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Strategic Vision Institute (SVI)

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



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Editor's Note

Just when the dust from the Pulwama crisis had seemingly begun to settle and the Pakistani leadership was celebrating a successful round of diplomacy with the US, the Indian leadership once again went ahead and set the entire negotiating table on fire. By unilaterally revoking the special and historic status of Kashmir that had been awarded under the Indian government's own principles of secular federalism, the Indian leadership itself has offered the most cogent justification of the two-nation theory to have come out of the South Asian region in recent times.

With the entire Jammu and Kashmir region in lockdown for the better part of this month, the Pakistan government has engaged in a flurry of international diplomacy which too has been unprecedented in recent times. As the UNSC unwillingly wakes up from its slumber on this key issue after nearly half a century, one wonders what might have been had Pakistan been more pro-active on this issue at the international level this last decade.

On the strategic front, the Indian leadership while continuing its trend of domestically politicizing its nuclear weapons capability has also used the current state of tensions to willfully inject even further ambiguity into its No First Use (NFU) Policy. In a staged and marked departure from a policy that in itself has steadily eroded, what the Indian leadership seems to be signaling to its neighbors as well as the wider international community presents a highly troubling and de-stabilizing sign that is only adding fuel to the raging fire in Kashmir. Coupled with its insistence on shunning any form of international mediation and ignoring Pakistan's bilateral overtures, there is a definite need to re-assess the situation from a Pakistan's end.

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 on our [Facebook page](#). For more information, please visit our website at www.thesvi.org.

M Waqas Jan
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India's Politically Aspired Nuclear Posturing towards Pakistan

Syeda Saiqa Bukhari

India and Pakistan share a long history of hostility which has long cast a shadow on regional peace, security and economic cooperation. Both countries have fought three major wars and have been involved in a number of clashes with each other. In the recent crisis of February 2019, this historical animosity again prevailed when both countries came dangerously close to a full-fledged war. During the crisis, Indian fighter aircrafts violated Pakistan's air space greatly intensifying tensions between the two nuclear armed rivals. Pakistan responded rationally and purportedly shot down two Indian jets while capturing Indian Air Force Wing Commander Abhinandan, who was later released by Pakistan as a peace gesture. Through this gesture, Pakistan conveyed to the international community that it has always remained in favor of settling its outstanding issues peacefully with India at the negotiating table instead of on the battlefield.

However, the Indian leadership wanted to achieve short term political gain by creating war hysteria against Pakistan in order to manipulate public opinion in its favor during the then looming elections. This for instance, was evident in the BJP's re-election strategy led by Mr. Modi which in turn proved highly effective in the recent Indian elections. Throughout its history, the BJP has always won elections on two grounds. By either exploiting the Hindu religion for political purposes, or by adopting an aggressive posture against Pakistan to divert public attention away from internal matters towards external security. In the 2019 elections, PM Modi used the same tactics to win the hearts of the Indian voters.

In order to cover up the flaws in its conventional capabilities, India also tested several missiles to boost its war-fighting capabilities. PM Modi effectively used these tests to raise public sentiments in his favor by combining these missile tests with aggressive statements against Pakistan. This was done to show the world in general and the Indian public in particular that India was ready to respond to any misadventure from Pakistan with its nuclear arsenal.

After being humiliated in the Balakot crisis, India conducted a successful test of its indigenously developed long-range subsonic stealth cruise missile 'Nirbhay' which is capable of reaching its target with a speed of Mach 0.7 while flying at an altitude of 100 meters. In the post Balakot environment, this test further intensified the crisis as the timing of the nuclear missile test was highly crucial in view of the 2019 India's general elections.

Furthermore, Mr. Modi has also directly politicized nuclear weapons during his election campaign. Such a discourse on nuclear arsenals shows a highly irresponsible attitude from the Indian leadership about its understanding on nuclear deterrence which is solely meant to deter adversaries from considering a first strike rather than indulging in careless escalation. This was evident in PM Modi's statements in which he publicly acknowledged that the Indian state possessed thermonuclear weapons and threatened to use them against Pakistan. All despite the fact that geographical proximity and wind

directions between India and Pakistan are crucial factors that cannot be overlooked if India really does intend to use its thermonuclear weapons instead of merely politicizing them.

Hence, the recent tests of sophisticated missiles and aggressive statements by the Indian leadership can be understood as serving only as an instrument to achieve political gain by the Indian government. This clearly shows the irresponsible behavior and lack of realization about the sensitivity of its aggressive posturing against Pakistan. It is the responsibility of a nuclear weapon state to behave wisely in a crisis-situation with an adversary state. But contrary to conventional logic, Mr. Modi has brought the Indian nuclear arsenal out of the domain of strategic stability, to be instead used as a cheap tool for his electoral politics, ultimately serving as a decisive factor in his reelection campaign. Moreover, it was quite unfortunate that the International community kept silent and did not condemn Mr. Modi's nuclear saber-rattling at all.

In all, India's irresponsible attitude throughout the Pulwama/Balakot crisis and through its nuclear saber-rattling, clearly shows its dual standards when it comes to declaring itself as a responsible nuclear weapon state. When in fact, the Indian leadership has remained deeply involved in negative signaling against Pakistan for simply political objectives. In the whole process of achieving his political goals, Mr. Modi brought the Nuclear Weapons debate onto the public sphere through his electoral politics without realizing the outcomes this could have on the entire South Asian region. This negative attitude gravely threatens regional strategic and deterrence stability in the long run.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/446968/indias-nuclear-posturing-inclined-towards-pakistan/>

India's Constitutional Revocation and Prevalent Security

Environment of Kashmir

Haris Bilal Malik

During Prime Minister Imran Khan's first ever visit to the US on [July 23, 2019](#), President Trump had offered to mediate the outstanding Kashmir issue between India and Pakistan. This move was greatly appreciated by Pakistan with President Trump publicly stating that Prime Minister Modi had requested him to mediate between the two countries over Kashmir during the sidelines of 2019 [G20 Summit](#) held in Osaka in June this year. With President Trump's offer to mediate at such a crucial time, the issue has once again achieved global significance. Moreover, President Trump's mediation offers, and India's recent move to constitutionally revoke the special status offered to Kashmir would likely have serious implications within the prevailing security environment throughout the region.

