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India-Pakistan Relations Post-Article 370: Security Implications and Diplomatic Tensions

Dr. Ammara Tariq Cheema

Lecturer, Department Of Politics And International Relations, GC women University, Sialkot, Punjab, Pakistan

ammara.tariq@gcwus.edu.pk

Rahat

MS Political Science, Department Of Politics And International Relations, GC women University, Sialkot, Punjab, Pakistan

rahatbajwah@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The Indian government's Article 370 revocation in August 2019 did a significant constitutional and geopolitical significantly impacted on the disputed territory of Jammu and Kashmir. This article explores the prospective security risks and diplomatic tensions of the summary noted resulting from this abolishment and places a review of why India and Pakistan view this action as they do and their respective responses. India sees this process of taking back Article 370 as an internal event related to regional assimilation and terrorism. According to Pakistan it is violation of international law in dispute with India's territorial integrity and an action that puts regional stability in jeopardy. Informed by historical context, this manuscript will review select military-strategic, cross-border militant, and international-diplomatic contexts in how the post-Article 370 context is started to shape bilateral relations between these two nuclear powers. Another area of focus will be on the role of key international players, China and the United States' involvement in Kashmir and the possibility of further escalation. Although any significant chance of escalation continues to loom large, it will conclude by suggesting that while direct confrontation has been averted, passive strategic ambiguity, strategic diplomatic isolation, and unresolved nationalist grievances continue to operate as deterrents to any chance of peace in the South Asian region.

Keywords : Article 370, the conflict in Kashmir, Jammu and Kashmir, and India-Pakistan relations, Regional Stability, Cross-border militancy, Nuclear Powers, Strategic ambiguity, Diplomatic tensions, China, South Asia geopolitics, Nationalist grievances, and Security risks.

INTRODUCTION

India and Pakistan both share a possibly longer life time in nuclear-armed neighbors in South Asia, having a long and unstable relationships based largely on the respective claims on the Jammu and Kashmir the disputed state. The disputes have become deep-seated much since 1947 when British India divided, creating an atmosphere of wars, crises, and a continuous state of unrest. On 5 August 2019, India's central government, recently re-elected on the back of a Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) landslide victory, unilaterally abrogated Article 370 of its Constitution (GOI, 2019), thereby altering Jammu and Kashmir's autonomy system while also influencing both internal administrative governance in India and international diplomacy and regional security.

Pakistan opposed the revocation and said it to be breach of international law and attempt to change the demographics of the territory that was disputed (Ahlawat & Izarali, 2020). On the other hand, India conversely declared the change as an internal matter that was made to strengths the J&k connection into Union of India, while improving the security and governance circumstances. The diverging points of view reestablished the conflicts, which affect diplomatic calculations and growing regional security concerns.

This paper examines the post-Article 370 dynamics in detail from the perspectives of Pakistan and India. By using the most recent studies, policy documents and beneficial evaluations, it assesses the armed forces posture, diplomatic moves, security implications and the international reactions. This seeks to provide a fair assessment of whether the revocation has raised the risk or established the opportunities refocused interactions.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Pakistan-India conflict over Kashmir has been viewed from multiple disciplines—strategic studies, international relations and legal studies Ahlawat and Izarali (2020) indicated that India's abrogation of Article 370 changed the security environment of South Asia, which made India's rival Pakistan less secure and narrowed Pakistan's strategic options. Amir et al. (2020) provide a concise historical assessment prior to reviewing the Kashmir conflict, arguing that the current situation should be viewed in the context of colonial demarcations and nationalism post-partition. Sagan (2001) and Fair (2018) focus their explanation of the prevailing territorial and policy situation on the ongoing capabilities of nuclear deterrence and proxy warfare that provide a stabilizing but fractious equilibrium. Fair claims to reconcile the paradox of lethal stability by these weapons: nuclear weapons deter large war, but lower level activities and groups continue terrorism. With Pakistan's own strategic interests, any India-Pakistan conflict thus allows for groups such as Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) and Jaish-e-Muhammad (JEM), (Fair 2018), to hijack India's popular opinion around this conflict, further freezing India's ability to react to Pakistani proxies. On India's end, Pant and Joshi (2020) suggest that the post-370 national narrative represents a shift towards a muscular nationalism and realism that

unifies domestic politics with foreign policy, offering India a chance to repudiate the narrative and the violence against it. Internationally, China's strategic interests in Ladakh were located in part to the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), and while India sees the seizure from both Pakistan and China as symbolic and existential it has regionalised the Kashmir situation, while the United States has generally attempted to follow a bilateral resolution track between Pakistan and India (Garver, 2006; Tellis, 2020)

