

India vs. Pakistan: Why Can't We Just Be Friends? By Husain Haqqani,
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-Sartaj Ahmad Sofi

Since the time of partition of Pakistan in 1947, the history of Indo-Pak from both sides exhibits chauvinistic tendencies that reinforced, and continues to reinforce both towards hostility. The under review book is basically the authors' experience as an ambassador of Pakistan in the United States and advisor to four Pakistani prime ministers. Though, it is a short book but it doesn't fail to encompass a comprehensive history of India and Pakistan. It appears fairly significant and candid debating on the mutual grievances between India and Pakistan. The nature of hostility, its causes, effects and some tensest moments of past 25 years, is fully analyzed in the under review book very skill fully.

The author, however, looks at the key pressure points in the relationship of Indo-Pak—Kashmir, Terrorism and the Nuclear Bomb, and describes them in separate chapters that familiarizes us fully to comprehend them within the context of India and Pakistan. On the other hand, it tries to answer the question of friendship between the two rivals who once were one country. Is there any possible form that will bind the two hostiles into the bond of friendship with each other? Or to put it simply why can't they be friends is the main issue discussed in the book. With the passage of time, the India-Pakistan relationship is becoming a victim of two parallel and contending nationalisms, and the policy of retaliation and vicarious punishment signals the doom of both countries at the cost of reconciliation. Nevertheless the book is divided into five chapters.

In the First Chapter entitled as "We can either be more than Friends or more than Enemies", the author impressively tries to nullify the notion that the sad state of affairs among the two nations lies on one nation only as leaders of both sides were eager to live as good neighbors. Although debates on issues like Communal riots, two-nation theory, Hindu India Vs Muslim Pakistan, Colonization plan of Pakistan, Pakistani Religious ideology, Army power, Division of Land etc continued.

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But at the same time, he [Author] argues that it is Pakistan's pathological obsession towards India that lies at the heart of the problems between the two countries. Despite enormous historical agreements and negotiations, both countries continue to approach one another as enemies. The Princely State of Kashmir, the bone of contention between the two countries, contributed to the creation of a major flashpoint for a perennial Indo-Pak conflict. Further, it visualizes the author's critical analysis of India-Pakistan history from partition to Shimla Pact of 1972.

The 2nd chapter "Kashmir is Pakistan's Jugular Vein" deals with the claim of Pakistan that Kashmir belongs to her only and exhibits her numerous efforts for her (Kashmir's) annexation. On the other hand, it depicts the Indian stand on Kashmir as well. While examining, the author thinks Kashmir not as the cause of conflict between the two States but only a symptom. It also highlights 1948-UN-Resolution i-e Plebiscite on one hand and the ratification of Jammu and Kashmir constituent Assembly's accession in 1952. Furthermore, it mourns the incoherent strategy of Pakistan regarding Kashmir issue.

The 3rd chapter "We should use the Nuclear Bomb" discusses about the historicity of Nuclear Power existing in both the countries and the author sees it as a defence for both States reciprocally for their future existence. India and Pakistan need to start looking at each other as two nuclear armed nations, says author, and start talking to each other as countries rather than as communities still engaged in the politics of communal identity. It also talks about the anti-Indian ideologue Dr. Abdul Qadeer Khan— a metallurgist, who advanced Pakistan's Nuclear Weapons Programme along with its rivals of India. No-doubt, the enormous conversations and agreements between both states are worthwhile to mention despite being busy in hostilities. The author considers Partition as the root cause of rivalry and Kashmir issue, its manifestation only. While comparing both on nuclear front, the author believes that if the two get into a war neither will exist.

In the 4th chapter "Terrorism—Irregular Warfare", the author interestingly demonstrates the irregular terror attacks of Pakistan. Unhesitatingly, he depicts the organization of *Lashkar-e-Taibah* and *Jaesh-e-Muhammad* responsible for creating chaos and confusion among India-Pakistan by mentioning the attacks of 9/11 and Mumbai attack 2008 as references. However, the idea of using irregular warfare as an equalizer against India is portrayed as Pakistan's strategic thinking against India. It speaks explicitly about the factors that sustain Pakistan's hostility to India. It also discusses on the Hadith of *Ghazwa-e-*

Hind that inculcates among *Jihadists* a pretext to attack on India. This way, both the countries hold ill will against each other.

The 5th chapter “The Space for Friendship is Shrinking” is obvious from the above mentioned issues. It talks about the “shrinking space” for India and Pakistan to become friends, and the author’s concern enhances seeing India becoming like Pakistan. The author initially sets it as a reminder for both India and Pakistan, quoting the statements of Gandhi and Jinnah about the cordial relations between them even after partition. Though most of the inhabitants of both the States were born after independence, but the anger and rhetoric of partition forms part of transmitted memories. For a new India-Pakistan relationship, Pakistan would have to give up *Jihadi* fantasies while Indians will have to stop their aggression into communal fervor, believes the author. But mourn on the current state of affairs between these two states, the author described that India also had turned just as Pakistan by quoting the words of Poet Fehmida Riaz “Turned out you were just like us”.

The book is no-doubt interesting and significant to familiarize one with necessary requirements of living friendly with the neighbors even with the rivals. Although, it solely focuses on the hostilities between India and Pakistan and about their future relations but at times, explains global issues of terrorism, significance of Pluralism, results of nuclear war, dispute between countries and the stand of Kashmir valley between India and Pakistan. Therefore, the book is of significance and relevant in the contemporary global world.

The book provides ample information about indo-Pak hostilities along with certain reasons that leads both towards rivalry. A critical evaluation of it however reveals the fact that the author considers hostility from Pakistan’s side more as compared to India. Similarly, he symbolizes the strategy and policies of Pakistan more vicious. Terrorism is, however, also being associated in one or the other way with the existent *Jihadi* organizations of Pakistan that depicts a sort of partial approach while dealing with historical facts.

The overall description of the book is appealing. It is meant to promote calm and favourable atmosphere among the two rivals- Pakistan and India. Finally, the author concludes with, it is better for both the countries to proceed towards friendship than to blame or becoming the same as just your rival is.
