

Narendra Modi's Foreign Policy Towards Pakistan and Decline of its Fascist Approach

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Since the Partition of British India (1947), the relations between Pakistan and India marked by tensions and conflicts due to consequential factors including Jammu and Kashmir which is one of the unfinished agenda of partition and relations are defined by persistent hostility and antagonism. India perceived to be adopted Pakistan centric foreign policy based on strategic autonomy, prioritizes national interest with the active participation in the Global South, and cultivates balanced partnerships with major powers. Narendra Modi since 2014 has shifted dialogue-oriented foreign policy with Hindutva nationalism and strategic assertion, marked with belligerence, firm deterrence, and coercive diplomacy mean doctrine of isolation of Pakistan diplomatically and frequently retaliating offensively. Therefore, Modi policy towards Pakistan built on the principle to isolate Pakistan, especially following the 2019 revocation of Jammu and Kashmir's special status under the article 370 and unilaterally withdrawal from the Indus Waters Treaty, which is against the spirit of international law. Further, under the Modi's regime relations between Pakistan and India have arrived in the lowest ebb. His aggressive policy failed to achieve key objectives, include counter-terrorism, regional economic initiatives and to minimize Pakistan's influence. However, Modi foreign policy has collapsed to produce the intended results, and in some cases, has led to a diplomatic decline and Pakistan has emerged as a key diplomatic bridge in shifting global power dynamics and its efforts has enhanced its global standing and increased its international influence .

Keywords: Modi foreign policy for Pakistan, Hindutva doctrine, Offensive policy, Kashmir and Efforts to isolate Pakistan

Foreign policy is not a monolithic, homogeneous, or not static but rather a complex and diverse discipline and rightly described as a first line of country security. It is a continuously changing process in the fluctuating environment and the country can change its internal and external dynamics as per their own choice, priorities and capabilities. In most of cases, foreign policy is an extension of country's domestic policy and its formulation or articulation require very careful thought and judgement (Kissinger, 1969). Certainly, foreign policy reflects the interests, values, and preferences of the country. Its success and failure perceived to be mirror of the decisions and behaviors of its leadership in the regional or global arena. As per the words of James Rosenau, foreign policy is a course of action in which state can compete its interests or any miscalculation or external pressure can affect negatively (Rosenau, 2008). In this regard, foreign policy is also a political gamble which highlights the inherent risks and uncertainties in international relations, where decisions can have unpredictable and far-reaching consequences, sometimes leading to escalating conflict or sometimes pushed towards the worst scenario. However, each government normally used foreign policy as an instrument to influence other countries or using foreign policy as a tool to achieve various goals including regime or state survival.

The scholars of world politics are agreed that foreign policy is one of the greatest instruments in the hands of country's leaders to pursue its national interests. It is considered as a full political activity of the country which can obviously lead a country in the highest level among the comity of nations and any wrong decision can put the country in awkward position. In the post-Cold War era, the religious and ethnic nationalism has shaken the world and this wave has changed the ideological dimension of international relations. The world has seen worst form of ethnic or religious nationalism in some parts of Eastern Europe and its severe implication also seen in Asian countries including Afghanistan, India and Pakistan. The world has seen the new form of nationalism which has become the fundamental element of contemporary politics and it is not just a matter of politics but its mix-up with culture and national identity. Its mean in the modern time, religious and ethnic nationalism has occupied an important position in the present political scenario, and it has to replace and alter it contemporaneously (Maia, 2022). It has confirmed that nationalism is one of the leading sources to reshape the global values and has increases the intensity of power in domestic politics of the countries, mainly by increasing the capacity of individuals and mobilise spirit of self-sacrifice. As Schrock-Jacobson, identifies some fundamental possible influence of contemporary nationalism and its use in domestic politics which entails to defamation of 'others, provoke violence in society, promotes biased strategic assumptions and encourage belligerent nationalist foreign policy (Jacobson, 2012). Under this type of nationalism leaders or elites can successfully create favorable environment and easily marginalize opposition and successfully exploit external threats to gain in internal political arena. It is also obvious that the research matter particularly emphasis on the affiliation of nationalism and the concerned incidents in different parts of the world mainly in Asian region (Shahzad & Rubab, 2024). Hence, foreign policy is often seen as a collection of intentions that drive countries to exhibit particular behaviour's essentially functioning as a blueprint or a series of strategies related matters in international affairs. According to Karl Deutsch, foreign policy is the reflection of country's behaviour and its priorities to interacts with other countries. In this regard, the some developing countries rulers normally used religious sentiments in domestic politics as an instrument to gain more strength against the internal or external rivals (Deutsch, 1960).

