

Pakistan-India Relations - future, known and unknown

A Talk by Senator (r) Javed Jabbar

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**SOCIETY FOR
GLOBAL MODERATION**

Strengthening Tolerance, Interfaith Harmony and Democracy



Founded in 2003 under section 42 of the Companies Ordinance, 1984 as a 'not for profit' organization

Chairman's Note

There has always been a need to promote tolerance, interfaith harmony and democracy in society. After 9/11, the people of Pakistan – and many more around the world – were accused of extremism and intolerance. It was to counter this mindset that I, along with a few other like-minded individuals, thought of establishing the Society for Global Moderation (SGM). It was then known as The Moderates.



*Syed Jawaid Iqbal
Founding Chairman*

I perceived SGM as a body that would promote peace and tolerance in all societies. SGM is not against any religion, custom or creed and desires to promote a world that supports moderation and temperance.

Over the years, SGM has invited prominent scholars and thinkers from around the world to share their views on subjects that are in conformity with its ideals.

They include: **Walter Russell Mead**, US foreign policy expert, who has served as the Henry A. Kissinger Senior Fellow for U.S. Foreign Policy at the Council on Foreign Relations. Subject: *'India, Pakistan and Afghanistan.'* **Marguerite H. Sullivan**, US Public Affairs and Communications Specialist and Director of the Center on International Media Assistance. Subject: *'Media Freedom and Sustainable Democracy.'* **Jacqueline Novogratz**, founder and CEO, Acumen Fund. Subject: *'Philanthropy and Leadership.'* **Vishakha Desai**, President Asia Society. Subject: *'Pakistan's Perception among the U.S. Populace.'* **Dr. Zaheerul Islam**, Islamic scholar. Subject: *'Islam in a Modern State.'* **Najmuddin Sheikh**, former foreign secretary of Pakistan. Subject: *'Foreign Policy Challenges and the New Government.'* **Sen. Raza Rabbani**, former chairman of Pakistan Senate. Subject: *'18th Amendment in the Constitution of Pakistan.'* **Dr. Mehtab A. Karim**, renowned demographer. Subject: *'Is the Population Bomb Ticking in Pakistan?'*

The SGM Board of Directors considered it appropriate to invite **Sen. (r) Javed Jabbar**, former minister, to speak on the relevant subject of *'Pakistan-India Relations - future, known and unknown.'* In his Talk, Sen Javed Jabbar said it was not known what the conditions in India would be after the Indian elections and how they would impact the region.

Excerpts from his Talk, plus questions, answers and comments from the audience are a part of this booklet.

Speaker's Profile

Javed Jabbar has served as a minister in three federal cabinets. He was Minister of Information and Broadcasting and Science and Technology under Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto. He subsequently served as Minister of Petroleum and Natural Resources and Adviser on National Affairs to General Pervez Musharraf, then the Chief Executive of Pakistan.



*Senator (r) Javed Jabbar
Former federal minister*

Mr. Jabbar takes active interest in such diverse subjects as voluntary work for grassroots development, environment, media, international affairs, writing and film-making.

New laws originally drafted by him introduced independent TV and radio channels in Pakistan in 2002 and enabled unprecedented access by citizens to officially-controlled data through the Freedom of Information statute. Major reforms in other ministries were also introduced during his tenures.

His book, 'Pathways -- Selected Writings' won the UBL Literature Prize for the Best English Non-fiction Book at the 9th Karachi Literature Festival, March 2018. Another of his books, 'What is Pakistaniyat?' published in English and Urdu, is prescribed in the curriculum of reputed education and training institutions.

Cinema, documentary and advertising films which were written, produced and directed by him have won several international and national awards. He hosted a programme 'The World Tonight' on PTV and a weekly FM radio programme in Urdu on FM 105, 'Friday Evening with Javed Jabbar', covering Pakistan's history, culture and international relations. He has founded/co-founded several leading grassroots organizations presently working in over 3000 locations across Pakistan to promote the rights of women, children and religious minorities in particular.

Javed Jabbar was elected for two consecutive terms as Global Vice President, International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), 2004-2012. This is the world's oldest and largest environment organization comprising states, governments, NGOs and scientists from over 130 countries.

The Human Rights Society of Pakistan has awarded Javed Jabbar a Gold Medal for outstanding public service. In 2015, the Pakistan Advertisers' Society presented him with a Lifetime Achievement Award for comprehensive contributions to the fields of marketing and advertising.

‘The future is going to bring increased pressures on Pakistan’

Syed Jawaid Iqbal commenced the proceedings by thanking Mr. Javed Jabbar for coming over to address members of the Society for Global Moderation (SGM) and other distinguished guests on the topic of ‘Pakistan-India Relations, Future, Known and Unknown’.



He said the subject was interesting and relevant, keeping in view the scenario in the South Asian region.

