

# **JOURNAL OF SECURITY & STRATEGIC ANALYSES**



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Summer, 2021

Volume VII, Number 1

## **Mackinder's Heartland Theory: Historic Rivalry and the China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)**

Dr. Mansur Umar Khan

## **National Integration: Challenges and Options for Pakistan**

Muhammad Nawaz Khan

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**Journal of  
Strategic Vision Institute (SVI)**

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# Journal of Security and Strategic Analyses (JSSA)

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**STRATEGIC VISION**  
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## **ACRONYMS**

AAD	Advanced Air Defence
AESA	Active Electronically Scanned Array
AEW&C	Airborne Early Warning and Control
AFSPA	Armed Forces (Jammu and Kashmir) Special Powers Act
AJK	Azad Jammu and Kashmir
ANI	Asian News International
ANP	Awami National Party
ASCE	American Society of Civil Engineers
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
AWACS	Airborne Warning and Control System
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
BDNA	Balochistan Drought Needs Assessment
BECA	Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement
BJP	Bharatiya Janata Party
BLA	Balochistan Liberation Army
BLF	Balochistan Liberation Front
BMD	Ballistic Missile Defense
BRI	Belt and Road Initiative
BRICS	Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa
CAA	Citizenship Amendment Act

CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CMD	Credible Minimum Deterrence
COAS	Chief of Army Staff
CPEC	China-Pakistan Economic Corridor
CPPNM	Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material
DCC	Development Control Committee
DG	Director General
DPRK	Democratic People's Republic of Korea
DRDO	Defence Research & Development Organisation
ECC	Employment Control Committee
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zone
FATA	Federally Administered Tribal Areas
FATF	Financial Action Task Force
FSD	Full Spectrum Deterrence
FTA	Free Trade Agreement
GB	Gilgit-Baltistan
GICNT	Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism
GNP	Gross National Product
GST	Goods and Services Tax
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency

IAF	Indian Armed Forces
IAI	Israel Aerospace Industries
ICBM	Intercontinental Ballistic Missile
IIOJK	Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir
IMI	Israel Military Industries
INF	Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty
INFCIRC	International Atomic Energy Agency Information Circular
IOK	Indian Occupied Kashmir
ISIS	Islamic State of Iraq and Syria
ISPR	Inter-Services Public Relations
IUHDSS	Integrated Underwater Harbour Defence and Surveillance System
KHAD	Khadamat-e Aetela'at-e Dawlati
KP	Khyber Pakhtunkhwa
LCA	Light Combat Aircraft
LEMOA	Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement
LOC	Line of Control
LRSAM	Long Range Surface-to-Air Missile
MIRVs	Independently Targeted Reentry Vehicles
MP	Member of Parliament

MPI	Multi-dimensional Poverty Index
MQM	Muhajir/Muttahida Qaumi Movement
MRSAM	Medium Range Surface-To-Air Missile
NAP	National Awami Party
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NCA	National Command Authority
NEMS	Nuclear Emergency Management System
NFC	National Finance Commission
NISAS	National Institute of Safety and Security
NPR	Nuclear Posture Review
NPT	Non-Proliferation Treaty
NRECC	National Radiation Emergency Coordination Centre
NSAP	National Social Action Plan
NSS	National Security Strategy
NSS	Nuclear Security Summit
NSSC	Nuclear Security Training and Support Centers
NTI	Nuclear Threat Initiative
NURESC	Nuclear and Radiological Emergency Support Centre
NWFP	North-West Frontier Province
PAD	Prithvi Air Defence



PAEC	Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission
PCENS	Pakistan's Centre for Excellence on Nuclear Security
PINSTECH	Pakistan Institute of Nuclear Science and Technology
PML-N	Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz
PNRA	Pakistan Nuclear Regulatory Authority
PPP	Pakistan People's Party
PPP	Purchasing Power Parity
PRP	Personal Reliability Program
PSA	Public Safety Act
PTA	Pakistan Telecommunication Authority
PTI	Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf
PTM	Pashtun Tahafuz Movement
RAW	Research and Analysis Wing
RSS	Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh
SAARC	South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation
SECDIV	Strategic Export Control Division
SIPRI	Stockholm International Peace Research Institute
SORT	Strategic Offensive Reductions Treaty
SPD	Strategic Plans Division

SPYDER	Surface to Air Python and Derby Missile System
START	Strategic Arms Reduction Talks
TNW	Tactical Nuclear Weapons
UAV	Unmanned Aerial Vehicle
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
VHP	Vishva Hindu Parishad
WB	Working Boundary
WEF	World Economic Forum

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## Editor's Note

This issue of *Journal of Security and Strategic Analyses (JSSA)* contains seven well researched articles and a book review. An effort has been made to offer insightful writings on contemporary security and strategic issues concerning Pakistan. The themes included in Volume 7, Number 1 not only present a comprehensive analysis but generate a much-needed discourse on the dynamics of policy, strategy, and security.

The first research article on *Mackinder's Heartland Theory: Historic Rivalry and China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)*, analyzes the Heartland Theory historically and determines that it is still relevant with regard to rivalry between the two Great Powers: China and the US. The author believes that China's BRI has given the Heartland Theory a new stimulus and drive. The paper also assesses the US rivalry vis-à-vis Russian-German challenges to it, along with the technological changes that transpired since the theory was first affirmed. The paper has furnished insightful debate and conclusions for comprehension of today's strategic rivalries among the major powers.

Second research paper titled *National Integration: Challenges and Options for Pakistan*, highlights nationhood's reliance on national integration, and the significant role it plays in ensuring national security vis-à-vis internal and external challenges. The author quite convincingly presents supporting arguments to this claim and believes that there is a thin line between centripetal and centrifugal forces, with multiplicity of factors including languages, races, ethnicities, and sects. These elements may serve both as ingredients of national integration and disintegration. The research article identifies issues such as leadership dilemma, bad governance, socio-economic disparity, ethno-cultural polarization, sub-nationalist politics, fragile national unity under federalism, extremism, national identity crisis and modernity confusion as the main challenges to Pakistan's efforts for national integration. Readers will find thoughtful discussion followed by pragmatic options presented as the way forward in this well-rounded research article.

The third research article on *Global Security in the Post-Cold War Era and the Relevance of Nuclear Weapons*, provides a unique take on the utility of nuclear weapons for major powers, asymmetry of power, and asymmetry of norms. The analysis and findings are specific to the West and the developed states. The author maintains that in the post-Cold War era, the nuclear weapons as a guarantor of global security for the major powers have lost their relevance especially after strategic confrontation between the US and the then Soviet Union. This is based on the perception that the use of force is no longer a likely mode of interaction between the main powers. These are instead viewed by the author as one of the principal sources of insecurity in today's world. This study considers the main sources of potential armed conflict between the major powers and role of nuclear deterrence. It argues that there is a fundamental difference in perception, and that from the US' point of view the sources of conflict are not caused by asymmetry of military power but rather by an asymmetry of norms. It concludes nuclear arsenals provide the major powers with a level security that they therefore engage in a pursuit of their "core interests" in a manner that is less risk averse with respect to the possibility of armed conflict.

A co-authored research article titled *India's Soft Power Image: A Case Study of the Indian Economy Under Modi*, discusses soft power as a fluid concept involving multidimensional policies. India's economic policies as a case study have been analyzed for their role in constructing India's soft power image. However, the authors observe that Modi's government, despite its promises to improve the economy has miserably failed at this front. Catchphrases used by Modi's government such as 'shining India,' coupled with the demonetization policies lacked the foresight and triggered the worst economic meltdown. In this research paper, readers will find captivating analysis on the role of economic policies in advancing state's soft power image, which in case of India, as established by the authors, has suffered remarkably during Modi's tenure.

Another insightful research article titled *India-Israel Defence Cooperation: Security Implications for Pakistan*, elaborates on how the burgeoning India-Israel defence cooperation is escalating the already existing arms competition in South Asia giving rise to 'action-reaction dynamics' owing to the security competition between India and Pakistan. This paper highlights India-Israel increasing defence collaboration in hi-tech weapon systems including Air and Ballistic Missile Defence system. The threat matrix and challenges thus emerge, carry direct implications for Pakistan. The author provides sufficient justification for Pakistan's counter-efforts solely aimed at securing itself. This paper also explains how the rapid pace of arms trade between India and Israel is disturbing the deterrence equilibrium and strategic stability in the South Asian region.

Sixth research article included in this issue talks about *Pakistan-India Security Paradox: Between Deterrence and Coercive Diplomacy*. It highlights the uncertainty and threat as two constants in their relations which are augmented by the hostile historical legacy. India had evidently moved to an escalatory posture with aggressive disposition in narrative and policy under Modi government. This paper analyzes how intimidating tactics of India particularly hybrid warfare is undermining the security balance between India and Pakistan. The relations have long been oscillating between deterrence and coercive diplomacy triggered by India's war mongering tactics with a potential to undermine conventional and nuclear deterrence. This paper adds to the knowledge by adopting a critical approach to the security dynamics between India and Pakistan.

The last research article titled *Pakistan's Nuclear Security Regime: Overcoming the Gap between Domestic Nuclear Governance and International Perception*, examines the threat of nuclear terrorism and Pakistan's robust safety and security measures. The paper convincingly builds the case for Pakistan as a responsible nuclear weapons state adhering to the IAEA safeguards. The author furnishes concrete evidence of Pakistan's enduring commitment, yet it is the only country,

which is required to prove its nuclear security credentials, time and again. The author identifies the wide gap between the true understanding of Pakistan's domestic nuclear governance and the flawed western narrative dominating the international perception. This research article analyses the fundamentals of contemporary international nuclear security regulations and assesses the role played by Pakistan in building a comprehensive system of nuclear security in compliance with International Nuclear Law.

The *JSSA* conforms to the standard HEC guidelines/rules of publication and seeks to maintain the general quality of the contributions as per the international standards. It is an HEC-HJRS recognized journal in the Y-category and aspires to become a top ranking HEC recognized journal. The quality aspect remains and will always be the prime concern of the SVI, supplemented by careful selection of the manuscripts, wherein the readers will be able to find a collection of well written academically sound research papers that have attempted to methodically examine various strategic and security issues in detail. It is being hoped that the readers will be able to benefit from the analyses presented in this issue. SVI plans to bring out subsequent volumes of *JSSA* on a regular basis and is looking forward to receiving high quality manuscripts exclusively written for *JSSA*.



# **RESEARCH PAPERS**



## Mackinder's Heartland Theory: Historic Rivalry and the China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)

Dr. Mansur Umar Khan<sup>1</sup>

### Abstract

*This paper analyzes the Heartland Theory historically and determines that it is still remarkably relevant with regard to rivalry between the two Great Powers: China and the US. In fact, China's gigantic BRI project has given the Heartland Theory a new stimulus and drive. The paper also assesses the US rivalry with regard to Russian-German challenges to it, along with the technological changes that transpired in the last 117 years, since the theory was first affirmed. The final outlook in terms of the theory is that the primary struggle and rivalry of the 21<sup>st</sup> century will be between the US and China over the BRI, since failure of the BRI would almost by default be viewed as a victory for the US in terms of retaining its solitary superpower status over China. The reason for this is that without the success of the BRI China would remain vulnerable to the choke point of the Straits of Malacca and the might of the US Navy in the South China Sea. Contrary to this scenario, a prosperous BRI would give Beijing the huge advantage to thwart US encirclement designs and thus unite Eurasia geo-economically against US interests. This*

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. Mansur Umar Khan is an Assistant Professor at the Department of Aerospace Sciences & Strategic Studies (DASSS), Air University, Islamabad.

*scenario has been described as a nightmare by American elites, especially with the accelerated decline of the USA due to the pandemic. Therefore, it is virtually inevitable, regardless which party is in power, that future US strategy is directed towards terminating the BRI.*

**Keywords:** Heartland Theory, Belt and Road Initiative, US, China, Russia, Great Powers Rivalry.

### **Russia and the Eurasian Pivot of the Heartland Theory**

Mackinder divided the world into Sea power versus Land power as two main geographical powers. He termed the preponderant side the “ring of bases” which linked the sea powers Britain, US, Canada, Australia, Japan, and South Africa into domination of the world’s oceans along with their commerce power. This ring of prevailing sea-powers was shielded against threats from the land powers of Eurasia, which Mackinder referred to as the gigantic continent.<sup>2</sup> Mackinder argued, however, that sea-powers were on the decline, due to economic and industrial progress, leading to simultaneous prominence of terrestrial powers.<sup>3</sup>

This led him to sound the warning that if the Russian Empire was able to expand past the terrain of Euro-Asia and gain access to the gigantic resources there to build a naval fleet, “the empire of the world

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<sup>2</sup> W. F Engdahl, “Behind the Anglo-American War on Russia,” *Global Research, Williamengdahl.com*, September 11, 2018, Available at: <http://www.williamengdahl.com/englishNEO11Sep2018.php> (accessed on 2 January 2021).

<sup>3</sup> Torbjorn L. Knutsen, “Halford J. Mackinder, Geopolitics, and the Heartland Thesis,” *Journal of The International History Review*, Vol.36, no. 5(2014), 835.

might then be in sight.” Ominously Mackinder indicated, “This might happen if Germany were to ally herself with Russia.”<sup>4</sup>

Mackinder recognized the potential colossal geopolitical repercussions of the then new Russian Trans-Siberian Railway linking the vast territory of Russia in Moscow at Yaroslavsky Vokzal, across all Russia around 6,000 miles to Vladivostok on the Pacific, and consequently admonished his high profile British listeners, “the century will not be old before all Asia is covered with railways,” creating a vast land area unconquerable to the naval fleets of the British and later, the US-Americans.<sup>5</sup> The Trans-Siberian Railway<sup>6</sup> was complete by 1916 but stopped at Vladivostok beginning in Moscow.<sup>7</sup>

### **British Empire was secured via Heartland Theory by keeping Germany and Russia at Bay**

Since that prophetic 1904 speech, the world has witnessed two World Wars that were primarily targeted at wrecking Germany and its perceived geopolitical threat to Anglo-American hegemonic aspirations, as well as shattering any peaceful initiative of a German-Russian Eurasia.<sup>8</sup> On behalf of British rulers Mackinder asserted an ideology of dominance via his dictum: ‘Who rules East Europe commands the Heartland; Who rules the heartland commands the

---

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

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> The Baikal-Amur Mainline (BAM), a railroad connected to the Trans-Siberian Railway in East Siberia and the Russian Far East, became the last large Soviet industrial project. It was constructed in the 1970s and finish in the 1980s, reaching into Mongolia and China; stopping in Beijing. Anton Bendarzsevszkij, “100 Years of the Trans-Siberian Railway,” *Geopolitika*, February 22, 2018, Available at: <http://www.geopolitika.hu/en/2018/02/22/100-years-of-the-trans-siberian-railway/> (accessed on 5 January 2021).

<sup>7</sup> Anton Bendarzsevszkij, “100 Years of the Trans-Siberian Railway,” *Geopolitika*, February 22, 2018, Available at: <http://www.geopolitika.hu/en/2018/02/22/100-years-of-the-trans-siberian-railway/Bendarzsevszkij> (accessed on 5 January 2021).

<sup>8</sup> Engdahl, Ibid.

World Island; Who rules the World Island commands the World.<sup>9</sup> His Heartland was the “pivot area” consisting of the core of Eurasia, while all of Europe and Asia is the World Island.<sup>10</sup> This theory conceptualized the great British, and later Anglo-American anxiety of an upcoming land power capable of connecting Eurasia, which disadvantaged the naval powers.<sup>11</sup> The fear was that Russia and Germany could form a kind of union or alliance; they would then constitute an “unconquerable fortress,” as Mackinder’s premonition warned. This alliance would be formidable because Germany would supply the technology and capital while Russia would unleash its vast strategic resources including its manpower. According to the theory, this effective collusion would lead to the rise of these two seemingly unstoppable land powers.

When Germany was caught in a two-front war during the 1<sup>st</sup> World War it tried to extricate itself by supporting the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia, which occurred in 1917. German intelligence put Lenin into a closed Train towards Moscow in order to foment a violent Revolution to overthrow the Czar. The idea was to make sure that the new Russia, led by Lenin, would no longer be interested in fighting against Germany on the eastern front.<sup>12</sup> Russia had suffered humiliating losses in this war and one of Lenin’s promises was to get Russia out of this terrible

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<sup>9</sup> Peter Dale Scott, “The Real Grand Chessboard and the Profiteers of War,” *Global Research*, December 25, 2013, Available at: <https://www.globalresearch.ca/the-real-grand-chessboard-and-the-profiteers-of-war/14672,%202009> (accessed on 10 January 2021).

<sup>10</sup> Matt Rosenberg, “What is Mackinder’s Heartland Theory?,” *Thought Co.*, September 10, 2018, Available at: <https://www.thoughtco.com/what-is-mackinders-heartland-theory-4068393/> (accessed on 10 January 2021).

<sup>11</sup> Pepe Escobar, “Back in the (Great) Game: The Revenge of Eurasian Land Powers,” *Consortium News*, August 29, 2018, Available at: <https://consortiumnews.com/2018/08/29/back-in-the-great-game-the-revenge-of-eurasian-land-powers/> (accessed on 12 January 2021).

<sup>12</sup> Michael Pearson, *The Sealed Train: Lenin’s Secret Journey from Switzerland to Russia to start the Bolshevik Revolution* (New York: G.P. Putnam’s Sons, 1975), 12.

war.<sup>13</sup> In the end, Germany was still defeated, and Russia experienced a violent Bolshevik revolution.

By 1919, as the Versailles Peace Treaty negotiations were ongoing, Mackinder “urged the creation of a tier of independent states to separate Germany and Russia, much along the lines finally imposed by the peace treaty.”<sup>14</sup> His prophetic predictive capability was uncanny, as his 1919 book *Democratic Ideals and Reality* warned of a chaotic Germany that would result in dictatorship. In 1924, cognizant of World War I, he published his prudent theory that foreshadowed the Atlantic community, which engendered after the Second World War, and became a military fact with the establishment of NATO. “In his hypothesis he argued that the power of the Eurasian heartland could be offset by Western Europe and North America, which ‘constitute for many purposes a single community of nations.’”<sup>15</sup> Some observers also credit him with anticipating the rise of Hitler, although this is refuted by Crone.<sup>16</sup> After Germany and Russia had suffered immensely in World War I, their political systems became radicalized because of it; therefore, fascism began its reign in Germany and communism became the political system of the Soviet Union (SU). This led to both of them being declared almost universally as outlaw states by all Western countries; they thus saw it in their mutual interest to cooperate with each other, which led to the 1922 Rapallo Treaty in which Germany exchanged technology for resources with the SU. This rapprochement policy worried the Anglo-American establishment and it made sure that it failed. Since it was mainly about economic and military strengthening of both Germany and the Soviet Union; Germany was offered capital

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<sup>13</sup> Stephen Broadberry and Mark Harrison, eds., *The Economics of World War I* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 21.

<sup>14</sup> Geoffrey Sloan, “Sir Halford J. Mackinder: the heartland theory then and now,” *The Journal of Strategic Studies*, vol. 22, no. 2-3 (1999), 15.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

from the US via the Dawes Plan, which made it change its course, while the Red Scare in the West and especially in the US made the SU into an ideological enemy of capitalistic, democratic, and pluralistic Western countries.<sup>17</sup> Mackinder was not only seen as a prominent geographer but also as the father of Geo-Strategy of his time and beyond. He was part of a closed circle of individuals that pledged their lives towards maintaining the British Empire. When, in 1904, Halford Mackinder's dictum was announced the power of Britain was already declining, especially with regard to a rising Germany. Germany was the China of its day, at the turn of the last century; it was seen by Britain as a revisionist power that challenged Britain for hegemony in mainland Europe. Just like China is busy in its enormous BRI project, even before WWI, Germany had an ambitious plan to build the Berlin-Bagdad railway. It started building it from 1903-1940. It is thus no coincidence that in 1904 a British counter strategy was developed. The Berlin-Bagdad railway was seen as a threat to British influence and also US interests,<sup>18</sup> just as the BRI today is perceived for the US, as it would have connected the energetic German economy to the immensely oil rich Middle East.

There is evidence that Anglo-American strategy was to embroil Germany, the rising power of that era, in a big war.<sup>19</sup> WW I served this strategic agenda, as Germany was faced with a two-front war between the UK, France, and later the US in the West and Russia in the East. When Germany was starting to win this horrendous war, the US transferred two million fresh soldiers into the slaughter in 1917, thereby tipping the scales in favor of the (Anglo-American) Entente

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<sup>17</sup> Mansur Khan, *Die Geheime Geschichte der Amerikanischen Kriege: Verschwörung und Krieg in der US-Außenpolitik*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed.(Tübingen: Grabert Verlag 2003), 13.

