



India Counterterrorism: India and Pakistan's Lack of Cooperation in Fighting Lashar e-Taiba after Mumbai Attacks 2008

Annisa Adlina

Universitas Indonesia, Depok, DKI Jakarta, Indonesia

Email: annisa_adlina@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

Following the 2008 Mumbai Attacks, India refrained from engaging in counterterrorism cooperation with Pakistan, the origin country of Lashkar e-Taiba (LeT), marking a significant departure from previous approaches. This study investigates the factors influencing India's decision through the lens of the Prisoner's Dilemma Theory. By examining India's strategic calculations and contextualizing them within the security dilemma framework post-Mumbai terror, this research aims to elucidate the rationale behind India's non-cooperative stance. Results reveal a complex interplay of historical distrust, perceived security threats, and strategic considerations shaping India's decision-making, highlighting the implications for future counter-terrorism efforts and international relations strategies.

Keywords: Counter Terrorism; India; Pakistan; Lashkar e-Taiba; Mumbai attacks.

INTRODUCTION

International security is one of the main aspects of the study of international relations, which emphasizes the protection of society from both military and non-military threats (Bojanić, 2022; Sengoz, 2022). At least in the last two decades, or more precisely after the Cold War, global security has become very complex due to the presence of other actors outside the country who play a significant role. One of them is the emergence of terrorism in various regions of the world. Terrorism can be understood as acts or acts of force using threats, violence, and spreading fear to achieve political or ideological goals (Peptan, 2019; Syahputra & Hamid, 2024; Zubrzycki, 2020). The network they have is spread widely so that carrying out attacks or spreading threats can be carried out in various cities, countries, or even across continents. This certainly poses a major threat not only to the safety of citizens but also to democracy, law, and human rights (MI5, 2023). One of the countries facing the threat of terrorism in the South Asia region is India.

India is faced with an increasing number of terrorist threats that are spreading throughout the country (Bhattacharyya, 2017; G. Gupta, 2020; Singh & Cheerathadayan, 2022). In combating

this, India has established a law regarding the National Investigation Agency, made amendments to the Unlawful Activities regulations, and other laws related to efforts to fight terrorism. The Indian government also issued a list of banned terrorist organizations in the Act, including Lashkar e-Taiba and Liberation Tiger Tamil Eelam. Furthermore, India has also formed organizations that assist the government in carrying out investigations, including the Central Reserve Police Force, the Indian Police Service, and the new National Investigation Agency (Banerjee et al., 2021; Rajput & Rajput, 2020). Apart from forming legal regulations and governance regarding handling terrorism, India is also carrying out counter-terror efforts by establishing cooperation with other countries. When the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) from Sri Lanka attacked, India prioritized cooperation with the Sri Lankan government in fighting the group. Cooperation was carried out by agreeing to send Indian troops as peacekeepers in 1987 (Cronin-Furman & Arulthas, 2021; Fazil & Fowsar, 2020; Mayilvaganan, 2023; Meier, 2020). After the bomb occurred involving several people from Bangladesh, the Bangladesh government also condemned the act and banned the existence of anti-India organizations (Government of India, 2012). Furthermore, India and Bangladesh are also establishing counterterrorism cooperation by strengthening border security cooperation in 2012 and intelligence cooperation in 2021.

Many of the previous articles criticized the Indian government in handling domestic counter-terror cases. For example, the formation of the Intelligence Agency or National Security Agency was only formed when a bomb exploded and did not anticipate this beforehand (Asad, 2022; Malik, 2019; Pathania, 2020). Moreover, many new organizations were formed but did not optimize the previous organizations that had been established. As a result of overlapping main tasks and functions, both the government and institutions are confused about how to act when a terrorist bomb attack occurs. Other articles also emphasize India's cooperation in dealing with terror with other countries outside Pakistan. For example, India's cooperation with Russia and China (Glazev & Arkhipova, 2022), India with the European Union (Jain, 2020), India-Israel collaboration (Naha, 2020), New Delhi and Washington D.C (Blackwill & Tellis, 2019; Markey, 2023) , as well as the dynamics of cooperation between India and Sri Lanka (Padmakumara & Senanayake, 2019).

