

The Dynamics of Indo-Russian ties under PM MODI Impacts on Pakistan

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Abstract: *In contrast to India-Russia historic partnership, Pakistan and Russia have rarely enjoy cordial ties. However, the recent times show that both the countries are trying their part to normalize the relationship and use those ties in to best of their advantage. The Pak- Russian ties where are motivated by interest, uncertainty and distress caused by Indian tilt towards US in pursuit of its interests, is another reason behind intensifying Pakistan-Russian cordiality. While both interest and uncertainty are core features of Structural Realism. This piece of research encompasses truly a show of engagements, reengagements and counter engagements based on these two factors.*

Key Words: Interests, Uncertainty, Pakistan, Russia, USA, India, Security Dilemma

Introduction

Putin's policy and its vision is regaining the glory that Soviet Union used to have once. It tends to reemerge at the face of the globe again as a contender. Whereas South Asia is a core part in this regard. Resurging Russia's foreign policy towards South Asia has remained for most of the time in history, India centric. While Pakistan remained allied with United States.

Russia and India enjoy historic partnership and also celebrated 72 anniversary of their ties, what Prime Minister Narendra Modi calls "Trust based friendship".

Although India and Russia share a past, rich of time tested partnership but Indo-Russian ties has experienced a bit divergence since 2014 when Prime Minister Modi assumed power. India and Russia collaborate on energy and on strategic front, along with diplomatic front. India has long been the leading buyer of Russian arms, and also a trusted partner to maintain Russian clout in South Asian region. While on the other hand Pak-Russian ties remained cold.

This piece of paper will be focusing on Indo-Russian ties under Prime Minister Modi.

However it requires to understand Modi's vision of diversifying India's approach across the globe, in order to have a strategic edge over Pakistan. For this purpose, India when tilted towards US and tend to maintain ties with US, America became the leading supplier of arms to India. Thus pushed Russia on to second number. Two years later, 2016 marked USA as the leading defense partner of India (Unnikrishnan 2019). This is what made Putin's Russia realize the divergences in Indo- Russian ties.

Despite these divergences, India and Russia witnessed the peaks of partnership in more than one domain i.e. energy, strategic, international organizations and many more. Moreover it experienced moments of suspicion and trust deficit. The changing geopolitics of South Asian region (CPEC, Afghan Peace Process and the threat of terrorism from ISIS) is where highlighting Pakistan's position, Indo- US strategic engagements made it easy for Russia to formally consider Pakistan for rapprochement, if Russia is to secure its position in Asia Pacific region. Moreover, it allowed Russia to give its Indian centric foreign policy a new touch of what

Nasir Muhammad calls in his article - Pakistan Card. (Muhammad, 2019)

The literature consulted shows Russian engagements in declarations and conferences hosted by Pakistan, Russian engagements in Pakistan led Peace process in Afghanistan and its interest in Chinese led Belt and Road Initiative, of which Pakistan is a core part (Pant, 2018). But all these engagements are highly reinforced by the divergences caused in Indo-Russian ties, as a result of Modi's vision of diversifying global partnerships. Newly emerged Pak- Russian co-operations turned out to be a major irritant for India, which serves Russia's policy goal to bring India back on line, and Russia to emerge as an important actor in Asia Pacific. Thus having a diversified influence in regional geo politics of South Asia.

The recent past witnessed increased Indian engagements, new pacts and new declarations between India and Russia, but is it India's effort to bridge the deficit? This will be seen in this paper. If yes then how much effective it will remain for Prime Minister Modi to bridge the gap caused by his own policy choices and inclinations towards USA.

Moscow seems to diversify the dimensions of its involvement in South Asia, whatsoever the reasons be, but a part of those reasons will be discussed in the respective paper. The literature consulted suggests that Russian tilt towards Pakistan and its cooperation is not something worry about. Moreover these ties are not even equivalent to that of Indo- Russian ties. (Zakharov, 2017).

Well this is something that I will try to figure out in this paper that is this claim made by (Zakharov, 2017) is acceptable or not?

