
**HISTORICAL, CULTURAL AND GEOGRAPHICAL TIES
BETWEEN PAKISTAN AND IRAN**

Abdul Qadir

Assistant Professor, Department of International Relations, University of Balochistan, Quetta

Dr Mir Wais Kasi

Associate Professor, Department of International Relations, University of Balochistan, Quetta

Dr Jabeen Bhutto

*Assistant Professor, Department of Comparative Religion and Islamic Culture,
University of Sindh, Allama i.I.Kazi Campus, Jamshoro*

Dr Abdul Rahman Nizamani

Assistant Professor Department of Economics, University of Sindh Jamshoro

ABSTRACT

In order to get a vivid picture of Pakistan-Iran relations, the paper delves into the past with Iranian history and Iranian sphere of influence in South Asia. Both South Asia and Iran have ancient historical, cultural and religious ties since the times of the Cyrus the Great to the present. The Persian language and literature particularly the Persian classical poetry have left a great impression on sub-continent's cultural and educational canvass. Pakistan-Iran border which was drawn by the British in the 1880s, remains still intact. Though the border is a wasteland with little agriculture but on the sea-front both the countries have access to the Strait of Hormuz which is of great strategic importance. Moreover, ethnic Baloch live on both sides of the border and cross-border and trade and livestock is the mainstay of cross-border economy. During the Cold War period, both Pakistan and Iran were subservient to the US policies against the Soviet Union; consequently, both received massive arms and equipment. This paper also indicates that during Mohammed Reza Shah's time, the relations between Pakistan and Iran were quite friendly but they underwent a change after the Iranian revolution and during General Zia's time. The main issues have been spelled out up-till 1979 and the minor frictions between the two countries could be managed through diplomacy. External pressures are also influencing the contemporary relations between the two countries and have put Pakistan in a dilemma. Historical and secondary sources have been used for the conduct of the study. Historical research has an important role to play in the Social Sciences. It helps us to understand the present by highlighting the past events.

REMOTE HISTORY

Pakistan as a part of South Asia is a cradle to one of the oldest civilizations i.e. Mohen-jo-Daro in Sindh, Harappa in Punjab and Mehr-Garh in Balochistan. It is contiguous to Iran and they have historical, cultural, religious and ethnic ties since ancient times. The Civilization of Iran is very

rich and dates back to the 6th century B.C. The Achaemenid Cyrus the Great ruled over a vast empire including the banks of the river Indus i.e. present day Pakistan. In a similar vein, Darius-I conquered Punjab and greater part of Indus valley (Encyclopaedia, 2006). The Achaemenids were great builders and Persepolis is a symbol of their architecture. Cyrus memory is still revered by most of the Iranians and during Muhammad Reza Shah Pahlavi's time in 1971, a pompous show was arranged at Persepolis which was attended by many world leaders and celebrities. The Achaemenid heritage, culture and Civilization influenced the Indian society of the time for centuries. Alexander the Great destroyed the Achaemenid dynasty in 330 B.C. and by conquering Afghanistan, he entered into India. Defeating the Porus at Jhelum (modern day Pakistan), he marched to present day Balochistan and eastern Iran (Tanner, 2009). A part of his army perished because of heat and desolation.

When the Arabs defeated the Sassanids (Persians) in 636 A.D, the Persian culture absorbed many essential parts of Islamic Arabic culture (Iran -Encyclopaedia, 2006). Islam spread rapidly and displaced Zoroastrianism and some of its followers ultimately had to seek shelter in India (Nehru, 2017). During the Safavid dynasty (1501-1736) Shi-ite Islam became the State religion (Encyclopaedia Iran, 2006). Safavid era was the golden time of Iran's architecture, paintings, literature, carpet making, etc. Taj Mahal in Agra is in the spirit of Persian architecture and is a great historical monument. According to Jawahar Lal Nehru's assessment the Safavid ruler – Shah Abbas was the contemporary of Mughal emperors Akbar and Jehangir (Nehru, 2017). "The flow of ideas, people and trade between Persia and Indian sub-continent dates back Millenia," says Vatanka (2017:7). Vatanka adds, "for the last five hundred years many Iranians have left Persia for South Asia due to economic reasons or religious persecution and this diaspora played an important role in Indian political and economic life" (Vatanka, 2017:9). The migrated people were embedded with their own traditions and customs. The dominant Persian culture led to a gradual penetration and an influential Shia minority in South Asia. Ijaz Akram categorizes Persian cultural influence spreading from the west of river Indus to the Punjab and Indian north (Akram, 2009). Iran has left a soft power image in South Asia. Persian language in courts and offices and the Persian literature created a large group of population who conveyed Persian ideas and culture from poetry and philosophy to many other fields. Mughals had also made the Persian as the official language until the British in 1843 made the English as the official language in India (Vatanka, 2017). Persian was also taught in Madrassas and Maktabas during the Muslim rule in India. The Persian classical poets like Saadi, Hafiz, Firdousi, Khayam and Rumi who are considered to be the soul of Iranian nation are still read by intellectuals

