



Spotlight

Why India Wishes to Destabilize Pakistan?

Maryam Mastoor

Research Analyst

Institute of Regional Studies,

Islamabad January 7, 2021

Why India wishes to destabilize Pakistan?

In a conflict ridden history of India and Pakistan relations, Pakistan for the first time has shared a dossier on Indian involvement in destabilizing Pakistan. The dossier contains evidence of Indian involvement in terrorist activities within Pakistan. It also alleges the Indian government of financially sponsoring terrorist activities in Pakistan. According to the dossier, India paid 820,000 dollars to the leadership of Tehrik e Taliban Pakistan. It is running 87 training camps out of which 66 are located in Afghanistan and 21 are located in India. With the dossier, the government of Pakistan wanted to convey to the world that India is actively involved in creating unrest in the country. And it also aims at jeopardizing China's project of China Pak Economic Corridor.

According to a report prepared by *Pakistan Institute of Policy Studies*, Tehrik e Taliban Pakistan and Baluchistan Liberation Army emerged as major actors of instability in Pakistan in the year of 2019. 82 attacks were carried out by Tehrik e Taliban Pakistan. It is alleged that Tehrik e Taliban Pakistan is financially supported by India. According to the dossier, the terror financing is not just confined to TTP, India is actively financing the miscreants in Gilgit Baltistan, Azad Kashmir and Baluchistan.

It is also evident that the leadership of Baloch liberation Army's has linkages with Indian authorities. The traces of these links can be found in Indian media news items as well. According to a report of *The Hindu*, Aslam Alias Achoo, a Baloch separatist leader was treated in Indian hospital.¹ The dossier also alleges India to sponsor Baluchistan movement. It says that transactions of 23.35 million dollars have been made by Indian embassy in Pakistan to Baloch nationals.

The dossier claims that Afghanistan has become a hub of India's malicious activities aimed against Pakistan. Former Indian Ambassador Gautam Mudkopadhaya along with

¹ Kallol Bhattacharjee, Explained: The Baloch Liberation Army, *The Hindu*, 3 July, 2019

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/international/explained-the-baloch-liberation-army/article28273960.ece>
and Chinese consulate attack 'mastermind' being treated at New Delhi hospital, *Express Tribune*, 23 November, 2018

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/1853189/chinese-consulate-attack-mastermind-treated-new-delhi-hospital>

General Ranjeet Senha also personally visited Baloch militant training Camp in Haji Gak area in Afghanistan. According to the dossier, some 30 million dollars were paid to Baloch dissidents to establish a camp in the area of Sarhad Leva Kandhar. Indian interests in Afghanistan are not hidden. India is also heavily spending in Afghanistan's developmental and infrastructural projects, it is the fifth largest donor to Afghanistan.²

According to the dossier, attack on Pearl continental hotel at Gawadar on 11 May, 2019 which resulted in martyrdom of five innocent civilians was also executed by Indian intelligence agencies. The attacker Hamal Nawaz used an Afghani number which was in contact with an Indian number, during the attack. The dossier names Dr. Allah Nazar as a main culprit behind attack on Pearl Continental hotel. The agencies of Pakistan have a record of telephonic conversations between him and persons from Indian secret agencies. According to a news item of *The Hindu*, published on July 3, 2019, Dr. Allah Nazar used to lead Baloch Student Organization, a student wing of Baloch Liberation Army (BLA).³

Ironically, before Pakistan shared a dossier on state sponsored terrorism in Pakistan, a report by internationally acclaimed Financial Crimes Enforcement Networks (FinCen) revealed about dubious activities of Indian banks. A Suspicious Activities Report (SAR) was filed by US banks with a monitoring agency, the FinCen⁴ on September, 2020, according to which, 44 Indian banks were reportedly found involved in suspicious transactions. The banks listed in the SAR report⁵ are also listed in the dossier shared by Pakistan government, on Indian sponsored terrorism in Pakistan.

