

Analysing Kargil Conflict in the Light of the Democratic Peace Theory and the Decision Making Process

Muhammad Waqas Haider,¹ & Tahir Mahmood Azad²

Abstract:

This paper methodically analyses the background of the Kargil conflict and political dimensions of both traditional rivals Pakistan and India. The Kargil conflict between Pakistan and India in 1999, over Kashmir, has deep rooted connection with unsettled several territorial disputes. It further explains the decision making processes during Kargil conflict with primarily focus on how the decisions were taken in Pakistan and India and what were the impacts of those decisions on the conflict? Pakistan was facing a dilemma owing to disparity between civil and military leadership over ownership of the conflict while the Indian military and political leadership was on same page so they were able to produce a unified response. Furthermore, this paper describes how both the democratic peace thesis cannot explain the Kargil conflict owing to its uniqueness. India and Pakistan both need to adopt dynamic measures to improve the democratic norms in letter and spirit to foster a peaceful atmosphere in South Asia.

Keywords: Kargil Conflict, Pakistan, India, democratic peace, Kashmir, war

INTRODUCTION

Pakistan and India has a history of stressed relations since their inception back in 1947 and are still in struggle with each other through contemporary times owing to faulty partition of the subcontinent during British Raj which created havoc by displacing more than 11 million people and also laid the foundation of animosity between the two newly created states in shape of Kashmir issue. Since then, these two so called democratic countries have had approximately 15 conflicts and crisis of varying intensity (Chari, Cohen & Cheema, 2008.¹ Major conflicts include the First Kashmir War (1947-1949), September 1965 war, 1971 war and 1999 Kargil conflict also known as Operation Koh-e-Paima (Operation KP). Just a year after the advent of nuclear arsenal in South Asia, India and Pakistan arrived at the brink of an all-out conventional war because of Kargil conflict which lasted for 73 days. Kargil conflict also disregarded the assumption that nuclear rivals cannot go to war with each other due to nuclear deterrence. Kargil can be declared as a watershed in Pakistan-India relations. The Kargil conflict is exclusive in a sense as a perfect example of how the democratic peace theory will not always prevent conflict between two democracies. The paper focuses primarily on how the decisions were taken in Pakistan and India and what were the impacts of those decisions on the conflict. It further analyses the democratic processes in both countries.

Most of the existing literature on Kargil is either produced by Indian authors who provide the Indian perspective or International scholars who are mostly biased towards the Indian perspective.

¹ MA Conflict Resolution and Peace Studies, Lancaster University, United Kingdom (UK). Email: m.w.haider@lancaster.ac.uk

² Visiting Research Fellow, Centre for Science & Security Studies (CSSS), War Studies Department, King's College London, UK. Email: tahir_mahmood.azad@kcl.ac.uk

In 2003, Shireen Mazari published her book, *"The Kargil Conflict 1999: Separating Fact from Fiction"* which was the first ever effort from Pakistani side f aimed to provide the rationale of Kargil operation form perspective of Pakistan. Although she cleared many misconceptions and also covered certain aspects of decision making but many domains were left unaddressed and it did not have the desired impact on the general public. She has not talked about the levels of democracy in Pakistan and India for drawing comparison of decision making. General Musharraf, the architect of the Kargil Conflict, published his memoir "In the Line of Fire" which was aimed to achieve inclusive propagation of the Pakistani point of view and to clear the speculations about the conflict but it made the issue further controversial and does little to shed new light on the issue. P. R. Chari, Stephen P. Cohen, and Pervaiz Iqbal Cheema in the book *"Four Crises and a Peace Process: American Engagement in South Asia"* have also highlighted the broader aspects of the issue and the efforts of International community. They say that, "No other South Asian crisis saw a greater gap between official Indian and Pakistani perspectives. As the following sections make clear, they were in agreement on only a few points, and the semi-authoritative government view has been seriously challenged, especially in the case of Pakistan" (Chari, Cohen, & Cheema, 2008). Here they have highlighted that the form of government was semi-authoritative but have not further elaborated the decision making in detail. Marcus P Acosta has also written *"The Kargil Conflict: Waging War in the Himalayas"* which is basically an account of the high altitude warfare and implications for troops and military planner however, it does not touch the political aspect of the Kargil operation. Tahir Amin in his article "Kargil crisis in Kashmir" highlighted the linkage of the issue with Kashmir dispute and further explained its impacts on relations between two countries while he has not given any attention towards the decision making and role of political and military institutions. Vinod Anand in his article, "Military lessons of Kargil" has highlighted the flaws of operation and lesson learnt for both countries but his approach is biased which undermined the factual position. Nasim Zahra's recently published book is the latest account on Kargil issue which has a pro-democratic view where facts have been overshadowed due to inherent bias of the author. Shaukat Qadir in his article titled, "An Analysis of the Kargil Conflict 1999" in RUSI journal has well highlighted the tensions that were existing between military and democratic government in Pakistan. He states that, "Sharif was very worried about the reaction of the military leadership, realizing that a withdrawal might result in his untimely ouster" (Qadir, 2002), which shows how apprehensive the government was but he has not explained the political dynamics and structure of Indian government which could have been beneficial to draw a comparison. A diverse nature of literature is available but no author has tried to see the conflict through the lens of Democratic Peace Theory which states that democracies seldom involve in war against other democracies. So there is a need to evaluate the conflict by applying the Democratic Peace Theory and analysing decision making process accordingly.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theoretical framework of this paper is based on the Democratic Peace Theory thesis developed from the works of Immanuel Kant "Perpetual Peace" written in 1795 which states that Democracies do not fight with each other (Pugh, 2005). Before proceeding further, there is a need to explain and operationalize terms democratic peace theory and decision making.

