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Islamabad

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Strategic Vision Institute (SVI)

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Strategic Vision Institute (SVI)

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SVI aims to project strategic foresight on issues of national and international import through dispassionate, impartial and independent research, analyses and studies. The current spotlight of the SVI is on the national security, regional and international peace and stability, strategic studies, nuclear non-proliferation, arms control, and strategic stability, nuclear safety and security and energy studies.

SVI Foresight

SVI Foresight is a monthly electronic journal. It has a multi-disciplinary perspective highlighting on the contemporary strategic and security studies. The Journal is envisioned to be a collection of policy-oriented articles written by its Research Associates, Visiting Faculty and professional experts. The objective is to provide the readership with a concise all-round and real-time policy oriented discourse on contemporary strategic regional and international developments, highlighting their relevance to Pakistan.

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Editor's Note

SVI Foresight for the month of April presents an anthology of high quality analytical opinions on contemporary strategic and security issues. The short commentaries provide an in depth diagnostic review of the regional and global strategic and security environment. The articles included in this issue have specifically focused on the most current developments in the international politics and evaluate them in a timely manner by furnishing pertinent and critically sound arguments.

One of the articles aptly unveils the realities about India's preemptive first strike and intrinsic flaws in its no-first use (NFU) policy. The author in this article maintains that all the hype about India's provocative gestures is unnecessary since India's inciting disposition is nothing new, nor should be taken as a surprise. The article flourishes that considering India's ambiguous stance on NFU, officials in Pakistan had always been right to doubt the credibility of this proclamation. While the latest statement by Vipin Narang about India's intentions of never letting Pakistan to go first, have raised a lot of eyebrows on both sides of the border, it should hardly be surprising for the relevant circles in Pakistan. The article provides strong arguments that the first strike would only be suicidal for India, who would not have much to gain from such irrational ambitions. In the same vein another article included in this volume, talks at length about the inherent dilemmas and varied connotations attached to India's NFU policy. The author bases the argument on excerpts from the book by India's former National Security Advisor Shivshankar Menon stating that "there is a political grey area as to when India could use nuclear weapons first against a nuclear weapon State" and that "India's nuclear doctrine has far greater flexibility than it gets credit for". A man of his stature and in his position must have been privy to India's inclination towards reinterpreting its nuclear doctrine of no-first-use by replacing it with the pre-emptive nuclear doctrine. Even though none of it should be ignored or taken lightly but in reality such a strategy cannot be implemented against Pakistan as conceptually and operationally, it is not possible to go for a decapitation strike because it requires a high level of intelligence and accuracy. Another article further elaborates on the nuclear implication of such a stance by India. It maintains that India's 'ace in hole', the flexibility

of first use in no-first use policy, if exists, will adversely impact the region. The mounting strategic ambiguities will not only invigorate the 'use them or lose them' dilemma in crisis time but will also complicate the deterrence posture, thereby inducing aggressive strategies, leading to war-fighting capabilities, lowering the threshold and increase in the alertness level in already murky South Asia.

Other articles included in this volume address various aspects of CPEC and provide strong analysis on the economic benefits of this initiative. How can the aggrieved elements and insurgent in Baluchistan province be streamlined and made part of the success of CPEC, and whether the CPEC actually will deliver or not, have all been discussed in detail through factual scrutiny. Another unique aspect regarding CPEC that has been explored is how it can actually be instrumental in peace building in Kashmir. The readers will also find a fresh take on the ever volatile situation in Afghanistan and whether the international Afghan peace conference in Moscow would be able to contribute to the peace efforts in Afghanistan. The rising temperature between India and Pakistan in the wake of Kulbushan conviction and an otherwise aggressive foreign policy ambitions of India have also been commented upon and made part of this electronic volume.

It is hoped that the issue will help readers in staying updated with the current political environment and they will find the analyses useful. The SVI Foresight team invites and highly encourages the contributions from the security and strategic community in form of opinion based short commentaries on contemporary political, security and strategic issues. Any suggestions for further improvements are welcome at our [contact address](#). Please see [here](#) the copy of SVI Foresight electronic journal. You can find us on [Face book](#) and can also access the SVI [website](#).

Senior Research Associate
Syedah Sadia Kazmi

India's 'Suicidal' First-Strike Hype

Zafar Iqbal Cheema

The hype about India's preemptive first strike, nuclear, conventional or combined, against Pakistan's nuclear assets, just before it is 'expected' to use or threaten to use tactical nuclear weapons (TNWs) is hardly surprising.

It is however really astonishing to see Pakistan's response, notwithstanding the fact that any discussion on the employment of nuclear weapons by itself is a scary subject. Most Pakistani analysts have rightly pointed out that Pakistan did not trust India's no-first-use nuclear declaration credibility at the first place. The most recent reiteration came on 6 April 2017, from Pakistan's Foreign Office spokesperson who said, "Pakistan had long maintained that India's ambiguous no-first-use nuclear declaration was not verifiable and hence nothing more than an empty political statement". However, most analysts have remained short of clearly pointing out that a successful disarming, decapitating or preemptive counterforce strike against an adversary possessing 'credible' nuclear weapons capability is almost impossible.

The historically established strategic precept about the assured failure of completely taking out all the weapons of a nuclear-armed adversary in a counterforce preemptive strike and the retaliatory 'unacceptable damage' from a counter strike is not based upon a postulation only, but a broad consensus of the nuclear strategists and professionals from across the world. Why then is the Indian strategic elite so excitingly spreading the very notion of disarming or preemptive strike in such a style?

The postulation of preemptive first strike was kicked off from Vipin Narang's assertion presented in a paper at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace conference (2017) on nuclear policy and non-proliferation, suggesting that 'There is an increasing evidence India will not allow Pakistan to go first,' in the use of nuclear weapons and could launch a 'comprehensive preemptive first strike to completely disarm Pakistan of its nuclear weapons so that India does not have to engage in iterative tit-for-tit exchanges and expose its own cities to nuclear destruction.' This 'assessment' of India's NFU nuclear policy is neither new nor surprising. It is premised on a number of previous statements and formulations by Indian political leaders and officials, lately from India's former National Security Advisor, Shivshankar Menon's articulation in his 2016 book that 'India might find it useful to strike first against an adversary poised to launch or that declared it would [certainly] use its weapons', which was an unequivocal reference to Pakistan.

India's nuclear history is replete with such contradictory assertions and an affront to basics of deterrence strategy. India's first officially articulated Draft Nuclear Doctrine (DND) in 1999 is a bunch of hyper contradictions. Article 2.3 of the Indian DND stated that "India shall pursue a doctrine of credible minimum nuclear deterrence," but Article 2.6 laid down a list of requirements, which describe that deterrence required India to maintain: "Sufficient, survivable and operationally prepared nuclear forces". It is obviously a self-contradiction that the doctrine of credible minimum deterrence requires

maintaining 'sufficient' nuclear forces. Due to this provision, the Indian nuclear doctrine was assessed internationally as an aggressive.

In January 2003, India's cabinet committee on security reviewed the draft doctrine and to make it partly operational; the committee summarised a version, which significantly departed from the August 1999 DND. The "no-first-use" posture has been modified significantly. Article VI of the operationalised nuclear doctrine renders the NFU declaration invalid by stating: "However, in the event of a major attack against India, or Indian forces anywhere, with biological or chemical weapons, India will retain the option of retaliating with nuclear weapons."

The possibility of successful preemptive strikes against nuclear weapons can also be ruled out because the dispersed and well-concealed nuclear warheads and mobile delivery vehicles cannot be attacked and destroyed with assured certainty. The survivability of even a few nuclear weapons for retaliatory purposes could wreak havoc if used in a counter-city mode or attack on nuclear installations.

Large-scale preemptive attacks by inherently dual-use systems in a limited or full-scale conflict to degrade or destroy the adversary's nuclear capability are considered the most dangerous, and therefore, counterproductive. These types of dangerous undertakings would lead to an uncontrolled escalation of limited conventional war to a nuclear exchange, which would be catastrophic for the whole region. The South Asian scenario is especially not conducive for such preemptive military strikes due to border contiguity, geographical proximity and retaliatory war options.

The dangerous strategic miscalculation is being repeated once again by the Indian policy circles projecting an obsolete strategic concept of counterforce preemptive first strike. The projection of preemptive first strike seems to be more politically motivated than a well-articulated military strategy, may be to satiate the aggressive intent of India's hawkish ruling elite.

<http://dailytimes.com.pk/opinion/27-Apr-17/indias-suicidal-first-strike-hype>

CPEC: Pakistan's Golden Ticket to a Successful Economic Takeoff?

Asia Maqsood

The astounding contours of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) includes various industrial parks, economic zones, dams, development of new infrastructure and energy stations which are linked with expressways and railway lines. These will be built along with the Kashghar-Gwadar route. The total estimated cost was initially 46 billion dollars which is increased to 51.5 billion dollars with the additional loan of 5.5 billion dollars. This mega project is expected to be completed by 2030 in three phases; short term, medium term and long term.

Through Chinese investment, the energy shortages will be reduced and the growth in income levels of Pakistan is expected. Eventually it will lead to GDP growth of country. CPEC would be game changer as Chinese president have signed MoU (Memorandum of understanding). Considering the next election in 2018, these projects will be implemented in coming three years believing that these would bring significant positive outcomes for Pakistan's economy. Under CPEC project, the huge investment is fixed related to set up a 15000MW coal based power plant which is 74 percent of the existing capacity. Indirect impact is huge such as the security of electricity supplies would boost the activities of private sector. Pakistan's economic growth is a Hercules task for the government without the foreign direct investment in both infrastructure build-up and relevant technology transfer as well.

Pakistan's economy is on the way of initial stages of take-off. According to Rostow, take-off is the industrial revolution, immense changes in the methods of production which have drastic outputs/consequences in a short time period. Hence with the implementation of CPEC project Pakistan's economy is entering this stage.

This mega project is taking the bilateral relations of both countries to new heights and will start the journey of prosperity of Pakistan and the Xinjiang province of China. This will bring prosperity not only for both countries but also for the region.

