



# VISION

VISIONARY INSIGHTS INTO THE STRATEGIC INQUESTS OF NATIONS

## SVI FORESIGHT

VOLUME 5, NUMBER 4

APRIL 2019

Compiled & Edited by:  
S. Sadia Kazmi

**Strategic Vision Institute**  
**Islamabad**

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**STRATEGIC VISION**  
I N S T I T U T E

**Strategic Vision Institute (SVI)**

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## **Strategic Vision Institute (SVI)**

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Strategic Vision Institute (SVI) is an autonomous, multidisciplinary and non-partisan institution, established in January 2013. It is a non-governmental and non-commercial organization, administered by a Board of Governors (General Body) supervised under a Chairperson and administered by a Management Committee headed by a President/Executive Director.

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**

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*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.

## ***Contents***

Editor's Note .....	1
The 'High-risk Low-gain' Politics of the Kashmir Issue	
Waqas Jan .....	2
India's Space Ambitions	
Syeda Saiqa Bukhari .....	4
After Pulwama: A False Flag Operation	
Haris Bilal Malik.....	6
Indian Military Advancements and Strategic Stability of South Asia	
Syeda Saiqa Bukhari .....	8
India Forced to Acknowledge Truth	
Haris Bilal Malik.....	10
The Self Aggrandizing Tenets of the Modi Doctrine	
Waqas Jan .....	12
Indian Cold Start Doctrine the New Normal and UNO	
Anjum Sarfraz.....	14

## *Editor's Note*

Arms race is no more confined to the conventional realms wherein the outer space has become an extended battle ground among the nations. Space based advanced weapon systems are turning it into an increasingly embattled domain rampant with strategic competitions. India's "Mission Shakti" recently helped it gain the status of fourth country after the US, China and Russia to interdict and intercept a satellite in outer space. Not just that but the fact that the successful anti-satellite (ASAT) missile test is based on indigenous technology, is indicative of India's growing self-reliance. Pakistan naturally feels concerned as India is clearly far ahead of Pakistan with its heavy military oriented and provocative space program. A constant hike in India's defence budget and its military modernization has been quite evident in past one decade. It remained a major importer of arms from the US and Russia along with being an important arms market for the globe. Although the budget increase is often justified under the pretext of "China threat", reality dictates that Indian military buildup is essentially South Asia centric. The ensuing regional security dilemma clearly has its roots in India's hegemonistic designs for South Asia. Such developments have direct implications for the fragile stability and balance of power in the region. A comprehensive debate on these significant areas have been highlighted aptly in the analytical commentaries included in this issue of SVI-Foresight. Readers will also come across some unique inferences on the politics of Kashmir issue and Pulwama incident in the backdrop of ongoing general election in India.

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

## *The 'High-risk Low-gain' Politics of the Kashmir Issue*

*Waqas Jan*

Over the last few days, Pakistan's Prime Minister Imran Khan seems to have come under tremendous fire for his recent statements regarding a possible future settlement with India over Kashmir. Speaking to a group of foreign journalists, Mr. Khan had stated that he might have a better chance of reaching an agreement with Mr. Modi if his right-wing Bharatiya Janata Party were voted to power in the ongoing elections in India. This he predicted would be better than dealing with the struggling Congress Party which may lack the political capital to cooperate with Pakistan, out of fear of alienating India's influential far-right.

Considered by many as a blatant endorsement of Mr. Modi and his more oppressive brand of politics, Mr. Khan has since taken considerable flak from his political opponents as well as from some prominent voices within Pakistan's mainstream media. These include former diplomat Senator Sherry Rehman who has vehemently criticized the PM's statement. Her position is that Pakistan instead of appearing to favor certain individuals should focus on dealing with the Indian state as a whole. Particularly with respect to the Kashmir issue, she pointed out that favoring one individual or party over the other not only amounts to interference, but denigrates and shuns other parties from any future diplomatic efforts as well.

The Senator does have a point. Picking favorites and potential negotiation partners before the Indian elections even start does amount to a diplomatic faux pas of sorts. However, if one was to simply consider the PM's statement on its own merits, all he did was state a harsh, albeit long-standing political reality that has persistently characterized both countries' relationship with one another. Particularly with respect to the politics and discourse surrounding the Kashmir issue, this reality has been referred to by renowned South Asian expert Stephen P. Cohen as the 'high risk low gain' nature of cooperation that exists between both countries.

