

INDO-US STRATEGIC COOPERATION AND SECURITY CONCERNS OF PAKISTAN

Abstract

This paper examines the geo-strategic relevance of Indo-US strategic partnership in South Asia where in India and Pakistan has antagonistic approaches regarding issues confronting one fifth population of the world. The imbalance in conventional, unconventional or nuclear weapons between India and Pakistan as a result of Indo-U.S nuclear deal and defense agreement is likely to accelerate the rise of mad race of nuclearization in South Asia and it is bound to undermine Pakistan's strategy of credible minimum deterrence capability . The strategic partnership of India and United States has not gone unnoticed in Beijing as China perceived it a direct threat to her national interests in the region. The perplexing aspect of U.S engagement in South Asia is to deal with India's long desire of dominating smaller nations of the region and Sino- Pak's convergence of geo-strategic interests regarding United States and India, security cooperation and mutual understanding on the war against terror.

Introduction

The priorities of world stakeholders have been entirely shifted to South Asia and Indian Ocean after 9/11. In this context the relations of both the United States and India became more friendly, cooperative and cordial because contemporary changes occurred in regional and global scenario. The most common stance or perception on war on terrorism, fundamentalism, extremism, weapons of mass destruction, and regional and global issues made them long-term friends, close partners, and allies.

In past during the cold war, the US strengthen the security if this region by the establishment of military treaties, NATO, SEATO, and CENTO etc. but India maintained the status of 'non-aligned'¹ and claimed as champion of "peaceful coexistence". The US recognized the significance of India as emerging regional power even though India had strong commitment with Soviet Union; despite of treaties with Pakistan, India was given weight age by allocation of military and economic aid before and after 1962 Sino- Indian conflict. The remarkable strategic, changes took place in the global politics after the disintegration of Soviet Union and the momentous transformation in international security system, trade and investment patterns which regularly maneuvered the international affairs².

Us-India Strategic Partnership

Indo-US strategic partnership in the post-cold war era began in early 1990s. The agreement between Prime Minister Vajpayee and President Clinton in March, 2000 was reflection of Indo-US collaboration of mutual understanding.

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The foundation of this cooperative endeavor was founded during Clinton's regime when William Perry, Secretary of Defense signed the "Agreed Minute on Defense Relations" with Indian counterpart, foreign Minister for defense S.B. Chavan in January 1995.³

The apparition document was signed by both Prime Ministers of US and India, Clinton and Vajpayee has affirmed a determination for qualitative and concrete relationship between the US and India, which shed a new era of friendship and strategic passage for next generations, on the basis of common vested interests and complimentary liability for ensuring the security of this region and international level. This agreement also affirmed that both countries are partners to provide strategic stability in South Asia, Asia and beyond.⁴

The US-India strategic vision originating during Clinton era stimulated quickly with the incoming Bush administration. A part from expanding scope of military to military cooperation, the Bush administration indicate of willingness to sell the a range of weapons technology, including air craft engines which were restricted for India and radars for the artillery to India. The other subject of mutual interest for both countries such as terrorism, operations for peacekeeping, the protection of sea and piracy both sides continued regular diplomatic consultations.⁵

National security strategy 2002 acknowledges capability of India to emerge as one of the greatest democratic states of the century. Alignment of American strategic interests conducive to Indian interests seems more visible in the conspicuous visit of President Bush in 2006. The visit gave unambiguous message of mutual understanding as global strategic partners, natural allies and having broad based agenda of common interests. Formal joined statement of both heads of states stated themselves to be representative of the nation's supporting human emancipation, democracy and rule of law. Later on in July, 2005, both leaders reaffirmed to put joint efforts for the sake of ensuring democracy, durable peace, and wellbeing of people across the globe.

Relations between India and US proved to be watershed between period of 2001 to 2003 and it set new directions of mutual cooperation. The cooperation included diplomatic collaborations, joint anti-terrorism efforts and defence collaborations, and public policy in its gamut. Its aftermaths facilitated Next Steps in Strategic Partnership (NSSP) that was announced in 2004. U.S and India have pronounced that their strategic partnership in 2005, aimed at addressing the issues of domestic unrest, regional conflicts and global security. President Bush' speech on 22nd February, 2006 declared his agenda with India to be ambitious and pragmatic. It asserted on the need of joint pragmatic efforts with an aim of providing their people with better future. Moreover, the speech also acknowledged potential of India as a global leader as well as a good friend of US.⁶

