

# **Mapping of Track Two Initiatives: A Case of Pakistan-India Conflict (1988-2001)**

**Tahir Ashraf**

Europe Institute, University of Malaya  
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia  
Department of International Relations  
Bahauddin Zakariya University Multan

**Md. Nasrudin Md.Akhir**

Department of East Asian, Studies  
University of Malaya, 50603-Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

**Javaid Akhtar Salyana**

Department of Pakistan Studies,  
Bahauddin Zakariya University, Multan

## **Abstract**

*The concept of Track Two Diplomacy for conflict resolution in bilateral relations is quite an old phenomenon. This study is focused to investigate what initiatives, within the framework of Track Two Diplomacy, were taken by Pakistan and India for the resolution of their bilateral conflict and enhancement of confidence building between them. The individuals, former government officials, technical experts, defence and strategic analysts took several initiatives to bring the people of the two countries closer by promoting people-to-people contacts. The role played by Pakistan India Peoples Forum for Peace and Democracy (PIPFPD) in the sphere of Track Two Diplomacy has also been carefully examined in this study. This study finds that the civil societies in developing countries of Asia like Pakistan and India have not still achieved awareness and consciousness to the tune of their counterparts in the western world, nevertheless the civil society in these two countries has uninterruptedly made attempts to pave the way for conflict resolution and has marked several suitable measures towards the process of confidence building between their respective countries. Lastly, this study attempts to analyze the hawkish role of the print media with special reference to the Lahore peace process of 1999 when the Indian Prime Minister AtalBihari Vajpayee visited Pakistan. The study concludes that there exists a “mind-curtain” between Pakistan and India which should be removed. People-to-people*

*contacts between Pakistan and India should be acknowledged as a sine qua non for an enhanced peaceful relationship between them.*

**Keywords:** Track Two Diplomacy, Pakistan-India bilateral relations, the Lahore peace process.

### **Introduction:**

The concept of Track Two Diplomacy for conflict resolution in bilateral relations is quite an old phenomenon. This study is focused to investigate what initiatives, within the framework of Track Two Diplomacy, were taken by Pakistan and India for the resolution of their bilateral conflict and enhancement of confidence building between them. It has been witnessed that for peace and confidence building, several initiatives were taken, by the individuals, former government officials, technical experts, defence and strategic analysts, showbiz industry, trade industry and grass-root workers, to bring the people of the two countries closer by promoting people-to-people contacts. The role played by Pakistan India Peoples Forum for Peace and Democracy (PIPFPD) in the sphere of Track Two Diplomacy has also been carefully examined. The civilized communities invariably take the civil society as the backbone of a nation, which always plays a significant and somewhat substantial role in bringing, the people of the world in general and people of the rival nations in particular, closer to each other. It has been viewed that the civil societies in developing countries of Asia like Pakistan and India have not still achieved awareness and consciousness to the tune of their counterparts in the western world, nevertheless the civil society in these two countries has uninterruptedly made attempts to pave the way for conflict resolution and has marked several suitable measures towards the process of confidence building between their respective countries. However, all such efforts for long time to come, have to face challenges and hazards because on the one hand these are quite deep rooted ill feelings between the two countries while on the other there are extremist and fanatic elements on both sides who are always inclined to frustrate such efforts. This study attempts to analyze the hawkish role of the print media with special reference to the Lahore peace process of 1999 when the Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee visited Pakistan.

### **Conceptual Framework: Civil Society and Track Two Diplomacy**

The concept of civil society is defined as a set of institution through which society organizes and represents itself autonomously from the state. The origins of the concept of civil society lie in key places of modernity in the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. The notion was first used to distinguish a sphere in which social relations were based on free association of individuals, rather than a fixed hierarchy of legal institutions (Shaw, 1999). At the dawn of 21<sup>st</sup> century the development of civil society is seen as a significant criterion for the development of democracy. Democracy is not merely the formal establishment of certain rights and institutions but also the consolidation of the social relations that support them. They include the development of an educated middle class and a framework of civil institution that can support democracy. In many countries of the “Third World” the creation of civil society is widely viewed as a concomitant of democratic change. While in the

western countries, the strength of civil society is often seen as a criterion of democratic health and stability. Traditional representative institutions of civil society such as trade unions, churches and parties have decayed in contemporary society. Now, these institutions can exercise their functions, if any, through mass media. Media has become a powerful actor of contemporary civil society.