This mega project is divided into different phases but the very first phase will be the completion of Port and Gwadar International Airport till 2017. Other small projects include expansion of Karakoram Highway and fiber-optic lines to improve communication between two countries will be done after the completion of the first phase.

Indeed Pakistan has suffered a lot because of flawed monetary policies, political instability and terrorism. But in contemporary political environment the PML-N government has been accomplishing its landmark objectives by joint ventures with the Chinese government

According to recent publishing of Centre for International Development at Harvard, the higher growth rates depends upon the gains in productive capabilities and Pakistan's predicted annual growth rate for next ten years is 5.0 percent. Its immediate neighbors China and India will grow by 4.28 percent and 6.8 percent respectively.

Pakistan's economy would be revolutionized through infrastructure build-up by China's huge assistance. China not only assists Pakistan at regional level but also at global forums. It has offered Pakistan to bear 80 percent financial cost of two Karachi nuclear power plants of 2100 mega Watt, ready to sell 8 conventional submarines to Pakistan Navy and cooperated in the production of JF-17 Thunder. China's assistance in the uplifting of Pakistan's economy would bring immense opportunities for Pakistanis.

The multidimensional CPEC project is receiving the highest level of government interest in both countries. It is on the way in realizing the goal of bringing mutual prosperity to the two countries with the developments of Gwadar Port, fiber optical links, establishment of new infrastructure and a host of energy-cooperation projects. Simultaneously it is facing some challenges ahead.

Pakistan's economic development is its key principle through CPEC. Hence progress has been started on their joint initiatives to develop Gwadar Port as commercial and international port. It is first priority of Pakistan to safeguard its territorial integrity and national interest in every single project under this mega project of CPEC.

Along this economic take-off there is a possibility of improved India-Pakistan bilateral relations because of Pakistan's economic fortification under CPEC. Simultaneously at regional level, Afghanistan can enjoy the benefits from this development because of enhanced economic activities. Pakistan proposed the construction of Peshawar-Kabul motorway which will link Afghanistan to other regions. Eventually this corridor is termed as "game changer" as well as "corridor to peace".

The key element which required for the success of the project of CPEC is the cooperation among provinces. The unpredictability of any terrorist attack on CPEC project especially in KPK and Baluchistan will be a great challenge. Pakistan is deploying 15000 special security forces under a separate Wing of Pakistan Army along the corridor for the security of Chinese nationals and companies. There is also a threat in form of Uighur militants in the Xinjiang province of China.

At the same time level of dangers to this development is not same across the country which cannot be ignored. This includes security concerns, militancy and environment of frailty. So Pakistan has to cater more employment for local populations because the lack of capacity generation to maintain this project would delay the overall development and growth. Simultaneously the entire work force should not be from China and indigenous capacity building and employment generation are pertinent to the sustainable economic growth of Pakistan. There should be a comprehensive list of suggestions/proposals by both countries if any default occurs to actualize this joint venture thoroughly. Consequently prospects of prosperity for Pakistan would be immense in continuation.

<http://foreignpolicynews.org/2017/04/05/cpec-pakistans-golden-ticket-successful-economic-take-off/>

The Future of Islamic Military Alliance

Babar Khan Bozdar

Saudi Arabia is leading 41 countries in the Islamic Military Alliance to combat terrorism with the omission of some key countries, such as Iran, Iraq, Indonesia, Afghanistan, Syria, and Tajikistan. The alliance was formed to eradicate terrorism from the soil of Muslim countries, but due to the absence of key Muslim countries, this alliance has been controversial and is an antecedent of expected results.

According to Saudi officials, the basic aim of this alliance is for international coordination with major powers and international organizations for operations in Syria and Iraq, to counter the Islamic State, or Daesh, the Arabic acronym for ISIS or ISIL, and to counter other terror organizations and to protect all member states. On one side Saudi Arabia heads a UN Human Rights Council panel and on the other side it leads an alliance against terrorism. This joke doesn't need a punch line.

The alliance's composition is rather telling that the greater part of its original 34 "member states" are from the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC); itself a body whose creation in 1969 was pushed for by Saudi Arabia. 23 OIC members were missing from the rundown. A closer look at the alliance, however, reveals that other Sunni states, for example, Algeria, have declined to take an interest regardless of their mutual interest in the battle against terrorism. It is, therefore, less a sectarian, and more of a geopolitical alliance.

Iran, the religious and local adversary of Saudi Arabia, is not part of the Saudi-driven military alliance, alongside Iraq and Syria. The exclusion of Shia-lion's share nations like Iran and Iraq from the military co-operation gives the impression of the military organization being a "Sunni collusion", or that it is a strategy to contain Iran.

ISIS is a big threat to Saudi Arabia. Recently, when this alliance was announced, ISIS considered it as a maverick. However, in the past two years ISIS has executed over twelve fear assaults on Saudi soil, bringing about more than 50 losses. Both ISIL and Iran challenge Saudi Arabia on the ideological front in comparative ways. Therefore, Saudi Arabia is trying to counter pro-Iranian organizations and their growing influence in Yemen, Iraq, and Syria.

Brig. Gen. Ahmed Al-Assiri, the counselor at the Saudi resistance clergyman's office and representative of the Arab coalition for Yemen's affairs, said that with the goal for Iran to wind up some portion of the military partnership, it must quit supporting terrorism aboard and threatening Arab and Muslim countries.

This is not first the time that Saudi Arabia has called for an Islamic Military Alliance, but it is the third endeavor since the Arab Spring to standardize military collaboration and coordination. In 2013, it pushed for a NATO-like coordinated charge structure for GCC military strengths, including 100,000 troops; in 2014 this was followed by a common police structure (called GCC-Pol) and a common naval force. In 2015, Saudi Arabia initiated, along with Egypt, the creation of a common anti-terror force under

the umbrella of the League of Arab States. Disregarding these excited affirmations and a few barrier boss gatherings; the venture has been put on hold since summer 2015 until further notice.

Riyadh sees itself in vital critical straits, following the nuclear deal with Iran; it feels fairly relinquished by its traditional military partner, the US. In 2015, Washington unequivocally precluded a common military settlement with the Gulf States in light of the fact that structures like NATO would take decades to assemble. Rather, it offered military help particularly in the areas of missile defense and cyber warfare.

Meanwhile, more than ten other Muslim nations have communicated their support for this collusion and will take the important measures in such manner. There are four nations that have demonstrated their advantage, but have not joined yet. These countries are Afghanistan, Tajikistan, Indonesia and Azerbaijan. Similarly, Svetlana Alexandrova, Tunisian Ambassador to Russia, has said that Tunisia won't give military support, but will contribute in terms of intelligence sharing and will counter-terrorism in its own way.

The Islamic Military Alliance is not an Arab equivalent of NATO, which is an integrated defense force aimed at opponents outside the member states' territory. Neither is it like the EU, which supports nearer participation on local security issues, nor is it even like the UN by being outfitted towards conflict resolution and post-conflict stabilization? In fact, it is a very classical military alliance that will strengthen sectarianism.

Interestingly, Pakistan is also part of the nations alliance by playing a leading military role. The Government claimed that our forces will work inside the Saudi border, but the fact is that the government had agreed to send their troops during the intervention in Yemen on Saudi's demand, but opposition parties and public rejected their demand. Islamabad is trying to portray a message that Pakistan is not isolated by participating in IMA, but in fact it will make Pakistan's relations worse with Iran and its allies.

The Islamic Military Alliance looks fabulous on paper, but controversial in terms and practice. Neither is it military or is it Muslim in nature. Simultaneously it will generate rivalry, enmity, hatred and sectarianism among Muslim world, therefore its future looks totally dark.

<http://www.eurasiareview.com/10042017-the-future-of-islamic-military-alliance-oped/>

Streamlining Baluchistan Insurgents for the Success of CPEC

Zainab Aziz

Insurgents in Baluchistan blame the Pakistani state for denying its people rights and extricating its assets to fuel development in different parts of the country. Baluchistan is the least populated province while it is the largest province by landmass. It has sizable Pushtun population along with the majority ethnic Baloch people. Even with the abundance of natural resources, Baluchistan remains the least developed province of the country. Militant groups and separatist movements carried out by insurgents demand independence while most of the Baloch groups urge for the greater share in the development projects and resources. Ever since Pakistan has gained independence from the British colonial rule in 1947, the province of Baluchistan has seen many uprisings. The conditions became more severe in the episode of insurgency that began in 2006 when a prominent Baloch leader, Nawab Akbar Khan Bugti, was killed in a clash with Pakistani forces.

Additionally, Baluchistan has the social structure based on the tribal and feudal system which revolves around the institution of tribal chief (Sardar). The government must play a positive and constructive role in improving the Baluchistan socially, politically and economically. For this, it must discourage the institutions like Sardars, Nawabs etc. It is an evident fact that this cannot be done in a glimpse and it will take many years to do so. Moreover, the economic constraints of the people in Baluchistan do not let them to be dauntless enough to struggle against an established institution, which has existed for centuries.

There is no opposition to the view that interference of federal government in provincial affairs of Baluchistan in mega projects like Reko Diq and operating Gawadar Port, resources utilization and royalty, extreme impoverishment, arbitrary attitude of the security forces and abysmal situation of missing persons, deplorable educational and health infrastructure, cultural sensitivities, absence of genuine representation and lack of coordinated efforts to streamline the resentful Baloch youth are real problems of the land. However, the people of Baluchistan are fully aware that terrorism and insurgency is not the solution to address these complicated problems. Therefore, appeal of raising arms against the state is losing its strength by each passing day as Baluchistan braces towards new era of peace and development.

"We were trapped by our leaders who said they are fighting for the rights of Balochs, but later we realized that they were enjoying their lavish lives abroad and had pushed us and our families to a war here," Obaidullah alias Babrak, a surrendered Lashkar-e-Baluchistan commander, told reporters once.