and scholars in South Asia. Famous South Asian poets like ‘Ghalib’ and ‘Iqbal’ wrote excellent poetry in Persian and Iqbal’s poetry and thought are still appreciated in Iran. Although South Asia and Iran have an inter wind history and culture but on the flipside the Indians had to face a traumatic experience when the Mughal Capital Delhi was ransacked by the Persian Nadir Shah in 1739 and all the treasures including Peacock throne was taken away.

GEOGRAPHICAL CONTIGUITY

Kaplan referring to Spykman says that Geography is the most fundamental factor in the foreign policy of the States because it is the most permanent.....(Kaplan, 2013). The British Commissioner- Sir Frederic J. Goldsmid was assigned the job of demarking Persia’s border with British India and Afghanistan in 1880’s. On the basis of this drawn line (with a little change) a border agreement was reached between Pakistan and Iran in 1958 (Vatanka, 2017). The long standing 900 km which stretches over a sparsely populated deserted land unites Pakistan and Iran. Louis Dupree called the three cornered area between Iran and Pakistan and Afghanistan as ‘Empty triangle’ because of its desolation, deserts and tough terrain (Vatanka, 2017). Besides the contiguity on land, on the sea front both Pakistan and Iran have access to the Indian Ocean and Gulf and they have access to the Strait of Hormuz. Gwadar (Pakistan) and Chahbahar (Iran) are emerging and competing ports. These warm water ports could also offer commercial outlets to the Central Asian States which are landlocked countries.

The Great Game (a term for strategic rivalry) between British and Russians which started in 19th century was a significant time of upheaval and foreign spies. The Great game ended in August 1907 by signing the Anglo-Russian agreement (Pollack, 2005). In the Great Game Britain adopted a ‘forward policy’ i.e. not to defend India within its own border but contain the Russian expansion into Iran and Afghanistan. It was feared that Russia would enter into South Asia through the border routes of these countries. The British extended a Railway line up-to Bolan Pass and then to Iranian town of Zahidan. In early 1880’s, Iran and Afghanistan were left as buffer zones between British India and Russia. British spies played a key role in the Colonial fray, but any expected Russian invasion of India through Persia proved to be an absurdity and it fizzled out. One of the negative aspects of the Great Game was that Indians and local population were not taken worth into any consideration. Despite the end of the Great Game, both British and Russian interference in Iranian affairs continued unabated and they had their sphere of influence on the Iranian soil.

A solid point in Pakistan and Iran relations is that there is no territorial claim or sovereignty dispute between the two countries. Sometimes border

skirmishes may occur but they are managed amicably by both Pakistan and Iran. The Pak-Afghan and Iran border is known to be used as a conduit for drugs supplies to Iran and then to other countries. The smugglers are well armed and Iranian forces have suffered losses in cross-border incursions. Therefore, the Iranian Government has to retaliate by sporadic shelling on Pakistan-border area.

The Balochs who mostly belong to Sunni Islam, live on both sides of the Pak-Iran border i.e. Pakistani Balochistan and Iranian province of Siestan-Balochistan. Their language is Balochi which is akin to Persian. Since they live in periphery – faraway from Islamabad and Tehran, therefore little development has taken place in their areas. They derive their sustenance from sheep and goat tending with scanty agriculture and trading. The population is scattered in far flung areas and they have little education. Pakistani and Iranian governments are trying to assimilate them to the greater national identity of their respective counties. What these people need is open borders, trading and economic and social uplift.

