



## EXPLORING THE DYNAMICS OF PAKISTAN-RUSSIA RELATIONS DURING PTI GOVERNMENT

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### ABSTRACT

*This study tries to give a broad picture of the complex relationship between Pakistan and the Russia while highlighting crucial events and turning points that have influenced their interactions under the leadership of the PTI. The research paper examines the changing dynamics of Pakistan's relationship with the Russia in a setting of defense cooperation, economic cooperation, and regional stability. It draws attention to the difficulties and possibilities that developed in these connections and provides information on the potential for future cooperation and involvement between these nations. The PTI administration aimed to increase business ties with Russia. There have been initiatives to increase bilateral trade and look into investment possibilities. In order to further their economic connections, the two nations founded its Pakistan-Russia Inter-Governmental Committee on Commerce, Financial, Scientific, and Technical Cooperation in 2019. The purpose of the research is to evaluate the prospects of the emergence of the strategic relations with Russia during PTI government and Russian factors.*

**Key Words:** Russian, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf, Bilateralism, Military Collaboration

### INTRODUCTION

The country's global strategy had weak foundations, was imbalanced, and inconsistent shortly after becoming independent. Due to many historical, geographical, and ideological peculiarities, Pakistan was unable to establish more intimate, friendly ties with the Soviet Union. The most glaring ideological flaws that are harming ties among Pakistan and the USSR date back to the Indo-Pak subcontinent's pre-independence era. It is possible to arbitrarily split the relationship between Pakistan and the Soviet Union into five significant time times: 1947-1965, 1966-1971, 1972-1977, 1978-1991 and 1992-2014. While the previous four phases, up until 1991, provided a review of Pakistan-Soviet relations, the final part (1992-2014) focuses on relationships between Pakistan and Russia (Burk, 1990).

The historical patterns of Pakistani-Russian communication and the prospect for future revival of significant ties in the light of the longstanding alliance between Russia and India and the emerging Indo-US alliance are the main subjects of this study. The purpose of foreign affairs is to further the best self-interest of a state. The country's foreign policy has not been successful in achieving something other than self-interest with regard to Russia. To evaluate Pakistani-Russian relationships from a historical



in nature, social, examine the possibility of a fresh beginning in the constantly changing worldwide and local safety environment, which opens up windows of chances for cooperation and interdependence (Hussain, 2012). Russian foreign policy towards Pakistan in general is changing as Moscow adopts a paradigm for conducting its foreign affairs that, in accordance of its management, balanced relations with all parties and upholds peace and security. This feat is impossible without Russia's demonstration of fairness towards all nations. As a result, Russia has been attempting to diversify its relationships with all of the South Asian players. Moscow does not appear to have a thorough plan regarding Pakistani or the region in general, although it does seem to be developing one for the near future. Moscow's ties to Islamabad have changed significantly over the past few years.

### LITERATURE REVIEW

Following are the review of important relevant literature review is an imperative part of research. These books and articles are related to Pakistan strategic relations with Pakistan and Russia. There are books newspaper, journals, published articles and reports, on this research literature which included relevant.

*Pak-Russia Relations: prospects for peace and stability in south Asia 2023* by Dr. Gull discusses those friendly relations with Pakistani and Moscow. It also emphasizes the difficulties that both countries are currently experiencing as it promotes their connections. The historical ties between the two nations have given rise to several opportunities that help to maintain peace and security in the south Asian region. This study makes a case for how maintaining links between the two nations would boost the region's wealth and economic growth. It clarified how favorable policy changes between Pakistan and Russia were influenced by one another. Because an international world alone cannot support a state, the author contends that both nations should improve their relations.

*Russia-Pakistan Relations and the Constraints of Geo-economics 2022* by Dr. Clary narrated that the Pakistani ties with Moscow have been severed after the end of the Cold War. Additionally, it highlights the economic and strategic situations of both Russia and Pakistan. This study identifies the moment at which Russia invented Ukraine. The ideological connection between the Afghan Taliban and the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan complicates relations between Pakistan and Afghanistan. This study is addressing some crucial components of my study.

*The strategic relations of Pakistan and Russia in 21 centuries 2021* by Dr. Khan point out of this research work many significant actions that may be taken to improve bilateral ties among Pakistan and Russia. It also mentioned how Russia strengthened its strategic ties with Pakistan following the 9/11 attacks. Russia has long shunned Pakistan and fiercely defends India. Currently, Russia and Pakistan are working closely with one another to maintain the balance of power. He described the nature of the relationship that makes both nations distinct and valuable in the area. International relations are dependent on national interests; thus, states maintain equilibrium to accomplish their objectives. This study emphasizes Pakistan's efforts to forge closer ties with other nations and advance its own interests in the modern age.