It is interesting to note that India is also using fake social media networks to defame Pakistan. A Brussels based organization, DisinfoLab revealed that there are 265 fake

² Agnieszka Paczynska, India in Afghanistan: Understanding Development Assistance by Emerging Donors to Conflict-Affected Countries, *The Stimson Center*, Washington DC, 25 September, 2017

<https://www.stimson.org/2017/india-afghanistan-understanding-development-assistance-emerging-donors-conflict-affected/>

³ Explained: The Baloch Liberation Army, *The Hindu*, 3 July, 2019

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/international/explained-the-baloch-liberation-army/article28273960.ece>

⁴ Isac John, Transactions of \$1b by 44 Indian banks flagged in SARs, *Khaleej Times*, 24 September, 2020

<https://www.khaleejtimes.com/business/banking-finance/transactions-of-1b-by-44-indian-banks-flagged-in-sars>

⁵ Ibid

media outlets in 65 countries, which are serving Indian interests. Their primary focus is to inculcate and reinforce anti Pakistan and anti-Chinese sentiments in Indians.⁶ EU chronicles is one such site, it proclaims to give news about EU, but its content is filled with anti-Pakistan news. It is still operational, despite the disclosure of DisinfoLab.⁷ An Indian news agency (ANI) often quotes news from EU chronicles.⁸

It seems that Pakistan is still not accepted by India as a separate state. Successive Indian governments have maintained a policy of feeding the Indian populace with hatred towards Pakistan. Quite astonishingly, ex Indian prime minister Mr. Atal Bihari Vajpai, who is considered as a 'bridge'⁹ between India and Pakistan pressed upon Ms Indra Gandhi during the 1971 crisis to 'lead the country to a total victory over the enemy'.¹⁰

Other than politicians, the military of India also embolden a Pakistan centric approach. Indian Brigadier Arun Sehgal clearly stated, "the most important issue is to prevent Pakistan from becoming the sole arbitrator of the Afghan political and strategic discourse."¹¹ The world needs to understand that the problem of Afghanistan was thrust upon Pakistan in 1979. It wasn't Pakistan's chosen course. Since then, because of ethnic and religious linkages as well, Pakistan's involvement in Afghanistan is undeniable. In fact, Pakistan has become a victim of Cold War policies. Pakistan is trying hard to bring stability in Afghanistan. But instead of having a cooperative policy with Pakistan to stabilize Afghanistan, India is pursuing a policy of 'countering' Pakistan.

These policies are not new, since independence Pakistan has been a contentious country for India. In fact, the idea of Pakistan questions the founding principle of India. Mahatama Gandhi and Motilal Nehru were staunch supporters of United India, without

⁶ Ramsha Jahangir, Indian network lobbying against Pakistan exposed, *Dawn*, December 10, 2020.

⁷ Here it is, <https://euchronicle.com/>

⁸ Please have a look at: <https://www.aninews.in/topic/eu-chronicle/>

⁹ Please see, Sanghamitra Mazumdar, When Atal Bihari Vajpayee charmed Pakistan, *Statesman*, August 16, 2018 and Pakistanis remember Atal Bihari Vajpayee and his historic Lahore bus visit, *India Today*, August 17, 2018

¹⁰ Srishti Choudhary, Aakanksha Ahuja, *Livemint*(Online), 4 March, 2019

¹¹ Larry Hauner and Peter Chalk, India's and Pakistan's Strategies in Afghanistan: Implications for the United States and the Region, *RAND*, Occasional Paper, 2012.

the British Rule. For Gandhi, division of India was like ‘vivisection of a living organism.’¹² According to an archive of Herald Tribune of 1947, before partition, Gandhi in a public meeting said, “we, Muslims and Hindus are interdependent on one another; we cannot get along without each other. The Muslim League will ask Jawahar Lal Nehru to come back, and he will take them back.”¹³ For Gandhi, there was a “disaster in the demand of Pakistan.”¹⁴ Stanley Wolpert in his biography of Nehru mentioned that Nehru called Pakistan just a ‘fantasy’ while responding to Sir Stafford Crisp.¹⁵

As the legacy has left a denial based pattern of India, towards Pakistan, it appears that an ‘intractable conflict’ of India and Pakistan will linger on. The denial of the past has now turned into enmity. The enmity that resides in the hearts, can only be wiped out if the bearer wishes it to be wiped out. This antagonism of Indians for Pakistanis is emotional, not practical. Emotional enigma can hardly be dealt with. Agra summit of 2001 presented the best example when Pakistani leadership wholeheartedly wished to ‘manage’ the longstanding crises of Kashmir between the two nations. It was a bilateral endeavour, with international support as well, but it was not reciprocated in the same spirit by the then BJP government in India.

