

The Kargil Crisis 1999 and Pakistan's Constraints

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Abstract

Kargil crisis has its links with unsettled dispute over Kashmir and Siachen glaciers between India and Pakistan. The Kargil war gave the realization to the World that Kashmir is an important dispute/issue between India and Pakistan and must be resolved. Pakistan had various objectives, motives and assumptions for initiating this conflict. Pakistan appears to have taken the decision to launch operations in Kargil to take advantage of a weak political government in India. But due to a lack of coordination among the political and military leadership, the effort ended into a failure. The Kargil war totally undermined Pakistan- India relations. India no longer trusts Pakistan. The Kargil conflict did not emerge in a vacuum. The long history of the Kashmir dispute between India and Pakistan generated the Kargil conflict and showed Pakistan's reaction to the Indian military policy in Kashmir, which culminated in the occupation of the Siachen Glacier in 1984. Pakistan had seen erosion in its position from India and especially the occupation of the Siachen Glacier but the Simla Agreement could not prevent it. Kargil crisis had produced military, political and strategic constraints for Pakistan. There was inadequate inter-institutional co-ordination and lack of operational clarity was seen throughout the Kargil operation. As a result, world pressure was imposed on Pakistan to withdraw.

Key Words: Kargil, Kashmir, Siachen, Constraints, Leadership, Military, Media, Religious Parties,

Introduction

Since the testing of nuclear devices by India and Pakistan in May 1998, the world appeared sensitive towards the developments in South Asia. The Kargil conflict was the first limited military operation between Pakistan and India after the nuclearisation in South Asia. Historically after the partition of India, Kargil has occupied a strategic position and has therefore been the cause of the intrusion by Pakistan. It had become clear that the friendly sentiments expressed by the Prime Ministers of Pakistan and India during the Lahore Summit had received a setback due to developments in Kargil. The Kargil conflict which occurred between May and July 1999 involved a limited combat between the Pakistani and Indian military and resulted in approximately 1,300 battle deaths. (Kapur, 2008:116). Kargil operation on the part of Pakistan shows a lack of coordination at the national political level. Due to the negative result of the Kargil Pakistani military has been used as a scapegoat by US,

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India and by political leaders and civil society of Pakistan. The attempt was to undermine the military institution of Pakistan. In the Kargil conflict between India and Pakistan the US role was important as it put pressure on Pakistan to withdraw. Before analyzing the Kargil crisis it is important to discuss the core issues which are related to it e.g. the Kashmir and Siachin Glacier issues between India and Pakistan.

Kashmir Issue

The genesis of the Kargil war can be traced back to the Kashmir dispute. Kashmir is the core territorial dispute emanating from the refusal of a plebiscite by India as a fair mechanism for a popular expression to decide about the future alignment. The two countries share a long border in Kashmir along the Line of Control (LOC). In August 1948, the United Nations Commission on India and Pakistan (UNCIP) adopted a resolution calling on both countries to conclude a ceasefire agreement in Kashmir. This could then be followed by an internationally supervised process that could determine the future status of Kashmir according to the wishes of the Kashmiri people. Finally a ceasefire line (CFL) was established between India and Pakistan. As a result, a bulk of Kashmiri territory 139,000 sq.kms out of a total of 223,000sq.kms remained under Indian control along with its population. (Akhtar,1999: XVII, 3-6). The Indian control extended to most of the Jammu and Laddakh regions whereas Pakistan controlled a part of Laddakh which is now Skardu along with Gilgit Baltistan and the issue of Kashmir emerged. United Nations formally divided Jammu and Kashmir by a cease fire line (CFL) in 1949. India agreed to hold a plebiscite in Kashmir in 1948 and in 1949 but it never implemented the relevant United Nations resolutions. After the 1971 war between India and Pakistan, a peace agreement at Simla was announced in 1972 and under this agreement it was decided that both countries would continue to hold their post war positions in Kashmir and the dividing line between the two states was renamed as the Line of Control (LOC) and this arrangement was to hold until the final settlement of a boundary between India and Pakistan. (Sattar,1995: XIII,28)

In early 1990, Indian shelling of Muzaffarabad-Kel road as it ran through the Neelam Valley resulted in great difficulties for the 10 Corps of the Pakistan Army, and also civilians were dislocated from the Neelam Valley area. These grievances were present among the military leadership of Pakistan. For more than 2 decades, the 10 Corps was subjected to what it viewed as constant encroachment by Indian forces. When the Pakistan military attempted to return the favor at Kargil, however, Pakistan was unable to explain its historical grievances and present a strong case for military action in the Northern Areas. The Pakistan military faced a serious challenge in the Neelam Valley; here

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Indian- controlled heights dominated the road along the river, which supplied Pakistani positions in that area. Since 1992 this road was subject to artillery and small arms interdiction from the Indian military positions, which also forced the road's closure in 1994. India shelled the Neelam Valley in order to coerce Pakistan to stop infiltration in the Kashmir Valley and Pakistan sought to exploit Indian shelling at Neelam Valley. The Pakistani positions could interdict the Srinagar-Leh road, which was in Kargil sector. The Kargil heights dominate the Srinagar-Leh road, which serves as the life line for Indian troops deployed around Siachen Glacier. (Cheema, in Lavoy, (Ed.), 2009: 56) General Musharraf in his book, *In the Line of Fire* stated that "I would like to state emphatically that whatever movement has taken place so far in the direction of finding a solution to Kashmir is due considerably to the Kargil Conflict." (Musharraf, 2006: 98).

