



SAUDI ARABIA-IRAN COMPETITION IN THE REGIONAL POLITICS CONCERN FOR PAKISTAN: AN ANALYSIS

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Abstract

For a long time, Middle East marked itself as a flashpoint of conflict, competition and rivalry. The post-1979 insurgency saw a heightening competition between Iran and Saudi Arabia. The web of competition not only entangles regional powers but global ones also. Islamabad, for instance, is an important extra-regional player which finds itself, caught between Iran and Saudi Arabia while trying to navigate the hot waters of regional politics. The Yemen emergency in 2015 presented difficulties for territorial procedure of lack of bias because Pakistan had accepted Saudi Arabia's call for troops in the Yemeni battle that Pakistan brought down because of the alleged outcome of Iran's frame of mind. Set in this context, this paper maintains that, before analyzing the challenges of Riyadh-Tehran competition for Pakistan, it is utmost important to deeply identify the cause of the competition and, only then, evaluate the nature of challenges to Pakistan and formulate its foreign policy calculus. This study argues that Saudi Arabia-Iran competition is multidimensional in its nature and, therefore, has morphed into an unending and unrelenting



quest for regional hegemony. In this milieu, Pakistan's choice to tilt towards Saudi Arabia is not strategically wise since Iran is its existential reality, immediate neighbor. For this reason, Qualitative Content Analysis was utilized and, based on this empirical analytical method, this paper offers insights by taking accounts of significant events and developments that took place from 2010 to 2018.

Keywords: regional peace, Gulf contention, strategic concerns, reconciliation, Middle East

1.Introduction

Iran, Pakistan and Saudi Arab are considered as significant nations in the world of Muslims. Saudi Arab is recognized as the pioneer of Sunnis; and Iran is termed as the founder of Shias separately. Iran has a long history of living as a separate and independent nation whereas Saudi Arab owns huge oil stocks and has holiest sites of Islam (site, 2018). Muslims of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan who belong to Sunni belief hold a bigger share in the religious pie. Hence, they are dominant. The populace likewise incorporated a noteworthy extent of Shias however the distinction of groups in individuals of Pakistan used to go unnoticed on the national and territorial levels. In this competition, the position of Pakistan, along these lines, gauges extraordinary noteworthiness and vagueness either. This issue has been influencing the local harmony and advancement; the quality of OIC and the place of the state of Pakistan both in the area and in the world of Islam. The partisan tussle in Pakistan between the Sunnis and Shias is battled by Sipah-I-Sahaba and Sipah-I-Mohammadi. They are financed by Iran and KSA separately (Ali M., 2011).

Iran upheld an assault on Houthi revolutionaries in the 2015 to change the routine in Yemen. It raged the Saudi Kingdom (Disk B. N., 2019). Saudi Arab chose to force back the dissidents by means of animosity additionally put Pakistan in a key scrape. Saudi Arab supposedly approached Pakistan to support her with the troops in its Yemen's central goal. It was a big shock to the Kingdom when Pakistan decided to stay nonpartisan in the Yemeni emergencies remembering vital results it could look by taking side. Be that as it may, later the Saudi Kingdom was pacified when Pakistan permitted its resigned General Raheel Sharif to lead the attack, fear based oppression union made by Saudi Arab (Ali S., 2019). Pakistan must watch out for the two of the Muslim countries- the Saudi Arabia and Iran. Further to include other Muslim forces for instance, Turkey, because it encircles the significant piece of the key of Pakistan and political concerns. Pakistan's bonds with Iran, Turkey and Saudi Arabia are an impressive section of its outside relations with foreign countries (Bhutto, 1976).