Furthermore, Baluchistan has an exceptional geostrategic location as it is a gateway Central Asia, Middle East and South Asia. Due to this reason, some of the Baloch people think that, Baluchistan only serves as a strategic asset in the policy of Pakistani establishment. For regaining the Baloch people's interest in the legitimate successive governments, the civilian and military leadership must formulate a comprehensive political strategy that can address their socio-economic grievances. The government

needs to bring an end to old system of patronage politics of supporting some selected sardars and their tribes. For the societal betterment of Baluchistan, the tribal chiefs are also the ones who create hurdles.

Baluchistan plays a crucial role in the Pakistan's economic development and acts as the potential lifeline to increase Pakistan's pivotal role in international politics and economics, due to its geo-strategic location and the plentiful natural resources in the province. The US/ NATO endgame in Afghanistan will take its toll in the most vulnerable provinces of southern Afghanistan – Helmand and Kandahar – that border Baluchistan. The Pushtun-dominated regions of northern Baluchistan which border the turbulent provinces will have consequential outcomes of major spillover of instability into their areas. This can further complicate the situation. The most viable long-term strategy to stop the prolonged conflict in Baluchistan is to deliver an efficient educational and governance system which can release the Baloch from the clutches of corrupt Patrons (tribal sardars). However, this all requires the veracious and righteous will and determination of our “men in power”. Hence provide people a fair and eligible share of jobs then to exploit the natural resources available in Baluchistan to fullest.

Baluchistan is awaiting development and prosperity which the ongoing mega project ‘CPEC’ is bound to ensure in near future. Development work on Sea Port, Airport and industrial Zone in Gwadar is in full swing. Chinese investment of \$46 billion under CPEC plan surely will usher in a new era of economic activity and prosperity giving boost to local economy. However, this region which was once the most volatile area because of the Baloch insurgents’ subversive activities, which constantly attacked security personnel and civilians as well as important installations has now the improved security conditions.

For the moment, if the prevalent conditions persist, the world will just have to wait and see whether Baluchistan can weather the storm. This time, thanks to CPEC, the choices for economic progress in the region are plentiful – but the results will depend on what policy Pakistan has in the near future. For the people of Baluchistan, hope springs eternal.

<http://foreignpolicynews.org/2017/04/11/streamlining-baloch-insurgents-success-cpec/>

Indian NFU Dilemma and Its Connotations

Beenish Altaf

MIT Professor Vipin Narang's comments caught up as a startling claim for Indian strategists and policy makers but not a surprise for Pakistan at all. Given the fact that his presentation was sourced on the statements by Indian officials, he needs to be taken perilously. He opined that India might launch a preemptive disarming strike in response to an "imminent" risk of a nuclear attack to curb Pakistan's ability to launch a nuclear attack against India.

The evidence Narang lined up to support this incredible claim is centered on a couple of paragraphs from a book by a former Indian national security advisor Shivshankar Menon. Narang quoted him that "there is a political grey area as to when India could use nuclear weapons first against a nuclear weapon State" and that "India's nuclear doctrine has far greater flexibility than it gets credit for". 'It that capacity, Menon was a member of the executive council of the Nuclear Command Authority, the highest non-political body that supervises India's nuclear weapons and their potential deployment. As such, he must have been privy to India's choice of second-use targets should deterrence fail.

As before, there is a constant assumption that India might be reinterpreting its nuclear doctrine of no-first-use by replacing it with the pre-emptive nuclear doctrine. But the Pakistan's Foreign Office spokesperson Nafees Zakaria said that "India cannot substitute for verifiable arms control and restraint measures." So its declaration was unverifiable. He was of the view that while taking appropriate security measures; Pakistan has to consider capabilities and not intentions which can change anytime.

However, in an inadvertent and implicit acknowledgment of Pakistan's deterrence capabilities, Narang admits that India cannot yet implement such a strategy. This is because India does not have "a good fix on all the locations of Pakistan's strategic forces" since these are deliberately dispersed and not kept in static locations.

Conceptually and operationally, it is not possible to go for a decapitation strike because it requires a high level of intelligence and accuracy. Narang has only validated Pakistan's deterrence policy. But India's current nuclear arsenals like submarine-launched ballistic missiles and its ambitious ballistic missile defense program reflect its aggressive nuclear posture.

Undoubtedly, India has a declaratory NFU doctrine for showing its strong and responsible nuclear bona fides (credentials) to the world but the shift to decapitation would make it a prospective nuclear belligerent. Similarly, India announced extending the range of its Brahmos missiles up to 600 km.

Although it is authorized in the MTCR guidelines but it could be taken as a shrewd step of India within a few days of its MTCR membership. Such actions are a cause for concern, and call India's intentions into question—especially with respect to NSG membership. Would NSG membership mean India may enhance its uranium reserves for military usage or a thermonuclear weapons test?

Candidly, it was India's unrestrained behavior, after which it became necessary for Pakistan to take a step forward towards a sea-based deterrent and launched Babur-III missile, a sea-launched nuclear-capable cruise missile (SLCM). After which Pakistan is now capable of delivering various types of payloads and will provide the country with a credible second strike capability, augmenting deterrence. So it is in actual, Indian actions that have raised concern in Pakistan, been perceived as destabilizing, prompting them to develop their own capabilities.

Shivshankar Menon writes in his book, "there would be little incentive, once Pakistan had taken hostilities to the nuclear level, for India to limit its response since that would only invite further escalation by Pakistan. India would hardly risk giving Pakistan the chance to carry out a massive nuclear strike after the Indian response to Pakistan using tactical nuclear weapons. In other words, India would be free to undertake a comprehensive first strike against Pakistan (under its cold start doctrine)."

In any case, India's no-first-use of nuclear weapons assertion was nothing but a hollow political gimmick. By all means, it will adversely impact fragile strategic balance because it replaces existing ambiguity with confusion. Given the already challenging security environment and the absence of escalation control mechanisms, such developments will only increase the risk of an unintended crisis. As Indian Defence Minister Manohar Parrikar once said that India should say it will use its nuclear powers "*responsibly*" instead of stressing on "no-first-use (NFU)." "Taking the statement in that context, the matter about pre-emption in a nuclearized South Asia is highly irresponsible and dangerous and will not help the cause of promoting strategic restraint and stability in the region."

So it is worth keeping into an account that India's existing doctrine can absorb the consequences of future Pakistan-related eventualities without any major changes. Meaning thereby, India's doctrine already permits substantial and considerable space for transformation

<http://www.indrastra.com/2017/04/OPINION-Indian-NFU-Dilemma-and-its-Connotation-003-04-2017-0020.html>

India's Foreign Policy Ambitions and Capabilities

Muhammad Adil Sivia

The implementation of an effective foreign policy requires clear vision about self and pragmatic understanding of the prevailing international environment. For newly independent countries, the role of leadership, especially founding fathers, becomes naturally very important for defining the core objectives of foreign policy of the country. Defining the institutional structure and structuralisation of long-term core foreign policy agenda requires leadership having the ability to make sense of outside world through the prism of pragmatism.

Jawaharlal Nehru, the founding father of India and first prime minister of the country, viewed India as a great power. Compensating the hard power deficiency that India had, Nehru took a normative stance for projecting India as a major power. He viewed India as the leader of South Asia. The policy of supporting the freedom movements in the third-world, especially Africa was designed for promoting the soft power of India.

The policy of non-alignment by Nehru portrayed India as a major power. During Indo-China border dispute, the great power claims by Indian leadership were put to the test in ruthless international politics structured on realism. A swift, conclusive and humiliating defeat at the hands of China brought fundamental reassessment of means that India utilised for securing its foreign policy objectives.

For interaction with countries outside the South Asian region, India took a benign foreign policy approach. Within South Asia, India even under Nehru followed an assertive foreign policy under the assumption that India was the leader of South Asia. Its aggressive foreign policy made Pakistan insecure and forced Pakistan to look options for balancing conventional superiority of Indian military by joining the US-led military alliances.

Ironically, instead of addressing the threat-hurling mindset of Indian leadership that forced Pakistan to join Western camp during the Cold War, Pakistan was blamed for involving outside powers in South Asia. Indian foreign policy makers and analysts failed to appreciate the fact that the insulation of the region from outside powers desired by India for dominating small states in South Asia was detrimental to national security interests of Pakistan. Indian expansionist foreign policy stance and threats to the territorial integrity of Pakistan meant that Pakistan was bound to look for military assistance from either of the powers leading Cold War. The policy of strategic autonomy that India followed was designed as a facade with the real purpose of establishing Indian dominance over South Asia while sending a message to great powers that South Asia belonged to India.

The development of military capabilities by India for plugging the gaps in its claim to great power status became a priority after a defeat at the hands of China. Under Indira Gandhi, India

practically distanced itself from nonalignment movement (NAM) and became closely associated with the Soviet Union for the military buildup. The lack of in-depth knowledge and a skill base for manufacturing advanced military hardware made India dependent on imported weapons from countries around the world. Economic reforms in India during the last decade of the 20th century have propelled India among top 10 economies of the world. Capital deficiency problem that India faced at the time of independence is now addressed to a great extent, and at the same time, it has become an attractive destination for foreign investment. The power of the purse and the size of the market has made India a sought-after country by major powers of the world. The gains made through rapid economic development are utilised by India for a military build-up to back bids for major power status. India views its economic rise benign in nature, producing public goods for other South Asian countries except for Pakistan. Within South Asia, through economic power, military threats and coercion, India has been making efforts for securing support to be recognised as the legitimate leader of the region.

The US for its national interest is promoting and encouraging India to play a broader role in South Asia and Indian Ocean Region (IOR), without considering the destabilisation effect of such moves on regional politics. By signing multiple military agreements with the US, India has sacrificed the policy of strategic autonomy for long term strategic alignment with the US for a greater role in world politics. For short-term economic interests, nuclear deals that the US, Russia, Japan, and Australia have signed with India, are adversely affecting the strategic stability of South Asia. The denial of the permanent membership of United Nations Security Council at the hands of the US after World War II has been Indian misplaced grievance. Though India claims to have a nuclear programme for countering security threats from China – the real purpose of the programme is none other than but adding credentials to its major power claims.

