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Strategic Vision Institute (SVI)

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Editor's Note

The dangerous escalation of hostilities between Pakistan and India, while having subsided to some degree continue to reverberate within foreign policy and international relations discourse emanating out of South Asia. This is due to the broad-ranging repercussions the Pulwama incident has had on the very concept of peace and stability throughout the South Asian region. While the BJP's narrative of marked hostility against Pakistan has continued unabated throughout its re-election campaign, it remains to be seen how Pak-India relations are likely to be affected by Mr. Modi's resounding electoral victory amidst these current trends. The same also holds true for the Indian state's aggressive military posturing as it forges ahead with its military's modernization program. With a key focus on developing its ability to project power across the South Asian and Indian Ocean Regions, its attempt at further expanding its hard power capabilities present a troubling scenario as part of its hegemonic ambitions.

Similarly, the dramatic shift in the role being played by outside powers is also of crucial importance, particularly the role being played by the United States. As a super-power that had once prided itself on upholding global peace, freedom and stability, its protracted animosity towards China and its attempts at propping up India as a major power broker threaten to wreak havoc across the region's prevailing security architecture.

All of these aspects thus merit serious analysis with respect to their impact on Strategic stability in South Asia. Particularly keeping in mind the wide-ranging effects, these developments are likely to have on the prevailing nuclear deterrence framework, these developments pose a unique set of challenges for Pakistan that need to be addressed with both care and immediacy across multiple levels of policy.

It is hoped that this issue will help readers in staying up to date with the current political environment and that they will find the analyses useful. The SVI Foresight team invites and highly encourages contributions from the security and strategic community in the form of opinion based short commentaries on contemporary political, security and strategic issues. Any suggestions for further improvements are welcome at our [contact address](#). Previous issues of the SVI Foresight can be accessed [here](#), and can also be found our [Facebook page](#). For more information, please visit our website at www.thesvi.org.

Senior Research Associate
M Waqas Jan

De-hyphenation Dilemma of the US in dealing with Pakistan and India

Musawar Sandhu

De-hyphenation, in general, is perceived as a policy of the U.S. to deal with Pakistan and India in different silos without linking their bilateral relations. Under this policy, the U.S. relations with Pakistan and India are to be carried out by an objective assessment of its interests towards each state (Pakistan and India) keeping in view their merits and demerits. This policy commenced its operation when the then U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice announced Washington's decision to De-hyphenate U.S. policies towards India and Pakistan in 2007.

As per Stephen P. Cohen, this policy of the U.S. to deal with two nuclear-armed neighbors in the South Asian region can be regarded as an Aristotelian approach where justice meant to each as per their virtues and assets free of each other.

According to Ashley J Tellis, there are a few reasons behind this strategic shift in U.S. policy. First, the vital importance of India as a rising power in the international arena with a population of 1.2 billion having democratic credentials. Second, a vast consumer market for the U.S. to explore in terms of military equipment, raw material, and white goods. Third, the inherent ability of India to counter China, defending the freedom of navigation, safeguarding lanes of communication, and the space race. Fourth, a unique way that could provide the U.S. with the ability to build its relations with Pakistan and India on separate tracks. Lastly, the U.S. is in dire need to share the weight of regulating the global norm and values based on internationally recognized principles. This task has become critical in Indo (Asia) Pacific region where India is ready to share the burden.

De-hyphenation has severe ramifications both for Pakistan and the region. Not only has it strained Pakistan's relations with the U.S. but has also tilted the South Asian Balance of Power in favor of India. This has also triggered an arms race in the region that could prove catastrophic because both states possess credible nuclear weapon capabilities. Under this policy, the U.S.'s relations with India flourished to such an extent that India became a strategic partner whereas, its ties with Pakistan deteriorated to the extent that in 2011-2012 some South Asian experts in the U.S. administration started talking about 'containing' Pakistan and 'talking tough' to Pakistan. Under this policy, the U.S. abandoned Pakistan's legitimate concerns vis-à-vis India, which proved to be sheer discrimination on its part. Pakistan felt cheated on the pretext that having sacrificed more than eighty thousand lives and suffering an economic loss of \$120 billion, still it is Pakistan that is being accused of harboring terrorist's safe havens, the double game in Afghanistan and is being subjected to "do more" mantra.

Now the question arises that to what extent De-hyphenation has taken place between Pakistan and India in terms of their relations with the U.S., and the answer is self-evident. First, the U.S. signed civil

nuclear cooperation with India not with Pakistan. Second, India is granted a pro-active role in Afghanistan despite having no direct geographical link with it. Third, the U.S. has also supported Indian request for the membership of Nuclear Suppliers Group. Fourth, the U.S. has granted India waiver to import oil from Iran despite sanctions on Iran. Fifth, the U.S. has no objection from India to purchase state of the art S-400 surface to air missiles from Russia. Sixth, the U.S. is helping India modernize its military and technological capabilities and last but not least, in post-Pulwama scenario the U.S. did not play its due role as a superpower of the world to de-escalate tensions between Pakistan and India instead, acknowledged that India has the right to defend herself. This encouraged India to violate the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Pakistan as a result; Pakistan had to respond for the sake of strategic stability in the region.

All these developments are seen with suspicions in Pakistan. Now, it is left only with a few options to readdress this altered notion of security dilemma to keep the strategic balance in the South Asian region. Pakistan can either go for self-help or alliances formation with its friends and neighbors or else cash its vital geo-strategic significance.

Regarding self-help, Pakistan has already started producing its indigenous JF-17 Thunder aircraft along with Al-Khalid tanks. Pakistan has also successfully tested Ababeel missile which is regarded as a game changer because it can carry both conventional and nuclear warheads including multiple independently targetable reentry vehicles (MIRV).

However, in terms of alliances formation, Pakistan has started close cooperation with its neighbors. For example, the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is going to be strategically vital for Pakistan both for its economic growth and military cooperation. Pakistan has also started working for close cooperation with Russia as a result Russian forces took part in multinational Naval exercise AMAN that took place in Pakistan from February 10 to February 14, 2017. Besides, Pakistan and the Russian army have been conducting joint military “Friendship” drills since 2016 with the most recent one held in Pakistan’s northwestern town of Pabbi from October 21 to November 4, 2018. Both the states agreed to upgrade their bilateral relations to Strategic partnership in the near future.

Apart from that Pakistan has to convince the U.S. to Re-hyphenate it with India in the region because Pakistan has become a lynchpin for the safe exit of the U.S. forces from Afghanistan. To quote Pakistan’s Foreign Office statement “U.S. President Donald Trump, in his letter addressed to Prime Minister Imran Khan, has stated that his most important regional priority was achieving a negotiated settlement of the Afghan war. In this regard, he has sought Pakistan’s support and facilitation”. Moreover, he also maintained that both states should “explore opportunities to work together and renew partnership.” Mr. Trump also “acknowledged that the war had cost both USA and Pakistan” therefore, “Peace and stability in Afghanistan remains a shared responsibility.” Thus, Pakistan must use this window of opportunity to neutralize the De-hyphenation induced Security Dilemma in the region.