RELATIONS DURING THE FIRST HALF OF THE 20TH CENTURY

In the first half of the 20th century, Iran witnessed a tempestuous history. It had seen the end of Qajar dynasty and the rise of the Pahlavi dynasty in 1925. Under the leadership of Reza Shah attempts were made to modernize Iran so that it could enter into the comity of nations. But Reza Shah faced many serious problems from the outside big powers. During the World War-II from 1941 to 1945, Iran was occupied by the Soviet and the British forces. Reza Khan was forced to abdicate in favour of his son Muhammad Reza Pahlavi. After World War II the Soviet Union didn't leave Iran soon. The Azerbaijan issue led to a diplomatic confrontation in March, 1946 between the USSR on the one hand, and the Iranians and the western allies, on the other hand (Halliday, 2005). The Soviet Union was obliged to withdraw its forces but the incidents like these left a deep scar on the psyche of Iranians and most importantly on Muhammad Reza Shah Pahlavi. He proceeded with fear and caution against the Soviet Union and Communism. Therefore, foreign occupation coupled with Mossadegh's rule had a deep paranoid impression on Shah. When the democratically elected Dr. Muhammad Mossadegh came to power in 1951, the Shah fled the country. Mossadegh followed an independent and neutral foreign policy and nationalised Anglo Iranian Oil Company (AIOC). But Mossadegh's government was toppled in 1953 by CIA and Shah was restored to power. Mossadegh was a nationalist-liberal and a democrat and Iranians still remember him. 'Good days and bad days go past,' he once told the Shah. 'What stays is a good name or a bad name' (Bellague, 2013).

The historical experience has created a sense of vulnerability in both Pakistan and Iran. Just like other countries of Middle East who had witnessed Colonial rule or Colonial subordination, Pakistan and Iran looked at each other as areas of interest who could work together to ensure their survival. For Iranian leadership, Pakistan provided an opportunity to have close links with each other as both the countries had poor relations with their neighbours for example, Iran had few links with Soviet Union and didn't get along well with Arab nations to the West (Kheli, 1977). Pakistan as a nascent country faced a myriad of problems and according to Hafeez Malik, these problems were: (i) Primarily the hostility of India and, to a lesser degree, the antagonism of Afghanistan; (ii) the lack of economic resources for industrial development and the refugee re-settlement in Pakistan; (iii) exceptionally inadequate military, which exposed Pakistan to India's hegemony (Malik, 2014). The Pakistani leadership repeatedly asked for military and economic aid from the United States but met with very little success. In 1947, Quaid-e-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah asked for \$2 billion assistance from the United States but was received with only \$10 million. On the other hand, Pakistan's first Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan did not visit the USSR despite invitation by Stalin. The continued un-acceptance of Pakistan as a viable polity by Indian statesmen and their denial to recognize that Pakistan will survive beyond a few years, only helped reinforce Pakistan's perception of its security (Waheed, 2014).

In order to foment good relations with Pakistan, Iran recognized Pakistan in 1949 and in 1950 Reza Shah was the first Head of State to visit Pakistan. Enormous possibilities of mutually beneficial economic and commercial, cultural affinities and historical linkages provided the underpinning for a robust friendly relationship between the two countries (Vatanka, 2017). Liaquat Ali Khan when returning back from Commonwealth conference stayed in Iran as Shah's guest in May 1949.

According to Hafeez Malik, from 1947-58 i.e. the first decade of Pakistan, the important clear factors of Pakistan's foreign policy were the alliances with the (i) the United States (ii) People's Republic of China (iii) the Middle East, with particular emphasis on the Pro-Western Arab States, Iran and Turkey (Malik, 2014:158). While Iran during this period showed friendly gesture towards Pakistan by recognizing it in 1949 and signing the friendship treaty in 1950.

PAKISTAN-IRAN DURING THE COLD WAR

Pakistan and Iran have important strategic locations because of their land and sea routes and possession of important resources. Regarding Pakistan's geo-strategic role, Babar Ayaz says, "If the British Commonwealth and the United States of America are to be in position to

defend their vital interests in the Middle East, then the best possible stable area from which to conduct this defence is from Pakistan territory. Pakistan is the keystone of the strategic arch of the wide and vulnerable waters of the Indian Ocean” (Ayaz, 2013:253). Similarly, Kaplan states about Iran’s strategic importance: Iran, because it is in possession of the key geography of the Middle East – in terms of location, population and energy resources – is therefore fundamental to geopolitics (Kaplan, 2013). During the Cold War geographic locations and geo-political importance of Pakistan and Iran led to the influence and meddling of US in these countries.