The discussions about India and Pakistan relations in previous scientific writings also emphasize the dynamics of relations between the two as a whole. How these two countries were in a fairly good situation in terms of counterterrorism efforts in 2002 but this changed when the Mumbai Attacks occurred in 2008 (Brine & Roycroft, 2021; Pant & Lidarev, 2018). Efforts made by Pakistan to bring itself closer to its neighboring countries were also discussed. Perkovich (2015), for example, has analyzed how dialogue efforts initiated by Pakistan responded to terrorism in India. Even though dialogue has been attempted to be built for decades, previous research states that the reason why there is still no counter-terrorism cooperation between India and Pakistan is due to border issues and nuclear tensions (D. K. Gupta, 2020).

This research seeks to investigate more deeply the main background underlying India's choice not to cooperate with Pakistan in stemming terrorism. That there is a calculation of profit and loss beyond the ideological aspect or arms race. Therefore, this research seeks to explain the reasons why India chose to collaborate with other countries but not with Pakistan. Furthermore, previous research used a broad approach so that the resulting analysis was not focused on country calculations. In the article India-Pakistan Relations after the Mumbai Terror Attacks, for example, Gupta et al., (2020) explain what choices the New Delhi government should take using a public opinion approach. Meanwhile, Javaid & Kamal (2013) emphasize research from a regional perspective with a Regional Security Complex approach. This study, therefore, seeks to fill the gap by emphasizing India's fundamental choice not to engage in counterterror cooperation with Pakistan.

The author argues that there are factors behind Delhi's reasons for not cooperating in the security dilemma following the 2008 Mumbai attacks. Historical aspects show how Pakistan behaved in previous dilemmas as the main factor in India's tendency to close down. Moreover, both have faced border and security issues since independence in 1947. Dialogue and cooperation have often been established but have failed, in this case, according to India, due to Pakistan's non-compliance. As a result, India no longer has confidence in building a cooperative dialogue with Pakistan. This assumption is then attempted to be explained in more depth through this article using the Security Dilemma theory as a Framework of Analysis.

This research provides a profound understanding of India-Pakistan relations by analyzing historical backgrounds and contemporary dynamics, highlighting factors influencing India's strategic decisions regarding counterterrorism cooperation. By identifying barriers such as border issues, nuclear tensions, and historical precedents, the study not only underscores challenges to be overcome for tangible progress in India-Pakistan relations but also offers practical insights for foreign policy formulation and diplomacy, as well as applying theoretical frameworks to evaluate strategic decisions in the complex realm of international relations.

RESEARCH METHODS

This literature review aims to delve into the factors underlying India's decision to abstain from counterterrorism collaboration with Pakistan subsequent to the 2008 Mumbai attacks, with specific attention directed towards the Prisoner's Dilemma Theory. The research question is formulated to unravel the rationale behind India's reluctance to foster cooperative dialogue with Pakistan in addressing the threat posed by Lashkar e-Taiba (LeT). Emphasizing India's historical engagements in counterterrorism cooperation, such as those with Sri Lanka and Bangladesh, it juxtaposes them against the absence of such collaboration with Pakistan. Furthermore, it scrutinizes criticisms levelled against the Indian government's management of domestic

counterterrorism cases and surveys prior scholarly works analyzing India's cooperative endeavours with other nations in countering terrorism.

The review underscores the intricate dynamics characterizing India-Pakistan relations and the manifold reasons delineated in extant research for the dearth of counterterrorism collaboration, including territorial disputes and nuclear tensions. To bridge the research lacuna, this study centres on India's foundational decision to eschew counterterrorism cooperation with Pakistan and advocates employing the Security Dilemma theory as the analytical framework. The review delineates the research structure, comprising an introduction, a section elucidating the analytical framework centred around the Prisoner's Dilemma Theory, a segment detailing the research method, a discussion section, and a conclusion encapsulating the research findings.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Prisoners' Dilemma as Framework of Analysis

One theory that focuses on calculations and predictions in international relations is the Prisoners' Dilemma theory. This mathematical approach was first formulated in IR studies by Robert Axelrod in the book *The Evolution of Cooperation* (1981). This theory describes a prison situation where two prisoners have the choice of admitting their guilt and receiving a lighter sentence or not confessing and being released. However, the prison sentence he gets depends not only on his choice but also on the answers of other prisoners. Moreover, with no communication between the two detainees, each suspect must make choices without knowing what the other party will do (Axelrod, 1981). The depiction of this dilemma also exists in international politics where every state actor will continue to be faced with the choice of collaborating or defecting. Even though there are more than two actors in a system, this concept assumes that each actor interacts one by one.