Without resolving outstanding territorial disputes with Pakistan, the Indian claim to be the leader of South Asia will essentially be challenged. India is trying to manufacture legitimacy through coercion and military threats. After becoming an overt nuclear power in response to the second nuclear test by India, Pakistan achieved a balance of power by offsetting Indian conventional military superiority. After losing the conventional military advantage over Pakistan, India has shifted to nonconventional tactics for destabilising Pakistan from within by promoting and financing terrorist groups in Pakistan.

Pakistan should continue to oppose India's bid for permanent membership of United Nations Security Council till India resolves the Kashmir dispute as per the wishes of Kashmiris. It is a new low for countries that have shown willingness to extend diplomatic support for Indian membership of UNSC, keeping in mind that India continues to disregard UN resolutions on Kashmir. India continues to be the biggest arms importer in the world that means even today India lacks indigenous base for developing hard power capabilities. Maintaining necessary conventional and nuclear military capability is essential for countering military threats from India. Further deepening and broadening of strategic relations with China are required for offsetting the pressure of extra-regional powers on Pakistan. Establishing relations with Russia on strong footing is essential for diversifying foreign policy option. Estranging the US will be counterproductive for Pakistan's objective of bringing peace in Afghanistan. Pakistan needs to play balancing act while devising long-term accumulative foreign policy centered on the promotion of its

national interest. Learning from our adversary India, revival and expansion of economy of Pakistan is the first step for enhancing foreign policy option of Pakistan.

<http://dailytimes.com.pk/blog/17-Apr-17/indias-foreign-policy-ambitions-and-capabilities>

BMD MIRV Technology in South Asia and Implications for the Region

Asma Khalid

The existence of a complex security *trilemma* between China-India-Pakistan poses a serious challenge to the strategic stability of South Asia. These states share the history of military confrontations and therefore conventional and nuclear development in one country is matter of concern for the other. A number of dynamics, such as conventional asymmetries, nuclear offensive and defensive capabilities, arms race, ballistic missile development and the absence of crisis stability mechanism has increased the fragility of the strategic stability in South Asia.

The regional strategic triangle, and especially two strategic dyads — China-Pakistan and India-China — has made the strategic landscape of South Asia complete with additional contours. In South Asia, the arms race is proportional to the India's conventional and nuclear developments. To pursue its global and regional ambitions — such as to cover the gap with China and superiority over Pakistan — India has increased its nuclear and missile program rapidly.

Consequently, the recent developments in the Indian Ballistic Missile Defence (BMD) system are a matter of great concern for the competing regional states, especially for Pakistan. Developments in the Indian BMD System and upcoming collaboration of India with US, Russia and Israel has added new dimensions to the regional security equation and pose a serious threat to deterrence stability.

India started the acquisition and development of BMD system in the 1990s to enhance its nuclear capabilities. The Indian missile program is based on Agni and Prithvi series and pursue a exo-atmospheric and endo-atmospheric BMD system. A successful test of the endo-atmospheric missile, Advance Area Defence (AAD) is a notable step towards the development and acquisition of a two layered BMD system.

On February 11, 2017, India conducted the successful test of high altitude inceptor missile, Prithvi Defence Vehicle (PDV). According to scholars, such developments and India's pursuit of BMD now has the ability to shake the nuclear calculus of region. Subsequently, it will challenge the very basis of strategic stability and deterrence in the South Asian region.

Developments in the Indian BMD system depict that India is quickly heading towards higher war-fighting capabilities from its minimum deterrence posture.

Although, India claims that it's enhancing its capabilities to counter China, according to analysts such capabilities will allow India to adopt an offensive strategy over Pakistan. The Indian BMD system will increase instability and Pakistan's security dilemma. It will force the Pakistan to improve the quality and quantity of its nuclear arsenal and it will force Pakistan to expand its military expenditure.

Other interconnected issues are regarding the effectiveness of BMD and a false sense of security because the BMD system cannot guarantee the absolute interception and destruction of targets. As such, the security dilemma and false sense of security will trigger the crisis instability. However, in the South Asian strategic landscape where a tri-angular relation exists the phenomena of nuclear deterrence will become more complex and result in a major catastrophe.

The Indian pursuit of a BMD system has complicated the security calculations of regional states. It will have spillover effect on its neighboring states thus triggering and consolidating a new arms race in the region. It is imperative for Pakistan to take effective measures to counter the volatility instigated by the Indian BMD. Acquiring or manufacturing their own BMD system is least available option due to economic restraints, so viable options in this regard is qualitative improvements to target the vulnerabilities of the Indian BMD.

In this regard, Pakistan's surface-to-surface ballistic missile, Ababeel has significant contributions in the defence arrangements of Pakistan. Ababeel is capable of delivering multiple warheads using Multiple Independently target Re-entry Vehicle (MIRV) technology. It is a constructive addition in the Pakistan's defence. It will facilitate Pakistan to sustain the credibility of its deterrence strategy against the Indian BMD system due to its ability to deliver multiple warheads.

India has increased the vulnerabilities of regional states, thus instigating instability and arms race. Policy options for Pakistan to counter the instability against the Indian BMD system is to quantitative and quantitative improvements in its nuclear and missile capabilities in a way that won't have an effect on the credible strategic symmetry and avoid an arms race in the region.

<http://www.eurasiareview.com/17042017-bmd-and-mirv-technology-in-south-asia-and-implications-for-region-oped/>

India's First Use Nuclear Policy and Regional Implications

Maimuna Ashraf

In making tactical dispositions, the highest pitch you can attain is to conceal them.

– Sun Tzu

‘Splendid first-strike’ and ‘strategic ambiguity’ are lately being discussed as the twin strong emerging components of Indian nuclear policy. In previous few years, the BJP’s manifesto and views expressed by former Indian officials hinted towards the inside deliberations regarding India’s use of nuclear weapons.

The debate rekindled when the renowned strategist Vipin Narang, at a recently held Carnegie International Nuclear Policy Conference, cited excerpts from the book of India’s Former National Security Adviser Shivshankar Menon and claimed the “increasing evidence that India will not allow Pakistan to go first. And that India’s opening salvo may not be conventional strikes trying to pick off just Nasr batteries in the theater, but a full ‘comprehensive counterforce strike’ that attempts to completely disarm Pakistan of its nuclear weapons so that India does not have to engage in iterative tit-for-tat exchanges and expose its own cities to nuclear destruction.”

This stirred up a number of suspicions; First, India is moving from its No-First Use (NFU) policy. Although the stated stance in its official doctrine of 2003, that undertakes massive nuclear retaliation in response to a preemptive strike (by an adversary) to inflict unacceptable damage and nuclear use against chemical/ biological weapons, have had already questioned the sanctity of India’s NFU posture. The NFU refers to a policy that state possessing nuclear weapon will not use them unless first attacked by an opponent’s nuclear strike.

Second, the precept specifies that this strike by India would be ‘counterforce’ that refers to target enemy’s nuclear weapons and military infrastructure rather than existing counter-value strategy, which aims at targeting adversary’s civilians and cities.

Third, this rebuttals the inferred unfolding of conventional and nuclear escalation crisis in South Asia which implies that Pakistan would launch low yield tactical nukes as a reactionary response to India’s conventional invasion by excluding the option of ‘strategic weapons’ use as first response that may avoid nuclear escalation.

On the contrary, recent assessment implies that India would inflict a comprehensive first strike in response to Pakistan’s use of tactical nuclear weapons with an ambition to fully destroy Pakistani nuclear forces and retaliation capability to launch interactive exchanges. Pragmatically, the adversary can wreak havoc with remaining intact nuclear weapons, thus presumably counterforce strike would fill this gap by leaving the opponent with no or little ‘third strike’ after India’s second strike in response to Pakistan’s first. By every mean, the first use would end India’s NFU, but can India fully disarm Pakistani nuclear forces by taking out all of its nukes? Too ideal to analyze, theoretically or practically, critics argue that India cannot hit all the potential targets simultaneously.

Here arise questions, what the trends and technological advances say about India rethinking its strategy? How Pakistan views this swirl of debate?

Pakistani strategists believe that evidences speak volume about India reassessing its official doctrine. Tellingly, India is developing range of nuclear delivery systems qualitatively and quantitatively, operationalizing its nuclear triad, making canister based warheads and deviating from liquid to solid fueled missile systems.

These shifts indicate India is aiming for high level of readiness and launch-on-warning mode of its nuclear arsenals. The trends are consistent to pre-emptive tendency and are paradoxical to Indian stated minimum deterrence posture and centralized command and control. Whereas, the development of shorter range ballistic missiles defy massive retaliation policy.

Previously, the retaliatory policy or NFU gave India a rationale to develop new capabilities and improve range and yield of its nuclear missiles to build defense against opponent. Resultantly, the introduction of Ballistic Missile Defense (BMD) and sea-based capabilities in South Asia triggered an unnecessary arms race in the region. Now this latest ambiguous mixture of offensive defensive capabilities is treacherous and confuses the concept of deterrence stability in the region.

Interestingly, the book by Memon was published in November yet the debate heated up after Pakistan declared to achieve seaborne nuclear deterrent and MIRV technology in December and January respectively, which reportedly neutralized Indian nuclear powered submarine and BMD developments.

Does it imply that India is being prepared after Pakistan has already been prepared? Or it is to confuse Pakistani decision makers and psychologically pressurize them to indulge in new spending?

Although all these personal views are marked as possible shifts and not declaratory changes however the absence of an official response (confirmation or denial) to these speculations, as media and policy circles are buzzing up with views, is serving well the strategic ambiguity in India's favor. This would give an impression of India keeping a first-use option. Even if it is the case, should Pakistan be worried?

Well, probably not because from an operational perspective, it would not be possible for India to carry out comprehensive strike on mere adversary's intent. Moreover, India has yet to achieve the high level of accuracy, readiness and increase response to impose splendid strike.

However, India's 'ace in hole', the flexibility of fist use in no-first use policy, if exists, will adversely impact the region. The mounting strategic ambiguities will not only invigorate the 'use them or lose them' dilemma in crisis time but also perplex the deterrence posture, induce aggressive strategies, lead to war-fighting capabilities, lower the threshold and increase the alertness level in already murky South Asia.