Before description and application of theory, the terms Democracy and War need to be defined and operationalized. Theorists such as James Lee Ray, Bruce Russett and Michael Doyle have conceptualized and defined characteristics that a democracy should possess. They include: "Regular, free, and competitive elections involving the free participation of opposition parties; a voting franchise for a substantial proportion of citizens, where the vote could be either for an executive or for a parliament to which the executive is responsible; at least one peaceful or constitutional transfer of power; and a minimal period of longevity as a democracy, which allows time for a culture of democracy to arise" (William & Thompson, 2010). In order to meet the criteria of a democracy, the state under question is supposed to have the above mentioned characteristics. Scholars have defined War in a number of ways but here we can say war is a "sustained, coordinated violence between political organizations" (William & Thompson, 2010). It is also defined as continuation of state policies by other means. The "Correlates of War (CoW) Project" imposed criteria of 1000 battle related deaths for a conflict to term as war. The validity of this definition is of more significance in contemporary times. War can also be defined as absence of peace (Amin & Naseer, 2011).

Democratic Peace Theory

Democratic peace theory denotes the notion that democracies do not combat with each other and it is a historically established fact with some exceptions. Democratic peace relates back theoretically to Immanuel Kant's 1795 treatise called "Perpetual Peace". Kant states that peace is a rational product of the interaction of states with a republican form of government (Pugh, 2005). Kant further stated that, the formation of republican form of governments was the paramount option because the rulers would be answerable and accountable to the public, thus leading to peaceful international relations. The Democratic Peace Theory states that democracies seldom involve in war against other democracies. It can also be termed as Liberal peace theory instead of democratic peace theory as democracy is a form of sovereignty whereas republicanism is a form of government. In order to supplement this argument, three major factors have been identified by the scholars which are described below:

Institutional Liberalism has fundamental belief in representative democracy and presence of parliament, the manifestation of rule of law, freedom of press, speech and expression and forming a system that enables the citizen's control over the government in true essence.

Normative Liberalism implies that citizens of democratic countries share collective values and customs among themselves which leads them to a higher level of cooperation with others like the separation of power, public accountability, and popular representation and, social / political freedom.

Commercial Liberalism argues in contemporary capitalist regime, a war destabilizes commerce and trade directly leading to economic crisis. Democratic states generally adopt transparent economic and foreign policies in comparison to non-democratic or authoritarian states. Democracies gain maximum advantages from social and economic collaborations.

The fundamental postulate of the theory is concise and logical: democracies are naturally peaceful towards each other and that the presence of democratic institutions within its culture makes it challenging for democracies to wage wars. A representative form of government makes the leader further answerable to the public and thus it becomes difficult even for rulers to carry irrational

foreign policies. The numerous democratic institutions in the society will bound the powers of the leader to make irrational decisions. There have been a large number of studies conducted on the argument of democratic states and non-democratic states indulging in war while keeping in mind both theoretical and empirical perspectives. Small and Singer concluded in their study that ‘there has been no significant difference between democratic or non-democratic states in terms of their involvement in wars’ (Small & Singer, 1976). However, liberal states may look at the non-liberal states with suspicion and may confront them in pretext of clashing norms. The democratic regimes have a quite different outlook in comparison to authoritarian rules owing freedom norms. At the same time as liberals believe in peace, they may wage war with no-liberals promote peace called the Liberal wars. The element of domestic and external perception building is very important in liberal peace theory in order to wage liberal wars.

Decision Making

It is not only the ‘ends’ about which the governments are concerned rather ‘means’ of pursuing those ‘ends’ effectively are also very significant. If the ‘means’ adopted by the government are not effective and they fail to achieve the ‘ends’ then the credibility of government is being challenged by the people whom they represent (Bray, 1968). Generally, in process of decision making the most suitable option is selected out of available options to maximize the output. Decision Making can be defined as “the cognitive process resulting in the selection of a belief or a course of action among several alternative possibilities. Every decision-making process produces a final choice that may or may not prompt action. Decision-making is the process of identifying and choosing alternatives based on the values and preferences of the decision-maker” (Basic Knowledge).