Siachen Issue

The Siachen glacier is adjacent to the Indo-Tibetan border along the disputed territory as Aksai Chen on one side, the Shaksgan Valley to the northwest and the north. The 9842 triangle is a wedge that separates a closer Sino-Pakistan territorial nexus. (Noorani, 2002: 19,10-23) The northeasterly line places the Siachen Glacier within Pakistani-controlled territory, with the LoC terminating at the Karakoram Pass. (Cheema, in Lavoy, (Ed.), 2009: 53). In this way, Pakistan considers the Siachen Glacier as the eastern extremity of Baltistan, while India takes it as a western boundary of the Nubra subdivision of the Ladakh district of Jammu and Kashmir. (Khosla, 1999: 8,194) The Pakistani claim over the Siachen Glacier is supported by the fact that the majority of foreign mountaineering expeditions sought Pakistani permission to enter the area between 1974 and 1981. (Cheema, in Lavoy, (Ed.), 2009: 53).

The Siachen glacier is strategically important because the Indians claim that their control is, in accordance with the internationally recognized principle of watershed. Pakistan had signed their border agreement with the China in 1963, according to which the alignment of CFL had been seen as linking NJ 9842 with the Karakoram Pass, a distance of 91.3 Kms. Historically, the CFL and LoC support Pakistan's claim to Siachen being on their side of the lines. The Indian troops had started their activities in the region during the years 1982-83. By the end of 1983, India had taken a decision to move into Siachen to occupy the Salto passes. This was done on the pretext that Pakistan was planning to occupy these passes. Thus, a decision of the Indian leadership to pre-empt a supposed Pakistani action resulted in India being involved in costly and difficult activity on a hostile glacier. The Indians had however planned an operation to seize the glacier. The Indian army started the operation in April 1984 by deploying troops via helicopters. By the time

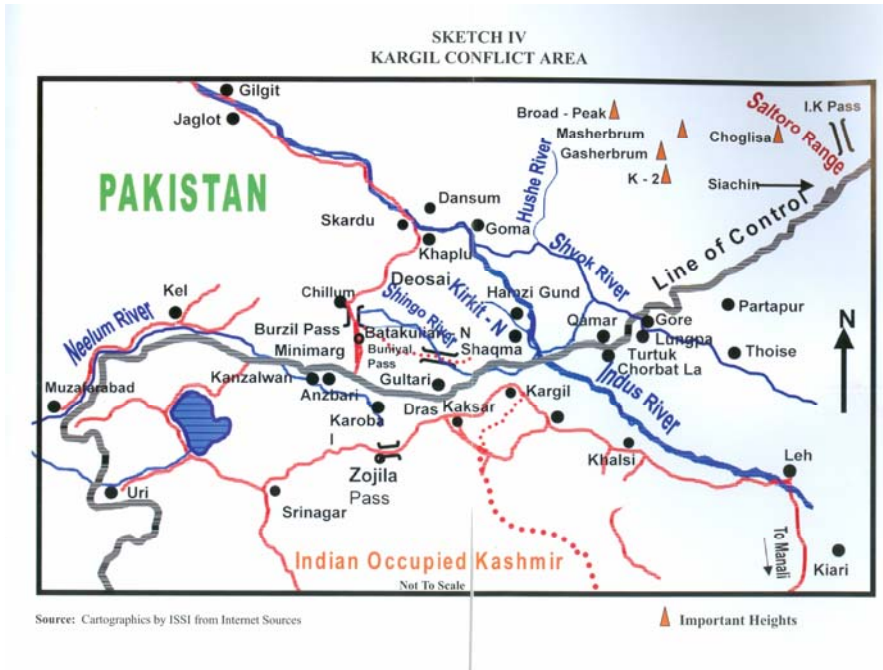
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Pakistan had estimated the scale, scope and purpose of this Indian military operation and had made prepared for reaction, Indian forces had already occupied major passes on the Saltoro Range. It was an embarrassment for the Pakistani military to lose Siachen Glacier. Pakistan's loss of Siachen Glacier had domestic political repercussions. The military government of General Zia-ul-Haq came under severe criticism.

Since 1986, Pakistan and India had several rounds of talks on the issue of Siachen glacier but unfortunately no consensus was developed to resolve this issue. Pakistan's case is very weak and confused because Pakistan lacks clarity in its policy and the decision making process is not proper regarding this issue. Pakistan believes that if India intervenes into Pakistan from this glacier then it could also ingress across the LoC to alter the agreed course of the LoC under the Simla Agreement. These miscalculations and misperceptions in the minds of the leaders of Pakistan were put to test later in the Kargil war. This linkage with Siachen Glacier and Neelam Valley was not conveyed to the international world during the Kargil crisis. As a result, Pakistan could not project an internationally acceptable rationale for its military intervention across the LoC. The Kargil operation motivated the military to pre-empt future Indian military actions. (Cheema, in Lavoy, (Ed.), 2009: 57).

The multiple rounds of talks regarding the Siachen issue showed that the Simla Agreement could not prevent Indian aggression in Siachen. The Pakistani government did not pursue an offensive reply to the Indian offense at Siachen. This lack of an offensive reply both militarily and politically, allowed India to stabilize militarily and politically its occupation of Siachen. The poor response by Pakistan to the Siachen occupation by India is a sign that it could ingress across the LoC.