<https://crssblog.com/2017/04/19/indias-first-use-nuclear-policy-and-regional-implications-maimuna-ashraf/>

China-Pakistan Economic Corridor and Peace Building in Kashmir

Adil Sivia

Dispute resolution mechanisms anchored on economic interdependence and developing mutual economic vulnerabilities has delivered even in case of worst enemies that repeatedly fought for territory. Germany and France twice went to war over mutually contested territory during the first half of 20th century. Both states claimed Alsace-Lorraine as theirs and employed military power to settle the dispute. Control over disputed territory switched hands between the two parties depending on the outcome of war. The defeated state that lost territory would prepare for next war to win back and gain territory.

This bloodbath for disputed territory between Germany and France continued until leaders and people in both states realized such territory grabbing approach through military means was not going to settle the dispute forever. The United States helped building peace in post World War II in Europe and developed the Western Europe through Marshal Plan. The US helped create an enabling environment for Western Europe countries that changed the perspective of leaders and people for adopting economic approach for dispute resolution especially territorial disputes. Confidence building measures, resource sharing and joint administration of disputed territories coupled with initiation of economic integration process eventually created mutually accommodating environment that gave confidence to the leaders for making concessions without being termed as traitors.

Kashmir is unresolved territorial dispute involving Pakistan and India. Both states have resorted to war for resolving the dispute. Conventional military force failed to deliver the political outcome that both states expected to manufacture through war. After becoming overt nuclear power states, there can be no rational consideration for war on Kashmir fourth time. Even though there is war mongering attitude by Bharatiya Janata Party government towards Pakistan, the possession of nuclear weapons by Pakistan works to instill rationality in the minds of political and military elite of India. Nuclearization of both states has essentially frozen the territorial status quo prevailing in Kashmir state.

The US has maintained the non-interference stance on Kashmir, encouraging both parties to negotiate directly, but such approach essentially means shying away from moral responsibility that the world leader has for building peace around the world. The US has failed to create enabling environment whereby India and Pakistan could resolve this disputes according to wishes of the people of Kashmir.

While making demands especially on Pakistan for economic integration with India, the US and Western leaders hoped that Franco-German Economic Interdependence Model could eventually lead to bilateral approach that would help resolving the Kashmir issue. The US failed to provide specific economic incentives to both states for moving towards resolution of Kashmir dispute. China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) provides opportunity to both states for creating enabling environment through economic integration for eventual resolution of Kashmir dispute.

Within South Asia, India is the biggest trade partner of China. Though China has proposed Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar Economic Corridor (BCIMEC) under One Belt One Road (OBOR) initiative, the real incentive for India will be connectivity with Central Asia. For India, relative economic advantage will be degraded by preferring any regional connectivity strategy ignoring Pakistan.

Within Indian Administered Kashmir (IAK) there is popular support for joining CPEC and connectivity with China and Central Asia. Even the puppet government of IAK has given friendly gestures to the idea of IAK becoming part of CPEC.

Detractors of CPEC in India who are hostile to the idea of IAK becoming part of this economic initiative argue that such action will give legitimacy to Pakistan's control over Kashmir. Such extremist constituencies that right wing nationalist political parties have fostered in India ignore the fact as recognized in United Nations Security Council resolutions that Kashmir is disputed territory.

By making offer to India to part of CPEC, Pakistan is not trying to seek any legitimacy for its part of Kashmir. The purpose of such offer by Pakistan to India is improving the condition of people of IAK. Instrument of accession that Hari Singh signed with India is not acceptable because he had ceased to be legitimate rule of the state. The people of Kashmir state through massive indigenous uprising delivered their verdict on the legitimacy of the ruler.

Oppressive tactics that Indian Armed and Paramilitary Forces have been using against the people of Kashmir have failed to break the will of the people to fight for right to self determination that is corner stone of Human Rights Law. Holding Kashmir by India through force is wastage of economic resources and cruel joke with millions of people living under poverty line inside India.

Full potential of transit trade agreement that India has signed with Afghanistan using Pakistan's land cannot be realized till India starts taking meaningful steps towards economic integration with Pakistan. The Indian designs for connecting with Central Asia can be economically feasible only if there is peace in the region especially in Afghanistan.

Economic development of China offers opportunity to Pakistan and India to benefit from this miracle. With increasing economic stakes in stability of the region, imperatives for peace building efforts by China through economic development projects will increase. Status quo on Kashmir can be maintained while developing economic links between the two Kashmir. With political will, such a framework for visa issuance can be agreed between the two countries that will not undermine the status of the disputed territory.

Pakistan's offer to India for joining CPEC if utilized can become boon for improving the condition of people of Kashmir. Mutual trust building by enhancing economic development of Kashmir through CPEC can help create right conditions for resolution of Kashmir dispute.

The indigenous movement of Kashmiris for right to self determination has shown to Indians that business as usual cannot continue in IAK. CPEC provides opportunity for demilitarization of Kashmir. Instead of using brutal force against the people of Kashmir, India should give nod to IAK becoming part

of this economic mega project. Conflict transformation and improving the condition of the people of IAK through CPEC should be focus of New Delhi. CPEC has the potential to bring peace not only in Kashmir but in Afghanistan as well. The future belongs to regional connectivity, economic integration and regional trade.

<http://www.eurasiareview.com/25042017-china-pakistan-economic-corridor-and-peace-building-in-kashmir-oped/>

Moscow Conference: Afghanistan is at the Verge of Collapsing or Blossoming?

Asia Maqsood

Afghanistan on the verge of blooming or on the verge of collapsing is yet to be seen. Before this 11-nation Afghan Peace Conference, hosted by Russia, there was a Quadrilateral Coordination Group (QCG) formed in January 2016 to advance the peace process with the participation of US, China, Pakistan, and Afghanistan. These all states conducted talks with Taliban, though Russia sensed marginalized. Eventually, this effort of QCG not accomplished its objective. Instead, Moscow had organized a three-party meeting on Afghanistan included Russia, China, Pakistan. Russia held the second meeting of six-nation on Feb 15 with the addition of India, Iran. Assessing resurgence of Russia in the contemporary international political scenario, its first and foremost objective is to remind West not to ignore Moscow's interests in the Afghanistan matter at regional and international platforms. Now, this is the third time that Russia hosted regional talks in five months with the expansion of additional five Central Asian States.

The paramount stakeholder US did not join this regional consultation/talk while it's great role was emphasized simply by the dropping of non-nuclear, Mother of All Bombs in eastern Afghanistan's Achin district of Nangarhar Province. But also on the eve of regional talks, US State Department acting spokesperson Mark Toner titled this consultation as Russia's Vanity Project. The US Administration's absence from the conference is depicting an increased geopolitical rivalry between US and Russia. In this contemporary world which is not unipolar but going towards multi-polarity. Many emerging powers such as China and India are playing their role regionally and internationally. Russia is also resurging with its role in the different parts of the world. It has also taken steps for International Afghanistan Peace Conference and invited the US on its soil for talks. There is still a conflicting scenario between Russia and US. It is impossible for Russia alone to set up the diplomatic podium to find ways for reconciliation in the war-torn country and settling Afghanistan drawn out struggle and Taliban insurgency. Though Russia is was concerned Afghan resolution and claimed that it does not want to allow ISIS or any other extremist group with ambitions beyond the Afghan border by establishing footholds in the country and threatening the former Soviet States (Central Asian States), most of them have defense agreements with Russia.

Hence, it is pertinent for all global and regional powers to set up a platform to actualize Afghanistan peace and stability on its soil rather anywhere else. Simultaneously equal involvement of US is pre-requisite otherwise another Mother of All Bombs is entirely possible. As far as Pakistan-Afghanistan relations are concerned, they have been deteriorating with charges and counter-charges regarding sheltering anti-states militant attacks. Another factor which is prominent that is the growing Indo-US ties probing India to play its influential role in Afghanistan. Eventually, AF-Pak ties are not on even keels. All these events which are discussed above have substantial implications on Pakistan. Pakistan should raise its voice that it has been playing an indispensable role in countering terrorism

rather promoting on regional and international forums to avoid the Mother of All Bombs on Pakistan adjacent border with Afghanistan. Tasneem Aslam, Pakistan's Foreign Office Additional Secretary, said that Pakistan welcomes the extended format of the peace conference on Afghanistan. She told to Sputnik news, " in our view, it was a useful discussion and was an extended format. Five Central Asian States shares a common border with Afghanistan, and any instability in Afghanistan have an impact on them in many ways. The Pakistani Diplomat said that these regional talks were fruitful and all the participant 11 countries were willing on the idea of reconciliation as this is the only roadmap for Afghanistan.

While US State Department acting spokesperson Mark Toner said that Washington regional peace efforts as " seemed to be a unilateral Russian attempt to assert influence in the region that wasn't constructive this time." These conflicting views forecast another war game in this region, pursuing their regional interests. Eventually, the geopolitical rivalry will be increased between these two states. If we analyze the whole situation in Afghanistan, the conflict in this country is not open like Syria while its low-intensity conflict where the situation escalates sporadically, and there are occasional incidents in each province. The overall situation is not homogenous in this country. Some provinces such as Punjshir, Dykundi, Bamiyan or the northern city of Mazr-e Sharif are relatively less affected by conflict-driven violence. More violence is in northern Kunduz, Southern Helmand or eastern Nangahar. Assessing the geopolitical alignment in South Asia where China-Pakistan and Russia are getting closer for joint ventures such as joint military exercises between Russia and Pakistan. Later is committed to working with the international community to support efforts for peace and recompilation in Afghanistan.

Simultaneously smooth Pakistan-US relations are pertinent for peace and stability in the region. Stability and peace in the South Asian region primarily depend upon the stability in Afghanistan. Pakistan is worried from the violent campaign of IS which shares 2600 Km border with Afghanistan. It is crucial for both Pakistan and Afghanistan to establish greater interactions at different levels specifically at the government to government level for border management, the revival of Afghan peace process and to enhance trade and commerce. In essence, if the US and other western states were on the negotiation table in Moscow, it would have been a breakthrough for the peaceful solution for the future settlement of Afghanistan. At least this meeting could have paved the way or laid the common ground talks for the final settlement.