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study takes a qualitative research design approach, using descriptive and analytical methods to examine the security and diplomatic repercussions of India's change in Article 370. The research draws on secondary data including peer-reviewed academic articles, government documents, reports from international organizations and other recognized news sources. Data were gathered from academic databases like JSTOR, Taylor & Francis, ResearchGate, and from think-tanks like Carnegie Endowment and Brookings Institution in policy circles. Content analysis was used to surface the recurring themes of strategic posturing, transnational militancy, nuclear deterrence and international perspectives.

The research takes on a comparative focus examining the implications from both Indian and Pakistani perspectives. The research also takes on a regional angle as it considers China and the United States in the analysis. Thematic presentation of findings allows for a more streamlined presentation while grouping results to present coherently in an analysis of historical context, trends in security, and shifts in diplomacy. Though the research utilizes non-empirical sources of representation, triangulation of academic, official and media views enhances the validity and policy usefulness of the work.

Article 370 revocation: Constitutional Changes and Kashmir's Political Status

Article 35-A was added to the Indian Constitution as a crucial component of the 1954 presidential order that permitted amendments under Article 370. The state of Jammu and Kashmir had the authority to establish a particular group of people as "Permanent residents" according to the terms of this article, providing them with special legal benefits and status. Jammu and Kashmir power to grant privileges and rights to these designated "Permanent residents" is crucial component of Article 35-A. Although a few seem to violate upon any fundamental liberties protected by larger Indian Constitution, Kashmiris are protected by these unique and particular rights and privileges (CONWAY, 1895).

On August 5, 2019, the Indian government revoked Article 370 of the Indian Constitution, and thereby ended the special autonomous status of Jammu and Kashmir, revoking Article 35-A, which allowed the state to define permanent residents and give them exclusive rights related to land, employment, and education. In doing so, the BJP government had successfully sanctioned a process of integrating Jammu and Kashmir more directly in to the Indian Union that they had long sought. The reasons for the move were characterized to the public as necessary for

developing the region, countering terrorism, and promoting national integration.

The BJP government was successfully carried out on an ongoing objectives of further Jammu and Kashmir integrating into the Indian Union with this act. The public was made aware that the action was required to move forward national integration, fight terrorism and develop the area. Conversely, opponents of the move argued that it was unconstitutional and violated India's federal structure and UN Security Council resolutions with regard to Kashmir's contested status (Ahlawat & Izarali, 2020).

Pakistan asserted that the revocation was illegal and warned that it would alters the regions demographics, particularly its Muslim population. The imposition of new domicile laws allowing non-locals to acquire residency and land prompted further anxiety. Across the political spectrum in Jammu and Kashmir, political leaders denounced the Indian government's actions. Article 370 revocation was accompanied by mass detention of residents, communications blackouts, and media restrictions all of which raised concerns about human rights internationally (Human Rights Watch, 2019). The tension between the India and Pakistan increased, the revocation thereby indicated a turning point in the Kashmir dispute, changing its constitutional, political and demographic landscape.

Table 01: Key Legal Changes Post- Revocation of Article 370

Provision	Before Revocation	After Revocation
Article 370	Granted special autonomy to J&k	Abrogated, full application of Indian Constitution
Article 35A	Restricted property rights to residents	Repealed, property rights extended to all Indian citizens
Administrative Status	Jammu & Kashmir State	Divided into J&K and Ladakh, two Union Territories.
Logical Legislature	Had own Constitution and laws	Laws subject to Indian Parliament

Source [Government of India (2019) and Ahlawat & Izrali (2020)]



Figure 1: Political map of the Kashmir region, showing areas administered by India, Pakistan, and China (National Geographic, 2016).

