

Failed Indian Diplomacy Siddhi B Ranjitkar

India has informed Nepal: the presiding over SAARC that it is not going to participate in the upcoming SAARC convention to be held in Pakistan in one-and-a-half months. Relations between Pakistan and India have been tense after the Kashmir disturbances, and then the death of 18 Indian army personnel on the border with Pakistan. India has rarely good relations with the neighboring countries. Pakistan has been a totally failed nation, Indian intellectuals say.

Even after the attack in Uri and 18 Indian army personnel were killed, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi offered Pakistan to compete for fighting against poverty rather than fighting against each other. Prime Minister Modi from the first day of taking office has made efforts on improving the relations not only with Pakistan but also with all the SAARC (South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation) inviting the head of State of each SAARC country to the Modi 's oath-taking ceremony in New Delhi. Modi made even more efforts unexpectedly visiting Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif in Pakistan on his way back home from Afghanistan.

Now, India suddenly has told the SAARC countries that India is not going to participate in the SAARC convention in Pakistan in November 2016. It must be going against the will of Modi, and against his foreign policy, the Indian bureaucracy must have made this decision once again making the Indian diplomacy a failure.

The Indian bureaucracy has been the leftover of the British Raj in India. Even after almost 70 years of the end of the British Raj, the Indian bureaucracy could not get rid of the supremacy of the bureaucrats that have the mindset of the rulers than the service deliverers. So, the Indian bureaucracy has contributed to make the Indian diplomacy a failure in the SAARC region. For example, how the Indian foreign secretary, and the Indian diplomats serving and that have served in Nepal, have behaved in the past and even today, of course arrogantly.

Unfortunately, Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Bhutan followed the suit after India declared its non-participation in the SAARC gathering in Pakistan. Why these countries have to do so I could not understand except for pleasing the Indian officials. Probably, even Modi has not been happy with this decision because he has the mindset to take all the SAARC countries together. Now, the SAARC countries have been totally divided.

Again those three countries following India declaring not participating in the SAARC convention, need not do so, as a single country not taking part in the gathering means such convention would not be held following the SAARC statute. So, these countries either want to please India or show their displeasure to Pakistan.

Afghanistan has not been happy with Pakistan, as Pakistan has been the center for Taliban to grow and then come to act in Afghanistan. After 9/11 terrorist attacks on the New York twin towers, Pentagon, and so on in 2001, the USA military finished off the Taliban government in Afghanistan as the Taliban did not want to deliver Osama Bin Laden: the mastermind of the 9/11 attacks, and sent the Taliban back to Pakistan and the remote areas in Afghanistan. Thereafter, USA ended the life of Osama Bin Laden that had been quietly and probably having very cozy life thinking nobody would be able to reach him nearby the military school in Abbotabad in Pakistan.

The previous Hamid Karzi government of Afghanistan had publicly complained a number of times that Pakistan had been sheltering Taliban and then letting Taliban raid in Afghanistan. Obviously, the relations between Afghanistan and Pakistan have not improved. So,

Afghanistan naturally has sided with India in the current case of not participating in the SAARC convention, as India has been very helpful to set up democratic institutions in Afghanistan.

Going direct head-on confrontation with Pakistan, India has directly helped the Pakistan military generals to prove the elected civil government cannot tackle the Indian hostile attitudes. The Pakistan army has been always seeking the confrontation with India, as the strategy to come to power using its military power. Canceling the SAARC convention in Pakistan means the victory of the army over the civil government otherwise the civilian government of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif would have consolidated his foreign policy even though the Pakistani and the Indian army have been creating havoc in Kashmir to prove their power and strength. However, the cancellation of the SAARC convention has severely weakened Prime Minister Sharif.

Nobody would be surprised if the army were to take over in Pakistan again banishing the civilian prime minister to Saudi Arabia. Then, the head of the military junta would first make an official visit to India for the recognition as did General Pervez Musharraf when he took over from the then elected Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, who came to power again through the universal franchise after Musharraf was weakened. Thus, India has been helping the Pakistan army to take over repeatedly.

What would go wrong to India if India were not to recognize any junta in Pakistan and insist on reinstating the civilian government? Then, India could strongly deal with the civil government and resolve the Kashmiri problem rather than letting the Pakistan army to create mayhem in Kashmir and send the militants to attack the Indian army on the border and so on.