KARGIL CONFLICT: BACKGROUND

The roots of Kargil conflict can be traced back in history to partition of the subcontinent in 1947. India and Pakistan have a long enduring rivalry, despite the fact that seventy years have passed after independence from British Raj, yet the antagonism between the two nations doesn’t appear to diminish. An agreement was made during the partition process of the subcontinent which gave the right to a total of 625 princely states to join either India or Pakistan or remain independent (Sharma, 2011). A non-Muslim Maharajah Hari Singh was the ruler of princely state of Kashmir which had a Muslim majority population. Maharaja Hari Singh (under threats and pressures from both India and Britishers) was enforced to sign the Instrument of Accession to accede to India. Kashmir is situated towards the extreme north of Pakistan while both Pakistan and India challenged each other for gaining control of the majority Muslim region in two wars. The 1972 Simla Agreement, succeeding the December 1971 war over Bangladesh, created the Line of Control (LoC) that splits Kashmir into Pakistani-held and Indian-held regions. India has control over the eastern regions of the state, which comprises the Kashmir Valley, Jammu and Ladakh while Pakistan has control over the western areas, which it called “Azad Kashmir”, and the Northern Areas (Verma, 2002). The assertion of dyad states for control over this strategically and economically vital valley has provoked a perpetual conflict in South Asia.

Pakistani and Indian Stance

Right after signing the Simla Agreement in 1972, the war mongering Indian leadership firstly banned the United Nations observers unilaterally and also occupied 3 to 4 posts of Pakistan in

Chorbat sector which severely affected the agreement right at the onset. The next blow to agreement was "Operation Meghdoot" launched by India aimed at occupation of Siachen Glacier and passes at Saltoro Range in 1984 which caused growing tensions between both countries (Mizari, 2003). There was a practice by troops on both sides of Line of control to vacate their posts in winters due to harsh weather condition, so India took advantage of this practice and occupied few more posts in Qamar sector in 1988 after which the situation became very tensed and the armies remained eye ball to eye ball. Six rounds of Defence secretary level talks were held from January 1986 to June 1992 between Pakistan and India to resolve Siachin issue but no breakthrough could be achieved. Indian also conducted many interdictions on Muzaffarabad – Kel road to stop supplies to Neelum Valley and in 1994 the road was closed owing to massive interdiction.

Before and after the nuclear tests by India, Indian Minister of Defence, Mr George Fernandes visited Ladakh region numerous times coupled with Indian new equipment procurements specifically relating to operations in snow based areas. The threats by L K Advani for operations along LoC added fuel to the fire. At the same time, during seventh round of talks in November 1998, India again took the same stance adopted in first round to maintain the status quo and did not agree to return the area which it occupied after Simla Agreement (Mizari, 2003). The Line of Control violations increased massively in mid-1998 and many villages were targeted by Indian firing which caused a large number of civilian casualties. With all this background, the first perspective was perceived by Pakistan that Indian army was preparing for some form of operations in summer of 1999 in either Siachin or some other sector and same was conveyed to India by Pakistan through multiple channels on multiple occasions (Mizari, 2003). The suspicious movements of Indian army along LoC coupled with intelligence reports and assessments raised concern in higher formations of Pakistan army and FCNA was tasked to formulate a plan of operations to deter enemy in case of any aggression.

The other more strong perspective is that in-November 1998, Lt Gen Mahmud, Commander 10 Corps, requested Lt. Gen. Aziz the then Chief of General Staff for a meeting with Gen. Pervez Musharraf the Chief of Army Staff. When Lt. Gen. Mahmud visited Musharraf, he was accompanied by the General Officer Commanding Frontier Constabulary of the Northern Areas Major General Javed Hassan. They sought authorization to implement a plan, which had earlier been deferred, to occupy terrain in the Dras-Kargil zone, vacated by the Indians every winter as the Indian did back in 1988 in Qamar sector. The rationale behind this plan was to provide a boost to the Kashmiri freedom movement and to get the issue highlighted to the international community to get further support for resolving the Kashmir issue. The plan was approved in principle, with directives to embark preparations. Knowledge of this plan was to be confined to the four people present, for the time being (Qadir, 2002). In November 1998, preparations were initiated for execution of the plan but the matter was informally presented to Prime Minister Sharif somewhere in December 1999. He was presented with justification that the liberty movement in Kashmir wanted a stimulus which could be delivered by an intrusion into Kargil region and beyond. Sharif was unable to conceive the spectrum of operations and it is also believed that the military leadership did not present the complete plan and the political aims and objectives of operation were also not well defined. At this stage the rest of the army as well as Chief of Air Staff and the Chief of Naval Staff were unaware of plans for the operation as preparations advanced in secrecy (Qadir, 2002).

On the political front, conflict emerged within two months of Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee's iconic 'Lahore bus yatra' (Lahore bus journey) in February 1999. It was just months back in May 1998 when India conducted a series of five nuclear weapon tests to which Pakistan responded by carrying out six nuclear tests over a period of two weeks. The situation was tense so a joint declaration and a gesture of friendship between Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and Prime Minister Vajpayee was the need of the time. The declaration was much successful and grabbed headline all over the world depicting affability between the two nuclear powered neighbours. This document pledged mutual cooperation and bipartisan negotiations to settle disputes between the two rivals, historically pledging that each nation would "protect all human rights and fundamental freedoms" as well as each other's sovereignty (USIP, 1999). Peace has never been a long-lasting affair in India-Pakistan relations and thus within two months of the signing of the Lahore Declaration, both the countries entered into conflict.