Historical Context of India-Pakistan Relations: From Partition to Article 370

Since the independence of India and Pakistan in 1947, Pakistan have had an unstable relationship marked by disagreements over land, military conflicts and intermittent peace efforts. Based on the theory of two-nation, the division of British India led to immediate conflict, especially over the princely region Jammu and Kashmir. The region was divided along the Line of Control (LoC) after many years of conflict and then the region of Kashmir became a central issue in the relations between the two countries as a result of the First Kashmir War. (1947–48) (Ganguly & Kapur, 2010).

Conflicts were further strengthened by subsequent conflicts in 1965 and 1971, both which resulted in the creation of Bangladesh and raised Pakistan's sense of vulnerability. The simla agreement in 1972, which required bilateral talks in an effort to establish a peaceful resolution, but failed to produce a lasting solution (Kux, 201). Conflicts were further strengthened by subsequent conflicts in 1965 and 1971, both which resulted in the creation of Bangladesh and raised Pakistan's sense of vulnerability. The simla agreement in 1972, which required bilateral talks in an effort to establish a peaceful resolution, but failed to produce a lasting solution. Regardless of ease periods like the Declaration of Lahore (1999) and Agra Summit (2001) terrorism which was cross border, military standoffs, and mistrust among the nations have been repeatedly hindered. The war of Kargil (1999) rapidly brought an end to Lahore Declaration that Prime Ministers Atal Bihari Vajpayee and Nawaz Sharif signed and promised peaceful dialogue and confidence-building measures (Hussain, 2005). The Agra Summit failed over Kashmir and mediation issues.

The ties among India and Pakistan were suffered after the 2008 Mumbai attacks. India maintains that Kashmir is an internal matter, whereas Pakistan maintains that it is unresolved "dispute" that calls for international intervention.

When Article 370 was repealed in 2019, tensions raised as Pakistan lowered the diplomatic relations and mobilized global outrage (Chaudhury, 2020). Although brief interactions such as ceasefire agreement in 2021 LOC, bought some short term break, the absence of ongoing communication generate instabilities. The historical trajectory indicates that Indo Pak relations will continue to be stuck in the cycle of conflict fleeting diplomacy unless the situation in Kashmir and terrorism are addressed.

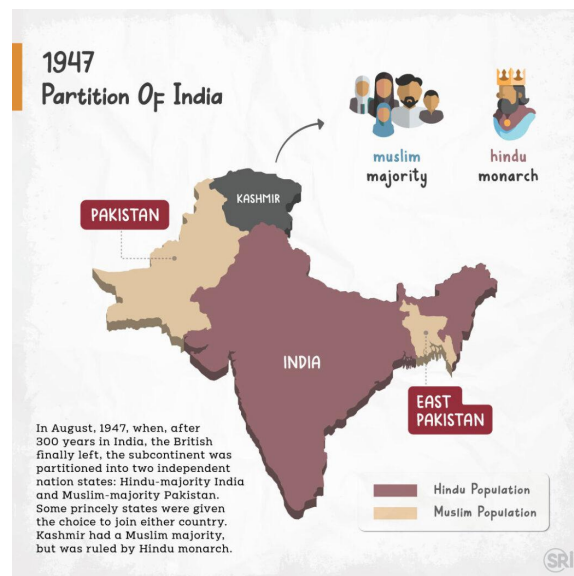


Figure 2: 1947 Partition, birth of India & Pakistan, with Kashmir at the center (Desk, 2022)



Figure 3: A graphic situates the area of Indian-administered and Pakistani-administered Kashmir in the broader region (Abc.net.au, 2025).