This idea of the high-risk low-gain nature of Pak-India relations is based on the fact that any form of cooperation between both countries has historically remained fraught with risks, particularly within the realm of local politics. This idea that leaders on both sides of the border have often more to lose than to gain politically has been evident throughout both countries' histories; especially when calling for greater cooperation.

For instance, these same risks were evident on both sides during Mr. Modi's impromptu visit to Pakistan in late 2015. Building on the budding bonhomie between himself and former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, both leaders had highlighted their growing personal relationship as highly positive for India Pakistan relations. This was despite the criticisms both were facing for appearing too conciliatory and overeager to paper over long standing issues. However, the risk of appearing weak or ceding more than necessary was ultimately greater for an already weakened Nawaz Sharif. Already dogged by the increasingly tenuous relationship between himself and the military establishment, Mr. Sharif instead of

gaining any ground towards a workable solution with India, found himself even more politically alienated as a result of his overtures.

The same was the case in the Musharraf era as well. At the height of his power in 2001 and immune to the political risks of civilian leaders, Mr. Musharraf appeared more than willing at the Agra summit to reach a workable solution. His proposed solution however remained untenable for Indian leaders such as L.K Advani, who found the risks of appearing reconciled with the Pakistani General as too great. Six years later, the four point plan which Mr. Musharraf had developed over years of back-channel talks with Mr. Manmohan Singh's government, also fell through as Mr. Musharraf's political troubles at home started to take toll. The growing uncertainty over Mr. Musharraf's political future further compounded the risks being faced by Indian leaders in late 2007, at a time when the Kashmir issue was according to many 'all but resolved'.

Even more ironic perhaps was the lost opportunity for India at Simla in 1972, where Shrimati Indira Gandhi Ji at the height of her power remained a hair short of finalizing the Kashmir issue with a militarily defeated Mr. Bhutto. As the controversial story goes, a verbal agreement between Mr. Bhutto and Mrs. Gandhi just fell short of being written down and signed due to Mr. Bhutto's insistence. He had reportedly asked for more time as the political risks for reaching a final settlement over Kashmir were far too great for him then.

Coming back to Mr. Imran Khan's most recent statement, his prediction of a weakened Congress party being less able to face such risks can be termed as a candid summation of the above historical lessons. Not to mention the risks Mr. Khan himself faces to his own political capital, when calling for cooperation with a jingoistic and war-mongering BJP government. A BJP government, which thus despite its highly questionable sincerity to peace, may still yet offer a more pragmatic chance of cooperation over Kashmir.

Yet, in staying true to the irony that has long plagued India -Pakistan relations, both Mr. Khan and Mr. Modi are neither the first, nor likely the last leaders to face the high risk low-gain implications of calling for peace and reconciliation between Pakistan and India. Unless there is widespread political consensus on an honest and stringent commitment to peace and reconciliation on both sides of the border, that elusive peace sought by a few idealists is likely to remain just that; an elusive ideal.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/377187/the-high-risk-low-gain-politics-of-the-kashmir-issue/>

## *India's Space Ambitions*

*Syeda Saiqa Bukhari*

On March 27, 2019 India has tested its first ever Anti-Satellite (ASAT) missile code named as 'Mission Shakti'. India shot down one of its own Low Earth Orbit (LEO) satellite through a ballistic missile and became fourth country in the world after USA, Russia and China having the capability. ASAT weapons are the space weapons which allow a state to attack opponent space assets which disrupt communication channel. Indian ASAT test translates into New Delhi capability which can be used to destroy opponent satellites. The shooting down of its own low orbit satellite with a ground to space missile has made India a 'space power'. This technology effects Intelligence, Reconnaissance and Surveillance (IRS) system of enemy state.

India has the ambitions to enhance its space capabilities as a part of its Defence Doctrine. This ASAT test by New Delhi touches a number of important issues which endanger the contemporary security environment of South Asia and the international security. At international level it generates a debate on space policy, politics and the weaponization. International community gave different reaction on Indian ASAT test. Indian missile test raised concerns in Pakistan as its security threats mainly coming from eastern border.

