



Warmongering Neighbours: India's Security Dilemma Concerning Chin- Pakistan

Sahadev Khura¹

Ph.D. Scholar

Department of Pol.Sc & Pub Admn

Sambalpur University

Jyoti Vihar-768019, Odisha, India

Abstract

India has been following a policy based on a realistic and constructive approach since the early 2000s in response to worries about a dual military threat from China and Pakistan. This seems to be a well-thought-out strategy done to prevent any loss of territorial integrity and sovereignty. rise of border disputes and military and terrorism threats leaving open serious challenges and vulnerabilities for India This paper examines and evaluates how India tackles, two fronts of the conflict. China is viewed as a security threat in India. The relations between India and both China-Pakistan have already been conflicting since 1962 with China and 1965 with Pakistan disastrous border conflict. China's following backing for Indian Maoists, as well as China's continuous occupancy of territories claimed by India. China's increasingly assertive claims to the disputed northern border, pose a new challenge to India's sovereignty over Kashmir.

India needs to be prepared to handle a crisis with two fronts through a realistic and constructive perspective. This article primarily focuses on a realist and constructive perspective of India adopting a policy to rebalance power with China-Pakistan and protect its security interests.

Keywords: Realist, Constructive, conflict, India, China, Pakistan, relations

Introduction

India has been following a policy based on a realistic and constructive approach since the early 2000s in response to worries about a dual military threat from China and Pakistan. This seems to be a well-thought-out strategy done to prevent any loss of territorial integrity and sovereignty. rise of border disputes, and military and terrorism threats leaving open serious challenges and vulnerabilities for India. Despite this, India has recently seen some development.-Relationships with China and Pakistan. India still faces a significant challenge from a two-front military threat. India does not have enough economic resources and military capability to fight a two-front war. So, India should pursue cooperation and continuing peace with one of its enemies on one side and another side —looking for partnerships with other power through realist and constructive theory to check the rebalancing.

Since China is still India's primary long-term strategic rival, keeping Pakistan's perpetual peace is difficult for India to achieve. Pakistan and China are working together more frequently both militarily and diplomatically. This poses the threat of coordinated action. So, India needs to take a broader perspective on how to seek to maintain territorial security in the context of perceived threats.

India faces a "two-front security challenge" which describes a parallel armed conflict involving China and Pakistan. China and Pakistan could adopt a cooperative or covert strategy whereby one nation openly assists the other militarily while also involving the two parties in covert cooperation. China would support Pakistan militarily, materially, and logistically if India and Pakistan were to wage war. This is known as covert cooperation. Either nation could launch a second front militarily in a cohesive manner in the event of a combined threat. The two are not mutually exclusive because there could be a seamless transition from the threat of complicity to the threat of collaboration.¹

The Indian state faces various threats, including insurgency, terrorism, and nuclear domains. India shares disputed borders and along its land boundaries, Pakistan and China have territorial claims. For many years, the Lines of Actual Control (LAC) and Lines of Control (LoC) that separate Pakistan and China have been a cause of dispute. Both countries pose military threats to India's continental and marine borders.²

Over the past 70 years, Pakistan-China ties have always been robust, founded on respect for one another and avoiding from intervening in internal affairs, and have worked nicely. Both parties have a high level of mutual trust and strive for peace and stability on both a regional and global scale. Despite being referred to as "iron brothers," they are not "allies" in the military. China has supported Pakistan in every way.

For India, There is already a threat of collusion coming from China and Pakistan. The majority of China's military hardware is imported by Pakistan, particularly, submarines, main battle tanks, Fighter aircraft, and unmanned aerial vehicles are examples of high-end products. Additionally, The completion of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), a Belt and Road Initiative project, has strengthened their strategic alliance. The threat of complicity already exists and does not necessitate India's actual physical deployment of soldiers or additional military commitment. equipment at the same time on two different fronts. India's true concern is the joint military threat, which is what remains. Different methods in which the collaborative threat might appear are possible. First, a concerted surprise attack from both India's north and west may be launched by China and Pakistan. Second, in a conventional military engagement between India and Pakistan, China could engage in strategic opportunism. An alternative to this may be a scenario in which CPEC assets and Chinese residents in Pakistan are threatened by a substantial conventional confrontation between India and Pakistan, providing China with an incentive to begin a different battle along the LAC to divert attention away from India.³

India's National Security Vs. Sino-Pak Onslaught: A Constructive Theory Approach.