Security Strategy of India in Kashmir Post-Article 370

Regarding the Kashmir issue, India saw the repeal of Article 370 as a kind of strategic reset that restored territorial sovereignty and boundary certainty. The government of India has asserted continually that the Indian Union incorporates Kashmir, and any intervention especially by Pakistan is unacceptable and illegitimate (MEA, 2019). In order to avoid the potential unrest, India significantly expanded its military and paramilitary presence in J&K. According to the media reports 40,000 more soldiers were sent to J&K in early August 2019, along with

curfews and prohibitions on communication (Human Rights Watch, 2019). Indian security establishments maintained that these were a short term steps aimed to reduce violence and external threats.

A principal part of India's new strategy includes rejecting the narrative of internationalization. India maintains that Kashmir is an internal issue, rejecting any possibility of mediation from third parties, including offers from international organizations (the UN) or the United States (Pant & Joshi, 2020). New Delhi has used platforms such as the UNGA and the OIC to counter Pakistan's claims, is increasing diplomatic space with Gulf States and Western allies. Also, the Indian government states that revocation creates space for the potential for economic investment and development in J&K, which will lead to a reduction of alienation and militancy. However, opponents assert that the securitization of the area and the incarceration of political figures are incompatible with these objectives and might contribute to unrest (Bose, 2020).

India also reset its doctrine with regard to surgical retaliation. Following the Pulwama attack in February 2019, it hit back at Pakistan with airstrikes opting to leave its previous policy of strategic restraint to employ preemptive retaliation (Fair, 2019). This illustrates India's wider appetite to leverage military instruments to defend territorial integrity after 370.



Figure 4: Kashmir unrest: Local protests erupt against increased security measures after the revocation of Article 370 (BBC, 2019).

Pakistan's Security and Strategic Response to Article 370's Revocation

When India revoked Article 370, Pakistan's response was swift, forceful, and complex. Prime Minister Imran Khan compared India's actions to settler colonialism, and the move was politically denounced as "illegal, unilateral, and in violation of international law" (Khan, 2019). Additionally, Pakistan suspended bilateral trade, expelled the Indian High Commissioner, and downgraded diplomatic ties (Ahlawat & Izarali, 2020). From the security perspective, Islamabad experienced the change as an immediate threat to the regional power structure.

In reaction, the Pakistani military came up with its armed forces presence along the Line of Control (LoC) and in the months that followed, multiple ceasefire violations were noted. The elimination of Article 35A, based on the Pakistani governance and leadership, would allow demographic shifts that might further weaken Kashmir's Muslim-majority identity and threaten Pakistan's claim to the

area (Haider, 2019).

However, a number of factors limited Pakistan's security approach. First, its past backing of militant proxies named Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) and Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), which both are classified as terrorist organizations, damaged its reputation abroad (Fair, 2018). Second, Pakistan was under economic pressure to disassociate itself from non-state actors following their inclusion on the Grey List of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF). Rather than a direct military engagement, Pakistan wanted to revitalize its credibility in its support for the Kashmiri struggle through international institutions and in global media narratives.

The Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) wing of the Pakistan military helped shape and circulate narratives of Indian human rights abuses in Kashmir. Domestically, government united the country around the issue and held our state-backed rallies and media campaigns as part of "Kashmir Solidarity Day."

As a strategy Pakistan also looked to China its "all-weather" friend to push for Security Council consideration regarding Kashmir. The results here were mixed as other great powers did not give Pakistan much support for this move, solidifying Pakistan's isolation on the issue (Cao, 2019). Even though Pakistan was maintaining nuclear deterrent capabilities, its leadership emphasized restraint for themselves and reiterated as something they were doing in contrast to India's "hegemonic ambitions" (Al Jazeera, 2019).

India's Diplomatic Posture after Article 370

In its diplomatic outreach following Article 370's repeal, India sought to advocate its conduct as a matter internal to India that was in conformity with its Constitution. India cited the Simla Agreement (1972) that called for bilateral treatment of disputes between India and Pakistan, and argued vehemently against mediation by any third state (MEA (2019).

India has commenced to frame the issue, at various international venues such as the UNGA, as the dilemma of a security and development pathway to eradicate terrorism, corruption and, under development in Kashmir. And rather than highlight its disputed status, Indian diplomats were keen to emphasize, even for the purposes of both Federalism, and governing dimensions, the extent to which Kashmir had now integrated into the hierarchy of Indian governance (Pant & Joshi, 2020).