<sup>18</sup> Arthur P. Maloney, *The Berlin-Baghdad Railway as a cause of World War I* (Virginia: Centre for Naval Analyses, 1984), 3.

<sup>19</sup> G. Docherty and J. MacGregor, *Hidden history: The Secret Origins of the First World War* (Edinburgh: Mainstream Publishing, 2014), 48.



alliance. This event, more than any other, led to the German defeat, which subsequently led to a disarmed Germany. But a disarmed Germany, as all powers knew, was only a temporary solution, and hence Germany started a second attempt to reassert itself.<sup>20</sup> At the Versailles conference in 1919, British Prime Minister Lloyd Georg even stated that if the Versailles Treaty is not revoked or modified there will be another war in 20 years,<sup>21</sup> hence in 1939, which was the exact year that WW II started.

A defeated Germany gave Britain some respite, but this condition was unacceptable to the leaders of Germany, and it would not last. So, the Western powers became apprehensive when the Hitler-Stalin Pact was announced on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of August 1939. The massive alliance between a huge Soviet resource juggernaut and a rapid technically advanced industrializing Germany was seen as a disastrous outcome of power politics of the 1930s in Eurasia. And predictably an Anglo-American Alliance swung into action once the UK was threatened with military defeat, first in Dunkirk and not much later during the aerial battle for Britain, in the summer of 1940.<sup>22</sup> It must be realized that the Berlin-Bagdad railway project was completed in 1940,<sup>23</sup> however; WW II abolished it.

After WW II, Germany was not only divided but the US driven Marshal Plan and NATO organization were imposed on a defeated West Germany. The purpose of NATO was best summarized by its initial Secretary General Hastings Ismay, when he declared its mission was “to keep the Russians out, the Americans in, and the Germans

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<sup>20</sup> Mansur Khan, *Die Geheime Geschichte der Amerikanischen Kriege*, 3rd ed. (Tübingen: Grabert Verlag, 2003), 18.

<sup>21</sup> Des Griffin, *Descent into Slavery* (Clackmaras OR: Emissary Publications, 1996), 117.

<sup>22</sup> Mansur Khan, *Die Geheime Geschichte der Amerikanischen Kriege*, 8.

<sup>23</sup> Ulrich Trumpener, *Germany and the Ottoman Empire, 1914-1918* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016), 316.

down.”<sup>24</sup> This was again in line with the Heartland Theory, as the US abruptly ended its WW II alliance with the Soviet Union that was crucial in defeating NAZI Germany, once this was accomplished. It then took the lead in not only ostracizing the Soviets from the West but made sure that a new German-Soviet-Russia rapprochement was prevented. This can be seen especially when a rejuvenated West Germany via its economic miracle, began the Ostpolitik<sup>25</sup> in the late 1960s. West Germany sought to have better relations with the Soviet East Bloc nations as well as with the SU. This led to predictable stern warnings from Washington and covert action and sabotage.<sup>26</sup>

There is also a covert history of Anglo-American intrigues other than war to prevent the rise of Germany in the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century. These go back at least to the Rapollo Treaty of 1924, when Germany and Russia opted for closer economic and military cooperation. Throughout the Cold War, whenever Germany tried to establish economic relations with the SU, Washington would intervene in order to sabotage such relations. This occurred during the failed 1978 oil pipeline deal between Germany, the Soviets and Iran<sup>27</sup> and is still ongoing in the current US attempts to use sanctions against the Nordstream2 pipeline project between Germany and Russia, which is set to deliver Russian gas to Germany.<sup>28</sup> With regard to the Sino-Russia challenge to the US's hegemonic status it has not been able to successfully sabotage these efforts as the Anglo-Americans simply

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<sup>24</sup> Richard Hurowitz, “What is NATO for?” *Washington Examiner*, July 25, 2018.

<sup>25</sup> Ostpolitik is a German term for (West) Germany's policies toward the East meaning mostly East Germany and the S.U.; it's a rapprochement policy that aimed to get the required energy resources from this part of the world, while trying to maintain manageable and decent relations with East Germany.

<sup>26</sup> Mansur Khan, *Die Geheime Geschichte der Amerikanischen Kriege*, 19.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> Johanna Ross, “Why Joe Biden Will Continue the US War on Nord Stream 2 till the Bitter End,” *Info Brics*, February 26, 2021, Available at:

<http://infobrics.org/post/32870/> (accessed on 20 January 2021).

don't have the same leverage against these nations. Nonetheless, they continue to sanction Russia, while doing what they can to prevent China's BRI project from becoming a success story.

The Heartland Theory was also employed in the Cold War, as it was not just about containing East Bloc Socialism/Communism; it was also to prevent any alliance or union between West Germany and the SU. Whenever West German leaders made advances towards Moscow, like Willy Brandt or Helmut Schmidt in 1978, Washington threatened them with, among other things, taking away their nuclear umbrella, thus leaving Germany's security exposed to the Red Threat.<sup>29</sup>

### **China and Russia as Part of the Heartland Theory**

Shrewdly Mackinder also asserted that a union or alliance of Russia and China would create another unconquerable fortress.<sup>30</sup> Most of China occupied a portion of what Mackinder called the "inner crescent," a semicircular territory bordering the Heartland, but which had access to the sea. Mackinder advised the strategists of his day to "no longer think of Europe apart from Asia and Africa." "The Old World," he wrote, "has become insular, or in other words a unit, incomparably the largest geographical unit on our globe." He called that geographical unit the "World-Island" and "Great Continent," and warned the insular powers that they must "reckon with the possibility that a large part of the Great Continent might someday be united under a single sway, and that an invincible sea-power might be based upon it."<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Mansur Khan, *Die Geheime*, 15.

<sup>30</sup> F. P. Sempa, "Is China bidding for the Heartland? Beijing doesn't have to choose between Land and Sea Predominance. It could have both," *The Diplomat*, January 21, 2015.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

After World War II, as the Soviet Union had conquered most of Eastern Europe and in the 1950s allied itself with China, Raymond Aron worried in his book *The Century of Total War* that “Russia has in fact nearly achieved the ‘world island’ which Mackinder considered the necessary and almost sufficient condition for universal empire.”<sup>32</sup>

### **The demanded division of Germany and Europe via Heartland Theory halted Soviet ambitions in Europe in 1942**

When *Democratic Ideals and Reality* was published again by 1942, the crucially influential US *Foreign Affairs* journal requested Mackinder, in 1943, to provide his insights on geopolitics concerning an anticipated allied victory in WW II. In “The Round World and the Winning of the Peace,” Mackinder elucidated how a defeated Germany needed to be contained. In the West, he proposed France must be constituted as a bridgehead, while the UK’s island should serve as an unsinkable aircraft carrier, finally a backup of manpower, industry, and agriculture needs to be established on the US’ East coast as well as in Canada. With regard to the East, in terms of Germany, Mackinder gave a stern premonition: If “the Soviet Union emerges from this war as conqueror of Germany, she must rank as the greatest land power on the globe.”<sup>33</sup>

In 1945, when annihilation of NAZI Germany was accomplished, Mackinder’s Theory foreshadowed the emerging East-West confrontation that would quickly morph into the Cold War. When the US’s elite tried to manage affairs with the Soviets, East Coast academics scrutinized Mackinder’s work, while policymakers listened to them. Mackinder’s ideas even reached the doyen of the strategic and diplomatic community George F. Kennan, who was to become the architect of the US’s Containment policy throughout the Cold War. On the 6<sup>th</sup> of March 1947, Halford Mackinder died and six days later, on

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> P. Tinline, “The father of geopolitics,” *New Statesman*, January 30, 2019.

the 12<sup>th</sup> of March US President Truman announced his Truman Doctrine,<sup>34</sup> which requested US \$400 million from Congress to counter and suppress any uprisings in Greece and Turkey.<sup>35</sup>

Even before this occurred, the US's power elite along with the UK knew that this potential Heartland had to be contained as the Soviets (Russia) had established a protectorate over Eastern Europe including East Germany, thus the Containment policy of the Truman administration was quickly implemented surrounding the entire East Bloc Socialist countries with different treaties that were military alliances.<sup>36</sup>

The crucial importance of West Germany was shown by the fact that on the 6<sup>th</sup> of May 1955 it was incorporated into NATO<sup>37</sup> and subsequently only 8 days later, on the 14<sup>th</sup> of May 1955 the Soviet Union countered this move with its Warsaw Pact treaty organization.<sup>38</sup>

### **The US Led Neo-Liberal Order after the Cold War**

With the sudden demise of the SU, at the very end of 1991, notions of US Unipolarity and hegemony were commonplace and for roughly a decade the US remained not only the sole Superpower, but its ideology in the form of neo-liberal capitalism based on massive and extensive privatization and deregulation coupled with 'democratization' reigned virtually unchallenged in terms of other ideologies.

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> Mansur Khan, *Die Geheime*, 30.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> Helga Haftendorn, "Germany's accession to NATO: 50 years on," *Nato Review*, June 1, 2005, Available at:

<https://www.nato.int/docu/review/articles/2005/06/01/germanys-accession-to-nato-50-years-on/index.html> (accessed on 8 February 2021).

<sup>38</sup> Gerard Holden, *The Warsaw Pact: Soviet Security and Bloc Politics* (Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 1989), 138.

Francis Fukuyama's article released in the summer of 1989, prior to the fall of the Berlin Wall, was even about the future being all about democracy and 'free trade' based capitalism and was thus called *The End of History*. Fukuyama, who worked for both the State Department and Rand Corporation, was overly optimistic that once consumerist capitalism and democracy reign, humanity would have reached its highest potential, and hence, global historical evolution would simply end.<sup>39</sup> In his analysis he relied heavily on a shallow interpretation of Hegel and Plato.

However, history tends to be rather unpredictable; the initial changes made by Russia, in the early 1990s, towards privatized and deregulated capitalism coupled with some form of democracy would soon grind to a halt and be replaced by so-called managed democracy and authoritarianism. The irony is that Putin as an authoritarian ruler remains very popular in Russia.<sup>40</sup> As for China (BBC, 2018),<sup>41</sup> it never decided to democratize, seeing such a move as a dangerous liability, while its form of capitalism remains firmly state controlled, with socialist tendencies not entirely abandoned.

In December 2007, the Great Recession struck the US, due to its own reckless policies of brazen banks deregulation that gave credit to virtually anyone that wanted to turn their homes into cash real estate balance sheets. Interest rates were set deliberately low in order to

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<sup>39</sup> Francis Fukuyama, "Biography," *Stanford University*, November 2020, Available at: <https://fukuyama.stanford.edu/> (accessed on 8 February 2021).

<sup>40</sup> HollyEllyatt, "Russians give Putin the chance to stay in power until 2036 after historic vote," *CNBC*, July 2, 2020, Available at: <https://www.cnn.com/2020/07/02/russia-vote-victory-for-putin-who-could-now-stay-in-power-until-2036.html> (accessed on 8 February 2021).

<sup>41</sup> G. Williams Domhoff, *Myth of Liberal Ascendancy - Corporate Dominance from the Great Depression to the Great Recession* (New York: Routledge, 2014), 32; Andrew Kliman, *The Failure of Capitalist Production - Underlying Causes of the Great Recession* (Pluto Press, 2011), 13.

encourage consumer credit binge consumption.<sup>42</sup>

China was one of the few countries that escaped the impact of this huge recession, which according to experts could have easily resulted in a global depression and was thus often seen as having the safer economic system with more growth producing capacity, while simultaneously also gaining in growth rates vis-à-vis the US.

### **The Economic Rise of China as Challenging US Hegemonically established World Order**

As predicted by the Heartland Theory, a meaningful alliance between Russia and China was a nightmare scenario for the US power elites. Should this occur, the US would face an “unconquerable fortress,” however, far less in military terms than in terms of economic power.

China has grown from an underdeveloped country during the Mao Era, into the US's primary economic competitor. The share of China's global GDP since 1992, rose from below 1% to 16%. At the same time, the US's possession of world GDP declined in 1992, from 26% to 24% in 2017.<sup>43</sup> According to the IMF's 2019 ranking, the US's global GDP accounts for 23.6% of the world's share while China's is 15.5% of the world.<sup>44</sup>

However, it can be convincingly argued that going by Purchasing Power Parity (PPP) of GDP is a more accurate assessment, and when this is done China is clearly the biggest economy in the world with a

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<sup>42</sup> Ryan Hass, “Why Has China Become such a Big Political Issue?,” *Brookings*, November 15, 2019, Available at: <https://www.brookings.edu/policy2020/votervital/why-has-china-become-such-a-big-political-issue/> (accessed on 8 February 2021).

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> Caleb Silver, “The Top 20 Economies in the World, Ranking the Richest Countries in the World,” *Investopia*, Dec 24, 2020, Available at: <https://www.investopedia.com/insights/worlds-top-economies/#countries-by-gdp> (accessed on 10 February 2021).

GDP (PPP) of US \$23.52 trillion to the US's US \$21.44 trillion.<sup>45</sup> If compared at PPP then China overtook the US back in 2013, and is now 25% bigger than the US economy.<sup>46</sup> Equally important is the fact that China's growth rate is still well above the US's at 6.4% in 2019, while the US's was 3% in 2019.<sup>47</sup> While the pandemic drastically slowed economic growth globally, it was China that not only managed to overcome the pandemic but also took an impressive lead economically when compared to the rest of the world. China is the only major economy that boasted ending 2020 with a 2.3% growth, while the rest of its main economic competitors show steep declines for the US and EU, of 25% to 35%, and 10% to 15%, respectively.<sup>48</sup>

Indicative of this accomplishment is the fact that at the end of 2020, China's production and services were restored to 100%.<sup>49</sup> A report by the BBC even predicts that due to the pandemic China is set to surpass the US economy by 2028; this would mean that it would accomplish this five year earlier than usually forecasted. The report stated that due to China's skillful handling of the pandemic it has boosted its relative growth compared to the US and EU for the coming years. "The Covid-19 pandemic and corresponding economic fallout have certainly tipped this rivalry in China's favor."<sup>50</sup> Beijing's share of the world economy jumped from a mere 3.6% in 2000 to 17.8%

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<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

<sup>46</sup> Edie Purdie, "Tracking GDP in PPP Terms Shows Rapid Rise of China and India," *World Bank...Blogs*, October 16, 2019, Available at: <https://blogs.worldbank.org/opendata/tracking-gdp-ppp-terms-shows-rapid-rise-china-and-india> (accessed on 10 February 2021).

<sup>47</sup> Brenda P. Wenning, "China vs. U.S.A.," *The Patriot Ledger*, Dec 23, 2019.

<sup>48</sup> Peter Koenig, "China – Leading to World Recovery – And Beyond," *Global Times*, March 12, 2021.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> "Chinese economy to overtake US 'by 2028' due to Covid," *BBC News Service*, December 26, 2020, Available at: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-china-55454146> (accessed on 10 April 2021).



currently and it will become a "high-income economy" by 2023, according to this BBC report.

Future predictions are also clearly favoring China over the US in growth rates, as the Chinese economy is estimated to grow by 5.7% annually until 2025, and 4.5% annually from 2026-2030. While in the US even after 'a strong post-pandemic rebound in 2021', the US economy will only grow by about 1.9% annually from 2022-24 and then slow to 1.6% in the years afterwards.<sup>51</sup> Shocking are the numbers of jobs wiped out due to the pandemic in the US, as a recent report put this number at 74.4 million people that became unemployed since the pandemic struck.<sup>52</sup> These citizens are also running out of money. Put into perspective this means that out of a total population of 331 million about 22% are now jobless. This is around the same as during the Great Depression of the 1930s, where, at its height, about 24.9% were unemployed.<sup>53</sup>

Overall, the assessment is that the pandemic for the US economy is a much bigger blow than for China's; this is also indicated by the macro-economic numbers, where the US economy fell by 2.3% in 2020, while China's expanded by 2.3% during the pandemic.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> Brian Root and Lena Simet, "United States: Pandemic Impact on People in Poverty Current System Leaves Needs Unmet; Lasting Reforms Needed," *Human Rights Watch*, March 2, 2021, Available at: <https://www.hrw.org/news/2021/03/02/united-states-pandemic-impact-people-poverty> (accessed on 18 February 2021).

<sup>53</sup> Greg Iacurci, "Unemployment is nearing Great Depression levels. Here's how the eras are similar — and different," *CNBC*, May 19 2020, Available at: <https://www.cnn.com/2020/05/19/unemployment-today-vs-the-great-depression-how-do-the-eras-compare.html> (accessed on 18 February 2021).

<sup>54</sup> Evelyn Cheng and Yen Nee Lee, "New chart shows China could overtake the U.S. as the world's largest economy earlier than expected," *CNBC*, January 31<sup>st</sup> 2021, Available at: <https://www.cnn.com/2021/02/01/new-chart-shows-china-gdp-could-overtake-us-sooner-as-covid-took-its-toll.html> (accessed on 18 February 2021).

Even more dismaying is that US infrastructure is many decades behind China's. US infrastructure is in a dire state, as the ASCE (American Society of Civil Engineers') 2017 Infrastructure Report Card gave the US infrastructure a D+ grade, which was the same grade it received in 2013.<sup>55</sup> The ASCE has calculated that some US \$4.5 trillion need to be spent by 2025 to repair the nation's highways, bridges, roads, dams, airports, schools, etc.<sup>56</sup> If one looks at the two Great Powers the pictures that emerge could hardly be more diametrically opposed to each other: On the one hand there's China, a nation that has been the most populous country on earth whose economy was charging ahead, for 30 years, at nearly double digit GDP numbers. Visitors say that if you visit China and then come back to the same urban areas six months later you won't recognize the area anymore as there are almost constant building projects ongoing 24/7. China's (urban) airports, harbors, ports, shopping malls, roads, hospitals, and even bus terminals are mostly all new and state of the art.

When one looks to the US, we see old airports barely managing affairs; no wonder the state of aviation in the US received a D grade from the ASCE. The energy sector even scored a dismal D+, as it is out of date. Roads got a D as well, drinking water a D grade, as many of the millions of pipes delivering the water are almost 100 years old. Alarming schools get a D+ rating. The public's system for transportation gets a D-, as per the ratings by the ASCE.<sup>57</sup> While China boasts brand new maglev (electro-magnetic) trains that attain amazing speeds; the US's Amtrak trains look like they are from the 1950s and operate accordingly. An assessment is therefore simple: China is

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<sup>55</sup> The ASCE issues its reports every 4 years.

<sup>56</sup> Cadie Thompson and Mark Matousek, "America's infrastructure is decaying — here's a look at how terrible things have gotten," *Business Insider*, February 5, 2019, Available at: <https://www.businessinsider.com/asce-gives-us-infrastructure-a-d-2017-3> (accessed on 25 February 2021).

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

modernizing at breakneck speed, while the US is hopelessly lagging behind in virtually every category of vital infrastructure. And on top of that China is laying roads, bridges, ports, and railways all across Eurasia. How could leaders of the US then not fear that their nation is bound to become more and more irrelevant in terms of power and influence in the near future?

### **Decline of US's Hegemonic Status and US Strategy for Re-Establishing its Hegemony**

At this juncture, the view that the era of American hegemony is coming to an end became increasingly popular even in the US itself.<sup>58</sup> Scholars and experts have suggested this may mean the downfall of rules-based liberal global order, which was constructed by the US, after the Second World War.

It is, therefore, not surprising that while the Great Recession plagued the Obama Administration, it decided on a crucial shift in its strategy. In 2011, President Obama as well as Secretary of State Hillary Clinton announced that far too much treasure had been spent fighting wars based in Afghanistan and Iraq in the global war against terror, while the real threat to the US came from the Pacific region.<sup>59</sup> The Pacific region was a thinly disguised way of meaning China. A gigantic reallocation of resources and the US Navy is now devoted and shifted towards China. China was now seen not as a Strategic Partner, as during the Clinton administration, but as a Strategic Competitor.<sup>60</sup> This

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<sup>58</sup> Alfred McCoy, "American Hegemony Is Ending With a Whimper, Not a Bang," *The Nation*, January 29, 2021, Jonathan Kirshner, "Gone But Not Forgotten: Trump's Long Shadow and the End of American Credibility," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol.100, no.2(2021), 27.

<sup>59</sup> Mansur Khan, "The Making and Coming of the Second Cold War – US Foreign Policy towards China," *Margalla Papers*, Vol. XVII, no.1 (2013), 190.