Formation of India's Foreign Policy

In the beginning, India's foreign policy was mostly influence by the Jawaharlal Nehru being a founding father of modern India. He has profound impact in the formation of country's foreign policy with the principles of secular credential, non-alignment and coexistence. It was well defined concept to deal the India's domestic scenario and international context, apart from the complex era of Cold War in which there was difficult to protect national interests in the presence of great powers. Although it is reality, external developments are heavily influenced by a country's domestic scenario is a cornerstone of foreign policy and international relations theory. Thus, India's foreign policy makers run the country's affairs with the vision of Nehru but the post-Cold War has changed dynamics and radically influence its domestic and external dimensions. According to Joyati Bhattacharya, from the foundation of India, the country is facing difficulty to manage its relations with Pakistan and later with China (Bhattacharya, 2018). It is necessary to understand because Pakistan came into being in a hostile environment and the country was in search of great friend to protect its security from Indian threats. So, earlier the country's policy makers joined western club just for the protection of external security threat and later shake hand with People Republic China (PRC) as a counterbalance of India. In the situation, Pakistan become successful to bring Kashmir on the global agenda and created serious situation in the doorstep of India. Moreover, China has emerged as a "real elephant" of the region and Nehru's effort to bring them on board failed due to non-cooperation of great powers (Bhattacharya, 2023). Above all, India as a nonaligned country put all eggs in one basket and annoyed the Western bloc which greatly upset to India's foreign policy and still in falling position because the US new administration shifting policies towards New Delhi. According to Ashok Kapur, from the inception of India, the country never holds its freedom in foreign policy including Nehru's era could not find way out to face the challenges of foreign policy (Kapur, 2016). No noble tool has worked to gain support against Pakistan and China because of geopolitical changes in the region and globe. Further, the US and Western powers resist New Delhi to change policy towards Pakistan and this factor destabilize and falloff India. Thus, it is fact that successive Indian governments normally compromise with the ongoing situation and shown hesitation to disturb the normal system. However, India's geography and diverse culture worked to popularize the country

and the government earned huge money from the tourism rather to gain from foreign policy or from the circumstance of world politics.

Indian Foreign Policy and Pakistan's Security

Historically, from the day of birth, Pakistan is engaged with antagonistic and unpleasant situation for its existence due to India's hostile attitude. The country is a victim of India's desire of dominance and wish that it should be satellite country. The two countries have fought six major or minor wars (1947, 1948, 1965, 1971, 1999 and 2025) and have experienced a number of crises, but not a single one incident has changed the power structure in substantial way. The event of 1971 war had the most shocking consequences because dismemberment of Pakistan has left severe impact on the political and strategic landscape of the country. After the breakup of country, Pakistan merged its military resources on the Western front which helped to strengthen its strategic position and also improved military capability to prevent India from larger conventional attack along the international border. On the other side, India failed to merge Kashmir with Indian union and under the agreement both countries converted Kashmir ceasefire line into the Line of Control (LoC) as the de facto border and agreed to resolve differences peacefully. Moreover, it was widely accredited that Zulfikar Ali Bhutto diplomatic skill beaten Indra Gandhi on the table and successfully manage the difficult situation and to keep the Kashmir issue alive and prevented region from India's capitalization.

Some Indian experts have opinion that India's victory in the 1971 war has given message to Islamabad that never fight with India and also have shown intention to live with the territorial status quo mean Kashmir dispute have settled once and forever (Prott, 2022-2023). At each stage of the hostility and proactive strategies of adversary such as in 1947–1948 and 1965 wars were imposed on Pakistan. There was also series of proxy wars between Pakistan and India alongside conventional wars, started from 1989 and the Kargil war (1999) was the extreme which the whole direction of Kashmir issue. In this regard, the 1971 India-Pakistan war is a significant historical moment, where both sides took deliberate military initiatives, transforming an internal Pakistani crisis into a full-scale international war. India was involved in cross border military engagement and openly supported anti-Pakistan elements to liberate Bangladesh. In this war both challenger and defender took military initiatives and ultimately dismembered Pakistan, and then New Delhi initiated forceful action in the western front just to create more vulnerability for military leaders but the United States threat to both New Delhi-Moscow prevented to move forward (Kissinger, 1979). India again mobilise its troops during the 2002-2003 crisis (Operation Parakram) in the rection of attacks on the Indian Parliament by terrorists but no evidences were provided to Pakistan by New Delhi and complained that attackers based on Pakistan (Stolar, 2008). Thus, as per the empirical record, it is sensible to argue that India failed to produce evidences and refused for mutual investigation about the incidents but it is reality that the groups who were involved to attacks on Indian souls are unchallengeable in terms of their capabilities, strategies and training because they have potential to boost rivalry between India and Pakistan.

In this regard, the perception cleared by security management of the country that Pakistan would never accept India's hegemony or dominance in South Asian region and it would never make any compromise on the Kashmir dispute, will neither forget Kashmir nor abandon it (India Today, General Asim Munir, 2025). Moreover, there is no secret that the main Indian political parties including Congress and Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) are like a Coca-Cola-Pepsi Cola, mean company names are different but water colour is same mean both have similar policies and have no soft corner for Pakistan. Both parties are the prison of partition syndrome and both have consensus not to given up its claim of a united India (Khan, 1967). Thus, India has inability to reconcile itself with Pakistan existence as a sovereign country and from the beginning, India is determined to make things difficult for the country. In the situation, the notion of security has always been a vital pillar in the formation of Pakistan security policy since any complacency can lead to the country's collapse (Chotisut, Bunyavejchewin & Krisathian, 2023). Many Pakistanis are agreed that economically and militarily stable Pakistan is a precondition for achieving security and peace with India and it is also necessary for the stability of the region. So, threats from India to Pakistan, as argued by Alexander Wendt, are the result of socio-cultural interactions (Wendt, 1992). Thus, Pakistan's case resembles, to a tremendous extent, how religious aspects alter the Muslim state's behaviour. In this way, security is a primary concern for Pakistan

because the way country's vanguard perceive security threats significantly contributes to shaping the policies of the country at large (Cheema, 1990).