India has also firmly strengthened ties with critical Gulf states, especially the UAE and Saudi Arabia - both long-time Pakistan's allies. Not long after India acted on Article 370, the UAE presented Prime Minister Modi with its highest civilian decoration. This was stated to indicate shifting diplomatic relationships in India's favor (Ahmed, 2019). Similarly, Saudi Arabia and Bahrain stayed outside the dispute, despite pressure from Islamabad. Only Turkey and Malaysia offered support for Pakistan's assertions, pointing to the isolation of Pakistan in the religion-based world (Datta, 2019).

Additionally, India's increasingly strong strategic partnership with the United States further consolidated a certain diplomatic position. At a media press conference,

President Donald Trump, either unaware of the implications under which United Nations Resolutions Pakistani signed or India negotiated ceasefire arrangements, offered to mediate on Kashmir, but later reaffirmed that the issue could only be resolved through a bilateral arrangement, consistent with India's position (Bagchi, 2019). Late in January 2020, during a state visit to India, the White House issued a joint statement on counterterrorism (this included remarks calling attention for Pakistan to take actions against terror groups operating from its territory) (White House, 2020).

India similarly employed its counter-terrorism narrative well. By diverting attention to Pakistan's long-standing overt relationship with non-state actors, while showcasing itself as a victim (i.e., Parliament attack in 2001, Mumbai attacks in 2008, Pulwama bombing in 2019), India lent itself legitimacy as a state fighting terrorism, and not as one suppressing a separatist movement (Tellis, 2020).

Table 2: Diplomatic Responses to Article 370 Revocation

Country/ Organization	Stance
United States	Issue must be resolved bilaterally, pressed Pakistan on terrorism
China	Called for UNSC discussion, concerned over Ladakh
UAE	Supported India's internal sovereignty claim
Turkey/ Malaysia	Supported Pakistan's Position
OIC	Issued soft statements, Limited collective action
UN Human Rights Office	Expressed concerns over rights violations

Source [MEA (2019), Ahlawat & Izarali (2020), and Bagchi (2019)]

Pakistan's Diplomatic Campaign Post-370

Straight after Article 370 revocation, Pakistan started a clear and loud diplomatic activity to internationalize the Kashmir issue. Prime Minister Imran Khan depicted India's actions as a contravention of UN Security Council (UNSC) resolutions and warned of the imminent dangers of genocide and ethnic cleansing (Khan, 2019). The government called special sessions in Parliament, communicated with foreign diplomats, and sent envoys to a few capitals.

Pakistan made an attempt to garner a multilateral spotlight at the UN. In August 2019, China, Pakistan's strategic ally, supported a closed meeting at the UNSC, but this effort ended up failing in that no formal statement was issued, and most members simply reiterated that the issue must be resolved bilaterally (UNSC, 2019). Pakistan also raised the issue at the UN General Assembly, where Khan emphatically condemned Hindu nationalism, highlighted human rights abuses in Kashmir, and warned of nuclear escalation (Khan, 2019).

Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), traditionally a source of support for Pakistan, made statements of concern without the commensurate collective activity. Interestingly, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Bahrain bestowed civilian honors on Prime Minister Modi, just after the revocation, which reflects

Islamabad's declining clout in the Muslim world. (Ahmed, 2019).

In addition to multilateral footprints, Pakistan also aimed to leverage diaspora communities, international media, and human rights organizations. Nationwide protests were planned in major Western cities, and some dossiers were submitted on Islamabad's behalf to UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) about abuses by Indian security forces in Kashmir (Dawn, 2020).

Despite these efforts to mobilize the international community, Pakistan was diplomatically isolated. Only Malaysia, Turkey, and China took strong positions in Pakistan's favors. While issue of human rights in Kashmir drew some interest from powers in the West, these powers refrained from framing the issue in a manner aligned with Pakistan's geopolitical ambitions. Pakistan's ability to project its narrative was also weakened as a result of its links to terror proxies and being on the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) Grey List (FATF, 2020).