<sup>60</sup> R. Baum, "From "Strategic Partners" to "Strategic Competitors": George W. Bush and the Politics of U.S. China Policy," *Journal of East Asian Studies*, Vol. 1, no.2 (2001), 213.

strategy has remained constant regardless of party affiliations since the Democratic administration left office, Donald Trump from the Republican Party has not only continued it, but arguably exacerbated it.

In Donald Trump's national security strategy doctrine of December 2017, he labeled China a strategic "competitor," and blamed China for upholding a "repressive vision" while following economic aggression designed to weaken the US. While this national security strategy contained a range of generalized threats, most of the doctrine's criticism was aimed at China and Russia, which are labeled as "revisionist" powers trying to 'shape a world antithetical to US values and interests.'<sup>61</sup> President Trump exclaimed after issuing the NSS: "This strategy recognizes that, whether we like it or not, we are engaged in a new era of competition, ... We ... face rival powers, Russia and China, that seek to challenge American influence, values and wealth."<sup>62</sup>

The national security strategy is required by law; it is seen as a blueprint for the US diplomatic and military leadership as they plan, among other things, how to confront global threats. Since Ronald Reagan every president has contributed at least one, but noticeable is how Trump's focus is far more deeply grounded in economic issues, while also taking a tougher position on China. In fact, he made sure that economic warfare is the main strategy to be used against China, as the US fights for retaining its preeminent status in the world, by asserting: "Today, we are declaring that America is in the game and America is going to win, ... For the first time, American strategy recognizes that economic security is national security."<sup>63</sup> The main argument Washington uses to convince people is that the US-Chinese

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<sup>61</sup> Demetri Sevastopulo, "Trump labels China a strategic 'competitor': Beijing accused of pursuing policies of economic aggression to weaken US," *Financial Times*, December 19, 2017.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

relationship is unfair and 'out of kilter.'<sup>64</sup> It's based on accusations that China has violated patent laws and stolen secrets, which disregard those historically rising and developing nations, have done this, including the US with regard to the UK, after it declared its independence.

However, Trump's trade war turned out to be a fiasco, as it espoused an autarchic America First stratagem initiating an expensive trade war with China. Mutually intensifying tariffs in a two-year period harmed the US economy to such an extent that Trump relented, in effect admitting defeat in January 2020, by signing an agreement that repealed the most excessive US duties for China's unenforceable promise to purchase more US products.<sup>65</sup>

Almost adding insult to injury, China would, in November 2020, lead 15 Asia-Pacific states in signing an economic partnership, which promised to engender "the world's largest free-trade zone, encompassing 2.2 billion people and nearly a third of the global economy."<sup>66</sup>

As if that was not demeaning enough, only a month later Xi Jinping accomplished 'a geopolitical coup' by obtaining a landmark accord with EU leaders for the closer incorporation of their financial services. It gives EU banks easier access to Beijing's market, in effect drawing Europe much closer to China. It was seen as such an affront by Washington that Jake Sullivan, President Biden's National Security Advisor, publicly told NATO allies first to consult with the new administration before they sign the deal, but they simply ignored Washington. "Indeed, this treaty is arguably the biggest breach in the

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<sup>64</sup> Ibid.

<sup>65</sup> Alfred McCoy, "American Hegemony Is Ending With a Whimper, Not a Bang," *The Nation*, January 29, 2021.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid, Section 11.

NATO alliance since that mutual defense pact was formed more than 70 years ago.”<sup>67</sup>

It would be difficult to downplay the shocking impact of these two deals on the power status of the US. As indicated in a January 2021 article by *The Nation*:

...those two agreements will give China preferential access to nearly half of all world trade (without even factoring in the still-developing Belt and Road project). In a diplomatic masterstroke, Beijing exploited Trump’s absence from the international arena to negotiate agreements that could, along with that Belt and Road Initiative, steer a growing share of the Eurasian continent’s capital and commerce toward China. In the years to come, Beijing’s inclusiveness could well mean Washington’s exclusion from much of the burgeoning trade that will continue to make Eurasia the epicenter of global economics.<sup>68</sup>

Former US Assistant Secretary of State Wess Mitchell for European and Eurasian Affairs revealed, in a Senate hearing, the real reasons of the Anglo-American sanctions and orchestrations against the Russian Federation and China. These show that allegations of Russian involvement in the US elections are merely propagandistic deception, used to divert attention away from actual US geopolitical strategy. Unsurprisingly, his honest exposure was censored by the State Department. His remarks make him almost a Mackinder pupil, by admitting:

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<sup>67</sup> Ibid, Section 12.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid, Section 13.

Contrary to the hopeful assumptions of previous administrations, Russia and China are serious competitors that are building up the material and ideological wherewithal to contest US primacy and leadership in the 21st Century. It continues to be among the foremost national security interests of the United States to prevent the domination of the Eurasian landmass by hostile powers. The central aim of the administration's foreign policy is to prepare our nation to confront this challenge by systematically strengthening the military, economic and political fundaments of American power.<sup>69</sup>

### **US Economic Warfare against Russia and China**

Since the Anglo-American elite fought two World Wars in order to sabotage the covering of all of Eurasia with railways, it would be naïve to believe that they will permit China's development of an even more gigantic 'railway' project. History is repeating itself here and with regard to Russia, once again. The US's orchestrated Ukraine coup of 2014 February was clearly aimed at constructing a deep division between Russia and Germany, because; at this juncture Ukraine constituted Germany's primary energy pipeline connecting the industry of Germany with Russia's gas. Once again plenty of German exports ranging from machine tools to automobiles and hyper-speed trains are required to construct the resurgent Russian economy quickly, which was altering the geopolitical balance of power in favor of an evolving German-Russian based Eurasia. This outcome is obviously perceived as a loss for Washington's establishment.<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> Engdahl, "Behind the Anglo-American War on Russia.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid, 2<sup>nd</sup> Heading, 5<sup>th</sup> Section.

The student of Mackinder and founder of *Stratfor* George Friedman exposed the fears of the US in an interview back in 2015, when he stated: "...the most dangerous potential alliance, from the perspective of the United States, was considered to be an alliance between Russia and Germany. This would be an alliance of German technology and capital with Russian natural and human resources."<sup>71</sup> In his testimony to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on 21 August 2009, Wess Mitchell gave a surprisingly candid proclamation of actual US geopolitical strategy via Russia. In fact, it was so honest that the *State Department* swiftly expunged the original version on their website. Here is the gist of the non-sanitized version summarized by author F. William Engdahl's article *Behind the Anglo-American War on Russia*:

Now Wess Mitchell's admission that the US strategic policy is to 'prevent domination of Eurasia by hostile powers' tells Russia and tells China, had they had any doubts, that the war is about a fundamental geopolitical contest to the end over who will dominate Eurasia—it's legitimate inhabitants, centered around China and Russia, or an imperial Anglo-American axis that has been behind two world wars in the past century. Because Washington mismanaged the Russian "Reset" that was meant to draw Russia into the NATO web, Washington today is forced to wage a war on two fronts — China and Russia — war it is not prepared to win.<sup>72</sup>

Political and Geostrategic analyst F. William Engdahl summarizes what is at stake for US Grand Strategy with regard to the Heartland Theory:

What the world has experienced since that forewarning 1904 London speech of Mackinder is two

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<sup>71</sup> Ibid, 2<sup>nd</sup> Heading, 6<sup>th</sup> Section.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid, Last Paragraph.



world wars, primarily aimed at breaking the German nation and its geopolitical threat to Anglo-American global domination, and to destroy the prospect of a peaceful emergence of a German-Russian Eurasia that, as Mackinder and British geopolitical strategists saw it, would put the “empire of the world” in sight. Those two world wars in effect sabotaged the “covering of all Eurasia with railways.” Until, that is, in 2013 when China first proposed covering all Eurasia with a network of high-speed railways and infrastructure including energy pipelines and deep-water ports and Russia agreed to join the effort.<sup>73</sup>

This means that what was once *the* Siberian Railroad Project at the turn of the last century, and the Berlin-Bagdad Railway project is now the BRI initiative of China with the notable difference that the BRI is far more ambitious than both of those 20<sup>th</sup> century projects combined.

As asserted, the Anglo-American power elite will wage war against this project, in a different fashion than during the last two centuries (1896-1940). The reason for this is simply that technology has advanced to such a level that fighting kinetic wars doesn't make much sense anymore between developed nations as they are too destructive, but there exists far more destructive technology on all sides of the Great Powers: US, Russia and China. One could thus argue that the atomic balance of terror has been replaced by another balance of terror, which is partially based in next generation technology, known as Full Spectrum Dominance, including proxy terrorism.

Back in 1997, the prominent Geo-strategist Zbigniew Brzezinski warned his audience what was at stake in his book *The Grand Chessboard*:

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<sup>73</sup> Ibid, 2<sup>nd</sup> Heading, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Section.

In that context, how America 'manages' Eurasia is critical. A power that dominates Eurasia would control two of the world's three most advanced and economically productive regions. A mere glance at the map also suggests that control over Eurasia would almost automatically entail Africa's subordination, rendering the Western Hemisphere and Oceania (Australia) geopolitically peripheral to the world's central continent. About 75 per cent of the world's people live in Eurasia, and most of the world's physical wealth is there as accounts for 60 per cent of the world's GNP and about three- well, both in its enterprises and underneath its soil. Eurasia fourths of the world's known energy resources.<sup>74</sup>

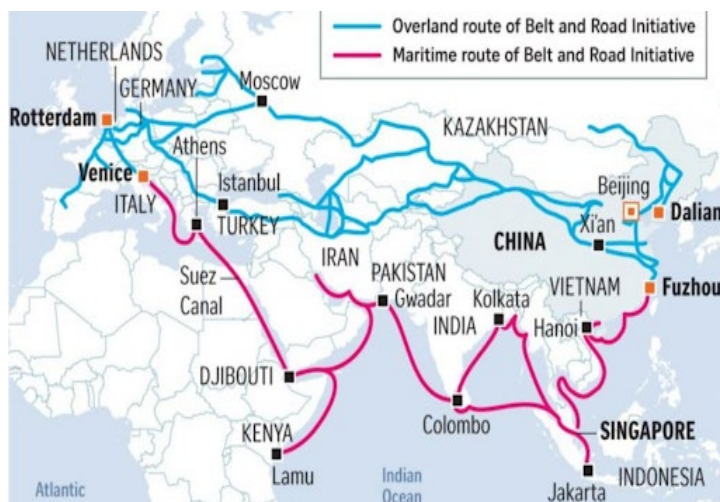


Figure: 1.1. China Belt and Road Initiative Map

Source: Asia Green Real Estate<sup>75</sup>

<sup>74</sup> Zbigniew Brzezinski, *The Grand Chessboard: American Primacy and Its Geostrategic Imperatives* (New York: Basic Books, 1997), 31.

<sup>75</sup> "The Belt-and-Road initiative and the rising importance of China's Western cities," *Asia Green Real Estate*, Available at: <https://www.asiagreen.com/en/news->

This map depicts how the completed BRI would cover and connect all vital parts of Asia, Europe, and Africa, where the overwhelming number of resources (both material and human) reside, including the most crucial trade routes and global markets, only excluding the US as a market. The Chinese leaders expect that by the year 2049, which is also the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Communist founding of the PRC, that the BRI would be fully implemented.

### **Concluding Thoughts**

It was no coincidence that Halford Mackinder asserted his Heartland Theory in 1904, in a then secret meeting, because; he was reacting to the Berlin-Bagdad Railway project, which started one year earlier in 1903. Already in 1919, with a defeated Germany at Versailles, Mackinder advocated “a buffer of Eastern European states between Germany and Russia, and, more alarmingly, a wholesale population switch.”<sup>76</sup> This was merely an early version of NATO and US Containment strategy, which at the time couldn't be realized.

However, today the stakes are much higher for the US's power status, as the BRI dwarfs the old German attempts at traversing railroads over a limited stretch of Eurasia. Completion of such a gigantic project is seen as an almost mortal threat by the US's power elite. As explained, US Grand Strategy has, for at least the last 120 years, been dedicated to preventing any such consolidation of the huge power potential of Eurasia. As the US is already suffering from a prolonged gradual economic decline, primarily due to the rapid rise of China over the last 40 years, and recently due to the devastating effects of the pandemic, any further erosion of US global power and influence is completely unacceptable to Washington's plans for

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[insights/the-belt-and-road-initiative-and-the-rising-importance-of-china-s-western-cities](#) (accessed on 8 March 2021).

<sup>76</sup> Phil Tinline, “The father of geopolitics,” *New Statesman*, January 30, 2019.

sustaining its world dominating ambitions. The biggest and immediate fear for Washington is that a world with a BRI would make the US more irrelevant, especially in terms of economic power and influence. The map clearly displays that world trade would shift even further away from the US towards Asia (primarily China, Japan and Russia) and the EU (primarily Germany and France). Therefore Trump declared a geo-economic war between the US and China in NSS 2017,<sup>77</sup> and sanctioned Russia.

The only sector where the US still maintains an impressive lead is the military, as it outspends the next 10 countries on defense combined.<sup>78</sup> But this is definitely a mixed blessing, because despite the fact that the US won the Cold War against the economically isolated SU, China is totally integrated into the world economy and a major war between the US and China would simply be too devastating for both economies, as they are huge trading partners, despite Trump's failed trade war against China. In fact, the US is still China's number one trading nation, and while China is the US's third biggest trading partner, this last ranking is deceptive because all top three US trading nations are in the 14% portion trading category,<sup>79</sup> which makes these US trading partners so close that it would be more appropriate to speak of three very closely situated number one trading nations for US

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<sup>77</sup> "Breaking the Mould: Trump's China Policy," *Institute for Security & Development Policy*, February 2018, Available at: <https://isdp.se/publication/breaking-mould-trumps-china-policy/> (accessed on 18 March 2021).

<sup>78</sup> Peter G. Peterson, "U.S. Defense spending compared to other countries," *Peter G. Peterson Foundation*, May 13, 2020, Available at: [https://www.pgpf.org/chart-archive/0053\\_defense-comparison](https://www.pgpf.org/chart-archive/0053_defense-comparison) (accessed on 18 March 2021).

<sup>79</sup> "Top Trading Partners - March 2021," *Foreign Trade*, May, 2021, Available at: <https://www.census.gov/foreign-trade/statistics/highlights/toppartners.html> (accessed on 24 March 2021). Workman Daniel, "China's Top Trading Partners," *World's Top Exports*, 2021, Available at: <https://www.worldstopexports.com/chinas-top-import-partners/> (accessed on 24 March 2021).

trade. Also, China is the US's second largest financier for its debt burden, after Japan.<sup>80</sup>

Of course, the US still has the advantage when it comes to technology, but even here its once revered position is quickly being challenged and eroded by China, as it has mastered reverse engineering, and due to the general transfusion of technology in an interconnected and globalized world, China is rapidly obtaining vital technology from the advanced nations, even despite the pandemic.

All these factors make it ever so imperative for the US's power elite to believe in the Halford Mackinder Heartland Theory, as they know, almost intuitively, that the US cannot allow itself to be isolated from Eurasia, since that would make it increasingly more irrelevant in terms of its power projection and global economic ranking. For the sole remaining Superpower then, the only choice is to thwart, sabotage, and demolish the BRI challenge, as it can hardly summon its own strength anymore, due to its hollowed out industrial base and the pandemic.

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<sup>80</sup> Kimberly Amadeo, "Who Owns the US National Debt?" *The Balance*, April 30, 2021, Available at: <https://www.thebalance.com/who-owns-the-u-s-national-debt-3306124/>. (accessed on 24 March 2021).

## National Integration: Challenges and Options for Pakistan

Muhammad Nawaz Khan<sup>1</sup>

### Abstract

*National integration solidifies the foundation of nationhood, which is crucial for national security against internal and external challenges. The study argues that there is a thin line between centripetal and centrifugal forces, which stimulates unfavorable environment having specific characteristic and features. Therefore, the multiplicity of languages, races, ethnicities, and sects are being influenced from that particular environment, which may serve both as ingredients of national integration and disintegration. Based on secondary review of academic sources, this study discusses that the issues such as leadership dilemma, bad governance, socio-economic disparity, ethno-cultural polarization, sub-nationalist politics, fragile national unity under federalism, extremism, national identity crisis and modernity confusion are the main challenges to Pakistan's efforts of national integration. It also suggests ways and means to address the issues of national integration.*

**Keywords:** Two-nation Theory, Socialism, Enlightened Moderation, Muslim Identity, National Finance Commission (NFC) Award, National

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## **Introduction**

“National integration indicates national consciousness, a common national consensus and common national identity, where regional sub-cultures get interacted into a national political system”<sup>2</sup> in order to keep intact their cultural, political, religious, and ethnic sub-identities, equally enjoying their socio-economic rights and opportunities, which is essential to enhance the national integration process. “It is a process through which people having common goals, sense of belonging and patristic sentiments arrive at a consensus on social, political, cultural, religious and economic cohesion with diversity.”<sup>3</sup> Common goals, interests and preferences may create a sense of unity among fragmented elements of society, which helps in laying the foundations of constructive nationalism against internal and external challenges. “National integration includes a confidence in nation’s future, a continuous rise in the standard of living, development of feeling of values and duties, at good and impartial administrative system and mutual understanding.”<sup>4</sup>

Socio-cultural, and ethno-lingual diversities are the centrepiece of national integration, wherein the intermingling diversities enrich each other and in no way weaken them. The provinces of Pakistan are rich in socio-cultural, and ethno-lingual heterogeneity, and the phenomenon of national integration has to run in the backdrop in engaging the

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<sup>2</sup> Jehanzeb, Saima Perveen & Fayaz Ur Rehman, “Challenges and Policy Options to National Integration in Pakistan A Comparative Analysis,” *Journal of Law and Society*, Vol. 44, no. 64 (July, 2013), 1.

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

<sup>4</sup> Shamila Tabassum, Ghulam Mustafa & Muhammad Nawaz Bhatti, “Issues of National Integration in Pakistan with Reference to Balochistan,” *Pakistan Social Sciences Review*, Vol. 4, no. 1 (March 2020), 205.

provincial citizenry, acting as a bonding material of harmony and co-existence, thus enabling the centripetal forces to take on a central role to intraregional integration. Punjabi, Sindhi, Balochi, and Pashtun nationalisms are always at the heart to form Pakistani nationalism, which is crucial to solidify the foundations of nationhood.

In this scheme of things, it is also observed that the intersecting features make unification of the fragmented strands of society an uphill task in the pluralistic society of Pakistan, where multiplicity of cultural and ethnic traits crosscut each other for their competing interests in attaining specific goals of ensuring maximum shares within the meagre national resources. This competition has made national unity difficult for national integration.

Ever since the creation of Pakistan, the country has remained entangled with the multiple challenges: bad governance; socio-economic and power disparities; politico-ethnic polarization; racial and lingual differences; civil-military and of late judicial confrontations; weak political system and leadership; ideological identities; religious extremism and sectarianism; modernity confusion; national identity crisis; and threats to territorial integrity from neighboring countries. The mistrust between the Centre and the small federating units infused by a sense of deprivation has piled up the problems being exploited by the hostile exogenous elements. These challenges have complicated the process of national integration in Pakistan.

The consciousness of separatism usually emerges in suffocated societies having internal crevices created by their ethno-lingual, racial, caste, and creed corrosions. With the deepening of these fault lines, the sub-nationalists try to exploit loyalties of the dissatisfied factions to their advantage. Therefore, in Pakistan, the centrifugal elements within the country's "national politics have promoted separatist tendencies



and identity crisis striking at the very soul of Pakistan's ideology."<sup>5</sup> The emerging situation gets ripened to be exploited by both the Islamists and secular political entities for their own vested interests. The sectarian extremist tendencies under the guise of Shia, Deobandi and Barelvi sects have further threatened national integration and challenged the very birth of Pakistani nation.

### **Concept of National Integration**

National integration signifies a continuous process bonding together the individuals from various socio-cultural and ethnic backgrounds into a common national identity to create the joint sense of oneness, harmony and national consciousness. Further, it is a process that offers different segments of society an "identical prospects and equal rights"<sup>6</sup> guaranteed by the constitution for enjoying several socio-economic and political avenues without any discrimination.

More precisely, national integration is a quest for unanimity within the state regardless of religion, race, creed or ethnic traits and language. It ties up every section of the society for a combined purpose of serving and developing a nation state therefore, it has great bearing and relevance to national security and nationhood.<sup>7</sup> A nation is an evolved community having particular territory, common history, values, language, ethnicity, and psychological characteristics of oneness.