Pakistan responded that 'ASAT test should have a matter of serious concern for global community, not only in terms generation of space debris but also because of its consequences for long term sustainability of peaceful space activities'. Bridenstine, administrator of NASA also condemned Indian ASAT test and said that 24 pieces out of 400 debris identified by NASA went above the apogee of International Space System (ISS) which could damage the ISS and other satellites. Russia and China also commended Indian ASAT test. Contrary, US reaction to Indian ASAT was quite supportive but they showed their reservation on debris. Pentagon's statement in favor of Indian ASAT test shows clearly that US have biased attitude towards New Delhi's developments. In general, such types of tests have negative impact on existing ISS. International rules and regulations about the space only stop a state from putting WMDs in the space. But it is a matter of concern that destruction of satellite creates debris which will ultimately affect the space system or other satellite. There should be a treaty which deals with the matter of debris.

South Asia security environment is marred with mutual hostility between two nuclear powers India and Pakistan. Owing to this enmity, both the states indulge in arms race. The action reaction spiral governs the arms race between India and Pakistan. This test will also start a new chapter of space race between two states.

The timing of the test i.e. 27th March was crucial in the context of existing tensions and aftermath of February 2019 military escalation between Pakistan and India. The crisis between two states started after 14 February Pulwama attacks in Indian occupied Kashmir (IOK) for which India blamed Pakistan. In this intense environment, the ASAT test opens up new avenue for intensification of existing clashes between the two nuclear armed neighbors. This test has strategic as well as political



significance. Politically it is significant because soon after two weeks of this test, Indian general elections were going to be held. It can be said that the test was a way to strengthen BJP popularity and to gain right wing support in the elections.

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Strategically, this test will not only disturb the stability of the region but also increase vulnerability which will ultimately challenge the existing deterrence stability of South Asia. Pakistan considers Indian developments a direct threat to its sovereignty; consequently this test can start a new space arms race in South Asia. Pakistan always in favor of demilitarization of space and tried to controlled arms race in South Asia. Pakistan due to economic constraints faces difficulties to maintain existing strategic balance of South Asia after Indian ongoing conventional and unconventional developments. International community especially US and West has dual standards vis-à-vis India and Pakistan. In this regard, Pakistan should further enhance its collaborations with China which is a time tested friend and strategic partner to maintain strategic stability of South Asian region.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/378774/indias-space-ambitions/>

## *After Pulwama: A False Flag Operation*

*Haris Bilal Malik*

South Asia has become a region of global security concern since its nuclearization in 1998. Nearly a month after the military de-escalation the world remains concerned about the after match of the escalation during February-March. In Pakistan, a debate is going on whether the Pulwama attack of February 14 may have been a false flag operation. Such operations rely on deception and aim for pre-determined outcomes in pursuit of some political or strategic objective.

India has a history of undertaking such operations with varying degrees of success. The grandest and most successful of these probably was the 1971 war. More recent episodes have included the 2016 Uri attack, the Pathankot Air Base attack and the Mumbai attacks of 2008. All these operations were aimed at diverting international attention from oppression of Occupied Kashmir and accusing Pakistan of sponsoring terrorism, that too without a shred of evidence. Some of these operations have been meant to influence election results.

The most recent example of a false flag is the so-called Pulwama suicide attack in which 44 Indian Central Police Reserve Force men were reported killed.

The Bharatya Janata Party of Prime Minister Modi has chosen to ground its election campaign on hatred against Pakistan. The timing of the escalation, i.e. just two months before the elections, makes it one of the most suspect operations of the kind. Within minutes of the Pulwama attack it was claimed that an improvised device carrying 350 kilograms of high explosive was used. There was no explanation as to how such a large amount might have been brought across Line of Control as alleged despite the heavy Indian forces deployment and the frequent curfews. Several Indian leaders and a media bandwagon were quick to accuse Pakistan of sponsoring the attacks.

Pakistan's response to the violation of its airspace is a part of history. On April 7, Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi warned that another Pulwama-like attack might be staged in the occupied Kashmir between April 16 and April 20 to justify another military escalation ahead of the polls to mount diplomatic pressure on Pakistan. He said Pakistan had credible intelligence regarding Indian preparations for the purpose. Diplomatic representatives of the permanent members of the United Nations Security Council were briefed on the intelligence. At a meeting of India's cabinet committee on defence the prime minister was reported to have given free hand to the services chiefs to act against Pakistan. The chiefs reportedly said that they had already selected targets beyond the Line of Control.