Saudi Arabia is a dominant stake holder in the region. The holiest sites of religion Islam in Saudi Arabia make it a unique country of significance for the whole Muslim world (McLean, 2006). The discovery of oil in 20th century and geopolitics of the cold war expanded Saudi Arabia's importance. The reserves in Saudi Arabia are one of the largest in the world. Jones is of the opinion that US in 1930s developed interests in Middle East. Strategic relationship was forged between US and Saudi Arabia in 1945. The US would provide protection to the Kingdom while the Kingdom would provide oil in return (cited in Mamadkul, 2017). The defence budget of Saudi Arabia is fifteen times bigger than that of Iran. Iran produces oil in second largest quantity within the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC). Iran's role in the region is justified by its energy resources and strategic location. According to Reza EkhtiariAmiri and FakhreddinSoltani, official diplomatic exchanges between Iran and Saudi Arabia began in 1960s (cited in Shabbir, 2014). From the 1960s till the Islamic Revolution of 1979 both the dynasties (Pahlavi dynasty in Iran and alSaud dynasty in Saudi Arabia) cooperated over certain internal and external issues. After the Shah's fall, Saudi Arabia-Iran relations got jolted by certain setbacks because the revolutionaries in Iran not only questioned the legitimacy of the Saudi regime, but also sought to change the status quo. Last days of Shah of Iran witnessed improvement of ties with Saudi Arabia. A security agreement was signed in 1977 to combat terrorism, subversion and crime (Menashri, 1990).

According to Ramazani (1983), the fear of Al-Saud had a good basis as Khomeini continued attacking the Saudi regime by calling its Shia minority to revolt. Just after couple of weeks of Iranian revolution, the holy Mosque in Mecca was seized by rebels demanding end of Al-Saud rule. On the order of King Khalid this uprising was crushed by Saudi army (Simons, 1998). The ruling al-Saud family feared a similar fate as that of Shah of Iran (Johns, 1981). Saudi Arabia's weight behind Iraq in its war with Iran in 1980s, changed the result of war when Iran was about to win it (Cordesman, 1999). According to Fanack (2018), direct attacks occurred between the two countries during the Iraq-Iran war. Saudi tankers were struck by Iran and Saudi Arabia responded by shooting down two jet fighters of Iran. During the Iraq-Iran war of 1980s, Saudi Arabia was initially neutral which can be understood as a relieving sigh for the nascent Iranian government (Alghunaim, 2014). Nevertheless, later the Kingdom put its weight behind the Saddam's regime for the reason of underpinned security concerns after US announced its neutrality in the war. According to Mumtaz (2016), Pakistan has a history of undertaking mediating efforts. Pakistan had tried to mediate between Iran and Iraq during their 8-years war (1980-1988). It was due to Pakistan's efforts that an ice-breaking meeting between the late Saudi King Abdullah and the then Iranian President Hashmi Rafsanjani took place on the sidelines of OIC Summit in Islamabad in 1997. The meeting is believed to have paved the way for the subsequent thaw in the rifts between Saudi Arabia and Iran. The emerging



potential of Iran to be a regional power collided with the US interests. The quest of Iran to obtain nuclear technology has been one of the main bones of contention between Iran and US (Abrahamian, 2008). The fall of Saddam regime in 2003 and the subsequent scenario changed the security paradigms of the region with great effect on the regional balance of power. It made great impact on the foreign policies of the two regional rivals. Both perceived strategy of each other for increased influence in the region as a total loss for itself. The factions in several countries of the region line up along Saudi Arabia or Iran based on the Sunni-Shia divide (Wehrey, et al., 2009).

According to Rozsa (2010), Iran made good use of the opportunities offered by the instability in Afghanistan and Iraq and the engagement of US and its allies there. If an Iraq under sanctions was not a counter-balance to Iran anymore, the regime changes in both Afghanistan and Iraq meant that the last remaining actors keeping Iran in check were eliminated. According to Eksi (2017), the Iraq war that began in 2003 and the events which happened after Arab Spring, changed the power equilibrium in the region. Besides being at proxy war with Iran in Syria, Saudi Arabia in 2015 moved for a more hawkish policy by starting the Yemen operation in the March of same year. This was an obvious display of a hegemonic quest by the Kingdom. In response to the Saudi's measures, Iran put its weight behind the powers which worked against Saudi Arabia in the proxy fields like Syria and Yemen. The sectarian role in Iraq, Syria and Yemen is played by both the rivals which is a dangerous factor for the region at large. Iran supports Syrian President Bashar al-Assad to enable him fight against the Sunni opposition groups which are backed by Saudi Arabia. As asserted by Bloomberg, Iran annually flows capital help of about \$14-15 billion for the protection of Assad's regime in Syria. Likewise, similar support from Iran goes to the Shia government of Iraq (cited in Mamadkul, 2017).