Since both the countries have strategic importance therefore, they have been prone to insecurity and foreign influence and intervention. Pakistan – because of the fear of aggression from India, has been following an India centric foreign policy. Threats from Afghanistan and Soviet Union created added fears and apprehensions in Pakistan. Therefore, Pakistan has defined itself as a security state from the very beginning. In the case of Iran, the foreign interventions through centuries, have led Iranian suspicions of foreign forces and outsiders. Talbot looks at Iran in the perspective of the ‘Great Game’ and says, “The Great Game that Russia and Britain played for control over Central Asia in the nineteenth century left scars on the generations of Iranian leaders and deeply instilled a determination to insulate Iran from foreign influence” (Talbot, 2012).

Since Pakistan and Iran were ill-equipped to meet their defence needs, therefore, they opted for the United States at the cost of their independent identity. While US during the Cold War looked at both Pakistan and Iran through the prism of containment of Communism. Both Pakistan and Iran joined South East Asian Treaty Organization (SEATO) in 1954 and Baghdad Pact in 1955 (comprising Pakistan, Iran, Iraq, Turkey and England) which was later renamed CENTO (Central Treaty Organization) in 1959. These alliances led to increased Soviet threat to both Pakistan and Iran. Pakistan faced a real military threat when in 1962 an American spy U-2 plane was shot down by the Soviet Union in its territorial space which had flown from Budaber – a military base near Peshawar. The Soviet Union admonished Pakistan for severe consequences but gradually it cooled down.

Shah always felt jittery about his throne as he had experienced exile when Mossadegh took power in the early fifties. When there was a leftist coup d’état in Iraq, the Shah feared for his rule and asked President Ayub of Pakistan for a confederation between Pakistan and Iran. Although this venture couldn’t materialise but remained on the drawing board up till mid 1970s (Vatanka, 2017). West suspected Soviet Union behind every trouble outside the Iron Curtain. George Kennan, an American diplomat suggested a policy of ‘Containment of Communism’ which was adopted in the Truman doctrine (Perry, 1993). President Nixon in 1969 presented the Nixon doctrine

in which he asked the American allies to be responsible for their own defence with the assistance of United States. Nixon and his foreign secretary - Kissinger looked at the world through the prism of international conflict between US and USSR and both were proponents. The third world was seen by them as a pawn for their own American advantage. Therefore, the Nixon doctrine gave the role of regional policeman to the Shah of Iran (Pollack, 2005). Nixon almost gave a free hand to Shah for the purchase of arms from the US which continued after Nixon. While Shah's thirst for arms were unabated and he went on purchasing arms. The oil price increase in 1970s provided a bonanza to Shah and OPEC countries. Between 1972 and 1977, Iran would spend over \$ 16 billion on American weaponry alone and accounted for one third of American sales (Pollack, K.M.2005:109). However, in case of Pakistan-India war in 1971, Nixon couldn't deliver arms to Pakistan because of embargo but he was willing to help Pakistan through a third party like Iran. Shah also sometimes became suspicious of US support for Iran as during the 1965 and 1971 wars his ally Pakistan was not helped by US (Pollack, 2005).

When Zulfikar Ali Bhutto took power in Pakistan after post-1971 debacle, he initiated cordial relations with Shah. Bhutto asked for aid and arms from his more affluent neighbour. In May 1973, during his visit to Iran, he cooled down Shah's fears about the situation in Balochistan and got additional assistance (Raza, 1998). Shah also tried to assuage, President Daoud Khan of Afghanistan on his claim of Pakthunistan (homeland for Pakthuns). However, Shah at times interfered in Pakistan's affairs and assumed the role of a benefactor. With the passage of time, differences between Shah and Bhutto were discernible as Shah disliked Bhutto's intimacy with the Arabs.

Bhutto's foreign policy was based on bilateralism and he avoided multilateral pacts and superpower rivalry. Pakistan left SEATO but continued to participate in CENTO. However, the Iranian revolution of 1979 ended the CENTO for good. On the issue of nuclear processing plant Bhutto's relations with the US soured and US threatened for serious action but Bhutto didn't budge despite Symington amendment. The Symington amendment passed in 1976 banned assistance to any country trafficking in nuclear enrichment technology outside of international controls (Wynbrandt, 2009). Pakistan's options for nuclear program were curtailed and there was pressure from US to shelve its program. Kissinger came to Pakistan with a policy of carrot and stick and according to Frankopan. In 1976, Kissinger suggested that Pakistan should wind down its reprocessing project and rely instead on a US-supplied facility being built in Iran that was part of a scheme devised by none other than Dick Cheney, for the plant in Iran to serve as a hub for energy needs across the region. When the President of Pakistan

turned down this offer, the US threatened to cut off the country's aid package (Frankopan, 2018). The French under US pressure also cancelled the supply of Nuclear reactor to Pakistan. But Pakistan's nuclear program continued despite the sanctions from US.