To understand how China and Pakistan are making India into a formal opponent, constructivism theory is being applied to international relations. The main ideas of Alexander Wendt and Nicholas Onuf's notions of

constructivism are used to explain the concept. The relations between India and both China-Pakistan have already been conflicting since 1962 with China and 1965 with Pakistan. Rising powers in one state and another state increase power for balancing which creates a security dilemma. India and China- Pakistan manifestations have made relations more complicated in recent years. China and Pakistan seemed to be India as an adversary. India always considers China and Pakistan as potential allies. According to a constructivist viewpoint, we create the environment in which we live. "We engage with each other to create the world what it is". Constructivist theory is used at both an individual and a group level. When applied to international relations theory, constructivism can indicate how India is "constructing" a present and future of the world in which China and Pakistan are our principal advantages. The term "socially constructed phenomenon" is used to describe global politics when analyzing constructivism as an international relations theory. Human relationships are shaped by common ideas rather than physical forces, and purpose actors' identities and interests are created by these shared ideas rather than by Nature.⁴

Wendt says, "ideas produce power and interest" a varied set of people can understand and exchange ideas. Each state and actor has their interpretation of notions. As a result, what a state perceives as a challenge or interest to itself may not be perceived as such by another state. This is something to keep in mind. The spread of thoughts that India is a threat will produce that condition in China-Pakistan's minds. China-Pakistan, on the other hand, may view these concepts differently and thought India is an enemy and prime competitor of the 21st century. However, if the idea is consistently articulated over time, China -Pakistan will likely grow to regard itself as a rival of India as well. Cultural diplomacy has been an important aspect of India's soft power. The country has been promoting its culture through initiatives such as Yoga, Ayurveda, and Bollywood films, which have gained popularity in China and Pakistan. Cultural exchanges have helped India in building people-to-people connections, fostering better understanding and trust to avoid misunderstandings leading to conflict.

Economic engagement has also been a crucial part of India's soft power strategy. India's growing economy and market have been attractive to Chinese and Pakistani business people. India's ties with China in economics and trade have been rich and are constantly improving, thereby facilitating stability. India and Pakistan have also cooperated on economic issues in the past, and this could be leveraged to build better relations and avoid potential conflicts.

India has also been active in engaging with international institutions such as the United Nations and the World Trade Organization. active engagement in such institutions has helped India in building better relations with China and Pakistan and other countries. Using its long-standing reputation of neutrality, India has acted as a mediator and arbitrator in disputes between China and Pakistan, thereby avoiding confrontation. India has also shown maturity and restraint by choosing diplomatic channels over military response in the face of conflict.

According to constructivists, the idea of national interest serves as a key explanatory instrument in international politics. Both internally and globally between India and both China and Pakistan, national interest and identity are crucial. India is China and Pakistan's closest neighbour, yet many international

issues are in the way, including terrorism, border conflicts, cooperation, and world order. Three characteristics—Nehruvianism, Neoliberalism, and Hyper-realism—can be used to describe Indian foreign policy towards China and Pakistan. These three individuals see China and Pakistan as hostile and friendly nations, respectively. According to neo-liberalism, harmonisation of interests is not a natural process and free markets are important for economic growth. Instead, it needs to be created through institutions. The Neo-liberal position holds that economic links will strengthen ties with China and Pakistan, whereas the Nehruvian view holds that India can build peace and cooperation with both Pakistan and China. Because Pakistan's support for terrorism and the growth of China are seen by hyper-realists as aggressive and expansionist, India must bolster its military capabilities to contain both countries.⁵

India's soft power has aided in preventing military conflict by building relations with its neighbours, improving economic engagement, and using cultural diplomacy. By utilizing these strategies, India has been able to mitigate tensions and maintain stable relations with China and Pakistan. Additionally, there is a growing chance that India and both China-Pakistan may establish a close and friendly relationship, so that, India and China-Pakistan are capable of avoiding the rivalry's ambiguity. Along with collaboration in the political and economic spheres. and also cooperation on military, terrorism, diplomacy, and sovereignty activities.

Rising India: Soft Power Vs. the Emerging Power

India has utilized its soft power to avoid war with China and Pakistan by using cultural diplomacy, economic engagement, and international institutions. Soft power has emerged as a pillar of India's current foreign policy. The Indian government employs various soft power components to foster close ties with China and Pakistan. Soft power was coined by Joseph Nye. "Soft power is the ability to change the behaviour of others to get what you want," Nye says. It does so through its culture, political values, and foreign policies.⁶ To promote Indian soft power, the current government has primarily relied on culture and political values. India regards Buddhism as a critical tool for rebalancing power and cooperating with China. Modi visited China and presented a Bodhi sapling to the Xian government as a gesture of goodwill toward India. Modi used the culture card in China to advance India's economic interests and improve people-to-people cultural relations.