Both the rival states did not want to push into the conflict, but they had to think of the balance of power and joined the conflict (Gause, 2014). People in Pakistan favor Saudi Arabia as it is the place where Islam got birth. The trust of Saudi Arabia in Pakistan decreased when the later signed a gas pipeline deal with Iran on January 31st, 2013 (Sial, 2015). The project of gas pipeline between Iran and Pakistan was conceived first in 1950 (Raza, 2017). The discussion on the project is being held between the two countries since 1994. A preliminary agreement was signed in 1995. Iran made India part of the project in 1999 and the project got termed as Iran-Pakistan-India (IPI) Gas Pipeline (Munir, Ahsan, & Zulfqar, 2013). Both Saudi Arabia and UAE have promised investments in Gwadar which can prove as a source of enhancing the significance of the project. This way it may make the rest of regional states to be part of it (Siddiqui, 2019). In May 2016, New Delhi announced that it would invest an amount of \$500 million in the strategic Chabahar port. This Indian plan is also to counter Beijing's 'String of Pearls Strategy' which is making



inroads into India's neighborhood through Gwadar of Pakistan, Hambantota of Sri Lanka, Chittagong of Bangladesh and Kyaukpyu of Myanmar. Though not exempted from challenges, India has much to gain from the port of Chabahar (Borah, 2018). Pakistan has deep strategic ties with Saudi Arabia as Pakistan is in dire need of economic support while Saudi Arabia wants military and diplomatic support from Pakistan. The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) which opposed taking side in Yemen conflict claiming it would divide Sunni-Shia spectrum in Pakistan. However, when got power, it had to turn to Saudi Arabia due to the worsening economic crises faced by Pakistan. It seems Pakistan expects Iran would understand the condition Pakistan is passing through, but Iran may retaliate by supporting Baloch insurgents inside Pakistani Balochistan if it finds the role of Pakistan extended in the Yemen conflict (Aman, 2019).

Sectarian violence in Pakistan took lives of 1710 persons from 2008 till 2014 (Dawn, 2014). Kashmir has been a continuous strategic concern for Pakistan. Shah of Iran used to be an open supporter of Pakistan over the disputes with India including the Kashmir issue. After the revolution, Iran opened a new chapter of ties with India. This reduced leverage of Pakistan on Iran's policy for South Asia. There has not been a consistent policy of Iran on Kashmir. Iran checks the tilt of Pakistan towards Saudi Arabia by using its ties with India and the Kashmir card (Bilgrami, 2018). By supporting Pakistan's cause on Kashmir, Saudi royal family strengthens its ties with Pakistani military and government. The military decision mainly was due to the fear that such infighting would make its unity at stake. Civilian leadership of Pakistan has avoided tilting in the foreign policy toward Saudi Arabia. However, close military and economic ties ensure that Pakistan would likely incline towards Saudi Arabia if forced to pick any of the two sides. Pakistan has several strategic reasons for retaining exclusive control over its nuclear arsenal instead of proliferating nuclear technology to Iran. The process of continued dictations by China, US and Saudi Arabia took Pakistan to no certain direction. In order to move forward, Pakistan needs to change its war economy into becoming an economy of peace (Hoodbhoy, 2019).

Keeping in view this background, this study attempts to understand the rivalry between Saudi-Arabia and Islamic Republic of Iran and its implications on Pakistan. This study also investigates the implications of Iran Saudi rivalry on the foreign policy of Pakistan.

1. Research Objectives and Methodology

The overall purpose of this research is to go through the details and have a thorough comprehension of the continuous contention between Iran and Saudi Arab. It is altogether a contribution in the discipline of International Relations; it is also in accordance with Peace and Conflict Studies because it brings into light the regionalization and inclusion of



the far off participants in that particular piece of the world. This examination planned to investigate and grasp the Iran-KSA competition's setting up key worries for Pakistan by understanding main drivers of the contention. The scientist attempted to portray the chronicled separation between the two nations. For this reason, the specialist set up three time spans dependent on the nature of political circumstance between these two nations to land at a sensible investigation of the unfurling occasions especially those which occurred after the year of 2013. The goal of study was additionally to concoct a working reconciliatory system and the job Pakistan could play in it.