The leadership of BJP win votes when they chant slogans against Pakistan. On the contrary, in Pakistan, India bashing has never been used as an election winning tactic. In 2013, before elections in Pakistan, Ex-Prime Minister of Pakistan, Mr Nawaz Sharif in an interview to *the Hindu* said, ‘We have a lot of love for India’.¹⁶ Pakistanis elected a leader who even expressed ‘lot of love for India’. But this is not the case with Indians. Anyone who slightly shows any good gesture towards Pakistan, is termed as a traitor.¹⁷ Recently, Rahul Gandhi, leader of opposition in India praised Pakistan for dealing the pandemic of

¹² Stanley Wolpert, *Nehru* (A Biography), (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996) p.316

¹³ *New York Herald Tribune*, New York, 5 June 1947.

¹⁴ Wolpert, *Nehru*, p.304

¹⁵ Stanley Wolpert, *Nehru*, p.357

¹⁶ Interview, We have a lot of Love for India, *The Hindu*, May 14, 2013

¹⁷ Late Om Puri faced a fierce backlash from Indians for criticizing ban against Pakistani actors. For details please see, Shweta Parande, Seditious case filed against Om Puri for insulting Indian Army martyrs? *India.com*, 9 Oct, 2016 <https://www.india.com/entertainment/seditious-case-filed-against-om-puri-for-insulting-indian-army-martyrs-heres-the-copy-of-the-fir-1533391/>

Covid 19, he faced a fierce backlash and was called 'Rahul Lahori'.¹⁸ According to *Pew Global Survey*, the opinion of Indians has grown increasingly negative about Pakistan.¹⁹

Despite Pakistan's multiple efforts of establishing good relations with its neighbour, India is stubbornly pursuing policies of negating Pakistan's peace overtures. Last year, Pakistan returned a captured pilot whose aircraft was shot down by Pakistan Air Force, in Balakot, with respect and honour.²⁰ Balakot strikes were again conducted to 'please' the population just before general elections. The symbolic nature of strikes was revealed by *Reuters*.

²¹When BBC contacted the Indian External Affairs Ministry to comment on the exposure about Balakot strikes that falsified Indian claim of killing 300 people and demolishing a madressa, they obstinately said that they still stand by the claim.²²

Peace in the region depends on ending this jingoistic rivalry of India towards Pakistan. How it can end? Who will sow the seeds of tolerance for Pakistan in Indian society? These are two pertinent, but unaddressed questions which need attention by scholars and politicians of India. The objective of progress and prosperity for the entire region indeed can be achieved by establishing peace. However, in the current circumstances it appears as a distant dream.

¹⁸ Rahul Gandhi says even Pak., Afghanistan handled pandemic better, *The Hindu*, October 16, 2020, and Please see, Rahul Gandhi should be called Rahul Lahori, is he trying to contest polls in Pakistan? asks Sambit Patra, Available at: <https://www.zee5.com/zee5news/rahul-gandhi-should-be-called-rahul-lahori-is-he-trying-to-contest-polls-in-pakistan-asks-sambit-patra>

¹⁹ Hanyu Chwe, How people in India see Pakistan, 70 years after partition, *Pew Global Survey*, December 7, 2017

²⁰Abhinandan was guest': Pak chaiwallah, doctor remember captured IAF pilot, please see, <https://www.theweek.in/news/world/2020/02/29/abhinandan-was-guest-pak-chaiwallah-doctor-remember-captured-iaf-pilot.html>

²¹ Martin Howell, Inside the Pakistani madrasa where India said it killed hundreds of 'terrorists', *Reuters*, April 11, 2019

²² Balakot air strike: Pakistan shows off disputed site on eve of India election, *BBC*, April 10, 2019