The Prisoner's Dilemma

		<i>Column Player</i>	
		<i>Cooperate</i>	<i>Defect</i>
Row Player	Cooperate	$R=3, R=3$ Reward for mutual cooperation	$S=0, T=5$ Sucker's payoff, and temptation to defect
	Defect	$T=5, S=0$ Temptation to defect and sucker's payoff	$P=1, P=1$ Punishment for mutual defection

NOTE: The payoffs to the row chooser are listed first.

Figure 1. Depiction of the Situation in the Prisoner's Dilemma

Source: Axelrod, 1981

Through the prisoner's dilemma table above, Axelrod tries to illustrate the advantages and disadvantages that both parties might gain. There are four scenarios in the Prisoner's Dilemma, including working together and both parties getting a reward, party A defecting and party B getting a heavier punishment, party B defecting, and both defecting. Although it is not like what is described by the Prisoner's Dilemma, where in international politics actors can still communicate, countries cannot truly understand the goals of other countries. So, the choice to defect or cooperate remains with each party. So what considerations can the state take into account when acting? According to Axelrod (1981), there are three things that can be factors for countries to make choices.

As with repeated computer games, interaction patterns can be a major part of how states determine choices. This can be seen through how the second prisoner faced the previous situation and what choices he made. If, in a similar situation, the prisoner defects, then the option of also defecting can be considered. As a result of repeated dilemmas, countries can likely face the same situation with the same parties. Therefore, considerations need to be taken when calculating future profits. Whether choosing to work together now can save you from a dilemma situation in the future. Third, if the two countries have never faced each other before, then the reputation of the second prisoner in the social structure can be considered. When an opponent has a reputation as a defector, he or she will likely defect in a prisoner's dilemma. On the other hand, when the opponent has a good reputation, the option to cooperate can be established more easily.

India-Pakistan Interaction in Counterterrorism

At the beginning of its emergence in the 80s, LeT only targeted India in the Jammu and Kashmir region. According to this group, India has been oppressing the Muslim community there for decades. With this bond of solidarity between fellow Muslims, the struggle emerged to fight India, establish a state with Islamic ideology, and strive to be an important part of the global struggle against the oppression of Muslims. LeT's first attack occurred in 1990 when several members of the Indian Air Force were on guard. A second attack was then carried out by LeT in 1993 which also targeted the Indian military in the Poonch area (Mapping Militant Organizations, 2008). Attacks in the early years of LeT's emergence were only focused on defeating Indian troops, especially in the Jammu and Kashmir region, but LeT's movements began to change in 1996. LeT carried out shootings targeting the Hindu minority community in Kashmir. As a result of this attack, 16 Hindu people died (Mapping Militant Organizations, 2008). Finally, LeT started targeting domestic India in 2000 and continued to grow in the following years. The peak was the 2008 Mumbai attacks which became a turning point in the counter-terrorism cooperation dialogue between India and Pakistan.

India and Pakistan are the two largest countries in South Asia by region. Both succeeded in gaining independence from the British in 1947, but the division of the former colonial territory was considered by Pakistan to be less suitable. According to Islamabad, the city of Jammu and Kashmir should be part of its country because the majority of the population adheres to Islam. This disagreement ultimately gave rise to endless conflict, even to this day. Apart from border issues, they were also faced with the nuclear arms race which began to develop during the Cold War period. India first conducted nuclear tests in 1974 and has developed very rapidly since 1988. On the other hand, Pakistan also began carrying out nuclear development in 1971. Apart from being a response to India's nuclear weapons, this decision was also due to Pakistan's defeat due to separatist movements in the Eastern region. (Tellis, 2022). As a result, under the leadership of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, Pakistan tried to develop these weapons quickly. The first trial was then carried out in 1983 and continued in 1998. The third aspect that also influenced the dynamics of the relationship between the two was the issue of terrorism in security.