An exploration configuration is an arrangement for gathering and examining information to address the scientist's inquiry (Holsti, 1969). Distinct structure is utilized to get data that concerns the status of the wonders and to portray "what exists" as for factors or conditions in a circumstance (Anastas, 2007). This investigation attempted to accumulate data and the information existing about the marvel of Iran-KSA contention and afterward depicted the current situation which in regards to the marvel. Subjective enlightening plan was proposed to give an appropriate and adequate comprehension of the wonder under examination.

A few investigation strategies can be utilized in subjective research, for instance, hermeneutics, phenomenology, grounded hypothesis, phenomenographic, ethnography, and content examination. In contrast to different strategies for subjective methodology of research, content investigation procedure isn't connected to any science and there are less principles to pursue. The ideas utilized are all inclusive (Philip, Burnard, as referred to in Bengtsson, 2016). This strategy of investigation is received as the danger of perplexity in issues of ideas and talk is diminished. This procedure has more roots in social examines. Inside the substance investigation system, idle examination procedure was picked to extend it to an interpretive dimension. This aided in basic importance of the content, that is, the thing that the content is discussing.

2. Data analysis and Discussion

Sectarian competition between Iran and Saudi Arabia has affected all Muslim states, including Pakistan. Due to its close relations with Tehran and Riyadh, Islamabad has become the most important player in the sectarian clashes of the Muslim world. The ongoing politics of Muslim world has intensified the role of Pakistan in the Islamic countries because Islamabad is determined to secure a reasonably important place in the international system while having cooperative ties with the Muslim states. The two alliances supported by Tehran and Riyadh have hampered the strategic priorities of the states having Muslim majority communities. An undeniable competition of the Muslim



countries has forced all the Islamic states, including Pakistan, to define their standing in the world politics on the basis of their roles in the Muslim world. The global standing of the Muslim states located in different regions always pays special attention towards the political patterns of Islamic countries. Pakistan, in the complex design of politics going on between both blocs of the Muslim world, has become a state of great responsibilities (Sabir, 2019).

The search for a politically cooperative and diplomatically supportive behaviors of states compelled Pakistan to consider the potential of Muslim states from different parts of the world which will not only strengthen the position of Pakistan in the international system but it will enhance the role of Islamabad in the regional politics of South Asia. The government officials from Islamabad are determined to carry a counterbalancing role in their home region because of Indian offensive hegemonic designs. In this way, the main drive for formulating a politically friendly and diplomatically cooperative policy for the Muslim states has become a fundamental feature of Pakistan's foreign policy in which the ideological connections between the states having Islamic communities is the only strong bond between the countries located in different parts of the world. Due to the ideological similarities between the states of Muslim world, the leading state authorities from Islamabad are determined to enhance their cooperative connection with the Islamic countries. The support gained from Islamic world has become a permanent feature of Islamabad's way of managing foreign relations. In short, it is appropriate to understand the increasing role of Muslim world in the international system which always fascinated Pakistan towards the politics of Islamic countries. The support of other states on the basis of common ideology is one of the main elements which can further let Islamabad to counterweight Indian role in the nuclearized subcontinent.

In order to acquire an influential role in the regional politics of South Asia against Indian hegemonic designs in the region, the political leaders from Islamabad are determined to increase their positions in the group of Islamic countries. A support from Muslim states will enable Islamabad to counter appropriately the violent political designs of New Delhi for the territorially adjoin nations. Therefore, the government of Pakistan is struggling to maintain its balanced position in the political divisions of the Muslim states due to having its strong relations with Iranian and Saudi governments. The governments of Iran and Saudi Arabia are the two main pillars of Muslim world which are fighting against each other on incompatible ideological difference. This ideological difference has emerged as a great challenge for Pakistan (Abbas, 1996). The foreign policy decision makers of Islamabad are trying to define their neutral positions the Muslim world, because a balanced role in the ongoing violent sectarian divisions of the Islamic countries has emerged another problem for Pakistan. In response to the violent sectarian divisions of the Muslim



countries, Islamabad is strongminded in addressing the issues of Muslim world parallel to countering the offensive Indian role in the South Asian region. So, the political leaders of Pakistan are attempting to counter the South Asian problems created by Indian as well as the politics of Muslim world. The problems of the Muslim world are mainly linked to the sectarian politics which are mainly created by Iran and Saudi Arabia. The challenges emerging from states of South Asian region and the states of Islamic world are permanently hampering the strategic choices of Islamabad in the international system, because the state authorities from Islamabad are trying to create a balance in the Muslim world mainly consisting of Saudi and Iranian blocs (Abbas, 1996).