### **Track-Two Diplomacy:**

Efforts to normalize the relations between Pakistan and India can be assessed under the aegis of track-two diplomacy. Track-two diplomacy is commonly defined as “a process of unofficial dialogue among non-official representatives of the parties involved in the dispute”. It is pertinent to mention here that non-official groups comprised of influential persons, who have either remained government officials in varied capacities, and “continue to enjoy the necessary access to the government or known to have the desired ability to influence public opinion in one form or the other”(Cheema, 1994, p. 4).

Waslekar defines track-two diplomacy as “a process of unofficial dialogues between disputing polities conducted, directly or with the help of a third party, by influential citizens who normally have access to their government and/ or an ability to influence the public opinion. The goal of track two diplomacy is usually to prevent or resolve conflicts, or build confidence between the parties they represent”(Waslekar, 1995, p. 1). Additionally, the goal of Track Two is to “promote an environment, through the education of public opinion, which would make it safe for political leaders to take political risks” (Montville, 1995). Track Two supports leaders by “compensating for constraints imposed on them by psychologically understandable need for leaders”(Montville, 1995).

Post-cold war period has a possibility for some breakthrough in Pakistan-India bilateral relations due to two important reasons. Firstly, New Delhi and Islamabad cannot afford to sustain their policy of confrontation owing to economic reasons. Secondly, Pakistan and India have lost their traditional support of cold war era.

### **Pakistan-India Peace Initiatives and Track Two Diplomacy**

Initiatives from the society are also being taken. O.P Shah an Indian intellectual organized the “Parlance” talks and brought to Pakistan Mr. K.R. Malkani, a Hindu hardliner and an office bearer of BJP (BharatiyaJanata Party) for an animated interaction (Siddiqui, 1995a).

On 25 April 1990 “Academics for Peace in South Asia” passed a resolution in New Delhi that stated that the real problems of the people of south Asia couldn’t be solved by war. It also demanded the political leaders of India and Pakistan to set in motion the process that would ensure no occurrence of wars in future(Ahmar, 1993).

In May 1990, fifty eminent Pakistanis in a joint statement appealed to both India and Pakistan to refrain seeking military solution to the issue of Kashmir. It is

irrational to expect that another, bloodier and costlier war can do so in future (Hassan, 1995).

On June 1990, a joint statement signed by fifty-four eminent Indians and Pakistanis was released simultaneously from Lahore and New Delhi. The joint statement called upon the governments of India and Pakistan to reaffirm their commitment to peaceful resolutions of all outstanding disputes, to withdraw strike forces of both countries from the forward positions, and for normalization of relations in all spheres in accordance with the principles of peaceful coexistence and the UN Charter (Hassan, 1995).

On September 9, 1991, a seminar sponsored by the Pakistan Chapter of the Afro-Asian People's Solidarity was held at Lahore that called for a new regional order for SAARC countries through closer political and economic cooperation. Bhabhani Sen Gupta, an eminent Indian journalist observed that

“The responsibility for not resolving the vital questions is on political parties that thrive on conflict because they have no programme for uplifting society. Despite tension between India and Pakistan, no war is possible because both governments have lost their patrons and thus do not enjoy the authority required for launching an offensive” (Gupta, 1991).

Pakistan People's Party arranged the SAARC opposition leader's seminar in Karachi on 8<sup>th</sup> September 1992. Benazir Bhutto, then leader of the Opposition and Chairperson of Pakistan People's Party, said in her inaugural address

“If the hero of French Resistance to German Occupation, de Gaulle, and the German leader, Konrad Adenauer could, cruise down the Rhine as an emblematic gesture of reconciliation, can we not in the countries of South Asia overcome the past and turn our swords into ploughshares which would bring bread and milk to the child of an Asian peasant, chained to a life without hope. Let us point the guns not at each other but at the common enemies of the peoples of SAARC countries i.e. hunger, unemployment and illiteracy” (Dawn, 1992).