The China Factor in South Asia's Security Balance

China occupies a tactical and cautious role in the India-Pakistan-Kashmir equation. While China is Pakistan's closest ally, Beijing has supported Pakistan on the diplomatic front. For example, at the UN Security Council where Pakistan requested a discussion when India revoked Article 370 (Ahlawat & Izarali, 2020). China was not only against reorganization of Jammu and Kashmir but did not support the creation of the Union Territory of Ladakh, which is next to Aksai Chin, an area claimed by India but controlled by China (Garver, 2006).

The security of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), which cross Gilgit-Baltistan and area that India also claims, is the China's most important concern. This important investment in infrastructure is at risk from any unrest in Kashmir. As a consequence, China backs the position of China diplomatically but avoids to direct action might compromise is larger regional economic interest (Pant & Raina, 2020).

In Galwan Valley are the security situation was made worse by the 2020 Indian-Chinese disputes. These disputes showed China's unease with the development of Indian infrastructure close to the Line of Actual Control, especially after Ladakh became a distinct Union Territory (Krishnan, 2020). While Pakistan is provided with a strategic cover by China, it is cautious when directly provoking dispute with India, considering that it offers Pakistan a strategic cover.



Figure 5: Territorial map of Jammu & Kashmir showing Indian, Pakistani and Chinese controlled regions (News, 2025).

Cross-Border Militancy and Escalation Threat

Militancy that was Cross-border, especially after article 370, remains one of the most volatile flashpoints in India-Pakistan relations. India continues to charge Pakistan with supporting terrorist outfits that have something to do in Jammu and Kashmir, especially the Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) and Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), as international terrorist outfits (Fair, 2018). Pakistan denies direct action but claims to only provide political and moral support to the cause of Kashmir.

India conducted airstrikes in Balakot following the Pulwama suicide bombing in an unprecedented move without declaring a war, and entered a new era of preemptive military action which could conceivably lead to a new danger of conflict in two states that possess nuclear weapons (Tellis, 2020). India has since gone beyond interactive doctrine from outraged Pakistani terrorism to a unifying doctrine of rapid retaliation, making another "major" terrorist act even more dangerous should a response be required again.

Despite reports of decreased infiltration efforts due to heightened monitoring at the borders, local militancy driven by alienation and online radicalisation has increased, further complicating the security posture (Bose, 2020). Without strong mechanisms for crisis management, even a small attack can easily escalate into larger scale confrontation. Therefore, cross-border militancy still poses a major threat to regional stability which keeps the two countries vigilant and limits opportunities for sustainability.

Nuclear Deterrence and Strategic Stability

Together, nuclear weapons of India and Pakistan's have capabilities collectively and cumulatively provided the basis for strategic deterrence in South Asia. India has a declared No First Use (NFU) policy while Pakistan has a nuclear posture of strategic ambiguity but wants to retain first use if it gets attacked with conventional forces by India in a large-scale war (Sagan, 2001).

In the post Article 370 context, Pakistan has ramped up its rhetoric about nuclear conflict if the tensions persist (Khan, 2019). Conversely, India has adopted an approach to strengthening its strategic deterrence using conventional deterrence, such as developing its ability to retaliate quickly against terrorist attacks, like the airstrikes in Balakot.

This creates a stability-instability paradox, whereby nuclear weapons can deter full-scale war but positively, reinforce low-level confrontations and proxy wars (Jervis, 1989). Particularly, introducing tactical nuclear weapons now also into Pakistan's arsenals exacerbates potential escalation control, while increasing risk of miscalculation.

While there is no actual instance of full-scale war, there are limited formal crisis communication mechanisms, such as communication with regard to arms control, which will only aggravate the potential for risk of miscalculation. Consequently, strategic stability is fragile and is now directly dependent on states

displaying restraint rather than being institutionally or reliably governed.