*Soviet-Pakistan Relations and post-soviet Dynamics, 1947-92 2016* by Dr. Malik published that what is aspartic ties among Pakistan and the US have become a hot topic in the twenty-first century. In the Stalin era, relations between the USA and Pakistan were poor. They didn't install any kind of system. Pakistan was not welcomed with open arms by the USSR since they thought he was a Seattle-born British citizen. They had nothing to do with how Pakistan emerged. The writers of this book highlighted that Pakistan had to pay a price for fortifying its strong strategic ties with both nations. Pakistan agreed that the US is attempting to govern it more and more. It also explains how the USA of the US is strengthening its ties with Pakistan by providing assistance. Nevertheless, they also sell weapons to Pakistan. Pakistan has a very strong stake in maintaining peace, and this has been recognized worldwide.



*Pakistan relations with Russia: Putin's propaganda Machine soft power and Russian foreign policy 2016* by Dr. Herpes point out that the book was split into three sections. In this book, author Marcel H. Van Herpen explains the value of soft power. This book's first section highlights Russian soft power. However, a chapter about the most recent growth and modification of Russian activity was added in this section. The development of a new proselytizer philosophy was covered in Part 2, and the author also makes an argument for the significance of the Eastern Orthodox Church of Russia. In Chapter 3, the author described Putin's struggle to strengthen Moscow's policy. According to the author, two French experts, Renate Lenik and Helence Balance, highlight Russian political practices. He describes the dynamics and policies of Putin's government. The author concluded by talking about the "Kremlin's pressure on Ukraine. The study conducted for this work by Marcel H. Van Herpen will significantly advance the body of knowledge about post-soviet Russia.

*The Russia Pakistan Rapprochement should India worry 2015* by Dr. Purushottam discusses the historical perspectives among both Russian and Indian factors, as well as Russia's interest in the south Asian region and its attempts to maintain the regulate of power in the region. Pakistan always be good relation both countries.

*Policies and Future Pak-Russia Relations: Lost Opportunities Options 2012* by Dr. Husain published that there have been several turning points in Pakistan's history, but the United States has remained a crucial player in Pakistani politics throughout. The relationship between media and democracy affects political, economic, social, and global occurrences. During elections and the terms of different parties in power, Pak-US relations continue to be talked about in politics and the general public. The discussion of political parties, whether in power or opposition, focuses on how they view US foreign policy.

#### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The methodological and scientific technique adopted to conduct research is known as research methodology. To gather, analyses, and data in order to respond to research questions, researchers employ a variety of processes and procedures. Experiments, surveys, investigations, ethnography, and other research approaches are all included in research methodology. The main goal of the methodology of research is to make sure that the study is done in a methodical, trustworthy, and valid way. In order to plan studies, gather data, and analyses findings, researchers employ a variety of techniques and instruments. To guarantee that their study is carried out in a responsible and ethical way, they also adhere to ethical rules and guidelines.

In order to analyses Pakistan's ties towards the Russia during the PTI (Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf) government I used a qualitative study approach. Data must be obtained through observations in order to accomplish this, and policy texts have also been analyzed. Information that is not numerical and that is detailed and frequently subjective is referred to as qualitative data. In research methodology, qualitative data is utilized to better comprehend complicated events, experiences of people, and social environments. A qualitative data set is a crucial part of research methodology since it provides a number of ways to investigate, analyses, and acquire understanding of the complexity of the research topic.

Data must be collected, analyzed, and interpreted in a systematic manner in order to address research queries or test hypotheses. Based on their study goals and objectives, I have chosen suitable qualitative methodologies like focus groups, qualitative observations, or content analysis. Press releases and statements issued by international leaders are among the materials available online.

#### Historical Background of Pakistan Russian Relations

Russian foreign policy towards Pakistan in general is changing as Moscow adopts a paradigm for conducting its foreign affairs that, in accordance of its management, balanced relations with all parties and upholds peace and security. This feat is impossible without Russia's demonstration of fairness towards all nations. As a result, Russia has been attempting to diversify its relationships with all of the South Asian players. Moscow does not appear to have a thorough plan regarding Pakistani or the region in



general, although it does seem to be developing one for the near future. Moscow's ties to Islamabad have changed significantly over the past few years. The balancing strategy used by Russia is not directed neither is it directed at anyone, nor is it designed to help anyone. It makes an attempt at doing precisely that attempts to strike a balance in order to position Russia to guarantee stability in the various parts in Europe and Asia, in this instance South Asia. It is pertinent to contrast Russian policy with India's celebrated multi-alignment approach (Smith, 1992).