In a signed statement issued on 30<sup>th</sup> January 1993, a number of Pakistani journalists, intellectuals, politicians and columnists urged Islamabad and New Delhi to improve the ties that had reached their lowest ebb since 1971 due to the destruction of the Babri Mosque in the Indian city of Ayudhia on 6<sup>th</sup> December 1992. The statement stated:

“The forces of fascism were getting stronger in the subcontinent and had been trying to undermine democratic institutions in both countries by exploiting religion and preaching a narrow, anti-humanist version of nationalism... it is truly in the interest of India and Pakistan to work for a peaceful solution of all outstanding disputes between them so as to pave the

way for peace and tranquility in the region that could benefit the subcontinent and mankind”(Dawn, 1993).

Pakistan-India Track-two peace initiatives can be categorized in two ways:

- A) Indigenous efforts of intellectuals.
- B) Effort of intellectuals under the sponsorship of external elements.

#### **A) Indigenous Efforts of Intellectuals:**

This category includes the initiatives taken by local intellectuals, diplomats and scholars. These initiatives have been explained as follows.

##### ***i. Shanghai Initiative Round***

Shanghai Initiative Round was held in February 1994 at Shanghai, China. The participants from Pakistan, India, China and the U.S. gathered there in their personal capacity. Second seminar of the Shanghai Initiative Round was held at Goa, India in February 1995.

Shanghai Initiative Round III was held in Islamabad, Pakistan on February 22-25, 1997. This seminar was a continuation of the previous two rounds held at Shanghai and Goa in February 1994 and February 1995 respectively. Twenty-one scholars, academics, former ambassadors, technical, military and security experts from the US, China, India and Pakistan participated in the seminar. The subject under discussion in all the three seminars was the nuclear weapon issue and its global and regional linkages. The participants displayed a common concern about any future nuclear carnage in the globe and were unanimous in their desire of promoting peace and stability globally and regionally (Arif, 1997).

##### ***ii. Pakistan-India People’s Forum for Peace and Democracy***

The Pakistan-India People’s Forum for Peace and Democracy (PIPFDP) was formed on December 7, 1994 in Lahore, Pakistan. I.A. Rehman, Director Human Rights Commission of Pakistan and Nirmal Mukerjee, a former Governor of the Indian Punjab were named as the two co-chairmen of the forum (The Muslim, 1994). The objective was to initiate a people-to-people dialogue on critical issues of peace and democracy.

On February 24, 1995 for the first time since the partition of the subcontinent, about 200 Pakistanis and Indians met for two days to discuss the contentious issues. After the first opening session, the closed door session of the convention started and four groups on the following subjects were formulated (a) war, demilitarization, peace and peace dividends (b) Jammu and Kashmir (c) Politics of religious intolerance in India and Pakistan (d) Issues of governance underlying between Pakistan and India.

The second convention of the forum was held in Lahore on November 10-11, 1992 in which some 200 delegates from both countries reiterated their commitment to work for complete nuclear non-proliferation at regional level, gradual demilitarization, democratization of state structures and societies and a democratic

resolution of the Kashmir dispute in accordance with the aspirations of the people of the state. Participants made suggestions regarding the public awareness, discouraging warrior images, intolerance and governance. It was suggested that working group on governance should be renamed as democratization and decentralization.

The third convention of the forum was held in Calcutta from December 28-31, 1996. It ended with Pakistani and Indian holding hands and singing, "we shall live in peace" (Island, 1997).