The Pakistan army knows that the Pakistan army's strength is nowhere near the Indian army despite having the nuclear bombs. They have seen the war that has created Bangladesh in 1972. The Pakistan army had to bear the humiliating defeat and see the creation of Bangladesh that was once an East Pakistan. So, whatever the civil turbulences in Kashmir are the creation of the Pakistan army for consolidating its power, and for making a comeback in the governance. Thus, the Pakistan army has been instrumental to make Pakistan a failure.

Democracy could not take root in Pakistan because whenever a civilian government was in power, it gradually lost the popular base because of the corruption, nepotism, and not having the strong political will to institutionalize democratic institutions. One of the major weaknesses of every civilian government has been not resolving the Kashmir problem or not accepting the de-facto border currently called the line of control. That was what exactly the Pakistan army wanted and the civil government simply complied with it.

China, India and Pakistan have the claim over the Kashmir territories. India believes that China and Pakistan have occupied some territories of Kashmir. India wants to go back to the border the British had set in Kashmir but China and Pakistan did not want to leave the territories that they had already occupied. Pakistan has even ceded certain portion of the land India has claimed as its own, to China.



Economist.com

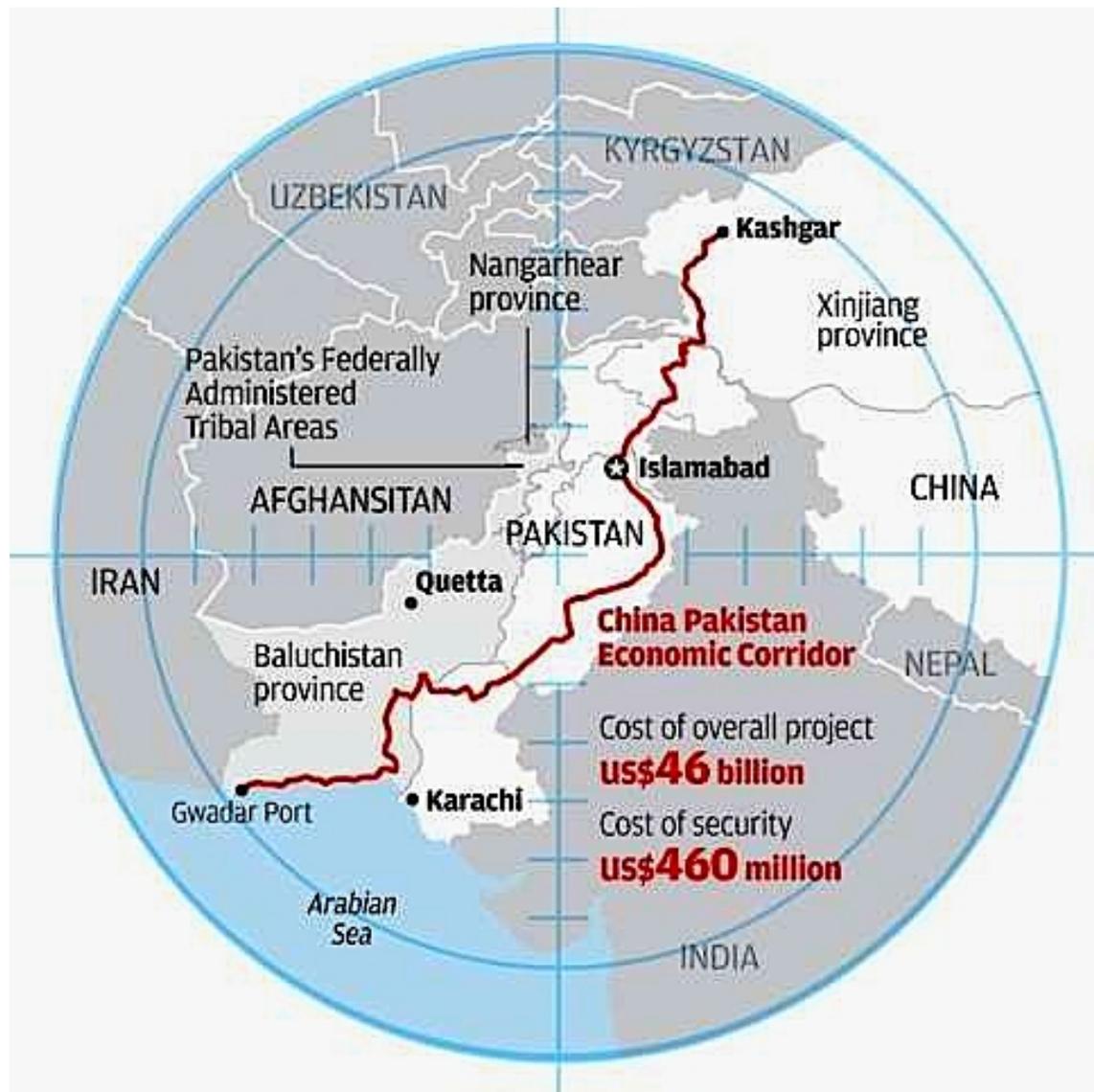
How the current Indian leaders have inherited this problem of Kashmir might be of interest to some folks. In 1947 when India became the independent country, Pakistan split away from India and formed a Pakistan. Most of the Indian rulers voluntarily joined India. One of them was the ruler of Kashmir that joined the Indian union. He happened to be the Hindu, and most of the Kashmiri were Muslims. Pakistan captured certain portion of Kashmir. Today, Pakistan called it Azad Kashmir means free Kashmir but it has been only for the namesake.