Strategic Importance of Kargil

Kargil, known as a gateway to the Himalayas 204 Kms from Srinagar in the west, 234 Kms from Leh in the east and 10-km from the LOC, is the district headquarters of Ladakh. The Kargil sector extends to about 150 km, with Drass at one end and Batalik at the other. The average height of peaks along the mountain ridges is 15000 feet. The Kargil gains importance due to the reasons that it is closest to LoC and secondly lies on strategic Srinigar leh Indian national highway, linking the region of Ladakh and Siachen with rest of the India. Indian side of Siachen is only connected through this highway and is logistically dependent on this road. Secondly, this highway is vital for India because it supplies Ladakh, where India has border dispute with China. During winter, this Srinigar -Leh Indian national highway is cut off by snow from the rest of the country. They need to stock up for winter since the road remains snow-bound for seven months. As Kargil is closest to the line of control (LOC), so this is the only sector where Pakistani posts can have advantage of higher positions. Normally on this kind of ground commanders have a superiority of twenty to one. So strategically, these commanding heights will enable to target the Srinigar-Leh national highway trapping 25,000 Indian troops on the Siachen glacier.

The War Events

The Kargil conflict between Pakistan and India started on 8 May and ended on 14 July, when both sides agreed to a ceasefire being brokered by United States president Bill Clinton (Pike, 2018). During the winter season, it was common exercise for men from both sides to abandon some of their posts along the LoC due to adverse weather conditions as the LoC in Kargil stretches over some of the most rugged territory in the world, with elevations fluctuating from 5000 meters to 6000 meters and winter temperatures plunging below minus 50 degrees Celsius (Sharma, 2011). In early 1999, the dynamics of limited conflict abruptly expanded when Pakistan succeeded in achieving an obvious strategic position over Indian troops. Local Kashmiris along with the support of troops of Pakistan's NLI and SSG crossed the line of control and gained control of strategic highland in Mushkoh Valley, Dras, Kargil and Batalik Sectors of Ladakh. "The master plan was apparently to block the Dras-Kargil high way, cut Leh off from Srinagar, trap the Indian forces on the Siachen glacier, raise the militants' banner of revolt in the valley, question the sanctity of the Line of Control and bring the Kashmir issue firmly back to the vanguard of international agenda" (Cheema, 2013).

The major chunk of personnel comprised the Northern Light Infantry (NLI) as they were well familiar with terrain and acclimatized with weather severity. It is also believed that Special Services Group troops also complemented the NLI units. At least eighteen artillery batteries reportedly supported the operation, most from across the LoC in Pakistani territory (Acosta, 2007). The occupation of Drass-Kargil region by the NLI troops emanated as a “spring surprise” to the Indian troops on patrols. On 6th May 1999, when the Indian forces returned to the mountains, they were surprised to find 1,700 men force; occupying territory inside Indian Held Kashmir which caused panic in Indian headquarters. There was mass shelling by Pakistan on Indian posts so initial patrols and reconnaissance parties sent by the Indian brigade headquarters were taken by surprise and paid very heavy price. Since Pakistan troops were on dominating heights so till end May Indian army showed signs of panic and miscalculations paying heavy price in the meantime both in men and material, blaming the brigade and intelligence agencies. However, "operation Vijay" was launched by Indian army and troops started moving from IHK to stabilize the situation, more than 35,000 soldiers and officers of 3rd division Leh, 8th division Nimu, 6th division Bareilly and 102 brigade were deployed there. Indian army started offensive by June with the support of large scale artillery build up and started to threaten Pakistan side of LoC. In response to that, more Pakistan army regular troops moved in to guard against any Indian attack, thus now both the armies jumped into direct clash. The Indian armed forces initial endeavours to dislodge the Pakistan army were terribly unsuccessful. Indian asymmetric advantages were largely negated by the striking Himalayan territory and a surprisingly determined enemy that possessed the ability to prevail. Indian armed forces were unable to swiftly switch from counterinsurgency to high intensity combat, in addition to its tactical approach to mountainous warfare. By June, Indian got frustrated by attacking the heights and government decided to launch massive air campaign using the front line strike elements. So operation Safed Sagar was embarked by Indian Air Force. Operation by the Indian Air Force started in earnest on May 26, 16 days after the beginning of Pakistani infiltration across the LoC. The striking feature of this initial phase was strafing and rocketing of the intruders' positions by MiG- 21, MiG-23BN and MiG-27. All operations (except air defence) came to an abrupt cessation on May 28, after two IAF fighters and a helicopter were lost – a MiG- 21 and a Mi-17—to the Pakistan Army's surface-to-air missiles (SAMs), while a MiG-27 went down due to engine trouble caused by gun gas ingestion during high altitude strafing. In reality, Pakistan Air Force was never involved in the plan of Kargil but afterwards during the peak of war when Pakistan Army seemed stranded in front of Indian Air Force, PAF was forced to get involved in the conflict but it was only half-hearted participation (Tufail, 2009). This contribution has two aspects, Combat Air Patrols and Air Defense missions only. F-16 Combat Air Patrols were flown which were ordered to remain 30nm inside the border. The air defense was already deployed at its wartime location. High level radars were deployed in the north to provide high level coverage. “A campaign that lasted 74 days and cost each side more than 1000 casualties concluded with India in control of the commanding heights around Kargil” (Acosta, 2007).