Currently Prime Minister Modi has perceived the threat well, and intends to bridge even a minor difference, which has caused its long term trusted friend inclined towards its rival. However, one thing to be discussed would be that Russia's foreign policy towards India has seen transformation.

As some scholars suggest that these Pak-

Russian ties are not equal to that of Indo-Russian ties, then here lies the gap, if is it so, what is making India worried of loose alliance or the trust gap with Russia? That means this inequality in partnerships has something worrisome. What is that would be seen in this paper.

Problem Statement

Since, Indo-US strategic romance is increasing, leaving Russia- its long trusted partner behind and increased partnership with conventional rival, has triggered Russia to bring a transition in its foreign policy towards India. Despite having interdependence in every domain from energy to telecommunication, and from information technology to strategic engagements being largest supplier of arms to India, Russia did not feel good of Indo- US bonhomie. Thus opted Pakistan as part of its foreign policy towards South Asia and most importantly towards India. Nonetheless, still Indo-Russia ties are matchless and Pakistan Card was played well by Russia. New Delhi perceived the threat well despite the fact that Pak-Russian ties are not equal to that of Indo- Russia ties, thus leading to new ventures of cooperation.

Literature Review

The article "Exploring the new dimensions in India-Russia cooperation" by ALEKSEI ZAKHAROV was published in ORF Occasional paper 2017 elaborates that energy and strategic bond have been the drivers of Indo-Russian ties. This piece of literature specifically focuses on joint statements given by the statesmen of both the countries, thus mentioning the St. Petersburg Declaration of 2017 as another feather in their cap to further boost the ties. However, this article focuses mainly on the avenues set to achieve under St. Petersburg Declaration and very less discussion and analysis on other ventures.

In article "India and Major Powers: Russia" by Nivedita Kapoor and Nandan Unikarishnan in August 2019, describe the tale of ever tested friendship and the effect of new government of Prime Minister Modi in 2014, and what effects its policies are having on Indo- Russian ties. This article has balanced approach, thus describes the

drifts in the foreign policy priorities of both the states which is now likely to stay. However, here lies the gap that she says the priorities are transformed and differences are likely to stay but does not talk about the efforts which Prime Minister Modi is meant to do in order to resolve the issues with long term partner, specifically when it faces Pakistan factor in its ties.

An article “Difficult Times ahead for Russia-India ties” published in *The Diplomat* was written by Harsh v. Pant in 2018, describes the effects of changing geopolitical realities in south Asia. However, have impact on Indo- Russian ties, including stance on Kashmir or the importance of CPEC. Here again, the author seems to have a much pessimist approach and a clear understanding of India’s foreign policy and importance of its exemplary partnership with Russia is lacking. Thus it misses to discuss the possibility of filling the gaps with new hopes and energy.

2017 article “India and Russia must work out their differences” by Sharanya Rajiv illustrates that Russia and India has come to a point where both have divergent opinions regarding India’s neighbor. Moreover, she tends to elaborate the recent trends in Russian approach towards Pakistan, and the reasons behind that is making India rework on their policy considerations. Thus the researcher ponders that how long India and Russia will base their ties on past achievements. When it says that Russia and India have different position on Pakistan to that of India’s, it surely misses that Russian interests with Pakistan are not of that capacity which Russia enjoys with India. Hence, Russia will not lose India, over Pakistan but to use Pakistan to get maximum from its partnership with India and to expand its clout in South Asia.

Article “The Russia-Pakistan Rapprochement: Should India worry?” by Uma Purushothaman in 2015 takes a detailed view of Russia’s increasing interests in Pakistan and the ongoing partnerships in energy and strategic domain. The researcher thus expresses its apprehensions as far as India is concerned, thus fearing China, Russia and Pakistan encircling

India; in accordance to which India needs to recraft its policy priorities.

Hypothesis

- Pak-Russian ties causing displeasure for India, thus driving India to restore the warmth and bridge the differences in Indo-Russian ties.
- For Russia, Pakistan is counter weight to India as there is equity not equality in Pak-Russian ties in relation to Indo-Russian ties.
- Pakistan is no replacement of India as far as ties with Russia are concerned. Therefore Pakistan needs to evaluate strategic appraisal and be realistic in foreign policy choices to get maximum out of newly formed bonhomie.

