepted by him. In his letter of invitation, Prime Minister Vajpayee pointed to the common enemy of poverty and expressed India’s willingness to discuss the Kashmir issue. He emphasized that there was no alternative to reconciliation and urged President Musharaf to walk the high road with him.35 Prime Minister Vajpayee also reiterated the desire to pick up the threads of Lahore and resume the Composite Dialogue. To demonstrate the seriousness of purpose, the Vajpayee government came up with a series of confidence

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building measures on the eve of the summit which included easing of punishment for Pakistani fishermen who got caught in Indian waters, opening up the Line of Control in Jammu and Kashmir to facilitate the movement of Kashmiri’s across the divide, offer of fellowships for Pakistani students in Indian technical institutions, unilateral reduction of tariffs on Pakistani goods and the readiness to send the Director General of military operations to make the border a peaceful one. This was done by India in good faith, but Pakistan felt that this might have been done to divert attention from what it saw as the core issue – the issue of Jammu and Kashmir.

**Agra Fiasco:**

At Agra, on 15-16 July, 2001, Prime Minister Vajpayee and President Musharaf held extensive one to one talks for over five hours. Talks were held at the delegation level as well. During these discussions, Prime Minister Vajpayee emphasized the importance of creating an atmosphere of trust and confidence for progress on all issues including Jammu and Kashmir. He took up other specific issues, which would further help the process of peace, such as the issue of 54 prisoners of war languishing in Pakistani jails; the extradition of criminals and terrorists who had been given sanctuary in Pakistan; the upkeep of Sikh gurudwaras and Hindu temples in Pakistan, treatment of the Indian pilgrims who visited shrines in Pakistan; and the enhancement of military beneficial trade. He also conveyed to him the
Indian resolve strength and stamina to counter terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir, while focusing on terrorism there. In his professionals President Musharraf focused exclusively on the dispute of Jammu and Kashmir and restated the well known Pakistani positions.36

However, the Agra talks focused on the primary issue of cross border terrorism and Kashmir, besides the overall relationship between the two countries. After two days and two nights of negotiations at Agra, both the countries could not agree on the draft of the Agra Declaration. The Indian side worked very hard to bridge the gap that existed between the approaches of the two countries as regards bilateral relations and arrive at a draft joint document that would move the Indo-Pak relations forward. India made proposals for the structure of the dialogue process on all issues, including meetings at the Official, Ministerial and Summit levels. Proposals were also made to address the issues of Peace and Security including Conventional and Nuclear Confidence Building Measures (CBMs), Jammu and Kashmir, Terrorism, and on the other subjects of the Composite Dialogue. But the Pakistani side insisted on the settlement of the Jammu and Kashmir dispute as a precondition for the normalization of relations, therefore the quest for a joint draft document was dropped from the Indian side.37

Prime Minister Vajpayee’s another attempt to find a breakthrough with Pakistan failed again. Although the two sides covered considerable political ground, the non fulfillment of the initial expectations of a final
declaration created a sense of failure in the minds of the Indian public which led to the government being blamed for not doing its homework properly.

The Pakistani side wanted that the Agra Declaration should be the basis for future negotiations between the two countries because the Simla and Lahore declarations did not place enough emphasis on solving the Kashmir issue. But the Indian side insisted that Agra was simply a contribution not only of the Lahore process but also of the agreement laid down in Shimla.

**Attack on Indian Parliament:**

The Agra talks failed primarily because of the Pakistani reluctance to accept the Indian accusation that terror was being explored from its soil to Kashmir and other parts of India which had to be stopped for a meaningful dialogue to take place between the two countries. The Indian state was vindicated when terrorists attacked the Indian Parliament on 13th December, 2001, following the attack previously on 1st October, 2001 on the Jammu and Kashmir state assembly. It underscored the fact that though Pakistan professed a desire for dialogue in public, it was unwilling to give up its strategy of confrontation, violence and deception while dealing with India and continued to support terrorist violence on Indian soil. Even though Pakistan joined his international coalition in the war against terror after
the 9/11 attacks, it was justified by the Pakistani President as the only way through which he could protect the 'Kashmir cause'.

This forced India to adopt a new strategy which involved a head-on confrontation with Pakistan. India delivered a formal demarche to Pakistan on 14th December, 2001, demanding an immediate crackdown on the operations of terrorist organizations, Lashkar-e-Tayabba and Jaish-e-Mohammed, on its soil. However, the Pakistani authorities continued to show a complete lack of concern, even going to the extent of making the absurd suggestion that the attack was designed by the Indian Intelligence agencies to discredit Pakistan. In view of this lack of concern, India launched its biggest military mobilization and to reinforce this military threat it called back its envoy from Pakistan, sought a reduction of staff at the Pakistani High Commission in New Delhi, restricted the movement of the Pakistan staff that stayed back and terminated rail, road and air transportation links with it, and handed over a list of 20 fugitives who had received safe haven in Pakistan and asked the Pakistani authorities to apprehend them and extradite them to it. India also considered scrapping of the Indus Waters Treaty of 1961. In response to all this, Gen. Musharraf threatened serious repercussions if India was to launch an attack on Pakistan. India debated conventional limited military options of a limited war. As the then External Affairs Minister, Mr. Jaswant Singh has remarked that the stand off in 2002 caused anxiety in some international quarters, and
generated fears of a nuclear war, totally unfounded as a subsequent events demonstrated.41