<http://southasiajournal.net/de-hyphenation-dilemma-of-the-u-s-in-dealing-with-pakistan-and-india/>

A More Nakedly Aggressive United States

M Waqas Jan

Of all the instability and unrest the US has been accused of fomenting over the last three years, no other example comes close to the lengths the US has gone to in its unilateral attempt at isolating Iran. Long accused by Russia and other major powers as the leading cause of instability in the Middle East, the recent escalation of tensions between Iran and the US forms part of a wider more troubling trend. This has included the US ratcheting up tensions with both friends and foes alike such as the escalating trade war with China, calls for regime change in Venezuela and the estrangement of its allies across both the European Union and NATO.

The last bit, regarding the US's growing differences with the EU's major powers such as France and Germany is also to a large extent directly linked with its hardline stance on Iran. This is evident in the clearly divergent stances both the US and EU have taken regarding Iran's Nuclear program. President Trump's unilateral withdrawal from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) last year had brought about considerable shock and dismay amidst European powers that had spent years negotiating the agreement with Iran alongside the US. Signed back in 2015, the JCPOA had set a historic precedent in international diplomacy, garnering support from China and Russia as well as the US, UK, France, Germany and the EU. Based on years of painstaking negotiations it was widely hailed as presenting a successful model for Nuclear Arms Control and non-proliferation.

In fact, a number of experts had hailed the JCPOA as being even better than the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in a number of ways. Its emphasis on monitoring other research and attempts at nuclear weaponisation beyond the involvement of nuclear materials was a major step in further expanding the role and scope of the IAEA's monitoring mechanisms. These same mechanisms which based on the consensus of world powers have been successful in both monitoring and limiting Iran's attainment of Nuclear weapons capability. The only exception has been the United States, and particularly the Trump White House that has made it a policy imperative to undo the years of work put in by both former US President Obama and Secretary of State John Kerry.

President Obama had even quite recently publicly lamented how reneging on the JCPOA not only undermined the United States credibility as a negotiating partner, but also dismantled a whole non-proliferation mechanism that was to prove crucial in addressing the growing threat from North Korea as well. As apparent in the failure of the recent talks between the US and North Korea in Vietnam, the US's seriousness and commitment to the non-proliferation regime has been openly questioned as it continues to prioritize its own geo-political imperatives. Its 'maximum pressure' campaign on Iran, which is flirting dangerously with yet another large-scale military conflict involving US armed forces, threatens to undo the last decades' painstaking rollback of US troop deployments throughout the Middle East.

Since the end of the Cold War, the US's unilateralism and more maximalist approach was never in question considering its series of interventions particularly in the Middle East. There was however a semblance of unity and International leadership which either under the aegis of the UN or NATO still more or less carried the garb of a multi-lateral consensus. That instead of simply employing naked aggression as accused of by its adversaries, the US was justified by its ideology and the success of its international diplomacy. This perhaps was best and most positively evident in the JCPOA, which had brought all the world's major powers into a concerted agreement on one of the world's most pressing issues, namely Nuclear Proliferation.

However, as the Trump administration beats its war drums to the tune of nothing short of a regime change in Iran, there is most definitely a marked difference in how the US has previously built its cases for military intervention in the Middle East. In the absence of any international support from its partners, or in the lack of any overarching ideal based on non-Proliferation or plain old human freedoms (à la Iraq), the recent case for the US military intervention in Iran appears outright indolent if not unjustified as has mostly been the case with US hegemony over the last few years.

<http://foreignpolicynews.org/2019/05/17/a-more-nakedly-aggressive-united-states/>

India's 'Nirbhay' Missile Test and Implications for Pakistan

Syeda Saiqa Bukhari

India, under its hegemonic tendencies, has always desired to dominate the South Asian region and to become one of the major powers in the region and beyond. Driven by its regional and global hegemonic designs, India is involved in several missiles' development programs. Recently, on April 15, 2019, India carried out a successful test of its indigenously developed long-range subsonic stealth cruise missile 'Nirbhay' which is capable of reaching its target with the speed of 864.36km per hour and a low altitude of 100 meters.

The Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO) of India developed this missile having an operational range of 1,000 km guided by the indigenously developed advanced inertial navigation system (INS). With the help of INS, Nirbhay can accurately hit the intended target. This missile is designed to carry nuclear or conventional warheads of 300kg to 400kg and allegedly cover the designated target range in 42 minutes and 23 seconds. According to the Indian Ministry of Defence, this trial test was conducted to "prove the repeatability of boost phase and cruise phase using waypoint navigation at very low altitudes." Nirbhay can be launched from different platforms, i.e. aircraft, ground-based vehicles or launcher, ships or submarine. India is on its course to test the air-launched version of Nirbhay which is scheduled to be taking place in 2 to 3 years.

Nirbhay cruise missile can fly at different altitudes ranging from 500m and 4 km above the ground, which decreases the chances of detection by an adversary's radar system. The cruise missile has loitering ability, which means that it can go around a target and perform several maneuvers and then re-engage the target. In other words, once the Nirbhay missile is above the target and is put on a 'loiter' pattern, the officials can easily decide as to whether a strike still needs to be carried out or not (if not then it will self-destruct above the target).

It also can enter deep into the adversary area and engage targets with high precision. The recent test is significant because it is the second successful test of Nirbhay after November 2017. India started the Nirbhay program in 2004 to be completed in 2016 but remained unsuccessful because of the technological issues (missile's flight control software and navigation system). Before 2017 test, four trial tests of Nirbhay were conducted but ended in failure. With the capabilities as mentioned above, India can use Nirbhay to target military camps or intended targets in enemy territory with fewer chances of collateral damage.

An important aspect is the timing of the missile test. This trial test of Nirbhay is conducted in such an environment when tensions between India and Pakistan are at an all-time high in the aftermath of Pulwama attack, whereas the general elections 2019 have already started in India. In the backdrop of February 2019 military escalation between India and Pakistan, the timing of this missile test from India is crucial. After four failed tests in 2013, 2014, 2015 and 2016, India has finally successfully tested this missile in such a critical time to project its ambitions vis-à-vis Pakistan. Within this range, it is solely

aimed at targeting certain areas inside Pakistan's border while staying well within the Indian territory. The notion of preemption against Pakistan is a core element of Indian joint armed forces doctrine of 2017 and land warfare doctrine of 2018. The Nirbhay missile allows for the possibility of a limited war with Pakistan.

Though Pakistan's subsonic cruise missile (Babur) is compatible with India's Nirbhay missile, this test will further enhance the ongoing crisis and mistrust between the two nuclear-armed states. Moreover, this test is an addition to recent Indian developments, i.e. anti-satellite ballistic missile, Electronic Management Intelligence Satellite' EMISAT', Dhanush Artillery gun. These developments show that India is trying to further escalate the ongoing politico-military tensions with Pakistan. Indian political elite, especially Prime Minister Modi, is using hatred against Pakistan as a trump card to get maximum support in general elections and to form a government again. India is not only working on the latest supersonic or hypersonic missile (BrahMos), but it is also testing indigenously made subsonic missiles (Nirbhay) to fill the existing gaps in its armed forces war fighting capabilities. Furthermore, through this test, it is evident that India is willing to enhance its first strike capability vis-à-vis Pakistan, thus abandoning its 'no first use' (NFU) policy.