Research Questions

- Why India is afraid of Russian tilt towards Pakistan when these ties lack equality to that of Indo-Russian?
- How India is trying to bridge the differences in occurred in Indo-Russian ties, and how it will impact newly emerged Pak-Russian bonhomie?
- What are the future prospects for Pakistan?

Research Objectives

The objectives of the this specific research are;

- To critically study the behavioral patterns of big powers (India and Russia) in recent times in the wake of increased Indo-US bonhomie.
- To analyze Prime Minister Modi’s eagerness and study the efforts made by India to restore normalcy in New Delhi’s ties with Moscow.
- To unveil the vulnerability of Pak-Russian ties, in the wake of PM Modi’s efforts to bridge the differences with Moscow.

Significance of Study

This respective study is significant in its essence as it aims to provide a holistic view of Prime Minister Modi’s foreign policy consideration and how effectively PM Modi is managing its ties with

Moscow and Washington both, amid considerable divergences with the former. Studying and analyzing the recent trends in South Asia with respect to Russia (a Resurgent Power) and reciprocal behavior of New Delhi (an aspirant of Regional hegemony) with special reference to Russia's ties with Pakistan and consequent effects on Islamabad, will become beneficial for Pakistan to evaluate its policies, this study will provide a guide for understanding the big powers play in the region along with a framework for carving Pakistan's way forwards. A significant contribution to the literature through this paper would be the work on how the interest based partnership of Russia and India, said to be the Trust based friendship faced the consequences of miscalculations of Modi's foreign policy towards the leading world power. Where the clash of interests made India feel the threat from its western neighbor, as Russia opted for Pakistan to bring India back on line and save its interests in South Asia vis-à-vis United States. This piece of literature is going to be helpful to find out what opportunities Pakistan got as a consequence of divergence in Indo-Russian ties, and if India regains its trust in Russia's eyes where will Pakistan be standing and what would be the future prospects for Pakistan.

Theoretical Framework

Theory provides underpinning assumptions to base a research on. For this instance, if we look into theories, Structural Realism and its variants called Modernized Structural Realism (Robert Keohane) and Defensive Realism suit the research in respective domain much. The basic assumptions of Structural Realism are

- States behave in an international anarchic system
- Externally determined set of structural imperatives work as driving force for a rational state's foreign policy
- States are rational unitary actors thus working for their national interests
- Non- governmental, multinational and international organizations get emphasis

- Elements of uncertainty of other states force a state to be defensive (Defensive Realism)

This theory that's how helps to analyze the dynamics of indo-Russian ties, which have a long history of trust and interest. But time showed that trust remains only until interests are secure. The time interests are threatened, states which are rational actors look for alternate measures to secure interests. This can be defensive or offensive. However in the respective study, Russia while got threatened by Indo-US bonhomie and defense ties, thus played rationally. Increasing diversified relations of India with Russian rivals that acted as external determinant for the foreign policy of Russia, made its rapprochement with Pakistan possible. One of many reasons behind was the uncertainty of Indo-US ties. The same uncertainty of Pak- Russian ties is making India to resolve issues and areas of mistrust with Russia and secure the interests thus divergences that's how leading towards new ventures. However, this current wave of partnership has an important role of international forums like Eastern Economic Forums, as suggested by the theory.

Research Methodology

This research paper aims to discover the answers to the research questions through the qualitative method. The recent trend and events in Indo-Russian ties and their impact on newly emerged Pak-Russian ties will be discussed on the basis on Primary as well as secondary data. For this purpose, already existing data in form of articles, research paper, newspaper stories and statements of the state official will be taken into consideration. Additionally, convenience sampling (A type of non-probability sampling) is used here to get the opinion of scholars and students of foreign policy, as they were easy to approach in the time of covid-19 plus budget restraint. 100 scholars of the respective field were approached through the medium of internet i.e. email and got questionnaire solved. Therefore, analysis part will be also be supported by the opinion (of the scholars who are students of foreign policy) which is gathered with the help of questionnaire.