Nation-building and state-building are twin processes of the concept of national integration, which is vital to national cohesion and security. Nation-building refers to creating psychological sense of unity without any particular linguistic and regional affiliations. State-building

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<sup>5</sup> Jehanzeb, Perveen & Fayaz, 1.

<sup>6</sup> Syed Jawad Shah & Waseem Ishaque, "Challenges of National Integration in Pakistan and Strategic Response," *ISSRA PAPERS*, Vol. IX, no. II (2017), 35.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

is a process of territorial integrity in which separatist feelings are absent within the geographical boundaries of the state “where the administration of central and state government runs.”<sup>8</sup>

There are multiple interpretations of the concept of National Integration. According to the Dictionary of Political Thought, integration is a process in which various segments of society enjoy equal privileges including social, educational and recreational opportunities without any discrimination.<sup>9</sup> It further describes that “integration is the process, whereby all institutions are made available to all members of the state irrespective of creed, race and origin with the intention of forming a unified civil society within the jurisdiction of a unified state.”<sup>10</sup>

H. A Ghani describes national integration as a “socio-psychological and educational process through which feelings of unity, solidarity and cohesion develops in the hearts of the people, fostering a sense of common citizenship, and loyalty to the nation.”<sup>11</sup>

Fred M. Hayward explains “integration as system cohesion, adaptation to structures, a bridging of elite-mass gap, the establishment of common norms and commitment to pattern of political behavior.”<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Faiza Mir & Dr. Abdul Manan Bazai, “Challenges to National Integration: A Case Study of Baluchistan,” *Journal of Contemporary Studies*, Vol. IV, no.1 (Summer 2015), 81-84, 82-83.

<sup>9</sup> Gulshan Majeed, “Problems of National Integration in Pakistan,” *Journal of Political Studies*, Vol. 21, no. 2 (2014), 69.

<sup>10</sup> Shamila Tabassum, Ghulam Mustafa & Muhammad Nawaz Bhatti, “Issues of National Integration in Pakistan with Reference to Balochistan,” 206.

<sup>11</sup> Faiza Mir & Abdul Manan Bazai, 81.

<sup>12</sup> Gulshan Majeed, “Problems of National Integration in Pakistan,” 70.

S.N. Panda explains national integration as a “psychological phenomenon, a feeling of oneness that raises above all narrow and divisive tendencies and makes for genuine patriotism and progress.”<sup>13</sup>

National integration is mainly a sentiment, in which “the community of any state assumes peaceful living with one another, having the feelings of togetherness, unity, compassion, without any discrimination of race, ethnicity, regional boundaries, etc.... No matter, a nation bears any caste, belief, region, or lingual issues, they consider themselves that ‘They Are All One.’ This kind of spirit is indispensable to national integration.”<sup>14</sup>

Factors influencing national integration involve social values, culture, language, interfaith harmony, religion, and ethnicity. Therefore, collaboration, cooperation, fusion, and development among these elements on the principles of inclusive approach, shared future, and win-win situation are the core to the process of national integration. As a result, the exchange of ideas, history, social customs, knowledge, art, languages, goods, and cultural beliefs increase people-to-people interaction and trust. Thus, “national integration is about national spirit, which brings peoples from different areas, dialects and beliefs together in a common endeavour to build systems for enhancing the prosperity of a nation”<sup>15</sup> with the aim of creating allegiance towards a state.

Culture is generally defined as a way of life of every specific group of people based on their beliefs and customs. In the multi-cultural societies, national integration is considered as a tool to create unity in diversity by minimizing cultural differences even in a complex societies and forging uniformity in the nation. National language also unites the

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<sup>13</sup> Shamila Tabassum, Ghulam Mustafa & Muhammad Nawaz Bhatti, 204.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> M. Kumar & N. Rekha, *Historical And Political Economy Of Education In India* (Chhattisgarh: Sankalp Publication, 2020), 340.

nation by promoting national consciousness in the multilingual country. Likewise, interfaith harmony, dialogue, respect to religious freedom, and mutual acceptance have the potential to assimilate in promoting the national solidarity and integration.

### **Impediments to National Integration for Pakistan**

The foundation of Pakistan was laid down on the Quaid-i-Azam's vision of separate democratic homeland for Muslims in which the state would be governed on principles of "Islamic ideas of social justice and equality."<sup>16</sup> The theory of the founding father perceived the Muslims of sub-continent as a separate nation opposite to the Hindu nation in the form of "Two-nation theory."<sup>17</sup> In fact, the empirical evidences of Muslims of sub-continent show that they were divided on the lines of Aligarh and Deobandi traditions; pro-Indian National Congress political ideology of territorial nationalism; pro-Muslim League's political ideology of distant Muslim identity; and religious parties' opposition for separate Muslim state in order to preserve the Muslim Ummah.<sup>18</sup>

Pakistan started its early life journey with internal and external complexities that demanded hard struggle for country's survival and political consolidation. Ultimately, the process of nation-building has been complicated and even become a more difficult task by the evolving events and unfavourable political landscape of Pakistan. For instance, the period from 1947 till 1971 was stressful and unstable for the federal integration. With the early death of Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, the infant state witnessed administrative and

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<sup>16</sup> Jehan Zeb Khan & Abdul Rashid Khan, "Quaid's Vision of a Progressive Pakistan," *Pakistan Journal of History and Culture*, Vol. XXXII, no.1 (2011), 166.

<sup>17</sup> Abdul Majid, Abdul Hamid & Zahida Habib, "Genesis of the Two Nations Theory and the Quaid-e-Azam," *Journal of Pakistan Vision*, Vol. 15, no.1 (2014), 192.

<sup>18</sup> Jehanzeb, Saima Perveen & Fayaz Ur Rehman, "Challenges and Policy Options To National Integration in Pakistan: A Comparative Analysis," 7.

governance challenges; economic and political instabilities pushing the military to power; the emerging sub-nationalist tendencies sponsored by hostile agencies; and the Indian animosity of “1948, 65 and dismemberment of 1971”<sup>19</sup> made integration a difficult process, creating many hurdles, which later on dragged the country into identity crisis.<sup>20</sup>

In that era, the futile debate on ideological identity of the nation “as an Islamic state, moderate state, socialist state has also been the contributory factors affecting the state efforts for the national integration.”<sup>21</sup> The ideological divide pushed Pakistan into an endless discourse of constructing the state identity on the bases of “Quaid-i-Azam’s vision; socialism during 1970s; Islamization during 1980; and enlightened moderation even after 73 years of the country’s existence.”<sup>22</sup> Hence, Pakistan inherited ideological cleavages for developing state identity, along with “multi-ethnic, linguistic and cultural groups and sub-groups, which had little in common besides Muslim.”<sup>23</sup>

Ultimately, the political leadership and policymakers of Pakistan have been involved in the matter of integration that has “become very

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<sup>19</sup> Syed Sikander Mehdi, “Pakistan: Conflict, Migration and Peace,” *Asteriskos: Journal of International and Peace Studies*, no. 1/2 (2007), 4.

<sup>20</sup> Alongside, the regional geopolitical implications illustrated by the repercussions of the “USSR invasion in Afghanistan (1979),” and the “Iranian revolution (1979)” caused the deepening of Saudi-Iran rivalries while using Pakistani land for their sectarian proxy war, which led to the rise of religious intolerance. Amidst this environment, the biased US policies have further complicated the national integration process in Pakistan. For this see: Alan Taylor, “The Soviet War in Afghanistan, 1979 – 1989,” *The Atlantic*, August 4, 2014.

<sup>21</sup> Syed Jawad Shah & Waseem Ishaque, “Challenges of National Integration in Pakistan and Strategic Response,” 36.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 41.

<sup>23</sup> Jehanzeb, Saima Perveen & Fayaz Ur Rehman, 4.

sensitive and heatedly discussed”<sup>24</sup> in the political landscape of the country, and in case of failure, this issue has a potential to make society intolerant. The oscillatory circumstances have forced political leadership and policymakers to divert their attention from the core areas that could ensure socio-economic prosperity and development for nation-building. Therefore, they have been unable to implement people-friendly policies, which might have fully satisfied the oppressed class, in general, and marginalized sub-nationalities, ethnicities and small provinces. The inability of political leadership and policymakers for delivering basic services to the people has provided a space to the disintegrated multitudes to exploit the situation to their favour, further creating instability in the country.

In reality, the successive regimes had been unsuccessful to offer due share to the citizenries in policy-making process at grass-root level. They were unable to initiate effective people-centric policies that could address the real grievances of various ethnicities at the social, political, and economic levels, specifically of the communities of East Pakistan, Balochistan, tribal areas, and Sindh to some extent. Eventually, the dismemberment of East Pakistan in 1971, the number of “insurgencies in Balochistan,”<sup>25</sup> and the demands for “Pushtunistan, as well as Sindhu Desh,”<sup>26</sup> are the cases in points.

As of today, the political leadership of Pakistan still faces the challenges of creating “a national identity out of the diverse regional,

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<sup>24</sup> Syed Jawad Shah & Waseem Ishaque, 41.

<sup>25</sup> Muhammad Muzaffar, Sidra Karamat & Khalid Saeed, “Balochistan Insurgency: Causes and Prospects,” *Orient Research Journal of Social Sciences*, Vol.3, no. 1 (June 2018), 117.

<sup>26</sup> Aamir Nazir, “Ethnic Militancy in Pakistan: Causes, Consequences and Remedies,” (paper presented at the two-day international conference on “Terrorism, Extremism and Militancy in Pakistan: Domestic & International Factors, Multan, Pakistan, January 17-18, 2017).

linguistic and cultural identities.”<sup>27</sup> The hurdles to national integrity are not specifically internal to Pakistan, as they also originate by the unfavorable circumstances and environment engineered by the external elements to aggravate the situation, thereby perpetuating economic disparities, ethno-religious extremism, political instability and sub-national tendencies at the domestic front. The victimization of Pakistan by the external hostile states has added complications to the phenomena of national integration.

### **Leadership Dilemma**

Behavior and psychology of the leadership play an important role to promote awareness of oneness among disjointed sections of society. The leadership’s charisma, sagacity, and deeper insight about peoples’ feelings or emotions, play a constructive role in minimizing the socio-cultural, and politico-economic identity rifts to implement the national order. However, after the death of Quaid-i-Azam, the leadership of Pakistan has been making efforts to transform the centrifugal tendencies of marginalized ethnic groups into centripetal feelings. Even, influential leaders like Zulfikar Ali Bhutto lost his charisma after the debacle of East Pakistan and had been unable to transform the parochial feelings of the people of East Pakistan, Balochistan, and former North-West Frontier Province (NWFP) recently named as Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) by diluting the separatist sentiments with national loyalty.

Although 18<sup>th</sup> Amendment was passed in 2010<sup>28</sup> for giving maximum autonomy to the provinces, yet the leadership of Pakistan

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<sup>27</sup> Faiza Mir & Abdul Manan Bazai, “Challenges To National Integration: A Case Study of Baluchistan,” 82.

<sup>28</sup> Mahboob Hussain and Rizwan Kokab, “Eighteenth Amendment in the Constitution of Pakistan: Success and Controversies,” *Asian Social Science*, Vol. 8, no. 1 (January 2012), 83.

seems reluctant to devolve further power at grass-root level. This fact hindered individuals' direct participation in the decision-making process, depriving them of the sense of ownership. Ultimately, the socio-economic and development policies formulated for the wellbeing of masses could not get general recognition. Instead of promoting the sense of oneness among the diverse ethno-cultural identities, the ill-perceived policies caused dissatisfaction among the public.

The fact of the matter is, different ethno-cultural identities are considered the beauty of pluralist state, which ideally contribute constructively to the progress of the country, ensuring socio-economic and political rights. If these basic rights of diverse identities are at risk, denying them access to social safety net, the marginalized communities can easily be derailed from their constructive role to destructive one. It may lead to instability or disintegration in an extreme case as evident in the "Bengali ethnic identity crises of Pakistan."<sup>29</sup> In the present-day Pakistan, the instability is factored out by the insecurity of Baloch dissatisfied groups —the ongoing low intensity ethnic insurgency in the province<sup>30</sup>—and the demands for social justice and human rights in the garb of Pashtun Tahafuz Movement (PTM) in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP).<sup>31</sup> The onus is on the political leadership to pacify the alienated ethnic groups by seeking national identity out of the various provincial

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<sup>29</sup> Muhammad Qasim Sodhar & Samreen, "Ethnic Conflicts: The Problems of Bengali Identity in Pakistan and Tribal Identity Problem in Chittagong Hill Tracts, Bangladesh (1947-1975)," *International Journal of Research in Social Sciences*, Vol. 7, no. 4 (April 2017), 51.

<sup>30</sup> Abubakar Siddique, "Balochistan's Separatist Insurgency on The Wane Despite Recent Attack," *Gandhara*, April 18, 2019, Available at: <https://gandhara.rferl.org/a/pakistan-balochistan-separatist-insurgency-on-the-wane-despite-recent-attack/29889887.html> (accessed on 22 March 2021).

<sup>31</sup> Francesca Marino, "Manzoor Pashteen Arrested: 'They Can Kill Me But Not the Movement'," *The Quint*, January 28, 2020, Available at: <https://www.thequint.com/voices/opinion/pashtun-tahafuz-movement-manzoor-pashteen-arrest-pakistani-state-army-human-rights> (accessed on 22 March 2021).



identities, thus giving the sense of ownership unified by national loyalty in the backdrop of internal and external challenges.

### **Bad Governance and Social-economic Integration**

Good governance is a prerequisite to “strengthening the process of national integration by providing equal development, ensuring equal rights and services’ delivery for all communities, regions and the federating units.”<sup>32</sup> It helps to incite a strong sense of national identity and national pride in the society. It also supports formulating effective policies centered around the concepts of “sharing, entrustment and allocation of national resources to the provinces”<sup>33</sup> to create a sense of satisfaction among all regional sub-systems. In return, the communities get encouraged to participate progressively as a medium to enhance the process of national integration.

Contrarily, bad governance is the root cause to all inefficiencies: social injustice; economic inequality; regional disparity; unemployment; unaccountability; delayed justice; misuse of power; corruption; nepotism; uneven infrastructure and industrial development; unequal distribution of natural resources along with the demands for royalty; inefficiency of institutions; and dissatisfaction among the general public. Rather, the “uneven division of resources either natural or other and favouritism in political and administrative manners of central and provincial governments always destroy the state.”<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Syed Jawad Shah & Waseem Ishaque, “Challenges of National Integration in Pakistan and Strategic Response,” 35.

<sup>33</sup> Jehanzeb, Saima Perveen & Fayaz Ur Rehman, “Challenges and Policy Options To National Integration in Pakistan A Comparative Analysis,” 2.

<sup>34</sup> Shamila Tabassum, Ghulam Mustafa & Muhammad Nawaz Bhatti, “Issues of National Integration in Pakistan with Reference to Balochistan,” 211.

The lax governance has generated economic backwardness in Pakistan, giving rise to social ills fueled by massive poverty, and crime, spreading frustration, and demoralization in the underprivileged regions especially the South Punjab, interior Sindh, Balochistan and tribal areas of Pakistan, where sentiments of marginalization have triggered militancy casting serious consequences on national integration.

The ill-disciplined governance in the country has made space for both the religious fanatics, and the sub-nationalists fulfilling their nefarious designs with the foreign backing and funding. Eventually, the religio-ethnic schism based on provincialism has become a breeding ground for discontentment, and deprivation, eroding the national harmony, integration, and prosperity.

A weak system of governance has been incapable of maintaining consistent “policies in the best interests of various cultural pluralities of the country.”<sup>35</sup> Despite passing the bill of Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) merger with KP<sup>36</sup> to integrate the underprivileged tribal areas into the mainstream socio-economic landscape, the people of the region are still facing “unsteady development”<sup>37</sup> – an illustration of bad governance. “The administrative, security, and economic reforms in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Tribal Districts are being implemented at a snail’s pace.”<sup>38</sup> For instance, “the process of inclusion of an estimated

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<sup>35</sup> Gulshan Majeed, “Problems of National Integration in Pakistan,” 68.

<sup>36</sup> Amir Wasim, “National Assembly green-lights Fata-KP merger by passing 'historic' bill,” *Dawn*, May 25, 2018.

<sup>37</sup> Wajeeha Malik & Shakeeb Asrar, “Post-merger Inaction in FATA: Expectations vs. Reality (Blog),” *South Asian Voices*, July 10, 2019, Available at: <https://southasianvoices.org/post-merger-inaction-in-fata-expectations-vs-reality/>. (accessed on 24 March 2021).

<sup>38</sup> Abubakar Siddique, “Pakistan’s Tribal Areas Caught In Limbo Awaiting Integration,” *Gandhara*, January 16, 2020, Available at: <https://gandhara.rferl.org/a/pakistan-tribal-areas-caught-in-limbo-awaiting-integration/30381219.html> (accessed on 24 March 2021).

30,000 local Levies and Khasadars into the regular police force is moving slowly ... The new tribal police lack training and infrastructure to undertake policing, which is still performed by the army and paramilitary troops in large parts of tribal districts.”<sup>39</sup>

Although, the federal government pledged in “2018 to spend around US \$10 billion on development schemes over a decade, approximately 10 per cent of the US \$540 million were reserved for the tribal districts’ development during the fiscal year 2019-20.”<sup>40</sup> That kind of performance is causing frustration among the tribal people, providing grounds to justify the demands of anti-nationalist elements such as PTM in the name of social justice, which already have unfriendly sentiments towards the civil and military establishment.

The situation for Balochistan is no different than that of tribal districts. The decision of increasing the Balochistan’s job quota from 3.5 to 6 per cent in federal departments was initially taken in 2016.<sup>41</sup> However, till June 2020, no progress was seen until the Prime Minister Imran Khan took notice of the matter during his meeting with Akhtar Mengal on June 28, 2020 and ordered all federal departments for the implementation of 6 per cent job quota reserved for the province.<sup>42</sup> Besides, “the short term projects of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) in Balochistan (2014-2020) such as “Khuzdar-Basima N-30, up-gradation of D. I. Khan-Zhob Highway N50, up-gradation of Quetta-Surab Highway N25, and completion of existing roads projects that were supposed to be completed by 2020, have seen little to no

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<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> “Balochistan’s Quota in Federal Jobs Increased,” *Dawn*, January 23, 2016.

<sup>42</sup> “PM orders implementation of 6pc job quota for Balochistan to woo BNP-M,” *Pakistan Today*, June 28, 2020.

progress.”<sup>43</sup> The indifferent behavior of civil administration for delaying to implement the federal government’s decisions and projects may instigate the marginalized ethnic groups in future to start resistance against unsteady developmental policies of federal government. Rather, it encourages “rebellious activities against the state and would be a major risk in the way of national integration.”<sup>44</sup>

Some efforts have been made to address the socio-economic and political grievances of the alienated regions of Pakistan in the form of National Finance Commission (NFC) Award, 18<sup>th</sup> Amendment, Pervez Musharraf development plan for Balochistan, Aghaz-e-Haqooq-e-Balochistan, National Action Plan, CPEC project and FATA merger with KP. These measures are considered positive steps to meet the demands of the provincial governments of Pakistan for attaining more political power, ensuring larger share in national funds, developing basic infrastructure, and warranting basic services for raising the living standards of the people.

However, these measures are unable to produce the desired results and bring clear trickle-down effects on the livelihood of the locals, owing to the weak administrative ability, capacity issues and poor planning of the provinces, in particular, and federal government, in general. That is why; the remote areas of each province of Pakistan along with the tribal belt do not have the provision of proper facilities of health, education, and economic opportunities at par with the bigger provinces and their metropolitan hubs.

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<sup>43</sup> Rafiullah Kakar, “Review of CPEC: Impact on Balochistan,” (paper presented at Islamabad Policy Research Institute Webinar on Security and Development of Balochistan: Existing Dynamics and Way Ahead, Islamabad, Pakistan, June 25, 2016).

<sup>44</sup> Shamila Tabassum, Ghulam Mustafa & Muhammad Nawaz Bhatti, “Issues of National Integration in Pakistan with Reference to Balochistan,” 205.

The statistics of government of Pakistan show that “24 per cent of Pakistan’s population (31 per cent in rural and 13 per cent in urban areas) lives below the poverty line. The multi-dimensional poverty index (MPI) of the country is 38.8 per cent, which includes 54.6 per cent in rural and 9.4 per cent in urban areas.”<sup>45</sup> Amongst them, the tribal districts have the highest levels of MPI followed by the Balochistan.