The then Indian Defense Minister Valavbhai Patel wanted to resolve the Kashmir problem by the military actions means removed the Pakistani occupiers by the force but the then Prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru did not want the military actions rather he opted for the diplomatic actions. So, without informing Defense Minister Patel, Nehru went to All-India Radio and announced that he would like to resolve the Kashmir occupation through the UN.

The UN Security Council decided to resolve the Kashmir problem through the plebiscite. India knew that the plebiscite means Kashmir would go to Pakistan.

In order to counter India, Pakistan has been strengthening diplomatic and economic relations with China that has been building the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor that would open an avenue to China to reach Arabian Sea. Thus, China could easily reach the sea through the Pakistani corridor, and reach very near to Iran. Not very far, from the Gwadar Port in the Baluchistan Province from where China reaches sea, India has an agreement with Iran to build a seaport. China, India and Pakistan have been inching together at reaching the Arabian Sea.

Either to make the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor failed or to counter the Kashmiri problems Pakistan has been creating, India has been encouraging rather helping the Baluchi rebels in the Baluchistan Province. China would have a hard time to reach the Arabian Sea if the Baluchi rebels were to be active and increased their activities against the Pakistani domination there. Thus, China, India and Pakistan have been doing their best to counter each other's influence and presence at any areas possible.



(Source: economist.com)

"The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) will be a "magnet" to attract more investment, business opportunities and exchanges to Pakistan in the near future, said Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan Sun Weidong on Tuesday (September 27, 2016). The ambassador made the remarks during a reception commemorating the 67th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China. He added that the CPEC have made significant progress as 16 out of a total of 30 early harvest projects have been completed or are under construction with an estimated investment of 14 billion US dollars. Speaker of the National Assembly of Pakistan: Sardar Ayaz Sadiq said the country's leadership and parliament attach great importance to the promotion of the CPEC as Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif has rightly called the project "a new concept in diplomacy," which will be the "game-changer" for prosperity of the entire region, the news on the [globaltimes.cn](http://www.globaltimes.cn) stated on September 28, 2016"

"India has strong objections to CPEC. This projects run through Pakistan occupied Kashmir, which is part of India. India has not been consulted, nor involved in the approval of the project. India has till now taken a measured approach towards Chinese issues like South China Sea dispute, excessive militarization of China, and other issues because India believes in being sensitive to each others strategic and political goals but CPEC will be a direct challenge by China to India. This project will help USA and other western thinkers wish to drive a huge wedge between India and China, comment of Jay Singh posted on the [globaltimes.cn](http://www.globaltimes.cn)".

<http://www.globaltimes.cn/content/1008811.shtml>

China and Nepal have been talking to build another alley for China to reach Bay of Bengal or the Arabian Sea through Nepal. The wide publicity has been that China will extend its railway line from the Xigatse in Tibet to Kerung on the Nepalese side of the Nepal-Tibet Border. The length of the railway will be 160 KM, and will be completed by 2020. Then, the extension of the railway will be to Kathmandu, Pokhara, and the Nepal-India border from where Chinese could reach Indian seaports through the Indian railways. When this dream comes true remains to be seen.