Significance of Kargil Crisis and Lessons Learnt by Pakistan and India

The Kargil conflict had numerous stratoms of vital importance for both India and Pakistan and they are mostly dissimilar for the dyad. For Pakistan the significance of Kargil was for the ensuing explanations: It was evident that Pakistan appeared to recognize that the operations like Kargil were not legitimate in the contemporary international settings and could not be conducted to

achieve political objectives. Pakistan also made disastrous miscalculation to understand that the international community would not support such operations and was unable to foresee the consequences of such episode. The political and diplomatic goals were not well thought off and the strategy to achieve those goals was never actually formulated. Here we can give one credit to Pakistan military which was successful in keeping secrecy of operational planning as hostile agencies were totally benign in this aspect (Tellis, 2001). Pakistan has also learnt various lessons from Kargil crisis. In any future event Pakistan needs to strategically foresee the response of international community and how to effectively utilise the diplomatic channels to shape the response of domestic and international key players. Significance of Kargil for India was for dissimilar reasons as compared to Pakistan. India established that the Pakistani military was the root cause of the issues that were persisting between India and Pakistan as military enjoyed greater degree of power in Pakistan in comparison to elected government. India also started to rethink and redefine its strategy on Kashmir issue and diplomatic and political engagement with Pakistan in the same context. The prevalent perceptions of fiasco of Intelligence infrastructure were also evident as Indians were not having any idea of the operational planning of Pakistan. The media campaign and broadcasting of the war helped India to build up its narrative and also to shape the domestic and international response in her favour to counter Pakistan.

International Response

As the news of armed conflict between the two nuclear states in Kargil spread in international community, a robust concern was raised at international level by the governments of different countries to resolve the issue at the onset. Indian army and government played their cards intelligently and diplomatically so they were able to get sympathies of world powers owing to the fact that the clash was initiated by the Kashmiri Mujahidin with the support of Pakistan army and intelligence agencies. It was perceived by International powers as an unprovoked aggression by Pakistan and also violation of the LOC. Pakistan was extensively forced by International community especially United States started to hard press to withdraw its troops from Kargil unconditionally or face complete isolation (Cheema, 2013). Pakistan's stance on the issue was not well thought of owing to mistrust between political and military leadership as no one tried to win confidence of other and due to this reason Pakistan was unable to win any diplomatic or political support from international community. The political leadership of Pakistan continued to follow the cover story of Kashmiri Mujahideen due to which they failed to project Pakistan's stance through media reporting. The ineffective media policy further complicated the situation as national media was not granted access to war zone. On the contrary, India was unable to win armed conflict but was able to win the war diplomatically and politically by winning moral and political support of international community at large just because of the reason that the Indian media was provided access to war zone and the conflict was broadcasted on television all over the world and they were also able to generate a unified perspective and coherent response (Shafqat, 2010). The international community also became more apprehensive about Pakistan in general and its nuclear assets in particular owing to irresponsible behaviour in Kargil conflict while the Indian reputation among global community increased as a responsible nuclear state which helped in enhancement of India-United State relations and India was perceived as a victim being retaliating in self-defence while Pakistan was projected as an aggressor.

Pakistan's Decision Making

The decision making in Pakistan is very complex phenomenon as Pakistan lacks basic constituents which are the hallmark of any democratic state. Despite a democratic country, Pakistan does not possess basic elements of a democracy that are Social Justice and Separation of Powers. It has no formal separation of powers which make contested institutions in Pakistan. The civil-military divide further aggravates the situation when a matter comes over national security and decision making in crisis (Lalwani, Haegeland, 2018). This divide in civil military relations started once governor general, Ghulam Muhammad, dissolved the first constituent assembly with the aid of commander in chief, General Ayub Khan in 1954 and it continues till date. Pakistan is well known for unstable democratic governance and imposition of military rule from its early years after independence. Democratic regime in Pakistan can be segregated over four distinct time frames. The first phase started immediately after its independence in August, 1947 and lasted till 1956. The next democratic era ushered from 1972 and culminated in 1977. The third phase prevailed from 1988 to October, 1999 when Nawaz Sharif was ousted by General Pervez Musharraf following Kargil crisis. Pakistan's fourth democratic phase started in 2008 and continued despite several efforts for derailing the democracy by different parties. The civil society and Pakistan army has played an important role to maintain the democracy in Pakistan though the military influence cannot be ruled out owing to deliberative structures in comparison to civil government (Ahmed, 2018). Pakistan also has a serious issue of separation of power between the three major pillars of state structure that comprise legislative, judiciary and executive. It is also very aptly highlighted by Nasim Zehra in her latest book, "Interestingly, much of Pakistan's political and security debate has veered towards the civilian versus military binary. Pakistan's political journey, with military rule spanning more than half its history, lends itself to such an approach. In mainstream debate, this promotes a flawed reading of decision-making, policies, and policy impacts. States and societies with a flawed understanding of policy matters can rarely become effective advocates for policy change. Acquiring consensus on Pakistan's India policy has been especially difficult as official and public debate has tended to follow the civil-military binary path" (Zehara, 2018).