Consequently, people have started blaming the federal government for lacking objectivity in policy measures at the national level, as is evident in the case of Gwadar port that is seen as the lynchpin of CPEC for socio-economic uplift. However, “the state of connectivity of Gwadar with the rest of Pakistan is so poor that it raises questions about the planning as a whole.”<sup>46</sup> The objectivity concerns are sufficient to generate rifts between the dissatisfied section of public and federal government.

With the growing mistrust, the dilemma has been that any development project of the federal government in small provinces, starts attracting jaundiced eyes. For instance, the security situation in Balochistan started deteriorating when the federal government took the initiatives of Gwadar Port, coastal highway, road and rail links, which was opposed by the Baloch nationalists’ propagation that it would change Balochi ethnic culture and demography.

Instead of welcoming these projects, the Baloch dissidents responded with fear that they would be “dispossessed of their own

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<sup>45</sup> “Balochistan Drought Needs Assessment (BDNA) Report, February 2019,” *Relief Web*, accessed August 24, 2020, Available at: [https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/balochistan\\_drought\\_needs\\_assessment.pdf](https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/balochistan_drought_needs_assessment.pdf) (accessed on 28 March 2021).

<sup>46</sup> Rafiullah Kakar, *Ibid*.

lands and resources,”<sup>47</sup> while turning into minority by the overwhelming inflow of Sindhis, Punjabis and other ethnic identities. Likewise, in the case of CPEC, the actual allocation of only US \$4 billion to Balochistan out of the potential aggregate of US \$50 billion<sup>48</sup> CPEC investment is being exploited by the Baloch dissidents that the province has a “meagre share and participation in the construction of mega projects.”<sup>49</sup> Baloch dissidents are also misleading the local communities making them to believe that federal government allocates only scanty share of the NFC Award to Balochistan. Contrarily, the province has seen an increase in its budget in 7<sup>th</sup> NFC Award from 5 per cent share to 9 per cent.<sup>50</sup> Rather, the 7<sup>th</sup> NFC Award recognized the factor of inverse population density, poverty, poor revenue collection, and the area as the variables for distribution of funds.<sup>51</sup>

Alongside, misperceptions are being aired that the federal government is mainly focusing on physical security, and not the human security (health, education, and employment generation) in Balochistan, resulting in either alleged killings or forced disappearances of the innocent Baloch by the security forces on the pretexts of peace and stability.”<sup>52</sup> Whereas, the government of Pakistan claims that these

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<sup>47</sup> Muhammad Zubair, “Balochistan Deserves Justice In Chinese Projects,” *Gandhara*, January 14, 2019, Available at: <https://gandhara.rferl.org/a/pakistan-balochistan-deserves-justice-in-chinese-projects-cpec/29708813.html> (accessed on 24 March 2021).

<sup>48</sup> Rafiullah Kakar, *Ibid*.

<sup>49</sup> Muhammad Zubair, *Ibid*.

<sup>50</sup> Muhammad Sabir, “Financial Implications of the 7th NFC Award and the Impact on Social Services,” *The Pakistan Development Review*, Vol. 49, no. 4 (Winter 2010): 387-403. Also see; Imran Ali Kundi, “Rs3254.6b for provinces under NFC Award,” *Nation*, June 12, 2019.

<sup>51</sup> Usman Mustafa, “Fiscal Federalism in Pakistan: The 7th National Finance Commission Award and Its Implications,” *PIDE Working Papers*, no. 73 (2011), 7. Also see; Junaid Shaikh, “NFC Award: limitations of provinces,” *Dawn*, April 29, 2011.

<sup>52</sup> Kamal Baloch, “Its Time the World Knows about Missing People of Balochistan,” *News Intervention*, Available at: <https://www.newsintervention.com/its-time-the-world-knows-about-missing-people-of-balochistan/> (accessed on 29 March 2021).

missing people have fled to “Afghanistan or other places of the world.”<sup>53</sup>

Indeed, the misperceptions and fears incite the Baloch ethnicity to resort to force in pressing their rights and representation in the central government. Majority of the Balochi folks fall easy prey to aggressive lobbying of the dissidents, making the provincial masses to believe that they are being discriminated in terms of their deprivation. Ultimately, the general sentiments of scepticism and unsteady development prevalent in the marginalized community of the country tend to hamper the goal of national integration.

### **Ethno-Cultural Diversity**

Cultural, ethnic, and linguistic diversities are natural phenomena, recognized as important determinants of integration to enrich and promote the national heritage. Ethnic diversity forms the national identity with the common interest of nation-building, which is perceived as the key characteristic of ethnic outlook of Pakistani society.<sup>54</sup> “Cultural integration indicates common national culture by which people identify themselves. It does not overlook cultural diversity, nor does it overstate a monolithic society. There are sub-cultures within the sphere of a common culture in a pluralistic society.

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<sup>53</sup> “The Commission of Inquiry on Enforced Disappearances has 2178 cases unresolved till 2019. For this see; “Pakistan: Enduring Enforced Disappearances,” *Amnesty International*, March 27, 2019, Available at: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/research/2019/03/pakistan-enduring-enforced-disappearances/> (accessed on 29 March 2021).

<sup>54</sup> “Demographically, the Punjabis embody the largest population of 109.99 million (52.96 percent), Sindh 47.85 million (23.04pc), KP 30.51 million (14.69pc), Balochistan 12.34 million (5.94pc), Fata 4.99 million (2.4pc) and ICT 2 million (0.96pc). Punjabi is number one language spoken by the majority (38.78pc) of Pakistanis, followed by Pashto 18.24pc, Sindhi 14.57pc, Urdu 7.08pc and Balochi 3.02pc.”

When the numerous sub-cultures get intermixed with their distinct identities, they form one common integral culture.”<sup>55</sup>

Ethnic and cultural diversities have the potential to play a central role in making common community. They are equally pivotal to assessing the ethnicity that to what extent it has an inbuilt paradox of conflictual and consensual characters. It is described as a cognitive act constructed on identity or loyalty, aimed at furthering the interests of specific group and region. Therefore, ethno-cultural and linguistic divide in Pakistan is prone to suffer owing to the tendency of unwillingness of interest groups to accept the cultural and linguistic diversity.<sup>56</sup>

The result is seen in the tug of power among various political parties at the provincial and federal levels dominated by the conflicting ethnicity, causing unease of relations between the center and provinces - the key concerns for national integration. The cleavage may disintegrate the nation by spiraling the feelings of marginalization and alienation, as evident in the case of East Pakistan dismemberment in 1971, wherein the few initial riots got massively triggered on charges of ethno-lingual marginalization, leading to the violent conflicts costing the national integrity. It is observed that the social fabric of Pakistan is also fragmented around biradari and caste structures that are much cherished as a main source of identity, and recognition, specifically in remote areas of the country, thereby eclipsing the importance of nationhood.

Though, the provincial or regional identity is essential to solid nationhood. Yet, using regional identity as a political card for vested

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<sup>55</sup> Jehanzeb, Saima Perveen & Fayaz Ur Rehman, 15.

<sup>56</sup> Zaheer Ud Din Qureshi, “Role of Interest Groups in Public Policy Formulation,” *Hamari Web*, Available at: <https://hamariweb.com/articles/31713> (accessed on 29 March 2021).



interests poses challenge to national integration as evident in the activism of PTM<sup>57</sup> and in the slogans of separatism raised by the Baloch insurgents like the Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA).<sup>58</sup> All these elements are sponsored by the hostile states with the aim to destabilize the country.<sup>59</sup> Pakistan has repeatedly raised its voice against the support extended by many foreign countries and their hostile intelligence agencies to their sleeper cells to conduct subversive acts, equally lending patronage to the terrorist elements to sabotage the national integration process.

The insurgents of Balochistan no way represent the general aspirations of the Balochistan society, but they are trying hard to harm soft targets of innocent non-Balochis and government installations by their low-intensity periodic attacks for which they get regular support from external players like India immersed in its hegemonic aim of destabilizing Pakistan.

In order to integrate Balochistan with the federation, there is a dire need of preserving the ethno-cultural-linguistic identities and removing the socio-economic inequalities. As discussed above, the successive governments have undoubtedly launched various development programmes, including the “Political Reconciliation process”<sup>60</sup> to give complete ownership to the people of Balochistan. However, these

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<sup>57</sup> Francesca Marino, “Manzoor Pashteen,” Ibid.

<sup>58</sup> Srijan Shukla, “Who are Baloch Liberation Army? Insurgents who killed 30 in Pakistan in last one week,” *The Print*, February 20, 2020, Available at: <https://theprint.in/theprint-essential/who-are-baloch-liberation-army-insurgents-who-killed-30-in-pakistan-in-last-one-week/368398/> (accessed on 3 April 2021).

<sup>59</sup> “PTM Funding: The Role of RAW-NDS, Wealthy FATA Diaspora in the Gulf & Hostile Agencies,” *Global Village Space*, April 30, 2019, Available at: <https://www.globalvillagespace.com/ptm-funding-the-role-of-raw-nds-wealthy-fata-diaspora-in-the-gulf-hostile-agencies/> (accessed on 3 April 2021).

<sup>60</sup> “Balochistan reconciliation: 625 insurgents surrendered in six months,” *Express Tribune*, February 8, 2016.

initiatives remain unable to curb the assumed fears of sub-nationalist groups that such programmes are only going to offer development opportunities to non-Baloch ethnicities like Punjabis and Sindhis; the issues of the Baloch ethnic groups of the province would remain unaddressed.

Unacceptance of central government's socio-economic and political initiatives by ethnic insurgents is bound to damage the cause of national integration. Whereas the concept of national integration for Pakistan is meant to create 3Cs: i) "common citizenry, ii) common political and social structures, and iii) a common state"<sup>61</sup> for building a common community with the aim to establish a sense of identity and mutual belonging without disturbing the existing diversities of linguistic, ethnic, religious, and geographical strata. "It does not mean to substitute an artificial new identity for the old ones."<sup>62</sup>

### **Sub-nationalist Politics and National Integration**

Muslim nationalism of sub-continent played a crucial role in the Pakistan movement. Later, its role to preserve the integrity of newly independent state had been gradually undermined due to its inability of agreeably resolving the issues of language, provincial status and division of natural resources among the stakeholders of diverse cultural backgrounds. The never-ending delays in solving these issues provided conducive environment for solidifying the sentiments of sub-nationalism in Pakistan.

With the passage of time, perceived marginalization of provinces and deprivation of nationalities set a stage for launching sub-nationalist movements, which "provided an opportunity to the leaders

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<sup>61</sup> Jehanzeb, Saima Perveen & Fayaz Ur Rehman, "Challenges and Policy Options to National Integration in Pakistan A Comparative Analysis," 4.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

of sub-national groups such as Jeay Sindh Mahaz, All Pakistan Muttahidda Students Organization now called Muhajir / Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM), and “National Awami Party (NAP)”<sup>63</sup> to start gripping the political landscape of the regional politics, while creating and exploiting controversy on the issues like Kalabagh dam.

Even today, the nationalist leaders of the small provinces such as Shafi Muhammad Burfat, Chairman, Jeay Sindh Muttahida Mahaz<sup>64</sup> Ayaz Latif Palijo, President, Qomi Awami Tahreek,<sup>65</sup> and Manzoor Ahmad Pashteen, Chairman, PTM<sup>66</sup> are inciting the sentiments of regionalism on the self-professed exploitation, alienation, and deprivation of their ethno-lingual identity. These sentiments may dent the process of national integrity by the acts of vandalism and brutality, thus threatening the national social fabric.

The civil and military leadership in Pakistan are continuously making efforts to merge the narrow feelings of provincialism into the coherent national identity. Power corridors in Islamabad are well aware that the coercive means could not produce fruitful results for attaining the goal of national unity, as it is a commonly observed practice that “different ethnic factions begin to attach more importance to their core ethnicity than the national identity.”<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>63</sup> Nadeem F. Paracha, “The first left,” *Dawn*, November 9, 2014.

<sup>64</sup> “Pakistan is afraid of political voice of Sindhi and Baloch: Shafi Burfat,” *ANI*, November 8, 2017, Available at: <https://www.aninews.in/news/world/asia/pakistan-is-afraid-of-political-voice-of-sindhi-and-baloch-shafi-burfat201711081913310003/> (accessed on 7 April 2021).

<sup>65</sup> “Ayaz Palijo says he is being punished for talking against ‘anti-Sindh projects’,” *News International*, October 4, 2016.

<sup>66</sup> Francesca Marino, “Manzoor Pashteen Arrested: ‘They Can Kill Me But Not the Movement’,” *Ibid*.

<sup>67</sup> Gulshan Majeed, “Problems of National Integration in Pakistan,” 68.

## Searching National Unity under Federalism

Federal form of government is considered an effective tool to crystalize the national integration process by separation of power between the federal government and the federating units. In this form of government, constitution guarantees protection of the rights of federating units and their ethnic strata. The federal form of government enables the diverse ethnicities to freely flourish their cultural uniqueness and integrate their belonging into the mainstream political system, which is indispensable for the process of national security and integration.

Observing the off-and-on engagement of the previous federal governments with the federating units, it seems that the present central government also feels the need to highlight the importance of belongingness and oneness of the federation to its federating units. There might be a realization in the federal government that any exclusive policy or indifferent attitude on its part may undermine the autonomies of the small provinces. Contrarily, only the inclusive policies guarantee constructive role of the federating units under the 1973 Constitution of Pakistan.

In this context, essence of the 18<sup>th</sup> Constitutional Amendment is to ensure smooth functioning of the country's affairs in an organized way. The rationale behind the amendment was the separation of power feature to strengthen the federal system by boosting its national security and integration. Obviously, the 18<sup>th</sup> Constitutional Amendment empowers the provinces to formulate policies in areas of socio-economic, educational, and health sectors, besides making local body laws. Now, the provinces are responsible for allocating the resources to development projects and implementing those for socio-economic uplift of their marginalized communities.

However, the poor performance and administrative incapability of the provincial governments have been the reason for their incompetence in delivering the basic services to their people, which is now pushing the federal government to think about revisiting the 18<sup>th</sup> Amendment for overcoming the irritants. But this idea has raised the eyebrows of national, religious, and sub-nationalist political parties of Pakistan, including the Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N), Pakistan People's Party (PPP), Awami National Party (ANP), Pashtunkhwa Milli Awami Party and Balochistan National Party. These political parties consider themselves the architect of 18<sup>th</sup> Amendment that ensures provincial autonomy in true sense. In their view, any attempt to reverse the 18<sup>th</sup> Amendment by the PTI government would be an attack on provincial autonomy, to the extent that they have grown sceptic about the commitment of the central government to national integration.

The lags in development are not necessarily the fault of 18<sup>th</sup> Amendment, but more so, the fault of the entire political system, which requires innovative reforms.<sup>68</sup> Basically, the political setting in Pakistan is still relying on the legacy of dynastic politics, with its two major national political parties: PML-N and PPP (apart from PTI). Despite their slogans of indiscriminately representing and serving the entire Pakistan, these two political entities have largely been relying on Punjab and Sindh provinces as their vote-bank. Interestingly, the results of 2008, 2013 and 2018 general elections show that the role, behavioral pattern, political priorities, and interests of these national political parties have become limited rather transformed, focusing more on regional than national politics.

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<sup>68</sup> Nadeemul Haque, "Post 18<sup>th</sup> Amendment Fiscal Space Issues Face by Federal Government and Possible Solutions," (paper presented at the Islamabad Policy Research Institute Webinar on 18<sup>th</sup> Amendment: Impact on Governance in Pakistan, Islamabad, Pakistan, July 21, 2020).

Therefore, the mainstream political parties try to contest elections based on ethnicity (PPP, PML-N and ANP motivate the voters in their favor on the basis of Sindhi, Punjabi and Pashtun ethnicities respectively), while the religio-ethnic political space has been shrunk to rural areas of Sindh, KP, and Balochistan. Hence, they maneuver to keep religio-ethnic differences alive to secure their political supremacy and relevance among the public, which is damaging the very cause of national integration.

In fact, the entire political structure of Pakistan evolved in a manner that a small ruling elite has remained dominated on the main landscape of the federal politics. They comprise the Punjabi rural, Sindhi feudal, Baloch Sardars, tribal Maliks and Khans, small group of Mohajirs, sub-nationalist leadership, industrialists and top civilian and military bureaucracy. In contrast to the Punjabi elite, the Sindhi, Balochi, and tribal elite tend to consider themselves excluded from the nation-building process on ethnic lines, and not on political grounds. Politically, they hold even more exclusive position in the peripheral landscape of regional politics. Such characteristics of regional polity, along with, dynastic politics have deepened polarization in the political milieu of federal politics on the bases of caste and creed system affiliated to narrow ends of ethno-cultural politics.

The scholars argue that political hegemony of the few “is confined to exercise the instruments of state power and serve its vested interests.”<sup>69</sup> Dominance of the aristocrats over national political system does not represent will of the masses, who feel excluded from the decision-making process. Concentration of power in few hands rather weakens the institutions, compelling the military to intervene, and introduce its own style of democratic system, while the judicial

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<sup>69</sup>Jehanzeb, Saima Perveen & Fayaz Ur Rehman, “Challenges and Policy Options to National Integration in Pakistan A Comparative Analysis,” 16.

intervention takes the form of *Suo moto* apparently to correct the executive and legislative measures.

Tug of power among the political aristocracy for preserving their legacy has further weakened the federation, rendering the social structure ineffective. Pakistan is, therefore, still struggling to seek societal integration at federal level of its diverse society fragmented on ethno-cultural, and sectarian lines. In this context, “the role of federal body as facilitator is essential to enhance the development of national integration in the country.”<sup>70</sup>

The responsibility of the central government is to provide guideline to provincial governments for conducting their affairs in an organized but mutually coherent manner.<sup>71</sup> The federal entity also listens to the political voices of the small provinces, with the aim of creating harmony on constitutional issues. It is necessary for the federal government to learn lesson from the bitter realities of the past of not listening to the demands of small provinces and not taking into confidence the small federating units on matters of constitutional amendments.

A smooth, cordial, and balanced relations between central and provincial governments are the pre-requisites to meaningful national integration. Otherwise, marginalization, alienation, disagreement with federal government, dissatisfaction, and insecurity among the small provinces will flourish centrifugal forces, causing national security issues like “separatist tendencies, anarchy, internal turmoil, subversion, ethnic issues, and violent struggles for power.”<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> Shamila Tabassum, Ghulam Mustafa & Muhammad Nawaz Bhatti, “Issues of National Integration in Pakistan with Reference to Balochistan,” 204.

<sup>71</sup> Gulshan Majeed, “Problems of National Integration in Pakistan,” 75.

<sup>72</sup> Faiza Mir & Abdul Manan Bazai, “Challenges to National Integration: A Case Study of Baluchistan,” 84.

## Sectarianism, Extremism, Ideological Identity and Modernity Confusion

The Quran forbids exaggerating religious matters (religious extremism) and ordains just and balance (middle path) between the extremes. Islam celebrates "*Ikhtilaf*"<sup>73</sup> (diversity). It defines the boundaries of religion to avoid overstepping and to prevent schism. The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) said that "*Ikhtilaf*" is a blessing. According to a saying of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), "diversity among the Muslims is a blessing (*Ikhtilafu um matirahma*)."<sup>74</sup>

However, in the intellectual history of Islam, diversity, space, and freedom of opinion have led to difference of opinions among the religious scholars, which has tended to dent the unity of the Muslim *Ummah*. However, various Muslim thinkers and jurists had been trying to prevent this schism by suggesting "*Ijma*" and "*Ijtihad*" (consensus and collective wisdom).<sup>75</sup>

Islamic Jurisprudence did not develop as state law. It is called *Fiqh*<sup>76</sup> and its concept and ideology are *Shari'a*. Muslim jurists started developing *Fiqh* and jurist opinion. These jurists worked independently from the state, but there was cooperation between the state and the jurists. The Islamic Jurisprudence developed as a jurist's law. These laws were not legislated by the caliph or the king. However, these laws were implemented in certain matters by the Muslim state.

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<sup>73</sup> Muhammad K Masud, "Ikhtilaf al-Fuqaha: Diversity in Fiqh as a Social Construction," *WANTED* (2009), 65, Available at: <http://arabic.musawah.org/sites/default/files/Wanted-MKM-EN.pdf> (accessed on 20 April 2021).

<sup>74</sup> Ibid.

<sup>75</sup> Sajila Kausar, "Collective Ijtihad: History and Current Perspective," *International Journal of Humanities & Social Science Studies* vol. III, no. V (March 2017): 151-163.