Dynamics of Indo-Russian Ties

India and Russia (former Soviet Union) has a history of trust based long standing diplomatic, strategic, economic and cultural partnership. In early years of independent India, Soviet Union helped India in building a heavy industry, mining, and steel and energy production. In order to ensure global peace and security with mutual cooperation, both countries signed Treaty of Peace in 1971. After that Russia aligned itself with India, not only allied but also supported India's stance on Pakistan's eastern wing. Russia tried to halt Chinese influence to aid Pakistan in latter's war against India in 1971. Russia also supported Indian stance of Pakistan supported militancy in Kashmir. As in 2002 Russian foreign minister when visited India stated that Pakistan should dismantle its support for militants. India remained nonaligned during the Cold War, but a tilt towards USSR was quite evident. India extended loan, technical credits and gift of rice to Soviet Union in the last decade that Soviet Union lived. After the demise of Soviet Union, Russia signed a new Treaty of Friendship with India, military technical cooperation agreement later on. India and Russia are partners in North-South Transport Corridor. Moreover, India and Russia are indulged in to billion dollars trade. Arms sale leads the trade chart. From military exercises to sale of MiG-21, MiG-35, Su-35, S400 air defense system, Brah Mos. cruise missile, nuclear submarines and many others are in the list.

Year 2014 marked Indian elections and Narendra Modi came to power. India had new leadership, and with that new aims, objectives, new dreams and new aspirations along with altogether new policies. Stagnation became a characteristic of Indo-Russian ties. Prime Minister Modi's policies just added fuel to the fire, brought already created stagnation a further. 2010 when marked with the special status given to Indo-Russian partnership, still the both the states could not achieve their target of US\$ 20 billion trade by 2015. USA became the top supplier of arms to India. Logistic Exchange Memorandum of Agreement in 2016 became the highlight of Indo-US ties. Moreover, 2018's Communication,

Compatibility and Security Agreement added to Russia's distress. Uncertainty is a shining feature of international politics. (Unnikarishnan, 2019). A rational state is uncertain in its behavior, where it can turn anyway for its national interests. As India turned towards US, coming out to be a balancer of China and contender to Pakistan, QUAD in which there is United States, Australia, Japan and India partnering as a part of US pivot to Asia policy. Uncertainty of Indian newly formed partnerships lead Russia to be defensive and find new way too. For that matter Russia found China, to which in 2014 Russia sold advanced weapons that also included Sukhi-35 and also S400 air defense system. Russia used Pakistan card and the world saw joint Pak-Russian military exercises, sale of MI-35 helicopters, engines for JF-17 thunder and what not. At one place where Indo-Russian bilateral partnership aimed at \$30 billion-\$50 dollar till 2025, India pulled the plug of Fifth generation fighter Aircraft Project and year 2017 could not saw any arms deal signed. (Unnikarishnan, 2019)

Losing an ally is dreadful, especially when one enjoys exemplary partnership. Losing a privileged partner to a conventional rival is a matter of utter dismay in an anarchic world. So is the case of India, which is skeptical of increased Pak-Russian amenability. While scholars argue that there is a glaring difference between Russia's partnership with India and Pakistan. Pakistan cannot replace India for Russia.

Prime Minister Modi's policy preference

Year 2014 marked with India's new leadership, new inspiration, aspiration and ambitions. Prime Minister Modi was having greater ambition to make India a "Great Power". For that matter he was aiming high strategic objectives thus pursuing high kind of strategic policies. Dr. Chris Ogden in his article "Thinking big: Modi's foreign policies priorities for India"- describes 3 core priorities.