India's Decision Making

India is generally regarded as a democratic state in comparison to Pakistan as the democracy has prevailed in India in some form or the other but Pakistan's political pendulum keeps on going back and forth between two extremes of democracy and military dictatorship though it was admitted by Manmohan Singh that they were closer to resolve the long standing Kashmir issue with Pervez Musharraf despite the later being a military dictator. India's democracy was straight way employed after British Raj but despite wars, internal separatist movements, communal violence, Hindu-Muslim clashes and severe socioeconomic differences, India has succeeded to withhold it's so called pluralistic democracy ever since its liberation. The social justice also does not prevail in India but the military is not much influential in decision making processes however, the politics of India is Pakistan centric.

Overview of India's Domestic Politics

Pakistan also has a serious issue of separation of power between the three major pillars of state structure that comprise legislative, judiciary and executive. In applying democratic peace theory

over Kargil War between Pakistan and India, it will be pertinent to analyse the degree of separation of power that existed between the three pillars of the state, which in turn would have effectively prevented the Chief of army staff or the head of the state from waging a war without the assent of the parliament. It will also be evaluated whether a democratically elected leader risks losing stature if the state loses an unjustified conflict and whether moral and political obligations for initiating wars exist (as they are expected in democracies).

Empirical View

The following graphics depict an overview of the degree of democratic rule within India and Pakistan over last 60 years' timeframe. A score of 6 or more on the vertical axis specifies the manifestation of a democratic regime. Figure 1 supports the abovementioned statement on Pakistan's four phases of democratic ruling. Figure 2, confirms the notion of a stable democracy within India since this country never hit a score below seven on the vertical axis, and thus India is considered a democracy ever since 1947. While democracy in Pakistan is still immature, the Democratic and Liberal values are not too shiny in India as well.

Internal Political Dynamics and Response of Pakistan (1998-1999)

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif was in a state of deep stress owing to unbearable international pressures coupled by unfair play by the military leadership which botched to apprise him actual situation. When the posts at Dras lost, Nawaz Sharif started struggle to find an escape route without further consulting military leadership at this point. He was also afraid of the military take over paradox if he opted to take decisions without support of Army. So he opted for an external influence to save his own position and despatched his younger brother Shahbaz Sharif to United States who succeeded to achieve the assigned objective as United States government issued a warning that Military takeover in Pakistan would not be favourable for Pakistan. This statement by United States gave clear idea to military top brass that prime minister is afraid of the situation and perceives a military take over. The Indian Government also gave offer to Nawaz Sharif that he can save his soul by giving a statement that the Kargil operation was conducted without approval of the Pakistan Government. In the course of the last meeting at the end of June 1999, General Pervez Musharraf briefed Nawaz Sharif that it would not be possible for India to succeed in Kargil against Pakistan Army but if the government desires to withdraw troops then we can do that. Sharif proceeded to United States where he met Clinton on 4 July and on guaranteed support by Clinton, he came back and broadcasted the withdrawal of the troops occupying Kargil. This shows that the Government institutions were on dissimilar pages. The separation of powers always remains a weak point in political dynamics of Pakistan where weaknesses of institutions invite others to interfere where they are not supposed to interfere.

The Government of Pakistan faced a great degree of difficulty in order to explain the rationality of operation to domestic as well as international audience owing to the clandestine nature of operation. The major political parties largely remained silent during the conflict while the religious parties took advantage of the crisis and were able to shape public opinion and generate political support for attacking government policies and occasionally maligning the image of military. The religious parties became further aggressive after Washington declaration as they were convinced that army and Mujahideen conducted a successful operation while political leadership failed to

support the operation because of US pressures, so they demanded removal of Nawaz Sharif (Nation, 1999). No efforts were made by the political leadership to shape the image of public by taking them into confidence regarding the operation and also about the Washington declaration. Both the military and political leadership failed to comprehend the internal and international milieu while planning the operation which subsequently headed to catastrophe at both fronts. There was no such body in Pakistan as National Security Council which could have brought Government and military on one page in relation with National Security and strategic matters. Although it was suggested by Army Chief General Jehangir Karamat in 1998 that Pakistan must set up a national security council to associate the armed forces with the country's governance but this was not welcomed by the Government and he was sent home for publicly announcing this proposal.