"Unlike what the Indian media described, Kathmandu is actually interested in the "One Belt and One Road" initiative, yet considering India's attitude it does not dare to accelerate its pace of implementing the deals signed between Beijing and Oli (former prime minister of Nepal). Beijing also hopes that Kathmandu can be a bridge between China and India and to promote the China-Nepal-India Economic Corridor, which will bring development and prosperity for all three economies. However, the Indian strategic circle is still holding a mindset of geopolitical competition and zero-sum game, rather than treating the cooperation between China and South Asia from the perspective of geo-economy and win-win collaboration. Beijing hopes to realize connectivity with Nepal and build a passageway toward South Asia through the latter, writes Liu Zongyi: a senior fellow of the Shanghai Institute for International Studies and a visiting fellow of the Chongyang Institute for Financial Studies, Renmin University of China on the [globaltimes.cn](http://www.globaltimes.cn)."

<http://www.globaltimes.cn/content/1009205.shtml>

China-India diplomatic relations has been not so rosy ever since the Dalai Lama: the Tibetan spiritual leader took a Shelter in India after the failed uprising against the Chinese rule in Tibet in 1958. The relations further deteriorated when America and India helped the Khampa uprising in Tibet in 1970s. Nepalese soldiers in the Mustang on the Nepalese side and the Chinese soldiers on the Tibetan side crushed the Kampha rebels thanks to the then Nepalese King Mahendra and Chairman Mao Zedong in China.

Since then the Chinese concerns have been the back and forth movement of Tibetans between India and Tibet through Nepal. Nepal has been hosting 20,000 strong Tibetan exiles even today. Nepal had once the representative of the Dalai Lama in Kathmandu, and the office for dealing with the Tibetan exiles in Nepal. China has been keeping an eye on the Tibetan movements in Nepal. Nepalese rulers have to repeatedly convince the Chinese officials of Nepal not allowing any Tibetans in Nepal indulging in any activities against China means raising voices against the Chinese rule in Tibet.

Currently, China and India have been going ahead with the strong business relations setting aside the diplomatic relations and the border disputes. Chinese investments in India have been rising at the exponential rate cashing on the cheap labor in India whereas Indian companies also have been investing in various fields including the software development in China. However, China has been benefiting from the trade surplus with India in a large scale. In fact, China has a trade surplus almost with every country it has been trading with.

Why Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Bhutan have to follow the Indian action of not attending the SAARC convention in Pakistan in November 2016 might be the good question for everybody to understand their motive.

Afghanistan wants Pakistan stop hosting the Taliban that has been nuisance to the democratically elected government. Taliban as everybody in the world knows want to introduce the entirely Muslim law, and take the country back to medieval time. Taliban had briefly ruled Afghanistan thanks to Pakistan. Currently, Pakistan has been hosting Taliban, and even creating its own Taliban.

Taliban is another name for the terrorists. Afghanistan and India are for curbing the Taliban. India also has been assisting Afghanistan in building its democratic institutions, and its economic activities to improve the economy whereas Pakistan wants its domination of Afghanistan. Naturally, Afghanistan will go along with India rather than Pakistan the next-door neighbor.

Now, the Bangladesh that had been once the eastern wing of Pakistan also goes along with India, as India is next door, and its culture except for religion, language and history is part of the west Bengal State of India. The current government of Bangladesh is very grateful to India for helping her to fight against the torturous rule Pakistan had imposed on the Bengalis. India had been instrumental to separate Bengalis from the Pakistan.

Bhutan has been really a country that India has saved from being a democratic opening the path for the people to go out of the country when the king of Bhutan drove them out of the country for demanding the fundamental human rights. When the same folks wanted to go back to their mother land Bhutan, India simply blocked them. Without the folks demanding the human rights, the Bhutanese king has been safely counting on the Gross National Happiness rather than the Gross Domestic Product. Unfortunately, the Bhutanese rulers have found that they have been caught in the net of the Indian administration, and could not move around without their approval. So, Bhutan has no alternative but to follow the path India adopts.