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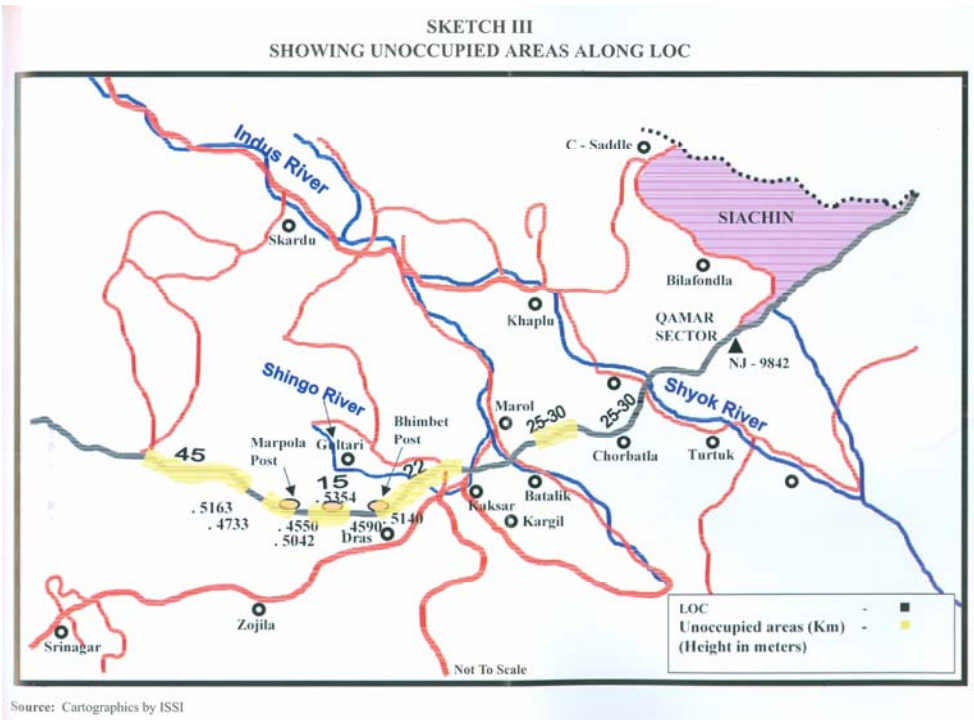
Source: Shireen, M. (1999). *The Kargil Conflict 1999: Separating Facts from Fiction*, Islamabad, ISSI, 2003

Strategic Importance of Kargil

Kargil is located 220km north of Srinagar. It is almost in the middle of Srinagar and Leh, a distance of 420 kms. It is significant to mention that Leh serves as a main base for supplies to Indian forces operating in the Siachen Glacier area. The land route to the Siachen Glacier in Indian held Kashmir passes through Srinagar to the Zojila pass going further down to Drass. The road runs South of Kargil on which there is regular Indian army movement along the road up to Zojila pass. For the supply and reinforcement purposes, the Indian Army has also built an alternative route through the state of Himachel Pradesh. The Srinagar-Leh road remains vital for the Indian army from the point of view of supplies and reinforcement purposes. Due to climate reasons during winters and landslides, this route was cut off and it is the only link between the Laddakh Division and Kashmir Valley. The Kargil sector, where actual operations took place in 1999, is surrounded by the Zojila pass towards the West, Shyok River on the East, the Line of Control (LoC) in the North, and the villages of Zojila, Somko, Mulbek, Khalsi and Patapur on the Southern side. Three rivers named Shyok, Indus and Hingo are also flowing in the same sector from the Southeast to North- West. (Mazari, 1999:34-36). The

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Pakistani area which was affected during the Kargil crisis is surrounded by Skardu in the North, the Line of Control (LoC) in the South, the Siachen Glacier and Indus River towards the East and the Neelam Valley in the West. The importance of the Kargil area is evident as it lies along the road connecting Srinagar in the South to the Siachen Glacier in the North. Pakistan forces occupied the mountains in winter season of 1999 at Kargil and blocked traffic on the road from Srinagar to Siachen Glacier. This blockade had stopped all material supplies and reinforcements of the Indian army in areas of Siachen and also the area on the North of Kargil. Pakistan considered the Indian presence into the Siachen area to be threatening for and India can at any time threaten Karakoram Highway which links Pakistan with China. (Nayyer, 2003:172-181). In 1989, the Kashmir's launched an armed struggle to change the status quo and since then more than 70,000 Kashmir's have been killed by the Indian security forces. (Dixit,2002:306-325). People of Kashmir are demanding the right of self determination but India is denying their right and this unresolved dispute has generated hostility between Pakistan and India.



Source: Mazari, S. (2003). *The Kargil Conflict 1999: Separating Facts from Fiction*, Islamabad, ISSI.

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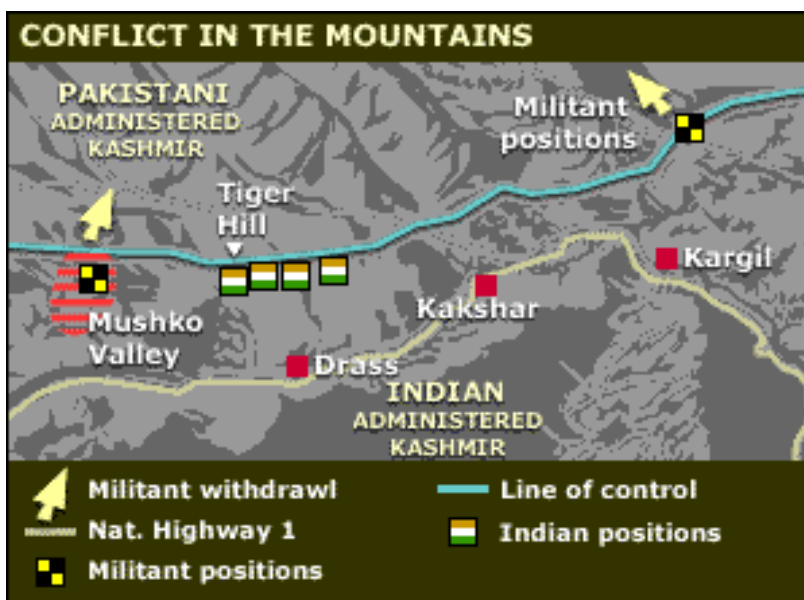
Kargil Crisis Situation

Due to the infiltration of freedom fighters across the LoC, the Kargil crisis precipitated. One strong point of view was that from the view point of freedom fighters, as they had been facing Indian aggression for decades and the only option left for them was the military option in the form of an attack on India from the Kargil heights. They were sure enough that India would never agree to tackle the issue on a political front. The United States of America had played an important role in defusing the crisis and President Bill Clinton pressurized Pakistani Prime Minister to bring the crisis to an end. The world was worried about this crisis as two nuclear powers were in a direct confrontation with each other. The Track II Diplomacy also remained unsuccessful towards the diffusion of Kargil Crisis.