The US-India strategic partnership shows many fields are to be explored by both the countries. The strategic partnership bears significant potential to contribute in various fields like civil nuclear cooperation, market economy and GDP growth, basic human rights like freedom, and promotion of democratic values. Moreover, there is vacancy in the fields of safe and reliable energy production centers to provide strong buttress to common strategic and security

interests. Their potential and commitment to collaborate in the field of innovative and market oriented knowledge to support economy and joint venture to fight against Asian influenza and HIV/AIDS.⁷

Convergences of Indo-Us Interests

President Bush and Prime Minister Manmohan Singh pronounced the partnership an implicit outcome of shared values and common interests. US and India working together on global issues, the convergence of interest at the broad level related to possible threats in the global realm seems to rest on terrorism, weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and emergence of China having economic, technological and military prowess to play proactive role in South Asia region as an extra regional actor.

The United States and India converged on the issue of Iran's nuclear programme. It was highlighted then that both US and India differed widely about the potential threats of WMD and terrorism from Teheran and it would be quite unwise and unfeasible for India to stand in favor of any retributive stern step against Iran as it contradicted with Indian interests. India had plausible ties with Iran in the nuclear and energy sector. Moreover India's conventional stance to oppose intrusions into a developing country's sovereignty, and differences with the US on the way the nuclear proliferation is dealt with was also visible factors to support Indian stance.⁸

The China Factor

China's economic potential and strategic interests in South Asia had to go through transformational shift in post-cold war era due largely to United States long desire of promoting unilateralism across the globe. Indo-U.S geo-strategic partnership has ratified all the efforts of India to become regional hegemony in South Asia where in China's interests are becoming vulnerable.

China is confronting with in South Asia, India's emergence as a rising global power and her hegemonic command over the region. Moreover, emerging US hold and interference in the South Asia and US-India strategic partnership are creating hindrances in the way of its peaceful co-existence with South Asia.⁹

Economic Imperatives

In the prevailing circumstances where India is quite ambitious to gain slot among developed state, the Indian policy makers decided unequivocally to improve its lopsided economic cooperation with America. In the same breath the American policy makers make an inception to consider India in the same accent as China¹⁰. In an allusion to both India and China, U.S National Intelligence Council in a report to Congress in 2005 anticipated future of China and India more or less similar to the status of Germany in 19th century and America in 20th century with more or less similar impacts on geo-political landscape. Its impacts bear potential to be as dramatic as those of the previous two centuries."¹¹

The prospectus of India outpacing China in coming decades also riveted America toward India in economic front. Business elite of India have leading

contribution in Indian economic sector whereas, role of Government is minimal. It has contributed significantly in attracting world's leading entrepreneurship to invest in India even in the advanced fields of medical and pharmacy research activities.¹²

There is a possibility that by the year 2010, their share of the world imports may exceed that of Japan and the European nations combined. The four Asian Big Emerging Market (BEMs) include China, India, Turkey, South Korea, Indonesia, South Africa., Poland, Argentina, Brazil and Mexico, including India have crucial significance in terms of world economy already, they constitute nearly 40% of the world population and half the GDP of all the BEMs, this means by the next 20 years this could mean to third of the total import growth of these countries¹³. Biotech sector of India's have shown tremendous progress enough to make both China and South Korea lag behind in the filling of biotech patents. Moreover, departments of food preservation, telecommunication, and financial services in the terms of insurance policies have also given plausible growth. Banking sector introduces schemes of micro financing to optimize small scale businesses and agricultural sector in order to make the green revolution a reality. These development stands as testimony to the vast potential to be harnessed for higher economic growth. Even other developed states have not yet reached up to the state where half of their economy is contributed by service sector, manufacturing sector, and agricultural sector contributed a quarter by each. India has gained a status of core for international technology products and services that establish one fifth of world software exports.¹⁴

India is making effective use of its human capital as she has both qualities in its labor force that is vast labor market and ambitious labor force. It may even make China lag behind India. Surplus labor force in comparison with china makes India cup of tea for leading global MNCs to contribute in exponential economic growth of India. India has another edge over china as China is at stake to get old before it gets rich.¹⁵ India's growing prospects for higher economic growth in a liberal and free market society has been a preponderant factor working in the mind of America to enhance its economic relations with India.