India is gradually becoming a major donor of foreign aid. Since the fall of the Taliban regime in Afghanistan, India has pursued an aggressive Afghan policy. The country has extended financial assistance for the nation's economic, social, political, and even cultural development. India has contributed significantly to significant infrastructure projects in Afghanistan, which is the country's second-largest beneficiary of aid from that country. while also strategically countering Pakistan. India has always had a friendly relationship with Afghanistan. In addition to creating institutions (law enforcement, the judiciary, and the Kabul Parliament), India has made significant investments in the construction of Afghan infrastructure, including roads, hospitals, and electrical projects. Indian businesses, particularly those in the steel and mining industries, have benefited greatly from such cooperation, with the latter winning the right to mine Afghanistan's largest iron ore deposit field. India gained a lot of goodwill from Afghanistan while keeping Pakistan out of Afghanistan. The presence of India in Afghanistan is part of a strategic plan to encircle and destabilise the Pakistani threat.

The realist Challenge: The Crisis of theory building.

Realism regards the international order as anarchic; the State is a unitary actor pursuing power through rational policies. The state is the most powerful actor in international politics; it is the "only truly collective actor in the world, recognising no authority higher than its own." Power and power relations are fundamental aspects of realism: power defines both national and self-interest. According to the power assumption, states seek power and predict interests in terms of power. Treating States as unitary and rational actors, each attempting to maximize expected utility - through competing power interests - can help us understand world politics.⁷

Realism is primarily concerned with national power, and it relies on the military to protect and preserve national power. Realism has been widely adopted in India. When it comes to national power. India has always been concerned about several issues. Unresolved territorial disputes led to wars in 1962 with China and in 1965 with Pakistan. India recognises South Asia as China's sphere of influence, while Pakistan encourages terrorism and poses security threats to India. In order to preserve a balance of power policy, it attempts to reduce India's influence in that area by building positive relationships with India's other South Asian neighbours, - also, India prevents China and Pakistan from becoming deeply involved in East Asia, India also maintains good relations with East Asia and has signed numerous agreements for cooperation. China's presence in the Indian Ocean has grown. While this is going on, India's "Look East" strategy has strengthened connections with other Asian democracies including Japan, Australia, Taiwan, and certain Southeast Asian nations that border the Western Pacific and have close ties to the US.⁸

Setbacks for India include cross-border shooting, claims of Line of Control ceasefire violations, terrorist assaults on Indian soil, militant infiltration efforts, and ceasefire violations across the international boundary by Pakistan. India would expect a state facing a nuclear threat from a neighbouring country, such as China-Pakistan, with which it has had a border dispute and a war and which is itself a nuclear power country (China-Pakistan), to arm itself with nuclear weapons as soon as possible. Pakistan and China have repeatedly threatened India with nuclear weapons. However, India now can protect itself against the possibility of a nuclear threat by establishing more nuclear powers and warheads in a counter-proliferation strike. India has retaliatory measures in place. But India now can protect itself against the possibility of a nuclear threat by establishing more nuclear powers and warheads in a counter-proliferation strike. India can strike any specific target area with long-range missiles in retaliation.

In dealing with issues such as security and terrorism, India takes a pragmatic approach. Due to domestic pressure to retaliate, India has developed retaliatory military-strike options short of full-scale ground mobilisation in order to avoid the strategic repercussions of showing weakness to Pakistan. Pakistan has failed to destroy the terrorist organisations most likely to attack India, such as Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) and its affiliates. Compared to his predecessor in 2008, Indian Prime Minister Modi is more likely to use force in his response. China has worked behind the scenes to control conflicts between India and Pakistan despite its long and close friendship with Pakistan.⁹

The New India: Rhetoric Vs. Reality.

The Indian Ocean is becoming increasingly important for energy and maritime trade. India is working to improve its naval capabilities. The Indian Navy's expeditionary and military intervention capabilities must be improved. China's efforts to strengthen its naval presence in the Indian Ocean are viewed favourably by India. As a result, India has strengthened its naval capabilities, increasing India's participation in the naval coalition of Australia, Japan, and the United States.

In many ways, the China-Pakistan-India relationship is remarkably stable. Bilateral summits and new multilateral groups frequently bring the three Asian giants together in pursuit of a common goal. Peace is valued by all parties as a means of expanding trade and investment ties and maintaining a focus on domestic economic development. However, significant differences and suspicions persist; others are related to these three Asian neighbours' rising global ambitions, military capabilities, and political and economic influence.