Narendra Modi and its Foreign Policy Trends

The scholars quipped that "India has no foreign policy, they have only fixed adversary i.e. Pakistan and have domestic politics based on Hindu fundamentalism," (Joseph, 2025) as James Rosenau said, "developing countries have no foreign policy, have only foreign relations based on domestic political trends, which they can use as a tool in foreign policy (Rosenau, 1969). So, this observation can easily apply on India because since Narendra Modi came into power (2014), he has changed its foreign policy by moving away from idealism to pragmatism, focus on geo-economic and becoming more active in domestic and regional affairs. He believes on the philosophy of Machiavelli and Chanakya, and used all means to achieve objectives in the realm of domestic politics and foreign policy (Pande, 2017). He has given emphasis on Hindutva philosophy for the strength of Hindu-nationhood with the belief to practically establish Hindu hegemony in the region. Thus, Modi era perceived to be departure of early idealism or moral posturing which was dominated in the country's foreign policy and adoption of "self-help" realist approach with the end of the Cold War and focus on material power by embracing the pragmatic policy. So, it is clear that Modi has assumed such a hard policy and utterly prepared to face Pakistan and China in all the forum.

It is evident that Modi promoted hatred against minorities particularly Muslims and adopted Pakistan centric foreign policy to isolate in the world. He perceived to be a vital player in body politics of India and alone controlling India's internal and external environment at the diplomatic and strategic levels. He basically initiated Identity based (religion) politics in India and given the rise of Hindu extremism. However, this situation emerged after 40 years of secular Congress governments rule and during that time the conflict with Pakistan became embedded. It is reality that Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)-led government of Atal Behari Vajpayee in 1999 and 2003 was also equally responsible who harbors extremist groups such as the Rashtriya Swayam Sevak Sangh (RSS) as an identity in the mainstream politics at the cost of other religious communities. There is no reason to deny this fact that national identity has played an important role in the India-Pakistan conflict. In this regard, Pakistan directly reliant on religious identity and India too dependent on religion just for supremacy. So, India under Modi have used Hindu identity to defend their own political positions and interests, which benefit from the continuation of the rivalry. The absence of an unambiguous national identity or secularism thus allows the territorial conflict with Pakistan to serve as a beacon for national unity, thereby prolonging and embedding the conflict.

Muni affirms the pragmatic behaviour of Modi which is pivotal to understand his determination to achieve regional and great power prestige and has introduced ultra-right politics and focuses on the resurgence of nationalistic, populist, and Hindu extremist notions in foreign and domestic policies to become champion of modern India" (Muni, 2015). Thus, it is confirmed that his policies are basically influenced by India's grand strategy and perceived to be a main security player in the region. Moreover, Modi's assumptions for greater India are the reflection of his strategic cultural anxiety and he is committed to continuing the policies because without that India cannot attain regional hegemony and global power status. On this way, Modi is facing great challenges, because his administration is navigating a significantly more complex in the regional landscape in South Asia and India is facing growing frustrations and diplomatic setbacks that Pakistan continuing to challenge India's power position and difficult to accept New Delhi domination (Kumar, 2025). However, it is difficult for India to prevent China that the country should not support and back to Pakistan in the field of economy and modernization of weapons which has increased its diplomatic power. It is also the indicator that India cannot move forward as a soft and hard power and seems too difficult that it can achieve regional or great power status (Ranjan, 2021). There is no doubt that the current India's strategic approach and foreign policy focus on isolate Pakistan diplomatically which India failed because of Pakistan's successful diplomacy and its reliance on asymmetrical warfare as well as nuclear deterrence. It seems at the moment, albeit in a manner India failed to protect its traditions, culture, and global vision. Moreover, the analysts mentioned that after the May 2025 short war with Pakistan, India has faced major setback for regional hegemony and global ambitions to become a 'world power' (White, 2025).

With this background, Narendra Modi emerged as one of the most popular leaders in India's political history. He always used Pakistan card to attract Hindu majoritarian votes for winning election. In the modern political setup, political parties in developing countries normally using selective notions and even nationalism as rhetoric to influence the common people or using sentiments as a propaganda tool to lure voters. So, political parties are the prison of trends and exploiting sensitivity of people more likely to win election for their conservative and nationalist agenda (Andorno, Neves, & Laukyte, 2023). In this regard, everywhere the election result shows the rise of right-wing politics in the world and India is leading country where religion and identity of the country is used for winning election and policy implementation. With this reference, Modi seems to be the most effective leaders in India who formed first majority government in nearly four decades. With a substantial list of foreign policy, he declared strong commitment towards its neighbours other than Pakistan and to engaging in alignment with other nations. For instance, with the restrictions of the space and time, Narendra Modi has transformed Indian foreign policy by introducing more pre-emptive, assertive and hostile style while maintain fundamental strategic continuity. Moreover, Prime Minister Modi highlights that foreign policy can only influence by the time in which it formulated and only can take influence by its historical, and geographical factors. It has proved that his "multi-alignment," approach, proactive diplomacy, and neighborhood first initiatives is not as per the ground reality.