Dialogue regarding terrorism has been built by India and Pakistan since the 80s. In 1984, India asked Pakistan to punish the perpetrators of the 1981 hijacking and Pakistan agreed. The next year, the two countries also carried out a Joint Dialogue Process which discussed the issues of terrorism, security, and immigration (Kiani, 2019). Dialogue is also carried out at the regional level, as in 1997. In this SAARC Summit, both Pakistan and India agreed to build trust, especially on the issues of terrorism and drug trafficking. Apart from that, state leaders have also started making visits to neighboring countries as a form of their seriousness in building better relations. Even in this Joint Dialogue, discussions regarding Jammu and Kashmir were also included to resolve the issue quickly (Padder, 2012). However, this harmony did not last long because in 1999, the Kargil War occurred, and dialogue failed again.

Apart from acts of terror in the United States in 2001, India also faced the same problem. There was an attack on the Indian Parliament Building on December 13. Accusations regarding Pakistan's involvement in terrorist groups are further aggravated in this situation. India assesses that its neighboring country is providing support for LeT to attack its country. Responding to this, the Pakistani government, through the Spokesperson for the Minister of Foreign Affairs, stated that the accusations were baseless, and India did not provide clear evidence (Anwar, 2019). Even the official website of the Pakistani Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2013) also considers that the attack that occurred twelve years ago was propaganda carried out by the Indian government. Even though they were in a bad situation, the two countries held a Joint Dialogue again in October 2002 and continued by building better diplomatic relations in 2004.

2004 was described as the best year in the normalization of India-Pakistan relations, which had been established since the Joint Dialogue in 1997 (Padder, 2012). This year, the two of them discussed various important issues including the economy, Jammu & Kashmir, terrorism, and five other issues. This dialogue also initiated further cooperation in counter-terrorism and a

commitment to form a new institution. During this normalization, Pakistani President Musharraf also emphasized again that Pakistan would not be a place for terrorists to take refuge (Kiani, 2019). This harmony went well until the following year when the two countries' transportation was added. Not only adding to the Delhi to Lahore itinerary, the two are also building maritime cooperation through maritime cooperation.

In 2006, there was an attack on a Mumbai train that killed 180 people and injured 800 others (Mapping Militant Organizations, 2018). This attack allegedly carried out by LeT has again reduced India's confidence in Pakistan. In fact, in the previous year's Joint Dialogue, the Pakistani government had condemned and promised not to make its country a place for terrorists to nest. However, attacks were still carried out by LeT and killed nearly 200 people. In this case, India again accused Pakistan of being the mastermind behind this incident. Yashwant Sinha, who is an Indian politician, stated that the negotiations between the two parties would not resolve anything because Pakistan continued to carry out violence against India (Fayyaz, 2009). Two months after the attack, the two met in Havana in September 2006 (Padder, 2012). In this meeting, both of them again emphasized cooperation in fighting the threat of terrorism even in a bad situation.

The next Joint Dialogue was held in 2007, and it discussed counter-terrorism cooperation again. In this meeting, both of them again condemned acts of terrorism and were serious about fighting them. The following year, the two met again to discuss the issue of terrorism and drug trafficking (Padder, 2012). However, just as the meeting was being held, the Mumbai attacks occurred which ultimately became a turning point in relations between the two. India can no longer trust Pakistan in its efforts to fight terrorism and has promised not to make its territory a haven for terror groups, especially LeT.

Even though dialogue has been attempted before, it is difficult to develop a stable situation for a long time and trust because of India's disappointment with Pakistan. This mistrust began in 1989 when a resistance group attempted to attack India in the Kashmir region. In this action, sympathizers also called for independence from India and some of them wanted to join Pakistan. The Pakistani government then provided moral and diplomatic support and India considered that Pakistan had encouraged separatist groups to attack its country. Apart from that, the dialogue that has been built over decades has not shown significant results and tends to stagnate. This is because the LeT threat still exists and is even increasing and the group is still headquartered in Pakistan.