Heartily Ties with Islamic World

The Article 40th of the present Pakistani constitution, completely calls for good working associations with the common nations especially the Muslim world. The article expresses, 'The State will attempt to safeguard and reinforce congenial ties among Muslim nations dependent on Islamic solidarity, bolster the regular interests of the people groups of Latin America, Asia and Africa, advance global harmony and security, cultivate altruism and agreeable ties among all countries and support the settlement of worldwide debates by serene methods' (The Constitution of Islamic Republic of Pakistan, 2012). The working of progressive governments from that point forward has vindicated this target in the remote ties talk of Pakistan by building up and keeping up great ties with every single Muslim nation. These nations fundamentally included Turkey, Indonesia, Iran and Saudi Arabia and so forth. Iran is a significant neighboring nation of Pakistan and both the nations had lovely ties for a considerable length of time is still reinforced by the respective want of good relationship.

KSA is a genial Pakistani compassion and depends on Pakistan in the time of need. KSA has helped in fortifying the Pakistani economy. Pakistan has received a lot from KSA in her atomic program in the decade of 1970. Pakistan and KSA other than security on the religious grounds stood on the same page against the soviet infiltration in Afghanistan and are always on the same page regarding the issues of Afghanistan, Palestine and Kashmir. The current continuous contention between Pakistan's lovely companion KSA and Pakistan's neighbor Iran, is a wellspring of nervousness on the key dimension. It is on the grounds that the elements of outside relations of Pakistan don't give Pakistan a chance to take risk by siding both of the different sides.

The Nuclear Pitfall



The atomic expansion banter in the locale has dependably brought unanticipated challenges for Pakistan. The tale of Pakistani Nuclear Program conveys numerous chances. Be that as it may, in the wake of turning into a Nuclear Power in South Asia, upsides and downsides both expanded for Pakistan. The aces incorporate the capacity to prevent any conceivable animosity from India a nuclear power and the supposition of only Nuclear Power in Muslim world while the cons incorporated the assents from the west and the delicate inner elements to keep up the atomic ability to the remain of IAEA. As talked about in the part of writing survey, Islamic Republic of Iran uncovered the obtaining of atomic innovation in 2005 from Pakistan. This prompted surprising tempest for Pakistan on the remote dimension as the world blamed Pakistan for multiplying its atomic weapons. Speculations as of now have been coursing about an undercover understanding among Pakistan and Saudi Arabia of atomic weapons' supply by Pakistan to KSA in the critical moment. Presently with the expanded discussion of Iran Nuclear Program, questions and concerns have been created in KSA and Pakistan. Pakistan could never need another atomic neighbor for her very own reasons. The only authority of Muslim world on the military dimension would be tested and the lift in the uprising of Shias may occur in Pakistan. It is additionally a worry for Pakistan that atomic race has started in the locale between two Muslim nations, with of whom Pakistan have great relations.

Challenges of Economic Survival

Pakistan has a wild monetary survival challenge since a decade ago. Pakistan faces the test of returning obligations with substantial increase. There are numerous reasons why economy of Pakistan has not been developing enough. Despite the fact that, Pakistan relies upon Saudi- Arabia much as far as for its monetary survival, the nation likewise relies upon Iran regarding vitality supply as Iran can possibly meet the vitality shortfall of Pakistan.

The Dependency on KSA

The financial assistance from KSA to Pakistan has a special history. KSA gave free oil of 50000 barrels to Pakistan every day in the season of authorizing of atomic weapons test in 1998. As in late 2014 Riyadh assisted Islamabad with a cash of \$1.5 billion. Along these lines the two nations have stood disobediently by one another in the midst of hardship (Saddiqa, 2018).