<http://southasiajournal.net/moscow-conference-afghanistan-is-on-the-verge-of-collapsing-or-blossoming/>

Proxy Wars and Peace in South Asia

Zainab Aziz

South Asian neighbours of India have always been affected by the terrorism spread by it. It had been involved in sponsoring and backing extremist non-state actors like Mukti Bahanis in former East Pakistan, Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) in Sri Lanka, Moist in Maldives, Maoist insurgency in Nepal and many other terrorist groups in countries of South Asia. India's notorious spying agency Research and Analysis Wing (RAW) has been behind all these covert activities. The primary objective of RAW since 1968 is to destabilize its neighbouring countries in order to maintain the hegemony of India over the other South Asian nations. Pakistan has the proofs of Indian sponsored state terrorism and Pakistan has given its evidences to the United States, United Nations, European Union and many other countries. The terrorist network spread in Pakistan by the Indian spy Kulbhushan Yadhav, who has been given death sentence by the military court of Pakistan Army, has confessed before a magistrate and the Military court that "he was tasked by Indian spy agency Research and Analysis wing to plan, coordinate and organize espionage and sabotage activities seeking to destabilize and wage war against Pakistan through impeding the efforts of law enforcement agencies for the restoration of peace in Balochistan and Karachi." The provoking statements by the Indian Home Minister Raj Nath and the External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj "I would caution the Pakistani government to consider consequences for our bilateral relationship if they proceed on this matter" add more hostility to the region's environment. It is quite evident now that India uses different tactics and strategies to promote terrorism in different countries as it has been using particularly Afghan soil against Pakistan.

The strained relations between Pakistan and India have been present since 1947 while the hostility between Afghanistan and Pakistan has been ongoing now for about four decades. India has been instigating proxy war in Afghanistan mainly against Pakistan that began after the collapse of Dr. Najibullah's regime in 1992, which had been backed by the former USSR. India accuses Pakistan only and refuses its involvement in Afghanistan while the Pakistani and Afghan officials repeatedly discussed the solutions to the proxy war. India's proxy war has been concealed by the US-led war against terror otherwise it would have been clearly manifested to the whole world. Indian government also employs the strategy of taking on a more robust military role in Afghanistan which would enable India to fill the security vacuum left by the US withdrawal. This will result in India's advancements of its regional interests, competing with its Chinese rival for influence in the country, and destabilizing Pakistan at the same time. Now is the right time for Afghans to debate, analyze and discuss this issue in depth, as well as to define their relationships based on mutual interest with both countries.

Indian government keeps on creating hurdles in bringing peace in Afghanistan, mainly when India is not willing to admit its responsibility. Consequently, the Afghans and Pakistanis have paid a high price for this ongoing proxy war. Over the last decade, every attempt at peace talks with the Taliban insurgents has been blocked by the countries that are adamant to see the South Asian region destabilized. The relationship and friendship with India has been costly for Afghanistan, it costs the lives of thousands of innocents Afghans and billions of dollars in damage and destruction. Pakistan's concerns

are genuine; therefore it wants serious efforts in Afghanistan to intercept trained terrorists from crossing into the country. As the former military ruler General Pervaiz Musharraf also highlighted once “That is another danger for the whole region and for Pakistan because Indian involvement there has an anti-Pakistan connotation. They (India) want to create an anti-Pakistan Afghanistan.” India has tried to gain traction with the Tajik ethnic group of Afghanistan as their proxy; it has also been financing and supporting separatist rebels in Balochistan via training camps in southern Afghanistan. Pakistan’s support has always been crucial to Afghan peace as US-led forces have to pull out one way or another after many years of battling the Taliban. Peace between India and Pakistan is pertinent for bringing peace in Afghanistan. While it may be wise for Afghanistan to sustain its partnership with India, but as an ally India should assist Afghanistan in the peace process.

In order to ensure the security and economic dynamics of South Asia, a détente between India and Pakistan is essential for it. An Indo-Pak synergy is of utmost importance against the horizon of withdrawal of Western forces from Afghanistan. The possibility of a stable South Asia would seem gloomy if India, Pakistan and even Afghanistan continue to feel apprehensive about each other as neighbors.

<http://foreignpolicynews.org/2017/04/27/proxy-wars-peace-south-asia/>

Kulbhushan Conviction and Rising Temperature in Indo-Pak Relations

Babar Bozdar

Since the Indian Navy officer, Kulbhushan Yadav was given a capital punishment verdict by Field General Court Martial under the Pakistan Army Act and the Official Secrets Act, Indo-Pak relations have plunged.

Yadav can appeal against the capital punishment verdict to Pakistan's Supreme Court within 60 days. He was indicted for secret activities, sabotage and espionage. Yadav had admitted before the court that he worked for the Indian intelligence agency Research and Analysis Wing (RAW) and that he was included in a few furtive exercises to create instability in Karachi and Baluchistan.

During the trial, Yadav was provided with a defending officer as per legal provision. It should be noted that Yadav was arrested by Pakistani intelligence agencies in March 2016 in Baluchistan. India reacted to this decision immediately by calling Pakistan's High Commissioner Abdul Basit to the Ministry of External Affairs and gave him a demarche saying that the court procedures that prompted capital punishment of Yadav were "ludicrous" and it would consider it as "premature murder". In the meantime, Sushma Swaraj cautioned Pakistan to be responsible for the 'outcome'.

The Yadav execution verdict precipitated heat in the political environment. It is not surprising that India is sponsoring terror in the country and then summons an ambassador to protest over the sentence of terrorists. This is the real face of the so-called largest democracy. Is India sponsoring terrorism on neighboring soil on one side and on the other trying to be innocent? The Yadav execution is a rational decision and Pakistan should never inch back from the verdict because terrorists neither have a religion nor state or nation. It would be better if Pakistan would do the same as India did with Kasab.

Kulbhushan Yadav is not the first RAW operative, caught snooping in Pakistan. Prior to Kulbhushan, a great number of Indian spies have been spotted and handcuffed during the course of the country's enmity with Pakistan. The distinguished among the dozens of Indian spies caught in Pakistan was Ravindra Kaushik, who was sent across the border in 1975 on a mission at the age of 23 after extensive training in Delhi for two years and finally deported. India is playing a spy war against Pakistan more efficiently. Now it is important for Pakistan to be vigilant and implement Yadav's punishment.

To complicate matters, a Pakistani Lt Col (R) Muhammad Habib Zahir has disappeared from Nepal which suggested that the spy war between India and Pakistan had intensified. It is believed that India's Research and Analysis Wing (RAW) abducted the retired lieutenant colonel as a retaliatory act to the conviction of Kulbhushan Yadav. Observers believe that India could use the abducted Pakistani retired army officer as a negotiating tool for the RAW specialist.

India relied upon the USA to take up the matter when the U.S. National Security Advisor McMaster visited India to meet PM Narendra Modi, Foreign Minister Sushma Swaraj and Ajit Doval was

intended to plan to raise the matter with his counterpart but the United States made it clear that it wouldn't intercede in the matter. The Indian government has been contending on Pakistan's claim on Yadav's charged spying mission, entering Pakistan with original Indian visa as it was troublesome for India to reject.

Not surprisingly, the Indian response was prompt and cynical. There was furious feedback of the decision in the Indian media. Defense Minister Khawaja Asif quickly announced that the death sentence against Yadav would not be carried out quickly but law of land was followed. National Security Adviser and previous Army general Nasser Khan Janjua said that India and Pakistan can't be adversaries perpetually and must take part in discourse to determine debate But Modi is vigorously into populism in view of disdain of Muslims. Therefore Indo-Pak relations are all weather hot.

India's Minister of External Affairs, V. K. Singh reiterated that the Indian government was considering all steps to get access to Yadav. The case of Kulbhushan Yadav continues to remain at boiling point While India has postponed talks between the coast guards. The Indian spy war against Pakistan is going on and throbbing the future of the people living in the region.

Pakistan consistently maintained that the two governments need to start the comprehensive bilateral dialogue, as announced in December 2015 to resolve critical issues. The maritime talks, coupled with meetings mandated by Indus Waters Treaty, were a small beginning by both countries to move on after the bitter exchanges over Uri.

India was looking to mount yet another diplomatic offensive to save Yadav and the government was awaiting a response from Pakistan over its demand for a copy of the charge sheet against Yadav as it mulled options to secure his release. The government was contemplating a move like the one it launched last year after the Uri attack to "isolate" Pakistan but all efforts were in vain and Pakistan again arises with greater support of ECO countries.

Eventually, India and Pakistan are indulged in spy war. RAW is sabotaging activates in, should expect and accept the same response too. India executed Kasab and alleged with Pakistan; though he was terrorist but Yadav is serving Indian Naval officer. It is necessary to treat Yadav and Kasab on equal grounds and India should avoid supporting terrorism on neighboring soil.

<http://www.eurasiareview.com/28042017-kulbhushan-conviction-and-rising-temperature-in-indo-pak-relations-oped/>

The Many Facets of International Afghan Peace Conference in Moscow

Sadia Kazmi

The fifth Russian-hosted Afghanistan peace conference was recently held on 14th April 2017. For the first time, the trilateral peace efforts by Russia, China, and Pakistan expanded to include more states. Even though the US did not participate, the event was attended by 11 countries including Russia, China, Pakistan, Afghanistan, India, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. The main agenda was to deliberate upon and discuss the ways to bring peace to Afghanistan. Not only does this new round of international talks feature a broader scope of regional players than before, it also is reflective of increased diplomatic efforts to find ways for reconciliation in the war torn Afghanistan. Going a little back in time one could recall that the Afghan peace efforts were initiated by Pakistan, China, and Russia in April 2013. While these three countries were always mindful of the importance of diplomatic solution to the Afghan problem, the fact that more representation from other countries was needed to find a consolidated solution never escaped their sight. Although this happened only in the fifth year of peace process, it is nonetheless appreciable. Another worth noticing dimension is that ever since its retreat from Afghanistan in 1989, Russia has mostly exercised caution in its policy with this country and remained almost missing from the political scene in this part of the region. It was only recently that Moscow formally revived the trilateral efforts last year after a gap of three years when the first two meetings were held in April and November in Beijing and Islamabad respectively. While the main purpose is to bring about peace in Afghanistan and in the region, at many occasions these peace efforts have been seen skeptically by the Afghan government as well as by the US. Some reasons have been mentioned occasionally for this lack of trust and most of the time it is the “Russian Factor” which usually comes under criticism. Afghan government rebukes the growing contact between Moscow and the Taliban stating that the anti-state elements are being supported, backed, and strengthened by Russia hence the motives behind these efforts are highly questionable. Similarly, the US on the other hand is keeping a close watch on the Russian involvement and interest in the region and assumes that the American-led efforts in Afghanistan are being hijacked by Russia. Similarly Pakistan has also been seen with suspicion for having close contact with Taliban. In these conditions it wouldn't be too wrong to say that the distrust and skepticism remain the biggest challenge to any peace efforts in Afghanistan.