India has often rejected such offers claiming Kashmir as being its internal matter. Taking a step forward, on [August 5, 2019](#), the government of India revoked the special status of the Kashmir region that had been previously granted under [Articles 370 and 35\(A\)](#) of the Indian constitution. Referred to as the [Jammu and Kashmir Reorganization Bill](#) this presidential order was later approved by the parliament despite the opposition's criticism. Under Article 370 of the Indian Constitution the Kashmir region had been awarded special constitutional rights and a 'so-called' autonomous status of decision making. Following the abrogation of [Article 370](#), the Kashmir region would now be divided into two 'Union Territories' i.e. [Jammu and Kashmir](#) and [Ladakh](#) governed by the Indian central government.

The timing of this constitutional abrogation might have been influenced by President Trump's offer of mediation between India and Pakistan that was reiterated by the US President despite India's rejection. This abrogation was also part of the Bhartiya Janata Party's (BJP) election manifesto as promised by Prime Minister Modi during the [2019 general elections](#). By fulfilling this electoral promise, Mr. Modi is trying to assert that Kashmir is entirely an internal matter for India and that it would not allow any third country to interfere in Kashmir issue irrespective of its relations with India.

Based on this notion India is inclined to project this political and constitutional change as its internal matter. By revoking the special status of this disputed region, India also intends to change the demography of Kashmir as much of the current population is Muslim. India has been involved in various tactics to change the demographic structure of Indian Occupied Kashmir (IOK) which includes a steady stream of Hindu migrants relocating and settling en masse from other parts of India in this predominantly Muslim region.

This trend is also evident in the region's population numbers. In 1947 for instance, the Muslim population of IOK was about [79 per cent](#). As of 2018 this figure has been reduced to [68 per cent](#). In this regard the abrogation of Article 35(A) would likely intensify this trend as in the future, non-residents of Kashmir would be able to purchase property in Kashmir and would become permanent residents with a right to vote.

The security environment of Kashmir has been at stake in recent years due to India's desire to oppress the freedom movement militarily. During Prime Minister Modi's first term from 2014-2019 the Kashmiri freedom struggle has seen greater military suppression, especially since 2016 when a prominent freedom fighter [Burhan Wani](#) was brutally assassinated. However, it seems that India has still not succeeded in achieving its desired objectives. After a landslide victory in the 2019 elections and with Mr. Modi once again in office as Prime Minister, the military suppression of the freedom movement in Kashmir has further intensified. Recently, India has deployed an additional [38,000](#) paramilitary troops in the region to join more than half a million troops and paramilitary forces already present. Along with this increased military presence in Kashmir, India has also been involved in continued aggression across the Line of Control (LoC) as evident by its use of prohibited '[cluster bombs](#)' against the civilian population. These could have seriously provoked Pakistan to respond in an offensive way and might have resulted in another [February 2019](#) episode.

At present, Indian aggression along the LoC poses a major threat to peace in the region. India might believe that it could carry out a limited attack or 'surgical strike' against Pakistan which would stay below Pakistan's nuclear threshold as evident from the [February 2019](#) military engagement and the recent attacks along the LoC. India has repeatedly attempted to dominate the escalation ladder as was shown in the recent escalation following the Pulwama attack. Prime Minister Imran Khan has warned about the possibility of a '[false-flag operation](#)' in Kashmir carried out by India for which Pakistan might be blamed. Based on such blame, India could launch a limited attack or a low intensity conflict across the LoC. Consequently, Pakistan would be left with no choice but to respond in kind to any such aggression by India.

India's abrogation of Kashmir's special constitutional status and its military offensive in Kashmir could trigger another politico-military escalation between India and Pakistan within a year. India's policy to forcefully make Kashmir an integral part of the Indian Union by annexing it through political and military means would serve a very dangerous precedent which would likely pose a serious detriment towards the peaceful settlement of the Kashmir dispute. This change in the constitutional status of Kashmir would greatly limit the prospects for third-party mediation in the future especially for the United Nations, whose resolutions on Kashmir clearly provide a right of self-determination to decide Kashmir's future. Unfortunately, the prevalent security environment in Kashmir is dominated by India's aggressive behavior which ultimately would have long lasting implications for strategic stability throughout the South Asian region.

<https://www.eurasiareview.com/20082019-indias-constitutional-revocation-and-prevalent-security-environment-of-kashmir-oped/>

Revocation of Article 370 in Jammu & Kashmir: Definition of State Terrorism Simplified

Shamsa Nawaz

Reshaping the geographical and national boundaries by diluting the IOK's demography and setting free the vicious politics of autocracy using a presidential order, in the world's second biggest democracy of India, begs several important questions. Transforming the de facto status into de jure amidst the draconian lock down has divided the state of Kashmir into two Unions: Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh on August 5, 2019, by the nationalist government of Narendra Modi. The Lok Sabha of India also testified the resolution with 351-71 votes on the Jammu & Kashmir Reorganization Bill. The Bill clearly ignores the poll conducted for the Sunday Hindustan Times newspaper, which showed that 66 per cent of respondents in the Kashmir valley wanted "complete freedom to entire Jammu and Kashmir as a new country". Although surveys also [found](#) that support for independence tends to be weaker in Jammu, yet the number of Kashmiri youth resorting to protests for self-determination has [grown](#) substantially between 2014 and 2017.

Emboldened by the election results of 2019, the stalwart soldier of RSS, Narendra Modi, has assaulted minority accommodation by weaponizing the *Hindutva* impulse. Akin with Natanyahu's state of Israel, he has finally thrown India into a nationalist shredder to uphold a longstanding wish for a non-secular and a non-democratic Hindu state. BJP has claims far beyond Indus River for Greater India. Earlier, the term 'secular' itself remained oblivious to Ambedkar's Indian constitution till 1973.