India had become surprised by the occupation of the Kargil heights. There had existed an agreement between India and Pakistan that the armies of either side would not occupy posts from 15 September to 15 April of each year. The intelligence failure has a history, as these originate from major structural defects in the Indian intelligence system. (Singh, 2000:104-120). Because their system was not working properly. Freedom Fighters had built their positions between November 1998 and April 1999 on the Indian side of the LoC. (Mazari, 1999:34-36). Indian higher intelligence had failed to pinpoint the time and places for such incursions. The Indian army had failed to anticipate this type of operation, which was spread over a broad front. Indian army contingency planning for the area of Kargil lacked an appropriate plan for coping with any incident. Indian military intelligence was entrusted with the task of gathering information inside a 10 kms belt on either side of the Indian border and it failed to detect the buildup of the Freedom Fighters at different places around Kargil. (Singh, 2000:104-120). America provided some aerial reconnaissance proofs to Indian government and informed about some extraordinary situation between India and Pakistan. At the initial stage India was not ready to accept it as a reality due to domestic political crisis and she did not anticipate the seriousness of the threat emerging from Pakistan. Track II Diplomacy with rigid stance of India on Kashmir was in a process.

The Indian troops had tried to push their way up to the height of 16,000 feet and higher. Due to the lack of ground cover and the heights occupied by Pakistan, the advancing Indian troops became easy targets for the Pakistani army. (Bajwa, 2004:262-265) The decision to introduce air power was the main source of escalation between India and Pakistan. So more danger and disaster was attached with the use of the fastest way of mobility. Due to the failure of the intelligence agencies of India and its Defense Ministry to get the intrusion, vacated the mishandling of the Kargil situation had led to a

progressive induction of higher levels of force by the Indian army. In a meeting, the high powered Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) decided to induct three additional brigades into the region. The Indian leadership miscalculated the significance of Pakistan's status as a nuclear power. India perceived that Pakistan can no more exercise a military option for the solution of the Kashmir dispute. The Director General South Asia, Mr. Afraziab stated that in spite of Pakistan's defeat in Kargil, it had an impact, as the Kargil war gave the realization to the World that Kashmir is an important dispute/issue between India and Pakistan and must be resolved. (Mr. Afraziab, Interview of D.G South Asia, Foreign Office, by Researcher, Islamabad)



Source: [www.http://vayu-sena-aux.tripod.com/images/kargilmaps1.html](http://vayu-sena-aux.tripod.com/images/kargilmaps1.html) .html

Potential Objectives of the Kargil Conflict

To launch the Kargil operation, the Pakistani military believed that there was multiple strategic and tactical reasoning. At least three strategic objectives and four tactical objectives can be readily discerned. (Khokhar, 2001, Dissertation). At the strategic level, Pakistan may have been attempting to secure a better bargaining position as it negotiated with India over the Siachen Glacier. (Gohar, *The Nation*, 1999, September 5). It may have induced international pressure for the resolution of the Kashmir dispute or at least got a time-bound Indian commitment through third part intervention. Thirdly it may have sought

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to prevent the formation of a consensus to divide Kashmir permanently along the LoC. At the tactical level, the Pakistani military sought to intercept the Srinagar- Leh road to disrupt supplies and reinforcements for the Siachen Glacier where Indian troops were stationed. It wanted to outflank India's defenses from the south in the Turtok and Chalunka sectors through un-held areas. (Baig, *The Nation*, 1999, May 30). It was assumed that India would pull back troops from Kashmir and Kashmiri freedom fighters morale would be boosted. The Pakistani military perceived the Kargil operation as a tactical move to create an advantage that might have broader benefits, such as enhancing the military's position in domestic politics, improving the morale of the army and increasing bargaining power for negotiations with India.

Pakistan's Assumptions behind the Kargil War

Pakistan's military action at Kargil was based on the following assumptions,

1. "Pakistan's nuclear capability would forestall any major move particularly across the international border involving the use of massive Indian conventional capabilities,
2. It had the confidence that the international community would intervene at an early stage, leaving it in possession of at least some of its gains across the LoC, thereby enabling it in doing bargaining backed by strong position,
3. China would adopt a favorable posture in light of its perceived anti-Indian stand in the post Pokhran II period,
4. A weak and unstable government in India would be incapable of a quick and firm response and will never in position to show any inclination for opening a new front,
5. The Indian army would not be able to respond adequately due to its heavy commitment in Jammu and Kashmir,
6. Due to an inadequacy of resources East of Zojila, India would not be able to react effectively against the intrusions before Zojila is opened for traffic by May or early June of every year,
7. The Indian Army would remain muster to muster adequate forces with high altitude training and acclimatization to fight on the Kargil heights,
8. Rapid restoration of normalcy in Jammu and Kashmir needed to be thwarted in order to sustain its cause". (Chawdhory, <file:///C:/unzipped/crises%20management/crises%20management/Defenceindia.com%2023-de>)

The Indian breach of the LoC during the Kargil crisis would weaken India's case and the same was true in the case of the second option if India had

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opened up a front along their international border with Pakistan. It could have led to a war with consequences of great intensity. The Cabinet Committee on Security met on a daily basis and each step on the political and diplomatic front was discussed with the services chiefs. India did not opt for crossing the LoC because it could jeopardize its vital international support. Heavy casualties were there and India's major concern was to evict the Freedom Fighters.