Prospects and Challenges for Pakistan



Saudi-Arabia and Islamic Republic of Iran determine the politics in Middle East region. Both are Islamic polities the former promotes Wahabism derived from Sunni school of thought as state policy while the latter interests are associated with Shiite sect of Islam. The region is rich in natural resources having abundance of petroleum, natural gas, and oil. These states are the members of various organizations like Organization of Islamic Countries (OIC), Arab League, Oil and Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), and Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC). Further, great powers like the US, Russia, China, Britain, are the main actors in the region. Moreover, Muslim states like Turkey, Afghanistan, Egypt, Central Asian Republics (CARs), and Pakistan also keep engage with Middle Eastern states through cultural and public diplomacies. Pakistan can acquire her interests from these regional organizations. However, Saudi-Iran rivalry may affect Pakistan in her quest of developing relations with either camp.

Pakistan is confronting with militancy, sectarianism, and terrorism for the last two decades that cause instability. Saudi-Iran rivalry can further aggravate security situations in Pakistan. It is a fact that Iran is a Shiite dominant society while Pakistan and Saudi-Arabia are the adherents of Sunni school or sect. Any rivalry between Saudi and Iran may escalate sectarianism in Pakistan. Further, Pakistan until now has adopted a non-partisan approach towards Saudi-Iran rivalry. Though Pakistan leads Saudi led counter militancy alliance but officially she has not announced its membership in the alliance. Iran considers this military alliance as a threat to Iran in the Muslim world. If Pakistan joins it, this will possibly antagonize Iran. Hence, it remains a tough challenge for Pakistan concerning the military alliance. Because of this Pakistan remained neutral and has not joined Saudi against Yemen.

Again, Pakistan, Iran and Saudi-Arabia peruse their interests in Afghanistan. Any uncertainties between Iran and Saudi may create hurdle for Pakistan in Afghanistan. India the arch rival of Pakistan can further exploit the situation and may create problems for Pakistan. Likewise, Pakistan has greater stakes in Gawadar and Karachi ports. India engagement with Iran in Chabahar is alarming for Pakistani interest in these two ports especially Gawadar. This implies that Pakistan has to play this chess-board with greater care and shall maintain friendship with Iran otherwise India rapprochement with Iran can jeopardize the interests of Pakistan. This may also create uncertainties in Baluchistan, province of Pakistan.

Saudi-Arab is one of the states that provide funds and aids to Pakistan. Besides, most of the Pakistani citizens are residing in Saudi-Arabia. They may face problems if any mishap occurs between the relations of these two states. Nevertheless, Pakistan can best address these challenges provided that she develops a policy of friendship with both these states,



i.e. Iran and Saudi-Arabia. Pakistan can utilize the forum like OIC and ECO and can play a role of interlocutor concerning Saudi-Iran rivalry. Further, Pakistan can best exploit China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and can convince the two rivals. Thus Pakistan is lives between the devil and the deep sea but this may enhance the importance of Pakistan in the region provided her foreign policy-makers adopt a realist approach towards these states.

The relevance of Islamic countries to the politics of great powers has become an important factor in the contemporary international system because its role because of the political designs of Muslim nations has become one of the most significant parts of the worldwide politics. The ongoing patterns of Islamic countries have become a gravitational point of international politics where the western powers try to dominate the bilateral designs of Islamic states. Due to their unique strategic locations and rich natural resources, the great powers always considers the role of Islamic countries as an important feature of international system. In the presence of great power politics of western world parallel to the sectarian divides of the Islamic world, the government of Pakistan can play an effective role in achieving of Islamic unity of different Muslim states. While having its ideologically strong and diplomatically cooperative bilateral connections with the Saudi and Iranian states, Islamabad can become active bringing Tehran and Riyadh diplomatically closer to each other. In this way, the government of Pakistan needs to adopt following steps for increasing of its role in the Islamic world parallel to reducing the sectarian divides of the Islamic communities.

Pakistan has learned a lot from the politics of cold war based on Soviet-United States hostile designs for maintaining global hegemony. The violent divisions of alliance politics spread across the world were mainly supported by Moscow and Washington during their hostility for global dominance. The reflection of cold war politics can easily be seen in the politics of Muslim world which is mainly based on ideologically competing values of Iran and Saudi Arabia in the states of majority Muslim populations. The historical role of Islamabad cannot be ignored during the intense period of cold war when the government of Pakistan accurately defended its position in the regional and international politics. While carrying a decades-long history of cold war politics, the political authorities from Islamabad can play effective role in the ideological confrontation of Tehran and Riyadh. On the basis of lessons learned from the Moscow-Washington rivalry under the shadow of cold war politics, Islamabad can enhance its role for the peaceful settlement of sectarian clashes of Iran and Saudi Arabia.