Prime Minister Modi's government is deliberately promoting war hysteria against Pakistan. This is height of irresponsibility as escalation beyond a certain point might lead to a war between nuclear powers.

One can conclude that the Pulwama attack was a false flag operation carried out with two objectives. First, to portray the freedom fighters in Kashmir as terrorists; and second to garner popular

support in the context of 2019 elections by spreading hatred against Pakistan. In case of military escalation by India, Pakistan may have no choice but to use tactical nuclear weapons.

The media as well as opposition parties in India have questioned Indian government's claim of targeting a militant training camp in Pakistan and downing a Pakistani fighter jet in a dogfight. According to Foreign Policy Us officials have verified that Pakistan's F-16 Fleet is intact.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/378756/after-pulwama-a-false-flag-operation/>

# *Indian Military Advancements and Strategic Stability of South Asia*

*Syeda Saiqa Bukhari*

South Asia is one of the most unstable regions in the world because of the ever growing hostility between Pakistan and India. Since partition India has always tried to dominate the region due to its conventional superiority over Pakistan. The bilateral relations of Pakistan and India are based on distrust and uncertainty. Consequently, Pakistan's major security threat perceptions are always inclined towards its Eastern border i.e. India.

The current Indian military developments and intention to purchase advanced weaponry have disturbed the existing strategic stability of the region. These developments include induction of 05 Dhanush artillery guns (indigenous) and launch of Electronic Management Intelligence Satellite 'EMISAT'.

Moreover, according to a media report, India has also recently ordered 240 Spike medium range Anti-Tank Guided Missiles (ATGM) and 12 launchers as an emergency purchase from Israel in wake of the recent military escalation with Pakistan. Spike is a medium range multipurpose weapon, having a capability to hit and completely destroy the heavy military armored vehicles. It has a fire and forget mode which enables it to lock onto the target before it fires instead of acquiring it once the missile is in the air. The missile can be launched from anywhere i.e. air, land or sea. Indian Army has a requirement of around 68, 000 anti-tank guided missiles and 850 launchers of various types. In February 2019 India-Pakistan crisis, Indian response showed that it lacks in terms of advanced military weaponry and efficient response capabilities. In this scenario, the emergency purchase ATGM is significant and somehow it immediately fulfills the operational requirements of Indian offensive military capabilities.

Likewise, Indian Ordnance Factory Board (OFB) developed Dhanush artillery guns with the intention to deploy them along the Pakistani border. These Artillery guns have the capability to perform equally well during the day and night operations. India army places the order of 114 Dhanush guns to OFB, out of which first five guns were handed over to Indian Military on 26th March 2019. Acquiring these artillery guns will enable India to launch swift action against Pakistan in pursuit of its Cold Start Doctrine (CSD).

Dhanush gun and anti-tank guided missile will boost the military fire power capability of India against adversary forces which is also the requirement of Indian offensive military doctrine.

On April 1, 2019 India launched its electronic management intelligence satellite 'EMISAT' focused at monitoring the movements of adversary state i.e. Pakistan. The timing of launch of EMISAT is also very significant as it comes shortly after Indian Anti-Satellite (ASAT) missile test on March 27 code named as 'Mission Shakti'. ASAT is designed to destroy enemy satellites and to disrupt the Remote Sensing (RS) systems.

Contrary to that EMISAT is a low earth orbit surveillance satellite which allows India to keep a watch over enemy activities and to provide information about the radar sites of adversary state. These new developments provide New Delhi a space based platform reconnaissance against the adversary states. It would strengthen the IRS system of India which is an important requirement for the successful implementation of swift offensive military actions under CSD.

New Delhi's advancement in space will not only escalate the ongoing tensions between India and Pakistan but also provokes an arms race in space. The biased attitude of International Community especially the US towards India and the ongoing cooperation would bring South Asian region to the brink of instability and insecurity.

These above mentioned developments show that India is on a course to advancing its military capabilities in pursuit of its doctrinal ambitions. The February 2019 military crisis between India and Pakistan shows absence of efficient response capability and lack of sophisticated weaponry from India.