As part of the first priority- achieving great power recognition, Prime Minister Modi aimed at making India big and attach it with Great Powers- for that matter India was seen extending ties with

Saudi Arabia, Africa, and South America. looking at a statement that was broadcasted when President Obama and Prime Minister Modi met in 2014: that says, “we will have a transformative relationship as trusted partners in 21st Century” depicts Indo-US intensifies relationship. However, they while on one hand extended their ties concerning promotion of liberal values, on the other hand coordinated in defense (New Framework for defense Cooperation, Logistic Exchange Memorandum of Agreement) , education and in other fields. [\(Ogden, 2018\)](#). Additionally, construction of a multipolar world where Russia also supported Modi, and Pursuit of Act East policy were also the aims held by Prime Minister Modi.

India’s fear of Russian tilt towards Pakistan

What made New Delhi recall an Old Russian Proverb, “an old friend is better than two new friends”? Definitely it is the reservations and fear that India is feeling out of the effect of slowly increasing Pakistan-Russian bonhomie. The issue is not Russian extending partnership, but of course with Pakistan, it is undoubtedly an irritant for India that its long standing ally and partner is being involved with its conventional rival.

So this is clear that unsurprisingly, India is not happy with this change in regional political dynamics. As scholars believe that the time is not going to come any soon when Pakistan will replace India’s importance for Russia, moreover Pakistan-Russian newly emerged partnership is not any equal to that of Indo-Russian friendship having a rich past of trust and cooperation. If this is the case. Then here lies the question what is making India afraid of Pakistan-Russian bonhomie?

If compare the magnitude of Russian partnership with India and Pakistan, one gets to know there is stark difference, as in 2017 the Indo-Russian bilateral trade did worth \$10 billion, which is miles head of Pak-Russian trade. Same goes in case of 2018 deal of \$400 worth \$5.2 billion, billion dollar trade deal of nuclear submarines, AK-203/103 rifles and what not [\(Kapoor, 2019\)](#). Despite the fact that Pak-Russian

ties are not equal to that of Indo-Russian partnership, but this is also a matter of fact that the issues on which Russia is supporting Pakistan, taking neutral position when India believes Russia to back India’s stance, and also changing geopolitical dynamics where Russia is extending partnership and cooperation with India’s rivals is a matter to fear of for India.

These issues include President Putin’s neutral stance on Kashmir issue, believing that Pakistan is making efforts to combat terrorism and also wishing to get into China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), plus an atmosphere of creation of China-Pakistan-Russia axis for peace process in Afghanistan. India is skeptical about this phenomenon as it caused India embarrassment on international front and also Russia not living up to India expectations continuously in past few years.

President Putin has addressed this Indian reservation as saying, “there is no country in the world that we have such deep cooperation with” [\(Dawn News, 2017\)](#). Meanwhile, at the same time Putin added that this “special relationship” between the two countries should not be restriction on forming contracts with other “partnering countries”. This is ridiculous, he added [\(Dawn News, 2017\)](#) d. The tone was set and very well communicated to the special partners that Russia is not to play on its own terms, will continue its special partnership with India on all strategic fronts, but New Delhi is not allowed to meddle in Russian policies, according to which Moscow will be extending ties with Pakistan and China as well where necessary. But an important fact to bear in mind is Moscow is not going to lose New Delhi too.

India fears Pakistan’s increased involvement with Russia because it involves some matters that are of core importance to New Delhi and cannot be compromised at any cost. For instance when in 2017 Putin in a press conference when asked to comment on Kashmir Issue, Putin simply did not take sides , remained neutral and also held the view that he is not going to decide whether Islamabad is involved in fueling the terrorism in Indian Held Kashmir. This time, Putin promised

to ensure cooperation to India, yet at the same time he expressed his believe in Pakistan to be taking steps for stability in the country. [\(Dawn News, 2017\)](#). Kashmir has always been a bone of contention between India and Pakistan, while India always promoted the stance that Pakistan is involved in all bad occurring in Indian held Kashmir including Uri attack and Pathankot blast. New Delhi believes that its partners should also endorse the stance but Russia here did not comment.