In the South Asian context, the historical rivalry between India and Pakistan has always played a crucial role in shaping the security dynamics of the region. Pakistan's major security threats emerge from India due to India's hegemonic designs. To overcome Indian conventional and unconventional threats, Pakistan's nuclear and missile program is solely based on providing deterrence against India. 'Nirbhay' like Indian initiatives can destabilize the strategic equilibrium of South Asia and will discourage any peace initiative in the South Asian region. Such developments will trigger an arms race in terms of the development of cruise missiles by two hostile South Asian neighbors; India and Pakistan.

<http://southasiajournal.net/indias-nirbhay-missile-test-and-implications-for-pakistan/>

Modi's Negative Nuclear Signaling: Playing Anti-Pakistan Card

Haris Bilal Malik

The Indian General Elections, which began in April 2019 and are scheduled for completion on 23rd May 2019, will involve 900 million voters casting their votes in seven phases; this makes it the world's biggest elections. Analysts around the world believe that the current Prime Minister, Narendra Modi is likely to form a government again due to many factors, most prominent of which is the intentional 'war hysteria' he created against Pakistan. The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has typically relied on spreading hatred against Pakistan during election campaigns to get maximum right-wing extremist popular support. In the context of the current politico-security hype in India, the negative nuclear signaling is evident from Mr. Modi's statements for the last few months, he is obsessively playing anti-Pakistan card. The ongoing elections are a factor behind the whole debacle of his obsession. The 2019 elections have become crucial for Mr. Modi and BJP because they coincide with February 2019 episode, which witnessed a short-lived military engagement between India and Pakistan.

In the same vein, Mr. Modi has also politicized nuclear weapons, pushing this button in elections gatherings. On 21st April 2019 at a rally in Rajasthan, he blamed Pakistan for always threatening India with nuclear weapons, and asked the crowd "whether India has saved these weapons for Diwali?" As a dominant figure in the Indian polity, Mr. Modi is keen to project the BJP's extremist narrative vis-à-vis Pakistan, and in the election campaign he threatened to use the thermonuclear bomb a.k.a. the 'mother of nuclear bombs'. The timing of India's Anti-Satellite (ASAT) weapon test on 27th March 2019, just a month before elections also shows Modi's ambitions of politicizing the whole debacle. He asserts that India is no more afraid of Pakistan's nuclear threats because today India is among one of the world's superpowers, capable of carrying out nuclear attacks on land, water and in the air.

Modi's vision of 'politicization of nuclear button' was widely criticized by Indian opposition parties and international analysts as well. BJP's former ally and former Chief Minister of Indian Occupied Kashmir (IOK) Mehbooba Mufti criticized Modi, saying that "if Indian nuclear bombs are not for Diwali purpose, then Pakistan's nuclear bombs were not for Eid either". Pakistan's Foreign Office has officially condemned Modi's discourse of using nuclear threat in his electioneering. The official spokesperson Dr Muhammad Faisal responded by saying that "this rhetoric is aimed at achieving short term political and electoral objectives, without realizing its implications for strategic stability in South Asia, and is highly condemnable and against the norms of being a responsible nuclear state".

There is no doubt that Pakistan lacks in terms of conventional military hardware vis-à-vis India. In the contemporary strategic discourse of South Asia, it is assumed by Indian strategists that Pakistan possesses the capability to respond to any Indian threat (conventional and unconventional) by using its tactical nuclear-capable missiles once the threshold is crossed. The same assumption might have driven Indian leadership to accuse Pakistan of "nuclear blackmailing" thinking that Pakistan would resort to the use of tactical weapons after air space violation by IAF on 26th February.

The whole episode of February-March 2019 did not prove to be a politico-military success for Modi and the BJP, and the credibility of Indian claims was questioned both from within India and from around the world. The humiliation which Modi faced in the aftermath of this crisis, has damaged the BJP in Indian domestic politics and harmed India at the international level. Pakistan's response to Indian conventional aggression was quite appropriate and proved to be credible due to the evidence of every maneuver which Pakistan had taken during the crisis. Even though Pakistan's response was conventional, nuclear deterrence remained dominant over the escalation ladder because of India's own assumption of 'nuclear blackmail' from Pakistan; the latter's response proved the former's assumption wrong.

Possession of nuclear weapons by a state comes with a great burden of responsibility, based on the nature of weapons. The nuclear button must not be in the hands of irresponsible leadership as a political button for the sake of electoral gains, as is the case of India where Prime Minister Modi is playing the nuclear card. In this regard, Mr. Modi's 'cloud and radar' statement of 12th May 2019 in which he described "he believed that our jets could escape Pakistan's radars detection due to the cloud cover at the time of air strikes" shows the irresponsibility and lack of realizing the sensitivity of the matter.

Narendra Modi's hatred for Pakistan and his frequent use of the nuclear threat exposes Indian dual standards when it declares itself a responsible nuclear state. India simultaneously maintains a 'no first use' (NFU) policy, while also retaining the concept of preemption and a proactive strategy against Pakistan in its 2017 Joint Doctrine of the Indian Armed Forces (JDIAF) and the 2018 Land Warfare Doctrine (LWD). Consequently, after the humiliation in the recent military standoff Modi has started threatening Pakistan with nuclear use.

The current political hype in India and the electoral environment is all nuclear dominated; Modi has brought the nuclear capability of India from the domain of strategic circles as being a decisive factor in elections. The global community should discourage the political interpretation of Indian nuclear capability by Modi and must revisit India's nuclear power status. U.S. being the strongest supporter of India's inclusion in elite Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) should play its vital role in this regard, if not, this unfortunate phenomenon will have long-lasting implications for strategic stability in South Asia.

<https://strafasia.com/modis-negative-nuclear-signaling-playing-anti-pakistan-card/>

Indian Nuclear Explosions of May 98 and Befitting Response

Dr. Anjum Sarfraz

India started its nuclear program soon after independence. The Atomic Energy Act was passed on 15 April 1948, leading to the establishment of the Indian Atomic Energy Commission (IAEC). The Prime Minister (PM), Jawaharlal Nehru declared: “We must develop this atomic energy quite apart from war indeed; I think we must develop it for the purpose of using it for peaceful purposes... Of course, if we are compelled as a nation to use it for other purposes, possibly no pious sentiments of any of us will stop the nation from using it that way.” Indian intentions to develop a nuclear device for military use under the garb of ambivalence were there since independence. Dr. Homi Bhabha was the first secretary who is considered the founder of this program.