#### **Cold War Effects on Pak Russia Ties (1947-1991)**

In the early years of its independence, Pakistan enjoyed close ties with the Western Hemisphere and the United States, in part due to its role as a state on the front lines of the Cold War struggle against Soviet supremacy. The Soviet Union, Pakistan's main competitor, also established close ties with India at this time. These circumstances made it difficult for Pakistan and Russia to engage in meaningful dialogue during this time.

Economic links strengthening economic ties could be a way to improve relations between Pakistan and Russia. Both nations can gain from increasing trade and investment as well as looking into fresh areas of economic collaboration. Maintaining peace in Afghanistan, combatting terrorism, and promoting regional stability are all shared goals of Pakistan and Russia. From Russia's point of view, the ability to share intelligence and information with Pakistan is crucial to its chances of influencing the regional processes. Russia has frequently expressed its concerns to Pakistan about the potential anarchy that threatens to topple the regimes in Central Asia and also spread across Russia's southern borders. The ultimate goal for Pakistan with the Russian Federation was to stop the link between international terrorist groups and battle the growing threat of terrorism and militancy. The domestic security of both states has been weakened by transnational violent organizations. The relationship between Tehreek-a-Taliban, al-Qaeda, and the Islamic movement Devastating and unstable both for Pakistan and the Russian Federation are the actions of extremists from Uzbekistan, the North Caucasus, and other Muslim regions of Russia (Khan, 2012).

#### **Pakistan Russia Ties 2018-2022**

##### **Military Collaboration**

Russia and Pakistan have advanced their military cooperation significantly. 2016 saw the first-ever combined military exercise between the two nations, dubbed Friendship 2016. Since then, there have been several military drills, include air force drills, navy drills, and counterterrorism training. The purchase of Russian weaponry for Pakistan, particularly helicopters and tanks, has increased defense cooperation as well (Khorram-Manesh, 2022).

##### **Cooperation in Regional Security**

Pakistan and Russia are both concerned about security in the region, particularly in light of Afghanistan. To advance stability and security in the region, the two countries have been collaborating and having conversations. Russia has actively aided Pakistan in its efforts to facilitate a peace process in Afghanistan, especially by serving as the venue for the Russian Format Discussions on Afghanistan. Russian Department of Foreign Affairs was cited as a source Pakistan is a nation with a strong regional presence that is increasingly expanding worldwide. Its physical setting and proximity to significant land and sea links increase its significance in the context of modern international politics. As a result, Pakistan's foreign author works as a research associate and media officer at the National Institute of Strategic Research in Islamabad. The global and regional condition of affairs are impacted by the policy attitudes and actions of strategic studies. (Sultana, 2019).

The visit through Pakistani minister of foreign affairs Hina Rabbani Khar to Russia resulted in closer ties between the two nations, offering hope for much-needed regional stability. Threats of conflict are brewing as the situation in the larger region reaches a breaking point. Pakistan has historically sided with the US whereas India has sided with Russia. Improved relations among Pakistan and Russia would be beneficial for both nations in addition to for Central Asia. They would additionally give Pakistan with an



opportunity to break free from the current instability cycle. The military and the judiciary are two of its main adversaries, and it is yet unclear who will prevail in this triangle of power. However, it is noteworthy that the minister of foreign affairs visited Pakistan and Moscow in the wake of this unrest (Maitra, 2012).

Ties among Pakistan and Russia significantly improved and took a favorable turn during the rule of the PTI (Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf) government. The Imran Khan-led PTI administration gave fostering relations with Russia a high priority in light of their shared interests and extensive cooperation. Here are some important details and sources related to Pakistan-Russian ties under the PTI administration.

By improving ties with Pakistan and taking a significant part in attempts to bring about peace in Afghanistan, Russia is currently looking to increase the scope of its excursions into South Asia. At the same time, Pakistan was always discouraged in the US since it did not place much importance on Pakistan's concerns about domination; instead, America consistently looked to Pakistan for assistance in waging the battle against Communism (Atanassova-Cornelis, 2020).

Including the first joint special exercises between Russia and Pakistan in Pakistan's hilly terrain. At the Astana Summit, which took place on June 9, 2017, Pakistan joined the SCO as a full member with the assistance of Moscow and other nations. Pakistan's involvement in the regional framework will give Pakistan and Russia more chances to work together in the economic and security spheres. The Pakistan Navy organized the Aman naval exercise, which was attended by nations. Russia's largest anti-submarine warship Severomorsk participated in this exercise for the first time. Additionally, both militaries engaged in joint training, beginning with the Friendship-2017 drills, which took place in the mountains close to the Nizhny Arkhyz agreement in Karachay-Cherkessia, the Russian Federation, in September 2017. About 70 military climbing enthusiasts from Pakistan and the Southern Military District of Russia participated. In February 2018, the Pakistani foreign minister travelled to Moscow and signed a number of documents. When Gen Qamar, who the Bajwa, and the third successive leader of the Pakistani army, visits Moscow in April 2018, a Joint Military Council was established (Dawn, 2019).