Another front where India critically sees the activities is that since 2016 Pakistan and Russia are involved in joint military drills. The military drills held in Cherat, Gilgit Baltistan- a piece of land that India believes Pakistan owning it illegally, was an irritant for India. [\(Kapoor, 2019\)](#) Moreover, military technical support and a considerable arms supply from Russia to Pakistan which makes Russia the 3rd biggest supplier of Russian arms to Pakistan- is a matter to be worried about for India because Pakistan's policies have always been India centric and also this time arms are being purchased for deterrence against India. The interesting part is that, who is the supplier? Russia- India's special partner.

India has always dreamt to be the regional hegemon in South Asia and a big brother. For that matter it is involved in US strategy of offshore balancing, acting as a balancer to China and contending Pakistan. Whereas, when India sees the geopolitical and regional political scenarios shifting where Russia is up to creation of China-Russia and Pakistan axis for creation of peace in Afghanistan, for an access to Central Asian countries as a part of Putinization of resources (a term used by author Marin Katusa in his book the Colder War), and also to defeat IS. This can turn out to be a blow to India dreams of regional supremacy and becoming the most important actor of South Asian regional politics. The disposition of Russia to engage with Pakistan despite the distress of its special and strategic partner mirror not just its immediate interests in Afghanistan and Central Asia but also is a way for it to hint its displeasure to India about its increasingly close ties with US [\(Kapoor, 2019\)](#).

India wants to isolate Pakistan internationally, but comes to face humiliation and disappointment when changing geopolitical realities, based on interest based partnerships raise Pakistan's importance again. Russia as a part of its plan of resurgence, wants Pakistan and China's inclusion in Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). Another forum where India has to face embarrassment when Dr. Jumma Khan Mari, a Baloch separatist leader who is in Russia for last 18 years, claimed that India hijacked the indigenous Baloch revolt. The claim was made in Mari's interview to Russian media outlet. After which, in few days Russia welcomed Pakistan's defense minister Khawaja Asif, and showed Russia eagerness to help Pakistan increase its anti-terror capabilities.

Amid new challenges and avenues of the Great Game, Pakistan is gaining importance for Russia. Russia's partnership with is definitely not comparable to that of India, but the avenues where both are collaborating turn out to be a major irritant for India. Meanwhile Russia believes the fact that India is irreplaceable, as it is a major Russian Trade partner. Putin is not ready to loose India too.

Indo-Russian efforts to bridge the differences

Putin has this realization that Pakistan cannot replace India. Moreover, Putin does not want to lose India to US. Then there is India, for whom the Russian message is best served that India needs to be balanced in its policies. There's need to take steps for an improvement in economic partnerships, and a clear plan of action is what required by India to moderate Russia's tilt towards Pakistan. For that matter President Putin and Prime Minister Modi, both are trying to overcome the stagnation in their partnership and also bridge the difference.

This realization has brought Prime Minister Modi and President Putin to get involved into new agreements, pact and

negotiating on international forums. Modi's era in India starts in 2014, where on one side Indo-Russia ties suffered the realities of each states strategic, political and economic imperatives, past few years saw increased Indo-Russian engagements on the other hand as a part of India and Russia's mutual efforts to bridge the differences. As Nivedita Kapoor and Nandan Unnikarishnan in their article "India and Major Powers: Russia" gives an overview of what deals were signed in order to strengthen the privileged and special partnership. India and Russia are seen shaking hands and holding many conferences, participation on international forums. There occur bilateral visits and interactions along with extended trade and cooperation in energy, defense, science and technology, space and many more.

Year 2014-2015 marked with the agreement where Rosneft was supposed to provide crude oil to ESSAR. The "localization of manufacturing" in India for Russian designed nuclear power plants, cooperation in helicopter engineering, Russia building 12 nuclear plants in India, manufacturing of KA-226T helicopters in India (2016), India's inclusion in SCO were seen as positive developments. (Unnikarishnan, 2019). Moreover, the leaders of two sides involved in informal sessions like Prime Minister Narendra Modi was invited for informal session at Sochi- it was considered as the bilateral effort to address the cleft in relationship. This summit met its purpose when after the meeting leaders let the world know about the new avenues they decided to work in and issued joint statement. From October 2018 onwards, India and Russia aimed at bilateral cooperation in supply of S400, bilateral talks between India and Eurasian Economic Union, inauguration of single window service in Russia for Indian firms, unveiling of Russia Plus in India to help Russian corporations capitalize in India, holding of the India-Russia Business Summit, setting up of the Far East Agency in Mumbai, signing of

the *India-Russia Economic Cooperation: The Way Forward* (March 2018), and the beginning of LNG supply from Gazprom (contract with GAIL). (Unnikarishnan, 2019)