As expected, the US and the UK got involved in an intensive diplomatic engagement with India and Pakistan. Under the combined Anglo-American pressure, President Musharraf in his speech on 12th January, 2002, declared that the Pakistani soil would not be allowed to be used to promote terrorism anywhere in the world and that he would not allow the fomentation of violence in the name of the Kashmir cause.42 India’s response to the speech was positive, but it insisted that there must be evidence of the cessation of cross border terrorism on the ground before it could resume engagements with Pakistan and insisted that this commitment should be extended to all territories under Pakistani control at that time. In this regard, India asked Pakistan to stop all infiltration across the border and the Line of Control (LoC), to take steps to end the funding and financing of terrorist groups in Pakistani territory, and to ensure that the daily cycle of terrorist violence was ended in Jammu and Kashmir and in other parts of Indian territory. India also declared that if Pakistan would operationalise its commitment to end cross border terrorism, then India would resume the composite dialogue process.43 But India suggested that the evidence would become clear only after the winter months by judging the trends of cross border infiltration and cross border sponsored violence.
The crisis which was expected to ease after Gen. Musharraf’s speech got exacerbated with another terrorist related violence in May 2002, against the armed forces and their families at Kaluchak. This led to Indian forces being moved to high alert so that they could go to war in a few hours notice. As India prepared for a war, President Bush sent the Defence Secretary, Donald Rumsfeld, and the Deputy Secretary to State, Richard Armitage to India and Pakistan to ease the tension. Richard Armitage was successful in extracting the commitment from Gen. Musharraf that Pakistan would end cross border infiltration permanently, which was conveyed to India. In response, India agreed to pull back some of its naval forces from the Arabian Sea, reduced the alert level of its armed forces, lifted the restrictions imposed on Pakistan over flights and named a new envoy to Islamabad but it expressed its unwillingness to resume political dialogue with Pakistan until it implemented its promises. The U.S. also pressed Pakistan to desist from disrupting the elections to the Jammu and Kashmir assembly in September 2002. After the successful completion of elections to the Jammu and Kashmir assembly, India announced the redeployment of its forces from the border.

India made significant gains from its coercive diplomacy on the issue of cross border terrorism which included the unambiguous international characterization of violence in Kashmir as terrorism; getting the western powers to hold Pakistan responsible for it and
obtaining assurances from it to end cross border terrorism; and to get America to endorse the fairness of the elections to the Jammu and Kashmir assembly which was a step forward in determining the wishes of the people.

Keeping with the desire of people on both sides to have peaceful and friendly relations, but being mindful of the fact that careful preparation was necessary so that there was a meaningful engagement at higher levels, the Indian government adopted a step by step approach to normalize relations with Pakistan. In consonance with this spirit, Prime Minister Vajpayee extended the hand of friendship to Pakistan at a public rally in Srinagar on 18th April, 2003. Following this gesture, he received a telephone call from the Pakistani Prime Minister, Mr. Zafarullah Khan Jamali, on 28th April 2003. The two leaders discussed ways of moving the bilateral relations forward. Prime Minister Vajpayee suggested the importance of economic cooperation, cultural exchanges and people to people contacts, as progress on these issues could help to create a climate conducive to addressing most difficult issues. Prime Minister Vajpayee in his suo moto statement in the Parliament on 2nd May 2003 stated, “We are committed to improvement of relations with Pakistan, and are willing to grasp every opportunity to do so. However, we have repeatedly expressed the need to create a conducive atmosphere for a sustained dialogue, which necessarily
requires an end to cross border terrorism and the dismantling of its infrastructure.\textsuperscript{44}

This led to significant subsequent steps such as the restoration of relations at the level of High Commissioners; resumption of the Lahore-Delhi bus service; high level exchanges at the level of Parliamentarians, businessmen, media, artists, judges, peace activists, sporting contacts and others, free medical treatment to 20 Pakistan children, release of prisoners and fishermen on both sides; and increase in the strength of the respective High Commissions. These steps generated a positive response among the peoples of both countries.

Following this, on 22\textsuperscript{nd} October, 2003, India announced further steps to promote people to people contacts which included – resumption of civil aviation links followed by resumption of the rail link; resumption of bilateral sporting encounters including cricket; permission to senior citizens (65 years and above) to cross at Wagah on foot; holding of visas camps in different cities to benefit the people; increasing the number of Delhi-Lahore-Delhi buses; the establishment of links between the Coast Guard authorities of the two countries; the non arrest by either side of the fishermen of the other country within a certain band on the sea; provision of free medical treatment to a second lot of 20 Pakistani children; resumption of passenger shipping services between Mumbai and Karachi; commencement of a bus service between Srinagar to Muzaffarabad; starting of bus or rail link between
In response to this, on 23rd November, 2003, the Pakistani Prime Minister announced that the Pakistani forces have been given instructions to ceasefire along the Line of Control (LoC) with effect from Eid-ul-Fitr. India welcomed the decision but also made it clear that in order to establish a full cease fire on a durable basis, there must be an end to infiltration across of LoC. To take this process further, India proposed a ceasefire along the Actual Ground Line Position (AGPL) in Siachen. The matter was discussed during the conversation between the Director Generals Military Operations of the two countries on 25th November, 2003, and it was agreed to observe a ceasefire on the International Border, LoC and AGPL, with effect from the midnight of 25th November, 2003. Furthermore, the Delhi-Lahore bus service was resumed from 1st December, 2003, the air links between the two countries were restored from 1st January, 2004 and it was decided to resume the Samjhauta Express from 15th January, 2004.