<sup>76</sup> Prawitra Thalib, "Distinction of Characteristics Sharia and Fiqh on Islamic Law," *Yuridika*, Vol. 33, no. 3, (September 2018), 438.



The major religious divisions in Pakistani society are based on Islamic laws such as “*Hanfi*,” “*Shafi’i*,” and “*Jafari*.”<sup>77</sup> The founders of Islamic laws always explained that they had differences on the interpretation of Islamic laws for which all of them are right.<sup>78</sup> The division in Islamic laws is not “*Firqa*”. *Fiqh* has become “*Firqa* (Sect)” in Pakistan where “*Hanfi*”, “*Shafi’i*”, “*Jafari*”, and “*Ahl al-hadith*” schools of thought tend to opt sectarian lines. In this regard, sectarianism has been promoted and supported in religious ways without realizing its severe implications for the Pakistani society.

Religious extremism in Pakistan has made it difficult for general scholars to analyse it, oppose it, or talk about it for the fear lash back from the extremist sympathisers in the country. This sympathy is based on nationalistic spirit and religious affiliation on strong sectarian lines. Resultantly, an ambiguous attitude towards religious extremism is observed. It is difficult to separate religious extremism from the normal faith and belief. It is equally difficult to differentiate between violent extremism and sectarianism.

The term extremism has been in use, but it got more significance in the post Afghan war in 1979. The reason is that extremism means an ideology for achieving the extremist objectives (power, dominance, etc.). When extremism is coupled with politics and political goals, power and authority, it becomes an ideology, which abhors dissent, differentiation and difference of opinion. But more importantly, when the ideology establishes link with power and dominance, its aim is no longer for individual and social improvements rather its goal is to get power to dominate others.

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<sup>77</sup> Jawad Syed & Edwina Pio, “Unsophisticated and naive? Fragmenting monolithic understandings of Islam,” *Journal of Management & Organization*, Vol. 24, Special issue 5 (September 2018), 599.

<sup>78</sup> Muhammad K Masud, “Ikhtilaf al-Fuqaha: Diversity in Fiqh as a Social Construction,” *WANTED* (2009), 65.

The sectarian Islam is "*Firqa Najiya*"<sup>79</sup> that also means to believe in "*Taqlid*"<sup>80</sup> which, in turn, means following one of the schools or groups in Islam. The term political Islam is used for those interpretations that called for an Islamic state. Foremost among them is Sayyid Abu'l A'la Mawdudi, who influenced other Muslim countries.<sup>81</sup> According to Mawdudi, *Iqtidar* (power) belongs to God and He is powerful and Hakim. This sovereignty of God becomes a basic concept of political Islam. Mawdudi believes that the concept of God makes obligatory for the Muslims to reject all those political systems which he termed "*Taghut*."<sup>82</sup> He describes that *Din* requires state and a political power as without these, religion would not be established.<sup>83</sup>

The sectarian views of Mawdudi about *Din* were criticized by Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi and others.<sup>84</sup> According to them, political Islam is not a mainstream perception and Mawdudi's interpretation of the *Din* is more political one that is why Jam'iyat al-Ikhwan al-Muslimin, Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan, Da'esh and other Muslim terrorist groups have opted for his concept of political Islam to get political powers.<sup>85</sup> The 1973 Constitution of Pakistan tried to solve the question of sovereignty in the way that the sovereignty of God is there but He has delegated His power to the people and the people through their

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<sup>79</sup> Muhammad Al-Atawneh, "Wahhabi Self-Examination Post-9/11: Rethinking the 'Other', 'Otherness' and Tolerance," *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 47, no. 2 (March 2011), 258.

<sup>80</sup> Abdul Rahman Mustafa, *On Taqlid: Ibn al Qayyim's Critique of Authority in Islamic Law* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 54.

<sup>81</sup> Muhammad Khalid Masud, "Islam and Influence of Religious Extremism in Muslim Societies," (paper presented at Lecture Series for Islamabad Policy Research Institute, Islamabad, Pakistan, December 20, 2016).

<sup>82</sup> Ibid.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid.

representatives. In fact, the parliament is exercising the dedicated powers.<sup>86</sup>

The assumption of the exclusive role of madrassa-trained clergy for giving religious interpretation has created a space for them to establish their monopoly over religious issues in Pakistan. The indulgence of external actors and their funding to religious institutions have further worsened the situation, thriving the religiously disruptive forces. With the passage of time, sectarianism emerged as a security challenge to national security and integration. The situation got worsened when various clergy from different sects gave divergent interpretations of Islam, which led to the tendency of extremism in the country.<sup>87</sup> The reasons for not raising voice against religious extremism in Pakistan include fear and anxiety, weakness, ambiguity, misunderstanding and lack of critical and analytical outlook.

In reality, there is an ambiguity in Pakistan about the spirit of religion, Islamic state, religious systems and objectives that affect certain questions such as: What is the type of the state identity? What should be the trends for Islamisation? What is Pakistan's national vision? Consequently, it has to get into a blind type of discussion such as whether Islam or secularism was the idea of the founding father of Pakistan. To achieve this goal, there are a number of Ulama Mashaikh conferences held in Pakistan, which have merely resulted in strengthening the existing strong sectarian sentiments of the religious groups.

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<sup>86</sup> National Assembly of Pakistan, "The Constitution of The Islamic Republic of Pakistan," *National Assembly of Pakistan, 2018*, Available at: [http://www.na.gov.pk/uploads/documents/1549886415\\_632.pdf](http://www.na.gov.pk/uploads/documents/1549886415_632.pdf) (accessed on 28 April 2021).

<sup>87</sup> Syed Jawad Shah & Waseem Ishaque, "Challenges of National Integration in Pakistan And Strategic Response," 42.

Thus, Pakistan has a lot of ambiguities in dealing with these questions, which gets accelerated by a belief that Islam is the only religion that unites the different religious sects. Instead of solving the questions of corruption, languages, provincialism, the Pakistani society and its political and religious leadership have been stuck with an idea that being a Muslim, they should stand closer and united by Islam. In fact, they have a vague idea of unity and identity.

The conceptual confusion of ideological identity and modernity predates independence. There were three perceptions about: the Islamic nation, the role of state and how best to be a true Muslim during the pre-partition of the subcontinent, which had contributed to weakening the basic concepts. For instance, first, the Islamic nation was defined in the pre-partition period as Ummah that did not recognize any territory. On the contrary, Pakistan has been territorialised. Even its constitution and religious groups have accepted Pakistan's territorial integrity.

Second, the state should be represented through religious identity. When Pakistan came into being, most of its people were calling for the implementation of Islam and Sharia in the country. They did not believe any state role in the religious affairs. In fact, it was the colonial period when for the first time the state had implemented Sharia in the subcontinent.<sup>88</sup>

Third, there was a fear that commenting anything on the religion could be penalized on the Day of Judgment or could be considered as blasphemy. However, after independence, the country's Constitution evolved as a mix of modern democracy and Islamic statehood; actually, in neither of the two.

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<sup>88</sup> Muhammad Khalid Masud, *Ibid*.

Pakistan could not solve the conundrum of role of religion in the ideological construct of the state. According to Stephen P. Cohen, "The most significant struggle in Pakistan is not a civilizational clash between Muslims and non-Muslims but a clatter between diverse conceptions and interpretations of Islam, predominantly how Pakistan should implement Islamic identity in State's outlook."<sup>89</sup> Such debates have always cast negativity and have been a source of persistent friction in the society and have kept the nation divided along religious-ethnic lines.<sup>90</sup>

The crisis of ambiguity in the religious discourse came from modernity, the meaning of which is still unclear in the country as the Pakistani society inherited this modernity from colonialism. The concept of modernity was considered by the Muslims of the subcontinent as an attack on their identity, culture and religion. At that time Syed Ahmad Khan stood up to differentiate between modernity and political aspect of Islam by asking the Muslims to acquire education and knowledge. He clarified that Muslims of the subcontinent needed a new theology and Ijtihad. His idea was criticized by most of the religious scholars of the subcontinent, who considered that Syed Ahmad Khan's suggestions would defeat the Muslim political history of the subcontinent,<sup>91</sup> thus they did not need any Ijtihad. Rather, they demanded the revival of Muslim political status or the revival of Islam in a political sense.

In Pakistan, the trend of political Islam has created further confusion in the concept of modernity, which was based on power and conflict theory that the political power should be divided on the basis of sectarian Islam along with the restoration of Sharia and Islamic laws

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<sup>89</sup> Stephen P. Cohen, *The Idea of Pakistan* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institute Press, 2004), 197.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid.

<sup>91</sup> Muhammad Khalid Masud, Ibid.

on the same lines. The weakness in the religious context is that the Pakistani society has not been able to define nationalism, role of state and sectarianism (whether it is good or bad). The fear in the religious context is to do Ijtihad is to disintegrate Islam and to commit blasphemy against religion. Any innovation or a new thing is not forbidden in Islam until it is added in the religion as an obligation like the obligations already pronounced in the Quran and Sunnah.

### **Recommendations**

Against this cloudy horizon, steering the process of national integration urges the federal government to focus on following steps:

- A well-thought-out National Social Action Plan (NSAP) is required considering the socio-economic, and political imperatives of all the provinces, thereby satisfying the essential needs of the ethno-cultural, and socio-political divergent identities. It will minimize the regional-provincial disequilibrium, granting more sense of ownership to the federating units supportive of the process of national integration.
- The on going political-economic initiatives for Balochistan taken by the federal government are appreciable, yet more efforts at the grass-roots level are needed to integrate the Baloch communities with the other provinces. In this regard, the provision of 4G internet service, and the development of the transmission lines and rail-road networks in all the provinces will help bring the on going initiatives to a logical end. In addition, there is a need to allocate seats to the people of Balochistan in all federal departments on the criteria of poverty, backwardness, and area so that they could consider themselves integral part of the country. It will equally help ensuring participation of the dissatisfied people, thus neutralizing their strong sub-nationalist feelings in the favour of national cohesion.

- There is a need to improve the administrative structure of KP government for implementing the former FATA merger plan in true letter and spirit, addressing the unsteady development in the region, which is crucial to the concept of national integration.
- Equitable distribution of development projects is required while accommodating the local private sector for creating new entrepreneurial units, cementing the unified economy. The central government needs to give priority to those projects, which generate economic mergers, inter-provincial interdependency, and national integration.
- To improve efficiency and capacity-building of all provincial and federal departments, the central government should launch a national policy giving guidelines for optimal departmental performance based on administrative accountability, decentralization of power, and removal of the traditional bureaucratic attitudes.
- Inter-provincial internship programmes with attractive packages for the qualified skilled professionals like doctors, engineers, and economic managers should be encouraged. Trade, labour, lawyer, and doctor unions should be reinvigorated at the national level.
- Empowered Local Body system is indispensable for Pakistan to keep people satisfied, narrowing down the spread of mistrust, and reducing the separatist tendencies. Decentralization of power from provinces to local bodies is a concrete measure to uninterrupted growth of the political process, ensuring integration of the deprived folks into the mainstream political process.
- Perseverance, patience, and continuous political dialogue are the key to building long-term consensus on the 18th Amendment. In this context, proposing well-considered

amendments and working for building consensus ought to be the top priority of the federal government.

- National political parties need to shed off their major reliance on provincial politics. They should transform their role, behavioural pattern, political priorities, and party interests from regional politics to more national politics.
- For ethnic and social harmony, the federal government should start the series of seminars on regular basis to be held in each provincial capital to inculcate the significance of unity in diversity.
- The scope of Council of Islamic Ideology should not be only confined to its role as an advisory body for the legislature that whether or not laws are against the spirit of Qur'an and Sunnah. It should also oversee any religious interpretation(s) given by madrassa-trained clergy to avoid divergent Islamic interpretation, and verdict, causing extremist leanings in Pakistan. It is observed with concern that the Friday sermons of various mosques tend to generate deviations, and sectarian divides, thus flourishing extremism. To curb this detrimental inclination, there is a dire need to develop a state-level single national Friday sermon mandatory to be recited at the Friday congregational prayers, thus solidifying the roots to national integration.
- Media plays an important role for cultural consolidation and national integration. A strong national narrative should be broadcasted to counter the extremist and sectarian along with provincialism narratives in the society.

## Conclusion

National integration is a process of bringing together culturally and socially distinct groups within the unified geographical boundaries of



the country in order to create a sense of oneness among them integral to the national unity. The cluster of languages, cultures, and ethnicities are perceived as the key elements that set a stage to the concept of nationhood, where people-friendly policies encourage all segments of society to play a constructive role in the nation-building. Opposite to this, any sense of marginalization, ethno-linguistic and sectarian schisms, extremism, caste-creed cleavages, and socio-economic deprivation, are the impediments to the growth of nationhood.

In fact, the nexus between sentiments of oneness and human development has become a central focus of national integration. These two elements are interlinked. There will be no feelings of togetherness without human resource development and no human resource development without feelings of togetherness. The study finds that in Pakistan, the successive governments could not get the desired progress in human capital formation to remove socio-economic injustices in Balochistan, interior Sindh, South Punjab, and tribal belt. The challenges that the country is facing in the political and social realms get compounded by provincialism, ethno-cultural divergences, bad governance, and inequalities in the provision of education and health services. As a result, socio-cultural, and political fault lines remain the dominant features of Pakistani society.

## Global Security in the Post-Cold War Era and the Relevance of Nuclear Weapons

Dr. Christoph Bluth<sup>1</sup>

### Abstract:

*Are nuclear weapons still relevant to global security? Compared with the nuclear confrontation in the depths of the Cold War, nuclear weapons and deterrence appear to have lost their salience. Considering the conflicts in which the major powers engaged, the focus in strategic studies changed to counterinsurgency, counterterrorism, and sub-conventional conflict.<sup>2</sup> Only recently, with the conflict in Ukraine and the increasingly confrontational relationship between the United States and China has this narrative come into question. The general perception on international security exhibits a strange paradox. On the one hand the US-led military interventions in Afghanistan, Iraq and other parts, the conflicts in the Middle East and Africa, the nuclearization of North Korea and the conflict between India and Pakistan among other regional security issues have given rise to a view that the modern world is less secure than ever, and we live in a world of chaos riven by unpredictable patterns of violence. By contrast, Steven Pinker has demonstrated the*

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<sup>2</sup> Adam B. Lowther, *Deterrence: Rising Powers, Rogue Regimes, and Terrorism in the Twenty-First Century* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 49; Andrew Futter, *The Politics of Nuclear Weapons* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan 2020), 3.

*casualties from armed conflict are at their lowest point in human history, and interstate warfare has virtually ceased to exist as a phenomenon.<sup>3</sup> The imminence of a global nuclear war in which at a minimum hundreds of millions of people would die appears to have dissipated. In some respects, it appears that war has become almost a phenomenon of the past. Most of the recent literature on nuclear weapons has focused on regional crises areas, such as South Asia (India and Pakistan) or the Korean peninsula.<sup>4</sup> However, the modernization of arsenals by the nuclear powers, the integration of strategic conventional and nuclear weapons in strategic doctrines and the more confrontational dynamics in Great Power politics is cited as evidence that the risk of nuclear use is increasing. This paper contests the emerging narratives on an increased threat of nuclear conflict and considers the sources of insecurity in the contemporary period and in particular the risks of armed conflict between the United States, Russia, and China in order to assess the role of nuclear weapons in contemporary security.*

**Keywords:** Nuclear Weapons, Global Security, Deterrence, US, China, Russia, Great Power Politics.

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<sup>3</sup> Steven Pinker, *The Better Angels of Our Nature: The Decline of Violence In History And Its Causes* (London: Penguin, 2011), 112.

<sup>4</sup> Christoph Bluth and Uzma Mumtaz, *India-Pakistan Strategic Relations – The Nuclear Dilemma* (Stuttgart: Ibidem Verlag, 2020), 22; Bruce W. Bennett, Kang Choi, Myong-Hyun Go, Bruce E. Bechtol, Jr., Jiyoung Park, Bruce Klingner, Du-Hyeogn Cha, *Countering the Risk of North Korea Nuclear Weapons* (Santa Monica CA: Rand Corporation, 2021), 7.

## The transition from the first nuclear age

The development of nuclear weapons which resulted in the acquisition of large strategic nuclear arsenals by the superpowers during the Cold War has resulted in an enormous literature elaborating the nature of nuclear deterrence.<sup>5</sup> A significant consensus developed that during the Cold War nuclear deterrence was effective in preventing direct military conflict between the United States and the Soviet Union, prevented a large war in Europe and reduced military conflict between the “superpowers” to proxy conflicts in what was then called the third world.<sup>6</sup> One of the most prominent advocates of the war-preventing effect of nuclear arsenals is Kenneth Waltz who has advocated the proliferation of nuclear weapons in order to reduce international conflict.<sup>7</sup> The end of the Cold War was the beginning of a total transformation of the international system.<sup>8</sup>

The confrontation of the two large armies of NATO and the Warsaw Pact that had been ready for large-scale high intensity warfare at short notice stood down and were to a significant degree dismantled.<sup>9</sup> The strategic nuclear relationship between Russia and the United States changed dramatically even though the existing capabilities remained in place. As very large numbers of warheads were dismantled the co-operative threat reduction programme provided for US assistance for

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<sup>5</sup> Lawrence Freedman and Jeffery Michaels, *The Evolution of Nuclear Strategy* (Palgrave Macmillan: Basingstoke, 2019), 51.

<sup>6</sup> Michael Howard, “Lessons of the Cold War”, *Survival*, Vol.36, no.4 (1994/95), 61; John Lewis Gaddis, Philip H. Gordon, Ernest R. May and Jonathan Rosenberg, *Cold War Statesmen Confront the Bomb: Nuclear Diplomacy Since 1945* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 161.

<sup>7</sup> Scott D. Sagan and Kenneth L. Waltz, *The Spread of Nuclear Weapons – A Debate Renewed* (New York, NY: W.W. Norton, 2001), 124.

<sup>8</sup> R.K. and Lebow, R.N, *Ending the Cold War: Interpretations, Causation and the Study of International Relation* (Aldershot: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 27.

<sup>9</sup> V.Litvov, “Nasha beopasnost’ i parizhsky dogovor,” *Sovietskaia rossia*, January 9, 1991.

the safe and secure dismantlement of warheads, delivery vehicles (i.e. missiles and missile silos) and the controlled storage of fissile materials (much of the uranium from Russian weapons was down blended and sold to the United States).<sup>10</sup> The key change was that until the end of the Cold War nuclear forces were designed to provide for deterrence against a large-scale conventional attack and to provide for escalation control in the event of the outbreak of conflict.<sup>11</sup> As the risk of major war in Europe became vanishingly small and Russia no longer had the capacity to wage such a war, the purpose of nuclear forces changed. They continued to provide a deterrent against a US strategic nuclear attack, but such a scenario likewise had become highly unlikely against a country that lacked the capacity of a large-scale land war, had lost a sizeable chunk of its territory, its Central European allies and had lost its foreign clients that had been involved in proxy wars.<sup>12</sup> The unipolar moment had arrived, with the United States as the world's largest economy with unrivalled military power and global power projection capabilities.<sup>13</sup> A large strategic nuclear arsenal was the basis of Russia's one remaining claim to be a Great Power, and it also provided a last resort guarantee of protection against foreign aggression as the military-industrial complex stagnated and the armed forces struggled to field any combat-ready units.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Christoph Bluth, *The Nuclear Challenge: US-Russian Strategic Relations after the Cold War* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2019), 25.

<sup>11</sup> James R. Schlesinger, *The Theater Nuclear Force Posture in Europe. A Report to the United States Congress* (Washington, DC: GPO 1975), 33.

<sup>12</sup> Christoph Bluth, *The Collapse of Soviet Military Power* (Aldershot: Dartmouth Press, 1995), 15.

<sup>13</sup> John G. Ikenberry, Michael Mastanduno and William C. Wohlforth, eds., *International Relations Theory and the Consequences of Unipolarity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 24.

<sup>14</sup> Chronology Office of the Historian, *United States Relations with Russia: After the Cold War 1990-91* (Washington, DC: Department of State, 2009), 38; Roy Allison and Christoph Bluth, eds., *Security Dilemmas in Russia and Eurasia* (London: RIIA/Brookings, 1998), 67.

## Sources of conflict in the contemporary international system

The expectations of the impact of the end of the Cold War on international security differed very substantially. President George H W Bush announced the dawn of a “new world order”.<sup>15</sup> While many commentators decried the “international disorder” after the predictability of the bipolar Cold War order and realists like John Mearsheimer predicted that we would “soon miss the Cold War”,<sup>16</sup> other scholars have argued that the end of the Cold War was a much more substantial transition in international politics and that major war is becoming obsolete.

The most prominent advocate of this thesis is Steven Pinker,<sup>17</sup> but others such as Joshua Goldstein and Christopher Fettweis focused on the dramatic reduction in the frequency of interstate war and the precipitous fall in the number of casualties of armed conflict.<sup>18</sup> Michael Mandelbaum and John Mueller went so far as to claim that major war between the Great Powers had become obsolete as a social phenomenon.<sup>19</sup> The explanations for this phenomenon are varied. For one thing, territorial conquest is no longer the basis of national wealth and access to raw materials is provided by global trade relationships. The creation of the United States established a body of international

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<sup>15</sup> Joseph S. Nye, “What New World Order,” *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 71, no.2(Spring 1992), 87.

<sup>16</sup> John J. Mearsheimer, “Why We Will Soon Miss The Cold War,” *The Atlantic Monthly* Vol.266, no.2 (1990), 37.

<sup>17</sup> Steven Pinker, *The Better Angels of Our Nature: The Decline of Violence In History And Its Causes* (London: Penguin, 2011), 112.

<sup>18</sup> Joshua S. Goldstein, *Winning the War on War: The Decline of Armed Conflict Worldwide* (London: Dutton 2011), 24, Christopher J. Fettweis, C.J., *Dangerous Times? The International Politics of Great Power Peace* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2011), 31.

<sup>19</sup> John Mueller, *Retreat from Doomsday: The obsolescence of modern war* (New York, NY: Basic Books, 1989); Michael Mandelbaum, “Is Major War Obsolete” *Survival* Vol.40, No.4 (1998), 20.

law that prohibited the changing of territorial boundaries by military force. Modern economies are based on intellectual property and not the possession of physical resources. At the same time, the norms that govern relations between states have developed substantially.<sup>20</sup> War is no longer considered a natural and legitimate activity of states and only permissible under very restricted circumstances. The theory of the “democratic peace” according to which liberal democracies do not go to war with each is a further development of the notion of the impact of norms on the reduction of armed conflict. This concept has been contested, and the interpretation of the empirical evidence depends on the historical time period under consideration and the definition of the term “liberal democracy,” but it embodies the notion that the norms that have been internalized by the political elites in democratic states result in a fundamental restraint regarding the use of force and that liberal democratic states do not threaten each other to the extent that the military balance between them is not a relevant factor in determining their relations.

But the acceptance of norms with respect to the use of force are not the unique property of liberal democratic states, as states with hybrid or authoritarian regimes also claim to adhere to international norms as codified in international law and in particular the UN Charter. Indeed, respect for international norms has become so universal that a special category – that of “rogue states” has been invented for states who are deemed to not generally conform to such norms, although this term and such designations are contested and generally not accepted

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<sup>20</sup> This is clearly the position of the US government even under the Trump administration, see Office of the Secretary of Defense, “Nuclear Posture Review 2018,” Report-2018, 2; Available at: <https://media.defense.gov/2018/Feb/02/2001872886/-1/-1/1/2018-NUCLEAR-POSTURE-REVIEW-FINAL-REPORT.PDF> (accessed on 2 February 2021). for an academic analysis see; Theo Farrell, *The Norms of War* (New Delhi: Viva Books Private Limited, 2006), 22.

in academic discourse.<sup>21</sup> In modern economies, wealth no longer stems from the possession of territories, and natural resources can be obtained through trade, obviating the need for territorial conquest as globalization has created world-wide economic interdependencies. The argument according to which war is no longer in the national interest of major powers, is supplemented by a different line of reasoning that explains the change in the role of armed conflict in the international system. The work of Bruce Russett and Zeev Maoz has substantiated the relationship between political participation and normative constraints in liberal democracies and the occurrence of disputes that involve the threat or the use of armed force.<sup>22</sup> This means that the sources of insecurity and the risk of conflict in the international system are not imbalances of power as posited by traditional realist theory. Instead, the sources of conflict are based on asymmetries of norms and therefore the higher the normative asymmetry, the greater the risk of armed conflict.

### **The second nuclear age**

The role of nuclear weapons in the international system is evidently closely related to the role of armed force more generally. In the realist perspective on international relations, military power is the principal determinant of state power and the risk of armed conflict is related to the balance of military power. However, as has been explained in the previous section, it is not clear that this explains the contemporary international system in which the risk of armed conflict between states is low except in some specific crisis regions such as South Asia or the

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<sup>21</sup> K. P. O'Reilly, "Perceiving Rogue States: The Use of the "Rogue State" Concept by U.S. Foreign Policy Elites," *Foreign Policy Analysis*, Vol. 3, no. 4(October 2007), 305.

<sup>22</sup> Robert Latham, "Democracy and War-Making: Locating the International Liberal Context," *Millennium*, Vol.22, no.2 (1993), 142; Zeev Maoz and Bruce Russett, "Alliance, contiguity, wealth and political stability: Is the lack of conflict among democracies a statistical artefact?," *International Interactions*, Vol.17, no.3 (1992), 267.



Korean peninsula.<sup>23</sup> During the Cold War, nuclear weapons were central to the conflict between the Soviet Union/Warsaw Pact and the United States/NATO and the dominant factor in the military balance that involved a substantial strategic nuclear arsenal with a triad of international range delivery vehicles, preparations of large-scale conventional conflict in Europe supported by tactical nuclear forces and proxy conflicts out-of-area. Although the United States and Russia still maintain substantial strategic nuclear forces, their role has changed fundamentally. As the prospect of large-scale warfare in Europe retreated, the United States developed effective global power projection capabilities based on conventional weapons while Russia's conventional military capacity shrunk to the point that nuclear weapons were considered essential as a deterrent of last resort, as well as Russia's only claim to be a Great Power.

The first decade after the Cold War seemed to confirm the view that the military contingencies that the nuclear powers are likely to face do not involve nuclear weapons either as a deterrent or as a useful military tool. Indeed, for the first time in their history the countries of Western and Central Europe did not face an external enemy. For example, in the conflicts in the Balkans four nuclear powers were engaged with armed forces, but this had no relevance for their conduct or the course of the conflict. As very few states faced an external threat that would compel them to acquire nuclear weapons, all non-nuclear states joined the NPT albeit some exceptions.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Brennen T. Fagan, Marina I. Knight, Niall J. MacKay and A. Jamie Wood, "Change point analysis of historical battle deaths," *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society: Series A (Statistics in Society)* Vol. 183, no.3 (2020), 21; Thomas S. Szayna, Stephen Watts, Angela O'Mahony, Bryan Frederick and Jennifer Kavanagh, *What Are the Trends in Armed Conflicts, and What Do They Mean for U.S. Defense Policy?* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2017), 3.

<sup>24</sup> Obvious exceptions are crisis regions such as South Asia and the Korean peninsula, and Belarus, Kazakhstan and Ukraine bowed to pressure from the US and Russia to allow nuclear weapons on their territories to be removed in return for security assurances and financial incentives.

Another significant factor is the development and diffusion of norms which changes the way in which countries view nuclear weapons. In particular international norms in relation to the use of force have changed fundamentally since 1945. The use of force is generally justified either as strict self-defence or more generally on the grounds of national security concerns. Rather, the use of force is only permissible under very specific conditions, such as self-defence, or the enforcement of international law and security as mandated by the UN Security Council (which may include humanitarian intervention).<sup>25</sup> Moreover, the use of force is subject to very stringent conditions, among which proportionality and the avoidance of civilian casualties are paramount.

Although this is not necessarily accepted by nuclear states, it could be argued in conformity with the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice that the use of nuclear weapons has to conform to the principles of international humanitarian law, which would mean that the use of nuclear weapons would be illegal in almost all conceivable circumstances.<sup>26</sup> Although nuclear weapons states may not accept such restrictions, nevertheless, Nina Tannenwald has demonstrated the emergence of a “nuclear taboo,” a growing and powerful moral restraint on the use of nuclear weapons that has turned “the habit of non-use” into a form of required and expected behavior among states.<sup>27</sup> It is true that Nina Tannenwald has more recently claimed that the nuclear taboo may have weakened by various developments.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Simon Chesterman, *Just War or Just Peace? Humanitarian Intervention and International Law* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 220; Adam Robert, *Humanitarian Action in War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 7.

<sup>26</sup> International Court of justice, “Legality of the Threat or Use of Nuclear Weapons,” *ICJ*, Report-1996, Available at: <https://www.icj-cij.org/public/files/case-related/95/095-19960708-ADV-01-00-EN.pdf> (accessed on 6 March 2021).

<sup>27</sup> Nina Tannenwald, *The Nuclear Taboo* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 29.

<sup>28</sup> Nina Tannenwald and James M. Acton, *Meeting the Challenges of the New Nuclear Age: Emerging Risks and Declining Norms in the Age of Technological Innovation and Changing Nuclear Doctrines* (Cambridge, MA: Academy of Arts & Sciences, 2018), 6.

These include nuclear modernization which threatens the second strike capabilities of nuclear powers, the development of conventional global strike capabilities, the increase deployment by Russia of sub strategic nuclear forces, the development of low yield nuclear weapons that allegedly lower the nuclear threshold, the emergence of small “undeterrable” nuclear states (so far only one, North Korea), the decline of arms control and the increasing emphasis on nuclear weapons in military doctrines of the Great Powers. This study argues that the opposite is the case and that these developments are misinterpreted. First of all, there is no evidence at all that the second-strike capabilities of the major nuclear powers are weakening.

The opposite is the case as the number of land-based missiles has been reduced and their capabilities are supplemented by much less vulnerable sea-based forces. The “window of vulnerability” is an even less plausible concept than it was in the time of Reagan. The increasing significance of conventional global strike capabilities, despite the confusion in the formal US nuclear posture, shows that there is a shift from nuclear to conventional capabilities for deterrence. Their purpose is not to facilitate the use of nuclear weapons, but to render it unnecessary. Nuclear doctrines and force postures are out of line with the actual military contingencies nuclear powers are facing. Low yield weapons have existed for decades, and even the new low-yield warhead for Trident would be a weapon of mass destruction killing in excess of 100,000 people in any urban area. Although Russia has increased its reliance on non-strategic forces for deterrence, it is remarkable that the United States has not followed suit. It is the argument developed in this study that the assertion that the risks of nuclear war are increasing is not supported by the evidence. It remains the case that in contrast to nuclear deterrence, the option of actual nuclear use is reserved for the highest level of escalation in a conflict in a situation where all other efforts at escalation control have failed. In other words, it would assume a massive high intensity conventional conflict that puts the

national survival of the nuclear power at risk. However, there is no theatre of conflict in which such a scenario is even a remote prospect in terms of relations between the Great Powers. It is true that relations between the Great Powers have become more conflictual and that military threats have re-emerged in Eastern Europe and the Far East. These will be discussed in more detail subsequently. Nuclear deterrence is a function of the credibility of a threat and the capability to carry it out. The latter remains, but the former has clearly diminished in terms of regional conflict involving the Great Powers. The only explanation for this phenomenon is that the Great Powers consider the use of nuclear weapons less likely and that the role of nuclear weapons in international security has diminished. This argument will be considered in more detail in the succeeding discussion.

Although one may question how strictly international norms are being adhered to, they demonstrably restrain the use of force by states. Indeed, Theo Farrell in his path-breaking study of the norms of war, stated: "Most of the time states obey international law, and they do so for any one of a number of reasons: because they think it is advantageous, appropriate, and/or fair to do so. Crucially, in terms of showing the autonomous causal effect of legal norms, states will obey international law even when it goes against their self-interests."<sup>29</sup> Many former practices in the conduct of warfare are no longer acceptable, such as the annexation of foreign territories or the execution of prisoners of war, and there is generally condemnation of military actions that are not precisely targeted to avoid civilian casualties.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Theo Farrell, *The Norms of War* (New Delhi: Viva Books Private Limited, 2006), 163.

<sup>30</sup> Christoph Bluth, *Britain, Germany and Western Nuclear Strategy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 30; Christoph Bluth, *Shadows of War* (London: Global Research Publications, 2020), 21.

The changes in the European security environment after the collapse of the Cold War system manifested itself in the steady decline of defence spending as a proportion of GDP by the NATO countries for example.<sup>31</sup> The major risk to international security in the time following the post-Cold war period appeared to reside in the so-called new wars, sub-state conflicts that arise from ethnic disputes, or failed states in regions of low development.<sup>32</sup> For the vast majority of states, there is no significant risk of war. This is a situation unprecedented in human history since the advent of the Westphalian system of states.

### **The US-Russian strategic relationship and the role of nuclear deterrence**

The early period in US-Russian relations after the Cold War were characterized by an effort to develop a non-adversarial relationship in which the United States and Russia were partners to manage the transition to cooperative security in Europe and a new stable nuclear order.<sup>33</sup> The dissolution of the Soviet Union had precipitated a collapse of Soviet military power and the withdrawal of troops from Eastern and Central Europe was in progress, with the last Russian troops leaving Germany in 1994.<sup>34</sup> Just at the end of the Soviet period the START 1 Treaty had been concluded which envisaged a reduction of deployed warheads by about 37% on both sides. The United States and Russia used the START Treaty as an instrument of non-proliferation to

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<sup>31</sup> "Financial and Economic Data Relating to NATO Defence," *NATO OTAN*, February 24, 2014, Available at: [https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/news\\_107359.htm](https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/news_107359.htm) (accessed on 10 March 2021); Javier Solana, "NATO and European Security into the 21st Century," *NATO OTAN*, May 13, 1998, Speech, published 13 May 1998, Available at: [https://www.nato.int/cps/en/SID-85AC8871-OCFB0FBA/natolive/opinions\\_26116.htm](https://www.nato.int/cps/en/SID-85AC8871-OCFB0FBA/natolive/opinions_26116.htm) (accessed on 24 March 2021).

<sup>32</sup> Mary Kaldor, *Old Wars and New War: Organised Violence in a New Era* (Stanford CA: Stanford University Press, 2007), 2.

<sup>33</sup> Sergei A. Karaganov, *Russia: The New Foreign Policy and Security Agenda* (London: Brassey's, 1992), 42.

<sup>34</sup> Pavel K. Baev, *The Russian Army In a Time of Troubles* (London: Sage, 1996), 103.

persuade Ukraine, Kazakhstan, and Belarus to give up the strategic nuclear forces based on their territories.<sup>35</sup> After the 1993 coup which was put down with an attack on the White House in Moscow where the Duma was held Yeltsin had to contend with the conservative forces in Russia that continued to perceive the relationship between Russia and the West as adversarial. In this context the continued existence of NATO was interpreted to mean that the West continued to threaten Russia, while the Western attitude was that as Russia and the West were no longer adversaries NATO should not be perceived as threatening.

The enlargement of NATO was motivated by a desire to integrate the Central European states politically into the West rather than develop a military threat to Russia. Although such integration would have made more sense through EU membership, the Central European states were not politically or economically ready for EU membership then and West European leaders did not consider it prudent to wait until they could join the EU which did not occur before 2004. NATO enlargement was vigorously opposed by Russia as a violation of previous commitments given by the G.H.W. Bush administration that it had “no need, no plans, no intention” to expand NATO membership to former WTO States and taken as evidence of the West’s hostility.<sup>36</sup> The NATO-Russia Founding Act created a new consultative mechanism to allay Russian fears, but in time Russia’s focus on NATO as a threat

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<sup>35</sup> “The START Treaty,” *The Library of Congress*, 1992, Available at: [https://www.loc.gov/law/find/nominations/gates/0001242677a\\_excerpt.pdf](https://www.loc.gov/law/find/nominations/gates/0001242677a_excerpt.pdf) (accessed on 12 March 2021).

<sup>36</sup> James B. Steinberg and Philip H. Gordon, “NATO Enlargement: Moving Forward; Expanding the Alliance and Completing Europe’s Integration by Thursday,” *Brookings Institution*, November 15, 2001, Available at: <https://www.brookings.edu/research/nato-enlargement-moving-forward-expanding-the-alliance-and-completing-europes-integration/> (accessed on 15 March 2021).

resumed.<sup>37</sup> The START II Treaty had the purpose of dramatically reducing the nuclear arsenals of the United States and Russia. By banning land-based ICBMs with multiple warheads, it would stabilise the strategic relationship as the threat of a first strike would now be considerably reduced, as well as ending Russia's dependence on missile factories based in Ukraine. START II was ratified by the US Senate on 26 January 1996 with a vote of 87–4.

However, the treaty became a victim of the internal battle in Russia over policy towards the West and was not ratified until Putin assumed the presidency. Even then it was not implemented, but was instead replaced by the Moscow Treaty (SORT) that permitted three warheads to be carried by each ICBM, but abandoned the verification measures that had been in place for START.<sup>38</sup> The Obama administration returned to more traditional strategic arms control negotiations that resulted in the New START Treaty which was recently renewed by the Biden administration.<sup>39</sup> The Trump administration's 2018 Nuclear Posture Review (NPR) followed the general outlines of the Obama administration to modernize the nuclear weapons arsenal. But, as the Bulletin of Atomic Scientists reported, "it includes several important changes. The most significant change is a recommendation to increase the types and role of US nuclear weapons. The Trump NPR takes a confrontational tone, presenting an assertive posture that embraces

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<sup>37</sup> Roy Allison and Christoph Bluth, eds., *Security Dilemmas in Russia and Eurasia* (London: RIIA/Brookings, 1998), 301.

<sup>38</sup> "The Strategic Offensive Reductions Treaty (SORT) At a Glance," *Armscontrol.org*, September 2017, Available at: <https://www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/sort-glance> (accessed on 15 March 2021).

<sup>39</sup> "Treaty Between The United States Of America And The Russian Federation On Measures For The Further Reduction And Limitation Of Strategic Offensive Arms," *NTI*, February 25, 2021, Available at: <https://www.nti.org/learn/treaties-and-regimes/treaty-between-the-united-states-of-america-and-the-russian-federation-on-measures-for-the-further-reduction-and-limitation-of-strategic-offensive-arms/> (accessed on 26 March 2021); "United States extends nuclear treaty with Russia for five years," *Washington Post*, February 3, 2021.

“Great Power competition,” and includes plans to develop new nuclear weapons and modify others. The report backs away from the goal of seeking to limit the role of nuclear weapons to the sole purpose of deterring nuclear attacks, and instead emphasizes “expanding” US nuclear options to deter, and, if deterrence fails, to prevail against both nuclear and “non-nuclear strategic attacks.” To be clear, any use of a nuclear weapon to respond to a non-nuclear strategic attack would constitute nuclear first use.

Thus, the NPR states that “non-nuclear strategic attacks include, but are not limited to, attacks on the US, allied, or partner civilian population or infrastructure, and attacks on the US or allied nuclear forces, their command and control, or warning and attack assessment capabilities.”<sup>40</sup> The purpose of nuclear forces will be to “hedge against the potential rapid growth or emergence of nuclear and non-nuclear strategic threats, including chemical, biological, cyber, and large-scale conventional aggression”<sup>41</sup> .. .. “The United States will enhance the flexibility and range of its tailored deterrence options. ... Expanding flexible US nuclear options now, to include low-yield options, is important for the preservation of credible deterrence against regional aggression....”<sup>42</sup> These statements in the NPR cover a full range of possible threat scenarios and have been taken to extend the role of nuclear deterrence and potentially the use of US nuclear forces. The ambiguous attitude of the Trump administration to arms control fits in with its nuclear policy. Russian violations of the INF Treaty were used to abandon the treaty regime altogether and right to the end the

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<sup>40</sup> Office of Secretary of Defence, “Nuclear Posture Review 2018,” *US Department of Defence*, Report-2018, Available at: <https://media.defense.gov/2018/Feb/02/2001872886/-1/-1/1/2018-NUCLEAR-POSTURE-REVIEW-FINAL-REPORT.PDF> (accessed on 20 March 2021).

<sup>41</sup> Ibid, 38.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid, 34.



Trump administration remained hesitant about renewing or renegotiating the START Treaty that Trump always said he disliked.

