

Wary of Jihadism and Changing Facets of Pak-Iran Relations

ZIKRIYA

Ph.D. scholar, Department of Pakistan studies,
Islamia College University Peshawar.

Dr. Asif Salim

Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science,
Bacha Khan University Charsadda.

Abstract:

The development of International relations together with forces like globalization and technology has brought the world closer to each other. Friendly ties and relations with states create massive challenges during times of conflict. However, these relations could be determined through the lens of War, conflicts and religious extremism. The focus of the paper is to highlight the relations between Iran and Pakistan through the focal point of increasing risk of Jihadist extremism in Iran. Moreover, this paper also signifies and focuses on the activities and attacks of militant organizations from Baluchistan on Iran border and its bad impacts of Pakistan. A qualitative research approach with desk analysis technique has been applied to analyses the effects of Jihadism and terrorism on the relations between Iran and Pakistan. The research highlights how the disputes and Jihadism in the form of religious extremism created great problems for Pakistan which would cripple the Pakistan's economy. But Pakistan is still striving to resolve conflicts because maintaining peace and prosperity in the Muslim world has always been a top priority of Pakistan's foreign policy.

Keywords: *Pakistan, Jundullah, Iran, Baluchistan, Jihadism, Muslim world, Islamization, Terrorism, Foreign policy, United Nations.*

Introduction

The sovereignty of Pakistan was first recognized by Iran, when Pakistan became an independent state and was emerged on the world map in August 1947. It was claimed by Pakistani Shias that they were not being treated well and were being discriminated on the grounds of sectarianism in Pakistan due to the Pakistani administrations Islamisation programme. This led to tensed relations from time to time between both countries. Pakistan was used by Saudi Arabia and Iran for proxy sectarian war battleground. In 1990s, when Sunni Taliban organisation which was situated in Afghanistan

started to gain support from Pakistan then it became a big problem for Shia Iran, which was against Afghanistan governed by Taliban's. However, trade and economic bond kept growing in both complete and correlative terms. In 1999, an agreement called Free trade Agreement was signed by both countries. Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) was founded by both countries. Currently, both countries are being cooperative towards each other and are setting up an association to benefit areas of joint interest. They are together fighting drug dealing along their mutual borders and resisting Baluchistan revolt. CPEC (China-Pakistan Economic corridor) is a subject of interest for Iran currently as it wants to join it. Pew Research Centre conducted polls and according to their polls, Iran has a positive image in Pakistan. Western neighbours of Pakistan are also viewed positively by the Pakistani according to these Polls. Assistance and encouragement of many Muslim nations including Pakistan, is requested by Ayatollah Khamenei. (Iran-Pakistan relations, 2019)

According to Sattar, (2017) a geographic and cultural region, located in Western Asia and north eastern Africa is known as Middle East including all Muslim countries along the Arabian Gulf: Iran, turkey, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Syria, Iraq, UAE, Lebanon, Qatar, Palestine, Jordan, Kuwait, Yemen, Bahrain, Oman, Cyprus and only one non-Muslim country that is Israel. The world now, is a global village and the inter connectedness and inter dependence as a result of globalization has pulled all states together, closer to each other in a sense that events occurring in one state may in one way or the other influence events in the other state (Yamin, 2017).

A nuclear pact among six big powers and Iran was a positive sign as it would help with the lifting of punishments and this deal was also welcomed by Pakistan in July 2015. Increased opportunities for both Iran and Pakistan to expand their economic and two-sided relations seemed imminent after the deal. The ultimate ban lifting from Iran would lead for the Tehran-Islamabad relation to be increasingly handled by geographic and economic substantiality. Two vast energy projects between Tehran and Islamabad are being planned to follow the ban lifting from Iran: a pipeline which would be natural and a transmission line operated with electricity. There two projects together will help Pakistan tackle their energy crisis like shortage of electricity and automobile fuel (Rafique, 2018).

Literature Review

The foreign policy of Pakistan is a true picture of Quaid e Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah's vision and is based on the principles presented by him.