The national security directors of the two countries attended high-level security meetings in Russia that same month. Presence of the defense representatives from the Strategic Planning Division in the Pakistani delegation suggests the possibility of conversations regarding strategic and nuclear matters. Following that, there were more frequent military delegation exchanges between Moscow and Islamabad. For instance, Vice Commander Kaleem Shaukat led a naval delegation from Pakistan to Russia in August 2018, where they signed an agreement mutually beneficial on naval cooperation. Given the ongoing tension between India and Pakistan, the participation of military contingents from both countries in the SCO joint exercises in September 2018 was a welcome constructive action that took place on Russian land (Gul, 2018).

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#### Political Engagement

The PTI administration worked to strengthen relations with Russia on a diplomatic level. Imran Khan, the prime minister of Pakistan, paid his first official visit to Russia in nearly ten years in 2019. A joint declaration on No First Deployment of Weapon in Outside Space and a protocol of understanding on boosting bilateral trade were two of the agreements that were signed as a result of the visit.





### **Military Coordination**

Throughout the PTI government's term, Pakistan and Russia's military coordination increased. In 2018, Pakistan took part in the joint military exercise Drishya (Friendship) with Russia, which was centered on counterterrorism activities. In 2014, Russia also relaxed its ban on selling weaponry to Pakistan, opening the door for potential defense cooperation. Increasing economic ties, recently, both nations have demonstrated a desire to increase their mutual economic benefit. There have been initiatives to increase investments and look into new commercial opportunities as Pakistan-Russian commerce has increased. The Memorandum of Understanding, or MoU, was signed by Pakistan and Russia in 2020 to advance their commercial and economic ties (Express Tribune, 2018).

### **Economic Cooperation**

The PTI administration sought to increase economic cooperation with Russia. The two nations looked into trade and investment possibilities, especially in fields like agriculture, energy, and infrastructure construction. Joint companies were set up, and trade missions between the two countries were made easier. Global stability and Afghanistan Concerns about stability in the region, particularly in Afghanistan, were shared by Pakistan and Russia. Both nations stressed the need of finding a peaceful end to the Afghan crisis and backed the Afghan-led and Afghan-owned settlement process. Russia and Pakistan continued to have frequent discussions on how the situation in Afghanistan was changing (Arab News, 2019).

It's crucial to keep in mind that while these allusions shed light on Pakistan-Russia ties under the PTI administration, developments occurring beyond September 2021 may not be covered due to the constantly changing character of international relations. Looking to current news sources and government comments is recommended for the latest and most up-to-date information. Afghanistan situation Russia and Pakistan have had different stances on Afghanistan. While Russia has called for a more comprehensive political settlement and voiced worries about the growing number of extremist organizations, Islamabad has backed the Taliban as a way to stabilize the area. Their relationships have occasionally been strained by this difference in tactics.

### **Relations between Russia and Pakistan Become Stronger**

Pakistan has asked Russia for assistance and investment in its energy sector. Russian businesses have expressed interest in funding Pakistan's energy initiatives, especially those involving liquid gas (LNG) and alternative power sources. The two nations' economic connections could be strengthened as a result of this cooperation.

### **Engagements on the Diplomatic Front**

The PTI administration has worked to enhance ties with Russia. There have been high-level exchanges and talks between representatives from the two nations, including the 2020 visit by the Russian minister of foreign affairs to Pakistan. These interactions have given us the chance to talk about cross-border concerns and look at potential areas of cooperation. Imran Khan, a former Pakistani prime minister, has been a vocal supporter of developing business ties with Russia. A day after the motion to remove his vote of confidence was made, he gave his final speech to the country and commended India for defying US pressure and purchasing cheaper oil from Russia. Since the Russia-Ukraine conflict, the Ukrainian government has been selling oil at a reduced price to maintain a healthy exchequer.