Used generously, the combination of population displacement and religious xenophobia during Modi's election campaign in 2019, the forcible integration of a Muslim majority state of Kashmir into the Hindu's India syncs well with the Sangh Parivar's project of redefining Indian nationhood. The multicultural and diverse dream of Gandhi and Nehru has fallen prey to the rogue declaration of today's Rajya Sabha.

The ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has frequently telegraphed its intention to axe Article 370, which is already described by the Indian constitution as a purely "temporary provision." In his implausible statement, the Indian Consul General in New York said that the repeal is "purely administrative" and is intended to "improve good governance and deliver socio-economic justice to the disadvantaged sections of the people in the State" while keeping their will exclusive. The Union's Home Minister has declared that "Pakistan Occupied Kashmir and Aksai Chin are included in it".

Historically, Pakistan's traditional Kashmir policy remained within the premise of the Partition Formula. Kashmir was to be a part of Pakistan. It was militarily occupied by India in 1947. In close consultation with both India and Pakistan, the United Nations Commission for India and Pakistan, resolved in concrete terms, the settlement of the dispute in two resolutions adopted on August 13, 1948 and January 5, 1949. Since both the governments accepted the Commissions' proposals, the resolutions

constituted an international agreement. Given that, Islamabad has always envisioned a free and fair plebiscite under the auspices of the UN Security Council Resolutions as the only solution. Whereas, India's realization that it can never win the will of the Kashmiri people made it controversial.

Pakistan proposed several approaches to resolve this vexed problem in its more than one hundred and fifty rounds of talks. Pakistan's first military ruler, General Muhammad Ayub Khan, decided to seek an out-of-the-box solution through the arbitration of the United States and United Kingdom. As a result, an area of 3,500 square miles, adjacent to Muzaffarabad was handed over to Pakistan. On April 21, 1948, the United Nations Security Council adopted Resolution 47. After having heard arguments from both India and Pakistan it suggested holding a plebiscite for fostering peace in the region. The resolution was passed under Chapter VI of the UN Charter. The role of the UN is well pronounced to maintain a widely accepted international order based on the values and ethics of peaceful coexistence. Similarly, the President of Pakistan, General Pervaiz Musharraf, proposed his four points while picking up "demilitarization" and "self-governance" from the Andorra Model, and his counterpart Manmohan Singh agreed with the "open borders" and self-rule, from the Samantra Bose proposals to foster bilateralism.

Yet there remained a persistent effort to have Pakistan declared a terrorist state. After 9/11, the world in general and the region in particular experienced a paradigm shift with fresh geo-economic and geo-strategic interests. This further complicated relationships, since Pakistan was invariably bracketed with the rebellious Afghanistan and Taliban. India also trimmed its policies to fit in the new configuration by getting closer to the sole international power of the US. The complementarity of the policies of Asia Pivot and Act East helped blur Pakistan's focal role in the protracted Afghan conflict. For Great Powers to survive, favorable regimes and states throughout the world are an important instrument. India subtlety its economic and political favors to Afghanistan while fueling the fire by fitting into Pakistan's size as an immediate neighbor. The US also got closer to India.

On the other hand, espousing with the US in a unipolar world earned India several favors in the meanwhile. The tendentious UN Resolution 1373 (2001) adopted by the Security Council, erroneously ignored the critical distinction between a freedom movement and terrorism. The situation was bedeviled by interpreting all resistance movements for self-determination as terrorism while giving the contrived controversial cover to India. India frequently started portraying itself as a victim of terrorism by Pakistan. An attack on the Indian Parliament soon after the 9/11, was craftily used by India to perpetuate this propaganda. The then Indian Prime Minister seized the opportunity to compare the incident with the 9/11 tragedy and ended all communication links with Pakistan. The same happened after the Samjhota Express incident in 2006, Mumbai incident in 2008, and LoC violations in 2013. India bracketed Pakistan with the Taliban, to fence its border against Pakistan and appointed half a million soldiers.

Modi's Kashmir policy gained reinforcement while characterizing largely with unchecked arbitrary arrests, torture, rape, illegal settlements, constitutional alteration and extrajudicial killings. Even the record of human rights violations in Kashmir by the occupational forces of India increased multi-fold. The world remained blind, despite the extensive documentation of the Human Rights Watch and

People's Union for Civil Liberties (PUCL), which unearthed perpetual Indian atrocities. According to the Kashmir Media Service, there had been 94,323 killings in IoK from the year 1989 to February 29, 2016, out of which 7,043 are custodial killings. About 133,387 civilians have been arrested and 106,055 structures burned or destroyed. About 22,810 women were widowed and 107,556 children were orphaned. The number of molestation or rape cases recorded is 10,175. The confident New Delhi evasively responded to all such reports and kept trying to change the demography of IoK by the settlements of non-Kashmiris. The Muslim population in Jammu has come down from 62 per cent in 1941 to 30 per cent. Efforts were already underway to gradually abrogate Article 370 from the Indian constitution which granted a special status to IoK.

The common understanding of the events in the last six decades of all the stake holders, India, Pakistan, Kashmiris and freedom fighters, has brought them to a Mutually Hurting Stalemate (MHS). In August 2015, S. J. Shankar, the Indian Secretary for External Affairs distinctly conveyed to his counterpart in Pakistan Secretary Foreign Affairs that, "India would not hold dialogue with Pakistan over Kashmir issue." The response had come after Pakistan's invitation for a dialogue on Kashmir.

Indigenous resistance for generations, however, decried persistently to fight for their right of self-determination and *Azadi*. On several occasions since 1990, the entire population of Srinagar came out to protest against the Indian occupation forces. In the year 2017, even the Srinagar High Court contested Modi's political stance and declared that "the territory of Indian-held Kashmir retains an element of sovereignty and cannot be integrated into India, at all."

Hence, the signals of a unilateral decision in the most militarized place of the world were obvious. After all, should the world have trusted a man who carried out Gujrat genocide in 2002 and killed more than 2000 Muslims during his chief minister ship? He even acknowledged India's involvement in the dismemberment of Pakistan in 1970, in his intimate swipe during his visit to Bangladesh in June 2015. India trained and used Mukti Bahini, the militant organization, to violate the UN Charter of non-interference and respect for sovereignty. The declaration of Indian External Affairs Minister, Late Sushma Swaraj before the General Assembly session of the United Nations on September 26, 2016 that "Jammu and Kashmir is an integral part of India and will always remain so" is a continuation of the same sequel.