The convention endorsed the Forum's standpoint contained in the Delhi and the Lahore resolutions and unanimously adopted "the Calcutta Declaration". The Calcutta Declaration demanded that both countries should celebrate the Fiftieth Anniversary of Independence by taking a solemn pledge to devote second half century of freedom to realizing the shared aspirations of the peoples for peace democracy, justice, tolerance and equal opportunities for all citizens regardless of belief, ethnicity, gender and social status. The two states must sign, by 14-15<sup>th</sup> August 1997, comprehensive treaty providing for the employment of internationally recognized mechanisms of mutual negotiation, mediation and arbitration for conflict resolution that could guarantee durable peace (Island, 1997).

The fourth convention was held in Peshawar on November 21-22, 1998. About 150 Indian and Pakistani delegates comprising trade unionists, academicians, lawyers, educationists, retired military officers and bureaucrats, social workers, journalists and Members Parliament (MPs) attended the Forum. At the end of the two-day deliberations, a declaration was issued on 23 November 1998 which stated that:

"Resolution of these issues cannot be delayed indefinitely and the convention demands that the governments of the two countries make much more serious, transparent and urgent attempts to put an end to the relations of mistrust between the two nations within a short time period" (Rashid, 1998).

The Fifth Joint Convention of the Forum was held at Bangalore on April 6-8, 2000. The convention was held under very difficult circumstances. Kargil episode deteriorated relations between India and Pakistan. Despite the hostile circumstances along both sides of the borders, nearly 500 delegates from India and Pakistan gathered and renewed their pledge to work for peace in this joint convention.

The fifth joint convention of Pakistan and India People's Forum for Peace and Democracy adopted the Bangalore Declaration and the Resolution on Kashmir on April 8, 2000. Being aware of the increasing danger of deliberate or accidental war breaking out with the risk of any conflict escalating to the level of nuclear carnage, the Bangalore Declaration demanded that

"an immediate resumption of dialogue at the highest level, horizontal and vertical de-nuclearization and a comprehensive no-war pact, effective steps towards internal demilitarization and in the interim until a complete roll back of nuclear weapons and

delivery programmes of both countries, a no-first use agreement, consent to the CTBT, rejoining the discussions on the FMCT and move towards the declaration of South Asia as a nuclear free zone”(The News, 2000).

The Declaration further called upon the Governments of India and Pakistan to order cessation of all hostilities along the Line of Control (LoC). It also “called upon the various militant organization of Jammu and Kashmir to eschew violence and appealed to the Government of India to release all political detainees so that the peoples of all sections of Jammu and Kashmir can decide their future in a democratic manner”(The News, 2000).It is notable that the Forum adopted, the first time, a separate resolution on Kashmir in its plenary session on April 8, 2000.

### *iii. Association of People of Asia (APA):*

The Association of People of Asia New Delhi organized a three-day Indo-Pak Amity Meet on May 15-17, 1996. It was a continuation of number of earlier non-official initiatives for Pakistan-India people-to-people dialogue with a view to take measures through more intensive and in-depth studies and discussion, for further promoting atmosphere of goodwill and improved cultural relations. The joint declaration demanded demilitarization of India-Pakistan borders and reduction in the nuclear arms race in South Asia. For the resolution of complex issues, the declaration considered “the growth of informal public opinion and active participation of people on both sides as the first requirement”. For this objective, the declaration “asked the governments of India and Pakistan for exchanges of delegations of civil society by gradually relaxing visa restriction and removal of restrictions on the free flow of information, ideas, books, newspapers, literatures and films” (Mainstream, New Delhi, 1996).

### *iv. Pen for Peace Conference 2000*

“Pen for Peace Conference” was held in Karachi on November 2000. It was an initiative of Pakistani writers, poets, artists, journalists and academics from all over the country to promote peace and harmony among nations and the people of the subcontinent. The Declaration demanded that

“The government of Pakistan and India must eschew their mutual antipathy, give up the unrewarding ‘war focused’ policies that they have been pursuing for the last half a century and give the alternate ‘peace focused’ policy a chance and adopt the total of peaceful negotiation for resolving their mutual disputes including the Kashmir dispute ..... all restriction on the exchange and import/export of books, newspapers, periodicals and magazines between Pakistan and India should be lifted” (Abedin, 2000).