“Our foreign policy is one of friendliness and goodwill towards all the nations of the world. We do not cherish aggressive designs against any country or nation. We believe in the principle of honesty and fair play in national and international dealings and

are prepared to make our utmost contribution to the promotion of peace and prosperity among the nations of the world. Pakistan will never be found lacking in extending its material and moral support to the oppressed and suppressed peoples of the world, and in upholding the principles of the United Nations Charter” (Ministry of Foreign affairs Government of Pakistan, n.d.).

Not only has this but the Article 40 of the constitution of Pakistan also directed Pakistan’s foreign policy for the future.

“The State shall endeavour to preserve and strengthen fraternal relations among Muslim countries based on Islamic unity, support the common interests of the people of Asia, Africa and Latin America, promote international peace and security, foster goodwill and friendly relations among all nations and encourage the settlement of international disputes by peaceful means”(Choudhary, 1973).

Quaid e Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah’s principles and the article 40 of the constitution make it apparent that the pursuit of universal peace remains a fundamental centrepiece of Pakistan’s foreign policy. Pakistan has been an integral part of the global community when it comes to encouraging and strengthening peace and order. It has always played a fundamental part to combat terrorism and extremism which has always appeared as a threat to the law and order in the international world. As a member of the United Nations organization, Pakistan has always worked for the organizations’ objectives of ensuring harmony and good will in the global community to maintain a stable and peaceful world order. Also, Pakistan has always gathered appreciations for its great contributions in the UN’s peacekeeping missions. The Secretary General of the United Nations, Ban Ki Moon cherished Pakistan’s contributions to International harmony in the following words: “Gratitude as the United Nations Secretary-General and gratitude as a global citizen for what Pakistan and her people have been doing for international peace and security. More than 100 countries contribute troops and police for United Nations peacekeeping missions, Pakistan is number one (UN News, 2013).

Methodology

The process of qualitative research approach with desk review techniques is followed in this study. The Desk review is the process in which the results of already published papers are presented and reviewed (Creswell & Clark, 2017). In this regard, the research papers and articles are included in this study. The keywords during the search process were used such as “foreign policy of Pakistan, Pakistan relations with Iran, Pakistan’s relation with Middle Eastern countries, Pakistan’s foreign Policy for Arabian countries”.

After that only those papers were included that were based on Pak-Iran relations and all other irrelevant studies were excluded.

Discussion and Findings

Pak-Iran Relations in Historical Perspective

It was agreed between Iran and Pakistan that if they fail to reach a mutual agreement over the problem of boundary then they will take the matter to the court for its solution. For the time being, Pakistan took control of Quetta railway in 1955. According to the statement given by Christopher Jafferlot in 2002, an agreement over the division issues of the boundaries have been reached by both countries. In October 1957, Pakistan Cabinet drafted a discussion session on the agreement. On 6 Feb 1958, the agreement was signed and legitimately approved (Wilkinson, 2010). Later on, August 31, 1960, the final protocol on Pak-Iran Boundary agreement was exchanged. Pakistan's president Ayub Khan, at that time, stated the Accord as a Milestone in the Pak-Iran History of Brotherhood. However, a few people Opposed the agreement over some concerns they had (Jehangir, 2014).

Wary of Jihadism and Changing Facets of Pak-Iran Relations

World's most mysterious movements of rebellion include Jundullah. Since its inception in 2002, Iran's Baloch minority have been represented by it. When compared to other rebel groups of Baluch society in neighbouring Pakistan, the Jundullah maintains an identity connected to religion rather than being an ethnic group. In Republic of Iran where most of its population is Shia, the Baloch minority are Sunni Muslims.

On the subject of the Jundullah, there are few world-wide experts out of which Stephane Dudoginon is the one. According to scholar based in Paris, "The Jundullah is very limited quantitatively". "They are less than 1000 and can reside anywhere from 200 to 700."

Tehran is a point of interest for Islamabad not only for economic reasons but also to have a good correlation with them. Pakistan angered Iran, when killing of multiple officials of Revolutionary guards was witnessed. It is stated by Dundoignon that "Pakistan and Iran's sense of conflict and tension can be lessened with the arrest or withdrawal of Rigi's." It was essential for good relations between Islamabad and Tehran that Rigi is delivered to Iran by security services of Pakistan after the attack of Pisheen in October 2009" (Bärthlein, 2010).