Throughout the Cold War many factors had been binding and splitting relations between Pakistan and Iran. Both countries were secular, centralized and Pro-West up till 1979. However, they played a subservient role according to the dictates of United States. Both were strategic partners and had a special relationship through SEATO and CENTO and served US interests to contain Communism. RCD which started in 1965 and later turned to ECO was a binding gesture of friendship amongst Pakistan, Iran and Turkey. Kapur sums up and gives an overview of some of the binding factors between the two countries from 1950 to 1979: (i) Both maintained a self-image as moderate Muslim States with cultural heritage and shared strategic interests (ii) Both were key players in the US struggle against Soviet expansion through the development of "northern tiers" (iii) Through the regional cooperation program both were partners in search of economic (security) (iv) Both were partners in border security concerning Balochistan (v) Both were aware that Pakistan was a geo-strategic buffer between India and Iran that needed to be maintained (vi) Iran served as a sanctuary to Pakistan's Airforce in a military crisis (in the 1965 war) and as a source of material and diplomatic support in Pakistan's fight with India (Kapur, 1990).

Major regime changes took place during the Cold War in the region at the end of the 1970s. Zia-ul-Haq staged a coup in Pakistan in July 1977. A communist revolution took place in Afghanistan in April 1978 and the Soviet Union intervened in Afghanistan in December 1979. These events brought a cataclysmic change in the region which led to a split up approach in Pak-Iran foreign policies on Afghanistan. After the Iranian revolution, Khomeini went on a belligerent path against US while Pakistan under Zia became a frontline State against the Soviet in Afghanistan. The religious sectarian beliefs and thought process of Zia and Khomeini also differed therefore their policies on Afghanistan diverged. Similarly, Iran-Saudi rivalry had a bearing on Pakistan and strained the relations between Pakistan and Iran. American sanctions and policies against Iran affected Pak-Iran relations.

CONTEMPORARY SCENARIO

Today, relations between Pakistan and Iran are lukewarm and uneasy due to external pressures and border insecurities. The external pressure comes mostly from US who tries to isolate both Pakistan and Iran and weaken their economies. In case of Pakistan, the much needed coalition support fund amounting to \$1.3 billion has been stopped by the US and Pak-US relations are at the lowest ebb. US has also re-imposed series of severe

sanctions against Iran and it is feared that by-passing these sanctions and trading with Iran could adversely affect Pakistan's exports to US and its other vital interests. Fatemeh Aman succinctly describes the US factor on Pakistan-Iran relations as follows:

Both Pakistan and Iran are deeply in trouble, socially and economically. Both are confronting US attempts to isolate them. Pakistan is prone to insurgency, terrorist attacks and ethnic tensions. Iran is facing renewed draconian sanctions on its oil industry and banks and rising domestic discontent. More than ever, they need stable relations, but external players may make them harder than ever to achieve (Aman, 2019).

Under the strict US sanctions, Iran is in dire need of strategic and trade partners and Pakistan could be its natural close neighbour ally. Iran wants to dispose of its surplus oil and could provide energy starved Pakistan with oil and gas at cheaper or discounted rates. Iran has also the capacity to increase the supply of electricity to Pakistan, manifold. Pakistan cannot afford to do away with these advantages and can explain to the US about its genuine energy needs. Pakistan may also not succumb to US pressures as animosity with Iran will be detrimental to Pakistan's interests.