## **B) Efforts of Think Tanks Under the Sponsorship of External Elements**

Under this category, many initiatives and projects were started with their foreign sponsors such as American and German institutions. These initiatives played

an important role in starting various track two diplomacy projects which are discussed as follows:

***I. The Illinois University's Programme in Arms Control, Disarmament and International Security (ACDIS).***

Programme in Arms Control, Disarmament and International Security (ACDIS) of University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign started its projects in 1978. Under this programme, many South Asian scholars, journalists and analysts interacted with the American and regional colleagues. Scholars from Pakistan and India have produced the joint projects regarding Pakistan-India conflict which have provided guidelines and alternative options for policy makers.

***II. USIS Contribution***

Equally impressive contributions are those of the USIS in the areas of track-two diplomacy. A group of distinguished and influential citizens from India and Pakistan were invited to meet at Neemrana fort in the state of Rajasthan, India. The group identified four major issues for discussion; the Kashmir dispute, nuclear non-proliferation, conventional arms race and defence budgets, and economic relation. The Neemrana process was initially sponsored by the USIS and reached a state where the two sides could agree on most issues except Kashmir. However, the process could not continue due to some reasons or other.

The motive behind the emergence of peace overtures in India and Pakistan is not idealistic but realistic one. Most of the peace activist has realist approach towards the importance of normalization of Pakistan-India relations. They believe that both Indian and Pakistan possess nuclear weapons and have the capability of destroying larger territories at astronomical costs of each other. Since India and Pakistan have nuclear weapons so neither India nor Pakistan is able to win a war by defeating the other completely. Defence analysis of both countries are of the view that both countries should adopt no war approach and realize that nuclear war cannot be won. Rather, it would become disastrous for the masses of both countries leaving no government either in Delhi or Islamabad ("ICN Seminar on Indo-Pak Relations in the Post-Nuclear Era: Possibilities(?) of Peaceful Coexistence....Conflict (?) Resolution..." The News, 2000).

**Constraints to Peace Initiatives between Pakistan and India**

Peace process between India and Pakistan has become hostage to the hawkish elements as well as negative role of media. The role of hawkish elements and print media can be investigated in this regard as follows.

**Role of Hawkish Elements:**

Hawkish elements exist in Indian and Pakistani societies are composed of hard-liners in various political parties, religious groups, segments of academicians, journalists and the military establishments in both countries. Jamat-i-Islami, Jamiat Ulama-i-Islam and Lashkar-e-Taiba are the hard liners in Pakistan whereas Rashtriya Swayamasevak Sangh (RSS), Vishwa Hindu Prasad and Bharatiya Janata

Party are in India. Pakistani hawks consider India's quest for preeminence in the South Asia as a barrier in normal relationship between Pakistan and India. Whereas Indian hawks allege that Pakistan is interfering in its internal affairs.

Hard liners of Pakistan and India have been against the track two efforts initiated between them. Commenting on the Delhi Convention of the PIPFPD held in New Delhi on 24-25<sup>th</sup> February 1995, the Amir of Jamat-i-Islami Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Rashid Turabi noted "there should be no official or non-officials talks with India till she recognizes the right of self-determination of Kashmiri people and stop terrorist activities (Farooq, 1995). Whilst a senior Pakistani official remarked about the Delhi Convention of Pak-India People's Forum in these words:

"The Pakistan Government's policy on this people-to-people dialogue is that we cannot stop and do not want to stop such gatherings. But we feel concerned if such occasions are used by India for propaganda manipulation. We are not very happy if these informal talks create provocative reaction in Pakistan" (Butt, 1995).

The Muslim, a Pakistani newspaper, considering the convening of Delhi Convention of Pak-India People's Forum as an activity of Indian intelligence agency RAW reports that

"According to the intelligence report, submitted to Prime Minister's Secretariat, Mr. Nirmal was being funded by Indian intelligence agency (RAW) and the purpose of it was to obtain some kind of statements from Pakistani scholars which could be used against Pakistan on any international forum" (The Muslim, 1995).