Many parties also believe that Lashkar e-Taiba has strong support from Pakistani intelligence forces. This is because LeT's vision and mission are in line with the Pakistani government in seizing the Jammu and Kashmir region. Apart from that, LeT is also believed to have received funding assistance and facilities such as schools and hospitals from the Pakistani government (Hashim, 2019; Macander, 2021). Moreover, even though Musharraf has emphasized his efforts to

eradicate terror groups based in Pakistan, LeT attacks and threats remain and continue to give rise to India's domestic security instability. Therefore, seeing the previous pattern of bilateral interactions with Pakistan on counter-terrorism issues, it is difficult for India to trust its neighbor and the choice to defect in the next dilemma situation is more likely to be carried out.

Lack of Rewards in India-Pakistan Counter Terrorism

In the prisoner's dilemma, the party who defected does not receive punishment but has a negative impact on other prisoners. This also happens in state situations where no punishment will be received when the state does not choose to cooperate. However, in repeated dilemmas, countries will tend to cooperate because of rewards or what Axelrod calls payoffs. Cooperation is chosen by countries, of course, to achieve maximum interests and profits. India also did this when building a security dialogue with Pakistan in the 80s. Discussions about security are trying to be built to safeguard society against acts of terror and fight terrorism. However, instead of reducing the number of terror attacks, Lashkar e-Taiba became increasingly active in carrying out attacks and began targeting Indian civilians in 2000. Moreover, when India and other countries urged Pakistan to take action in prosecuting the perpetrators of terror, Pakistan tended to move slowly.

Counter-terrorism has indeed been actively carried out by Pakistan, but its strategy only applies to groups that target the country's security, such as the Taliban (Tellis, 2012). The policy was not implemented as harshly when the government faced LeT, which had been targeting Jammu, Kashmir, and India. In the case of the LeT bombing of the Indian Parliamentary Office in 2001, for example, there was involvement of the Pakistani government which was reported by Indian security advisors (Coll, 2006). There was no response issued by Pakistan until, finally, the US put pressure on Islamabad to contribute to finding the perpetrator and bringing him to justice. Apart from the United States, India also continues to pressure and give ultimatums to its neighboring countries. After the Mumbai Attacks, for example, Pranab Mukherjee, who served as Minister of Foreign Affairs of India, contacted the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Pakistan directly to truly commit to prohibiting the use of Pakistani territory as a sanctuary for terrorism. Apart from that, Delhi also asked Pakistan to hand over the fugitives. However, despite condemning and denying its involvement, Pakistan took a slow time in formulating a response to the surrender (France24, 2008).

Calculation of future profits can also be seen through the intelligence aspect. This aspect is taken into account because the counter-terror cooperation carried out by the country - in this case, India - with other countries is expected to benefit from it by providing information to identify future threats. For example, intelligence assistance was provided by the US when establishing a counter-terror cooperation dialogue with India through reports regarding LeT threats through the FBI (Nayak & Krepon, 2012). Furthermore, a few days after the Mumbai attacks in 2008, the US government also deployed an FBI team to India to help solve the case.

This advantage is then hoped for by countries in a dilemma of choosing to cooperate rather than defect.

What happened with the US was, in fact, not the same when dealing with Pakistan. In previous security dilemmas, Pakistan did not provide intelligence regarding terror attacks targeting India. Even India considers that the Pakistani intelligence organization called Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) also provides assistance and support to terrorism. ISI is a Pakistani intelligence agency founded in 1948. Its task is to collect and analyze information that is useful for national security (Pathania, 2020). In the 2000s, when General Pervez Musharraf served as President of Pakistan, this organization was given the authority to provide support or weaken major domestic parties so that they remain obedient and loyal to the government. ISI provides support to groups that have an Islamic fundamentalist ideology, namely LeT and Harkat-ul-Ansar (Pathania, 2020). This is what India considers Islamabad's support for terror groups targeting its country. Therefore, the benefits obtained both now and the things that are promising in the future are not obtained by India, so the choice to cooperate becomes increasingly difficult. Apart from calculating profits, there is an assessment of the reputation of other countries which is also an important consideration in dilemma situations.