In his address to, Mr. Javed Jabbar said that the Pakistan-India relationship is the most complex bilateral relationship. There are no other two nation states in the entire world and the 193 members of the United Nations with the kind of multilayered

complexity as Pakistan and India have. The people of both countries have a long history together and yet there are great differences among them. By and large, people in the region are driven by a hysterical media and are also restrained by their mindsets.

We have vivid asymmetries and symmetries and unresolved disputes from Kashmir to Siachen.

He said that when talking about the Pakistan-India relationship, one is also talking about the internal state and society. There are no people to people relations if the state doesn't want it. We have vivid asymmetries and symmetries and unresolved disputes from Kashmir to Siachen. But like the Sphinx with half of its face broken, it is difficult to tell what it is initially or whether the Pakistan and India relationship is destined to be jinxed.

August 1947 saw the birth of two different states which was more about gaining independence than partition. It was actually the partition of Punjab and Bengal than the breaking of Mahabharat. Pakistan and its society are actually quite secular. In contrast, the Indian state calls itself secular but its society is quite religious. This reflects Hindu dominance. Although there may be streaks of extremism in Pakistan, the voters have never voted a religious party into office whereas Hindutva, which is a very aggressive form of Hinduism, has led to electoral revolution in India.

Mr. Jabbar said that despite Pakistan's fixation with Bollywood, we don't really comprehend India. And as for South India we don't know it. And in India, even erudite scholars get things wrong about Pakistan and its people. In short, both Pakistan and India are responsible for the problems between them.

People like Vallabhbhai Patel, who predicted Pakistan's end within its first six months, was proven wrong despite going into conflict within that period with India over Kashmir. This country not just survived but it also managed economic growth despite political instability and was seen as a model and then we went into war with India in 1965. However, India too violated the Simla Agreement. And yet in all the Saarc countries, it is only Pakistan which has the capacity and will to challenge India. The onus is also on India. How it grabbed Kashmir through fraud and how it shamelessly invaded East Pakistan.

As compared to Pakistan's, India's coastline is a much longer one but Pakistan ranks higher in the World Happiness Index and that reflects this nation's will to survive. Still, the future is going to bring increased pressures on Pakistan, mostly economical. Pakistan also faces more military deployment, which cannot be ignored.

With respect to the future of Pakistan-India relations, this is within the control of people of both countries but they need to foster a positive psyche and an attitude about the other country. The two countries need to be sure about how they deploy their armed forces and if India chooses to deploy 70 to 80 percent of its forces near Pakistan's borders, then Pakistan will not be able to do anything about it and the onus will fairly and squarely lie on the shoulders of India.

The non-use of nuclear weapons is a given and neither country can afford to use their nuclear weapons as this means mutually assured destruction. However, Pakistan can not commit itself to 'no first use' because of the asymmetrical position in conventional military strengths of both countries. I believe a movement towards dispute settlement is essential.

In the current situation, Pakistan has made the terrible mistake of not telling its real story to the world and there is no justification for this. I hope that the civil and the military leadership will not compromise on this any further.

The future of the Pakistan-India bilateral relationship tends to be a future unknown because what will happen in India after May 2019 is not known. But whatever the result, there will be calibrated de-escalation so that no one loses face. The process has already begun. There will be third party mediation which is already taking place but will not be acknowledged by both sides. There will be a resumption of Track II diplomacy and there will be more back channel discussions.

With respect to the future of Pakistan-India relations, this is within the control of people.

The event



in pictures



Q&A and Comments



Moin Fudda

Moin Fudda: Do you think our Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi did the right thing by not attending the OIC meeting?

Answer: I think our position was so vividly apparent and articulately expressed. The UAE government needed to be told very clearly that they had disregarded the founder member of the OIC and very insensitively invited the Indian foreign minister at the OIC Foreign Ministers' Council. But as you already know, these countries follow tradition.



Asif Noorani

Asif Noorani: Do you think that the Indian mass media will be able to get rid of its war hysteria anytime soon?

Answer: I don't see the vitriol being spilled out by Indian news channels or even their social media will diminish immediately as such things can only happen gradually. The virus of Hindutva has now been embedded into different parts of the Indian system. It will be difficult to dislodge these elements and replace them with a more balanced view. It is difficult to tell whether India will be able to produce a new, visionary leadership anytime soon.

As for a new political leadership in Pakistan, we have done very well. I am not underestimating what Prime Minister Imran Khan did to deescalate military tensions with India, despite the fact that the western media has not adequately recognized Pakistan's maturity. I think we deserve much greater appreciation. Not only the Prime Minister but Pakistani media, people and our armed forces, all of us have shown a far greater maturity level than our neighbours.



Talat Rahim

Talat Rahim: I have lots of friends in India who are pro-peace and pro-Pakistan but they too always ask me a difficult question: When will Pakistan stop exporting terrorism to India?