Diplomatic Efforts to Diffuse Tension

The Pakistani spokesman stated that a mutually acceptable United Nations force would be welcome to monitor whether there was any crossLoC movement of Pakistani sponsored Kashmiri freedom fighters as alleged by India. A popular newspaper of Pakistan wrote that the time has come for active diplomatic intervention of the outside powers. (*The News*,1999,May 28). The US rejected a Pakistani proposal that the United Nations should send a special envoy to Pakistan and India to diffuse this issue. The White House asked Pakistan and India to go for negotiations rather than military solution of Kashmir issue.US State Department official had the view that the current events would never change the US position that Kashmir is a matter to be resolved by Pakistan and India only through bilateral talks. (*Daily Dawn*,1999, May 30).

The Indian Prime Minister had a telephonic conversation with the Pakistani Prime Minister regarding the situation in Kashmir. (*Daily Dawn*,1999, May 27). Mr. MushahidHussain, the Information Minister of Pakistan in a news briefing showed his optimism about Mr. Aziz's forthcoming visit to New Delhi in order to diffuse tension due to theKargil crisis. (*Daily Dawn*, June 1). On May 31,1999, the Prime Minister, Nawaz Sharif had sent a message to the Secretary General of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), expressed Pakistan's concern at the military escalation across the LoC and showed his desire for durable peace in the region. (*The News*, 1999, May 31).The Speaker of the Iranian Parliament, Mr. Ali Akbar Hashmi Rafsanjani, expressed Iran's willingness to help in resolving the crisis as Chairman of OIC. (*Daily Dawn*, 1999,June 13).Pakistan's Foreign Minister, Mr. Sartaj Aziz visited India and met his Indian counterpart Mr. Jaswant Singh on June 12,1999. India stressedPakistanto vacate the positions in Kargil. Mr. Jaswant also pointed out that the dialogue process was abandoned by Pakistan through the misadventure of Kargil. The significant result of the meeting of the Foreign Ministers was the reactivation of track II diplomacy prior to the Lahore Summit.

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On June 24, 1999, the US Marine General Anthony Zinni, Commander of the United States Central Command arrived in Pakistan. He was briefed about the continuing efforts of Pakistan to revive peace talks with India. The United States called for Pakistan supported insurgents to withdraw from the Indian controlled Kashmir in the bluntest language. This shows that Pakistan had failed to convince the US of its point of view regarding the Kargil crisis. As a result, for the first time, America clearly held Pakistan responsible for this infiltration. (*Daily Dawn*, 1999, May 23). The US Congress demanded Pakistani pullout from Kargil. The Defense Coordination Committee (DCC) meeting was held to tackle the escalating crisis in Kargil at Islamabad on July 3, 1999. It was decided to encourage back channel diplomacy, to ensure all time high military preparedness and to convince the international community that Pakistan was sincerely pursuing the objective of de-escalation through dialogue. (*Daily Dawn*, 1999, July 4).

On July 4, 1999, Prime Minister, Nawaz Sharif flew to the US to meet President Bill Clinton. An announcement pertaining to the withdrawal of the fighters from Kargil was expected. On July 5, 1999, the two leaders reached an agreement under which the fighters would withdraw and it was also agreed that concrete steps would be taken for the restoration of the LoC in accordance with the Simla Agreement. (*Daily Dawn*, 1999, July 5). From an official point of view, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif had acknowledged that there was a real threat of war with India and there were diplomatic complications which were becoming increasingly difficult to handle. The consequence was his visit to the US and a subsequent appeal to the Freedom Fighters to vacate their positions after an appeal by Mr. Nawaz Sharif. (Malik, The Prime Minister's visit to the US also gave this impression that political leadership was very much true that this operation was done by military. But responsibility totally comes on Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif as the Prime Minister of Pakistan.

The US government was following the crisis with a heightened sense of seriousness. Mr. Strobe Talbot, an official of the US State Department had acknowledged the application of US pressure on Pakistan and had justified it by enumerating the reasons which he thought were responsible for Pakistan's action. According to him the COAS, General Pervaiz Musharraf had little regard for the civilian administration of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif. He also believed that General Musharraf had a sense of bitterness towards India. The Kargil operation was previously rejected by two former COAS, General Zia-ul-Haq and General Jehangir Karamat. (Talbot, 2004:159-165). The main concern was to stop an Indian attack across the LoC. In such an eventuality, Pakistan might seek support from China and other countries in addition to mobilizing for war and India might turn to Russia and also to Israel. This could result in a

widening of the conflict in the sense that the supporters of both Pakistan and India might try to score points against each other instead of stopping it. The Danger of nuclear disaster was there between them.

Pakistan's military planners did not plan this crisis to continue and to reach its logical end. Some military officers believe that this was a brilliant tactical plan; with a territory under control, why did the Government of Pakistan choose to withdraw? There was a serious lack of ground homework and diplomatic preparation and absence of consensus between the military and civil leadership. The freedom fighters and military men were not provided with a large logistics support. It was difficult to hold out posts, a heavy price had to be paid by the soldiers. Mr. GoharAyub declared that it was decided in the Cabinet meeting to say that Mujahideens are fighting not the Pakistan army. (Interview of Mr.GoharAyub by the Researcher).