India has emphasized two key questions which are vital for the US. On 21st December, 2005 in his address at Washington, DC Indian Foreign Minister Sham Saran highlighted the "closer integration one fifth of humanity with global market" which would have positive consequences for world economy and therefore for the US economy. Secondly, India emphasized the benefits of its economic growth to its democracy. India argues that better economic growth would bring tangible economic benefits to the India people and reduce poverty levels in the country. This would, in turn, ensure the success of democracy in India which is in the US interest.¹⁶

Indo-US Security Cooperation and the Nuclear Deal

Civil nuclear deal entails its signatories to ensure energy security and protection of environment against hazards of the nuclear radiations. In this regard, both governments showed consensus to take reciprocal commitments and resumption of full cooperation in the nuclear field. It implicitly directed United

States to amend its laws and policies in accordance to the prerequisites of the nuclear deal. It facilitated the nuclear deal to be practical among allies and friends to make in feasible among international regimes. It included 'expeditious movement' of fuel supplies at Tarapur as its salient feature. Moreover, it attempted to facilitate India's participation in ITER and to consult with other participants in the Generation-IV International Forum.¹⁷

India put forward its willingness to take for granted the same responsibilities and practices and acquire the same benefits and advantages as the other leading countries like United States with advanced nuclear technology. Accordingly, India for its part undertook the following commitments as stated by Prime Minister Manmohan Singh in the Parliament on 7 March, 2006.¹⁸

The US and India showed willingness to establish a "Defense procurement and production Group" with its manifest function to handle military logistic trade and prospects for co-production and technology collaboration. The agreement obliged the signatories to "work to conclude defense transactions, not solely as ends in and on themselves, but as a means to strengthen their security, reinforce Strategic partnership, achieve greater interaction" between the two armed forces. It will consequently contribute in establishing a better understanding and enhance cooperation between their defense establishments. The agreement postulated to cater the challenges related to global security environment being faced by both countries.

The primary structure of the agreement covered eight areas to deal with. First, it required a group assigned with the task to procure and produce for the purpose of overseeing joint productions in the field of defense, trade and exchange of technology. Second, bilateral defense trade was welcomed to expand. Thirdly, both parties acceded to jointly protect the sea route for trade. Fourth postulate included joint efforts to put an end to unsafe proliferation of mass destructive weapons. Fifth point directed to establish 'multilateral defense cooperation' with other states. Sixth clause of the agreement suggested to launch collaborated efforts in disaster and relief provision activities; they decided to make combined efforts disaster relief management. Seventh postulate showed determination of the signatory states in missile defence cooperation.¹⁹

The salient elements of the separation plan could be summed up in the following points:

- It was required on Indian part to point out 14 thermal power reactors out of 22 within India, could be under construction even. These reactors were to be put under safeguards phase wise by 2014.
- India had privilege not to accept the safeguards installed at Kalpakkam. India had leverage to avoid Fast Breeder Reactor and Fast Breeder Test Reactor to be located there.
- India has decided to put under her safeguards all future civilian thermal power reactors and civilian breeder reactors, only Government of India would have the sole right to conclude such reactors as civilian.
- It will not be constraint for India to flourish nuclear facilities in future

sensitive to either military or civilian whatever required by her.

- Rest of the facilities linked with reprocessing, enrichment and other processes of fuel cycle are kept insensitive to separation plan.
- United States has unequivocally pronounced its commitment to provide India with complete access to fuel for reactors. July 18 joint statement visibly shows commitment of US to amend their laws and policies conducive to making it feasible for India to get full access to international market for nuclear fuel. Moreover, it must ensure reliable and incessant access to fuel supplies arranged by multilateral organizations. This had been evident in the joint declaration during the US president's visit.²⁰

The significance of separation plan had two folded repercussions. It gave political moral support to Indian claimed stance of non proliferation. Similarly for America, it provided ground to show allegiance with Article 1 that obliges US to denounce any assistance by America that bears illegal nuclear proliferation. Undersecretary of state Nicholas Burns told reporters on March 2, 2006 that "it's not a perfect deal in the sense that we haven't captured 100 percent of India's nuclear program. That's because India is a nuclear weapons powers and India will preserve part of its nuclear industry to service its nuclear weapons program".²¹