The imprints of great powers rivalry structured on various inter-state conflicts of the great powers can also be addressed by playing an effective role in the international community.



A role of balancer during the intense period of cold war has provided various options to Pakistan through which the leaders from Islamabad have raised their roles in the world politics. Thus, the political authorities from Islamabad can play appropriately an effective role in the politics of Muslim countries where the ideological connections between Islamic countries have become an instrument for reducing the inter-state conflicts. Pakistan has played an effective role in the great power politics through attempting to create a balance between the states of different regions. In the inter-state hostilities of various great powers, the political leaders from Islamabad remained impartial with the aim of resolving great powers' points of disagreements. The government of Pakistan always showed its determination for addressing the various hostile points of great powers against each other. Through following the designs of great power politics in the Muslim world, Islamabad is determined to reduce the confrontational patterns of Islamic countries in which the leaders of Islamic communities have adopted sectarian violent positions against each other.

The politics of Middle Eastern natural sources generally has created the politics of oil between the Islamic countries because the resource-rich lands of Islamic countries located in the Middle Eastern region has become a fascinating point of the world. So, the great power politics has led the developed nations increase their spheres of influence in the Muslim world due to their unique geographical locations. The geostrategic inclination of the great powers towards Middle East has attached the politics of Islamic countries to the global politics and placed the clashes of Muslim world under the shadows of global power politics. According to the prevailing obscurities of the great power politics on the Islamic states of Middle Eastern region, the politics of Islamic countries cannot be ignored in the international system which has divided the Muslim world on sectarian lines. By understanding the geostrategic attributes of the Middle Eastern region developed under the wealth of natural resources, Islamabad can be helpful in minimizing the sectarian divides of the Islamic world because the Muslim world can replace the sectarian violence with the sectarian differences. The Muslim communities violently divided in different sectarian segments can overcome their difference with the help of Pakistan. Beyond both poles of Muslim world divided on the sectarian basis, Pakistan's nuclear weapon capability has declared it a third important part of the Islamic countries.

Being a single nuclear power in the group of Islamic countries, Islamabad can enhance its role for generating the peaceful forces between the Muslim communities of different states divided on various sectarian lines. The leaders of the Islamic countries have accepted the significance of Pakistan in the global politics through recognizing the Islamabad's nuclear weapon status. The political authorities from around the world generally and from Islamic world specifically have accepted the chief position of Pakistan in the international system. Through using its role as the only nuclear weapon state in the Muslim world, the leaders of



the Pakistan can resolve the sectarian divisions of the Islamic communities. The significant role of Pakistan in the Muslim world can further empower Islamabad in the group of Islamic countries while addressing their ideological differences. By focusing the violent divisions of the Muslim world, the government of Pakistan can bring both Tehran and Riyadh on a negotiation table where both hostile states can peacefully resolve their religious issues.

With the objective of resolving the clashes of Muslim world, the government of Pakistan can empower the concept of Muslim Ummah through strengthening its cooperative bonds with the Islamic communities across the globe. The notion of Muslim Ummah will not only strength the role of Pakistan in the group of Islamic countries, but it will let the leaders of the Islamic countries to share their cooperative ties with each other. The development of peaceful inter-state relations with each other based on mutually collaborative standards will help Pakistan to diminish the ideological differences of the Muslim countries which are devoted to uphold their religious values in the world. A protracted phase of persistent disappointment and hopelessness attached to the multilateral framework of Muslim Ummah can be considered an effective instrument for controlling the sectarian divisions of the Islamic countries.