Indian press also criticized the first two recommendations of the 1995 Delhi Convention and termed these resolutions "tantamount to endorsing Pakistan's traditional stand on the respective issues" (Dixit, 1996). It is notable that these recommendations dealt with disarmament, denuclearization and Kashmir issue.

Normalization of Pakistan-India relations are hostage to the enemy image and negative perceptions about each other. The vested interest groups on both sides have not only kept the enemy images alive rather they have propagated it as state policy. The right-wing political parties and groups have promoted 'adversary image'. Jamat-i-Islami, a politico-religious party in Pakistan has played a key role in enhancing enemy image of India in the Pakistani society. The Chief of Jamat-i-Islami Pakistan, Qazi Hussain Ahmad's statement, issued at a seminar on "Kashmir, National Interests and Trade with India" held in Lahore, can be quoted in this regard: "Unless the Kashmir issue is solved the agreements of trade relations with India will amount to hamper the Kashmir movement and concurrently Indian hegemony would be established. Although trade could not be rejected with any country for financial benefit, economic ties with India would mean to forget the sacrifices of Kashmir and

bargaining on national interests under the new world order, as the western world wants to make India an elder brother of south Asia region”(The Frontier Post, 1994)

Jamat-i-Islami held a mass rally against the visit of Indian Prime Minister to Lahore in 1999. Jamat’s activists chanted “Vajpayee go home” and “No friendship between the Hindus and the Muslims”. Qazi Hussain Ahmad, the Amir of Jamat-i-Islami noted

“Siachin or Wullar Barrage are just part of the real dispute between India and Pakistan and to discuss these issues keeping aside the real issue of Kashmir, would amount to weakening of Pakistan’s 50 years old principal stand..... In our view and from the point of view of the national interest an understanding on the issues of no war pact, no first use of nuclear weapon, Siachin and Wullar barrage with India would not only be wrong but dangerous. This would also amount to being unfaithful with the blood of over 57,000 martyred Kashmiris” (The Frontier Post, 1999).

Ijaz ul Haq, the then senior Vice President Pakistan Muslim League, expressed his concerns in the following words

“Pakistanis were receiving Atal Bihari Vajpayee, the Prime Minister of India, with patience by keeping their passions aside. However, Mr. Vajpayee would have to make an explanation for an unending massacre of innocent Kashmiris”(Khabrain, 1999a).

As far as response of Lashkar-i-Taiba is concerned, leading vernacular newspapers published an advertisement entitled “Message of Mujahedeen from the battlefields of Kashmir”, pledged to continue Jihad for complete freedom of Kashmir. It was requested to the Prime Minister of Pakistan to leave the issue of Kashmir. Mujahedeen would solve Kashmir issue in a better way by Jihad (Nawa-i-Waqt, 1999).

### **Role of Media**

Role of media cannot be denied in the formulation of popular and elite opinion. The primary job of the media is to inform and educate the people but it prefers to gain maximum earnings while using modern techniques of sales. For years the media particularly electronic media and vernacular press have been augmenting the antagonistic sentiments in the both countries.

In Pakistan, especially electronic media, has been focusing on the Kashmir uprising in religious terms that has heightened tension with India and created a frenzy of expectations within Pakistan. Pakistani masses are regularly told the right of self-determination as the only option for the resolution of Kashmir dispute. Therefore, Pakistani masses, before 2004, were not ready for an alternative approach for resolution of the Kashmir dispute.

Anjum Niaz, senior correspondent of DAWN has quoted an interview of Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali, then Foreign Minister of Pakistan (1993-1997) who told her that he had not three but six options for Kashmir. He was only willing to put them across the table if India shows some flexibility, which so far is not forthcoming. His statement raised hue and cry among his opponents who branded him as a traitor. The Foreign Minister had no option but to retract and put out a clarification immediately (Niaz, 1995).

The role of the Indian media has been against Pakistan and ISI. The message against ISI was reinforced through movies. Hindi movies such as “Fiza”, “Mission Kashmir” and “Pukar” which portrayed Pakistan intelligence officers as wicked and portrayed the freedom struggle in Kashmir as terrorism while depicted the Indian intelligence operatives as decent.