In the situation, Modi attitude and behavior is not exceptional which can be explained only in pathological terms. He is member of extreme right wing Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) which have a deep hatred against Pakistan and the Muslims. So, Modi's alleged hostility towards Muslims is not hidden because when he became Chief Minister of Gujarat (India) in 2002 he intentionally permitted anti-Muslim violence in the state in which more than 5000 innocent Muslims were killed. According to Sanjiv Bhatt, Modi attended a meeting in which he allowed Hindus masses to vent their anger against Muslims (*BBC News*, 2011). It is therefore essential to draw lessons that Pakistan is still the victims of India's continual poisonous propaganda which they are spreading falsehoods to cover up its domestic failures. They are involved in sponsoring terrorism through RAW and their associate agents in the province of Baluchistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to destabilize Pakistan. However, Pakistan is committed to resist such actions and uphold its national interests and security. In this regard, Stephen Cohen is agreed that in the contemporary world where awful practices exist, then why a country like Pakistan adopted a specific offensive policy which helps the country's security guardian to take suitable measure for the protection of country's security. It is inevitable that a country who knows the destructive actors in the globe, then the country has an option to use all possible means to protect its national security and external threats (Cohen, 2003). However, in case the states failed to miscalculate the state of affairs and taking erroneous steps which can damage national security and this situation perceived to be dangerous and can benefit to adversary. As a result, states policy makers and decision makers have to diagnose the nature of threat.

In fact, Narendra Modi is the only regime in India who most notably change the shape of India's foreign policy. He changed Cold War version of bipolar policy and chose the path of pragmatism for proactive foreign policy and isolate non-alignment in all forum and trying to emerge as the developing world leader. Previously, pragmatic aspect was mostly missing in Indian foreign policy and leaders were hesitant to adopt proactive policy at the cost of other nations interests (Miller & de Estrada, 2017). However, Modi has built new policy on the view to focus on strengthen defence just to stabilize its regional status which is the gate way of its global ambitions. Therefore, Modi's vision of foreign policy based on the argument that coexistence is no more a core principle of foreign policy because the world has changed and it cannot prevent conflict and failed to foster cooperation. He emphasizes that countries with different ideologies is difficult to stay under one umbrella. Thus, achieving peaceful coexistence is challenging because countries are more inclined towards national interest and eager to gain more power for peace and stability (Ganguly, 2015).

It is highest desire of Modi that the South Asian region should be under India's influence and great powers including China must avoid to involve in the regional affairs. Domestically, he replaced secularism and with Hindutva for the socio-cultural strength of Hindu nationalism and promote his political ideology in which he replaced Nehruvian notion of diversity in India to achieve Indianization or Hindu renaissance. He

openly used “realist or pragmatic” approach that “state needs an enemy for survival” (Antunes & Camisao, 2018) and used ‘Pakistan’ for regime and state survival. For this purpose, he decided that country have to live in a context of anarchy and have to manage the country’s concerns in relation to persist in the highly competitive environment. He often-used analogy ‘not leave a chance for enemy to call someone for help and try their best to impose their will to stay under their own environment. In the situation, Modi central objective of foreign policy has been to isolate Pakistan regionally and globally. His external affairs machinery is involved to mobilise world against Pakistan and categorise that the country is a mothership of terrorism just to ratchet up international pressure but India failed to achieve nefarious objectives. In fact, the world knows that Pakistan has experienced significant impacts from terrorism and the country has faced numerous horrific terrorist attacks, resulting in substantial loss of life, infrastructure and economic damage.

Although on ground India’s position was different and other than to takes measures to overcome internal and external challenges. He announces in the 69th session of the United Nations General Assembly in September 2014, that “The destiny of a country is linked to its neighborhood and New Delhi has given the top precedence of friendship with neighbors” (Modi Speech at the United Nations, 2014). Apart from the global level commitment, Modi initiated new approach particularly in the perspective of the necessary strategic race with Pakistan and China. Under his leadership, Modi reassess its priorities in foreign policy and used propaganda tools to address issues with Pakistan, especially used diplomatic machinery to reduce Islamabad influence in the region and globe (Pal P, 2018). He continues accelerate strains with Pakistan with reference to Kashmir issue, and terrorism, which India perceived to be threats to its national security and regional peace (*Al Jazeera*, 2023). In fact, Modi’s strategies for Pakistan are not normal activity as usual in bilateral diplomacy, he adopted policy of “smile and stick” mean engaging in dialogue and keeping distance from the country and trying to defame in all the manners (Kumar, 2017). In this regard, Pakistan reiterated willingness for a “meaningful and comprehensive dialogue” with India on all outstanding issues including Kashmir dispute and water distribution (See *Dawn*, 2025). However, it was Modi regime who disengaged from the composite dialogue with Pakistan and shown unwillingness to restart negotiation and demand actions against the offenders of the attack. It is also reality that India has not produced the single one evidence of attacks as they charged on Pakistan. With this excused, his regime has not restored negotiation with Pakistan but instead has sought repeatedly to engage and casting India’s leading role. According to Clary, India disengaged with Pakistan because Islamabad always asserted that dialogue must be on the Kashmir issue rather than only on terrorism (Clary, 2021).

Modi Foreign Policy Towards Pakistan

Since the division of British India (1947), India and Pakistan both countries are hostile each other and it has been categorized by a complex web of partition syndrome and characterized by a geopolitical factor, extraordinary tensions, and less time of tranquility. In fact, no Indian government have intention to stabilise relations with Pakistan rather they become aggressive and offensive as Prime Minister Modi has also adopted significantly calculated strategy towards Pakistan which categorized by strong posture and forceful measures. In addition, once the Modi gained power, his administration implemented its zero-tolerance policy towards Islamabad and carried out “surgical strikes” in Pakistan’s areas including its administered Kashmir, which called Azad Kashmir. On the other hand, Modi represented an arrogant policy which perceived to be departure of India’s customarily diplomatic policy and presented provocative policy. He initiated well-organized crusade against Pakistan in the international and regional forums to accused Pakistan for aiding terrorists and supplying weapons, training and financing to non-state actors but the world vehemently denounced the New Delhi claims against Pakistan.