Vajpayee’s Islamabad Visit in 2004:

This process of rebuilding the mutual confidence between the two countries resulted in the issuing of the Indo-Pak Joint Statement of 6th January, 2004 during the SAARC summit at Islamabad in which leaders of both the countries welcomed the recent steps towards normalization of relations between the two countries and expressed the hope that the
positive trends set by the CBMs (Confidence Building Measures) would be consolidated. Prime Minister Vajpayee said that in order to take forward and sustain the dialogue process, violence, hostility and terrorism must be prevented. To carry the process of normalization forward, the President of Pakistan and the Prime Minister of India agreed to commence the process of the Composite Dialogue in February 2004. The two leaders were confident that the resumption of the Composite Dialogue would lead to peaceful settlement of all bilateral issues, including Jammu and Kashmir, to the satisfaction of both sides.47

Building upon the tremendous goodwill that was demonstrated by the people in both countries, the Government pursued a proactive policy of constructive engagement with Pakistan with the objective of cementing a durable structure of peace and stability in South Asia. Based on the solemn and categorical commitment given by the President of Pakistan on 6th January 2004 not to permit any territory under Pakistan’s control to be used to support terrorism in any manner, the Foreign Secretaries of the two countries met on 18th February, 2004 to commence the Composite Dialogue. The talks signaled the unfolding of a substantive dialogue process. They reviewed and endorsed the agreement worked out at the Joint Secretary/Director General level meetings on 16-17 February, 2004 on the modalities and timeframe for discussions on all subjects of the agenda of the Composite Dialogue.48
The U.P.A. government continued the peace process revived by the Vajpayee government. To continue the Composite Dialogue initiated by the Vajpayee government, the foreign secretaries of the two countries met in June 2004. During the Foreign Secretary level talks on 27-28 June 2004 on Peace and Security and Jammu & Kashmir, views were exchanged on carrying the process forward in an atmosphere free from terrorism and violence. India proposed a comprehensive framework of CBMs. It was, inter alia, agreed to immediately restore the strength of the respective High Commissions to the original level of 110; to immediately release all apprehended fishermen in each other’s custody and put in place a mechanism for the return of unintentionally transgressing fishermen and their boats from high seas without apprehending them, and to initiate steps for early release of civilian prisoners. It was also agreed in principle to re-establish the Consulates General in Karachi and Mumbai. The two Foreign Secretaries had a detailed exchange of views on Jammu and Kashmir and agreed to continue with a sustained and meaningful dialogue in order to find a peaceful, negotiated and amicable solution to the issue. Talks on the remaining six subjects of the Composite Dialogue, namely, Siachen, Sir Creek, Tulbul Navigation Project, Economic and Commercial Cooperation, Terrorism and Drug Trafficking and Promotion of Friendly Exchanges in various fields, were held in the last week of July and first half of August.
The External Affairs Minister of India met the Foreign Minister of Pakistan on 5-6 September, 2004 to review the overall progress in the Composite Dialogue. A one-day meeting between the two Foreign Secretaries preceded it. The two Ministers agreed on a series of technical talks on various subjects, including expert level meeting on Conventional and Nuclear CBMs, inter alia, to discuss the draft agreement on advance notification of missile tests, meeting between railway authorities on the operationalisation of the Munnabao-Khokrapur rail link; meeting between Indian Border Security Force (BSF) and Pakistan Rangers meeting between Narcotics Control Authorities, meeting between the Indian Coast Guards and the Pakistan Maritime Security Agency to discuss in MoU on establishing communication links between item, and a meeting on all issues related to commencement of a bus service between Srinagar and Muzaffarabad. It was also agreed to establish a Committee of Experts to consider issues related to a trade; a Joint Survey of the boundary pillars in the horizontal segment of the international boundary in the Sir Creek area; addition of a new category of tourist visa in the visa regime between the two countries, and promotion of group tourism, setting up of a mechanism to deal with the issue of civilian prisoners and fishermen to further measures for facilitation of visits to religious shrines, and upkeep of historical sites; implementation of the outcome of the August 2004 meeting of Defense Secretaries; and enhanced interaction and exchanges among the
respective Foreign Offices. Technical level talks on various subjects, as agreed during the meeting between the two Foreign Ministers in September 2004 were held in the first half of December.50

The Foreign Secretaries of the two countries met in Islamabad on 27-28 December 2004 to initiate the next round of the Composite Dialogue. They had discussions on the overall progress in bilateral relations, and on Peace and Security including CBM, and Jammu and Kashmir. A schedule of meetings on the other six subjects on the Composite Dialogue was worked out. The two Foreign Secretaries agreed to promote regular contacts at local level at designated places and explore further CBMs along the international boundary and the LoC. On Jammu and Kashmir, India suggested five places along the International Boundary and the LoC where members of the divided families from the two sides could come and meet under a joint security arrangement.

Musharraf’s visit to India in 2004:

Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh met President Pervez Musharraf in New York on 24th September, 2004. It was the first meeting at the highest level after the formation of the new Government in India. Prime Minister emphasized that the dialogue process was based on President Musharraf’s assurance on terrorism as contained in the Joint Press Statement of 6 January 2004. The two leaders reiterated their commitment to continue the bilateral dialogue to restore
normalcy and cooperation, and also agreed to look at the possibility of a gas pipeline in the larger context of expanding trade and economic relations between the two countries. On Jammu and Kashmir, PM conveyed India’s willingness to explore all options, short of redrawing of boundaries, or a second partition of the country.

The visit of the Prime Minister of Pakistan, Mr. Shaukat Aziz on 23-24 November, 2004 in his capacity as the Chairperson of SAARC facilitated further forward movement in bilateral relations. Although SAARC was the occasion for the visit, there was also an exchange of views on bilateral issues. Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh underlined the importance of Pakistan fulfilling, in letter and spirit, its commitment on cross border terrorism. He also reiterated India’s determination to address all issues on the bilateral agenda, in a serious and purposeful manner. As agreed during the Foreign Secretary level talks during 27-28 December 2004 in Islamabad, the contacts at political level continued and the Indian External Affairs Minister, Mr. K.Natwar Singh, visited Pakistan from 15-17 February 2005 where an agreement to start the Srinagar-Muzaffarabad bus service from 7 April 2005 and to start a bus service from Amritsar to Lahore and religious places such as Nankana Sahib was reached. It was agreed to initiate discussions on reducing risks of nuclear accidents or unauthorized use of nuclear weapons and preventing incidents at sea and to look at a gas
pipeline through Pakistan subject to satisfaction of India’s security concerns and assured supplies.