Though India is conventionally superior to Pakistan, but it might take India years to operationalize its Cold Start Doctrine. These new developments will create challenges for Pakistan's security and push it to take necessary measures to ensure strategic stability of the South Asian region. It is evident that Pakistan due to its financial constraints faces difficulties in responding to the recent Indian high tech developments, nonetheless maintains the existing balance of power in South Asia. Pakistan as a responsible state has always taken necessary steps to maintain peace in the South Asian region.

<https://www.eurasiareview.com/27042019-indian-military-advancements-and-strategic-stability-of-south-asia-oped/>

## *India Forced to Acknowledge Truth*

*Haris Bilal Malik*

India has finally acknowledged the truth regarding the February 26 violation of Pakistani air space. On April 18, Minister for External Affairs Sushma Swaraj told an election gathering that no Pakistani citizen or military official was killed during the air strike. The admission tends to corroborate Pakistan's stance that there no militant training camp located in Balakot and that there were no casualties. The Indian claim of shooting down a Pakistan Air Force F-16 fighter jet during the February 27 dog fight has also been negated by a report in Foreign Policy Magazine according to which US Defence officials have verified that Pakistan's F-16 fleet is intact.

Maj Gen Asif Ghafoor, the Inter Services Public Relations Director General, has noted that the truth has been revealed. Pakistan hopes, he has said, that one day truth regarding the 2016 surgical strikes and shooting down of two Indian Air Force jets by PAF and the Indian claim about shooting of a PAF F-16 jet will also be revealed. It's always better late than never.

Sushma Swaraj's statement contradicts the official Indian announcement projecting the February 26 violation as a successful air strike in which a training camp of Jaish-e-Muhammad was destroyed and 350 militants were killed. India has been making such false claims against Pakistan irrespective of which party is leading the government.

In the aftermath of February 14 suicide attack in Pulwama by a Kashmiri local, in which 44 Indian Central Police Reserve Force men were reportedly killed, India accused Pakistan of sponsoring the attack. On February 26 Indian jets violated Pakistan's air space, ostensibly to target a JeM training camp, but were forced to retreat. The IAF jets only managed to jettison their payload. India then claimed to have hit the camp and killed 350 militants. The claim was questioned around the world. At a National Security Committee meeting held the same day, Prime Minister Imran Khan rejected the Indian claim.

Responding to Indian accusations following the Pulwama incident, Prime Minister Imran Khan had offered a joint investigation in his February 19 speech if India could provide authentic information regarding Pakistan's involvement. It may be argued that India rejected Pakistan's proposal out of a fear of exposing the falsehood.

On April 10, several foreign journalists, ambassadors and defence attaches of various countries visited Jabba, Balakot, where India claimed to have destroyed the militant camp. The visitors were allowed to interact with the locals. They were shown the bomb craters and learnt that the strike had not resulted in a loss of human lives or destruction of infrastructure.

The escalation brought Pakistan and India to the brink of a nuclear war. The situation was most tense when Pakistan struck back across the Line of Control (LoC) and two Indian were shot down by the PAF and an Indian pilot was captured. The pilot was later released in a goodwill gesture meant to promote peace.

General elections may have been one of the factors behind the debacle. Prime Minister Modi has been promoting war hysteria against Pakistan. BJP has always relied on spreading hatred against Pakistan during its election campaign to garner right wing extremist support.

In this context, a test of an Anti-Satellite weapon on March 27 and the threats to use a hydrogen bomb against Pakistan have been widely publicized.

In the wake of India's warlike threats the danger of a nuclear conflict between two countries has become even more pronounced. India needs to understand that the stability of the South Asian region lies in the peaceful settlement of disputes.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/383969/india-forced-to-acknowledge-truth/>

## *The Self Aggrandizing Tenets of the Modi Doctrine*

*Waqas Jan*

As Mr. Modi confidently pushes forth his re-election bid in the ongoing Indian elections, numerous analysts have offered various summations of his outgoing government's performance. These include a broad range of analyses on his characteristic 'hands-on' approach to foreign policy, which in contrast to his predecessors' has been self-styled as a major paradigm shift.