In this regard, Narendra Modi’s campaign to Pakistan undergone a drastic change and appeared to the highest level of assertive engagement rather than restraint. The situation is still a serious and it seems two nations have risky standstill because until the Kashmir dispute, which is the main issue between the two countries, the condition cannot normilise. Pakistan says Kashmir is our jugular vein and India declares Kashmir is just like head of our body (Lati & Bhandari, 2020). In general, there are dim chances to bring two nations closer because there are three fundamental interests of Modi government to keep continue extremely

tense relations with Pakistan which are necessary for his regime existence. First strategy towards Islamabad is to remain pressurize the country by hook or crook. Secondly, Modi is using Pakistan and religious card in domestic politics and do not need to develop cordial relations. Thirdly, Modi is not willing to settle outstanding dispute including Kashmir with Pakistan through dialogue as a goodwill gestures, and continue exploiting terrorism to blackmail the country. These are the obvious reasons which Modi government is using as toughened approach in dealing with Pakistan. This is particularly true, mutual relations of the two countries are not cordial and both are involved to counter each other in the regional and global forum and has put the peace in the danger (Dubey, 2025). According to T. V. Paul, India and Pakistan have violent and ferocious enmities and both differ in many ways, including socio-political, linguistic, economic, and religious lines. In fact, Modi regime has made no tangible efforts to stabilize its relations with smaller neighbors including Pakistan. For this reason, they have resolved only minor issues but not interested to sort-out major disputes with neighboring countries (Paul, 2005). Moreover, Modi's believes on Hindu Supremacists and Hindutva ideology which they are using these belligerent policies to oppose Pakistan and to discover the factors that paved the way for the xenophobic posture of its administration.

Furthermore, Modi's "Muslimphobia" and anti-Pakistan rhetoric are nothing but just to gain popularity. He also used anti-Pakistan rhetoric as Giriraj Singh, Bihar BJP leader, once said "those who want to stop Modi against Muslim and Pakistan have no place in India (*The Times of India*, 2014). In other words, Modi emerge as a hardliner and become unconcerned with the parties or leaders who have soft corner with minority Muslims or Pakistan, categorically mentioned, "sympathisers have no place in India," and they should move to Pakistan (*The Times of India*, 2014). In this regard, Modi's unapologetic communalism policy created deep negative impact with neighbouring countries particularly with Bangladesh and Pakistan. He always targeted Muslims just to admire right wing extremist Hindu community to gain in election and it is one of the fundamentalist policies of BJP party (Sen, 2022). It is also broadly held view among political analysts and viewers that Narendra Modi have commonly used rhetoric about Pakistan as a part of political gambling to fascinate the Hindu nationalist vote bank and project a strong national security agenda. Moreover, he encouraged followers to become aggressive with time towards other religions. Allowed to beat Muslims because of eating cow meat and become biased and intolerant for other minorities and different low casts. Additionally, Modi has displayed a harder line policy against India's opponents and domestically also used religion in a violent manner just to show Hindu domination in the country.

Modi Influence Neighbours Against Pakistan

Modi prompted to pursue particular relationships with its neighbors and compelled them to keep out from Pakistan. He particularly used his influence on Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal and Maldives to keep distance from Pakistan if they need cordial relationships with New Delhi. On the one hand, India acknowledged that Pakistan is the greatest threat to its security rather China, which once defeated India in its border war in 1962 and New Delhi perceived to be not capable to face China in land, air or sea (Khan, Dawar & Wei, 2025). Indian leadership using China card to gain potential economic and strategic advantageous from the US, Europe and Japan. They are showing growing concern about Beijing strategic activities and trying to take greater role in the Indo-Pacific region (Lin, 2024). Furthermore, Modi and its party BJP views Pakistan through a lens shaped by Hindutva ideology and have psychologically partition syndrome. They are using Pakistan as a shield of national security and possessing hardline stances to keep India's unity, aiming for regional dominance and have desire for global power status. According to Barry Buzan, India views Pakistan as a significant obstacle to achieving its regional dominance and global aspirations. This perspective has confirmed by the continue enmity and ongoing geopolitical rivalry (Wojczewski, 2014).

However, India and Pakistan mutual relations have worsened under the Modi era, excluding the short time of Nawaz Sharif period when Prime Minister Modi visited Pakistan to congratulate Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif on his birthday, but his reconciliatory visit failed because he did not shown flexibility to talk over the issue of Jammu and Kashmir which is the one of bone of contention between the two countries and its military establishment, who is dominated in the policy making of country and has prevented Nawaz Sharif to not cross the red line (Wani, 2016). Additionally, Pakistan refused to accept terrorist attacks on Indian