Pakistan's Security Concerns

Indo U.S. strategic partnership including 10 year defense pact and nuclear deal in June, 2005, confirms the strong perception that the U.S.A, has decided to accord higher priority and greater significance to India. The nuclear agreement between USA and India has raised many questions and great suspicions with in United States, South Asian countries who were apprehensive with nuclear non-proliferation. The major point of difference is that Bush administration was going to sign a nuclear deal with a state which is not signatory of NPT. Moreover, the deal did not impose any checks on India's nuclear capability for defense purposes; it raises strategic threats for the Asian states especially for those having conflict of interest with India. The main thing which is discussed widely that George W. Bush took a critical step to provide nuclear technology to that country which has no yet signed the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).ⁱⁱ As this deal was not imposing any substantive constraints on India's "conditioned ability to develop nuclear weapons," in that scenario, the strategic importance of this deal has geopolitical implications for strategy of US on Asia.²²

Indo-US defense agreement is viewed as potential threat to security of Pakistan as India having superior Theater Missile Defense (TMD) system, sophisticated delivery mechanism, and nuclear weapons existing in the state of full deployment and the presence of nuclearized environment would automatically raise the level of threat, insecurity and misperceptions in the region. Further activation of the Proliferation Security Initiatives (PSI) stands harbinger of imbalance in South Asia. "The (PSI) is part of the US notion of 'coalition of the willing' which aims to demoralize international law of the sea by attributing its coalition members the right to stop traffic of suspicious transportation of WMD

ⁱⁱ Daily New York Times, March 5, 2006.

material or apparatus on the high seas.”²³

Mari time security cooperation under strategic partnership between US and India is nothing but to secure Mari time domain that would cause serious Mari time issues between Pakistan and India in the Indian Ocean and international seas as well. Man Mohan Singh categorically stated India’s rise to global partner of world politics, in his speech he said, that there were various opportunities. The world has been facing new opportunities with new challenges since last 15 years. He believe that today the countries are more accessible to India emerging as a major global power than in history and it is up to us how we seize those opportunities and ensure new path ways to our chosen destiny”.²⁴

The neighboring states of India have seriously concerns over that development in that region that U.S. is supporting India for a larger role to play in the region as the “Regional policeman”. The Telegraph again expresses the same that Shayam Saran’s visit to United States department had this agenda in his mind. Also India has a long history of hegemonic designs spreading over more than 50 years. It has been supporting insurgencies in Sri Lanka and its track record of relations with Nepal and Bangladesh is also suspicious Quoted in Steven Fidler, “Views Differ on JC. U.S. Energy Deal with New Delhi”.

The U.S. distinguishes India as a sphere of Influence in South Asia.²⁵ According to The Telegraph, April 5, 2005 Naran statements in Washington were momentous as a part of steady movement by the Bush administration recognized India as the sole gateway to influence the South Asia. With this interpretation of influence over South Asia the both riders, New Delhi and Washington must work together mainly on Nepal, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, and to a lesser extent on Bhutan and Maldives. New Delhi is being encouraged by the Bush administration to enhance its already considerable engagement with Kabul. These signify a sea-change from Bush first term, when the then Secretary of state pressurized India to slow down its interaction with Karzai government and cut down on assistance to the post-Taliban establishment as well because it was not being liked by General Pervez Musharaf.”²⁶

U.S. admired Pakistan’s efforts against war on terror in Afghanistan, on this behalf, Pakistan was granted Non-NATO ally status in March 2004. But India, having the 10 year long standing ally status by the U.S. in June, 2005, disturbs the strategic balance in the region of South Asia. The presence of U.S. led NATO forces in Afghanistan and fragility of Pak Afghan border raised the stress in tribal belt of Pakistan. These were the matters perceived to be constant source of tensions between Pakistan and United States. Moreover, the US-Indian strategic partnership would definitely support more Indian involvement in Afghanistan. On 2 March 2006, President Bush stated in his speech at New Delhi that he particularly want to thank the Indian nation and the Indian government for supporting the new democracy in the neighborhood and that being the democracy in Afghanistan, where India pledged \$565 million in reconstruction aid plus \$50 million for the new national assembly building”. Bush’s statement about India’s role in Afghanistan was a notion of further possible developments in the region than possibly means the Indian involvement would be at the expense of Pakistan.²⁷

Failure of United States to curb the resurgence of Taliban in Afghanistan,

and Pakistan's thinking to resolve the issue through dialogue is seen by the U.S. with suspicion and mistrust. Ultimately it helps India to launch poisonous propaganda against Pakistan as harboring extremists and, terrorists. The new Indo-U.S. defense cooperation would further allow India to have its military presence in Afghanistan which would severely affect Pakistan's security.