The IAEC established a new facility in January 1954, the Atomic Energy Establishment, Trombay (AEET); later in August 1954 the Department of Atomic Energy (DAE) was created with Dr. Bhabha as Director to function directly under PM. The AEET facility was renamed as Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC) in January 1967 after the death of Homi Bhabha. On May 18, 1974, India conducted an underground nuclear test at Pokharan in the Rajasthan desert, codenamed “Smiling Buddha.” The government of India claimed it a peaceful test, but it was actually part of an accelerated weapons program. The world reaction was not strong as expected. United States and Canada criticized the test as they had provided aid to India for nuclear project which was supposed to be for peaceful purposes. Later on due to violation of understanding between two countries, Canada withdrew assistance to India. Chinese stance was that it would affect the stability in South Asia. After this event, Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) was established which gives guidelines to regulate the transfer of sensitive nuclear material. However, India continued pursuing vigorously its nuclear program to develop weapons of mass destruction.

During election campaign in February 1998, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) had announced in its manifesto that if elected it would seek to “exercise option to induct nuclear weapons”. The PM, Atal Bihari Vajpayee of BJP, gave orders to conduct nuclear tests on 11 and 13 May 1998. A total 5 nuclear devices were exploded. The Indian PM, very proudly claimed that India has become the sixth nuclear weapon state and should be treated by the world as such. Indian stance towards Pakistan drastically changed. The senior Indian hierarchy started giving provocative statements against Pakistan. The Indian home Minister L.K Advani said, “Islamabad should realize the change in the geo- strategic situation in the region and the world. It must roll back its anti- India policy especially with regard to Kashmir.” The Corps Commander in Indian occupied Kashmir held an unprecedented news conference and advocated his plans to attack Azad Kashmir across the LOC. The world reaction to Indian nuclear explosion was not as strong as envisioned. Extracts from the President Clinton speech from CNN broadcast of 12 May 1998, are, “I am deeply disturbed by the nuclear tests which India has conducted and I do not believe it contributes to a safer 21st century. The action by India not only threatens the stability of the region, it

directly challenges the firm, international consensus to stop the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction". The other major world powers also showed reluctance in penalizing India.

The Pakistan atomic energy program was started much later as compared to India. The Atomic Energy Commission (PAEC) was established in 1956 to participate in Atoms for Peace Program announced by the US administration. The program continued at slow pace for peaceful use till detonation by India in 1974. This strategic development was perhaps the first that pushed Pakistan in the direction of nuclear tests in May 1998. Dr A Q Khan joined the program in 1976 and founded the Engineering Research Laboratories (ERL) later renamed Khan Research Laboratories (KRL) at Kahuta near Islamabad, with the exclusive task of indigenous development of Uranium Enrichment Plant. According to Carey Sublette, "Pakistan's Nuclear Weapons Program Development," Nuclear Weapons Archive, January 2, 2002, the nuclear program of Pakistan developed speedily in 1980s and it had conducted the first cold tests of its nuclear device in 1983. According to Pressler amendment of 1985, Pakistan was required to get a certificate from the President of USA that it did not possess nuclear device for getting economic and military aid from USA, which was not signed by the President in 1990. Hence the aid to Pakistan was stopped. It happened soon after former USSR left Afghanistan.

On 11 May 1998 when India conducted first 3 nuclear tests, the PM of Pakistan, Nawaz Sharif, was on official visit to Kazakhstan. The Defense Committee of the Cabinet (DCC) convened on 13 May was chaired by PM, attended by the federal ministers and three services chiefs (Gen Jahangir Karamat was CJCS as well). Dr. Samar Mubarakmand represented PAEC in place of Dr. Ishfaq, the chairman who was abroad, and Dr A Q Khan, the KRL. At closing of the meeting it was informed that India has conducted another nuclear test. The political, military, economic and technical considerations were obviously discussed thread bare. The political and military leadership was on the same page in the decision making process. Gohar Ayub the foreign minister present in the meeting writes in book, "Testing Times", page 35, that when Raja Zafar ul Haq asked General Jahangir Karamat for his views, he said "we could match India, but the decision to do so would have to be a political one". Dr. Samar Mubarakmand and gave ten days' time for preparations to conduct the tests. The site and tunnel had already been selected.

On 18 May, after a lot of deliberations with different segments of the society and the opposition parties, the PM gave go ahead to Chairman PAEC to test nuclear bombs on 28 May 98. This was a unanimous decision of national importance. The government and military leadership, opposition parties, and general public were firmly on the same page. The PAEC team headed by Dr. Samar under the supervision of Army Corps of Engineers sealed the tunnels on 25 May. On the evening of 27 May the site was made ready for tests and conveyed to PM. Seventeen days starting from 11 May when India conducted first test till Pakistan responded on 28 May were very critical for the PM, Foreign office and GHQ. They were mulling over ways and means to allay the international pressure in the form of sanctions, and at times lucrative offers for economic aid in lieu. The President of USA called, PM several times to convince him not to go nuclear.

On 27 May a day before nuclear detonation he called our PM several times. A presentation by the participants of War and National Defence Courses (1997-98), was scheduled on 28 May at 1000hrs in National Defence College (NDC) for the PM which was attended by the ministers and services

chiefs. The writer of this article was undergoing war course and present in the auditorium. The topic was related to “Should Pakistan Conduct Nuclear Explosions or Exercise Restraint”. Points against the detonation were, weak economic conditions, will further worsen after slapping of economic sanctions. Points given by the panel to conduct explosions were much stronger. The panel concluded the presentation saying, “Now or Never”. There was a big applause. The environments prevalent in the auditorium, and smiling faces of the senior hierarchy indicated that Pakistan will carry out nuclear tests very soon. The same evening at 3:15pm, Pakistan gave a befitting response to 5 Indian nuclear explosions conducted on 11 and 13 May 98, by exploding 5 nuclear bombs and the sixth on 30 May at 11:55am. After successful explosions the PM claimed that Pakistan had become the seventh nuclear state.

<https://moderndiplomacy.eu/2019/05/20/indian-nuclear-explosions-of-may-98-and-befitting-response/>

21 years of Nuclearization of South Asia: Current Doctrinal Trends

Haris Bilal Malik

Since the nuclearization of South-Asia in 1998, the region's security dynamics have changed considerably. This has had a profound and irreversible impact on regional and extra-regional politics, the security architecture of South Asia and the international nuclear order. India had carried out its nuclear tests between 11-13 May in 1998.

Consequently, Pakistan, due to the emerging scenario, also had to carry out its nuclear tests on 28th May 1998. Hence this May marks the 21st anniversary of the nuclearization of South Asia. During this period, the nuclear doctrines of both countries have gone through several phases of evolution.