Pakistan had also committed to do the same, but the fall of the PTI administration dashed those hopes. Such an agreement would have assisted us in reducing the ever-growing current account deficit. Discounted excluding China and India Russian barrels are being shipped to Georgia, Turkey, and a few African countries. We are unsure of the veracity of Imran Khan's claim that Pakistan is following US policy by avoiding trading connections with Russia. We can be certain, though, that Pakistan has resisted taking a stand on issues of national importance if doing so would harm our connections with the ruling elite. The war in Ukraine is a recent occurrence. Due to their price and terms of reference, Russian oil and gas are among the most sought-after commodities by Pakistan. However, despite signing multiple memoranda



and starting a gas pipeline project, we have been passing up this chance. The refusal to explore for locations that sell lower oil and gas in a country where a sizeable number of foreign reserves are spent on that purpose can only be described as an act that betrays dedication to the interests of the nation (Schliebs, 2021).

There are centuries when anything occurs, and months when decades happen, allegedly stated Vladimir Lenin. This is evident from the recent conflict between Russia and Ukraine. On the 24th of February in 2022, Russia invaded Ukraine, altering the trajectory of global politics. It has triggered conflict in Eastern Europe for the first time since 1945. The Russian invasion of Ukraine seems to have reignited the cold war. The West has imposed harsh sanctions on Russia. 33 countries, include the United States, Canada, and EU members, have made it illegal for Russian planes to fly in their airspace. To resolve the Russia-Ukraine problem, international organizations should intervene and facilitate discussions between the two nations. If the situation isn't under control, sanctions by themselves will not be sufficient to minimize the loss of money (Huang, 2016).

The geopolitical situation was then drastically changed by the Russian takeover of the Ukrainian republic. Khan's entry coincided with the outbreak of hostilities, which did not bode well for Pakistan and brought the country into the international spotlight. Strong warnings from western nations to Pakistan also focused on the social repercussions of the visit. Additionally, after witnessing the Russian Armed Forces' subpar performance with weapons on the field of battle, Pakistan's military started to question its optimism towards Russian defense equipment and whether it may be able to put Islamabad on a par technologically with India. The Army Chief of Pakistan's criticism of the Russian invasion clearly conveyed this. Imran Khan's departure as prime minister ushers in a new Pakistani administration. officially changed to It also suggests that any further efforts to normalize relations with Russia have been put on hold and that the present state of romance between Pakistan and Russia, as exemplified by Imran Khan's visit there has ended (Ahrari, 2022).

In an effort to fortify its economic and geopolitical connections with the Russian Federation, Pakistan has enthusiastically answered with a similar diplomatic response. a report by Dmitry Peskov, the Kremlin press secretary, Imran Khan, who is the most recent prime minister of the nation in 23 years, will travel to Moscow for the first time on the 23rd and 24. A trip to Moscow by Putin's administration this year, that is also expected, will strengthen the relationships between the two nations on the commercial and strategic levels. Although it is realistic to believe that Pakistan and Russia's strategic partnership would expand over time, Pakistan also has a huge impact on the evolving geopolitical chessboard in Eurasia. Pakistan makes rapid IT advancements by utilizing its strategic location and strong military.

## CONCLUSION

Russia, which is the top exporter of natural gas and the second-largest exporter of oil, is often referred to by the term energy superpower. Russia must discover fresh destinations for its energy products, just like every other nation that produces oil and gas. Petrol is in short supply in Pakistan, which already sees itself as a big energy consumer. According to reports, Pakistan has a daily gas shortfall of 1.5 billion cubic feet, which is expected to more than treble by 2025. According to authorities, local LNG imports will become more necessary to meet demand as domestic gas supplies fall from 3.51, which is in 2019 to 1.66 in 2028. The country began importing LNG in 2015 to offset an increase in consumption and a decline in oil imports. In addition, studies claim that in just six years, Islamabad has become the ninth-biggest LNG exporter in the world. Pakistan's top gas supplier at the moment is Qatar, and that country continues to search for new energy partners to collaborate with. Pakistan obtained credit worth US\$4.5 billion (S\$6.12 billion) through the Islamic Trade and Finance Corporation in June 2021 to pay for the cost of import oil, petroleum, and LNG. In July 2021, the two countries will sign a shareholders deal that will lay out their future course of action for collaboration. A 2.5 trillion-dollar (S\$3.4 billion) energy pipeline is to be built in Pakistan as part of this agreement. Russian energy investments in Pakistan were

expected to total \$14 billion in the United States (\$18.7 billion) in 2019. A portion of the investment package includes this project. Vladimir and his staff were skilled political movers during his time, as evidenced by Russia's desire to forge enduring commercial and trade ties with Pakistan. Moscow's geopolitical need to create a chance that false information and harmful outside advertising could diminish the value of local defense partnership, but this risk can be minimized by maintaining the participation model and achieving the necessary financial and strategic cooperation.

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