

PEACE IN SOUTH ASIA IS MERELY A DREAM

1) INTRODUCTION

Thesis statement :- Although, some people believe that peace can be achieved in South Asia; however, due to the lack of good governance in these states and unstable relations between nuclear states suggest that peace in south Asia is ~~a~~ merely a dream.

2) CONTOURS OF SITUATION IN SOUTH ASIA :-

3) REASONS FOR PEACE BEING AN UNATTAINABLE TASK IN SOUTH ASIA :-

- (i) Historical perspective ; role of the British in ~~at~~ the absence of strong institutions.
- (ii) Unstable relations between nuclear states and vacuum ~~for~~ fundamentalist outfits.

- (ii) Overview of unstable ~~solution~~ situations - from Afghanistan to Myanmar.
- (iii) Unstable relations between nuclear states.
- (iv) Ethnic and cultural diversity ; open door for proxies.
- (v) Playground for great powers Cold war 2.0 and its effects.
- (vi) Lack of regional framework failure of SAARC.
- (vii) Climate change ; Asian acid report.
- (viii) Potential economic hub ; the role of IMF in controlling economies.

4) PROPONENTS OF OPPOSITE STANCE :-

- (i) Economic interdependence will quell issues ; ~~is~~ refuted by the case of German-England trade before World War I.

5) INAY - FORWARD :-

- (i) Role of global powers in solving Kashmir issue.
- (ii) Revamp SAARC.

6) CONCLUSION. ▢

World peace has tantalized the Human race but have eluded it them since its inception. Similarly, regional peace has also remained unachievable in South Asia. South Asia is a very important region, it has a populous states and nuclear powerhouses. Some factions hope that peace in South Asia can be achieved if economic interdependence is compounded. On the other hand, empirical evidence such as the perennial Indo/Pakistan rivalry, nuclear arsenals, and internal governance issues suggest otherwise. Furthermore, it has become a playground for ~~the~~ great powers to achieve dominance. These state of affairs

paint a very bleak picture. but exuberant steps can pacify this issue. Firstly, Diplomatic ties should be augmented on the European union model. Secondly, the World states should give a serious thought to the Kashmir issue; it has been the main bone of contention between India and Pakistan. Thus, some factions believe that peace in South Asia can be achieved; however, the ~~inter~~ lack of good governance in these states and unstable relations between nuclear states suggest that peace is merely a dream in South Asia.

Before diving into the arguments, one needs to

understand the contours of South Asian region. The states that lie in this region have a flexible purview. However, the main players are India, Pakistan, and Afghanistan. China is not technically in South Asia but its politics have revolved around this region. This region was colonized by the British. Historically, it has remained a very unstable region due to its cultural, ethnic and religious diversity. It has attracted a lot of attention lately due to its population bulge and economic opportunities that it presents. Still these region has remained unstable and underdeveloped.

The causes for peace being an elusive concept in South Asia are: firstly, from a historical point of view the Britishers left this region with weak institutions and haphazard partition. They gave a blueprint but did not elaborate on expansion of these institutions. Governance is flawed in areas such as Myanmar, Pakistan, and Bangladesh. The institutional decay started from the outset. Strong institutions are pivotal for foreign policy as foreign policy is just an extension of domestic policy. Furthermore, partition was drawn out on very vague outlines. Pakistan and Bangladesh were thousands of miles apart yet the same state. Similarly,

intervention in Afghanistan by imperial powers was a normal action. Thus, due to the actions of imperialistic powers in the past, the governance structure is flawed in South Asia.

th
a
ho
t
a

Secondly, this region is highly unstable due to nuclear arsenals and area susceptible to fundamentalist outfits. India and Pakistan are two nuclear states. They are daggers drawn all seasons. They have went to war three times. Their neighbour: China, is highly involved with affairs of these states. Shockingly, it is also a nuclear state. Similarly, Afghanistan has seen civil war and foreign interventions for

the past 45 years. It is a very volatile space. Iran, has seen revolutions and tacitly is a nuclear state. Other states are facing military coup issues. By analysing the whole region one realises that its a pool of gasoline and one matchstick will cause an explosion. Hence, due to the dynamics of the region peace can be hardly achieved.

Thirdly, Pakistan and India, two nuclear states, have been foes and still yet to reconcile ties. When the sub-continent was de-colonised, two states were born. India and Pakistan have not seen

eye to eye ever since. The main bone of contention have been the issue of Kashmir. The two states have ~~be~~ went to war thrice. Both have^{been} involved in multiple skirmishes. The peace of the region is at the mercy of these two states. Being the two biggest states of the region, ~~without~~ their reconciliation peace can never be achieved for longer periods.

Fourthly, ~~major~~ this area has a lot of ethnic and cultural diversity. This area has been inhabited by a plethora of races and cultures. From the dravidians

to the Mughals, all brought their culture and religion.

No one nation inhabits a state. India is a glaring example of this issue. In such states all ethnicities fight for their rights. ~~th~~ Following through with the Indian example, it has seen the Khalistani independence movement and issues in Mizoram and Nagaland.

§ In Pakistan, Baloch nationals have been agitated by proxies. This opens the door for proxy wars. In South Asia such issues are very much prevalent.

They might be intrinsic or ~~ma~~ become extrinsic but they disturb the peace.

Therefore, due to the cultural diversity that opens the door for proxy wars, peace cannot be achieved in South Asia.

Lastly, Great powers have always interfered in this region for selfish gains. Three powers: Russia, America and China have all been meddled with affairs of South Asia. America have invaded Afghanistan on paltry claims. It had a domino effect, the spillover was felt in Pakistan. In the same breath, new nexus' have been formed: Indo/U.S and Sino/China. Due to cold war 2.0 between U.S.A /China, Pakistan and India's relations have deteriorated. Furthermore, Russia has also been trying to gain support in the region, which will beget America's interference. Hence, due to the interference of major powers, the region has remained unstable.

On the other hand, there are proponents that claim the opposite of the said arguments. ~~The~~ Peace in South Asia is possible if the economic ties/interdependence is compounded. They present the argument that states that have good trade ties never indulge in wars or skirmishes. However, there are ample instances which have not been averted by trade. Before World War I, trade between U.K and Germany was the largest among European states. Thus, chances of working of such agreement are very minor.

Desperate problems require desperate solutions.

In South Asia's case, they require swift and multilateral solutions. Firstly, the World should join hands to solve the Kashmir issue.

As the innocent death of innocent public can never lead to peace between India and Pakistan. Holding a referendum or an agreement between the two states can solve the issue. Secondly, regional organisation: South Asian association of regional cooperation (SAARC) should be revamped to increase diplomatic ties between all states and provide impetus to trade. Aspects of E.U should be inculcated.

In conclusion, the unstable relation between nuclear states and interference of great powers for personal gains leads one to say that so peace in South Asia is merely a dream. Holding a large population of Asia, this region has seen instability from the outset. The myriad causes for it were the lack of proper institutions, Indo/Pak rivalry, and Afghanistan issues. Furthermore, it has been caught in the cross hairs of cold war 2.0. Some factions still believe that peace might be achieved. It is still very far-fetched but certain actions such as rectifying the issues between India and Pakistan

can go a long way.
One can hope for a
better tomorrow as it
took Europe a few
centuries to gain peace.