No Role of Parliament in Decision Making Process

The Prime Minister appears to have been properly briefed on the issue of Kargil and was involved in the decision making process, but this issue was never brought into Parliament. This had created a negative impression of Pakistan's stand on Kargil amongst the international community. (*The Nation*,1999, July7). It was seen as a military-led action although the Prime Minister knew about the actions. On the Indian side, it had freely shared all information on Kargil with Foreign diplomats and the military leadership was brought under severe scrutiny by the civilian leadership for this serious security lapse. The Policy of secrecy promoted Pakistan as an aggressor whereas India showed the policy of openness and this policy projected India as a state facing aggression. When the Pakistani government decided to let the Parliament and the public know about what was happening in Kargil and along the LoC, it was too late. Pakistan had faced international isolation and India enjoyed international support, getting assured of the vacation of incursion by Pakistan under intense World pressure. (*The Nation*, 1999, May 30).

Constraints for Pakistan

No military expedition can be undertaken without consideration of the environment, which includes the domestic political situation, the economic environment and the regional and global diplomatic scene. The planners of Kargil did not expect the conflict to rise above the level of a large- scale skirmish along the LoC. TheKargil operation was launched at a time when thegovernment was divided domestically and fragile economically.TheKargil crisis was certainly an outcome of a series of misperceptions and this crisis

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has military, political and strategic constraints for Pakistan and India. This research is only focused on Pakistan's domestic constraints, so only constraints for Pakistan will be discussed.

Leadership

The history of conflicts between Pakistan and India shows that the leadership of the two countries was roughly aware of the capabilities and strengths of each other. Intentions also play an extremely important role in the creation of a threat. The intentions of leadership may not have concrete manifestation and therefore, introduce elements of doubts and uncertainty. Pakistan's military leadership viewed Kargil as the episode of the Kashmir and Siachen issues. The official justification given by Pakistan was that LoC is a temporary arrangement. General Musharraf writes in his book that "It was appropriate to allow the Rawalpindi Corps to prepare and present the FCNA (Force Command Northern Areas) plan of the defensive maneuver in the Northern areas so as to deny any ingress across the LoC. A plan for plugging the gaps ranging from nine to twenty- eight miles between our positions was formally presented and approved towards the middle of January 1999. Rawalpindi Corps and FCNA were to execute it. (Musharraf,2006:90). This clearly shows Pakistan's army involvement in the Kargil crisis. The Pakistani leadership had the perception that it was the right time for taking an action to highlight the Kashmir dispute because after 1998 both India and Pakistan were declared nuclear powered states and it would be difficult for the world to ignore any critical development between them. (Gehlot,2004:108).

Kargil provided the political leaders and the mainstream national political parties with an opportunity to build consensus and redefine relations with the military and the religious groups. However, the political leadership did not live up to the expectations of the Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif because he did not consult political parties, Islamic groups or the military before and after visiting United States for withdrawal of the forces from Kargil heights. It was the real need to rebuild trust among Pakistani institutions after Kargil. But the political leadership was busy in securing its rule as well as sorting out the military. Ultimately the relationship between the Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and General Musharraf reached at the lowest and military coup took the charge of the Pakistan.

Track II Diplomacy

Mr. Mishra visited Pakistan on June 20, 1999 and met the Prime Minister of Pakistan. Mr. Mishra told Mr. Niaz A. Naik that India and Pakistan were only an inch away from the way from commitment and he must convey to Prime

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Minister Nawaz Sharif. In reply to this message Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif wrote a message for India Prime Minister Vajpayee that,

1. Both the Prime Ministers should reiterate their commitment to the Lahore Process,
2. The two states should take tangible initiatives to restore the sanctity of the LoC,
3. India should stop military action in the Kargil sector in order to restore an atmosphere conducive to peace,
4. The two Prime Ministers should initiate efforts to restore the Lahore process and strive to resolve all bilateral issues including the core issue of Jammu and Kashmir. (The News, 1999, July 12)

With the above mentioned proposals, Mr. Niaz A. Naik visited New

Delhi on June 27, 1999. Prime Minister Vajpayee told him that Pakistan should announce the withdrawal of its forces from Kargil then everything would become normal. Mr. Niaz stressed that both sides would have to commit themselves to withdrawal. Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif stopped at New Delhi on his way to China and sent a message of peace and goodwill to the Indian Prime Minister Mr. Vajpayee. Both India and Pakistan agreed on the following points,

1. Appropriate steps to be taken by both sides to mutually respect the LoC determined under the Simla Agreement,
2. Immediate resumption of composite dialogue initiated under the Lahore Process,
3. Islamabad to use its influence on the Freedom Fighters to ensure disengagement,
5. Find an expeditious solution to the Kashmir dispute within a specified period. (The News, 1999, July 12).

Mr. Naik stressed that India backtracked and instead of inviting the Prime Minister of Pakistan Mr. Nawaz Sharif to New Delhi, Mr. Vajpayee warned that Pakistan must withdraw its forces from Kargil or naval buildup would continue. This naval buildup was the largest ever in the region.

Gap between Civil and Military Leadership

Another aspect of constraints during the Kargil crisis which remained under intense debate in Pakistan was, either the decision to initiate this operation was a collective decision involving both the political and military leadership. There are two points of views on this issue. According to one, this was a collective decision. COAS General Pervaiz Musharraf acknowledged it

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in his book, *In the Line of Fire*. The army briefed the Prime Minister in Skardu on January 29, 1999 and in Kel on February 5, 1999. As the operation developed, he was briefed in detail on different occasions such as on May 17, June 2 and June 22. (Musharaf, 2006:96). Pakistani newspapers reported briefings given to Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif from January 29 to July 5, 1999 on the Kargil crisis. (*The News, Daily Dawn, The Nation*, 1999, May 25). Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif was briefed on the threats in the Drass-Kargil sector and was very much involved in the decision making process regarding the Kargil operation. Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif was briefed in a meeting in which Colonel Cheema, Nadir Pervaiz and Gohar Ayub were also present, before starting the Kargil operation. Major General Majeed pointed out the logistic problems and Mr. Nawaz Sharif was more interested in Pakoraas, samosaas rather than on the briefing given to him by General Pervaiz Musharraf. (Personal Interview of Mr. Gohar Ayub by the Researcher).