Religious Extremism in Iran and its Affects

On the Westernmost front, Iran, with its geographical aims, materializing nuclear ability, tactical competitiveness with Pakistan, and intuition over U.S-Pakistan axis, has the reason and ability, if not the aim, to anchorage policies of Pakistan. Afghanistan and Iran are also rivalling, and Iran is contender for economic access to Central Asia but itself Iran is not stable. Moreover, an Afghanistan which is unstable, remnants of Taliban can be

found and has support from tribal areas of Pakistan can cause possible uncertainty and can be worrisome for both countries relations. In Pakistan, the aid program from US should largely focus on aiding deprivation reduction strategies. Pakistani public is already much concerned about poverty increasing day by day, worried about high ostentation and dissatisfaction over growing influence of army on civilian administered institutions, in addition to other internal tensions that are housed by the country. In the absence of a charismatic secular leader, the entire range of opposition could coalesce under an Islamic banner, such as happened in the Iranian revolution. The U.S. would be well-advised to avoid such a scenario (Hussain, 2018).

Terrorist Activities in Iranian Baluchistan

The responsibility has been taken by Jaish-e-Adlmay for the IRGC vehicle attacks which took place at highway of Zahedan-Khash which is exactly 110 km from border of Pakistan. In Sistan-o-Baluchistan province, people are deprived of their own political rights and this fact cannot be denied by Iran. Baloch population of Iranian Baluchistan holds bad blood against the government on being not represented well in affairs that involve institutions like politics, armed forces and bureaucracy. The actions like even mayor and deputy arriving from Tehran in Iranian Baluchistan makes all concerns look legit. There are Sunni Muslims in Iranian Baluchistan, so this is also a reason of discord. Discrimination is faced by religious leaders of Sunnis and is at some instances not even allowed to meet their own people. Baloch people are very poor in comparison to others (Durrani, 2019)

'A warning from Iran'

It was claimed by the force senior commander that Iran's elite Revolutionary Guards 27 members which were killed by a suicide bomber belonged to Pakistan. Latest statement by Jafari, on Pakistan specifically is "brutal" as "Islamabad is blamed directly" for the attack in it. This was all stated by Reza Khaasteh. The statement was more of a warning than an assertion claimed Mizans Online chief editor Mohammad Farahani. "Terrorists are being supported by Pakistan is not his claim. Pakistan is being used as a shelter by the terrorists and seriousness on this matter should be shown by Pakistan. Pakistan officials must do much more to secure the border," Farahani told Al Jazeera.

Jaish al-Adl armed group should be handled by Pakistan by the use of force suggested by IRGC chief following Sistan-Baluchistan province border attack that resulted in the death of 27 members of the elite security force. Before "revenge" is taken by Tehran, armed groups should be pursued by Islamabad immediately stated on Saturday by Chief Commander of IRGC Ali Jafri. It was quoted by Jafri while talking to media of Iran that "Iran will follow international law and will strike back against terrorists if in the

coming days, suitable punishment is not given by Pakistan, "His statement style was different to the previous response he gave on the "friendly state of Pakistan" to increase security along the border between Iran and Pakistan. The comments came during a meeting held between Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia Mohammed bin Salman and Prime Minister Imran Khan along with their respective top officials in Islamabad.

Jafari said Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates are "conspiring" with the United States and the "Zionist regime" to foment attacks, such as Wednesday's suicide bombing, which also left at least 13 Revolutionary Guard members injured.

It was further added by Jafari that "These kinds of actions that are performed by UAE and Saudi Arabia will not be taken lightly anymore" (Regencia, Iran warns Pakistan to crack down on Jaish al-Adl, 2019).

Pakistan's response towards Harsh statement from Iran

Iranian Leadership's bold statement was taken lightly by Pakistan as controversial issues like these between two brotherly states can be resolved behind a close door without public intervention. It is strategically important for Pakistan to maintain a good relationship with Iran. Jaish Adl may be straddling on both sides of borders between Pakistan and Iran but its activities in Pakistani Baluchistan have always been under minute scrutiny and scrutiny. Nevertheless, it would be wise to resolve poverty issues concerning Baluchistan youth on both sites on emergency basis (Durrani, 2019).