military bases, which India claimed attackers based on Pakistan Jahidi organizations, who weakened environment between the traditional adversaries. In this regard, New Delhi felt fear that Pakistan is using cross-border terrorism and extremism as an instrument against India which New Delhi feel threaten for its national security (Gupta, 2025). For instance, Pakistan feels uncomfortable by India's involvement in Baluchistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa which threatens Pakistan's security (General Musharraf, 2006). However, India has taken many decisive steps in the near past including unilaterally withdrawal of Article-370 and 35-A (August 2019) of the Indian constitution, mean removed of the special status of Jammu and Kashmir once and for all. Pakistan rejected the one-sided changes about the Indian occupied Jammu and Kashmir which is perceived to be against the will of international law, UNSC resolutions (1947-1948) and bilateral agreements (Mehta, 2019). International community including China also condemned Indian action and internalize the matter on behalf of Pakistan and given hard time to India's soft diplomacy. In response of Pakistan proactive policy, Modi has taken turning point in term of relations with neighbours-hood and used US global war on terror as a shield and directly focused on Pakistan (Sreeram, 2016). So, in the second term Modi has taken strict action under his 'doctrine,' targeted Pakistan and reaffirming India's place as a regional power in the world (Angana, 2016). In order to exert substantial influence to play in the global politics, Modi has given deep association to domestic politics particularly to Hindutva philosophy which is a cultural justification of Indian nationalism and its diplomacy. To achieve its goals, Modi pursued dynamic foreign policy to encircle Pakistan through its economic and defence power rather to establish relations through dialogue (IISS, 2025). In this context, China helps Pakistan to increase presence, boost its defence and economic capacity and created significant influence in South Asia, which counter India's strengthen in the region.

It was recorded that Modi bilateral diplomacy failed to bring anti-terrorism pressures on Pakistan and also Western and leading Muslim countries refused to support Indian stance and insisted to involve in dialogue with Islamabad. Though, it was Modi's utmost desire to blackmail Pakistan on the issue of terrorism but its central focus idea never appreciated in the world. Shekhar Gupta explained Modi's failure and mentioned that Pakistan is equally vital as a leading Muslim nuclear power and it is not easy to be ignored or isolated by the world community which have one of the powerful militaries (Gupta, 2016). However, Modi become rigid and signaled that India will only focus terrorism and refused to discuss on Kashmir. Shyam Saran, former diplomat and Foreign Secretary, argues that Modi's have constructed policies for the revival of Hinduism which are unconvincing like other predecessors to boost India's cultural style (Mohan, 2015). But Raja Mohan, mentioned that Modi's rule seems to be 'Third Republic' which was marked by social unrest and deep religious divisions and it also reflect in his foreign policy (Mohan, 2015). His main agenda is to deal only Pakistan as a country's chief rival and exploiting China to impress the Western world. As explained by Brahma Chellaney that Indian foreign policy makers failed to understand the China-Pakistan strategic partnership which is the integral part of South Asian scenario, which has changed security dynamics of the region. No one can realize the decades-old flow of Chinese military assistance to Pakistan which prop up the country as a counterweight of India, can be understood only in the context of Asian geopolitics (Chellaney, 2010). In fact, under the Modi regime, India's strategies to Pakistan based on a stance of slow-to-anger in mutual diplomacy and his bilateral diplomacy or more explicit coalition diplomacy with the objectives 'Acting West', 'Acting East' and 'Acting South' decline because of Modi's perceptions which largely absent from its logical end (Haokip, 2011). There is no doubt that India, at the moment is a world's growing economy and have the six largest military but not influencing the power position of neighbouring countries of China and Pakistan. He also tried its best to moving India towards partnership with other regional and global power but not succussed to take support against Pakistan and China (Bajpai, 2017).

Surgical Strikes and Modi Foreign Policy

After the failure of Modi's diplomacy and foreign policy, he carried out series of surgical strikes on so-called terrorists' sanctuaries in Pakistan. It was the operational attacks itself, and started subsequently global diplomatic campaign against Pakistan to highlight that strikes are against the state-sponsored terrorism. Moreover, strikes were the part of the Cold Star Doctrine and India's broader strategic designs to aggressively deal Pakistan. The time period of these strikes was from September 2016 to 2019 which created more

hostilities between the two countries and greater escalation risks between the nuclear-armed countries. India justified its actions with the pretext of self-defense and under international law and mentioned that the events of 9/11 (2001) has given justification, the countries who are responsible for providing shelter to non-state actors, can be handle with offensive means (Begoore, 2016). In response of that Pakistan claimed that Indian airstrikes are against the rules of international law and United Nations charter and universal norms do not allow India to use forces against the country. Pakistan declared that Indian actions constitute an act of war and the country will react accordingly. It has no training camps and Kashmir freedom movement is indigenous and Indian move will consider well-planned intervention in Pakistani areas and it would be strongly response (Sasikumar, 2019). *The New York Times* also mentioned that Pakistan's authorities declared that India's cross-border strikes will consider "an act of war" (Barry & Masood, 2016). However, it was proved the effective way of peace in the region is only possible by the reasonable solution of Kashmir issue which need careful diplomatic efforts from the both sides to bring the two sides back from the brink.

It was Modi government decision to target Balakot (2019), Hazara region, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, by airstrike to prove the global community that India is a regional bully and no country is beyond its approach. But Indian dream collapsed when Pakistan Air Force (PAF) had shot down two Indian Air Force (IAF) aircraft, (MiG-21) and captured Indian pilot Abhinandan Varthaman who landed on Pakistani area and later pilot released by the US involvement (Daily Dawn, 2019). In this incident, India not only lost aircrafts and also failed to target so-called training sites of Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) and Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) as Modi government claimed that these organisations has been involved in terrorist attacks on India but New Delhi failed to dismantle and also failed to provide credible evidences about the infrastructure in Pakistan soil (Daily Dawn, 2019; Perkovich & Dalton, 2016). On the other hand, Indian expert of foreign policy continues emphasis to Modi's to improve its relations with Pakistan because without that India cannot achieve the target of economic growth and the time has come to recognize Pakistan as an important actor of the region (Nanda, 1999).