This perspective is evident for instance in Professor Harsh Pant's recently released book titled 'Indian Foreign Policy under the Modi Era'. One of Mr. Modi's long-standing proponents, Prof. Pant has credited this Indian Prime Minister with not only injecting a certain impetus and vigor to India's foreign relations, but also with fundamentally altering the more passive and risk-averse approaches of the past. This has entailed India taking on a more leading as opposed to a balancing role in its relations with major powers at the global level, while subsequently consolidating its own leadership role within the South Asian and Indian Ocean regions.

These aspects are argued as being evident in the renewed emphasis on greater cooperation with ASEAN countries, as well as the revival of the BIMSTEC. Both these moves have been credited as forming an integral part of Mr. Modi's 'Act East' policy, which has been widely acknowledged as a much needed advancement of India's long floundering 'Look East' policy. As part of India's own bid to contain China's rising influence and its threats of encirclement, India's pivot to the East has in turn also been supported by the US, Japan and Australia as part of what is now referred to as the 'Quadrilateral Alliance'. These developments are just one example of what many including Prof. Pant have hailed as a more assertive and successful use of India's soft power capabilities.

Simultaneously, Mr. Modi's hard-line stance on Pakistan too has been lauded by his supporters along similar lines. Veering between surprise visits and unprecedented military strikes, his approach towards Pakistan has been to stay one step ahead by remaining both evasive and unpredictable. What this has done is effectively negate any possibility of Pakistan playing a stabilizing role in the region while more or less ignoring its very existence. This stands in stark contrast to the cautious optimism and measured restraint employed by his predecessors, who were still willing to engage in at least in some form of dialogue, instead of completely ignoring and shutting out South Asia's second largest economy and military power.

As a result, Mr. Modi's readiness to use military force and create space for cross-border operations within the nuclear threshold has been lauded as bold and necessary by his proponents. By exerting the kind of hard power that is perhaps more characteristic of a regional hegemon, the ensuing notions of 'surgical strikes' and 'swift military response' have come to form a key part of India's foreign policy discourse on Pakistan. Something that is related directly to the self-aggrandizing narrative of India's emergence as a potential global power, or as Mr. Modi himself has oft repeated, a 'super-power in the making.'



Yet, while these allusions to India becoming a major world power find rapturous applause amidst the country's ongoing election rallies, there are still a number of limitations that remain more or less self-imposed by this approach to outside observers. This is evident in the fact that even though India's Act East policy may have led it to reach as far East as the Western shores of the United States, it has done so at the detriment of a whole slew of opportunities to its more immediate West. This in turn has caused India to arguably ignore and fail to adapt to a series of key developments amidst the changing global status-quo

For instance, by relegating SAARC to near redundancy and by trying to ignore Pakistan's very existence, Mr. Modi's policies have arguably allowed a fast rising China to gain even greater influence not only in Central Asia, but also within its own traditional spheres of influence within the South Asian and Indian Ocean regions. This head in the sand approach and reluctance to engage with countries which it fears it cannot control, points instead to a stubborn and near defeatist approach to diplomacy. An approach which seems a far cry from the above espoused goal of becoming a regional let alone global power.

This lack of progress is further evident in the recent aftermath of the attempted aerial strikes by India into Pakistani territory following the Pulwama crisis. In what is increasingly being termed as a grave miscalculation on India's part, the very public loss of men and resources is perhaps trumped only by the severe loss of prestige and credibility to India's aspired role as a regional leader. Hence, considering what Mr. Modi has to show for all his pro-activity and bluster, India's lack of leadership is becoming increasingly apparent in a region where its ambivalence and a clear absence of direction are already negating the decades of progress made by his predecessors.

Ironically however, as Mr. Modi's numerous proponents and speech writers had probably realized early on, the electoral value of this self-aggrandizing narrative still carries immense relevance at home, despite its apparent hollowness to outside observers. After all, what would politics be without its many delusions of grandeur and self-aggrandizement amongst its most seasoned practitioners such as Mr. Modi.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/384361/the-self-aggrandizing-tenets-of-the-modi-doctrine/>

## *Indian Cold Start Doctrine the New Normal and UNO*

*Anjum Sarfraz*

In December 2001, five gunmen attacked the Indian parliament. 14 people were killed including five suspected terrorists. India without a thorough investigation blamed Pakistan. Subsequently, India mobilised its forces on the borders, and threatened to carry out surgical strikes against the alleged Islamic militants undertaking jihad in Kashmir. India also demanded cessation of support to the alleged cross-border terrorism, and to hand over 20 suspects involved in alleged terrorist activities in India.