Since the evolution of doctrinal projection of nuclear program, India had emphasized on a 'no first use policy' (NFU) in its first-ever official document the 1999 'Draft Nuclear Doctrine' (DND). India has since however gone through gradual shifts in its doctrinal posture from its DND since the first amendment came in January 2003 this stated that if the Indian armed forces or its people are attacked with chemical and biological weapons, India reserves the right to respond with nuclear weapons anywhere, a clear termination of its NFU policy. Subsequently, the notion of a preemptive 'splendid first strike' has emerged within the discourse surrounding the Indian and international strategic community. According to this, if in India's assessment, Pakistan is found deploying nuclear weapons, India as a contingency would resort to such a 'splendid first strike.'

The notions of a limited war under India's 2017 Joint Doctrine of the Indian Armed Forces (JDIAF) and the 2018 Land Warfare Doctrine (LWD) are all based upon a proactive strategy and indirect threats of preemptive strikes which unofficially abandons the NFU policy. Through significant technological advancements, India has shifted its approach from a counter-value to a counter-force posture, as it demonstrates its ambitions of achieving escalation-dominance throughout the region.

India's military expansion and its technological advancements include its missile development programs which include; supersonic missiles, hypersonic missiles, ballistic missile defense system (BMD), space capabilities for intelligence, reconnaissance, and surveillance (ISR) and the induction of nuclear submarines. India's recent anti-satellite (ASAT) weapon test is also indicative of this continuing trend. These technological advancements are clear indicators that India's policies are aimed at destabilizing the existing nuclear deterrence equilibrium in South Asia.

Pakistan, due to the Indian desire to establish its regional hegemony, maintained a precise balance of power to preserve its security. Pakistan's doctrinal trajectory, on the other hand, has shifted from strategic deterrence to 'full spectrum deterrence' (FSD) by adding tactical nuclear weapons which, it claims, falls within the threshold of 'minimum credible deterrence.' In this regard, Pakistan too has

developed its missile technology based on; short, intermediate and long-range ballistic missiles. Pakistan's 'Nasr' missile, for instance, was recently introduced essentially in response to India's Cold Start Doctrine (CSD) as a 'weapon of deterrence' aimed at denying space for a limited war. The induction of 'multiple independently reentry vehicle' (MIRV), the development of land, air and sea-launched cruise missiles and the provision of a naval based second-strike capability have all played a significant role in the preservation of minimum credible deterrence and the assurance of full spectrum deterrence at the strategic, operational and tactical levels.

In the contemporary complex security environment of South Asia, Pakistan's 'full spectrum deterrence' (FSD) has recently been put to the test. After the 26th February 2019 air space violation by the Indian Air Force (IAF) following the Pulwama incident, Indian analysts have questioned the credibility of Pakistan's FSD. Negative nuclear signaling was also evident in the statements of the Indian political leaders including Prime Minister Modi and several high-level government and military officials that have been trying to undermine the credibility of Pakistan's FSD. Within this scenario, however, India's conventional strikes were responded to via conventional means, which was widely perceived as an 'appropriate response.' Furthermore, the situation did not escalate further because of Pakistan's FSD remaining as one of the primary factors that remained applicable throughout the situation thus preventing the use of nuclear weapons by India.

As has been long evident, India has held long term strategic ambitions to become a great power. For this purpose, India is continuously advancing its nuclear doctrines based on increasing the range and speed (supersonic and hypersonic) of its nuclear-capable missiles. The current security architecture of South Asia revolves around this Indian behavior as a nuclear state. In contrast, Pakistan's nuclear doctrine is based solely on assuring its security, preserving its sovereignty and deterring India either by 'minimum credible deterrence' or 'full spectrum deterrence.' The possession of nuclear weapons by Pakistan has assured the perception of 'massive retaliation' in Indian politico-security hierarchy and thus prevented crises from escalating further. Based on the undeniable threats from India to its existence, Pakistan must preserve this deterrence equilibrium vis-à-vis India and maintain the 'balance of power' in the South Asian region.

<http://southasiajournal.net/21-years-of-nuclearization-of-south-asia-current-doctrinal-trends/>

India's Naval Ambitions and Strategic Stability of South Asia

Syeda Saiqa Bukhari

For a long time, India has held the ambition of becoming one of the greatest military powers in the world. For this purpose, India spends significant amounts of money to modernize its armed forces including its land, air and naval forces. Since the last few years India's major focus has been to convert its existing navy into a 'blue-water' navy.

The possession of submarine ships is one of the most important requirements for projecting power as a blue water navy. The Indian navy's submarine fleet comprises of the indigenously developed nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarine (SSBN) INS Arihant, four French origin Scorpene class submarines built in India and Akula class submarines leased from Russia.

On 6th May 2019, the Indian navy launched yet another Scorpene class submarine termed as the INS Vela to further enhance its maritime capabilities. This submarine is the fourth of six overall units that will be delivered to the navy through a transfer of technology (made in India Initiative) agreement (Project 75) with France. The Scorpene class INS Vela has the capability to stay submerged for a week which makes it difficult for it to be tracked by its adversaries. This class also has the capability of undertaking several types of mission such as anti-surface warfare, anti-submarine warfare, area surveillance and intelligence gathering operations.

The INS Vela has top-end stealth features which include acoustic silencing techniques, low radiated noise levels and the capability to launch a potentially decisive attack on an adversary by using precision guided weapons. Furthermore, the Scorpene class is also equipped with Weapons Launching Tubes (WLT) that can carry weapons on board that can be efficiently reloaded at sea. With these capabilities, India aims to considerably improve its war fighting capabilities and to project power as a blue water navy across the Indian Ocean Region (IOR).

With the induction of Scorpene class submarine, India has two objectives. The first is to that to pressurize Pakistan under its regional hegemonic designs. The second is to become a great power by increasing its naval presence in the region while staying at par with China's extensive naval power.

The Feb-March 2019 short lived military engagement between India and Pakistan has however raised significant questions regarding India's power projection capabilities vis-a-vis Pakistan. On 5th March 2019, Pakistan navy detected and prevented an Indian submarine from infiltrating Pakistan's maritime borders. This clearly showed Pakistan's capability to thwart any surprise Indian naval intrusions into Pakistan, despite the billions spent by India on its military upgrades. Hence, even though, Pakistan's naval fleet may lack in numbers vis-à-vis India, Pakistan has an efficient naval defense and surveillance system, whose capabilities are evident from this recent episode.

A naval force with a larger submarine fleet can create serious challenges for its adversary, but in this case, the detection of the Indian Scorpene class submarine raised glaring questions regarding India's self-purported capability to ambitiously dominate the Indian Ocean.

India still retains a powerful desire to build up a naval force capable of fulfilling its strategic goal of emerging as a major global player. However, it has also so far focused more on increasing its fleet of submarines rather than improving their efficiency. Based on the historical enmity between India and Pakistan, South Asia has witnessed growing insecurity because of these trends.

As a result, Pakistan's major security threats are largely from its eastern neighbor. Keeping in view of this prevailing security environment, India's growing naval spending and extensive build up are adversely affecting the strategic balance of the region. While Pakistan has been successfully able to deter India's hegemonic designs, it is becoming increasingly difficult to directly compete with India's blue water ambitions in the long-run with its relatively stagnant economy.