Who is to be blamed? Although state terrorism could not have been better defined even today, Pakistan is truly isolated in the absence of any strong rejection of India's atrocious acts by the international community. Pakistan wandered the world's corridors of power—from New York to Geneva to Brussels—looking in vain for effective support. The disproportionate move has a massive potential to spin both, the region and the international order, into danger.

Pakistan is once again pushed into a quagmire with intense multi-dimensional long and short term, legal, strategic, political and moral choices to follow through. However, Pakistan must not withdraw from its confidence in the international forums. Scrapping its belief in diplomacy will have lesser fruits to pick yet needs proactive lobbying. Engaging through all international forums with an insistence on diplomatic sanctions could be a simultaneous option. The world must not soften its words and declare Modi's

rogue government, a terrorist entity. Moreover, India is a non-secular and a non-democratic Hindu state, contributing more fiercely to exclusivism and non-participative democracy, and it should be treated accordingly. Lowering diplomatic relations, sifting through legal options in the International Court of Justice, and cutting off bilateral pacts with an untrustworthy government, is required of a civilized responsible state which Pakistan has befittingly by responding rationally to both Indian terrorist acts in Kashmir and the WoT in Afghanistan. War for two nuclear states is certainly not a sensible option yet Pakistan holds responsibility towards Indians as a nation as well. Especially to those who are made hostage to a rogue thought and are being deprived of their constitution.

<https://strafasia.com/revocation-of-article-370-in-jammu-kashmir-definition-of-state-terrorism-simplified/>

Kashmir Once Again Playing out as Diplomatic Theatre at the UN

M Waqas Jan

Friday's closed-door meeting of the UN Security Council on Jammu and Kashmir marked the first time in over 50 years since the issue was discussed at the world's foremost diplomatic forum. This issue which has long remained at the center of India Pakistan tensions recently received fresh impetus following India's unilateral decision to withdraw the special status awarded to the region. This was followed by a widespread clampdown in the form of an indefinite curfew as well as a media and communications blackout that is currently in its second week.

Consequently, the above mentioned UNSC meeting on Kashmir forms a key component of Pakistan's diplomatic offensive following India's actions. As such, it represents a highly interesting case of diplomatic theatre where the anticipation of possibly resolving or bringing about at least some semblance of positivity to a long-festering conflict has generated considerable interest the world over. This includes interest from the international media as well as several observers and diplomats as a possible precedence for a consensus driven approach to conflict resolution in general.

However, the lack of any meaningful outcome or even a joint statement directly arising out of this meeting has led to an almost perverse battle of sorts over optics and narrative between key stakeholders, which aims to leverage the UN's significance as a platform for international consensus. Especially with a view towards placating an international audience's expectations of what is just or right, the absence of a joint statement following this meeting has led to a vacuum that has resulted in even greater discord regarding this issue. Thus, instead of a collective decision or stance taken on the issue by the UNSC, the entire world witnessed China and Pakistan presenting their cases for international mediation at one end, and India insisting on the issue remaining an internal matter at the other. This for instance, was clear in the press statements given by each of these countries' representatives following the end of the UNSC meeting.

Against a backdrop of the UN Security Council's logo and speaking in a microphone carrying the white on blue letters of the 'UN', Chinese ambassador Zhang Jun was the first to state that all the UNSC members were gravely concerned at the human rights situation in Kashmir and that there was a general agreement that all parties concerned should refrain from taking any unilateral action that might aggravate the situation any further. He went on to state that as per China's stance on the Jammu and Kashmir dispute, the status of Kashmir was still undecided and that it should be resolved via peaceful means in accordance with the UN charter, the relevant UN Security Council Resolutions as well as the bilateral resolutions pertaining to it.

Pakistan's representative to the UN, Maleeha Lodhi whose remarks closely followed the Chinese Ambassador thanked China for lending assistance in her country's request for calling the UNSC meeting. She regarded the meeting as a major diplomatic victory since the voice of the *Kashmiri* people, despite all attempts to silence it, was heard at the world's highest diplomatic forum. She stated that this

meeting was the first step taken as part of a protracted and drawn out struggle for justice for the Kashmiri people which Pakistan remained fully and vociferously committed to.

Considering how both the Chinese and Pakistani ambassadors while speaking in quick succession nearly echoed each other's policy stances on this issue, it appeared as if both statements were jointly written by them. Many observers in the media had later pointed out that the statement given by the Chinese ambassador was in fact a version of a potential joint statement that was to be ideally given by the president of the UNSC. However, since other P5 members had raised reservations regarding its wording and assumptions of the UN's role in mediating the conflict, it was presented instead by Ambassador Jung as China's position on the matter, to which Ambassador Lodhi had voiced her approval.

Both their stances however, stood poles apart from the statement given by India's permanent representative to the UN, Mr. Syed Akbaruddin. Given after a brief interlude to the previous two statements, Mr. Akbaruddin explained how following China and Pakistan's statements he was self-admittedly compelled to present his own country's stance on the matter. The gist of it was that India's move to revoke Jammu and Kashmir's Special Status was wholly an internal matter. That it remained committed to resolving its issues with other countries bilaterally and that it was saddened by Pakistan's approach of using violent *jihad* and terrorism as a precursor to any potential negotiations. In a characteristic show of one-upmanship that has remained a hallmark of India and Pakistan's interactions at the UN, Mr. Akbaruddin also made a flamboyant point of taking questions from Pakistani journalists with whom he at one point even came forward and shook hands with as a gesture of his country's willingness to engage with Pakistan. All while repeating India's decade old stance that Pakistan stop terror in order to initiate talks.