The actual story of Kargil is known to very few in Pakistan who can narrate the real happenings on the rigid and inhospitable heights of Dras sector of Indian-held Kashmir whereas the general public perceptions deviate a lot from the factual account owing to secrecy of plans and no access to official data from Pakistan side and non-factual narration by mostly Indian side. General Pervez Musharraf in his famous autobiography, that was written Seven years after the Kargil conflict, made a stance that the political leadership of the country specifically prime minister Nawaz Sharif was fully aware about the planning and conduct of the operation and also the operation was going to be a successful manoeuvre if Nawaz Sharif should not have taken hasty steps by flying to Washington and ordering with drawl of troops under United States pressure (Shafqat, 2010). But the claim was immediately denied by Nawaz Sharif and he blamed that military leadership kept him in dark about the operation and he only came to know once Indian Prime Minister Vajpayee telephonically informed him about the invasion of Kargil sector (Herald, 2006). However, this is being negated by Shireen Mizari who states that Nawaz Sharif was fully aware about the operation and was periodically briefed in meetings taking place at different places in early 1999. The first briefing was given at Skardu on 29th January followed by the second briefing at Kel on 5th February. During briefing at Kel, specific highlights about Indian Interdiction missions along LOC were also given (Mizari, 2003). Many voices were raised among politicians to hold investigation of the incident by a Parliamentary Committee so that the facts can be established but nothing was done regarding the issue and at same time senior retired military officers also asserted that Kargil episode has seriously undermined Pakistan's stance on Kashmir (Shafqat, 2010). But if one correlate the episodes and the recent statement of Nawaz Sharif about Mumbai attacks where he alleged Pakistan's involvement in those attacks and seriously compromised the national security then it can be inferred that Nawaz Sharif was informed about the operation and later on he refused to accept this to save his political career as he was doing the same in 2018.

Internal Political Dynamics and Response of India (1998-1999)

Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee officially visited Pakistan in February 1999 for his greatly glorified 'Bus Diplomacy' to sign the Lahore declaration which suffered an immediate impediment with the onset of Kargil episode which happened within three months of the ratification of the declaration in May 1999. Both India and Pakistan went on to marshal massive sum of troops to the border, regardless of a large number of losses, by the end of June. Kargil incident was the clear manifestation of the self-assurance of both countries which they got after they became nuclear powers. Pakistan's army leadership misinterpreted in terms of escalation of

war by India perceiving that India would not retaliate at larger scale owing to fright of nuclear attacks. Disagreeing with Pakistani perceptions, India was undeterred and responded with full strength to push back Pakistan army in hind quarters across the border without fearing escalation of the intensity of the encounter. "Once there was clarity in Delhi on the scale and depth of Pakistani intrusion in the Indian border, the Vajpayee government decided to hit back with overwhelming military and diplomatic might and political resolve. Combined with aggressive military retaliation, including heavy artillery and aerial attacks, Delhi stonewalled every Pakistani effort to extract some strategic advantage" (Zehara, 2018). The Vajpayee showed full commitment and they were firm at their stance that they will dislodge Pakistani troops from Kargil area on any cost. The National Security Council (NSC) of India was established on 19 November 1998, with Brajesh Mishra as the first National Security Adviser. The Indian NSC played a vital role in the decision making during the Kargil episode in contrast to Pakistan where no such body existed at that time. India being gloried of her 1998 nuclear tests started to become more aggressive and Indian politician like L. K. Advani threatened to occupy Azad Kashmir by use of force (Cheema, 2013). In contrary to 1965 war, where India crossed international border, this time Indian leadership decided not to cross LoC and just to push back Pakistani Forces. "Still, India did not refrain from avoiding any and all instances of escalation. India mobilized its Air Force, deployed troops from its western and southern commands to positions along the border with Pakistan, and reinforced the western fleet of its Navy with support from the eastern fleet. These measures indicated that India was consciously raising the stakes by positioning forces along the international border" (Panday, 2011). Indian political and military leadership was not having any doubts that what they need to do and how they need to do and there was no dilemma between political and military leadership so they were able to generate a unified response whereas the political leadership and military in Pakistan were not on the same page which led to a disastrous situation.

Democratic Peace and Kargil Conflict

The features that describe a democracy are prevalent within both Pakistan and India, but there has been debate about how democratic both the countries are? Both countries are also coded as a democracy by the 1999 Polity III data. Some theorists that argue in favour of democratic peace theory believe that Pakistan is not a full democracy because of the strong influence of the non-governmental (military) actors on the Pakistani government decision making. Keeping in view the levels of democracy and internal political dynamics of both India and Pakistan, it can be established that the basic assumption of democratic peace theory, that democracies do not engage in war or escalate violence with other democracies, was thwarted by the Kargil conflict as it became an exception to the theory where two democracies indulged in war with each other. By analysing the events that occurred in Kargil, it can be implied that the democratic peace theory failed to apply itself, whereas the school of realism and its ideas such as security dilemma and offensive/defensive realism are more relevant. Realism provides for a better understanding of the situation in Kargil and although both countries were democratic, it is an exception for the theorists that argue for democratic peace theory. India and Pakistan are till today, regarded as rivals and hence it shows that although democratic peace theory is one of the best theories for understanding peace in the contemporary world, realist tendencies can still be prevalent within two democracies causing them to engage in violent conflict. Hence, it can be stated that Space for conflicts exists between two democracies as the ideals of both nations have deep differences. Pakistan and India both don't have