Answer: You must immediately tell them that India has been exporting terrorism to Pakistan for a long time. They do it more cleverly and subtly than we tend to do. They have been doing it systematically in Karachi, FATA, Balochistan and in other parts of the country. They have also infiltrated parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa through Afghanistan. There was this huge Indian military convoy and one character carrying 350 kg explosives managed to evade all the security checks, comfortably positioning himself to blow himself up. It completely lacks credibility. It was an inside job and all you have to do is to see the capacity of RAW and the Indian mindset to create the Pulwama situation.



*Air Vice Marshal
(r) Abid Rao*

Air Vice Marshal (r) Abid Rao: The biggest impediment for confidence-building measures between India and Pakistan are the non-state actors. Why is the state policy still unclear on this?

Answer: From Pakistan's strategic point of view, we have a very large neighbour who is unwilling to talk about Kashmir. To make things worse, India makes systematic attempts to prevent Kashmir from being addressed at any international forum. This leads to enormous frustration and genuine grievances. So how do you come to terms with such a large neighbour who is willfully suppressing people and generating so much conflict?



Yaseen Siddique

Yaseen Siddique: I don't think that Kashmiris want to become a part of Pakistan. Do we want Kashmir to become a part of Pakistan or are we supporting Kashmir because we want it to become independent?

Answer: There cannot be a single answer to your question because of the multiple dimensions of Kashmir. We have to agree what is Kashmir. If we mean the areas and districts of Indian occupied Kashmir which has a Muslim majority, we don't know what they want until there is a plebiscite. Some people will say a plebiscite is not enough because it does not offer the third option which is independence. As visualized by the UN, a plebiscite was only about choosing between Indian and Pakistan and it didn't offer the third option of independence. So we need to agree whether there can be a third option and we know that India will obviously oppose it and even Pakistan will oppose it because it will undermine our position that we have been demanding the right of self-determination. So we have to revise our fundamental premise and there cannot a single answer.



Muzaffar Meraj

Muzaffar Meraj: Can you please shed some light on Dawn Leaks that endangered the interest of the state?

Answer: It is a moot point. The deliberations of that committee were confidential. I solemnly respect the confidentiality of certain aspects of the state which I would not want to disclose even if this means protecting something that has been wrongly done by the state. I have never been in the Ministry of Defence but I have served in the cabinet three times. I have been reasonably close to General Pervez Musharraf as well as the other two heads of the government and I will never disclose the inside details. In the case of Dawn Leaks, it was the betrayal of state obligations of those people who participated in that meeting. I believe I would have not leaked that information and if I were editor of Dawn I would not publish it because the damage growing out of that published news story for the whole country and the state was far greater than the use of freedom of expression.



Dr. Sabiha

Dr. Sabiha: India seems to be becoming a non-secular country. Do you see the fallout of that on Pakistan and would it bring about an exodus of Indian Muslims to Pakistan?

Answer: I don't see it is going to happen as a cohesive, united movement. As history suggests, the Indian Muslims have never taken up the issue of Kashmir for whatever reasons. They possibly feel threatened that if they raise the Kashmir issue they will be targeted. In fact, the Kashmir dispute receives no support from any part of India and the majority of Muslims in India are reconciled to living in the Hindu-dominant country.



Syed Nusrat Ali

Syed Nusrat Ali: How will the recent military escalations between Pakistan and India have an impact on Modi's re-election as the Indian Prime Minister?

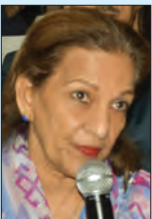
Answer: I wish I had a definitive answer to give. In my opinion, the recent military clash with Pakistan alone will not ensure victory for the BJP in the forthcoming general elections.



Dr. Mehtab Karim

Dr. Mehtab Karim: There is a lot of sympathy shown to the Palestinian cause in the West, but we don't see anything supportive to Kashmir in the international media.

Answer: I agree. This is partly because we have failed to conduct the kind of sustained engagement with global media, whereas the Indian system recognizes that and engages in regular dialogue and there are many Americans of Indian origin, such as Fareed Zakaria of the CNN, who are now subtly able to shape the presentation in their own subjective way. We have not made an equivalent effort by the state and even by Pakistani Americans living in the U.S.



Shahnaz Wazir Ali

Comment

Shahnaz Wazir Ali: The scenario is being painted these days about the terrible possibility that what is happening to the Palestinians is now going to happen to the Kashmiris. It is a great tragedy in the Muslim world that now the Palestinians have been completely decimated and none of the major Muslim countries have really done anything to support, save and stand up as one voice to protect the Palestinian people. With regard to Kashmir, Pakistan's voice is the largest voice raised in the international forum. The scenario that has been painted now is that India is very aggressively following Hindutva as its national policy and Modi, who is possibly going to be re-elected, is pursuing the line even more relentlessly. I think there is a possibility that the Palestinian tragedy is now going to be played out in Kashmir.



**“ A people that
elect corrupt
politicians,
imposters, thieves
and traitors are
not victims... but
accomplices ”**

– George Orwell



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