In order to overcome these challenges that may be posed by Indian naval advancements in the future, Pakistan can develop closer ties with Russia and China to enhance its early warning and maritime defense capabilities. Pakistan has always acted as a responsible nuclear power and has tried to maintain its strategic balance with India without indulging into an arms race. This however, is becoming increasingly difficult for Pakistan to maintain without the support of outside powers, particularly within the changing dynamics of the Indian Ocean Region.

<https://www.eurasiareview.com/28052019-indias-naval-ambitions-and-strategic-stability-of-south-asia-opened/>

The Encroaching Impact of Arms Trade on South Asia's Geopolitics

M Waqas Jan

In his famous farewell address to the American Public in 1961, President Dwight D. Eisenhower had both defined and warned against the encroaching influence of what was then termed as the US's 'Military-Industrial Complex.' Speaking of the growing synergy between the US Military and the US's fast rising defense and arms industry, President Eisenhower (himself a highly decorated former US General) had taken both time and considerable thought to highlight what he believed was a grave threat to the ideals of peace and prosperity for which the United States had stood for within the Post-War scenario. What's more, he had said it right in the middle of the Cold War at a time when the US was engaged in an arms race for survival with the Soviet Union.

Six decades later, as one surmises the far-reaching impacts of the same Military Industrial Complex on the present day's international politics, President Eisenhower's warning seems more like the realization of a cryptic prophecy more than anything. In fact it has become increasingly difficult to find a parallel to the way the intersection of money and power affects global peace and prosperity, the way it is affected by the intersection of defense and foreign policy at the hands of the world's arms industries.

This is best exemplified today by how lucrative arms contracts at the state level have increasingly come to take growing precedence over key foreign policy decisions, particularly by the world's major powers. Thus, it is no secret that the world's foremost arms importers enjoy considerably close ties with their suppliers. This is markedly apparent in the long history of close ties between the United States and Saudi Arabia which have increased manifold since the latter recently took over India as the World's largest arms importer. The importance given to Saudi Arabia's defense contracts in the US is such that the entire diplomatic fallout from the Jamal Khashoggi affair last year was presented as an unnecessary inconvenience by none other than President Trump himself.

The same bonhomie is also visible in the US's growing defense and strategic ties with India. As the top importer of arms for the entire previous decade, India's lucrative market for arms contracts is fuelled by its fast rising economy as well as its need to modernize its aging soviet-era platforms.

Whereas the bulk of India's military hardware is sourced from Russian defense manufacturers, US defense contractors such as Lockheed Martin and Boeing have consistently eyed gaining a wider share of the Indian market. This includes the delivery of the first of 22 Apache attack helicopters and 15 Chinook helicopters made to the Indian Air force earlier this month. It also includes a similar deal that was recently signed between the United States and India to purchase 24 Sea Hawk helicopters to further expand the latter's naval capabilities.

Yet, perhaps the most lucrative opportunity for US defense contractors coming out of India is the Indian Air Force's latest tender for 114 fighter aircraft to replace its soviet era MiG squadrons. Worth around \$18 billion, the Indian government's requirements are based around developing an indigenous production base built on large-scale transfers of technology, training and maintenance operations. With the long-term goal of reducing its dependence on imports and developing its own local arms industry, India's requirements thus extend beyond the mere procurement of platforms. Instead, they involve a unique opportunity for the world's foremost arms manufacturers to gain a long-term foothold within the Indian market, while simultaneously investing in the country's rapid economic growth.

These aspects are clearly evident in Lockheed Martin's most recent sales pitch to India regarding the F-21 Fighter Aircraft. Offered as an exclusive India only upgrade of the widely used F-16 fighter aircraft, the F-21 is being marketed as a highly viable solution to India's modernization needs. With its production line planned on being based in India, Lockheed is aiming to build on last year's announcement that it would be transferring the production of the F-16's wings to its joint facilities in India by 2020.

If carried through, these developments are likely to have a serious impact on the trajectory of US-India relations for many decades to come. This in turn would also significantly affect both China's and Russia's approach to South Asia, particularly with respect to Pakistan. In fact much of the discourse on the development of Indo-US military ties is already based directly on the US's strategic rivalry with China over the Indo-Pacific region. They very *raison d'être* for the Quadrilateral alliance, and the re-designation of the US Military's Pacific Command to the 'Indo-Pacific Command' are all cases in point.

However, going back to President Eisenhower's warning over the encroaching influence of the US's Military-Industrial Complex, the above developments assume a slightly different context when viewed from the perspective of the US's powerful defense lobby. That while the benefits of supplanting Russian defense contractors with US ones within India's growing arms industry may not be stated as an explicit policy objective by the US State Department or the White House; there are definitely many in Washington that would wholeheartedly welcome such a scenario.

From a purely realist perspective, many would consider the above developments simply as one of the many instances of real politik that characterize our world today. However, for the few idealists left amongst us, it is becoming increasingly difficult to assess whether the US's major arms agreements are serving as a subordinate corollary to, or a key determining factor of its foreign policy choices. As a super-power that has long predicated its actions on the ideals of maintaining peace, freedom and stability, it is quite troubling to witness its foreign policy so increasingly and unabashedly driven by power, greed and profitability, especially in this day and age.

<http://foreignpolicynews.org/2019/05/24/the-encroaching-impact-of-arms-trade-on-south-asias-geopolitics/>

The Capriciousness of Hybrid Warfare in South Asia

Musawar Sandhu

There is a famous quote by Sun Tzu that ‘the supreme art of war is to subdue the enemy without fighting’. This saying aptly describes the saga of on-going Indian induced Hybrid warfare against Pakistan. To define Hybrid warfare, North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) has comprehensively addressed this issue in their annual report titled ‘Hybrid Threats: A Strategic Communication Perspective’. In this report, NATO has defined hybrid warfare as a ‘type of warfare that combines conventional, irregular and asymmetric activities in time and space’.

Hybrid warfare is not a new phenomenon. It is as old as the history of mankind and has been prevalent in different forms and orientations. It is also known as Grey zone, Asymmetrical or New Generation warfare that aims to influence the diplomatic, political, military, economic, informational, intelligence and legal aspects of a state. In addition, it strives to control the narrative through the use of irregular militias, clandestine support to secessionist movements, and economic morass. This has also been associated with the use of cyber-attacks to delegitimize governments, defame the adversary’s leaders through well-organized malicious campaigns and the propagation of narrative construction through false information.

One of the longstanding narratives that have been constructed and spread through targeted misinformation has been that Pakistan is a terror sponsor state. This has been carried out to a large part by India that has alleged Pakistan of carrying out terrorism in various manifestations both internally and externally. It has been widely evident in the statements of its leaders, foreign diplomats and massive media industry all of which have employed the use of online Social Media to devastating effect.

At the external level, Indian parliament bombing in 2001, Mumbai mayhem in 2008, Pathankot attack in 2016 and Pulwama incident of 2019 have all been blamed on Pakistan in a highly consistent and immediate manner despite these claims being based largely on circumstantial evidence. This narrative has been further reinforced using India’s diplomatic clout across the world to label Pakistan as a state that sponsors terrorism and to present itself as its victim as part of its own hybrid warfare strategy.