Pakistan's Reputation in SAARC as a Consideration for Cooperation

In a prisoner's dilemma, players may meet each other for the first time. So, the two of them don't have a previous interaction pattern. According to Axelrod (1981), another consideration that can be chosen is the reputation of other players in a social structure. In the case of India and Pakistan, both are members of a regional organization called the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation or SAARC. An organization founded in January 1987 that aims to improve the welfare and quality of life of people in the region (SAARC, 2020). At the time of its formation, India and Pakistan were in a bad situation and were skeptical about the establishment of a regional organization. However, after several years of its founding, Pakistan began to realize the importance of SAARC in the region's progress.

Since the beginning of the formation of SAARC, Pakistan has expressed its concern about member countries' nuclear explosion tests which could threaten regional stability (Murthy, 1999). In 1990, Islamabad also emphasized efforts for faster and more comprehensive global arms control. As a member country, Pakistan is also active in providing other ideas beyond security to be included in the SAARC Summit. In 1986, for example, when hosting the summit, Pakistan suggested holding special activities for women (Arif, 2018). At the tenth SAARC Summit, Pakistan also proposed ideas regarding peace, security, and development in South Asia. In this meeting, Pakistan also encouraged good bilateral relations between each member country and strengthened the role of the organization if there were tensions between member countries (Murthy, 1999). Since its founding in 1987, Pakistan has also hosted summits in 2004 and 2016. In 2004, Pakistan hosted the twelfth conference, which focused on examining economic,

technological, social, cultural, environmental, and handling aspects of terrorism. Finally, the nineteenth conference was held in Pakistan in 2016 but was not attended by India because it believed that the Pakistani government was involved in the Uri terror act.

At the regional level, even though Pakistan has played an active role since the beginning of the formation of SAARC, India still considers the bad intentions of its neighboring country's presence as a form of spying on India. Apart from that, India's disappointment was also caused by Pakistan's attitude which was considered slow in fighting cross-border terrorism. Terrorists affiliated with ISIS are also spreading in South Asian countries and maximum counter-terror efforts cannot work if Pakistan continues to protect and provide support for them. SAARC is considered unable to develop like the EU and ASEAN because of the dispute between India and Pakistan (Reza, 2016; Murthy, 1999). However, for India, Pakistan's presence hinders this regional organization's movement. Due to Pakistan's bad reputation for India at the regional level, the choice to defect is greater than collaborating in a dilemma.

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CONCLUSION

A country's geographical proximity often influences its interaction with other countries. However, the closer a country is, the greater the conflict and disputes occur. This also happens in the situation of India and Pakistan which have a long history in aspects of security, ideology, borders, territorial division, and so on. Since the beginning of independence in 1947, both have faced a crisis over the Jammu and Kashmir region which continues to this day. For Pakistan, Kashmir, which is inhabited by a Muslim majority, should be part of its country. On the other hand, Kashmir also provides additional strength to India in terms of territorial area, community diversity, and borders. Moreover, India and Pakistan can also use this area against each other. This instability is also exploited by radical groups to achieve their respective interests. One of them is the Lashkar e-Taiba terrorist, which is also the main discussion in this article, which has targeted attacks in Jammu and Kashmir since the early 90s.

In contrast to terrorists from Sri Lanka and Bangladesh, India did not establish counter-terror cooperation with Pakistan in fighting LeT, especially after the 2008 Mumbai Attacks. As illustrated in the prisoner's dilemma situation, Delhi tends to defect because of Pakistan's attitude which is considered to be siding with them. LeT is the enemy. Before the terror act in Mumbai in 2008, both were in a good situation and were trying to strengthen cooperation in the security aspect. However, this changed in reverse after the LeT attack which killed hundreds of Indians. Even though, in several speeches, the Islamabad government has condemned and explained its non-participation in the bombing, India remained reluctant to dialogue and improve relations for at least several years afterwards.

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