Wary of Jihadism in Iran

Despite some differences, Pakistan always enjoys good friendly relations with Iran. It has economic, strategic and security interests in the region. Iran's nuclear deal with the world provided Pakistan with trade and commerce opportunities. The resource rich country provided Pakistan with chances to fulfil its energy requirements.

On the other hand, same is the case with Saudi Arabia that has always promised help to Pakistan no matter how difficult the situation was in terms of support in the international world and aid whenever required for instance it gave Pakistan a grant of \$1.5 billion in 2014, providing job opportunities to a greater percentage of Pakistani population resulting in foreign remittances almost \$5.6 billion annually and also a source of our petroleum products (Papanek, 2019). If Pakistan acceded to either side, it would strain relations with the other ally also giving to rise to sectarian conflicts in the country. Thus to maintain a stable environment in the International world, not to instigate the Sunni Shia rivalry and not to spark another conflict, Pakistani parliament in 2015 unanimously agreed to not send forces to war in Yemen and declare neutrality because Pakistan's priority includes promoting peace and order in Muslim countries and disapproving territorial

violations of any kind especially countries consisting of holy sites which hold significance importance to Muslims. Keeping in mind this principle, then prime minister of Pakistan in 2015 said that in case of any violation of the territorial sovereignty of Saudi Arabia, Pakistan would not stay quiet and will be bound to take action. The war is going on since 2014 and has destroyed the infrastructure and displaced millions of people of Yemen. It has led to a famine in the area and the war is still continuing on the cost of millions of lives. The locality of recent attacks of terrorism in Pakistan took place near the countries Afghan and Iranian borders. Pakistan's commanding circles have been concerned about the flattened security situation in the province. If incursions kept happening near the Afghanistan and Iran border areas and did not stop anytime soon, the country may have to face serious repercussions (Jamal, 2019).

A report by the State Department of U.S states that Iran continues to be "the globes worst terrorism state sponsor," international terrorists' groups are being funded by it and engaging in "terrorist plotting of its own" around the world, specifically in Europe.

On November 1, [Country Reports on Terrorism 2018](#) was released and [claimed that](#) annually \$1 billion dollars have been spent by Iran to "assist groups of terrorist that serve as its agents and to grow its evil effects around the globe." It quoted Hizballah the Lebanese Shi'ite movement and groups Hamas and Islamic Jihad who are Islamist groups of Palestine. "The Iran threat is not limited to East – it is a global threat in reality," the department's coordinator Nathan Sales, for counterterrorism, told a news briefing in Washington (U.S. State Department: Iran Remains 'World's Worst State Sponsor Of Terrorism', 2019).

Iran's Objectives and Capabilities

It can be said after analysing the situation that the policy of Iran is oriented towards disincentive. Iran's security policy's calculated object is to make the war cost with Iran so elevated that diplomacy seems more suitable option always. Functioning and productive nuclear weapons would be ultimate source of instilling fear. An unexpected war could erupt due to acquiring such a capability. An alternative lower-risk such as significant damage could be delivered to the interests of U.S if allied political parties and armed forces are established. In increasing the cost, Iran also avert early strikes on its nuclear infrastructure. Being small and easily attackable, Israel becomes the prime target, with Hezbollah being described by officials of Iran as "our calculated obstacle" because of the damage the group can impose on Israel. Bahrain uprising could be started by increasing these attempts, attacks on oil installations in Al-Qatif, airports rocketing and Arabian gulf shipping (Watling, 2019).