In order to further facilitate people-to-people contact and to provide a fillip to the present process in India-Pakistan relations, the Government on 18 September 2004, announced unilateral measures to liberalize visa regime for Pakistan nationals, including accredited journalists with minimum 3 years accreditation with national or international media of repute, academicians and professors, Vice-Chancellors and those coming on the invitation of reputed/eminent universities and institutions; medical doctors, if accompanying patients for treatment at leading/reputed hospitals in India; all Pakistani nationals above the age of 65 years. It was also decided to grant permission to Pakistan nationals to visit up to twelve places during each visit, and to liberalise the issue of visas for participation in conferences. In December 2004, the Government took the unilateral decision to grant visas to senior citizens (above 65 years), children (below 12 years), and members of pre-vetted groups from Pakistan on arrival at Wagah Border. In addition, the Government also decided to allow admission to students from Pakistan in technical institutions in India, on a case by-case basis.

The successful start of the bus service between Srinagar and Muzaffarabad in the Pakistan occupied Kashmir was hailed as a landmark in the Indo-Pak peace process. President Musharraf visited
India from April 16-18, 2005. During this visit, both countries agreed to carry the bilateral relationship forward. A lot of progress was made in the bilateral relationship between the two countries through confidence building measures, people to people contacts and by enhancing the areas of interaction. It was agreed to restore the rail link between Kokhrapar and Munnabao. President Musharraf and Prime Minister Singh discussed the issue of Jammu and Kashmir in a positive atmosphere. Prime Minister Singh emphasized that while there would be no redrawing of borders, all measures that could bring the people on both sides together, including increased transport linkages to facilitate greater traffic of people and trade across the border and the Line of Control would be taken to help the process and create an atmosphere of trust and confidence. President Musharraf stressed the importance of addressing the Jammu and Kashmir issue. However, he argued that the confidence building process had made significant progress which would create a general sense of trust and understanding between the two countries which in turn would be conducive in creating an environment for a just, fair and mutually acceptable solution of all outstanding issues.52

Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh and President Pervez Musharraf met in New York on September 14, 2005 and reviewed progress in their relations since they last met in New Delhi on April 18, 2005. The two leaders referred to the earlier statements of January 6,
2004 and April 18, 2005 and reiterated their pledge that they would not allow terrorism to impede the peace process. They reaffirmed their commitment to the decisions taken at their meeting in New Delhi and agreed to expedite their implementation. They also welcomed the progress made within the framework of the composite dialogue, including promotion of trade and economic relations, people to people contacts and confidence building measures. They also welcomed the recent release of prisoners on both sides and agreed to continue the process on a humanitarian basis. They expressed their commitment to ensure a peaceful settlement of all pending issues including Jammu and Kashmir to the satisfaction of both sides. They agreed that possible options for a peaceful, negotiated settlement in this regard should continue to be pursued in a sincere spirit and purposeful manner.

In an attempt to further strengthen people to people contacts, the Munnabao-Kokhrapar rail link, the Amritsar to Lahore bus service and the Amritsar to Nankana Sahib bus services were started in 2006. However. With the Pakistani involvement in the Mumbai local train blasts and the simultaneous increase in cross border terrorist violence in India, it suspended the Foreign Secretary level talks as part of the Composite Dialogue Process in July, 2006, Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh pointed the futility of peace talks when cross border terrorist violence was killing innocent people at the same time.

**Joint Anti Terrorism Mechanism:**
President General Pervez Musharraf and Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh had a cordial, frank and detailed exchange of views on all aspects of India-Pakistan relations in Havana on 16th September, 2006. A Joint Statement was issued in which the two leaders reiterated their commitments and determination to implement the Joint Statements of January 6, 2004, September 24, 2004, April 18, 2005 and September 14, 2005. The leaders agreed that the peace process must be maintained and its success was important for both countries and the future of the entire region. In this context, they directed their Foreign Secretaries to resume the composite dialogue at the earliest possible. They strongly condemned all acts of terrorism and agreed that terrorism is a scourge that needs to be effectively dealt with. They decided to put in place an India-Pakistan anti-terrorism institutional mechanism to identify and implement counter-terrorism initiatives and investigations.

**Pre 26/11 Indo-Pak Relations and CBMs:**

The Indo-Pak relations have been essentially marked by conflicts, disagreements, lack of mutual trust and so on. Their relation had reached the lowest point after the Kargil war and the Parliament attack in 2001 which virtually brought both the nations to the brink of a full-fledged war. Their bilateral relationship has had however in the recent times improved in leaps and bounds. It is primarily owing to the new emerging scenario in an increasingly globalised world coupled with the realization that their mutual conflict is actually harming both their
interests. The Confidence Building Measures (CBMs) that both the Governments undertook has made the real difference. Their improving bilateral relations can be understood from the following recent developments. In 2006, a “Friends without Borders” scheme began with the help of two British Tourists. The idea was that Indian and Pakistani children would make pen pals and write friendly letters to each other. The idea was so successful in both the countries.53

Post 26/11 Indo-Pak Relations:

India appears to have taken a very apt decision by avoiding an out-right war with Pakistan in dealing with Mumbai attacks. The path of diplomatic offensive it has launched is also producing results. It is also time that India pursues this endeavour to its logical conclusion. However, India needs to understand and accept the practical difficulties that the Pakistani Government faces. As otherwise though it may produce a feel good factor among the Indian establishments, it will fail to produce any real and effective result. Further, India should also introspect about its own failures and try and improve its own defence and become productive in focusing on preventing such terrorist attacks from occurring in the first place. India also needs to understand that deterioration of Indo-Pakistan relations is what the terrorists desire. Therefore, India needs to tread with care and avoid falling in the trap laid by the terrorists.
In other words, Indo-Pakistan bilateral relations are once again in a grave danger. The situation is tense. Lack of trust and mutual suspicion prevails. India has launched an aggressive diplomatic, offensive against Pakistan. But both nations need to realize that coexistence and cooperation should be the guiding principles. That terrorism is a curse that both the countries are suffering from. It is in this context both need to act more responsibility and read through the nefarious designs of the trouble makers. Pakistan on the one hand should act more responsibly and address India’s concerns while India should resist from taking any wrong step in a fit of rage. Only they can lasting peace be restored in the area and both the nations can develop and prosper and in this regard the joint statement can be seen as a positive development.

Trade Relations:

Despite the current tension between the countries, the trends of trade and commerce have improved. The volume of trade between the two countries for 2007-08 stands at $2.2 billion, of which $1.5 billion forms India’s exports to Pakistan. Since Pakistan has an overall trade deficit, the proposal allows it to frame bilateral safeguard measures to protect domestic industry from getting impacted. India has shown interest in having a Free Trade Agreement with Pakistan. India has assured to eliminate all para-tariff and non-tariff barriers in a time-bound manner. The broad contours of the proposed FTA focus on providing
real market access to Islamabad, removal of Tariff Rate Quota and state-specific taxes and non-tariff barriers on imports from Pakistan. In fact, India has also open to importing all agricultural products despite public sector agencies in India having the exclusive right to such trade. The proposed FTA has to be completed in phased manner. In the initial phase, the proposed FTA would cover goods, to be followed up by an agreement on trade to services and investments and later, on comprehensive economic cooperation in a phased manner. India is, however, keen that Pakistan shifts to a 'negative list' of imports from India from the 'positive list' operational now. The negative list could be reviewed every two years. As of now, there are only 1,938 items covered under the positive list greatly limiting the number of items that can be exported from India. but after the Mumbai attack the proposed FTA with Pakistan has definitely suffered a setback.

The India Pakistan Joint Study Group (JSG) at Commerce Secretary level constituted in 2005 has so far met three times. At its third meeting held on 2\textsuperscript{nd} August 2007 in New Delhi, both sides,, inter alia, decided to facilitate trade in goods by addressing the issues such as customs cooperation, standards, certification system etc.

As part of Confidence Building Measures with Pakistan, Cross LoC trade on the Srinagar-Muzaffarabad and Poonch-Rawalakot routes commended from 21\textsuperscript{st} October 2008. Twenty-one items for trade have been identified for duty-free passage. Items to be traded from
Salamabad to Chakoti and Chakandabagh to Rawalakot are carpets, rugs, wall hangings, shawls and stoles, fresh fruits and vegetables, aromatic plants, dry fruits including walnuts, Kashmiri spices spring rubberized coir / foam mattresses, furniture including walnut furniture etc. Similarly, items to be traded from Chakoti to Salamabad and rawalakot to Chakandabagh are rice, precious stores, dry fruits including walnuts, medicinal herbs, fresh fruits and vegetables, furniture including walnut furniture, carpets and rugs, embroidered items, foam mattresses, shawls and stoles.

Certain representations have been received for addressing the issues such has infrastructure developments etc., to facilitate LoC Trade. The Government has decided to provide funds for creating minimum infrastructure facilities for the LoC trade at the above two places as per the specifications and requirements to be spelt out by the Government of Jammu & Kashmir.

India has, inter-alia, taken following initiaves to boost bilateral trade:

1. The issues of mutual concerns are discussed to address them to the extent feasible through Commerce Secretary level talks on Economic and Commercial Cooperation within the framework of Composite Dialogue. The last round of this dialogue was held on 31st July – 1st August 2007 in New Delhi.
2. Back to back movement of trucks for loading and unloading for trade between India and Pakistan became operational at Attari-Wagah LCS since October 2007.

3. Development of infrastructure at Attari has been taken up as a priority project in the Integrated Check Post Project initiated by India.

4. Expeditious completion of statutory certification related formalities for import of cement from Pakistan.

5. Both sides decided to open two bank branches in either country.

Positive aspects:

1. There are cultural similarities between the two nations despite difference in religion. If can be difficult for a visitor who visits Lahore and then visits Amritsar to say which city belongs to which country. The cultural unity of undivided India was never in doubt. The difference is in religion. In a way even, that is artificial because there are more Muslims living in India that in Pakistan.

2. The countries have realized the importance of talks and negotiations. After losing three wars as well as Kargil War to India, Pakistan has realized that problems with India cannot be solved through force but only through talks. The countries started a composite dialogue when the Indian Prime Minister visited Pakistan in January 2004 thereby marking a betterment of relations. Even after Mumbai blast, India realized the need to
resume the talk and signed a joint declaration at Sharm-el-Sheikh.

3. There have been a slew of Confidence Building Measures (CBMs) such as bus and train links, people-to-people contact etc., between the two. Also cultural exchanges have taken place. These have definitely generated goodwill and improved relations. Cricket diplomacy had worked wonders. Indian cinema is also very popular in Pakistan. After the Mumbai blast the process of Track III and Track IV relations has suffered but a strong foundation has been already built.