Indian television channels including some private channels directly referred Pakistan as an enemy country especially during and after Kargil episode. Mostly Indian T.V. channels propagated against Pakistan which has badly affected the prospects of peace between Pakistan and India.

Vernacular press has also nurtured an aggressive and communalized nationalism. Delhi convention on 24-25 February 1995 was criticized by a section of a Pakistani press. Pakistan Times, a Pakistani newspaper termed that RAW was behind idea of Indo-Pak non-official talks. It further stated that RAW would try to use the non-officials talks as a basis for unleashing false propaganda against Pakistan (Pakistan Times, 1995).

Also, the Indian press criticized the Delhi convention of the 1995 Pakistan-India People’s Forum. The Pioneer, an Indian newspaper, lamented the opposition for organizing it in New Delhi at that juncture. Saradindu Mukerjee, an Indian columnist writes bitterly about the ‘unilateral closure’ of the Indian Consulate General in Karachi in these words:

“Our government can really tackle the Pakistan’s challenge only if it bothers to remember that Islamabad is merely continuing with the preparation policy of Muslim communal separatists who brought to naught every attempt in to forge a common anti-imperialist front and maintain communal amity...” (Siddiqui, 1995b).

Similarly, Nawa-i-Waqt, a leading Pakistani Urdu newspaper, commented on Indian Prime Minister’s Lahore visit in its editorial as follows

“Arrival of murderer Vajpayee-prospects for peace. Murderer of Indian and Kashmiri Muslims, and responsible for demolition of Babri Mosque, is arriving at Lahore today according to already decided schedule. Here, he will negotiate with the Prime Minister, Mr. Nawaz Sharif” (Nawa-i-Waqt, 1999b).

**Reflections:**

The role of media in India and Pakistan has been hostile towards peace efforts launched at state and society level. Government controlled electronic media has always played its role as a pro-government instrument. On the other hand, the majority of the print media, which is free from government control, can be considered as a barrier in normalization process between India and Pakistan. It has shaped public opinion as rigid and non-accommodative towards bilateral conflicting issues. Therefore, the first thing what India and Pakistan should do, it is reaffirming those commitments that Pundit Nehru and Liaqat Ali Khan made. The 1949 Nehru-Liaqat Pact was triggered chiefly because of the communal riots in Bengal, but it had bigger objectives before it. An important section of the pact was that 'neither country would carry out hostile and antagonistic propaganda against other' (Askari, 2000). Therefore, Pakistan and India should reaffirm their commitments in the context of the entire gamut of bilateral relationship and for any kind of lasting peace between them.

Despite the negative role of hawks as well as media in both countries, the utility of the track two efforts cannot be ignored. The Track-two efforts clear the ground for track-one leaders to start the negotiations of a meaningful dialogue contributing towards the durable peace. Track-two efforts also help in promoting public understanding on vital international and regional issues concerning peace and security, arms control and disarmament. These initiatives propose viable, pragmatic and politically acceptable options for consideration by the decision makers.

The decision-making responsibility exclusively rests with governments. However, the quiet, unpublicized second channel diplomacy can supplement the government's attempt in piecing together acceptable solutions. The non-official negotiators possess greater maneuverability of approach unlike government officials. They exercise their judgments about the national interests of their respective countries. The solutions proposed by them are ipso facto not binding on their government. The governments have choices of rejection, modification or acceptance of these proposals submitted to them. This flexibility is a great asset. There are many examples where the antagonists were engaged in negotiations despite being in a state of war. The USA and USSR were engaged in bilateral track-two diplomacy on nuclear war and related-issues during cold war. Similarly, Israel and Egypt, being technically in a state of war, had long secret bilateral contacts.

Like the Iron Curtain, there exists a "mind-curtain" between India and Pakistan that needs to be removed. People's participation should be recognized as a sine qua non for effective relationship between them. Encouraged by the people's desires, leaders on both sides may take political risks to accommodate each other's position on the complicated issues including Kashmir dispute.

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