Iran's inspiration to support terrorism

When back in 1979 government of Shah was overthrown by Islamic revolution, since the office leadership of Iran has worked with line-ups of terrorist groups for the promotion of their concerns. To deal with United States and other countries in the neighbourhood, Iran has heavily relied on its connection to terrorism and till now it remains an important instrument in their foreign policy. James Clapper who was Director of National Intelligence (DNI) in 2012 testified against Iran and warned that Iran continues “to devise averse to U.S or overseas allied interests.” Hezbollah is a Lebanese group which whom relationship of Iran is very important and widely known. Midwife Hezbollah has been helped by Iran and Iran has trained, supplied weapons and financed it to the tune of well over \$100 million a year – even more perhaps, according to the year and logic used to calculate. Iran’s military aid included anti-tank guided missiles, thousands of rockets and ordnance systems in addition to not only small arms and other type of weapons typical for terrorists making Hezbollah one of the most forbidding sub-state groups in the world. Joint operations have been conducted together by Hezbollah and Iranian forces. Even though Hezbollah was long subordinate to Iran, evolution has occurred spotted in this relationship slowly. Increasingly, Hezbollah and Tehran are partner—its leader, Hassan Nasrallah, has considerable stature in the Arab world, and the group’s military resistance to Israel is widely admired. Decision and interests of Hezbollah are decided by him for himself (Byman, 2012).

Iran’s regional Strategy

Iran 2018, Hamdan “we are waiting for you, come on” On a normal day, Middle East’s most powerful soldier seems reserved from a rant; indeed, he usually apt for discretion. Major General Soleimani sits in a corner quietly and understands everything in meeting with everyone from foreign ministers of Russia to Ayatollahs to local war leaders. His voice is seldom raised, and he speaks softly. He disapproves all efforts at adoring a hero not allowing for example, admirers to kiss his hand. He has been described by an American Journalist as “almost hypothetically humble. “He is unattractive physically”. His face gently frosted with a close-cropped white beard, fond memories recollection bringing a shine in his dreamy eyes, he has high resemblance to Sean Connery of mid-career, circa Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade. He is short in stature—a fact he has been known to highlight, dubbing himself “the smallest soldier” (Dorn, 2020).

Internal Challenges to Pakistan

Tehran should correct its policy regarding rebellion in the region because violence is increasing in Iran day by day and most of it comes from Baluchistan’s volatile region. It continues to be a serious challenge for Pakistani authorities and policy makers to draft effective policy for future

use as they seriously affect the domestic as well as foreign policy of Pakistan.

Ethnic Problems

There are several problems that would arise due to the worsening relationship between Iran and Pakistan. People from both the countries would face challenges regarding ethnicity, society and culture. As we know that a lot of Pakistani Shia travel to Iran for the fulfilment of their religious purposes.

Sectarian violence

A major security challenge emerging from the ongoing Pak-Iran crisis is the rise of sectarian violence in the country. The Sunni Shia rivalry or the famous Saudi Iranian conflict can be traced back to the post Saddam era. Pakistan itself has its own sectarian problems, a history of Sunni Shia violence which is taking place on the cost of thousands of lives since the last three decades. According to South Asia Terrorism Portal, 4734 persons were killed in sectarian violence in Pakistan, between 1989 and 2014 (Mumtaz, 2016). The conflict between Saudi Arabia and Iran has played a major role in raising the problem of sectarian violence in Pakistan. Fears arise that this Sunni Shia rivalry may spark tensions and any sort of similar rivalry in Pakistan.

Terrorism and extremism

Another challenge springing from the Middle East crisis has been a wave of terrorism. The Sunni Shia conflict has led to a disenfranchisement of Sunni from political and economic matters in both Iraq and Syria. This has caused the neglected Sunnis to develop militant organizations such as Islamic State (IS) or Daish. They are popularly known as Jihadists groups. Activists from Pakistan, Afghanistan and India are said to be a part of these organizations which raises concerns about its growing influence in Pakistan especially. However, the Pakistani authorities have denied the presence of such groups in Pakistan. In February 2015, the interior minister of Pakistan while speaking at USIP said with confidence that the militant organization of IS only exists in the Middle Eastern countries and has no headquarters in Pakistan. It is a serious challenge for Pakistan as these organizations such as IS may emerge as a threat to the peace and security of Pakistan.

Economic crisis

Moreover, another problem can be the economic crisis as the results of Pak-Iran crisis and this will cause the Middle East flux. It can threaten the economic development in various ways. First, if the peace in Pak-Iran is at risk, it would immediately affect the flow of remittances entering Pakistan from the oil rich country like Iran. These remittances are sent by the Pakistani labourers working at the border shared by both the countries.