Although Afghan government was initially quite critical of Russian motives, but later Afghan Foreign Minister Salahuddin Rabbani clarified that Afghan government accepts and believes Russian assurance about contacting Taliban only to urge them to join the peace process. Hence the display of understanding from Afghan side merits appreciation for it did not opt out of the peace process. However, there wasn't any representation from Taliban despite them being the main actor in Afghanistan. It is important that any efforts towards bringing peace in Afghanistan should include Taliban as well if it is to be made a successful peace process. Leaving out Taliban will only address half the concerns. It is also being speculated that the Daesh/ISIS might have reached an understanding and forged hands with Taliban. Whether that is true or not, the possibility just can't be ruled out. This

provides another reason as to why Taliban should be made part of the peace process. The very agenda of these peace efforts is to keep the spread of ISIS in Afghanistan to Central Asian states and from there on to other states. Only an all inclusive effort with all the stakeholders as part of the peace process will provide some hope to bring peace in Afghanistan.

Same applies to the stance taken by the US. The boycott of Russian led endeavor is only going to highlight the self centered interest of the US. If both Russia and the US are in favor of the same end result in Afghanistan i.e. to bringing peace in Afghanistan, then there is a need to understand that only a combined effort will bear the desired result. Dropping a MOAB on a 95,000 population district just few hours before Afghanistan Peace Conference in Moscow only proves that the US disregards the option of talks about Afghan Peace and instead is resorting to using power to eliminate Daesh. At the same time it also reflects on the fact that the US doesn't want to be part of any setting that has Russia in the lead role. By deciding not to join the peace process, the US has underscored the trend of icy relations with Russia. It shows that marginalizing Russia is more important for the US than putting in combined efforts for peace. US branded it as a "unilateral Russian attempt to assert influence in the region". US needs to keep in mind that for any initiative to be "constructive" it should be seen with less skepticism and be given some chance to deliver especially when all the other countries joined in the peace process. This dimension should not be ignored and the US should avoid its stubborn stance vis a vis Russia.

The participant states have reiterated their support for peace in Afghanistan through peaceful means. They have also urged Afghan government to be supportive towards the efforts. Along with that the Taliban have been offered to forego military solution in favor of talks on the issue of reconciliation. Over all the major emphasis has been put on collectively addressing a more imminent threat i.e. the spread of ISIS terrorist group. Although it looks like the US under Trump administration is still working to draft a policy vis a vis Afghanistan, the facts show that there rather has been continuity of the same policy as that of Obama. However one can expect slight change in the form of increase in the number of troops. There could also be more MOABs dropped in the future. The rest of the plan for Afghanistan regarding training, advising, assisting, and calling for reconciliation remains the same as that of Obama administration. Whatever the method US adopts, it is imperative to not see it only as "Russian affair" and instead be supportive towards the regional approaches at reconciliation and counterterrorism in the country. Last but not the least, it could be anyone's guess that peace in Afghanistan cannot be brought about through military force but a long term sustainable peace would be a possibility only through peaceful means of talks and negotiations with all the stakeholders as part of the process.

<http://foreignpolicynews.org/2017/04/29/many-facets-international-afghan-peace-conference-moscow/>

Missile Proliferation, India and MTCR

Maimuna Ashraf

MTCR is one of the four non-proliferation regimes that aim to curb the technology that can be used for nuclear delivery systems. The other three are the Wassenaar Arrangement that deals with export control of dual use technologies and conventional arms. Australia Group is related to export controls on technologies with regard to chemical and biological weapons. Lastly, the Nuclear Supplier Group (NSG) is a cartel of 48 countries that aims to curb proliferation of nuclear weapons. The members participate in decision making and are expected to play their role in implementing the international standards for responsible non-proliferation behavior. It works with the International Code of Conduct against Ballistic missile proliferation (ICOC) in order to restraint the production and spread of delivery systems capable of delivering WMD. India gained candidacy to MTCR which sets guidelines to control the production and delivery of missiles and unmanned aerial vehicles capable of mass destruction.

The MTCR restricts its members to export missile or missile-related technology and systems capable of carrying a payload of at least 500 kg to a distance of at least 300 km. The decisions made in MTCR are consensus based. In past, the regime has been successful in convincing Argentina, Iraq and Egypt to give up their ballistic missile programs. However, India's entry in MTCR is being proved beneficial not only for India's space and missiles program but it is also reinforcing its import export with other states possessing sensitive technologies without any vulnerability of facing sanctions. The significant improvement is the recognition of India's nuclear legitimacy that will strengthen its credentials. It has been the quest of Indian strategic planners to be the members of elite nuclear clubs; therefore the candidacy to MTCR may help India in its ambition to join NSG and get the permanent seat in United Nations Security Council (UNSC).

The 37th Plenary meeting of NSG will be held in June this year and this is yet to see if India would bargain for its inclusion in NSG with China, which has been rejected for MTCR's membership in 2004. As now India will be in position to help China's inclusion in MTCR. Last year, China protested India's membership in NSG as non-NPT state but at that time India was not the member of MTCR. The MTCR membership is profoundly helping in India's missile program. Previously India was denied sophisticated missile technology due to MTCR provisions standards or sanctions. Now when all these limitations have been removed, India is extending its missile's ranges to improve its defense and striking capabilities. Other than missiles, India is now importing surveillance drones from US, before denied due to MTCR restrictions. On the other hand, Indian approval for acquiring Arrow II theatre missile defense interceptor from Israel was facing constant delay because the acquisition was subject to US approval.

The US was bound to abide by the MTCR guidelines thus despite the willingness of Israel this technology transfer could not take place. But recently, Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI) announced the biggest security contact ever to supply long range air and missile defense systems. Moreover, India's space program was also facing setback because it was unable to export cryogenic technology from

Russia. The technology was also required to expedite India's Agni's program and ICBM pursuit. In the next year after India joined MTCR, it successfully tested Agni-V which ranked India among few states possessing Inter Continental Ballistic Missile (ICBM). India also developed capability to launch manned space missions. However the field of drone technology is being benefitted in the absence of confines after this regime's membership and now India is looking forward to export drone's technology from US. To conclude, the admission to MTCR largely proved beneficial to India in order to improve its offensive-defensive capabilities. The country is now extending its missile ranges which are helping the rationale of missile proliferation. Most of these capabilities might not be directly aimed at Pakistan yet the trend to develop variety of capabilities can allow India to adopt an aggressive strategy towards Pakistan in future. The fearsome aspect is that a debate has already been stirred up in strategic and policy circles about India reviewing its no-first policy. The signs of internal debate to reconsider nuclear posture and the acquisition of diverse along with missile proliferation will adversely impact the South Asian strategic stability.

<http://southasiajournal.net/missile-proliferation-india-and-mtcr/>

Why Pakistan is Pursuing Full Spectrum Deterrence Against India?

Beenish Altaf

Pakistan's former envoy to United Nations, Amb Zamir Akram said that Pakistan is not seeking parity with India in terms of nuclear weapons, but is rather pursuing Full Spectrum Deterrence to ensure that there are no gaps in its deterrence capability. It is the need of the hour, while looking at the growing Indian aspirations of becoming a giant South Asian nuclear power. It includes both the nuclear weapons development and the missile development.

The number of nuclear weapons, enough to maintain nuclear deterrence, has continued to trouble nuclear deterrence theorists, strategists and policymakers since the post-Cold War period. Meanwhile, the world's nuclear weapons stockpile is estimated to be at 16,000 approximately, and all states possessing nuclear weapons, in one way or another, are constantly modifying and modernizing their nuclear inventories. No state will place a number or cap on what it considers to be a sufficient nuclear force for credible deterrence.

In South Asia, India and Pakistan, nuclear armed rival neighbors, have estimated stockpiles of 90-110 and 100-120 respectively, according to estimates from the SIPRI Yearbook 2015. Both countries have committed policies of minimum nuclear deterrence and no-nuclear arms race. While India seeks to maintain a nuclear force sufficient to deter mainly China and Pakistan, Islamabad maintains that it seeks a deterrent equilibrium vis-a-vis New Delhi and not nuclear parity.

Amb Akram, with a practical command on the subject, viewed that the threats were growing in the region due to large scale acquisition of military hardware by India, its public rejection of the policy of No First Use of nuclear weapons, determination to carry out disarming strikes against Pakistan, and its espousal of dangerous and destabilizing doctrines like the Cold Start Doctrine.

Ironically the revolving ongoing speculation on the transformation of NFU policy of Indian Nuclear doctrine is getting a lot of hype nowadays. The strategy might be to keep all options open by putting ambiguity in its nuclear doctrine. Diplomatically, the Indian doctrine is only to show the international community that New Delhi has maintained a responsible use of its nuclear weapons by declaring a written doctrine, which, paradoxically, was never credible enough.

Only due to the abovementioned espousing weaponry expansion and military enlargement, 'this has required us to move towards Full Spectrum Deterrence for responding to threats at the tactical level, the counter-force level, and the counter-value level. We need to cover all levels of threat.' It should be taken into account that the strategic stability in South Asia was not just about Pakistan and India, but also involves China and the US in the sphere.