Challenges are facing India from China and Pakistan

Border and terrorism issues

The problem of cross-border terrorism is getting more and more difficult. Major nations' lack of commitment has nullified India's attempts to pass a resolution on terrorism at the UN. Greater and closer intelligence cooperation is required to combat ISIS/Islamic State/al-Qaeda, as well as its various imitators and other radical Islamist organisations, particularly with Middle Eastern nations. To counteract Pakistan's proximity to and support of terrorist organizations, India should change its "Look West Policy" into an "Act West Policy." However, despite their exposure to terrorism, nations like China continue to protect Pakistani terrorists and are reluctant to label Pakistan as a state that sponsors terrorism. This has strengthened Islamabad's resolve to continue its tirade against India, which must be stopped. This has strengthened Islamabad's resolve to carry on with its anti-Indian tirade, which demands immediate and meaningful international cooperation. To remain relevant, India will need to assess the risks and adjust its strategies.¹⁰

Economic competition:

India and China are economic rivals, with both countries competing for influence in the region and beyond. This has led to an increase in economic and trade tensions, with both countries imposing tariffs and other measures to protect their domestic industries.

Bilateral Challenge

During the India-Pakistan Wars of 1965 and 1971, India was aware of a two-front military threat. The more recent military challenge began in 2006 when the China Study Group suggested building border infrastructure in response to significant infrastructure improvement on the Chinese side. The Modi-led NDA government is committed to upholding a long-standing policy of maintaining border infrastructure in good condition to prevent Chinese troops from using it as they advance.¹¹ India-China border roads with a total length of 4643 km were

proposed by a task force after they visited the Line of Actual Control (LAC) three times and mostly connected to the regions where the two countries disputed the border. Two of India's closest and most competitive neighbours, China and Pakistan, present bilateral difficulties. China opposes India's membership in the Nuclear Suppliers Group, the UN Security Council, and other regional and international organisations and claims certain territories within India as its own. Over the years, Pakistan's major backers have provided it with billions of dollars worth of military aid and equipment, much of which has been used in conflicts with India and to finance insurgencies in Indian-occupied Kashmir. China and Pakistan's alliance, which has persisted is India's biggest source of concern. additionally, in particular about China's transfer of missile systems and nuclear weapons technology to Pakistan.so, India and both China and Pakistan failed to Make a Bilateral relationship to resolve the border issues.

Security threat for India's sovereign territory

India believes that China and Pakistan are using the CPEC as a means of provoking India's interests in the IOR. Additionally, it presents a security issue for India. In Pakistan, Gilgit-Baltistan is traversed by the CPEC. Pakistan's control over the western part of Kashmir is seen as illegal by India, which regards the entire region as a part of its territory. India has designated this region as Pakistan-occupied Kashmir as a result (PoK). The fact that China does not want the matter to be resolved in India's favour because the territory is thought to be the actual "umbilical cord" connecting China and Pakistan aggravates the situation.¹² This agreement is not recognised by India, which sees it as a direct threat to its security and territorial integrity as well as to its national sovereignty. Kashmir, or the PoK as it is known in India. This could be interpreted as a strategy used by China to protect its CPEC investment.

China and Pakistan challenge India for the Indian Ocean

The Indian Ocean is critical to India's national interests and foreign policy. to develop a more important and long-term maritime presence for China in the Indian Ocean. The presence of Chinese and Pakistani navy vessels, as well as joint exercises in the Indian Ocean and Arabian Sea, raises India's security concerns. Chinese and Pakistani ships are collaborating in Indian Ocean naval operations. These measures endanger India's security and energy interests, and have the potential to disrupt the IOR's calm. India's regional diplomatic and military capabilities would be put to the test if China keeps enhancing its naval capabilities in the Arabian Sea.¹³

India has been interested in and concerned about China's growing influence in the Indian Ocean. The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is one of many maritime-related projects that are a part of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) of the Chinese government. An important infrastructure project is known as the CPEC links western China to Pakistan's Gwadar Port, which is situated on the Arabian Sea and is a part of the Indian Ocean region..¹⁴

The "String of Pearls" is a term used to describe China's development of various ports and naval facilities in the Indian Ocean region. This strategy aims to secure China's energy supply routes, protect its overseas interests, and potentially enhance its military presence in the region. Pakistan has been enhancing its naval capabilities over the years. It has invested in modernizing its fleet and expanding its maritime infrastructure to secure its maritime interests in the Indian Ocean.¹⁵

Conclusion

A two-front conflict will put India under a lot of stress. Fighting a war on two fronts is never a smart or good idea. The relationship between India and China-Pakistan as well as South Asia's security situation are constantly in the news, particularly when tensions between the two countries rise. India should seek peace and cooperation with China and Pakistan to avoid a prolonged conflict between the three nuclear-armed states that would harm regional development. India must and should take all necessary precautions to stay out of the trap of preparing for such a conflict. Three nations are reliant on one another. Globalization has greatly reduced the size of the world. It has contracted in every facet of human existence. Integration with other countries is essential for the three countries. The amount of international cooperation is growing daily as a result of dependence and globalisation. India, China, and Pakistan should resolve the conflict through trilateral and multilateral engagements as we enter the twenty-first century.

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