Another issue can be the security threat as a result of the sectarian tensions in the country. Pakistani authorities are concerned about the foreign workers working in the country; also the occasional trips of foreign ambassadors into the country may also be at risk. Thus, these forms of violence pose a threat for the economic development of Pakistan.

Steps taken by Pakistan to Improve its relations with Iran

Iran and Pakistan are looking for ideas to increase their military connection. Earlier this month Gen Qammar Javid Bajwa who is Pakistan army chief arrived in Tehran to meet with the military and civil pecking order of Iran. He wanted to improve two sided relations between the nations and unite military efforts.

To upgrade relations and have faith in close allies is the focus of Imran Khan, Pakistan's prime minister since joining the office in 2018 August. Iran has been visited twice by Gen Bajwa in pursuit of military diplomacy and to support peace efforts of Khan in the region. Iran-Pakistan has witnessed completely evolved relations in just one year (Siddiqui, 2019).

Criminal activities been witnessed on the border between both countries have been criticized by officials of both nations and there doesn't exist any major two-sided issues between both nations other than this issue. Due to this issue, both countries have been unable to increase their trade and profit from their relationship. Enhancement in the field of intelligence and evidence-sharing between Pakistan and Iran has been started after Pakistan's Chief of Army Staff; General Bajwa visited Iran in 2017. (Jaffery, 2019)

An evolution in the relationship of Pakistan-Iran is imminent. Imran Khan Stance on not picking any side in the conflicts of Islamic world has been appreciated by Hassan Rouhani, Iranian President and claimed it will support both countries relations. This augurs well for reducing trust-deficit between Islamabad and Tehran that had crept in due to the complex geopolitics in the region.(Jaffery, 2019)

Sanctions Triggered by Terrorism List Designation

Iran is named by U.S as "terrorism sponsors state"—is because Iran being included in U.S. "list of terrorism"—enables multiple sanctions on Iran. The nomination is supervised by Section 6(j) of the Export Administration Act of 1979 (P.L. 96-72, as amended), acts international terrorism has continuously been supported by countries facing sanctions. The sanctions activated by the nominations are as follows: • U.s dual use items sales restriction. The Administration Act of Export, as supplanted by the Export Control Reform Act of 2018 (in P.L. 115-232), demands there be an impertinence of refusal of any applications for license to sell dual use items to Iran. Through Export Administration Regulations (EARs) administered

by the Bureau of Industry and Security (BIS) of the Commerce Department has enforced these restrictions (Katzman, 2019).

Conclusion

Despite all the challenges that Pakistan had to face as a result of the crisis and disputes evolving in Middle East, Pakistan always ensured peaceful settlement of all disputes and kept the peace and prosperity of the Muslim world as its top priority because It is like a union where if one disputes deepen in one particular country, it weakens all of them. Also, as a Muslim majority country, it is Pakistan's primary responsibility to work for the harmony and unity of the Muslims around the world. Pakistan has always gone an extra mile to ensure the peace and security in Iran. Although there have been the chances of Jihadism in Iran due to the Shia Sunni disputes and internal religious civil war. Anywhere in the part of the world, if the Muslim state is under oppression or involved in a conflict, the duty to resolve the conflict must be fulfilled effectively by Pakistan. No doubt, Pakistan as always responsibly played its role in supporting all legitimate Muslim causes around the world, whether it be the Syrian conflict, the Palestinian issue or the Yemen dispute, it has always raised his voice against those who carry out atrocities and oppressions in order to resolve the conflict. Pakistan's foreign policy is based on Quaid e Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah's vision and in line with the principles of international law and UN charter thus, any unlawful act by any particular country is disapproved by the state whether it be the use of chemical weapons or the violation of territorial sovereignty of any particular state by the other, no matter what the purpose of the intervention is. 7.4 billion Was the Cost of Pakistan's owned territory to Iran, this was stated in 2004 by Wilson John. Pakistan continues to adapt similar policies for the future also, where the primary focus should be on conflict resolution and management especially for the fellow Muslim countries and to be available for them in all hours of need.

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