At the internal level, India has supported various dissenting and disgruntled voices within Pakistan through the construction of a number of false narratives. In this regard, the recent emergence of the Pakhtun Tahaffuz Movement (PTM) is being widely perceived as yet another instrument of hybrid warfare being used by Indian intelligence agencies as an ironic response to Pakistan highlighting the atrocities committed by Indian forces in Kashmir.

The nature of this threat is further evident in the seriousness with which the Pakistan military’s external relations wing, the Director General Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) has taken to addressing the narrative that is being propagated. In combating slogans such as ‘Yeh Jo Dehshat Gardi Hai, Iss Ke

Peechhay Wardi Hai' (behind this terrorism, is the [military] uniform) the ISPR is well aware that the mis-information campaign being waged is a direct threat to its own efficacy and objectives. This is why the ISPR has repeatedly emphasized that these types of false slogans are intended to favor the Indian position vis-à-vis Pakistan. That it is tantamount to demoralizing the armed forces of Pakistan that are in fact responsible for defending the territorial integrity and independence of Pakistan.

As is evident in these developments, Social Media platforms like Facebook and Twitter have been extensively used by the Indian intelligence agencies and PTM as a common public space to launch their sophisticated propaganda campaign and narrative against the armed forces of Pakistan. To this effect, Senator Mian Raza Rabbani on May 14, 2019, added that 'this is a hybrid war which is taking place and we need to understand it correctly' because in hybrid warfare the purpose is not to achieve the immediate defeat of the adversary but to demoralize it from all the fronts.

Since hybrid warfare is all about winning the hearts and minds of the people therefore, the government can be seen adopting an all-inclusive approach to deal with the PTM leadership and its followers to sort out their issues. The DG ISPR has also acknowledged that while there are certain issues, they need to be addressed adequately, via dialogue and inclusive engagement by all stakeholders. That the State should not leave its people to play in the hands of the enemy. Ahsan Iqbal former Minister for Interior has aptly described the situation in his words that 'Fifth generation wars can't be won by first-generation war [fare] tools. Battles of ideas can't be won by bullets. Nations only become stronger with inclusivity, dialogue and understanding'.

Therefore, at this critical juncture of time, the use of force to shut the dissenting voices of PTM and its ilk can prove catastrophic if used indiscriminately. Similarly, ignoring the veracity of this threat and not giving it due attention is also dangerous, especially taking into consideration the wider geo-political scenario. Hence, in this New Generation warfare the government should exercise extreme care so that it maintains an adequate balance between upholding fundamental human rights on one hand while maintaining the legitimacy and the writ of the state at the other, keeping in view of this ranging battle over hearts and minds.

<https://www.eurasiareview.com/31052019-the-capriciousness-of-hybrid-warfare-in-south-asia-oped/>

Ports of Pakistan and Gwadar's Potential as a Transshipment Port

Dr. Anjum Sarfaraz

The oceans play an important role in transportation of cargo the world over, as the cheapest mode of transportation compared to rail, road and air. According to the International Chamber of Shipping, 90% of world trade is carried by 50,000 merchant ships. It includes all types of cargo like machinery, vehicles, different types of liquids, construction material, food items, and livestock. These ships need ports to be docked for loading and discharging of cargo. Countries having all weather deep draught ports, equipped with state of the art cranes and associated equipment to handle cargo efficiently. These are a mammoth requirement for the advancement of economies.

Seaports are also instrumental for generating employment opportunities through effects associated with these like crew for operations and personnel to work in repair workshops for sea going ships and different types of harbor vessels such of tugs, pilot boats, dredging vessels, and different types of other equipment. They also comprise of numerous logistics activities such as storing, distribution, container stacking, food arrangements for employees. These also require the presence of specialized personnel for inspection and custom requirements. Ports attract investors to establish industries in the vicinity to import raw material and export finished goods. It is observed that large cities are located closer to the bigger ports. In fact ports can be the real pillars of economic development of a country.

Major considerations for a port are; less adverse weather affects, bigger ships (deep draught and longer in length) can be docked, efficient handling of loading and unloading of cargo. In addition back yard area to handle cargo should have sufficient space. Hinterland connections should facilitate smooth flow of cargo to and from the port. Pakistan has about 1120 Km coast with three commercial ports. Karachi port was developed in 1887 and is being operated by Karachi Port Trust (KPT). It has a total of 33 berths. Out of these there are also three oil piers for handling liquid cargo like different types of oil, molasses etc. Ships up to 12.5 meters draught can be berthed. Out of remaining 30, three each on East and West wharves are for handling containers which have been leased to Pakistan International Container Terminal (PICT) and Karachi International Container Terminal (KICT) following Land Lord Port Policy.

These companies install their own cranes, other equipment and have their own employees for operations. The ownership remains with the Port Authorities. Container carriers up to 11.5 m draught can be docked. Remaining berths can handle bulk carriers and other type of ships having comparatively shallow draught up to 10 meters. The recently built extension of Karachi port has a quay wall of 1500 meters which can dock most container ships up to 16 meter draught. These berths have been provided on lease to South Asia Pakistan Terminal (SAPT) for operations. It is a modern facility equipped with state of the art cranes and other associated equipment. Karachi port has handled 55million tons of cargo in 2017-18, which was about 55% percent of the total cargo of Pakistan. However, this port is now

in the center of the busy city Karachi, therefore cargo flow to and from the port has become very problematic. Alternate routes need to be explored. It is suggested that a pipe line for liquid cargo from oil piers at Kemari to an appropriate location outside limits of Karachi may be constructed. From here oil tankers may load the liquid cargo for upcountry. For containerized and other cargo a separate road may be built from Karachi port to link highway. In the meantime only smaller 6 to 8 wheeler trucks may be allowed to take cargo to a separately built yard outside the limits of Karachi from where bigger trucks can take the cargo to and from up country.

The second port is Bin Qasim which is also located in Karachi. It has seven berths; ships up to 12 meters draught can be docked. It is being operated by Port Qasim Authority (PQA). It was initially built to provide iron ore to Karachi Steel Mills. Now it can handle all types of cargo including containers, oil and Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG). In the year 2017-18 it has handled 45 million tons of cargo which was 45 % of the total cargo. Bin Qasim port has sufficient spaces to build new berths when required. Its connection with hinterland is not posing problems because it is located well outside the main city. These two ports are meeting the requirements to handle all types of import and export of Pakistan which is presently around 100 million tons and have capacity to meet future requirements as well.