Indian Army Chief General S Padmanabhan issued a statement that indicated the intention of Indians, "This is not an exercise. A lot of viable options (beginning from a strike on camps to a conventional war) are available. We can do it...if we go to war, jolly good."

India's demands challenged Pakistan's sovereignty and territorial integrity. Pakistan's leadership denounced the terrorist attack. However, it was made clear that the threatened surgical strikes would be taken as hostile acts that would be responded to in the same coin. At the same time, to counter India's aggressive posture Pakistan also mobilised its armed forces, energised its diplomatic channels, and General Pervez Musharraf, the then president of Pakistan, in his televised address to the nation on March 23, 2002, conveyed an indirect nuclear signal to India stating: "By Allah's grace, Pakistan today possesses a powerful military might, and can give a crushing reply to all types of aggression. Anybody who poses a challenge to our security and integrity could be taught an unforgettable lesson."

The standoff between the two nuclear powers continued for almost a year. India having not been able to accomplish its mission to launch a swift military response, its army began to look for a new doctrine that would enable the country to achieve its political and military aims in a short war without running the risk of crossing Pakistan's nuclear red lines. The Indian army developed a Cold Start Doctrine (CSD). Conceptually, it envisages application of 8 to 10 Integrated Battle Groups (IBMs) on multiple thrust lines, assisted by overwhelming fire power to degrade Pakistan's military before it is completely mobilised.

The Indian military leadership unveiled the doctrine in April 2004. "The goal of this limited war doctrine is to establish the capacity to launch a retaliatory conventional strike against Pakistan that would inflict significant harm on Pakistan's army before the international community could intercede, and at the same time, pursue narrow aims to deny Islamabad a justification to escalate the clash to the nuclear level."

The Cold Start Doctrine was further refined into a Proactive Operational Strategy in 2007-2008. Keeping in view the present strength of the two armies, India's CSD and Proactive Operations are unlikely to achieve any desired objective in a given period in the future on any level, from a surgical or a punitive strike to a full-scale Cold Start Operation. The Indian army hopes to destroy the Pakistan army, the 7th largest in the world, in a few days using its rapid deployment Pakistan-Specific force, which is placed right on the Pakistani border.

The concept of the Indian CSD and later the Cold Start Operations seems to be based on the 1967 model of the pre-emptive Israeli attack on Arab countries. In addition, Indian strategists think that the war would be space-oriented, and that it would be a limited war, whereas in Pakistan there is no concept of a 'limited War'. Any war with India is seen as a total war for survival. With the present strength of the armies of both the countries India does not have the capability to outclass the Pakistan army in a time frame that falls in the category of a limited war. Stephen P Cohen defines India's CSD as "a short cross border punishing raid in response to a major terrorist act."

In short, CSD or Proactive Operations are not applicable in the India-Pakistan scenario to achieve specific objectives and keep the war constrained or limited. Pakistan and India being nuclear powers this doctrine is least practicable between THE two nuclear adversaries.

On February 26, 2019 India tried to achieve her objectives by following the 'New Normal', which was first conceived and then employed by the US and Israel in their foreign policy or geopolitics, especially after 9/11. Under the garb of fighting terrorism, Americans and Israelis justified the breach of sovereignty of other states, such as Iraq, Lebanon, Palestine and Syria. Using their superior military and technological power, Washington and Tel Aviv turned the abnormal act of breaching the sovereignty of these states into their New Normal.

In simple words, it has been 'okay' for Americans and Israelis to conduct surgical strikes against Iraq, Lebanon, Palestine and Syria because these states, claimed the US and Israel, are either incapable or unwilling to take action against militant groups or non-state groups based in their territories and serving as proxies for other powers. India carried out air strikes on Balakot on a so-called militant camp. No damage to life and property occurred. Pakistan gave a swift, timely, accurate and measured response the next day. However, it was not on the International Border unlike India that attacked inside the territory of Pakistan. It is considered an act of war.

India has not been able to achieve her desired aims and objectives. It is proposed that Pakistan may launch a protest in the United Nations against India for carrying out air strikes inside the territory of a sovereign state. It will be on the record of the United Nations that India committed an act of war against a sovereign state.

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