The role of Pakistan cannot be ignored in the Muslim world because the nuclear weapon status of Islamabad has become an important feature of the Islamic world in the contemporary international system. The acquisition of the nuclear weapon capabilities by Islamabad has made Pakistan one of the important developments of the Islamic world. The Islamic leaders from different parts of the world have accepted the significance of Pakistan in the Muslim world which is divided on sectarian divisions. In addition to the nuclear capabilities of Islamabad, the government of Pakistan has established cooperative ties with other states on ideological basis. The leading state authorities from Islamabad have accepted the important role of Pakistan in the international system due to its strong diplomatic ties with Tehran and Islamabad. The political authorities from different parts of the world have accepted the importance of ideological triangle between Tehran, Islamabad and Riyadh under the broader religious framework. In this way, the Pakistan has emerged as an important player in the group of Islamic countries and its role has become an important feature of the contemporary international system. The government of Pakistan can use its potential effectively through implementing an agenda of Islamic unity among Muslim countries. With the help of Islamabad, the states of majority Islamic populations cannot only address their religious differences, but the leaders of the Islamic countries can ensure their unity. The formulation of an alliance on the basis of religious commonalities will enable the leaders of the Muslim sates to leave their sectarian difference with the help of Pakistan. In short, Islamabad can play a role of mediator between Tehran and Riyadh for



the peaceful resolution of their sectarian divides (Shahid, 2014). The leaders of three states, Iran, Pakistan, and Saudi Arabia can make the Muslim world united and stronger in the absence of their political sectarian differences. A strong and united Muslim world will further create religious harmony between the Islamic communities across the globe.

3. Conclusion

The 'Iran-Saudi Arab' competition can be followed through the recent events of the history. Different perspectives by numerous creators and specialists on the unrest of Iran of 1979 are served as the dividing lines which promoted the contention among these two nations. Iran in the times when it was ruled by Shah; had smooth relationship with Saudi Kingdom, rather the relations were moving forward by making positive attitude motions. The relationship of the two states started experiencing the bumps on the contrast of religious differences. Further, the connections of KSA with the west and their new set up increased the tension. In addition, the transformation developed a twist in US interest in the region; this caused the rearrangements in the security of territory. The contention kept complicating and escalating and Khomeini's downfall happened in the year 1989. Thereafter, Iran came into the position where it is needed to modify attitude by denouncing the disseminating the transformation and putting Shiite uprising abroad on halt. These measurements promoted great relations with Saudi Arab.

The Post-Arab Spring situation and the intrusion of the United States worsened the territorial perceived leverage. The struggle for provincial authority between Iran and Saudi Arab sparked off. It was an outcome of Iran's atomic program, too. Moreover, Iran reanimated helping Shiites in the Middle East and Gulf. Afterwards, the development of Houthis' dealing with the Capital of Yemen- Sana- the contention enhanced. This enraged Saudi alliance and they overran Houthis in Yemen. Moreover, The KSA had occasion for Pakistan's support in Yemen. Herewith, Pakistan came to the point where the concerns of Pakistan demanded equitableness for and its arrangements in the area of Gulf required maintaining it for a certain length of time. Pakistan, being the fundamental partner, holds a bit of her business in the local predicament. The risks of Pakistan put her in the place to be a participant of the show. Intermediary fighting was used as a method by the two combatants in the district. These battles, furthermore, incorporate different forces such as the United Nations, Israel, and Russia forming it a territorial round of concerns.

The two of the countries- Saudi Arab and Iran- has observed partisan accomplices as they are the best apparatuses for anticipating authority in the area. Yemen, Syria, Iraq, Lebanon and Egypt's and Bahrain's political rebellious parties, equipped with intermediary clashes are generally recognized to be supported politically and materially by Iran and Saudi Arab,



individually. Iran's mission of atomic weapons, in the same way, remained a noteworthy pain, especially Saudi Arab felt it a constant threat for its existence. It is hazardous because it is a continuous race to own deadly weapons in the respective area. The world is beholding a fast advancing enmity between Iran and Saudi Arab. In the Middle East and around their very own fringes, both paramount states- Iran and KSA- are exercising their geopolitical powers. Hence, for the sake of a legitimate concern for provincial and worldwide harmony and peace, the Atlantic accomplices settled their arrangements and systems for the Middle East, Iran and Saudi contention, accordingly. On the off chance that they don't, the counter popularity based worldwide and provincial powers will exploit this split and an immediate war is more likely conceivable between Iran and Saudi Arab. Besides, OIC and Pakistan can contribute in setting up a system of reconciliation among the two nations.



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