Where since 2017, there have occurred more than fifty ministerial level visits between Russia and India, Russia also allowed visa free entry of Indian workers including doctors and engineers, via Vladivostok. In year 2018, India and Russia aimed at investing in third country like building a power plant in Bangladesh. Additionally, India defies US threat and signed deal for S400. Year 2019 has also saw the new avenues of engagements giving out a loud message that Indo-Russian partnership is back on track. Earlier in 2019, two leaders met at SCO, while later on Prime Minister Modi was invited by Russian counterpart to attend the session of Eurasian Economic Union being held in September 2019. 20th annual India-Russia summit also held in Russia. Prime Minister Modi attended the 5th annual summit of Eurasian Economic Union as chief guest.

In September 2019 meeting, both sides recalled how exemplary, trust based, trust worthy partnership both enjoy. In addition, both the sides discussed inter-parliamentary engagements as valuable. They seemed to be satisfied on trade turnover and aimed at investing in industrial sector, high-tech and human resources more. Moreover, Mutual protection of Investment found its place in their discussion too. Eliminating trade barriers, custom barriers, would be facilitated in the trade agreement between Eurasian Economic Union and India. Meanwhile, trade in local currencies was also discussed along many other issues. All these developments show that where at one place Russia is still distress on the term "Indo-Pacific", yet on the other hand both sides are trying to negotiate their differences plus engage in new deals to cope with challenges of distrust. Both the countries also aimed at building a Southern Indian port in Chennai to Vladivostok that will reduce the time of

shipment(used to be done via Suez canal and Europe) from 40 to 24 days.

However, one thing to bear in mind is what the theory of structural realism suggests that uncertainty and national interests drive states decision along with leader's motivation. Putin is behaving the same way. At one place, becomes defensive due to Indo-US ties, extends hand of cooperation towards Pakistan and China due to its interest in Afghanistan and CARs, and does not want to lose India too and it is Russia's long standing partner.

Impacts on Pakistan and Future prospects

If Russia is involved in its partnerships with India as well as Pakistan, what message goes to Pakistan? Should Pakistan really rely on Russian Partnership? If this partnership is to stand for a longer time? Is indo-Russian partnership is somewhat damaging to Pakistan?

In order to answer all these questions and understand the impacts on Pakistan, it is important to understand Russia's motives. Russia wants to rule global energy politics, for what it needs safer routes for energy supply. All the intentions of political resurgence-economic might is essential and for that matter Russia needs to trade. If all these preconditions combined, it tells that Russia in order to maintain presence in South Asia India is important, plus it is major trade partner, major buyer of Russia arms. While on the other hand where non-state actor in Afghanistan emerged as a challenge and a threat perceived by Russia, require Pakistan's assistance to get rid of them. However, China's Belt Road initiative and CPEC holds Pakistan's importance for Russia as it will provide Russia trade routes.

As far as the case of Indo-Russian partnership is concerned, it is present for last more than 70 years. It is just finding new avenues for cooperation. Its impacts on Pakistan can be in form of increased Indian Deterrence capacity against Pakistan (putting

Pakistan under threat). On international level, if Russia and US supported India's stance on Kashmir

, Pakistan's position will be weakened. Moreover, Pakistan will be far behind of race and acting as a balancer to India in South Asia. Russian cooperation will help India to increase its efficiency in education, defense, energy, science and technology and economy, while Pakistan if continued to be confused on its partnerships, relying on any single state will be damaging for Pakistan's interest. As part of Russia simultaneous involvement with India and Pakistan can create security dilemma and stability threat in South Asia as a whole, where it supplies arms to both the rivals.