The most important concern for Pakistan is the agreement on missile and defense cooperation between the India-U.S. nuclear allies. This Missile and defense development was apprehended by George Koblemtz that the Indian acquisition of an Anti Theatre Ballistic Missile (ATBM) could definitely threaten the nuclear balance South Asia by depriving Pakistan of an assured strike capability. Pakistani authorities may have apprehension that during a crisis, they would be susceptible to intercept first strike by India, which would then rely on its missile defenses to intercept any Pakistani missiles not to dismantle on the ground. Islamabad might find sound reasons to show concern over it as it bears potential to mitigate nuclear retaliation of Pakistan in case of war. It may also provide India leverage over Pakistan to engage Pakistan in conventional war and enjoy herself with safe position as very less fearful of Pakistan's nuclear strike capability. Wider gaps of power balance in the region have certain effects that might conclude in the form of security unrest among the region.

The obsession of India of acquiring most sophisticated missile defense capability is bound to further move the pendulum of nuclear strength in favor of India resulting in undermining Pakistan's strategy of minimum level of deterrence and nuclear restraint. These developments in relations of India and United States, by ignoring the maintenance of strategic balance in South Asia would have disastrous effects on Pakistan's missile defense capability.

In this regard, Islamabad Council of World Affairs (ICWA) recommends, "at the diplomatic level, Pakistan should forcibly convey to the US at the highest level its security concerns caused by the latest Indo-US defense pact. We must emphasize the destabilizing consequences for South Asia, an open ended supply of highly advanced weapons to India. The supply of anti- missile system to India would disturb the precarious strategic balance of South Asia." A geo-political shift in South Asia in the aftermath of Indo-U.S. strategic partnership has also caused serious concerns in china as Beijing's newspapers, which represent Communist Party of China, expressed that other nuclear suppliers also have their own partners of interests.

Sino-Pak close relations and friendly ties to cooperate for further enhancement of Military capability of Pakistan is always seen by the U.S. with suspicious eyes: Also China is concerned with India growing military power and is not unaware about Indo- U.S. strategic partnership. "China remains a major worry for U.S. dominance in South Asian region and it is only logical in American perspective to prop India up as a counter weight to China".²⁸

Daily telegraph reported a conversation between US Under-Secretary and Indian Foreign Secretary that suggested that China at large extent in the conversations but America did not aim at containing China in the region. Indo-America ties were not meant to challenge China."²⁹

Up till China did not announce its policy about massive arms buildup and strong American support to India. However Indo-US strategic partnership's goals and objectives are not unknown to the world. A noteworthy geo-political swing, therefore, is likely to come about with the building of the strategic partnership aimed at precise objectives that intent to use force to achieve these objectives which could undermine the sovereignty of smaller South Asian states. This US will be looking forward to India to outsource US imperial outreach as a capable power to respond quickly to regional crises. US and India will launch joint ventures to defeat evil ideology of terrorism which is potential threat to freedom, harmony, and peace in society. Thus U.S and India would stand shoulder to shoulder to curtail and impede the increasing defense capability and military and economic power of China, and combat terrorism spreading out of the Muslim world.³⁰

Conclusion

Indo U.S strategic partnership is the reflection of United States foreign policy paradigm shift in the region of South Asia. It has recognized the hegemonic designs of India by declaring India as natural partner of United States. The U.S defense cooperation with India as the defense agreement between them clearly marks close collaboration in military, conventional and non-conventional weapons irrespective of what NPT stands for, has serious repercussion on geo-strategic scenarios of South Asia. Indian strong desire of becoming regional hegemony dominating smaller neighbors with her military strength, nuclear power and super power connivance is likely to affect strategic balance between India and Pakistan especially in minimum deterrence capability and nuclear restraint.

Indo-U.S strategic partnership has accelerated India's dream to raise as global power as a counter weight to China which is perceived to be a potential threat for U.S interests in the South Asian region and beyond as well. United States desire of more Indian involvement in Afghanistan's reconstruction along with under mining Pakistan's efforts on war against terror is not based on ground realities as the world has recognized the role of Pakistan in war against terror. Freedom struggle of Kashmiri's has also been put to back burner as Indo-U.S strategic partnership reiterates the soft image and democratic projection of India across the World.

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