truly liberal democracies, therefore, the theoretical notion that “Two Liberal democracies won’t go to war with each other” won’t apply in case of Pakistan and India until both countries achieve truly liberal democracies in their respective countries (Amin & Naseer, 2011). It is easy to sway public opinion in favour of a conflict between both countries because of shaped perceptions by media and war mongering by Indian government and Pakistan’s security driven approach. Space for war between both countries is increasingly shrinking due to nuclear overhang.

CONCLUSION

The Kargil episode was a reflection of reciprocated lack of confidence, distrust, suspicion and irrational decision making. The Kargil conflict validated that encounter between Pakistan and India is barely discouraged by the existence of nuclear weapons rather it can happen just due to inability of military and political leadership to make right decisions under uncertain conditions. Both the countries, being nuclear powers and responsible members of the international community, need to take serious steps to leave behind the legacy of the Kargil and to take effective steps towards solution of the contentious issues in a peaceful manner by having a unified approach. This conflict also taught an important lesson that the real strength of a nation resides in its political power and to achieve this its military and political leadership needs to be well gelled up so that an appropriate decision can be made to safeguard national interests. The stable government structures and strong institutions play a greater role to maintain a peaceful environment both internally and externally. Over the past few years, India-Pakistan strains, cross-border kinetic exchanges and LOC firing incident and casualties have become the norm while reconciliation efforts have been hindered owing to a multiplicity of reasons which need to be addressed by both the sides to foster a peaceful environment in South Asia. In security sensitive countries like Pakistan and India where democratic traditions have never been deep-rooted and the military is engrossed in an authoritarian, rather than a consensual approach, there is a pressing requirement to indoctrinate a more liberal culture that accommodates different points of views as it is being done in developed countries in west.

References:

- Acosta, M. P. (2007). The Kargil Conflict: Waging war in the Himalayas. *Small Wars & Insurgencies*, 18(3).
- Ahmed, S. (1970). The uncertain future of Pakistan's democracy. SpringerLink.
- Amin, M & Naseer, R. (2011). Democratic Peace Theory: An Explanation of Peace and conflict Between Pakistan and India. *Berkeley Journal of Social Sciences*, 1(3), 1.
- BK101 Knowledge Base. (n.d.). Problem solving. *Basic Knowledge.com*
<http://www.basicknowledge101.com/subjects/problemsolving.html>
- Bray J. (1968). Decision-Making in Government. *Operational Research Society*, 19(Special Conference Issue).
- Chari, P. R., Cohen, S. P., & Cheema P. I. (2008). *Four crises and a peace process: American Engagement in South Asia*. Haper Collins Publisher.
- Cheema, M. J. (2013). International community on Kargil Conflict. *A Research Journal of South Asian Studies*, 28(1).
- Lalwani, S. & Haegeland, H. (Eds.). (2018). *Investigating crises: South Asia's lessons, evolving dynamics, and trajectories*. Stimson Center.
- Levy J. S. & Thompson, W. R. (2010). *Causes of War*. Wiley- Blackwell Publishing.
- Mizari S. M. (2003). *The Kargil Conflict 1999: Separating fact from fiction*. Ferozsons.

- Panday, A (2011). The stability-instability paradox: The case of the Kargil war. *Penn State Journal of International Affairs*.
- Pike, J. (1999). Military. 1999 Kargil Conflict, <https://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/war/Kargil-99.htm>.
- Pugh, J. (2005). Democratic Peace Theory: A Review and Evaluation. CEMPROC Working Paper Series.
- Qadir, S. (2002). An Analysis of the Kargil Conflict 1999. *The RUSI Journal*, 147(2).
- Shafqat, S. (2010). The Kargil conflicts impact on Pakistani politics and society. *Asymmetric Warfare in South Asia*.
- Sharma, N. (2011). General Pervez Musharraf, General V. P. Malik and The Kargil Conflict. *Pointer Journal of the Singapore Armed Forces*, 37(3-4).
- Small & Singer. (1976). The War-Proneness of Democratic regimes, 1816-1965. *Jerusalem Journal of International Relations*.
- Tellis, A. J. & Fair, C..C. & Medby J. J. (2001). *Limited conflicts under the nuclear umbrella: Indian and Pakistani lessons from the Kargil Crisis*. Santa Monica: Rand.
- The Lahore Declaration*. (1999). Provided by the United States Institute of Peace: 21.
- Tufail, M. K. (2009). Role of the Pakistan Air Force during the Kargil Conflict. *Centre for Land Warfare Studies Journal*.
- Zehara, N. (2018). *From Kargil to the coup: Events that shook Pakistan*. Sang-e-Meel Publications.

Date of Publication	Feb. 25, 2022
---------------------	---------------