The third commercial port is Gwadar which is located on the Western edge of the coast in the province of Balochistan about 533 km from Karachi. It occupies a strategic location at the entrance of Persian Gulf overlooking the Arabian Sea. It is just outside the choke point, Straits of Hormuz, where 17 million barrels of oil pass every day. In 1997 the government appointed Task Force identified this fishing harbor to be developed as a commercial port. The project could not be started due to economic sanctions after nuclear detonation in May 1998. It started in 2002 and first phase was completed 2007. It has 1000 meter quay wall to dock 14.5 meter draught ships. It has 3 multipurpose berths one RO – RO facility and one service berth. First ship was docked carrying 70,000 metric tons of wheat in March 2008. Originally it was built to supplement other two ports.

Now it has taken shape as key component of the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). It has been leased to China Overseas Port Holding Company (COPHC) for 40 years. It is designed to handle cargo of Chinese Western province, Xinjiang and at a later stage cargo of land lock countries, Afghanistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan. Presently cargo of Afghanistan is being handled by Karachi and port Qasim. Gwadar port is ready for operation about 11 years before but it has not been operated to its optimum capacity yet. Mainly because the designed road and rail infrastructure up to Khunjerab pass has not been fully developed. However it meets the requirements to be operated as a Transshipment Port in addition to CPEC cargo.

The transshipment concept refers to the shipment of containers/ goods to an intermediate port before being taken to the final destination. It plays a critical role due to infrastructure limitations in smaller sea ports and shipping lines strategies to have minimum ports of calls of their bigger ships. Now days on average, a container is handled 3 to 4 times between the first port of loading and the final port of discharge. The concept of transshipment operation is increasing very fast. Gwadar port because of its strategic location closer to Persian Gulf, ability to handle deep draught ships, short access channel of only 4.7 km long, comparatively low cost labor, sufficient area to stack containers and other cargo, can

be equipped to operate as a transshipment port. Bigger ships coming and going to Persian Gulf, and bound for Indian Ocean littorals can discharge their cargo at Gwadar and smaller ships can take these to the ports of destination.

It is pertinent to mention that Singapore area wise is a small country, but its Port of Singapore is the world's biggest transshipment port as well as the busiest port after Shanghai. It handled 36.6 million containers in 2018. The government of Pakistan Ministry of Maritime Affairs may consider the possibility of operating Gwadar as a transshipment port. It will certainly act as source of enhancement of economy and to provide job opportunities especially to residents of Balochistan.

<https://moderndiplomacy.eu/2019/05/25/ports-of-pakistan-and-gwadars-potential-as-a-transshipment-port/>

Does Pakistan's Nuclear Doctrine Stand Vindicated Post-Pulwama?

M Waqas Jan

Earlier this week on May 28, Pakistan marked more than two decades of technological prowess since successfully harnessing nuclear weapons capability. Termed as the 'Day of Greatness' (*Youm e Takbir*), the occasion is meant to symbolize the country's resolve and determination in indigenously developing advanced nuclear research and technology. Furthermore, it also commemorates the achievement of setting up the entire framework of strategic nuclear deterrence in South Asia, with respect to its arch-rival India. As a result this day symbolizes one of the defining hallmarks of the Pakistani state's self-purported identity as a nuclear power. This in turn holds important implications for how this idea is projected inwardly to its own citizens as part of instilling a sense of patriotism and national identity, as well as being projected outwardly to its friends and foes within the wider international community.

In light of the recent escalation of hostilities between India and Pakistan following the Pulwama attacks however, this year's commemoration of *Youm e Takbir* carry added implications to Pakistan' nuclear posture as direct result of the heightened geo-political tensions pervading throughout the region. While the immediate threat of war following history's first aerial dogfight between two nuclear powers has largely subsided, there still remains a pervasive atmosphere of jingoistic sabre-rattling between India and Pakistan. These hostilities have been driven to a large extent by the BJP's anti-Pakistan rhetoric, which has been on clear display throughout the party's re-election bid in the recently completed Indian elections. While initially considered by Pakistan to be directed more towards a domestic audience of Indian voters, this rhetoric has been further reinforced by the Indian state's own nuclear posture as evident in the previous week's test launch of its Brahmos cruise missile.

The test which has been publicized by India as a successful air-to ground launch of the 'world's fastest cruise missile' has been apparently carried out to showcase India's enhanced airstrike capabilities. Highlighting the enhanced precision and greater penetration capabilities of this particular weapons system, this test can be seen as a continuation of India's shift towards employing a 'counterforce' doctrine that is premised on creating greater space for a limited military engagement, particularly with a view towards Pakistan. Hence, taken within the context of the purported 'surgical strikes' that the Indian Air Force had attempted to carry out within Pakistan back in February, the latest Brahmos test indicates the same kind of nuclear posturing that has come to be expected from India's strategic planners over the last decade.

As expected, Pakistan's response under these circumstances has been to conduct a test of its own that was carried out just a day following the Indian test. The difference however was that, Pakistan, instead of showcasing a new or upgraded technology, chose instead to carry out a training launch of its already

inducted Shaheen II ballistic missile system. Referring to how the missile adequately ‘maintained the desired deterrence stability in the region’ (in the military’s official statement accompanying the launch) Pakistan has chosen instead to simply reiterate its stance on what it considers as the key to maintaining the region’s strategic balance. Hence, Pakistan’s nuclear posturing can be consequently understood as still preferring a countervalue strategy, which is premised more along the threat of Mutually Assured Destruction and all out nuclear war. This has been done to deliberately differentiate its stance from India’s emphasis on counterforce which is in contrast premised on still creating space for a limited war, as outlined above.

These differences between both countries’ strategic posturing once again pose serious implications for regional peace and stability. As evident in their differing positions, Pakistan being the economically weaker country cannot expect to compete with India at every stage of its weapon’s development program. Hence, its repeated emphasis on the deterrence value of its largely indigenously developed, yet highly capable nuclear arsenal. India on the other hand, being one of the world’s largest arms importers can easily afford to outspend Pakistan enhancing both its conventional and strategic capabilities. This is evident in its ambitious plans to upgrade both its naval and air strike capabilities by prioritizing the sophistication and integration of its cruise and ballistic missile delivery systems.

It is worth noting however, that even though both countries’ strategic directions differ vastly in their ability to project power beyond their borders, history has repeatedly shown that Pakistan is highly unlikely to let India dominate based solely on its purported military strength. As was evident in Pakistan’s own retaliatory strikes and the ensuing aerial dogfight three months ago, India’s material advantages alone are no guarantee of combat effectiveness particularly considering the immense value placed on it by its political leaders. This glaring gap between India’s purported strategy and real-world effectiveness thus lays bare a dangerous disconnect between its military planners and political leaders.

On the other side of the border, as Pakistan commemorates 21 years of maintaining strategic stability within the region, its own approach stands perhaps even more vindicated within the current scenario. While there is a definite consensus based on this stance between its political and military leadership at the internal level, it nevertheless remains to be seen how this is likely to be viewed by other major powers within the wider international community. Either way Pakistan’s own claims over the deterrence value of its nuclear arsenal stand only to have been reinforced, rather than eroded in light of the above developments.

<http://foreignpolicynews.org/2019/06/01/does-pakistans-nuclear-doctrine-stand-vindicated-post-pulwama/>