India and three other countries that followed her has the half of the SAARC countries on her behalf while other half such as Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka has quietly accepted the cancellation of the SAARC convention this year in November. Originally, SAARC has been the seven-country organization, as Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, the Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka set it up in 1985 for the small countries to stand on a par with the large countries. Afghanistan joined SAARC in 2005 making it eight-member organization. China

has the status of an observer. It is ready to join SAARC at anytime provided India approves it.

Making the SAARC convention a failure this year not only make Pakistan a failure but also Nepal, too, as Nepal is presiding over the SAARC this year on rotation. However, Nepal as a presiding nation is calling on the SAARC-member States to hold the 19th convention in Islamabad in November of this year. Whether the States that did not want to go to Islamabad for the SAARC convention would listen to the call of Nepal remains to be seen.

"India has conveyed to current SAARC Chair Nepal that increasing cross-border terrorist attacks in the region...have created an environment that is not conducive to the successful holding of the 19th SAARC Summit," the Indian foreign ministry said in a statement. "In the prevailing circumstances, the government of India is unable to participate in the proposed summit in Islamabad," according to the BBC NEWS on September 28, 2016."

"Indian Foreign Minister Sushma Swaraj told the UN General Assembly on Monday (September 26, 2016) that "Pakistan remains in denial". "It persists in the belief that such attacks will enable it to obtain the territory it covets. My firm advice to Pakistan is: abandon this dream. Let me state unequivocally that Jammu and Kashmir is an integral part of India and will always remain so." Pakistan responded by calling Ms Swaraj's speech a "litany of falsehoods" that distorted history, and denied its forces had helped the attack on the Indian army base in Uri. Both India and Pakistan claim all of Muslim-majority Kashmir in its entirety but only control parts of it, the BBC NEWS stated on September 28, 2016."
<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-india-37492352>

"Referring to the Line of Control that separates India and Pakistan at the controlled areas of Kashmir, Director General for Military Operations Lt. Gen. Ranbir Singh said in a press conference conducted jointly by the ministries of defense and external affairs: "India conducted surgical strikes last night across the LoC to safeguard our nation. Significant casualties have been caused to terrorists and those trying to shield them. We don't have a plan to further conduct such strikes. India has spoken to Pakistan." He added: "There were launch pads at the LoC where terrorists were present waiting to infiltrate the nation and attack areas in Kashmir and metros across the country." The Indian side suffered no casualties, the news on the ibtimes.com stated."

"India and Pakistan have fought four wars since their independence and separation in 1947, three of them over Kashmir. The LoC is a de facto border between the two countries, even though it is not recognized by either country as such, both of which claim the entire state of Jammu and Kashmir as their own. The last time the two countries fought was in 1999, and a 2003 ceasefire signed between them is routinely violated, with frequent episodes of firing occurring along the heavily fenced border, the news on the ibtimes.com stated."
<http://www.ibtimes.com/india-pakistan-war-surgical-strikes-escalate-tensions-along-border-between-hostile-2423751>

What is this? A single strike ends the terrorists? India hit the terrorists' hideout. Is that the end of the surgical strike? It is hard to believe that a single strike could make any difference to the terrorists if really terrorists were there. It is nothing but to keep the army happy at the cost of the diplomacy. Diplomacy has failed no doubt about that.

"I want to tell the Pakistani people: India is ready to fight you," said Mr. Modi. "If you have strength, come forward and fight against poverty. Let's see who wins, who is able to defeat poverty and illiteracy first, Pakistan or India?" Mr. Modi's response was spectacular: a call for war, but not against Pakistan. It was a deft, rhetorical play, and deft statesmanship too, tacitly acknowledging that the Indian leader aims to continue his country's long-standing

policy of strategic restraint in its dealings with Pakistan, the BBC NEWS stated on September 28, 2016.”

“Blood and water cannot flow at the same time,” said Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday (September 26, 2016), as he announced that he was suspending meetings of the committee that oversees how water is shared between India and Pakistan. It represents a dramatic use of water as a diplomatic weapon. Division of the waters of the Indus River system, which spans both countries, is governed by a 56-year-old treaty, which is regarded as one of the most successful agreements of its kind. It has survived two wars and any number of military standoffs between India and Pakistan, the BBC NEWS stated on September 28, 2016.”

“Delhi says it will restart work on a huge dam on one of the tributaries of the Indus, the Jhelum, as well as looking at other ways to increase the use of water for irrigation, storage and hydroelectric power. These projects would take buckets of cash and many years - probably decades - to implement, but the message is clear: we can use more than just weapons of war to hurt Pakistan, the BBC NEWS stated on September 28, 2016.