However, Modi preferred to use pressure against Pakistan and used robust and proactive actions to sideline the country. In this regard, his policy marked a significant transformation in India's strategic doctrine, signaling a decisive move to counter Islamabad moves apart from stabilization of relationships with Pakistan. In fact, Modi policy towards Pakistan remains one of the most enduring objectives based on the periodic resumption to unjustified the partition which has affected every dimension of interstate relations and there are no signs of abating (Tandon, 2016). Indeed, Pakistan as a new-nation state is not the only country who born in the era of decolonization and it was not the gift of great powers geopolitical sitting rather it comes out by the long struggle of South Asian Muslims. In fact, Indian has become sensitive with the division of British India which was as usual business and they should come out from the post-World War II changes which are inevitable and emergence of Pakistan is one of the realities in the world. Thus, history is witnessed that Pakistan always offered for meaningful talk and taken many peace initiatives but Modi government like the Congress leadership adopted delaying tactics to involve with Pakistan for comprehensive negotiation including Kashmir but it was India who avoided for conflict resolution with Pakistan. Thus, India has nothing to do but continuing blamed Pakistan for supporting terrorist activities in India to destabilize the country. While Pakistan offered for joint investigation against terrorist attacks in India but New Delhi claimed that Pakistan has offered insufficient cooperation and the New Delhi have no option to disagreed with Islamabad offered (Pandalai, 2011).

Modi Foreign Policy After Pahalgam Incident

In the recent past, Narendra Modi once again designs plots against Pakistan just to defame the country through the violent activities as they did before in different cities of India and accuse Islamabad without credible evidences. It was normal practice of Modi government to allege that Pakistan has become a "facilitation center for terrorists" and informed the world body to take notice (Perkovich & Dalton, 2015). Pakistan consistently rejects accusations of state-sponsored terrorism, labelling Indian allegations are baseless propaganda with the designed to tarnish Pakistan image and isolate it internationally (Daily Dawn, August 21, 2022 and April 16, 2025). With this background, as per the well-organized Indian plan on April 22, 2025,

some RAW trained group attacked on the innocent tourists in the Baisaran Valley near Pahalgam, Anantnag district of Indian controlled Kashmir. The attackers executed in mass-style killing, mostly Hindus and it perceived to be one of the worst assaults in Kashmir since the February 2019 Pulwama suicide bombing that killed 40 TRF (*Al Jazeera*, 2025). India claimed that Pakistan based resistance groups were involved in Pahalgam attack and engaging in hostile activities which leading to significant diplomatic and military escalation.

In response of Indian traditional anti-Pakistan-hostile propaganda, Pakistan outrightly rejected baseless allegations and said attack is a ‘false flag operation.’ In an interview with *Al Jazeera*, Pakistani Defence Minister Khawaja Asif claimed, without providing any evidence, the attack was “orchestrated” and rejected India’s claims that Pakistan was involved (Amours, 2025). Indian media claimed, the Pahalgam attack is the severe security failure of authorities which basically appeared in rural side which is greatly militarised zone under the intensive observation of forces. According to Indian sources, the militants were already in the area but security guardian has taken no notice, showed no threat of mishap (See *Frontline Magazine & Dawn*, 2025). Many observers including Abhijnan Rej have critically analyse the attack and mentioned that India have to investigate the rising fault lines within the internal security governance (Rej, 2025). On the other hand, Indian official media plot to defame Pakistan through social media as part of a malevolent and planned effort to accused Pakistan. Raw based media wing has viral widespread propaganda and fabricating stories to implicate Pakistan in terrorist activities. More importantly, it has confirmed that Modi government has taken well-prepared action against Pakistan but the global community has seen that it was untrue and baseless data based on self-created assertions (*BBC News*, 2025). Moreover, foreign media and their secret services have not found any clue of Pakistan’s involvement in the attacks. India basically abortive to produce sound evidence and used false tactics to cover its domestic failure. Equally important, Pakistan exposed a record based on indisputable proves of India’s involvement in the internal affairs of the country and requested to the global community to take notice of New Delhi’s rebellious actions against Pakistan and prevent to destabilize the South Asian region.

After Pahalgam incident (May 2025), which marked a turning point of the South Asian politics because India with the excuse of attack, immediately initiative limited military offensive named “Operation Sindoor” against Pakistan followed by Operation Mahadev to track and eliminate the militants involved in the freedom struggle of Kashmir. In order to reply Indian aggression, Pakistan was fully prepared to response under the operation Bunyan-um-Marsoos mean Indian attack will be answerable. The situation perceived to be severely threatening and challenging in the contemporary global conflicts which potentially created worst scenario between the two nuclear arms neighbors’ and also become alarming for regional and global politics. However, it was the fifth time (April 2025) that India and Pakistan involved in war which perceived to be the major escalation between the South Asian neighbors. India made responsible Islamabad for the attack in which many tourists were killed in Indian controlled Kashmir area (Pahalgam) in April 2025 and an accusation strongly rejected by Islamabad. Pakistan’s Air Force successfully targeted Indian fighter jets and shot down Russian Migs and advanced French-made Rafales. Pakistan response to India by Chinese-made fighter jets (JF-17) and shot down multiple Indian Air Force (IAF) fighter jets, including the Rafales (Stockwell, 2025). Indian officials initially refused to confirm the aircraft loss, as Anil Chauhan, the chief of defense staff of the Indian Armed Forces, in the beginning denied the veracity of the claim, but later Air Chief Marshal Staff Amar Preet Singh admitted that India’s S-400 air defence systems made it vulnerable by the Pakistani aircraft (*Al Jazeera*, August 2025).