Yet, considering the stage, setting and timing of the situation at hand, what the audience of journalists was in the end left with was a shrewd and knowing diplomat presenting a clear denial of the spirit of the UN. While employing his best smoke and mirrors it was evident that the press conference was being used by Mr. Akbaruddin as an opportunity to distract, disguise and deflect international opinion from the issue at hand. In essence, it presented another example of one of the many slick PR driven spectacles that are passed on for diplomacy at the UN these days. Yet, considering the lack of unity from the UNSC, and China and Pakistan having already attempted to leverage the stage and setting, can one really blame him?

For an organization that once embodied upholding the ideals of peace, justice and equality as its very *raison d'être*, it is extremely disappointing to see the UN's own inaction and passivity reducing it to being nothing more than mere spectacle. Especially during a time where the world is increasingly plagued by strife and discord, seeing Kashmir being reduced to just another metaphor for such issues speaks volumes of the lack of direction and principles guiding global leadership in our world today.

<https://moderndiplomacy.eu/2019/08/20/kashmir-once-again-playing-out-as-diplomatic-theatre-at-the-united-nations/>

Modi-fying Kashmir and Historical Facts

Muhammad Bilal

The Modi government on 5th August 2019, revoked two key constitutional provisions — Article 370 and Article 35A — which gave the state of Jammu and Kashmir distinctive rights. India moved around 50 thousand military personnel into the valley to avoid any backlash, which shows that the Indian government is afraid of the repercussions of an illegal act. But these curfews and emergencies are not new for Kashmiris. Kashmiris will continue fighting for their land and will never compromise. Kashmir is an 86,000-square mile disputed region that is divided between India, Pakistan and China. Kashmir's independence struggle has a long history.

Historically Kashmiris have not ruled their own land since their last king Yusuf Shah Chak who was defeated by the Mughals in the 16th century. Chak launched guerrilla attacks against the armies of Mughal king Akbar on November 1586, he was certain that "Independence was just a day away". Since then, it's been 400 years that Kashmir has passed into the hands of Afghans, Sikhs, the British Great Britain and now Indian rulers after partition. Today, the same kind of guerrilla attacks continue against the Indian occupational forces, although by a renewed insurgency fueled by modern weapons and communications technology.

Thousands of *Kashmiris* are part of the freedom struggle against Indian forces. Now in the shape of the Kashmir freedom movement, it is entirely different from what it was during the early years of partition. Now, the use of social media has changed the dynamics of the freedom movement making it extremely challenging for India to curb the voices of *Kashmiris* in the present era. Though India always blames Pakistan for supporting freedom fighters and stone-pelters it has never really applied an introspective approach to what its armed forces are doing.

As Kashmiris continue to reject India and its democracy the Modi government has locked down almost 90 lakh Kashmiris since August 5, 2019. There is a complete media blackout in Kashmir and still India calls itself a democracy. Such actions taken to erode the basic fabric of the Kashmir freedom movement will only fuel the struggle for independence even more. There are many people inside India who negate this act of oppression by the Modi Government. Modi's actions are opposite to democratic values which India often claims are the reason for its unity.

Several Indian activists have condemned the abrogation of Articles 370 and 35 A. Till now 6 petitions have been filed in the Indian supreme court, all of which reflect the pure negation of Mr. Modi's agenda. Hence, the way India is treating *Kashmiris* will surely have dire consequences for the state in the future. The country which calls itself the largest democracy is treating *Kashmiris* worse than animals, a democracy where even cows purportedly enjoy more rights than *Kashmiris* and Muslims.

In 1947, *Kashmiris* resisted against Dogra forces and around 2 lakh were killed but the *Kashmiris* refused to be subdued. After partition on 2 November 1947, Indian Prime Minister Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru had promised a plebiscite in Kashmir saying: "The fate of Jammu and Kashmir is ultimately to be decided by

the people. The pledge we have given not only to the people of Kashmir but also to the world. We will not and cannot back out of it.”

Yet, India has still not pulled back its troops since then and has continued to forcefully occupy the region. Pakistan and India have fought a number of wars and smaller-scale conflicts in 1948, 1965, 1971 and 1999 related to Kashmir while border skirmishes remain frequent even today. India is involved in killing *Kashmiris* while the world remains silent. Only a consistent struggle can force India to check its decisions otherwise, India is on its way to change the demography of Kashmir. Modifying the status of Kashmir within the Indian constitution won't change realities which exist historically. Even today, the whole world acknowledges that Kashmir is an international dispute and not just an internal matter of India. By casting even further light and global attention on this issue through his most recent actions, Mr. Modi has gravely miscalculated the outcome of this move.

Revoking Article 370 A has already stripped Kashmiris off their special rights and now there would be single citizenship for *Kashmiris*. The Indian flag will be the only flag and Article 356 and 360 will be applicable. Minorities will be eligible with a 16% quota. People from other states will be eligible to buy land in Jammu and Kashmir and assembly duration of the Union territory of Jammu and Kashmir will be for 5 years. All the above developments will further estrange *Kashmiris* in their own land. From 1586 till now, the *Kashmiris* defeated many oppressors, and none were able to subdue them. Mr. Modi's modification of its status will definitely fire back in the coming days as India cannot impose a curfew forever.

At least 4,000 people have been detained in Kashmir since August 5, 2019 and situation on ground as reported by the international media is getting worse than ever. More and more Kashmiri youth will join armed groups and the intensity and number of armed attacks is widely expected to surge dramatically. Without a doubt such a dangerous and arrogant decision by the Indian leadership has severely compromised the peace and stability of the entire region.

<http://southasiajournal.net/modi-fying-kashmir-and-historical-facts/>

India's NFU card

Haris Bilal Malik

The nuclearization of South-Asia in 1998 marked considerable changes in the region's security dynamics. This has also had a substantive impact on regional and extra-regional politics, the security environment of South Asia and the global nuclear order. Since then, India has gone through gradual shifts in its nuclear doctrinal posture. Set out in the 1999 ['Draft Nuclear Doctrine'](#) (DND) the Indian stance initially was that India would maintain a policy of 'No First Use' (NFU). The first amendment to this draft which came out in [January 2003](#) was based on the Indian Cabinet Committee on Security's (CCS) review of the nuclear doctrine, which stated that if the Indian armed forces or its people were attacked with chemical and biological weapons, then India reserves the right to respond with nuclear weapons. As such, this review could be regarded as a denial of the [NFU](#) policy. Based on this notion, it could be assumed that India had the aspiration to shift away from its NFU policy since 2003. Hence, playing with its NFU card as a diplomatic and strategic tool has been in practice by the Indian state since then.