4. SAFTA has finally come into force. Though it is not exactly a bilateral issue, its enforcement would have been impossible without betterment of relations between India and Pakistan.

5. The Balighar dam dispute has been solved through World Bank intervention. The verdict of the World Bank appointed expert, Raymond Lafitte has been accepted by both the countries.

6. The two countries have taken steps to ensure that there are no nuclear accidents. Hotlines exist between many top level officials thereby showing a greater level of engagement than in the past. Besides, the countries inform each other in advance before carrying out certain missile tests.

7. Fishermen who accidentally crossed over to each other's territory have many times been exchanged.
8. Despite the Mumbai blast, the people of both India and Pakistan have realized that terror attack was a manifestation of fundamentalists and not Pakistani people as a whole and therefore, the mutual respect has remained intact for each other.

**Shanghai Meet:**

Terrorism was the main issue when India suspended high level interaction with Pakistan in January 2009 and remained so. But Prime Minister Manmohan Singh broke the dialogue logjam on June 9, 2009 when he met Pakistani President Asaf Ali Zardari at Yekaterinburg on the side lines of Shanghai Organisation Cooperation Summit. Both agreed that their Foreign Secretaries should discuss the T-Word so that the two leaders could decide have to take the bilateral relationship forward. Infact with their meet, India-Pakistan set talks ball rolling.  

On 1 January, 2010, India and Pakistan exchanged through diplomatic channels simultaneously at New Delhi and Islamabad, the lists of nuclear installations and facilities covered under the Agreement on the prohibition of attack against nuclear installations and facilities between India and Pakistan.  

**Foreign Secretary level talks:**

Foreign Secretary level talks between India and Pakistan were held on February 25, 2010. The two sides had a frank, constructive and useful exchange of views. During the talks, India’s concerns on the terrorism emanating from Pakistan and directed against India were
conveyed clearly in a forthright manner. Further information on terrorist threats and activities against India emanating from Pakistan was also handed over to the Pakistani side for investigation and appropriate action. Pakistan Foreign Secretary expressed the desire and determination of the Government of Pakistan to make all possible efforts for a successful conclusion of the Mumbai attack trial which is underway in Pakistan. He stated that Pakistan was determined not to allow its territory to be used for terrorist activity against any country, and said that the additional information provided by India on February 25, 2010 will be studied. Pakistan raised certain issues which were responded to appropriately, reiterating our national position on these issues. It was also decided to address urgent humanitarian matters. The two Foreign Secretaries have agreed to remain in touch and continue their endeavour to build trust and confidence.57

Prime Minister's Stand on 34-page dossier:

The Prime Minister Man Mohan Singh categorically said that a 34-page dossier handed over by Islamabad two days ahead of his meeting with counterpart Yusuf Raza Gilani had given ample verification that Pakistan was acting against terrorists. “It showed progress though not adequate progress”. The dossier contained a detailed brief on the action taken by Pakistan. “It is the first time they had admitted that their nationals and a terrorist organization based in Pakistan carried out the ghastly terrorist act in India”. This dossier was the primus mobile to
change his approach towards Pakistan and he wanted to give peace a chance to excel between the two countries. The other factors, which precipitated him, may be enumerated as:

1. He reviewed that there was no change in stance while contending that "any meaningful dialogue with Pakistan" cannot move forward until Islamabad took steps to end terrorism emanating from its soil.

2. Prime Minister clarified that Indian stand remained unchanged with Pakistan. Infact, Pakistan is bound to take “sustained, effective and credible action” without waiting for the composite dialogue to begin. “It does not mean dilution of our stand, it only strengthens our commitment that meaningful process of engagement cannot move forward unless and until Pakistan takes measures to control terrorism”.

3. Prime Minister had also underlined that “engagement is the only way forward to realize the vision” of a stable and prosperous South Asia and said India is “willing to go more than half way provided Pakistan creates the conditions for a meaningful dialogue". He indicated that the timing situation and process of dialogue would depend on actions taken by Islamabad. “Whether, when and in what form we broaden the dialogue with Pakistan will depend on future developments".
4. He pointed out Pakistani Prime Minister and he had agreed that the foreign secretaries will meet as often as necessary and report to the two foreign ministers who will meet on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly. Singh said he had discussed with Gilani the present condition of bilateral ties, the future potential and the steps that are necessary to enable the two countries to realize the potential.

Pipeline Diplomacy

TAPI

The Petroleum Ministers of Turkmenistan, Afghanistan, Pakistan and India has signed an agreement for the $7.6 million –TAPI gas pipeline project, describing it as “financially and economically viable” despite the escalation in costs since the time it was first proposed. The implementation of the pipeline project ought to begin in 2010, and the first supplies of gas should start flowing through the 1,680 km. pipeline in 2015. The pipeline will traverse a total distance of 1,680 kilometers – out of which only 145 km. will be in Turkmenistan, with Afghanistan and Pakistan having to build the major part of the project with 735 km. and 800 km. of the pipeline respectively. The pipeline with a diameter of 56 inches will supply 90 million metric standard cubic meter per day (mmscmd) of gas from Turkmenistan’s Daulatabad fields. It will begin at the Daulatabad gas field in Turkmenistan, pass through Herat and Kandahar in Afghanistan, and Multan in Pakistan, ending at Fazilka on
the India-Pakistan border. The agreement finally inducts India into the project as a full member. For the first two years of the project, India and Pakistan will get over 40 mmscmd each, while Afghanistan will receive only five mmscmd. But from the third year, Afghanistan's share will increase almost three fold to 14 mmscmd, with a consequent decrease in the share of the other two countries. The gas supply, as per the agreement, will be guaranteed according to international norms on the principle of unobstructed transit of gas. The 'safety and security' of the pipeline will be provided by the participating governments in their sovereign territories. The transportation tariff will be calculated on the basis of the cost of service method. The Asian Development Bank (ADB) will fund the project.

