

Indian Strategic Doctrinal Transformation: Trends and Trajectory

Dr. Summar Iqbal Babar and Dr. Muhammad Nadeem Mirza¹

Abstract

From being one of the biggest proponents of non-alignment to becoming a state aspiring to be a regional hegemon, India has gone through a huge doctrinal transformation in its strategic thinking. This paper addresses evolution of this transformation while detailing major military doctrines such as Nehru doctrine, Sunderji doctrine, Cold-Start doctrine, Indian Maritime doctrine, Indian Land Warfare doctrine, and Indian Joint Armed Forces doctrine. This continuous doctrinal transformation aims at seeking a more synchronized modernization of the military, creating synergy to fill operational gaps and enhance agility for swift manoeuvrability under a nuclear overhang. The study concludes that under the present BJP government, Nehruvian influence over Indian strategic thought has reduced significantly and therefore ultimately led to the design and adaptation of more hawkish strategies – such as Land-Warfare Doctrine 2018, hybrid warfare, surgical strike stratagem – which are contrary to the behaviour of a responsible nuclear-weapon state.

¹ Dr Summar Iqbal Babar is a Lecturer at School of Politics and International Relations, Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad. Dr. Muhammad Nadeem Mirza is Assistant Professor at School of Politics and International Relations, Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad.