

## **The Transforming Strategic Cultural Equation Between India and Pakistan**

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### **Abstract**

*Indian war machine's focus remains on Pakistan. It sufficiently amplifies the imperative of sustenance of an effective nuclear deterrent posture, which is critical for the very survival of Pakistan. Therefore, any lacklustre Pakistani response would definitely emit wrong signal to the adversary, which would compromise the effectiveness of Pakistan's nuclear deterrent posturing. Pakistan's response on February 27, 2019 to Indian air strikes was absolutely necessary. Although, there was a possibility of something going astray at any time/place. However, in Pakistani viewpoint, this risk was worth taking due to massive concentration of Indian war machine under Cold Start Doctrine (CSD) strategy around Pakistan. Both countries' disproportionate sizes and divergent strategic cultural ethos and moorings have too kept at the sharp edge since their independence. The rationale of India and Pakistan to produce nuclear weapons were divergent. India to end the international "nuclear apartheid" and to enhance its NWS stature. Pakistan to protect its independence and sovereignty from the perceived security threat from*

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*India. Pakistan is compelled to craft a compatible and dynamic military strategy so as to neutralize India's aggressive military posturing. This compels Pakistan to supplement its economic and military disadvantage through a determined and dynamic nuclear deterrent posturing so as to prevent India from any military misadventure.*

**Keywords:** Strategic cultural ethos, Cold Start and Full Spectrum strategies, Nuclear deterrence, Security threat, Regional dynamics.

## **Introduction**

The paper argues that disproportionately stronger forces of one country vis-à-vis the weaker state either lead to induction of coercion or it may drag them toward the very edge thereby generating a spate of instability and crises. It may also subtly push them to craft dangerous annihilation strategies against each other backed by a variety of options to employ conventional and strategic forces. This paper has five sections and sub-sections to unpack the peculiar dynamics of India-Pakistan's conflict trajectory. First section focuses on *Strategy and Strategic Culture* that retraces the dynamics of both countries' strategic, historical, and religious baggage. Second section is titled *The Post-1998 to 2001-2002 Period*; third section is *-The Post-2001-2002 Military Standoff to the CSD and full spectrum strategies*; section four retraces the period from the inception of the *CSD and "Full spectrum" Doctrinal Wrangling to Pulwama-Balakot Crisis*; and the last section is *conclusion*, which succinctly sums up the empirical debate with critical analytical approach.

## **Strategy and Strategic Culture**

In the era of technological innovation and development, the concept of warfare has been dramatically transformed. Since the

time immemorial, the concept of strategy had merely focused on violence and fighting. Now, in the information age, the military weapons and other instruments of warfare, such as nanotechnology, satellites, nuclear and space weapons, artificial intelligence, and communication technologies would too exert immense and far-reaching influence on the crafting of military strategies of all the countries so as to fight a technological-centric warfare. The technological transformation between the “attack and defence’- as technology is equipped to offset the conventional forces equation with the technologically advanced conventional and strategic forces. In spite of military weapons’ lethality and development, strategy still tends to remain “inherently psychological activity”<sup>1</sup> in which the role of rational leader would remain predominant. Since “rationality” is largely influenced through the cultural ethos, deception, and the complex nature of human psychology,<sup>2</sup> it is relevant to mention that, in essence, strategy is crafted not only to fight a war but also “to coerce enemies.”<sup>3</sup> In the context of Indo-Pakistani military dynamics, the elements of coercion and enmity, it is argued, are the major factors. As both countries possess nuclear assets, but with disproportionate economic and military capabilities to annihilate each other “out of all proportion to any numerical input-whether that’s counting combatants or more broadly those that are the kill-chain.” This disproportionate destructive capability irrespective of the “scale of conventional force that any adversary can muster,”<sup>4</sup> has altered, if not nullified, India’s apparent plan to coerce Pakistan due to its disproportionate conventional forces advantage. In such a disproportionate military equation, Pakistan and Israel are two

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<sup>1</sup> Kenneth Payne, *Strategy Evolution and War: From Apes to Artificial Intelligence* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2018): 14.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., 15.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., 136.

classical examples<sup>5</sup> – as both countries possess powerful adversaries, but, lack geographical depth to sustain any disproportionate conventional forces' onslaught. Therefore, nuclear weapon is the power equalizing instrument for them.

### *Technology & Warfare*

With the technological and nuclear revolution, the dynamics of warfare and strategy have too changed. In order to implement such strategy, it is imperative to take countermeasures against the impending nuclear attack. Actually, the Cold War rivals – the United States (US) and the Soviet Union, had possessed assured second-strike capabilities to prevent nuclear attack<sup>6</sup> – as the empty threat of second-strike potentials to employ nuclear weapons would be ineffective and considered bluff. Only the mutual annihilation capabilities of the rivals would be an effective measure to cancel-out each other's threats of attack, which incidentally, both India and Pakistan too presently possess. Obviously, they are constrained to observe the paradoxical "delicate balance of terror" equation against each other - as Albert Wohlstetter had aptly described it in his 1959 classic article.<sup>7</sup> However, it is imperative to understand: 1) technology is shifting the essence of "balance between scale and violence" between the states, including ideas and concepts of societies; 2) it can change the human "cognitive approach" towards warfare; 3) leads or encourages humans to abstract reasoning; and 4) led to development of some of the most lethal weapon systems, including thermonuclear assets that would further make it difficult to correctly "gauge the intentions" of rival state's policymakers

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> See Bernard Brodie, *Strategy in the Missile Age* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1959): 48.

<sup>7</sup> See Albert Wohlstetter, "The Delicate Balance of Terror," *Foreign Affairs* Vol. 37: No. 2 (January 1959): 121.

minds.<sup>8</sup> In case of India and Pakistan, to correctly gauge their policymakers' minds is very difficult, particularly when they have a huge gulf of religious, cultural, different moral ethos, and historical baggage behind them. This wedge between them has further widened due to score of unresolved disputes, which has also impacted their strategy towards each other. Both have divergent historical inquiry and heritage to fall upon that is influencing their evolving strategies relating to warfare.

*Strategic Culturally Based Study of International Relations*

In the 1970s, debate over the concept of strategic culture had emerged amongst the international relations academics. For instance, during the Cold War, Soviet Union and the US had started to refine the broader parameters of their nuclear war fighting strategies in which reportedly the US and the Soviet military leadership had exhibited tendency to evolve "a preference for pre-emptive, offensive uses of force that was deeply rooted in Russia's history of external expansionism and internal autocracy."<sup>9</sup> That "US, on the other hand, tended to exhibit a tendency towards a sporadic, messianic and crusading use of force that was deeply rooted in the moralism" and the Western political thought.<sup>10</sup> In case of India-Pakistan, the strategic culture's influence has been of great political and strategic significance. In fact, it has impacted the essential nurturing of the "strategic behaviour" of both countries' policymakers. In essence, "everything a security community does, if not a manifestation of strategic culture, is at least an example of behaviour effected by culturally shaped, or encultured, people, organizations, procedures, and weapons."<sup>11</sup> In fact, strategic

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<sup>8</sup> Payne, *Strategy Evolution*: 91.

<sup>9</sup> Alastair Iain Johnston, "Thinking About Strategic Culture," *International Security* Vol. 19: No. 4 (Spring 1995): 32.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 32.

<sup>11</sup> Colin S. Gray, *Modern Strategy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999): 132.

culture-related complexities happen due to different structures and cultures of various countries. Contemporary scholars have evolved a mixture of definitions so as to cogently explain the dynamics behind states' strategic culture and their policy formulation processes. Jack Snyder writes that strategic culture is "the sum of ideas, conditioned emotional responses, and patterns of habitual behaviour that members of a strategic national community share with regard to nuclear strategy."<sup>12</sup> He further explains that state's behaviour is associated with different emotional responses that in return constitutes a certain environment in which the policymakers and the security establishment perceive threat from the adversary, which then impels them to formulate strategy to convince the adversary desisting from a certain course of action. Strategic culture, an analytical and intellectual tool package, is the sum of ideas that coalesces unique group of values, attitudes, and behaviours pertaining to the use of force, retained by a community and gradually emerged over a long historical period. Moreover, it is "not a permanent or static feature. Rather, a strategic culture is shaped by formative experiences and can alter, either fundamentally or piecemeal, at critical junctures in that collective's experiences."<sup>13</sup>

Johnston explains that strategic culture is the "ideational milieu which limits behaviour choices" from which "one could derive specific predictions about strategic choice."<sup>14</sup> Environment is

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<sup>12</sup> See Jack L. Snyder, *The Soviet Strategic Culture: Implications for Nuclear Options* (Santa Monica.: Rand Corporation, 1977): 8; and Jack L. Snyder, *Myths of Empire: Domestic Politics and International Ambition* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1993). 27.

<sup>13</sup> K. Longhurst, "The Concept of Strategic Culture," in G. Kuemmel and D. P. Andreas (eds.), *Military Sociology: The Richness of a Discipline* (Baden-Baden: Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft, 2000): 200.

<sup>14</sup> Cited in Jeffrey S. Lantis and Darryl Howlett, "Strategic Culture," in John Baylis, James J. Wirtz and Colin S. Gray (eds.), *Strategy in the Contemporary World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013): 80.

additionally shaped by the “international military behaviour, particularly those concerning decision to go to war, preferences for offensive, expansionist or defensive modes of warfare, and levels of wartime casualties that would be acceptable,” observes Steven Rosen.<sup>15</sup>

In this context, Johnston explains that strategic culture is essentially determined by strategic community, which is responsible to craft well-calibrated response strategies, which at the end would tend to significantly impact the overall societal thinking, organizational environment, attitudes and behaviour.<sup>16</sup> While some scholars, including Ken Booth and Russell Trood explain strategic culture as amalgam of “habits regarding the threat and use of force which have their roots in such fundamental influences as geo-political setting, history, and culture.” This in their viewpoint “persists over time, and exerts some influence on the formation and execution of strategy.”<sup>17</sup> Therefore, one can safely say that, in case of India-Pakistan, their history and strategic cultural ethics were too ingrained in both countries’ “strategic preferences that are rooted in the early or formative experiences of the state, and are influenced to some degree, by the philosophical, political, cultural and cognitive characteristics of the state and its elites.”<sup>18</sup>

### *Cultural Divide Between India and Pakistan*

The history of both countries was deeply influenced by divergent strategic cultures that had persisted and consequently impacted their policymaking elites’ preferences for foreign and security

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> See J. L. Johnston, K. M. Kartchner and J. A. Larsen (eds.), *Strategic Culture and Weapons of Mass Destruction: Culturally Based Insights into Comparative National Security Policymaking* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009): 58.

<sup>17</sup> Ken Booth and Russell Trood, eds. *Strategic Cultures in Asia Pacific Region* (London: McMillan, 1999): 4.

<sup>18</sup> Johnston, “Thinking about Strategic Culture,” 34.

policies. These strategic values were then echoed through the “nation’s traditions, values, attitudes, patterns of behaviour, habits, symbols, achievements and particular ways of adapting to the environment and solving problems with respect to the threat and use of force.”<sup>19</sup> In reality, the strategic cultural ethos have “deep roots within a particular stream of historical experience,” remarked Colin Gray, which is afterward manifested and “provides the milieu within which strategy is debated.”<sup>20</sup> Obviously, all these factors subsequently influence country’s political discourse, military doctrines, defence, and strategic community’s threat perceptions vis-à-vis adversary thereby inspiring the defence organizations at the centre stage of security policy making processes, including determining the very foundation of civil-military relations of the country.<sup>21</sup> All these aspects then generate a state of interdependence between the political and military elites institutions that consequently make them keepers of country’s strategic culture particularly in the foreign relations, crafting of strategies, and defence policymaking processes.<sup>22</sup> It deeply influences the states policy dynamics, which then becomes a predominant factor in implanting institutionalization of military and political elites’ influence upon the defence and security policymaking issues. Such elite’s policymaking then internally and externally influences country’s security architecture vis-à-vis rival(s). The subsequent sections of the paper would briefly

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<sup>19</sup> Ken Booth, “The Concept of Strategic Culture: Implications for Nuclear Options,” in Carl Jacobsen (ed.), *Strategic Power: USA/USSR* (London: Macmillan, 1990): 121.

<sup>20</sup> Colin Gray, “National Style in Strategy: The American Example,” *International Security* Vol. 6: No.2 (Fall 1981): 35.

<sup>21</sup> See Dima Adamsky, *Culture of Military Innovation: The Impact of Cultural Factors on the Revolution in Military Affairs in Russia, the US, and Israel* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2010): 34.

<sup>22</sup> For discussion on “interdependent relationship” see Thomas U. Berger, *Cultures of Antimilitarism: National Security in Germany and Japan* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998): 1.



recapitulate the doctrinal transformation of both countries after the nuclear tests of 1998.

### **The Post-1998 to 2001-2002 Period**

#### *India*

As argued in the preceding section, the India-Pakistan's strategic cultural ethos were quite deep-rooted and diametrically opposite to each other. For instance, India's first Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, after accepting the partition plan of British India on June 3, 1947, stated that: "For generations we have dreamt and struggled for a free, independent and united India."<sup>23</sup> Nehru also remarked that the "proposal to allow certain parts to secede if they so will is painful for any of us to contemplate."<sup>24</sup> He prophesied: "It may be that in this way we shall reach united India sooner than otherwise."<sup>25</sup> Whereas, Mohammed Ali Jinnah of Pakistan observed that both Hindus and Muslims "neither intermarry nor inter-dine together and, indeed, they belong to two different civilizations...they have different epics, different heroes, and different episodes."<sup>26</sup> This vividly created a clear fault-line that future leadership of India and Pakistan steadfastly followed. In fact, it laid-down the foundation of both countries' hostilities that

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<sup>23</sup> See Pandit Nehru's broadcast on the partition of India, "Indian Independence: Partition Source 7," June 3, 1947, *British Library*, <http://www.bl.uk/reshelp/findhelpregion/asia/india/indianindependence/indiapakistan/partition7/>.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> K Sarwar Hasan (ed.), *The Transfer of Power: Documents on the Foreign Policy of Pakistan* (Karachi: Pakistan Institute of International Affairs, December 1966): 236-237.

<sup>26</sup> The cultural difference between Muslim minority and the Hindu majority in India was thoroughly discussed by K K Aziz. He indicated thirteen factors that had eventually helped the Muslim dominated states of British India to raise their voices in favour of a separate homeland. For further study, see K. K. Aziz, *The Making of Pakistan: A Study in Nationalism* (London: Chato and Windu, 1967); and Stephen Hay (ed.), *Sources of Indian Traditions: Modern India and Pakistan* (New Delhi: Viking by Penguin Books India Ltd., 1991): 229-230.

continue to the present-day. Essentially, the tit-for-tat nuclear testing of 1998, paradoxically, was too a clear reflection of their inimical relationship. Furthermore, their bilateral relations had essentially doggedly traversed on divergent trajectories, which inherently has propensity to “misfire” due to their opposing “beliefs” and foreign and security policy objectives.<sup>27</sup>

The element of “beliefs” and “misfire” also remained a predominant factor behind crafting of their post-nuclearization military and nuclear policy as well. It was clearly a visible influencing factor behind both countries’ opposing nuclear strategies. Moreover, culture is an alternative to a rational approach and conception of reasoning.<sup>28</sup> In 1998, India’s Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) government after conducting nuclear tests, considered it an “inevitable” development and “a continuation of policies from almost the earliest years of independence” remarked India’s then senior advisor on defence and foreign Affairs to Prime Minister Jaswant Singh.<sup>29</sup> He maintained that, “the first 50 years of Indian independence reveal that the country’s moralistic nuclear policy and restraint paid no measurable dividends, except resentment that India was being discriminated against.”<sup>30</sup> It marked the overt nuclearization of South Asia. Singh furthermore unequivocally stated: “if the Permanent Five (P-5) continue to employ nuclear weapons as an international currency of force and power, why should India voluntarily devalue its own state power and national security.”<sup>31</sup> This in his perspective would have been

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<sup>27</sup> Robert Jervis, “Deterrence and Perception,” in Steven E. Miller (ed.), *Strategy and Nuclear Deterrence: An International Security Reader* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1984): 59.

<sup>28</sup> Terry Eagleton, *The Idea of Culture* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2000): 57.

<sup>29</sup> Jaswant Singh, “Against Nuclear Apartheid,” *Foreign Affairs* Vol. 77: No. 5 (September/October 1998): 41.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 43.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*

submission to indefinite “nuclear apartheid.” In the same vein, he claimed that now “India is a nuclear-weapon state,” and that it is not “a status for others to grant” rather it is “an objective reality.”<sup>32</sup>

After the nuclear tests of May 1998, India’s National Security Advisory Board (NSAB) was set-up in November under Brajesh Mishra, the first National Security Advisor (NSA) - with intent to strengthen country’s National Security Council (NSC), and to evolve nuclear doctrine for India. In August 1999, India’s “Draft Nuclear Doctrine” (DND) was published - with apparent intent to move away from the recessed deterrence to a credible minimum deterrence. However, it was closely linked to a policy of assured retaliation based on a nuclear triad capability. The DND was taken as India’s official “no-first-use” (NFU) nuclear policy. Albeit, the DND also had a provision to rapidly *transform* from peacetime mode to a deployed status in “the shortest possible time,”<sup>33</sup> which further made NFU less credible in Pakistani perspective. The former Indian Foreign Secretary (2006–09) and National Security Advisor (2010–14) indicated India’s probable intent to further amend the DND, and to add provision of adopting a counterforce pre-emptive strategy along with its apparent plan to fight a limited war against nuclear-armed Pakistan.<sup>34</sup> Since drafting of the DND (1999), it was last amended in 2003.

According to one Indian scholar: “the first generation of India’s nuclear strategists were largely minimalists, valuing deterrence by punishment. Though this deterrence approach made its way into

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid., 46, 49.

<sup>33</sup> Ali Ahmed, “India’s Nuclear Doctrine: Strategic Direction or Drift?” *South Asian Voices* (December 17, 2018) <https://southasianvoices.org/india-nuclear-doctrine-strategic-direction-or-drift/>

<sup>34</sup> See Shivshankar Menon, *Choices: Inside the Making of India’s Foreign Policy* (New Delhi: Penguin, 2016): 67. Also see Prakash Menon, *The Strategy Trap: India and Pakistan under the Nuclear Shadow* (New Delhi: Wisdom Tree, 2018): 42.

the official doctrine intact, in an egregious intervention reportedly by generalist bureaucrats, the term 'massive' was inserted into the official doctrine."<sup>35</sup> The author further elaborated: "while this is aligned with deterrence by punishment, it detracts from credibility in that it is not possible for India to follow through on it, for two reasons." The first factor was "Pakistan's vertical proliferation has over time ruled out success of first-strike levels of attack." The second was "the regional environmental consequences, which militate against deterrence by punishment based on a counter value strike."<sup>36</sup> The author further elaborates:

Strategic direction requires a shift away from India's official nuclear doctrine to a strategically sustainable one. India's nuclear doctrine cannot credibly continue to project that it would retaliate with higher order strikes to any form of nuclear first use against it.... And if indeed there has been a doctrinal shift, that it remains unacknowledged testifies to India's strategic drift rather than strategic direction. India must shift back to doctrinal transparency to clarify whether it is strategically wise or strategically bereft.<sup>37</sup>

Coming back to 1999, India-Pakistan fought their first post-nuclearization war in the Kargil region of disputed Kashmir; and in 2001-2002 the Twin Peaks crisis erupted. After the Twin Peaks crisis, in 2003, India amended its nuclear policy and added the word "massive" retaliation against the use of chemical, biological or nuclear weapons on its military personnel anywhere in the world.

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<sup>35</sup> Ahmed, "India's Nuclear Doctrine."

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

This was a policy departure with apparent option to strike counter value targets.

Ostensibly, India was not inclined to tie its hands with the term “credible minimum deterrence,” which would compromise its nuclear policy, and secondly, it would facilitate it to obstinately focus on its Advanced Technology Vehicle (ATV) programme to develop nuclear ballistic missiles and nuclear-powered submarines so as to establish strategic nuclear triad with objective intent to robustly strengthen India’s doctrine – not only against the regional countries, but, also against the “permanent five” who had sustained a “nuclear apartheid” since the dawn of the nuclear age.

The development of India’s nuclear deterrent policy has gradually evolved from 1998 to 2020 under the stewardship of BJP-led National Democratic Alliance (1999 to 2004), except with the ten-year rule of the Congress-led United Progressive Alliance (from 2004 to 2014). This is a clear reflection of the BJP-led government’s approach to transform the very trajectory of India’s foreign and security, particularly, nuclear policies. The under mentioned subsection of Pakistan would indicate that there is a lack of doctrinal clarity persisting between India and Pakistan, which is making the entire nuclear paradigm of mutually assured destruction dangerously murkier.

### *Pakistan*

In the case of Pakistan, since 1947 it fought three wars with India. The 1971 war had led to separation of the former East Pakistan, which then became Bangladesh. The traumatic experience of 1971 war and the 1974 Indian nuclear test gave impetus to Pakistan’s policy to develop nuclear weapons as a weapon of deterrence in

order to prevent repetition of 1971-type defeat.<sup>38</sup> In 1977, the Republican administration of the former President Ford suspended economic and military assistance to Pakistan for its alleged nuclear weapons program. However, in the late 1970s, the US President, Jimmy Carter clamped the Glenn-Symington Amendment against Pakistan.<sup>39</sup> In 1985, the Pressler Amendment was specifically added as a provision to the US Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, under which, the US president now annually had to certify that Pakistan was not in possession of any “nuclear explosive devices” as a mandatory condition to qualify to receive military assistance.<sup>40</sup> In essence, the Pressler Amendment specified that military assistance to Pakistan would only continue to flow if there was no clear evidence of the production of nuclear explosive devices by Islamabad. However, Pakistan continued to develop its nuclear weapons programme due to India’s consistent efforts to conduct more nuclear tests with intent to declare itself a nuclear weapon state (NWS). Throughout the 1980s to 1998, Pakistan continued to closely monitor India’s nuclear weapons-orientated program, which ultimately led to the end of “nuclear apartheid” in 1998 - to use Jaswant Singh’s terminology.<sup>41</sup> On the other hand, by that time, Pakistan too had produced a sufficient quantity of weapons-grade fissile material and perfected indigenous research and development regarding production of nuclear warheads.<sup>42</sup> However, both Presidents Ronald Reagan and George Bush’s (senior) administrations had continued to provide military aid to

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<sup>38</sup> For comparative study of Indian and Pakistani nuclear weapon programmes see, Zulfqar Khan, “The Development of Overt Nuclear Weapon States in South Asia,” (PhD Diss., University of Bradford, 2000).

<sup>39</sup> See Rodney W. Jones et al., *Tracking Nuclear Proliferation: A Guide in Maps and Charts* (Washington D.C.: The Brookings Institution Press, 1998): 131.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 132.

<sup>41</sup> Jaswant Singh, “Against Nuclear Apartheid,” *Foreign Affairs* Vol. 77: No. 5 (Sept/Oct, 1998): 41-52.

<sup>42</sup> Khan, “The Development of Overt,” 192.

Pakistan until the fiscal year 1989 when the US President refused to certify that Pakistan's activities did not constitute actual production of nuclear explosive device. The US aid to Pakistan remained suspended in the interim period – from 1989 to 1998. After the nuclear tests, sanctions were imposed on Pakistan (The October 1999 military coup again led to invocation of fresh sanctions).

After 1998 nuclear tests, Indian Prime Minister Vajpayee, in a statement in the *Lok Sabha*, claimed that India possessed a “Big bomb,” and declared India a NWS. Vajpayee furthermore remarked: “it is not a conferment we seek nor is it a status for others to grant” to India. Vajpayee also emphasized on granting a *de jure* nuclear weapon state status to India. Certainly, it was not acceptable to the Pakistani policymakers. Furthermore, Pakistan was also repeatedly being threatened by the Indian leadership. Hence, Pakistan considered the “vague promises of enhanced economic support” of the US without any credible “guarantees against conventional or nuclear attack by India,” obviously insufficient to forego its nuclear weapons option. In reaction, Pakistani leadership decided to respond to the Indian tests on May 28 and 30, 1998.<sup>43</sup> In Pakistani perspective, India's aggressive statements and demands for the NWS status was clearly a reflection of BJP's Hindu chauvinism, pride and hatred towards Pakistan. Obviously, Pakistan's non-testing of nuclear weapons would have melted its nuclear deterrence strategy into a “hot air.”<sup>44</sup> The international community had also expressed concern over India's nuclear policy that in their perspective was risky and ambitious, given its stipulation of a nuclear “triad,” and with no *upper-limit*

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<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, 195-199.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, 198.

on its nuclear arsenal/capability.<sup>45</sup> This was quite an elusive concept given the level of deterrence that India was ostensibly trying to achieve.

### **The Post-2001-2002 Military Standoff to “Cold Start” and “Full-spectrum” Strategies**

#### *Regional Dynamics*

James Sperling writes that in the post-Westphalian world - the countries' national security cultures are essentially being influenced by four factors: “(1) the worldwide view of the external environment; (2) national identity; (3) instrumental preferences; and (4) interaction preferences,” that would impact the “dynamic of international system.”<sup>46</sup> Hence Pakistan too had to remain cognizant of India's elusive doctrinal moorings. There are many nuclear policy-related concepts such as recessed deterrence, maximum deterrence, and moderate - that are different from each other.<sup>47</sup> Therefore, India's *open-ended* nuclear doctrine was likely to ring alarm bells in Islamabad. India being much bigger in size, economy, military capability, and diplomatic clout vis-à-vis Pakistan, in latter's perspective, it was a perpetual source of threat to its security. The advocates of recessed deterrence would tend to argue that the major threat to India comes from Pakistan and, on

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<sup>45</sup> “US Says India's Nuclear Doctrine not Encouraging,” *Reuters*, August 18, 1999; Ministry of External Affairs of India, “India's Nuclear Policy Draft,” August 18, 1999, <https://mea.gov.in/in-focus-article.htm?18916/Draft+Report+of+National+Security+Advisory+Board+on+Indian+Nuclear+Doctrine>

<sup>46</sup> James Sperling, “National Security Cultures, Technologies of public goods supply and Security Governance,” in Emil J. Kirchner and James Sperling (eds.), *National Security Cultures: Patterns of Global Governance* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2010): 11.

<sup>47</sup> For the Indian interpretation of various concepts see Rajesh Basrur, *Minimum Deterrence and India's National Security* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006): 61.



the other hand, proponents of maximum deterrence concept would tend to believe that “it is not necessary to consider the threat of Pakistan in drafting of nuclear policy, but rather that the main threat lies with China.” The latter group also believes that to ensure strategic autonomy, it is necessary to have a deterrent capability against the US and Russia as well. Moderates considered China as the primary threat and Pakistan as a secondary threat.<sup>48</sup> In view of India’s ambiguous nuclear ambitions, Pakistan had to craft proportionate military and nuclear strategies so as to protect its security and sovereignty from a country that in 1971 war had bifurcated it into two parts.

### *India’s Draft Nuclear Doctrine*

The Draft Nuclear Doctrine (DND) had clearly envisioned a concept of strategic triad, which included different ranges of ballistic missiles, warheads and other delivery systems to reinforce its nuclear deterrent forces. Initially, India had subtly distanced itself from its previous stance of minimum deterrence, which seemingly it considered insufficient to meet its future strategic requirements. Hence, India embarked on restructuring of its deterrent forces option - on the concept of triad. However, simultaneously it too harped on its traditional NFU doctrinal posturing in clear contravention to its resurgent strategic triad forces restructuring, therefore, DND’s concept of ‘minimum’ was apparently considered inappropriate for the future strategic requirements of India. Ostensibly, India in parallel also vied for enhancement/procurement of its hi-tech and technological capabilities so as to make its deterrent forces more robust in line with its envisaged triad concept. Zafar Khan observes that India’s

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<sup>48</sup> See Bharat Karnad “A Thermonuclear Deterrent,” in Amitabh Mattoo (ed.), *India’s Nuclear Deterrent: Pokhran II and Beyond* (New Delhi: Har-Anand, 1999): 22.

“broader strategic sufficiency, innovative and sophisticated technology” acquisition policy would “further enhance India’s deterrent forces in terms of accuracy, ranges, penetrability, yield, and survivability.” All this was being done with the strategic collaboration of the US to assist India to develop its ingenious military technological projects with intent to enhance its conventional and nuclear deterrent forces.<sup>49</sup>

It is a clear reflection of India’s quest for power maximization and modernization of its conventional and strategic deterrent forces. Obviously, India’s bid to strengthen its strategic forces was considered by Islamabad a powerful threat to its security, if not, to its very survival. Hence, it further magnified Pakistan’s insecurity, which perforce landed it into a security dilemma cycle due to India’s massive military restructuring program. It became a cause of further friction between the two. In essence, India’s increasing conventional and strategic forces vis-à-vis Pakistan’s credible minimum deterrent posture became a cause of escalation and crises between the two. For instance, primarily, the root cause of conflict between the ancient Athens and Sparta was also premised on such a security dilemma. Thucydides explains: “what made war inevitable was the growth of Athenian power and the fear which this caused in Sparta. As for the reasons for breaking the truce and declaring war which were openly expressed by each side.”<sup>50</sup> According to ancient classics of Thucydides: “the power that deals fairly with its equals finds a truer security than the one which is hurried into snatching some apparent but dangerous advantage.”<sup>51</sup> Apparently, India’s bid for power maximization and military modernization was expected to evoke a proportionate response

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<sup>49</sup> Zafar Khan, “India’s Strategic Triad: Current Trends and Future Prospects,” *Journal of Security & Strategic Analyses* Vol. 5: No. 1 (Summer 2019): 21.

<sup>50</sup> Thucydides, *The Peloponnesian War*, ed. Rex Warner (London: Penguin Classics, 1954): 49.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, 61.

from Pakistan, not necessarily in quantitative terms, but, in qualitative terms - to neutralize India's swiftly expanding modern war machine. For Pakistan, India's massive strategic forces expansion and modernization programme is expected to accord it a clear strategic "advantage," not necessarily to employ the strategic deterrent forces, but to employ them as an instrument of coercion and compellence.<sup>52</sup> Obviously, in such a critical strategic equation, and with a huge gulf of cultural differences, it would be quite a challenge for a country like Pakistan to establish an effective deterrent equation vis-à-vis the bigger and stronger India.

It was in such a strategically and culturally divisive environment that after the military standoff of 2001-2002, that India began to craft a more dangerous and escalatory "Cold Start Doctrine" (CSD) strategy, and in reaction, Pakistan crafted a "full spectrum" nuclear strategy.<sup>53</sup>

### **From CSD and "Full spectrum" Doctrinal Wrangling to Pulwama-Balakot Military Crisis**

As contended, it was with the partition of British India in 1947 that the divergent strategic, religious, and historical moorings of two countries had sparked a war over the disputed region of Kashmir. Fundamentally, Pakistan's quest was for security from India. On the other hand, as observed in the argument, India intended to realize the dream of its reunification, which it believed was arbitrarily partitioned into two nation-states – India and Pakistan. Right from their inception, India-Pakistan's relations remained constrained, if not on a sharp edge, which had led to three wars in 1947-1948, 1965 and 1971, and one conflict of Kargil in 1999 - in addition to

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<sup>52</sup> For further study see Lawrence Freedman, *Deterrence* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2004): 109-115.

<sup>53</sup> See Zulfqar Khan, "Pakistan's Evolving Strategic Outlook: Strategy and Nuclear Deterrence," *The Korean Journal of Defence Analysis* Vol. 28: No. 1 (March 2016): 103-121.

military crises of Brass-tacks (1986-1987), 2001-2002 Twin Peaks and February 2019 Pulwama-Balakot. Reportedly, from 2004 onwards India had commenced war gaming to fine-tune the strategy of CSD to fight a limited war against Pakistan. Whereas, Pakistan too tried to proportionately evolve a well-calibrated “full spectrum” nuclear deterrence strategy against economically, diplomatically, and militarily much stronger India so as to prevent the operationalization of CSD-related war plan by India under the nuclear overhang.

Essentially, both countries’ existing security matrix was largely influenced by their persisting “rivalry, mistrust and violence.”<sup>54</sup> In fact, the communal violence of partition and the festering dispute over Kashmir had further hardened both countries’ resolve against each other. Above all, this matrix was further complicated with the induction of nuclear weapons, which too kept their relations in perpetual turmoil.<sup>55</sup> On the other hand, Indian policymakers also had apprehensions that submission to the concept of plebiscite<sup>56</sup> would have snowballing effects thereby encouraging other states in the Indian Union to demand “for independence.”<sup>57</sup> Rather New Delhi still doggedly continued adherence to the dream of establishment of united India. This deep cultural and ideological divide was amply reflected in both countries’ crafting of conflicting and aggressive military strategies against each other. This has truly made South Asia “a tinderbox filled with tension and danger.”<sup>58</sup> Notwithstanding both Scott Sagan and Kenneth Waltz’s arguments for and against the possession of nuclear weapons by India and

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<sup>54</sup> Philipp Schweers, “India and Pakistan: Trapped in a Security Paradox,” *DIAS-ANALYSIS* No. 37 (December 2008): 1.

<sup>55</sup> Scott D. Sagan and Kenneth N. Waltz, *The Spread of Nuclear Weapons: A Debate Renewed* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2003): 89.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, 90.

Pakistan,<sup>59</sup> their deep strategic cultural divide has largely been transformed into a neurological rivalry, which is expected to keep their relations on knife's edge - that is expected to further destabilize the security matrix of South Asia with frequent spate of crises from time to time. The Question is: why the deterrent essence of nuclear weapons has not induced them to formulate conciliatory policies against each other? The straight answer is the unresolved dispute of Kashmir, and their deep cultural, religious, and historical divide. The second question is: why crises has frequently erupted between the two nuclear-armed rivals? The subsequent paragraphs would attempt to succinctly answer the second question in the light of empirical data/literature.

### *South Asian "Tinderbox" & Regional Dynamics*

The history of India-Pakistan's series of crises is over two decades old. As argued by Sagan, "the nuclear arsenals" of India and Pakistan are "likely to remain, much smaller and less sophisticated than were the US and Soviet arsenals."<sup>60</sup> But, the question is: whether nuclear technology in the hands of India and Pakistan would remain *frozen* in time and space? The straight answer is no. One, because of the ongoing geostrategic transformation in the Indo-Pacific region, and India's role as the US pivot to contain the economic and military rise of China – would *doubly* qualify New Delhi to receive sophisticated technologies from the West, particularly the US and its allies. This will qualitatively and quantitatively enhance Indian indigenous military, including nuclear, production and research and development capabilities, thereby making Pakistan take similar measures with the cooperative arrangements of China to hold India's military might at bay. Second, Pakistan-China's strategic collaborative framework

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<sup>59</sup> Ibid., 88-124.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid., 91.

would also proportionately enhance former's military might and technological capability vis-à-vis India's military and technological prowess. Therefore, Sagan's argument of possession of smaller and less sophisticated nuclear arsenals by India and Pakistan, is not *sustainable* in view of both countries' growing nuclear weapons sophistication and geostrategic equations between the two emerging power blocs – the US and China. Third, Pakistan is geographically enabling China to secure an access to the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) thereby diluting Beijing's acute Malacca Straits Dilemma. Most significantly, the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) would enable China a simultaneous access to the Pacific and the Indian Ocean that would play a pivotal role in China's strategic policy to circumvent the apparent China encirclement policy of Washington. In this transformation, apparently, Pakistan would also be *doubly* qualified to access the sophisticated military and nuclear technologies from China as well. Logically, the other factor that is of paramount significance is the deterrence and stability.

### *Deterrence*

The concept of deterrence can be briefly summed up as “a coercive strategy” that has “the potential or actual application of force to influence the action of a voluntary agent,” observes Freedman. Essentially, the concept of deterrence revolves around the “threats of retaliation,” which is a strategic deterrence.<sup>61</sup> Fundamentally, the deterrence theory since the times of Thucydides to Hobbes, Morgenthau to Sagan-Waltz in essence has been state-centric in its approach.<sup>62</sup> Freedman explains:

A controlling strategy still depends initially on judgments concerning the opponent's strategy, but

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<sup>61</sup> Freedman, *Deterrence*, 26-27.

<sup>62</sup> See Franck C. Zagare and D. March Kilgour, *Perfect Deterrence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000): 7.

after a point that becomes irrelevant as the opponent runs out of options. A *Consensual* strategy involves the adjustment of strategic choices with another without force or threats of force. Coercive strategies can be divided into the deterrent and the compellent, essentially between persuading another that they must not act for fear of the consequences if they do, and that they must act for fear of the consequences if they do not. Elements of all of these can be in play at the same time either against a single opponent or against several opponents.<sup>63</sup>

Since 1998, both countries have demonstrated tendencies of crafting “controlling” strategies against each other. India by first putting forward the NFU provision accompanied by nuclear “triad” concepts into its DND. On the contrary, Pakistan is wrangling with conceptualization of its nuclear strategy from apparent first use (there is no stated or documented nuclear policy of Pakistan) to “full spectrum” nuclear deterrent strategy to hold India’s conventionally and strategically powerful forces at bay – by proportionately strategizing its conventional and nuclear deterrent forces posturing with the help of crafting of compatible strategies against India. The most significant element of “*consensual*” strategy seems to be missing in both countries’ nuclear lexicons. This is a huge strategic amiss of Indian-Pakistani policymakers. Therefore, continuous eruption of crises from time-to-time is likely to keep their relations on upward escalatory trajectory. In such an environment, the concept of strategic stability is likely to remain a hollow dream in view of both countries’ conflicting policies and divergent strategic cultural ethos.

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<sup>63</sup> Freedman, *Deterrence*, 26-27.

### Stability

Strategic stability's fundamental concept is premised on the notion of rationality. Strategy sans rationality would become an *irrational strategy* particularly if the rivals are carrying divergent historical, cultural, unresolved disputes, and religious baggage in a highly charged strategic environment particularly when both rivals are declared nuclear states. According to Zagare and Kilgour, there are two types of rationality – *procedural* and *instrumental*. Procedural rationality denotes “the work of those who approach strategic behaviour from the vantage point of individual psychology.” It requires “rational decision, then, requires that an actor have an accurate perception of the implications of *all* conceivable alternatives and a well-defined set of preferences over the entire set.” Furthermore, it should have a “decision-maker who can correctly and dispassionately assess the preferences of other relevant actors, their likely responses to his or her choices and, in particular, to concessions or threats.”<sup>64</sup> While the concept of instrumental rationality revolves around the logic of both the *rational* and *psychological* “inferences about the logical connection between preferences – which may, in principle, reflect perceptions (or misperceptions) or beliefs – and actual choice.”<sup>65</sup> “The definition of instrumental rationality is indeed straightforward,” observe Zagare and Kilgour. In fact, it is the “logical structure of actor's preference ordering, are implicit in it. For an actor to be instrumentally rational, he or she must have a *complete* and *transitive* preference ordering over the set of available outcomes.”<sup>66</sup> Whereas the result would be largely determined on the scale of completeness and preferences of pictures and choices. Moreover, the completeness and transitive choices are still

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<sup>64</sup> Zagare and Kilgour, *Perfect Deterrence*, 38-39.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, 39-40.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, 40.



“minimal requirements for a definition of rationality.”<sup>67</sup> This makes definition of stability and instability more complex to understand particularly when the rivals are deeply entrenched in their cultural and religious biases and preferences. This brings us to another imperative question that, how to realize peaceful coexistence in view of their huge baggage of unresolved and deep-rooted biases against each other. The answer is, yes, it is doable, provided both countries’ policymakers give space to each other’s genuine demands and resolve their outstanding issues, and to rationally appreciate the available procedural and instrumental choices to them – in the event of non-adherence to the imperative of *coexistence*. If one looks back from the 1980s to 2020, there were a whole series of crises that were apparently triggered due to variety of factors – whether it was Brass-tacks, Twin Peaks or Pulwama-Balakot. Therefore, both countries need to understand that the “tinderbox” is still filled with inherent tension and danger capable of igniting a spark that could lead to eruption of a catastrophe of unimaginable proportion. Before conclusion, it would be appropriate to analyse the unravelling dynamics of Pulwama-Balakot crisis of February 2019.

*Pulwama-Balakot’s Display of “Procedural” and “Instrumental” Procedures*

If the Indian claim of a “nuclear weapons state” status was not for others to confer on India,<sup>68</sup> then, similarly, nuclear-armed Pakistan was also an imperative security requirement. In 1998, Jaswant Singh claimed that “India’s strengthened nuclear capability adds to its sense of responsibility.” He ended his article by prophesying that: “the world still has to address the unfinished agenda of the

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<sup>67</sup> Ibid.

<sup>68</sup> See Singh, *Against Nuclear Apartheid*,” 49.

centuries.”<sup>69</sup> However, India’s imprudent decision to attack Balakot in an air sortie on February 26, 2019, with “total of 16 aircrafts, six each armed with Spice 2000 and Crystal Maze missiles, flew into Pakistan-occupied Kashmir”<sup>70</sup> and attacked Balakot deep into Pakistani territory; was clearly a violation of nuclear-armed Pakistan’s sovereignty. It was an *irresponsible* act of a conventionally much stronger nuclear India against conventionally weaker nuclear state of Pakistan. From both procedural and instrumental angles, it was an unrestraint behaviour of India, which could have resulted in serious security consequences - had Pakistan not applied restraint - not to attack targets inside the Indian occupied Kashmir. On the following day (February 27, 2019), Pakistan Air Force (PAF) JF-17 shot down Indian Air Force (IAF) MiG-21Bison inside Pakistani administrated Kashmir. While Indian claim of shooting down of one PAF F-16 aircraft was widely refuted by Pakistan, the *TIME* magazine, and other international print and electronic media.<sup>71</sup>

Pulwama-Balakot crisis is a typical reflection of both countries’ policymakers’ procedural rational behaviour. Though, luckily, after the post-Balakot encounters they had behaved in an instrumentally rational manner. However, there is still a danger of eruption of more crises as their bilateral disputes still remain unresolved and strategic cultural divide is also persisting. Additionally, the asymmetrical rise of Indian economic and military power in comparison to Pakistan, would continue to complicate their relations and would act as a “tinderbox” awaiting to be ignited in case of any

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<sup>69</sup> Ibid., 49, 52.

<sup>70</sup> Snenesh Philip, “How Afghan Intel Helped India Carry Out the Balakot Air Strike,” *The Print*, February 26, 2019, <https://theprint.in/defence/how-afghan-intel-helped-india-carry-out-the-balakot-air-strike/371471/>.

<sup>71</sup> Iain Marlow, “India Never Actually Shot Down Pakistani F-16 in Kashmir Clash, New Report Says,” *TIME*, April 5, 2019, <https://time.com/5564980/india-never-shot-pakistani-plane-kashmir/>.

unexpected incident. Since, in such a tit-for-tat type crisis cycle, there would always be a probability of overreaction by one country against the other. This is more dangerous particularly when power equation between the rivals is asymmetrical, as is the case between India and Pakistan. However, the “fear” that the other side “may react, indeed overreact, is most likely to deter escalation,” writes Herman Kahn.<sup>72</sup> In some cases, some states may deliberately escalate tension either “to threaten the other side with all-out war,” as outwardly was the case behind India’s deliberate act of escalation, or to “provoke it, to demonstrate committal or recklessness, and so forth.” Interestingly, Pakistan’s reaction to Indian Balakot strike was seemingly well-calibrated and determined reaction – ostensibly just short of “committal” behaviour,<sup>73</sup> because, in case Pakistan had not responded or confronted Indian violations of Pakistani air-space, latter’s deterrent posture vis-à-vis India would have been difficult to sustain. Furthermore, it would have given India impetus for operationalization of coercion through the CSD strategy against Pakistan. Third, it would have demonstrated Pakistan’s lack of capability or determination to counter Indian intrusive design. Fourth, it would have paved way for a perpetual Indian coercion. Therefore, Pakistan’s non-response would have emitted negative signal to India, which could have encouraged latter to launch a well-calculated limited war against Pakistan under the rubric of “Cold Start Doctrine” strategy in which India had massively invested since the origin of this concept from 2004 onwards.

### *“Strike RAPID” Concept*

The concept of CSD has a long history stretching back to 1980s when Indian Army conducted a massive military exercise called

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<sup>72</sup> Herman Kahn, *On escalation: Metaphors and Scenarios* (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Transaction Publishers, 2010): 3.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.

“Operation Brass-tacks,” which was reportedly designed for “Strike RAPID” (Reorganized Army Plains Infantry Division) formations. The Strike RAPID was supposed to act as Indian Army’s strike corps particularly trained for a swift urban warfare.<sup>74</sup> From then onwards, India commenced a concerted effort to streamline its war fighting machine into various regional commands, for instance, Indian Army was divided into six operational commands: 1) Northern Command – Udhampur, Jammu and Kashmir; 2) Southern Command – Pune, Maharashtra; 3) Eastern Command – Kolkata, West Bengal;

4) Western Command – Chandi Mandir, Punjab; 5) Southwestern Command – Jaipur, Rajasthan; and 6) Central Command – Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh. Three commands are specifically designed against Pakistan. They are the Northern Command, Southern, and Western Command. The Northern command has three Corps, which includes XIV Corps of Leh, Jammu and Kashmir; XV Corps, Srinagar, Jammu and Kashmir; and XVI Corps at Nagrota, Jammu and Kashmir. In addition, the Southern Command located at Pune is responsible for border areas of Rajasthan. This Command also has XII Corps located at Jodhpur. The XII Corps is equipped with Armour and Mechanised brigades supported by two infantry divisions for swift and quick thrust into Pakistan. The third command which is focused on Pakistan is the Western Command, headquartered at Chandi Mandir, Indian Punjab. This is the most significant command as far as Pakistan is concerned. This command holds extensive strike formations, which includes four Corps: the II Corps, X Corps, IX Corps, and XI Corps.<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>74</sup> V K Kapoor, “Employment of Armour in Urban Terrain,” *SP’s Land Forces Issue 4* (2012), <http://www.spslandforces.com/story/?id=206>.

<sup>75</sup> “Analyzing the Indian Army,” *Pakistan Defence*, March 21, 2020, <https://defence.pk/pdf/threads/analysing-the-indian-army.100557/>.

In addition to this massive concentration of strike formations in the close vicinity of Pakistan - more than 81 percent of Indian Air Force's bases are also configured against Pakistan. Furthermore, India has earmarked its eight-division size Integrated Battle Groups (IBGs), and seven missile groups specifically organized to counter Pakistan.<sup>76</sup> Shireen Mazari remarked that the CSD is primarily designed to commence pre-emptive strikes against Pakistan for which India has inducted hypersonic cruise missile – BrahMos I-II, which is destined to play a key role in Indian military strategy. Mazari claimed that Pakistan developed Nasr short-range cruise missile, and in August 2019, it test fired the night-launch version of the surface-to-surface ballistic missile (SSBM) Ghaznavi with 290 kilometers range, to signal Pakistan's operational readiness and intent to counter any aggressive venture from India<sup>77</sup> supported by heavy armoured, IBGs, mechanized infantry, and air assets into Pakistani territory in 48-72 hours at the onset of military blitzkrieg.<sup>78</sup>

## **Conclusion**

Indian war machine's formidable focus on Pakistan sufficiently amplifies the imperative of sustenance of an effective nuclear deterrence posture, which is critical for the very survival of Pakistan. Therefore, any lacklustre Pakistani response to an IAF intrusion or further aggression would have definitely emitted wrong signal to the adversary, which would have compromised

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<sup>76</sup> Shireen M. Mazari, "Annexation of Kashmir and India's Nuclear Threat," *The News*, September 1, 2019, <https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/520385-annexation-of-kashmir-and-india-s-nuclear-threat>.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid.

<sup>78</sup> See Franz-Stefan Gady, "Is the Indian Military Capable of Executing the Cold Start Doctrine?" *The Diplomat*, January 29, 2019, <https://thediplomat.com/2019/01/is-the-indian-military-capable-of-executing-the-cold-start-doctrine/>.

Pakistan's will and effectiveness to maintain nuclear deterrence at any cost. In the prevalent environment, Pakistan's February 27, 2019, response was absolutely necessary. Although, there was a possibility of something going astray at any time/place, in Pakistan's viewpoint, this risk of conflagration was worth taking due to massive concentration of Indian war machine around Pakistan. Ostensibly, there was no "transitive" or alternative option available to Pakistan; therefore, it had to act with "instrumental rationality" that is to implicitly convey to India to back off or to face the unforeseen consequences.<sup>79</sup>

Above all, both countries' disproportionate sizes and divergent strategic cultural ethos and moorings have kept them at the sharp edge. Since the partition of British India, both countries had fought numerous wars and witnessed a series of crises, which even after their overt nuclearization, did not stop. Both countries' rationales to produce nuclear weapons were divergent— for India, it was to end the international "nuclear apartheid" and to establish its NWS stature. Therefore, it was imperative for Pakistan to protect its independence and sovereignty from the perceived security threat from India. Most significantly, India's first Prime Minister Nehru had reiterated his intent to undo the partition and to create a united India again. In 1971, India succeeded in separating the former East Pakistan, and created an independent country - Bangladesh. Moreover, the unresolved dispute of Kashmir is also keeping the entire dynamics of South Asian peace and stability on the razor edge. In addition, most of the Indian military forces are also configured against Pakistan, to which the latter had to craft compatible and dynamic strategies so as to neutralize India's aggressive military posturing, which is amply demonstrated through massive concentration of its war machine, and IBGs

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<sup>79</sup> Zagare and Kilgour, *Perfect Deterrence*, 40.

conceived under the CSD to impose a limited war on Pakistan. This ostensibly constrained Pakistan to proportionately act against the Indian intrusion into Pakistani airspace/territory. It impels Pakistan to supplement its economic and military disadvantage by a determined and dynamic nuclear deterrent posturing so as to prevent India from any military misadventure.