Pakistan can escape any devastating impact of increased Indo-Russian partnerships. This Pakistan can do by carefully crafting foreign policy choices, drawing a balance between all the allies, restrict it policy from keep becoming reactionary, becoming rational in its choices, understanding the fact that there is nothing like trust and morality in international dealings but interests. So Pakistan needs to understand that only Pakistan can save itself, by focusing on its aims, knowing what does it really wants and gaining the maximum out of its partnerships. Pakistan if realizes its importance for Russia in South Asian region, then it should move forward by setting the conditions that will save its position and turn her into the beneficiary of the respective engagement. Moreover, Pakistan needs to understand that Russia is not going to compromise on its relations with India, neither Pakistan can replace India.

If Islamabad crafts its policy rationally, to act as an important player in changing international political scenario, there is a bright future ahead amid increased importance due to CPEC- connecting the world, providing trade route and bringing out peace in Afghanistan to make the route safer

and become important factor in Russia's energy politics in South Asia ultimately.

Additionally, the results of the questionnaire having question to gather scholars' opinion in this regard show that approximately 69 percent of scholars who filled the questionnaire feel that Russia's inclination towards Pakistan has been generated due to slight drift in Indo-Russian ties resulting from increased Indo-U.S. bonhomie. Moreover Russia's message is well received in New Delhi thus causing it to make efforts to bridge the differences as Russia takes Pakistan as counter weight to India. Scholars agreed that Indo-Russian ties are concrete than Pak-Russian ties, yet believe that equity in Pak-Russian newly formed ties to that of Indo-Russian partnership is causing distress in New Delhi. Furthermore, results show that Russia's interests with Pakistan are here to stay despite New Delhi manages to bridge the differences with Russia, due to changing strategic appraisal i.e. CPEC, energy politics on the region, growing threat in form of ISIS, and Pakistan's role in Taliban peace deal. A belief is also found among scholars that Pakistan needs to evaluate the regional politics, potential in its thaw with Russia and also be realistic in its foreign policy decisions based on national interests so that get maximum out of its partnership with Russia.

Conclusion

In international relations driven by interest, trust is the factor on which India and Russia keep on forcing. Indo-Russian relationship is indeed exemplary. It has seen crust and troughs in their ties, but in a world where both the countries celebrate 70 years of partnership, converge their interests in the fields of educations, trade, economy to strategic plus enjoying special and privileged relationship, chanting for trustworthiness of each other- interest remains still the

cornerstone of political, strategic and economic engagements.

Uncertainty is another factor that drove the Indo-Russian ties in recent part. Modi's ambitions of diversifying relations, becoming closer to Great powers, be a great power in multi polar world caused New Delhi to extend its ties to Washington. Here generated the uncertain condition as Moscow found India's new engagements threatening. Moreover, increased geopolitical importance, emergence of non-state actors as a threat to Russian interests, increased the importance of Islamabad for Moscow. In pursuit of Russia's economic and strategic interests, plus to cater the uncertainty caused by Indo-US romance, brought Pakistan and Russia closer.

Pak-Russian bonhomie as stated earlier is not comparable to that of Russia with India, but is still a contention for Indian interests. The reason behind is the India's fear and the matter of prestige, as India sees Pakistan buying arms from Russia, seeing Russian troops doing military exercises in areas about which India accuse Pakistan of illegally holding. India then witnesses its long standing trusted partner asking India to join the project CPEC, which India is resilient of. These things, the aspects of Pak-Russian ties along with its possible consequences are coming as major irritant for India, which does not want to lose its partner. Russia and India trying best to take their partnership on to a next level- that says for India and Russia, no one can replace each other. This is the time for Pakistan to learn from its past mistakes, make some preemptive kind of foreign policies that would be able to extract much out of its partnership with Russia and not allowing India to harm its interests.

However, Russia's simultaneous engagement with India and Pakistan can have drastic effects of south Asia's security. This is the aspect that can be explored further as a continuation of this respective piece of paper.

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