Referring to a recent statement by Massachusetts Institute of Technology scholar Vipin Narang, and assertions by former Indian National Security Adviser Shiv Shankar Menon in his book suggesting that India could shed its No-First Use doctrine and carryout disarming pre-emptive strikes against Pakistan, the former envoy said this did not come as a surprise because Pakistani security quarters never believed in an Indian declaratory statement of No-First Use, which could not be verified.

It is important to note here that India is the largest arms importer, and is engaged in several nuclear deals worldwide for which US is the biggest helper. An evidence estimated that for the US it would be desirable if a friendly Asian power beat Communist China to the punch by detonating a nuclear device first for which the very likely country was no other than India. So, the US assisted by helping India acquire nuclear explosive, for balancing communist China that is evident from the recently declassified Sept 1961, top secret memorandum from State Dept official George McGhee to Secretary of State Dean Rusk.

There were various national and international factors behind the Indian nuclear program. Internationally, New Delhi perspective is that its program was driven by its reservations about China, which had nuclear weapons, and its desire to achieve “great-power status”.

Nevertheless, posture of Credible Minimum Deterrence has remained a principle option of Pakistan’s nuclear policy. This principle is based on the concept that Pakistan’s nuclear policy is driven by its perceived threat to its security from India and is therefore India-centric. Deterrence is the sole aim and a small arsenal is considered adequate for satisfying it. But ironically this is also a fact that with the introduction of Tactical Nuclear Weapons in the region or with the introduction of battlefield weapons is actually a modernized advancement in the inventories. Those are ironically meant to balance out this superiority complex.

So, it could be concluded that it is only when states feel threatened they opt for defending their territory and sovereignty that actually compels them to maximize their security measures under the perceived threat of vulnerability. But for maintaining a deterrent posture, according to my understanding, the quantitative number is not necessary, as the possession of a nuclear weapon is itself enough for crafting deterrence. Because even by possessing one nuke, the nuclear aggression from the other state can be discouraged. So the question of numeric parity or nuclear sufficiency does not make sense. Therefore, it would not be in correct to conclude that credible minimum deterrence is not the same as nuclear parity and nuclear supremacy.

<http://nation.com.pk/blogs/29-Apr-2017/why-pakistan-is-pursuing-full-spectrum-deterrence-against-india>

CPEC: Living Up To the Expectations

Sadia Kazmi

While through CPEC China has undoubtedly become the largest investor in Pakistan, it reflects on the immense importance that China attaches to CPEC as a flagship project of One Belt One Road. It is not wrong to say that CPEC within OBOR holds the same significance for China as the Suez Canal did back in 1869, when it was officially opened providing connectivity to the Nile River in Egypt and the Mediterranean to the Red Sea. Another similarity between the two is the opportunity to reducing the transit time for worldwide trade. While Suez Canal already enjoys major shipping traffic where almost 50 ships pass through it daily, the Chinese initiative once fully functional will bring about similar edge and advantage to China and all the other participating countries and the regions. Among all the economic corridors, the CPEC is going to remain the most significant one owing to its geographic location. Today the combination of six economic corridors will eventually connect different regions throughout Europe, Africa, West and Central Asia. These economic corridors are also being seen as an attempt to counter America's Pivot to Asia strategy. It is no hidden secret that this American strategy was launched to keep a check on China in 2012. This has certainly created a flux in the overall security environment of South East Asia, where India, Vietnam, South Korea and Japan have been willingly serving the US interests in the region. India also has its own reservations against CPEC for the plan includes the route to pass through Jammu and Kashmir: an Indian Occupied territory. Even though both China and Pakistan have time and again expressed concrete resolve to not let the CPEC derail, the Indian opposition to CPEC and the US' attempts to contain China through strategies like Asia Pivot, will continue to present major challenges to the smooth materialization of CPEC.

Nonetheless despite the ever growing controversies, the hyped up skepticism, prevailing grievances, the ambiguities and plethora of challenges, the Chinese investment in Pakistan is continuously on the rise. The initially estimated investment of CPEC, that was calculated to be US \$ 46 billion, was revised and reached to US \$ 55.5 billion. This figure has now further been increased to US \$ 62 billion as per the statement recently issued by Sind Governor Muhammad Zubair. It is believed that the initial share of investment at US \$ 35 billion and US\$ 11 billion between power projects and infrastructure has also increased. The new chunk of money is to be spent on the infrastructure projects including industrial zones, Karachi Circular Railway and for other developmental plans. Around US \$ 18 billion worth projects are about to complete. Among these projects, the energy related ones have been given priority. Another worth US \$ 17 billion are in about to initiate. The short term, medium term and long term projects are expected to be completed by year 2020, 2025 and 2030. Also recently it was reported that 11 projects of 11,000 Mega Watts are going to be completed before the deadline. This shows the work on CPEC is gaining pace and is being completed within the stipulated time.

However these "positives" get overshadowed owing to massive campaign launched by India to mislead people into suspecting the motives of this very project. This is the reason why the provinces have their skepticism towards CPEC. In order to neutralize India's malicious designs it is very important that the true picture and facts are shared with the common people. The people should be taken into

confidence and their grievances should be put to rest. At the same time the people should also make an effort to consider only the authentic news and not just believe the hearsay. The governments of Pakistan and China have official web pages which are continuously being updated. These have an open and free access to everyone. These sources of information should be regarded more credible than negative propaganda.

Other challenges include Pakistan's internal problems such as current account deficit, tax collection, political volatility, corruption, militancy, and separatism. The government of Pakistan should tackle with these challenges on priority bases in a proper order. The projects should be completed on time without giving any space to corruption. In order to address these issues both China and Pakistan need to take more robust and practical steps. President Xi Jinping has put forth a very pertinent method of achieving the desired end by suggesting that "China and Pakistan need to align development strategies more closely to realize the dreams of our peoples. Both our countries face the important task of economic development and improvement of people's livelihood. We need to enhance strategic coordination, deepen practical cooperation and work together for common development. We will build the China-Pakistan community of common destiny and set a fine example for such efforts by China and its neighboring countries". Managing it in timely and efficient manner is the key. It is bound to be a boon if handled adeptly; otherwise inept handling of this epoch-making project will reduce it to the status of bane.

<http://foreignpolicynews.org/2017/04/30/cpec-living-expectations/>

Dynamics of Strategic Stability in South Asia

Asma Khalid

Strategic stability in South Asia is complex phenomena due to adversarial relationship between two traditional rivals India and Pakistan. Existence of an Action-Reaction Spiral between both nuclear rivals is increasing the fragility of the South Asian strategic stability.

Though, the both states have successfully achieved the principal requirements of strategic stability by enhancing their nuclear capabilities and maintaining the deterrence. But different postures of military strategies have negatively affected nuclear equation of the region. Balance of power in South Asia revolves around the competition over nuclear and conventional military build-up between India-Pakistan and powers politic among United States, China and Russia.

The territorial dispute over Jammu and Kashmir is an actual bone of contention and previous events of the war of Kargil, the Mumbai attack, and the most recent attacks of Pathankot and Urri, has severely shattered the stability paradigm and these events have brought both countries on the brink of war. Most significantly the Indian claim of surgical attacks in Pakistan held Kashmir has seriously disturbed the existing strategic stability paradigm in South Asia.

Though the introduction of nuclear weapon has brought the fundamental change in regional security calculus but Stability-Instability paradox is operational in south Asia.

The dilemma of the South Asian region is that with the passage of time, strategic stability is becoming more fragile instead of becoming strong. Deterrence stability and Crisis stability in the region is not yet stabilize due to various internal and external factors Historical events, social, economic, political aspects and external powers especially United States (US) has played crucial role in disturbing the strategic force balance and strategic stability in the region. Internal challenges such as territorial disputes (Sir Creek, Kashmir, and Siachen), increased border tension on LOC, defence production gap and Indian military modernization, Indian ballistic missile program, and absence of arms control regime are the main source of tension in the region. In such a strategic landscape three possible threats to regional strategic stability are: crisis instability, arms race, security dilemma and escalatory danger have worsened the situation.

Power politics among super powers has also played a crucial role in disturbing the regional equilibrium as the sub-continent has remained under the influence of great powers. During the cold war period USSR and U.S exercise their power struggle over South Asia; where as in china emerged as third competitor during the Post-Cold war era.

At the end of Cold-War, India-US bilateral ties were strengthened by economic and defence co-operation. In post 9/11 indo-US stronger ties were the biggest threat to regional stability. Growing Indo-US strategic partnership, Indo-US nuclear deal, recent defence co-operation and U.S support to Indian

candidacy for NSG has drastically halted the process of stability. Defence bond between U.S and India is biggest threat to regional stability as well as to the global non-proliferation efforts.

At the broader aspect the Indo-U.S strategic partnership has put the question mark on the aspiration of both states and it may force the other regional states to take the measure to ensure their safety and security.

In response to Indo-U.S strategic co-operation, China and Pakistan are making a strong partnership in economic, military and nuclear fields. China can play the crucial role to maintain the balance of power in the region by providing assistance to Pakistan in military and nuclear fields. At the same time, Pakistan and China are pursuing the strategies to counter the threats and challenges to regional strategic stability but not by violating the international laws or norms as US did to support India's membership for NSG. Subsequently, Pakistan's vision is to promote the idea of regional cooperative development; CPEC is the most significant example of that.

Two categories of strategic partnerships: the Indo-U.S strategic partnership and China-Pakistan Strategic co-operation has evolved the unique kind of equilibrium in the South Asia. However, India's military modernization plane, missile program, Indo-U.S civil nuclear deal and discriminatory approach of U.S towards Pakistan have directly challenged the regional strategic balance.

In this regard, the absence of crisis stability and deterrence stability mechanism is increasing the fragility of South Asian strategic stability. So it is imperative to develop a framework comprised of conventional force balance, arms control regime and conflict resolution. Unfortunately, India has always rejected such proposals regarding nuclear restrains. In order to ensure the regional stability it is necessary to take the establishment of restraint regimes seriously for durable peace in the South Asian region.

<http://www.eurasiareview.com/30042017-dynamics-of-strategic-stability-in-south-asia-oped/>