Subsequently, in later years 2016-2017, 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, as a contingency India would likely resort to such a splendid first strike. With such a doctrinal posture, India by asserting its quest of preemption against Pakistan, is attempting to undermine the deterrent value of Pakistan's nuclear posture and ultimately destabilizing the South Asian region. In this regard, India has been constantly advancing its nuclear weapons capabilities based on enhanced missile programs and the development of its land, sea, and air-based nuclear triad thus negating its own NFU policy. India's quest of limited war or a low-intensity conflict against Pakistan under its more recent doctrines such as the [2017 Joint Doctrine of the Indian Armed Forces \(JDIAF\)](#) and the [2018 Land Warfare Doctrine \(LWD\)](#) are also based upon proactive strategies and indirect threats of preemptive strikes which would likely abandon the NFU policy.

The NFU card was also one of the core points of the Bharatiya Janata Party's (BJP) campaign during the Indian General Elections in 2014. But later, this point had seemed to be ruled out from the electoral debate. More recently however, the BJP did win the 2019 General Election with a landslide victory based largely on its negative nuclear signaling against Pakistan. In the aftermath of the 2019 elections which were held in an environment dominated by the Post- Pulwama situation and with Mr.Modi once again in office as Prime Minister, the political and diplomatic escalation between India and Pakistan for the last few months has become a global concern. For instance, the Kashmir issue which has also recently gained global significance has resulted in severe domestic and global condemnation directed towards the BJP government. It arose from the BJP government's decision to change the special status that had been awarded to the Kashmir region by revoking Articles [370](#) and [35A](#) of the Indian constitution.

The revocation of Kashmir's special constitutional status by the Indian government along with the rising political and diplomatic tensions between India and Pakistan, the security environment of the whole

region has been once again put at stake because of the possession of nuclear weapons by both countries. This is also evident from the involvement of BJP's top leadership in negative nuclear signaling against Pakistan in recent months. In an apparent shift from its NFU Policy, on [August 16, 2019](#), India's Defence Minister Rajnath Singh while on a visit to the Pokhran nuclear test site paid tribute to the late former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee and asserted that India might review its 'No First Use' (NFU) policy. He stated that a change in future circumstances would likely define the status of India's NFU policy.

The shift in such a NFU policy is also evident from India's enhanced missile development programs which include; super-sonic missiles, hypersonic missiles, ballistic missile defence systems, enhanced space capabilities for intelligence, reconnaissance and surveillance and the induction of nuclear powered ballistic missile capable submarines. Similarly, the anti-satellite (ASAT) weapon test which India conducted in March 2019 is also indicative of such a shift. Such recent developments are clear indicators that India would likely maintain a notion of a preemptive strike against Pakistan and might officially abandon the NFU policy as asserted in the Defence Minister's statement.

Pakistan has assured its security and preserved its sovereignty by deterring India either by minimum credible deterrence or full-spectrum deterrence. This posture asserts that Pakistan's nuclear weapons are for defensive purposes only and are aimed at deterring India from any kind of aggression. India's quest to move away from its own NFU policy would likely pose a serious threat to the security of Pakistan which already faces conventional asymmetry vis-à-vis India. Hence the possession of nuclear weapons by Pakistan has served as a decisive factor within such an environment.

This change in India's NFU policy might enhance an open-ended nuclear arms race between India and Pakistan in the coming years which would likely undermine the deterrence stability of the South Asian region even further. Pakistan would be left with no choice but to enhance its nuclear forces' alert and readiness which would bring severe implications for South Asian region's strategic stability. India's recent quest to review its NFU policy which was asserted by the defense minister's statement would thus likely have serious implications for the broader security architecture of the South Asian region.

<https://foreignpolicynews.org/2019/08/24/indias-nfu-card/>

Does an Ambiguous Indian Nuclear Stance Benefit Anyone?

M Waqas Jan

The recent escalation in India-Pakistan tensions resulting from the deteriorating human rights situation in Kashmir has since its outset carried the threat of spiraling into the realm of the nuclear question. With both India and Pakistan having already fought three full-fledged wars and a series of medium to small-scale skirmishes, Kashmir's potential of turning into a major nuclear flashpoint has remained a constant threat for the 2 billion people living in South Asia. Since both countries declared their nuclear weapons capability, this looming specter of nuclear war has been leveraged by both India and Pakistan to varying degrees and effects.

For instance, Pakistan's approach to this issue is encapsulated in the following two objectives. The first being to serve as a viable deterrent to the conventional asymmetry that exists between its own and India's armed forces. And the second to help internationalize the Kashmir dispute by leveraging the international community's commitment to preventing nuclear war. This can be thus understood as having both a regional and a wider international dimension.

India's regional approach on the other hand, was also to an extent aimed at preventing any military incursion or adventurism from Pakistan. Its commitment to a 'Retaliation Only' or No First Use policy announced shortly after the Pokhran II tests (1998) however, had formed a major component of India's attempts at internationally projecting itself as a responsible nuclear weapon state. At least that was the impression given by the [draft report](#) of the National Security Advisory Board on the Indian Nuclear Doctrine dated August 1999. Yet, in last week's [statement](#) given by Indian Defense Minister Rajnath Singh, exactly two decades later at the very site of the Pokhran II tests, a major departure from this policy was witnessed. Paying tribute to former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee and his legacy as one of the architects of India's NFU policy, Mr. Singh had stated that "While India has strictly adhered to this doctrine (of No First Use), what happens in the future depends on the circumstances."