<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-india-37483359>

Mr. Modi is hoping that raising dams will prove a less dangerous strategy than raising guns, but evidence from his own country suggests that isn't the case, the BBC NEWS stated on September 28, 2016. However, it might prove more dangerous than immediate gun fights, as Pakistan eventually might see no alternatives but to fight for the water. The fight might be the gunfight or the nuclear fight, who knows? Again, the Indian establishment has proved that its diplomacy has entirely failed.

India's diplomacy has been to bully the neighbors. The recent event of India unofficially imposing a blockade on Nepal and let the 30-million Nepalese suffer from shortage of fuel and other basic needs. It is a shame on India but the Indian establishment does not realize it even though the blockade did not bring the desired results. However, it is not the first time India has imposed such a blockade on Nepal.

India has been attempting to steal the birthplace of Lord Gautam Buddha constructing a replica of Lumbini in India. The world knows that Lumbini is the birthplace of Lord Buddha. The archeological findings have already proved without any doubts that Lumbini in Nepal is the birthplace of Lord Buddha. However, Indian establishment has never been tired of trying to steal the birthplace. Even Prime Minister Narendra Modi telling the Nepalese parliament that Lord Buddha was born in Nepal twisted the fact when he was in Japan.

The relations of India with Sri Lanka have been much to be desired. Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi got hit by a soldier while inspecting the guard of honor in Colombo, and ultimately got killed by the Sri-Lankan-Tamil suicide bomber in India.

Such Indian diplomacy is not a new development but the current Bharatiya Janata Party leaders have inherited from the Nehru dynastic rulers. The first prime minister of Independent India: Jawaharlal Nehru had not only failed in his diplomacy but also in his economic policy that did not raise the livelihood of the poor Indians even after almost 70 years of independent.

Nehru along with the president of Egypt Gamal Abdel Nasir, President of Yugoslavia Joseph Tito, and President of Indonesia Sukarno set up a non-alignment movement that did neither please the west nor the then U.S.S.R. While engaging in this movement Nehru did not have much time to see the economic development in India. He followed the socialistic path for the economic development but could not lift the country from poverty. During his time, and

the time of the rule of his progeny, the economic growth of India did not exceed 2.5% growth of GDP per year causing the poverty to never end.

When Chairman Mao Zedong invaded India in 1962, nervous Nehru immediately called the then President of America John F. Kennedy for help. President Kennedy ordered the Seventh fleet stationed in the Mediterranean Sea to sail to the Indian Ocean but Nehru after a few hours called back President Kennedy to tell him no need of any assistance. Kennedy was furious at Nehru for his childish diplomacy. Nehru has tilted to the U.S.S.R throughout his life but at the time of need Nehru moved to America.

Nehru's regional diplomacy had been to bully the small neighbors. Nehru bullied BP Koirala to turn over the power to King Tribhuvan in 1951 and he forcibly got the Koshi and Gandak Rivers from the Prime Minister Matrika Prasad Koirala of King Tribhuvan, Nehru did the same thing to other neighboring countries. He had been in a state of war with China and Pakistan almost all the time. His progeny simply followed his diplomacy.

When BJP won the majority in the lower house, Prime Minister Narendra Modi tried to turn around the Indian diplomacy. He wanted to lead the neighboring countries in other words he wanted to take all the regional countries together. To this end, he has to give something or compromise on many things but the Indian establishment have been used to bully the small countries, did not let Modi do what he wanted. Pakistan had the same problem. Despite Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's desire for improving the relations with India, the army did not let him do so.

The first Indian diplomatic failure has been with Nepal, now with Pakistan. What the Indian establishment achieved making the SAARC summit to postpone, and hitting a single surgical strike in Pakistan nothing but disgust from the well wishers.

India's diplomacy particularly the regional diplomacy would be successful only when as Modi did try to take all the regional stakeholders together. He needed to convince the Indian establishment particularly the bureaucracy that India needed to give many things to the regional States, which would be beneficial to all sides. Indian bureaucracy could boast its leftover mindset of the British Raj, and rule the region. It is time for them to relinquish their old mindset in the 21st century, and sideline the Indians that say, "India has a largest army why not strike Pakistan."

October 1, 2016