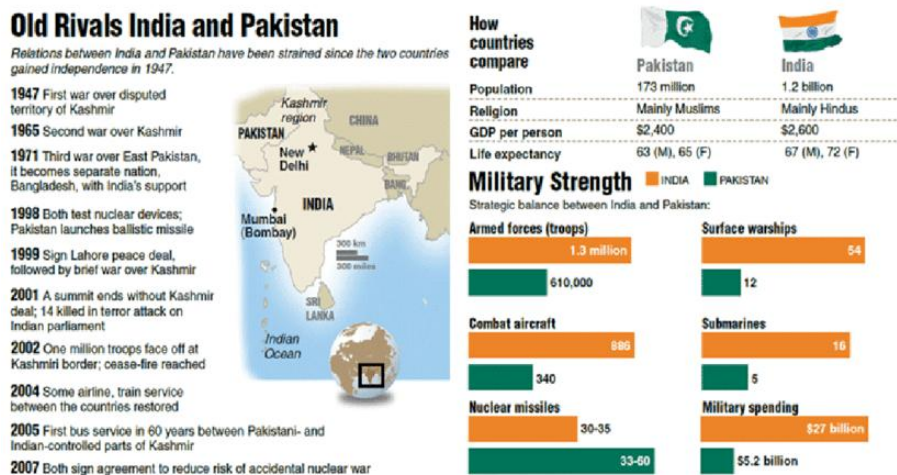


Figure 6: Comparisons of India and Pakistan military capabilities (Amir et al., 2020)

CONCLUSION

Article 370 revocation increased the already India and Pakistan's tense relationship has had a major impact on South Asia's geopolitical landscape. Pakistan sees the move as a violation of international laws and a danger to the stability of the region, while India perceives it as a step towards counterterrorism and national integration. The security dilemmas created ranging from cross border militancy to nuclear brinkmanship have only further entrenched suspicion and facilitated mistrust. Diplomatic ostracism, strategic ambiguity, and unaddressed nationalist narratives continue to be obstacles to peace. Barring substantive dialogue and crisis management mechanisms, the escalation possibility and the continued instability in the region which remain, and the chances for sustained stability are at best, tenuous.

Findings

This study demonstrates that the abrogation of Article 370 in August 2019 has led to a deepening of strategic distrust between India and Pakistan. India sees the changing of the constitution as an internal issue in relation to its own regional aspirations and a countermove against terrorism; however, Pakistan interprets the abrogation as a violation of international law for altering the demographic reality of Jammu and Kashmir. These different views have further entrenched their competing narratives of sovereignty and legitimacy. Furthermore, security conditions on the ground remain fragile. India has systematically intensified military infiltration and surveillance, while Pakistan has sustained diplomatic condemnation and military posturing in a form of deterrence that utilizes the armed forces along the Line of Control (LoC). Although both sides have obviated traditional warfare, the kinetic potential remains for miscalculation which could lead to armed conflict due to ongoing cross-border militancy and a lack of institutional mechanisms for crisis management. Also engrossing the region are factors associated with nuclear deterrence, asymmetric warfare, and the presence of an external State sponsor

(China) which continues to enlarge the strategic risk profile of South Asia with growing fragility in the strategic environment.

Recommendations

To diffuse tensions and create durable stability in the region, both India and Pakistan need to develop an orientation that favors a path towards dialogue instead of confrontation. Dialogue must lead to institutionalized and continuous lines of communication, particularly in moments of crisis to avoid any miscalculation. In addition to working with CBMs (confidence-building measures), which could be simple measures of information sharing, hotlines for military contacts and coordinated border management to begin to restore confidence, both countries must equally commit to a joint strategy to address cross-border militancy in a transparent manner. Both the nations must refrain from using proxies to further policy goals. The international community - in particular China and the United States - can help by facilitating dialogue and delegitimizing the countries' compliance with existing commitments. In addition, human rights in Jammu and Kashmir must be addressed with greater transparency and a serious level of civil society engagement. This potential direction could stem from a limited level of alienation and extremism. Put simply, an effort at reestablishing sustained, clearly bilateral diplomatic contact - even perhaps through a backchannel or Track-II format - is the best option for de-escalation and peace in the region.

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