The second point of view is that the Prime Minister was not taken into confidence on this issue and this view is mostly held by the responsible functionaries of the Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's administration. On the part of Pakistan's political leadership there was a sense of urgency for diffusing the crisis. US pressure appears to be the driving factor towards the ultimate diffusion of this crisis. Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif was not only upset with the crisis but also appeared terrified by the reaction of the Army Chief General Pervaiz Musharraf if he succumbed to US pressure.

On June 27, 1999, Pakistan's Chief of Army Staff (COAS), General Musharraf, disclosed that efforts were underway to arrange an early meeting between Pakistan's Prime Minister, Mr. Nawaz Sharif and US President Mr. Bill Clinton, to discuss the escalation of the Kargil crisis. He was asked whether the crisis would continue until such a meeting materializes. He replied it could be so. However efforts were already underway to de-escalate without compromising national honor and dignity. The General was also asked to comment on the prospects pertaining to the withdrawal of forces could only be taken by the Prime Minister. There would be no unilateral withdrawal. (*The News*, 1999, May 27). India again rejected an offer of talks on July 3, 1999. The Kargil operation was a brainchild of the Chief of Army Staff (COAS), General Pervaiz Musharraf. The detailed plan of this idea was later finalized between the COAS and the former Director General of the Inter Services Intelligence (DGISI), General Muhammad Aziz Khan in secret. Three other high ranking military officers, Lieutenant General Mehmood Ahmad, Commander Northern Area (FCNA) and Lieutenant General Tauqir Zia, Director General Military Operations (DGMO) were also privy to this plan. (www.mediamonitors.net/ahamin3.html.)

General Musharraf and his associates (General Aziz and General Javaid Hassan) were keen to launch a Kargil operation. The Pakistan air force and navy were kept out of the plan. Nobody knows that what was going on and very little knowledge about this event was made public. It was a secret operation launched by the Pakistan army, GHQ with the help of northern infantry. The Kargil war deteriorated India-Pakistan relations and both countries squandered a golden opportunity for peace. Kargil was an excellently planned and executed military strategy but it was devoid of political and diplomatic backing. Pakistan won in the battlefield but could not sustain it strategically. The civil-military relations became worst afterwards which led to the military coup of 1999 in Pakistan.

Economy

The already fragile Pakistani economy was weakened further during and after the Kargil operation. India spent nearly Rs.30 crore (US\$ 6.9 million) per day during the Kargil War. Pakistan's expenditure would have been fairly close to that. The Pak economy was also under tremendous pressure after Kargil. It was forced to cap its defense budget. The reduction of the Pakistan defense budget, however, is unlikely to have any significant impact on the Indian defense budget. India is likely to maintain its defense expenditure between 2.5 to 2.75 per cent of its GDP in the foreseeable future to meet modernization demands of its armed forces. (<http://www.storyofpakistan.com/contribute.asp?artid=C063&Pg=3>). The Kargil clash was bad news for the Pakistani economy which was reeling from last year's post-nuclear test economic crisis. Both nations' currencies had been weakened, with the Pakistani economy even more dependent on bailouts from IMF and World Bank. A \$5.5 billion bailout by the IMF rescued the country from an economic disaster last year. But the latest conflagration is bound to add to Pakistan's already daunting list of problems. It is almost ironic that even when the people of Pakistan endure a period of enforced austerity, the military finds the budget for its misadventures across the border. Pakistan had thought that it would be able to take advantage of the political down fall in India but it was a blunder that Pakistan had made Kargil with its bankrupted economy. (<http://www.expressindia.com/ie/daily/19990618/ige18160.html>).

Despite rescheduling of external debt, the country's forex reserves are hovering at \$1.7 billion -- up from last year's \$400 million but still dangerously low in this war-like situation. There is also a fear that economic sanctions, which were relaxed by the US for one year, may again be slapped against Pakistan. These worries drove the 100-share Karachi Stock Exchange (KSE) index sharply lower as investors rushed to offload stocks after news trickled in that India would not resume a dialogue until Pakistan pulled out from the

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heights in Kargil and on reports of troop mobilization on the border. The KSE index has lost more than 100 points since the artillery battle started on the LoC in first week of May. The tension has also led to the rupee sliding against the US dollar. The dollar is quoting at Rs.55 in the open market, compared to the official rate of Rs.52. After the Kargil the Pakistani economy slipped into a deeper morass with reduced development spending and aggravated the current recession.

Media

Different factors significantly constrained the ability of the Pakistani media to report and make authentic commentary on the Kargil operation. The government of Pakistan had made it clear that this was a Mujahideen operation, with only the political and moral support of the government. (Shafqat, in lavoy, (Ed.), 2009:283). The government restricted access to the northern areas and these limitations were a major hurdle for covering alive story and investigative reporting was not possible due to restrictions. The journalists had neither the resources nor the will to report on the actual conduct of the war. The Kargil war was not properly covered by Pakistani media. But on the other side of the border the Indian Media fully covered the Kargil operation and Kargil became India's first media war which helped create more support among people for the Indian government's actions. The media was divided into three categories: liberals, Islamists and realists in Pakistan.

Liberals were criticizing the civil-military leadership and were critical of the faulty military planning and in competency of the political elite. They were reporting that Pakistan was facing humiliation and its national pride seriously injured. Most of these journalists criticized the dominance over the political system and the attitude of the military towards politics and that's why Pakistan's problems are increasing day by day. The Kargil operation was part of the problems. These journalists did not have alternate suggestions, vision and the solution of this crisis. (Shafqat, in lavoy, (Ed.), 2009:283). India launched the media attack on Pakistan as a state which is sponsoring terrorism, whose military is out of the control of the political leadership and having anti Indian sentiments. The Indian media was successful in drawing the attention of the West.