**Role of GAIL:**

State-run GAIL India Ltd will be part of a consortium that will be building the 7.6 billion dollar Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India gas pipeline by 2015. The rival Iran-Pakistan-India gas pipeline is to be built by the three nations separately – Iran is to build the section of the pipeline that fall in its territory, while Pakistan will construct the 1,035 km length from Iran-Pakistan border to Pakistan-India border. India will lay the line from its border with Pakistan to the consumption centre.

**India offered new talk with Pakistan:**

On February 6, 2010 India offered new talk with Pakistan at Foreign Secretary level to unlock the dialogue process. It was a
calculative initiative after making a judgement or action taken by Pakistan on the 26/11 terror attack. The Indian government stressed to Pakistan that the dialogue offer did not mean that it had given up on its expectations about concrete action by Islamabad against terrorism. India also told Pakistan that talk would focus on terrorism and other issues hurting bilateral relations.\(^{59}\)

**India-Pakistan Foreign Secretaries level talks:**

The India-Pakistan Foreign Secretaries talks were held at Thimpu on February 10, 2011 represented by Indian Foreign Secretary Nirupama Rao and her Pakistani counterpart Salman Bashir. These representatives decided not to raise public expectations, but to allow confidence building process to develop gradually.

**India-Pakistan Home Secretaries Talks:**

A range of issues such as cross-border terrorism, smuggling of narcotics, flow of counterfeit currency into India and the progress in the Mumbai attack case trial were discussed by the Home Secretaries of India and Pakistan at the two-day talks held on 28\(^{th}\) and 29\(^{th}\) March 2011 at New Delhi. After Mumbai attacks in November 2008, these talks carried importance, two years after the dialogue was suspended. This meeting was represented by Gopal K.Pillai and Chaudhary Pamar Zaman, the Home Secretaries of India and Pakistan respectively. The talks were held in a positive atmosphere as it was decided at Foreign Secretaries of India and Pakistan’s meet in February 2011 at Thimpu
not to raise public operations, but to allow Confidence Building process to develop gradually. In a Joint Statement issued at the end of the two-day meeting flagged various areas of cooperation, including countering drug and human trafficking, streamlining visa procedure, cyber crimes and maritime cooperation India provided information on the ongoing probe into the Samjhauta Express blast. It also raised the issue of Lashkar-e-Tayyaba founder Hafeez Sayeed's and India statements, activities of underworld don Dawood Ibrahim in which Pakistan side promised to do the needful.

Cricket Diplomacy:

As a confidence building technique the Prime Minister of India Dr. Manmohan Singh invited the Pakistani President Asif Ali Zardari and Prime Minister Yusuf Raza Gilani to watch the India-Pakistan Cricket World Cup Semi-Final held at Mohali in Punjab on March 30, 2011. In a virtually identical letters to Zardari and Gilani, the Indian Prime Minister said ‘he planned to watch the Semi-Final’. More than the invitation being a good will gesture to leaders for a neighbouring country. The Mohali invitation was an opportunity to shore up a relationship which has curious history where its suspended animation turns out to be a dangerous stagnation. The Pakistani Prime Minister said that it was a timely opportunity to show the world that these two nations can play together as well as deliberate on issues of national importance. This was a third time cricket diplomacy between New Delhi and Islamabad,
the other two were Zia-ul-Haq tried in 1987 and Pervez Musharraf in 2005.

In a positive development, Pakistan agreed in principle to allow a commission from India to visit Pakistan in connection with investigation into the November 26, 2008 Mumbai terror attacks. Similarly the visit of Judicial Commission from Pakistan to India in connection with the Mumbai attacks was also agreed.61

Continuing with the cricket diplomacy which was launched recently in Mohali when India and Pakistani cricket teams met for the ICC World Cup semi-final clash, India has decided in principle to resume cricket ties with Pakistan.

Sources in the government said that India would most likely send its cricket team first. “As the current season is all full and packed, it is for the BCCI to find a schedule that will suit both countries. The people are passionate about cricket, the game is popular and evokes great interest among the public, so cricket ties can be resumed “ the sources said.62

**A busy calendar of Talks:**

India and Pakistan had chalked out a busy month of scheduled talks to pick up the threads of the comprehensive dialogue that was suspended after the late Mumbai 2008 attacks. The Commerce Secretary level talks in Islamabad in the last week of April 2011 followed by a meeting between the water resources Secretaries on the Wullar
Barrage / Tulbul Navigation project in May 2011. The Surveyors General of the two countries on solving the Sir Creek dispute will resume discussions. A meeting of Siachen between the Defense Secretaries is likely to be the fourth in the series. The Director General of Narcotics Control Board will meet his Pakistani counterpart in May 2011. The two countries also decided a meeting of Foreign Secretaries of the two countries in June.\textsuperscript{63}

**Foreign Secretaries level talks June 2011:**

As decided earlier, the Foreign Secretaries of India and Pakistan met in Islamabad on 23\textsuperscript{rd} June, 2011 and began their discussions on all issues of interest for both countries with specific focus on peace and security with great sense of confidence, optimism and determination. Both the countries committed to trying and bridging the trust deficit and take the relationship forward. Within the rubric of peace and security, Confidence Building Measures relating to both nuclear and conventional weapons were looked at during the meeting.