In the same way, one of the senior French intelligence official also inform to CNN that Rafale fighter jets had been downed by Pakistan (*CNN News*, May 31, 2025). The US President Donald Trump has repeatedly mentioned that a number of “brand new, beautiful planes” were shot down by the Pakistan Air Force, with figures ranging from five to as many as eight aircraft. Indian official also claimed, its forces had made a “tactical mistake,” in a fight with Pakistan and acknowledged their weaknesses (*Al Jazeera Media Network*, 2025). According to foreign media, Pakistan informed to United States that by all means Pakistan will defend its territory against India, even can go to extreme level. In the situation, the US Secretary of State,

Marco Rubio, actively intervened and reported to the President Donald Trump about nuclear escalation, resulting in a ceasefire between Pakistan and India (Chrostou, 2025). In fact, Pakistan's civil and military leadership was ready to use nuclear deterrence to counter India's conventional military superiority (Lawal, 2025). According to the Center for Arms Control and Non-Proliferation sources, Pakistan rejected no first use policy and signaling readiness to use nuclear weapons to protect its sovereignty and independence (CACNP, 2025). Therefore, in the prevailing security environment, Pakistan has extended deterrence, which has served to contain the adversary aggressive position in response of expansive conventional threats and India failed to pursue its limited options. There is no doubt that nuclear weapons have emerged as a guarantee to prevent full-scale war and created strategic stability. There is no doubt that nuclear weapons have potential capacity to de-escalate the pressure of greater conventional forces through effective deterrence and compellence which work as a coercive diplomacy, reduce the chances of war in the region.

Furthermore, the India-Pakistan May 2025 short war has underscored the multifaceted nature of modern warfare, where Pakistan used its strategic diplomacy and credible deterrence against India. The event exposed India's military and strategic vulnerabilities and Pakistan has emerged as a key strategic player on the global stage as well as the country gained significant strategic position in the world. Moreover, Modi decline with its key pillars of foreign policy such as strategic autonomy, multilateral institutions, and technology for global development. Its idea of digital diplomacy, economic growth and South-South cooperation also turned down (Malone DM, 2025). The leading global media highlighting Pakistan's momentous diplomatic victory and its proactive engagement with the United States and key regional partners. The daily *Telegraph* described that Pakistan adopted a front foot strategy on both military and diplomatic fronts and declares Pakistan rising global power under strong civil-military leadership led by Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir (Crilly, 2025). Furthermore, the global landscape has transformed Pakistan and country becomes blue eyed and secure a trade deal with the United States and signed defense agreement with Saudi Arabia (Mosly, 2025). Its international position has strengthened dramatically and its deterrence contributed to revive the Kashmir issue on the global stage, and also helped to contain India's diplomatic standing. Additionally, Narendra Modi's plans to isolate Pakistan in the region and global level have decline diplomatically and his strategy of bilateralism on Kashmir has also faced setback. Moreover, Pakistan gained psychological confidence and improve its standing in the eyes of the world and began to view ties with Pakistan as a matter of honor and pride. On the other hand, his Act East Policy, infrastructure-led diplomacy, and the Indo-Pacific strategy declined along with regional and global security frameworks.

Conclusion

India's foreign policy has experienced a significant change since its independence to Narendra Modi's period of Indianisation. Jawaharlal Nehru's ideology of neutrality, secularism and idealism replaced by Modi's idea of Hindutva, 'multi-aligned,' and 'strategic autonomy.' He perceived to be built cordial relations with all great powers and neighbouring countries with Indian conditions. He presented India with the new orientation of governance, economy, and national identity. Modi's background and ideological leanings towards Hindu-nationhood, stemming from his early association with the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), which is preaching chauvinism, prejudism, hatred and communal tensions and marginalization of minorities. His domestic politics, electoral considerations and foreign policy significantly influence by anti-Pakistan and anti-Muslim rhetoric and a strong, assertive posture to appeal to a nationalist voter base. He exploited terrorism as a part of a broader foreign policy strategy to defame Pakistan with the sole objective to consolidate the Hindu nationalist vote and project an image of a strong leader capable of safeguarding national interests. Of course, Modi played a destructive game in Pahalgam incidents (April 2025), arranged by RAW to pressurize Pakistan but balloon punctured and pay back Modi's 'Kashmir' narrative at a dead end. Its aggressive posture against Pakistan failed to influence the world and the new situation harms India's international standing and disappointed domestic audience. Its objectives to elevate its status as a global player and a regional hegemon went into dream. Nevertheless, the response of its foreign and domestic policy and particularly in the areas of strategic, economic and socio-cultural front become rhetoric and less gains. Moreover, India needs time to recover its wounds because its economic ambitions, multilateral engagements and proactive diplomacy once decline cannot reemerge as a leading force in global and regional level.

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