Islamist journalists mostly in the Urdu press, perceived hostility of India as well as of United States and argued that a growing US-Indian conspiracy had targeted Islamic forces, which in their view were gaining momentum in Pakistan, specially with the emergence of the Taliban in Afghanistan. (Shafqat, in lavoy, (Ed.), 2009:286). They believed that US was afraid of Islam

and wanted to demolish Muslims. Many Pakistanis believe that India and US are cooperating in order to undermine Muslim interests. These commentators asserted that the Mujahideen were successful in imposing fighting and casualties upon India at Kargil.

The realist commentaries highlighted the importance of nuclear weapons in the form of deterrence as well as the dangers of nuclear war and pointed out Kashmir as a core issue which could trigger a nuclear war between India and Pakistan. Mostly the former civil servants and scholars from academics truly analyzed the Kargil conflict. The relationship between the Pakistani state and Islamic militants became a matter of concern and debate. In the media the relationship among religious political parties, such as Jammat-e-Islami and Jamiat-ul- Ulema-e-Islam and the jihadi groups were discussed.

Religious Parties

Since the independence of Pakistan in 1947 the political and ideological usage of Islam has gained momentum. Islam became an instrument of mass mobilization in Pakistan.

“It is in this context that religious parties have structural roots as well as cultural and political legitimacy. On the domestic front, religious political parties have propounded and sought to reform society and political institutions by demanding the implementation and enforcement of Shariah (Islamic laws).”(Shafqat, inlavoy, (Ed.),2009:290).

From time to time, the religious parties had gained influence on foreign policy matters especially on India. The Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) and the Jamiat-ul-Ulema-e-Islam (JUI) were the two parties which greatly reacted to the Kargil conflict. These religious parties argued that the Pakistani government and military was and is under US pressure to appease India. They believed that the jihadis were ejected from Kargil under US action. These parties stated that the military and the jihadi groups had waged a successful Kargil war but the government had lost it on the political side. Professor Khursheed Ahmad explained the Jamaat-e-Islami position on Kargil as

“after conquering the peaks of Kargil, the climb down and humiliation of the Washington declaration and retreat of the mujahideen has created a complex situation which has made the old wounds bleed again and has endangered the very existence of the country and the freedom of its people....and the withdrawal has distorted the Kashmir issue and has stabbed the jihad movement in the back. It has rendered even our nuclear deterrence ineffective and has very adversely

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affected our defense capability and morale of the fighting forces.”(www.Jamaat.org/Isharat/index/htm/sept.1999).

The religious parties were more vocal in blaming Pakistan's government after the withdrawal of forces from Kargil and advocating Islamization in Pakistan. MaulanaFazal –ur-Rehman had articulated the party position as “JUI was of the opinion that the withdrawal from Kargil would put an end to the Kashmir issue once and for all....and the Washington Declaration had betrayed the people and Mujahideen of Kashmir where the freedom movement had received a great set back....Pakistani people want to change the government and replace it with a new system based on Islamic principles.” (Daily *Dawn*,1999, July 12). The Kargil crisis also enabled the JI and JUI to develop an effective strategy of regime confrontation and mass mobilization against the leadership of Pakistan. The military coup of 1999 was welcomed by these parties and in the elections of October 2002, the religious parties formed a six party coalition in the form of Mutidha- Majlisey- Amal (MMA). They mobilized massive support against President Musharraf's support for war against terrorism and his u- turn policy in Afghanistan for not supporting Taliban. These religious parties got as much support from the Pakistani people that they had emerged as the third largest party in the form of MMA coalition in the national assembly.

Conclusion

At the end, theKargil crisis was not concluded according to the perceptions of the Pakistani planners. Weak decision making could be seen not in Pakistan but also in India. Pakistan had beard constraints which were emerged from this crisis. Impressed by the success of the Freedom Fighters against the Ex Soviet Union in Afghanistan, the Pakistani military leadership decided to pursue a policy of low-intensity warfare in Kashmir. The Kargil strategy was, low intensity war and had an opportunity to Pakistan for the settlement of the Kashmir dispute on its own terms and acquisition of nuclear weapons would deter India from waging an all- out conventional war but in practical terms due to different constraints of Pakistan this plan did not work.

The most obvious constraint was the lack of coordination between the political and military leadership. Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif was assertive towards India- Pakistan relations but the military leadership was showing an aggressive attitude. Pakistani leaders had the view that limited action would surprise India and they would be induced into a limited response. As a result, the world would pressurize India to make negotiations on the settlement of the Kashmir issue. The Indian stakes were high and the situation of the 1965 Indian army was totally different from the 1999 Indian army perspective. Now

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they were armed with nuclear weapons. Except from the initial stages, there response was pro-active throughout this crisis.

The Kargil operation did not make progress according to the perceptions of the policy makers. Pakistan's strategy had certain weaknesses as it could not hold captured posts due to lacking of the proper logistical supply and support. The Kargil operation launching time was not in favour of Pakistan as after the nuclear tests of May 1998 the international pressure was on India and Pakistan to begin a peace process and progress was expected regarding the Lahore Summit between Pakistan and India. The Pakistan government failed to explain its viewpoint and motivations behind this Kargil operation. As a result, world pressure was imposed on Pakistan to withdraw. The secret nature of the Kargil operation forced the government to remain tight-lipped about it. The government had problems in explaining the rationale of the intrusion. This secret war of Kargil never anticipated its impact on Pakistan's politics and its relations with other states especially with India.

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