Incrementally inching towards dismantling six decades of trust deficit, India and Pakistan on Friday agreed to build a constituency for peace at home through cessation of hostile propaganda, strengthening cooperation on counter-terrorism besides narrowing divergences and building convergences on Jammu and Kashmir.
Mindful of the historical baggage and the internal political dynamics of both countries, all aspects of mutual concern – from Jammu and Kashmir to Mumbai terror attack and the Samjhauta Express blasts – were discussed in the two-day engagement here between the Foreign Secretaries of the two countries.

And, belying all expectations, the two officials decided to jointly address a press conference after first announcing separate briefings. The joint press conference was in addition to a joint statement and, according to Indian officials, a signal that the usually squabbling countries can face the world together.

Though Foreign Secretary Nirupama Rao did not mince words in her opening remarks when she said “the ideology of military conflict should have no place in the paradigm of our relationship of the 21st century” and should be replaced by a “vocabulary of peace”. Indian officials maintained this was not a reprimand. “We have resurrected this process, let us not run this aground by rushing to conclusions”.

The need to remove the shadow of the gun was a recurrent line. Replying to a question on the discussions on Jammu and Kashmir, she said peace and reconciliation had to be built step-by-step and “only in the absence of the gun can we discuss such issues”.

On specific cross-Line of Control (LoC) Confidence Building Measures (CBMs), the working group decided to meet next month to
strengthen and streamline the existing trade and travel arrangements and purpose modalities for additional measures.\textsuperscript{64}

Indian delegation stated to Pakistan that it had come to Pakistan with an open mind and a constructive spirit in order to work towards building trust and confidence in their mutual relations and thereby leading to an eventual normalization of relations for the well being and prosperity of the two peoples.\textsuperscript{65}

\textbf{India is the most important neighbour:}

Billing India as Pakistan’s most “important neighbour”, Pakistan Prime Minister Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani on Wednesday said New Delhi would have to play a more positive and accommodating role and respond to Islamabad’s legitimate security concerns.

Addressing a seminar on de-radicalisation, in Islamabad Gilani articulated the hope that the ongoing process of comprehensive engagement with India would be fruitful. “Pakistan desires sustained, substantive and result-oriented process of dialogue to resolve all outstanding issues, including the core issue of Jammu and Kashmir”. Stating that Pakistan would like to resolve all outstanding issues in a peaceful and just manner, Mr. Gilani added that New Delhi would not find Islamabad lacking in will to write a new chapter in bilateral relations, but stressed the need for some accommodation by India. Mr. Gilani’s remarks come close on the heels of the well-received comments made by Indian Foreign Secretary Nirupama Rao in a television interview she
had voiced a noticeable change in the way Pakistan viewed terrorism. In fact, while Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's comment that "Pakistan should have Kashmir alone" caused some unease here – given that the premier Indian advocate for dialogue said something that could queer the pitch – Ms. Rao's subsequent remarks have served as a salve to the festering relationship.  

An Overview:  

Over the last decade, the inter related issues of Jammu and Kashmir and Cross Border Terrorism have plagued the bilateral relations between the two countries. The twin issues brought the two countries to a situation in the Kargili War in 1999 and to an almost near confrontation after the attack on the Indian Parliament in 2001. However, after the incident of 9/11/2001, the USA has forced Pakistan to soften the recalcitrant attitude towards India, which has led to the resumption of dialogue between the two countries to resolve the outstanding issues between them. It is said that the Pakistan Army will have no role in the policy of Pakistan if there is durable peace between India and Pakistan. Now, it has to be seen whether the Pakistani army can give up its traditionally hostile attitude towards India and reach a solution on the issue of Jammu and Kashmir, which is an integral part of India that would lead to peaceful relations between the two countries which still remains an elusive dream for the peoples of the two countries.
The fundamental point that needs to be constantly kept in mind, when seeking solutions to South Asian issues, is a commonality of perception in both countries, and among leaders in both political spectrums, that culturally, ethnically and geographically they emerge from one large entity of an undivided India. As a result, confidence building measures that need to be put into force would have to be built upon these already existing perceptions among the masses. These measures would find relatively easier acceptance than trying to change popular positions on such contentious issues as Kashmir, the demarcation of borders or settlement of evacuee property.

Numerous Confidence Building Measures between the two countries have been undertaken in a top-down manner. But they have been unable to remove the mistrust that continues to dominate the thinking of the elite in both countries. A classical example is the perceptual difference that exists over Kashmir, despite both sides releasing the futility of war, particularly after signing the Simla Agreement. Pakistan believes Kashmir is the core issue in Indo-Pak relations and unless it is resolved there could be no meaningful progress. The resolutions are not mutually exclusive. On the other hand, New Delhi has held that Simla has to be viewed in the totality of mutual commitment and obligations that both sides undertook after the 1971 war. New Delhi draws attention to the manner in which the Shimla Accord was signed and argues that UN resolutions, over the years, are
irrelevant to changed ground realities. It believes that Kashmir is symptomatic of overall Pakistani attitudes and perceptions in creating better relations with India.

There is a wide divergence of perceptions over the meaning of lasting peace between the two countries. New Delhi is looking for a comprehensive solution to all issues bedeviling bilateral relations, while Islamabad, spurred by domestic political pressures, has hitched its wagon to the resolution of the Kashmir issue. While India proposes CBMs as incremental steps to improve bilateral relations, Islamabad perceives that New Delhi's present difficulties in Kashmir could be utilized to wrench the state away from the Indian Union. If Delhi seeks a status-quoist solution for a more peaceful South Asia, Islamabad is determined to undermine the unity of India. The chasm in understanding has become wider over the years and it looks unlikely that Islamabad would give up its attempts to take over Kashmir, unless New Delhi is able to prove its dominance on the ground by resuming the political process.
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