Saudi Arabia is also sensitive to any friendly overture between Pakistan and Iran, as Saudi Arabia looks at its foreign relations through the prism of Iran. Pakistan's interests also lie more with Saudi Arabia as millions of Pakistani expatriates work there and Saudi Arabia has been bailing out Pakistan, time and again. Recently, Saudi Arabia provided \$3 billion to Imran Khan's government to ease its balance of payments problem and UAE also followed suit. According to Michael Kugelman: "...Riyadh- already enjoying some new leverage after its recent \$3 billion gift to Pakistan- could pressure Islamabad to side with the Saudis in an unfolding US-Iran crisis" (Kugelman, 2019). Saudi Arabia has also agreed to provide oil on deferred payment from 1st July, 2019 for three years which in total amounts to \$ 9.6 billion. However, Pakistan should not take sides in the Middle East as the situation in the Middle East is volatile and changes from time to time. Ahmed Rashid apprehends: "If Pakistan does rent out its regular forces to any State, the Iran backlash will be fierce. Pakistan will be dragged into an Iran-Arab rivalry in the region, a sectarian war in the Middle East that would inflame sectarian tendencies in Pakistan" (Rashid, 2013). Under such circumstances Pakistan is obliged to maintain a balance in its relations with both Saudi-Arabia and Iran.

In the bordering areas of Pakistan and Iran, occasional incidents of shelling have been noticed from Iranian side. Sometimes drug-smugglers infiltrate from Pak-Iran and Afghan border and ambush the Iranian border patrol, therefore Iran has to retaliate. However, the real tension between Pakistan and Iran and the United States ensued when in 2006 Jundallah

having a force of about 1000 militants resorted to subversion in Iran (Mabon, 2018). Later on General Kayani finished off the hideouts of Jundallah in Pakistan while Abdul Malik Reki who was spearheading the Jundallah group was captured and hanged by Iranians (Rashid, 2013). In this connection, Iran's response was to support some Taliban groups to act as counter-weight to US' influence in the region.

Although Jundallah phenomenon has subsided but in recent years, a spate of terrorist attacks took place on Pak-Iran border areas and 27 Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) were killed. According to Amir Rana, "Iran alleges that Saudi backed group Jaish-ul-Adl carried out the attack from Pakistan while Pakistan alleges that Baloch separatist organizations are operating in Pakistan from Iranian soil (Rana, 2019). This indicates that terrorism on both sides of the border has created distrust and somewhat strained relations between the two countries. But this should not be considered as State sponsored either in Pakistan or Iran as non-State actors are troublesome and outrageous for both the countries. The menace of terrorism could be tackled with better security management and co-operation and both the countries have the mechanism for it. During Imran Khan's visit to Iran in April 2019 both the countries agreed on a joint border rapid force which will patrol Pak-Iran border. However, any such action may not be detrimental to the trade and movement of the people across the borders who are already suffering much. Akbar Notezai in the research journal 'Conflict and Peace studies' writes that: "Historically, Pakistan-Iran border has been a peaceful, open border region. Baloch would intermingle with each other across the border. Baloch, straddling on both sides, have cultural, economic and social relations with each other. This is no longer the case. Their movement is curtailed, and they are now socially, economically and culturally cut off from each other" (Notezai, 2019:152).

CONCLUSION

Pakistan and Iran fall in a region which has historical, cultural and religious ties since millennia. Persian language and literature and customs and traditions of Iranian migrants in the sub-continent (though in the past) have left a positive influence on the relations even today. Both Pakistan and Iran can take advantage of their long-standing affinities as well as geographical contiguity. The close ties from 1950s to 1970s could be set as a precedent for peaceful order in the region. The RCD turned into the ECO could be revitalised for trade, investment and economic uplift in the region.

Throughout its history, Pakistan had been concerned about its security which could be shifted to development-oriented policies. Similarly, Iran during Shah's time felt vulnerable from Soviet Union and its Communist ideology. Therefore, in the 1950s (during the Cold War) both Pakistan and

Iran entered into multilateral alliances sponsored by US. As a result of which both countries received massive military hardware and economic assistance. This increased the threat perception from the Soviet Union and Pakistan's relations with India were strained further. However, in 1965 war with India, Iran provided a sanctuary to Pakistani aircrafts.

After the Iranian revolution of 1979, Pakistan and Iran went on different paths vis-à-vis USA. There was a complete change in Iran's foreign policy and it severed relations with the US. Khomeini called US – a great Satan while Pakistan became a front-line State in American sponsored war in Afghanistan. Distrust developed between Pakistan and Iran on the issue of Afghanistan. There was a zig-zag in the relations of the two countries in the coming years. What is needed is to bridge the schism between the two countries. A soft-power image should be developed in both the countries and people to people contacts may also be increased. Increasing trade could help in better relations. The border skirmishes on the border between Iranian forces and non-State actors could be controlled by better border management and co-operation between Pakistan and Iran.

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