This question of India renouncing its NFU stance has already been doing the rounds in academic and policymaking circles for quite some time. Yet it has always been downplayed or negated by one argument or the other. For instance, Manohar Parrikar during his stint as the Indian Defence Minister in 2016 had [alluded to the possibility](#) of India considering a pre-emptive strike in a marked departure from the stated NFU policy. The statement, which was made at a public book launch however, was qualified by the Minister as being his personal opinion and not an official policy statement. In contrast, the above statement given last week by the current Indian Defence Minister represents perhaps the clearest and most direct articulation of India's renouncement of the NFU at a pre-scripted gathering. Not to mention the fact that Mr. Singh [tweeted](#) the same from his official twitter account the same day during one of the most heightened periods of tensions over Kashmir.

The significance of Mr. Singh's statement has been further echoed by Vipin Narang, one of the leading academics focusing on India's nuclear program. In a recent [interview](#) he stated that while the credibility of India's NFU policy had already eroded long ago, all this move has done is bring even greater

uncertainty and instability to an already tense situation. He stated that while India's NFU policy was already perceived as being irrelevant by Chinese and Pakistani strategists, it had still carried a self-purported image of India as a responsible nuclear weapon state to a wider international audience. That despite its hollowness, the NFU still projected a semblance of stability and acceptance of a certain responsibility befitting a rising power.

Yet, the present BJP government by steadily renegeing on its commitment to the NFU has exhibited a resolve and willingness to upend the status-quo at the expense of India's international credibility. By politicizing nuclear brinkmanship as chest-thumping machismo, what this Indian government has essentially done is willfully project a sense of ambiguity regarding its nuclear posture. While such a move may generate rapturous applause amongst the BJP's predominantly far-right electorate as well as some of the most prominent hawks within the country's politico-military establishment, what it does is estrange India's commitment to certain ideals that may still hold a certain weight and diplomatic capital in its dealings with the international community. What's more it also puts the onus on both Pakistan and China to quite visibly re-think their strategic calculus leading to even greater risks and uncertainty with regard to regional stability.

Hence, while the BJP under Mr. Modi represents a far-cry from the more moderate and careful tact of Prime Minister Vajpayee, one wonders whether anyone else in the Indian leadership can look past the self-aggrandizing hubris that characterizes this government. The kind of hubris that considers India's tremendous economic rise as affording it the ability to renege on universally acclaimed ideals of peace and stability. All while pandering to a segment of its population's basest instincts driven by greed and a misplaced sense of supremacy.

<http://southasiajournal.net/does-an-ambiguous-indian-nuclear-stance-benefit-anyone/>

India's Quest to Dominate the Indian Ocean

Syeda Saiqa Bukhari

The Indian Ocean Region (IOR) is widely regarded as the hub of global economic and strategic activities for several reasons. For instance, it provides the predominant outlet for oil from the Persian Gulf to various destinations across the globe. More than [80 percent](#) of global oil trade passes through the IOR.

India has long held the desire to dominate this region via the presence of its naval forces and by attempting to exert greater control over its related economic activities. [Alfred Mahan](#) once declared that 'whoever controls the Indian Ocean has prospects of ruling the world. Perhaps it is this theory which best describes India's quest to dominate the IOR. In the last few years, the region has once again gained significant importance by becoming a hub of strategic competition among regional and extra regional rivals. India's interests in the region are challenged by the emerging global powers' roles such as China's role in the Indian Ocean.

In order to secure its strategic interests, India initiated an unprecedented naval buildup under its vision to turn the Indian Ocean into 'India's Ocean'. As a result, India is allocating more and more of its budget to its naval war fighting capabilities including both its conventional as well as strategic forces. Additionally, India's growing economic interest has heightened the IOR's strategic significance. India wants to secure 'sea-lines of communications' to the Middle East, comprising of vital oil and energy supply chains. In this regard, India is not only strengthening its naval capabilities but also seeking to strengthen relations with smaller states within the IOR. These [include](#) Sri Lanka, Maldives, Myanmar, Thailand, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Mauritius and Seychelles.

This has been further evident in Prime Minister Modi's emphasis on greater engagement with the littoral states of the Indian Ocean. After securing a landmark victory in the 2019 general elections, PM Modi chose Maldives and Sri-Lanka as his first official visit abroad for this term. Such choices clearly show India's foreign policy priority in the IOR. Moreover, Mr. Modi adopted an agenda which is led by trade and investments, to achieve its great power status that is also benefitting its economy at the same time. A reflection of his Indian Ocean outreach is thus reiterated in the Budget 2019-20 which in itself is aimed at maintaining such a hegemonic influence. India not only economically assists such smaller states in terms of their trade and economic development but is also attempting to build a lasting military relationship with them. This is to play a significant role in its blue water great game. This is further evident in India's plans to build up its naval and air bases in [300 islands of Andaman](#) and [Nicobar](#).

Prime Minister Modi sees control over the ocean as fundamental to keeping the strategic circle of India over its rivals thus forming a significant component of the Indian State's global ambitions. The progression in its financial approach, political mindset and effective discretions has empowered India's articulation towards its desire for ruling the Indian Ocean Region.

Likewise, to achieve its objective, India is spending huge amounts for the development of sophisticated naval technologies. India's naval modernization and its approval of \$16 billion for nuclear powered

submarines and naval warships are creating challenges for the stability of the South Asian region. Under the aspiration of hosting a Blue Water Navy, India [plans](#) to develop more than 160 naval ships, 3 aircraft carriers and more than 40 warships and submarines. Furthermore, India took the first step towards the nuclearization of the Indian Ocean region in 2016 by conducting a successful test of the K-4 indigenously developed intermediate range submarine launched ballistic missile. This is likely to compliment the capabilities of its existing, ballistic missile submarine, the 'Arihant'.

The naval modernization of the Indian navy is thus in line with its ambitions to maintain its hegemonic status and to exert more control over important chokepoints such as in the Straits of Hormuz and Malacca. But with all these developments, the Indian navy lacks the required professionalism and efficient response capability. This lack of an efficient response capability has remained evident since the post Balakot tensions with Pakistan. This was evident when an Indian submarine failed to covertly enter Pakistani waters. Detected and thwarted by the Pakistan Navy, this recent failure has cast serious doubts over India's purported ability to project its naval power. Hence, the Post-Balakot environment has raised glaring questions over India's self-alleged capability to dominate the IOR. All despite being numerically and financially superior to Pakistan as it has often proclaimed itself to be.

In all, the Indian Ocean has considerable geostrategic and geopolitical significance within the current scenario unfolding in the region. While the world's major powers are competing with one another to secure their interests in the region, India is also attempting to secure its own foothold as a dominant regional power. By developing closer relations with other IOR states and spending huge amounts of money on the modernization of its naval forces, India's hegemonic quest to dominate the Indian Ocean Region is creating asymmetry with other comparatively smaller naval powers of the region. This asymmetry would likely pose an increasingly grave threat to the stability of the South Asian region over the long run.

<https://foreignpolicynews.org/2019/08/24/indias-quest-to-dominate-the-indian-ocean/>

Is the US Selling Another War?

Komal Ali Shah

Lately, certain members of the Trump administration are discussing Iran in the same manner Iraq was mentioned by the Bush administration back in 2002. Furthermore, some unanticipated events in the Strait of Hormuz have provided the US with casus belli. The US is going to sell an Iran war this time. Here's how it will go.

The Trump administration has a real and an official reason to attack another country in a different gulf. The real reason is something hardheaded, logical and covetous, and that is resources; primarily oil, geo-strategic location and political benefit. Sometimes, it is done to win the election at home. However, the official reasons would target prevalent and popular emotion, seemingly noble but actually indispensable: retaliation, integrity, fear and rogue behavior. It's not really needed that people believe in the official reason but it should be rational enough for them to pretend to accept it. Since underneath both the logical and emotional reasons lies a primeval reason: people like war. Humans are violent animals who rejoice in killing. Human sacrifice is still being practiced, only with modern justifications.

US citizens will hear stories about Iran's atrocities, its oppressive regime, its torture, and how it is harboring terrorism. The world will hear about Iran's aims of attacking the US, Iran's 'secret' nuclear weapons and its preparation for war, almost ready now. A sense of appalling urgency will prevail that every new day's reluctance is dangerous. To invade Iraq, the Bush administration made hue and cry of the threat of Saddam Hussein's 'weapons of mass destruction'. Turned out, there weren't any.

Same is the case with Iran now. Americans' dread of nuclear weapons usually goes far beyond the logic, which, as suspected, is the projection of guilt at being the only country to having used these catastrophic weapons. The talking point "We don't want the smoking gun to be a mushroom cloud" was narrated by a Bush official to invoke fear in Americans to garner their support. The current administration will definitely use the same narrative to invoke the same threat of Iran using nuclear weapons against America, or against Israel, or any of its allies.

Obviously, the typical gung-hos would extend their support for war. There would be the usual percentage of the population that supports any war the government wants to wage against people who aren't Americans. But what is disturbingly surprising here is how the apparently well-educated lot would support this notion of government. Editorialists, columnists, commentators, anchors and academics would try to sound reasonable in making arguments for supporting this heinous act. Some of them would be eloquent enough to convince the masses. As it turns out, smart people can be just as stupid as stupid people if scared enough.

Hermann Göring, who was once the designated successor to Hitler, after the gig was up, game over, quite candidly described how to get ordinary people go to war for you: "All you have to do is tell them they are being attacked and denounce the pacifists for lack of patriotism and exposing the country to danger." So, it is already established that those publicly opposing war would be accused of cowardice, of

supporting oppression, totalitarianism, and terrorism, whereas war mongers would posture as practical, rational, calculating specialists of realpolitik, as they offer up sacrificial children to the god of death.

Eventually, there would happen a triggering incident, perceived as a kind of attack on America or its allies. The incident can be real or made-up but that does not matter. Consider the Vietnam War. The Gulf of Tonkin, also known as the USS Maddox incident, provided Lyndon Johnson with the congressional authority to escalate the conflict. By the time actual facts came up, they showed that the incident had caused no casualties and was just a bullet in the hull of one ship. Millions of Vietnamese lives and approximately fifty thousand American lives had already been sacrificed.

Just last week, John Bolton, the national security advisor of the US, accused Iran of targeting its oil tankers and pipelines in the Persian Gulf. Well, different gulf, same story. Neither Johnson nor Bolton happened to have any solid evidence regarding the incidents in the Gulf but they both appeared rather confident because they, despite the fact that their claims may or may not be true, know that people would not be able to refute or challenge them until it's too late.

US government's spokesperson would assure the citizens that it would be a swift victory with few casualties and a very limited cost. All of this was said and assured by the Bush administration, but the aftermath of the Iraq War was sectarian violence, civil war, collapse throughout the Middle Eastern region, birth of the militant organization ISIS, loss of as many as 4,000 American soldiers, and nearly half a million Iraqi civilians. Not to mention the financial cost which amounted to more than a trillion dollars. However, years later, it would become obvious that in hindsight, those opposing war were right all along about everything, and that war mongers were the ones who were the liars. But there would be no debate then because the war would be lost, money wasted, and the dead forgotten.

Humanity, as a class is a slow learner, partly because every new generation is starting over from total ignorance. Writing and history can, in theory, improve the learning curve. And there are some indications that Americans might be unwillingly learning some lessons. A recent poll by the Hill shows that very few Americans would support a preemptive invasion of Iran. However, nine out of ten would support a military response only if Iran attacks first, and as evident from the Gulf of Tonkin incident, such an attack can be easily arranged.

It is pretty obvious that some people in the Trump administration very much favor a war with Iran for different motives, but interestingly and surprisingly, among them is not Donald Trump. Trump seems to have gotten tired of the wars by the US and he has a very little stomach for a new war. But, of course his views on a new war by the US might change if his poll numbers are worrisome or impeachment seems likely, as he does like to set records.

A very popular slogan by Carl Sandburg was used in the Vietnam War: "What if they gave a war and nobody came?" Let's just hope that the Americans inch their way toward a momentous point where governments and leaders keep on repeating the same narrative or propaganda campaign based on a fake casus belli that the American population for one actually sees through and rallies against.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/445251/is-the-us-selling-another-war/>