There are three important reasons to believe that the statements in the NPR are overinterpreted. The first is that US nuclear weapons are not deterring chemical, biological or cyber aggression, nor are they appropriate instruments to deter or respond to it. In fact, the NPR itself affirms that “The United States would only consider the use of nuclear weapons in extreme circumstances to defend the vital interest of the United States, its allies, and partners.”<sup>43</sup> The basis of nuclear deterrence is the credible threat to use nuclear weapons, and it is simply not credible to use nuclear weapons against anything other than existential threats. The second is that while the Trump administration put great store in maintaining and building military capabilities, issued various military threats and resisted Congressional efforts to institute constraints based on the War Powers Act, it was exceedingly reluctant to actually use them. Trump increased the troop levels in Afghanistan but then moved towards complete withdrawal despite a deteriorating security situation and now the Biden administration has announced that the United States will withdraw. The Trump administration continued that campaign against ISIS initiated by the Obama administration, but withdrew most forces from Syria as soon as all territory was recovered, abandoning its Kurdish allies in the process. When faced with the prospect of launching military strikes against Iran, Trump demurred and decided not to act.<sup>44</sup> Moreover, Trump persistently challenged the existing alliance security structures in Europe and the Far East. Despite his rhetoric, Trump appeared to be unwilling to initiate military action against North Korea or defend

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<sup>43</sup> Ibid, 21.

<sup>44</sup> Katrina Mansion and James Politi, “Donald Trump backs away from military action against Iran,” *Financial Times*, January 8, 2020.

Taiwan in the event of a conflict.<sup>45</sup> Indeed, prior to leaving office Trump initiated action to withdraw all US forces from all its overseas basis, an action which he was unable to complete.<sup>46</sup> But the reluctance to deploy and use US forces abroad is increasing after Trump, while the risks of a large-scale conventional attack on US territory are extremely low. Another way of expressing this is that the major powers are deterred from escalating any military conflict beyond a sub conventional level. The actual use of nuclear weapons remains extremely unlikely because the hierarchy of military conflict has not changed, and nuclear weapons remain at the upper level of escalation. The third reason is that it is to be expected that the Biden administration will revise US nuclear doctrine again and move away from the more contentious aspects of NPR 2018 as it moved quickly to renew START for another five years.

Russian strategic arms policy has been characterized by substantial overall reductions as codified in arms control agreements with the United States (albeit still maintaining a very substantial force) and incremental modernization. The primary purpose of Russia's strategic nuclear forces remains the maintenance of an effective counter to US strategic forces as Russia, contrary to some of the rhetoric, is not likely to be involved in any armed conflict in which it is necessary to deter the threat of large-scale military attacks with nuclear forces. Thus, the official US government threat assessment focuses on Russian "influence campaigns, intelligence and counterterrorism cooperation, military aid and combined exercises, mercenary operations, assassinations, and arms sales—to advance its interests or undermine

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<sup>45</sup> Josh Rogin, *Chaos – Trump, Xi and the Battle for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* (New York, NY: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2021), 44.

<sup>46</sup> Jonathan Swan and Zachary Basu, "Episode 9: Trump's war with his generals," *Axios*, May 16, 2021, Available at: <https://www.axios.com/off-the-rails-trump-military-withdraw-afghanistan-5717012a-d55d-4819-a79f-805d5eb3c6e2.html> (accessed on 27 March 2021).

the interests of the United States and its allies” and accepts that the purpose of nuclear forces is to deter attacks on Russia itself. It also considers large-scale military operations far outside Russia to be unlikely.<sup>47</sup> It states: “We expect Moscow to insert itself into crises when Russian interests are at stake, it can turn a power vacuum into an opportunity, or the anticipated costs of action are low.” The nuclear strategic relationship between Russia and the United States is stable, and despite the controversies over the issue of ballistic missile defence neither side can credibly destroy the second-strike capability of the other sufficiently. Although Russia was explicitly excluded as a target of national missile defence on the grounds (as articulated by President GW Bush) that Russia was no longer an enemy, Russian military planners have remained nervous about new capabilities that might degrade their offensive strike capabilities.

This has manifested itself in Russian opposition to European based missile defence installations directed against a possible missile attack from Iran.<sup>48</sup> The European Phased Adapted Approach includes the deployment of the Aegis Ashore Missile Defence System whose purpose is to defend European states against long-range missile attacks from smaller states such as Iran and the United States has stated that the Russian Federation cannot be targeted by the system deployed in Romania. The Russians have claimed that the MK-41 VLS system enables Aegis Ashore to launch ground-based cruise missiles in the contravention of the INF Treaty. The Russian stance to portray the Aegis off-shore and onshore systems as offensive threats was

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<sup>47</sup> Office of the Director of National Intelligence, *Annual Threat Assessment of the US Intelligence Community*, Report-2021, 9.

<sup>48</sup> Keir Giles and Andrew Monaghan, *European Missile Defense and Russia* (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War College, 2014), 2.

vigorously rejected by the United States.<sup>49</sup> The competing claims regarding offensive capabilities that allegedly violated the INF Treaty resulted in the decision by the Trump administration to withdraw from the treaty in response to the SSC-8 cruise missile, which according to the US has a range of 3,000 km and violates the INF Treaty although this claim is rejected by Russia. However, the United States has no plans for new INF deployments in Europe despite the end of the INF Treaty.<sup>50</sup> The deployment of US missile defences in Europe is given as the rationale for the deployment of strategic bombers in Crimea and the introduction of hypersonic missiles. Although hypersonic missiles which contrary to various declarations cannot yet be deemed to be operational are an important new technical development, do not fundamentally alter the strategic balance between the United States and Russia as missiles armed with the new re-entry vehicle are included in the START limits.<sup>51</sup> Although Russia has substantially modernized its strategic nuclear forces to ensure a substantial strike capability by all legs of its strategic triad and has narrowed the technological gap with the United States, neither side has the capacity to execute a first strike that would prevent the other side from launching a massive counterstrike and so a very high degree of mutual vulnerability persists.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> David Axe, "Why Russia Is Angry at America's Missile Defense Systems (Blog)," *The National Interest*, October 22, 2019, Available at: <https://nationalinterest.org/blog/buzz/why-russia-angry-americas-missile-defense-systems-90111> (accessed on 3 March 2021); CSIS Missile Defense Project, *Aegis Ashore* (Washington, DC: CSIS 2021)

<sup>50</sup> Shannon Bugos, "US Completes INF Treaty Withdrawal", *Arms Control Today*, September 2019, Available at: <https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2019-09/news/us-completes-inf-treaty-withdrawal> (accessed on 14 April, 2021).

<sup>51</sup> Amy F. Woolf, *Russia's Nuclear Weapons: Doctrine, Forces and Modernization* (Washington, DC: CRS, 2020), 20.

<sup>52</sup> Vladimir Dvorkin, *Preserving Strategic Stability Amid U.S.-Russian Confrontation* (Moscow: Carnegie Center, 2019), 6.

While the nuclear strategic relationship remains stable, Russia has over the last decade revitalized its conventional capabilities and has more recently exhibited a more assertive posture with respect to the use of force.<sup>53</sup> In particular, Russia has now become very assertive in terms of reasserting its dominance in the former Soviet space.<sup>54</sup> The recent Russian military interventions in Georgia and Ukraine and the annexation of Crimea is viewed by some scholars as the beginning of a revival of the nuclear threat in global security as Russia has hinted that the in the event of a NATO military intervention the use of tactical nuclear weapons might be possible. This is underscored by the risks taken by Russia in its “hybrid warfare” to support its sphere of influence despite its relative weakness in conventional capabilities vis-à-vis NATO.<sup>55</sup>

However, the conclusions drawn from these cases may be exaggerated. The Georgia case is complex with evidence that Georgia itself provoked Russian retaliation so that Tbilisi could push for NATO membership and that then-President Mikheil Saakashvili played his cards badly. How significant the nuclear threat is, remains to be seen however given that NATO also has nuclear capabilities, and the US has strategic nuclear capabilities that are more than a match for those of Russia. So far, a revival of the military confrontation in Europe or the strategic nuclear stand-off between the US and Russia is not on the

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<sup>53</sup> Bettina Renz, *Russia's Military Revival* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2018), 122.

<sup>54</sup> This has given rise to the; “S.1221 - Countering Russian Influence in Europe and Eurasia Act of 2017,” *Congress.Gov*, 2017, Available at: <https://www.congress.gov/bill/115th-congress/senate-bill/1221/text?q=%7B%22search%22%3A%5B%22russia%22%5D%7D&r=65> (accessed on 1 April 2021).

<sup>55</sup> Polina Sinovets, “The Nuclear Element in Russia’s Asymmetric Warfare Strategies,” *Ponars Eurasia*, December 4, 2015, Available at: <https://www.ponarseurasia.org/the-nuclear-element-in-russia-s-asymmetric-warfare-strategies/> (accessed on 1 April 2021).

horizon.<sup>56</sup> Although Russia and the US have been engaging in dangerous military activities that increase the risk of accidental interaction between military forces in the air and on the sea, the forces for a large-scale conventional conflict are not in place nor would the strategic objectives of such a conflict be apparent. Moreover, this situation has not significantly affected the pattern of global security. It is not clear whether “hybrid warfare,” which is a sub conventional conflict that uses low levels of disguised forces as well as non-military means such as cyber-attacks and information warfare, relies on nuclear deterrence or not. As with hybrid warfare, Russia has been using subversion rather than a conventional military engagement against potential targets in Eastern Europe,<sup>57</sup> the means to combat it also need to be “hybrid” by countering information warfare as well as support for sub conventional combat. It is highly unlikely that the US would become militarily involved in the conflict in Ukraine even if Russia had no nuclear weapons.

Indeed, Ukraine is using weapons provided by the United States to combat Russian forces and proxies without any regard to Russia’s nuclear weapons. For now, it seems that nuclear deterrence is not a significant factor in the conflict itself, even though Ukraine is now regretting giving up the nuclear forces on its territory (even though it was unable to manage a nuclear weapons complex at that time) and is contemplating a nuclear revival. However, from a strategic perspective it seems clear that Russia has become much less risk-averse since 2014.<sup>58</sup> Despite the improvements in Russian conventional military

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<sup>56</sup> See the statement by Jessica Cox, Director of Nuclear Policy at NATO: Jessica Cox, “Nuclear deterrence today”, *NATO Review*, June 8, 2020, Available at: <https://www.nato.int/docu/review/articles/2020/06/08/nuclear-deterrence-today/index.html> (accessed on 1 April 2021).

<sup>57</sup> Lanoszka, A, “Russian hybrid warfare and extended deterrence in Eastern Europe,” *International Affairs*, Vol.92, no.1 (2016), 175.

<sup>58</sup> Lawrence Freedman, *Ukraine and the Art of Strategy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press,2019), 65.

capabilities since their low point in the 1990s, Russian forces are, if the claims of Russian analysts are to be believed, still relatively weak and technologically inferior to NATO forces especially if one takes into account potential reinforcements from the United States to the existing peace-time deployments, despite efforts in recent year to modernize and upgrade capabilities.<sup>59</sup> The likely explanation that is the continued reliance of Russia's large nuclear capabilities which include substantial non-strategic assets as well as calculations about the reluctance of NATO to commit forces to the defence of non-member.

### **Contemporary security challenges in Northeast Asia**

In Northeast Asia, China's position at the end of the Cold War was undergoing dramatic change since it had opened up to international trade and focused on economic development and modernization. The dissolution of the Soviet Union and the withdrawal of Russia from its previous global commitments resulted in a fundamental transformation of Sino-Russian relations from an adversarial relationship to a strategic partnership. With the disappearance of the Soviet threat, Russia's role in the security of Northeast Asia diminished significantly. China was improving its relations not only with Russia, but South East Asian countries and it initiated diplomatic relations with the Republic of Korea. Even relations between the PRC and Taiwan became less belligerent. The main countervailing trend was on the Korean peninsula, where the end of the Cold War and the loss of the lifelines from Russia and to some extent China precipitated an existential crisis in North Korea that resulted in the collapse of the planned economy, a famine that killed over a million people and almost ended the Kim regime. At the same time the North Korean nuclear program precipitated a major crisis that very nearly resulted in a military conflict with the United States. The crisis on the Korean peninsula, alongside

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<sup>59</sup> Kristin Ven Bruusgaard, "Russian nuclear strategy and conventional inferiority," *Journal of Strategic Studies*, Vol.44, no.1 (2021), 35.

with the enduring US-Japanese alliance and the security assurances to Taiwan perpetuated the American military presence in the Asia-Pacific region.

The continuing economic growth and modernization of China as well as rise of regionalism in East Asia, the persistent conflict with the DPRK redefined the geopolitics of the region. With the slogan of the “peaceful rise of China,” the accession to the NPT and the cessation of nuclear testing, its efforts to come in line with concerns about the exports of dual-use nuclear and missile technology China made an effort to appear as a “good international citizen” and allay the fears in the United States and in the region about its growing political and economic power.<sup>60</sup> Although China as one of the P5 on the UN Security Council has a major voice in global security, Beijing has been reluctant to assume any wider international responsibilities and has so far exercised its influence through occasional vetoes, while mostly abstaining on controversial resolutions.

Under Xi Jinping China clearly perceives itself as a major power in the region and increasingly as a global power on a par with the United States, set to eclipse the United States by 2049. However, although there is a dense network of trade and economic relations involving China, other regional players are not prepared to accept China as a leader in regional security. Indeed, China’s aggressive pursuit of territorial disputes in the South China Sea and the Sea of Japan has tarnished its image and generated serious concerns about the future rise of China and the impact on the geopolitics of the region.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> David Shambaugh, *China Goes Global* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 10.

<sup>61</sup> Ronald O’Rourke, *U.S.-China Strategic Competition in South and East China Seas: Background and Issues for Congress* (Washington, DC: US Department of State, 2021), 8.



Although China has shown signs of moderating its approach to this issue it remains a major source of tension in the region.<sup>62</sup>

From the US perspective, the sources of tension in East Asia are not only about divergent national interests. As James Steinberg, Obama's former Deputy Secretary of State has pointed out, they are also about values. Steinberg and O'Hanlon describe the view of those who see values as central to relations with China as follows: "The values debate is not wholly independent from security concerns...the autocratic nature of the Communist Party means that China's policy will necessarily be hostile to the United States... From this perspective, actively supporting democratic change and human rights not only is consistent with US values but also can bring about the 'peaceful evolution' of the Chinese political system that would make China's rise less threatening."<sup>63</sup> In 2011 the then US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton published an article in *Foreign Policy* entitled "The Pacific Century" that set out some of the thinking underlying what came to be known as the "US pivot" to the Asia Pacific region.<sup>64</sup> It was based on the recognition that in economic, political and security terms East Asia is becoming the most important region in the world. The pivot was based on six pillars. The first priority was to strengthen the alliances of the US in the region. Although the alliance with Japan has come under strain it is fundamentally intact after the resolution of the issue of the American bases on Okinawa and in other parts of Japan. The alliance transcends party politics in Japan and in the view of the White House works well on day-to-day issues. The alliance with the Republic of

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<sup>62</sup> Anders Corr, *Great Powers, Grand Strategies – The New Game in the South China Sea* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2017), 247; David Shambaugh, *Where Great Powers Meet* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021), 22.

<sup>63</sup> James Steinberg and Michael O'Hanlon, *Reassurance and Resolve* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2014), 68.

<sup>64</sup> Hillary Clinton, "America's Pacific Century (Feature)," *Foreign Policy*, October 11, 2011, Available at: <https://foreignpolicy.com/2011/10/11/americas-pacific-century/> (accessed on 4 March 2021).

Korea remains strong as the disagreements that marked the Roh administration have been resolved and the Moon administration worked closely with the US government to coordinate policy towards North Korea.<sup>65</sup>

The pivot is also articulated as an act of “economic statecraft.” The objective is to put in place a political and international regulatory environment that will enable the development of closer business ties across the Pacific. The focus has been on promoting Asia-Pacific economic integration and free trade agreements such as the US-Korea FTA and the Trans-Pacific Partnership, although the latter was abandoned by President Trump. The second pillar of the pivot is deepening working relationships with emerging powers, including China, and the third pillar of the pivot is US engagement with multilateral institutions, in particular ASEAN and the East Asia Summit. The fourth pillar is expanding trade and investment, the fifth pillar forging a broad-based military presence and the sixth pillar is the support of universal values which include human rights.<sup>66</sup> This issue is a particular source of friction in US-China relations and Chinese policymakers see diplomatic engagement on human rights as interference in China’s internal affairs, while interpreting US political and military actions is based on US strategic interests rather than the promotion of values and the international order. The effort to downplay the significance of the military element of the pivot has had the opposite of the intended effect. On the one hand both allies and others in the region were underwhelmed by the apparent weakness of

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<sup>65</sup> “DCPD-201800361 - Remarks Prior to a Meeting With President Moon Jae-in of South Korea and an Exchange With Reporters in New York city,” *govinfo*, May 22, 2018, Available at: <https://www.govinfo.gov/app/details/DCPD-201900650> (accessed on 2 March 2021); “100 Policy Tasks Five-year Plan of the Moon Jae-in Administration,” *Korean Culture and Information Service*, August 17, 2017, Available at: <https://english1.president.go.kr/dn/5af107425ff0d> (accessed on 14 March 2021).

<sup>66</sup> David J. Bertau, Michael J. Green, Zack Cooper, *Assessing the Asia-Pacific Rebalance* (Washington, DC: CSIS, 2014), 4.

the military aspect of the pivot. On the other hand, it has provoked a much more assertive stance by China, which is precisely what the Obama administration intended to avoid.

In addition to the continuing pursuit of territorial claims in the maritime regions, China has effectively abolished the special status of Hong Kong in a firm response to political protests and continues to signal the preparedness to use force against Taiwan. As a consequence, South Korea and Japan have become even more reliant on the United States to counterbalance China's growing power. The "one belt one road" initiative developed by President Xi Jinping as an ambitious economic development and commercial project designed to improve connectivity and cooperation among many countries across Asia, Africa, and Europe has become the platform for China to take a leading role in the ordering of the international system as a leading power in a multipolar world.<sup>67</sup>

The emerging challenge of the Chinese navy is part of a longer-term effort to displace the United States as the dominant military power in the Pacific.<sup>68</sup> Despite various speculations to the contrary, the immediate challenge is not one of direct military conflict as such a conflict (say over Taiwan or the maritime territorial claims). Although China's naval patrols, the declarations of air control zones extended far beyond China's territorial boundaries and the penetration of Taiwan's air space with advanced aircraft have been viewed as a greater willingness to deploy and threaten military power, this does not mean that China intends to initiate armed hostilities and China is not alone in

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<sup>67</sup> Eyck Freymann, *One Belt One Road* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2021); Jonathan Fulton, ed., *Regions in the Belt and Road Initiative* (London: Routledge, 2020), 98.

<sup>68</sup> Office of Secretary of Defence, "Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China 2020," *US Department of Defence*, Report-2020, Available at: <https://media.defense.gov/2020/Sep/01/2002488689/-1/-1/1/2020-DOD-CHINA-MILITARY-POWER-REPORT-FINAL.PDF> (accessed on 3 April 2021).

defining an expansive Air Defence Identification Zone (ADIZ) which can extend to 200 km or more. Such a conflict would have serious consequences for both sides, especially in view of China's dependence on continuing economic growth and the economic interdependence of China and the United States. The strategic concerns arise from the way in which the perception of China's military capabilities both in Washington and in the region will alter the behavior of political actors and impact on the evolution of the geopolitics of the region. The ongoing conflict involving China and South East Asian countries over the maritime and exclusive economic zone claims have resulted in inconsistent responses from South East Asian countries due to their economic interests in harmonious relations with China and their military weakness. Efforts to get a coherent response from ASEAN has failed for this reason.<sup>69</sup> If tensions over these issues rise, there is the other possibility that the United States could become drawn into a serious conflict between China and another country in the region. The United States has sent patrols into the disputed areas in order to re-assert the principle of freedom of navigation, which elicited sharp protests from China, but there remains a level of restraint on both sides. But the strategic risk is that China will be able to change the status quo in the region incrementally without provoking a war. Not only would China be rewarded for an aggressive expansion of its control over the maritime region, but this has the potential of creating a new strategic status quo in which China has created a maritime buffer zone from which the US navy is excluded. The Trump administration focused on trade relations with China and had little interest in regional security (except for North Korea) or support for

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<sup>69</sup> Huang, Jing and Andrew Bill, eds., *In the South China Sea. Navigating Through Rough Waters* (Palgrave Macmillan: Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 82; David Shambaugh, *Where Great Powers Meet* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021), 15.

human rights despite various statements critical of China's human rights record, especially in Hong Kong.<sup>70</sup>

China's military modernization is designed to enable China to support what it has defined to be its core interests.<sup>71</sup> The larger geopolitical goals are to support China's role as a major power in the region and the displacement of American influence. In strategic terms, the highest priority are relations with Taiwan. Although China is pursuing its relations with Taiwan in anticipation of a peaceful reunification at some time in the future, it reserves the military option in case it is deemed necessary. A similarly high priority is defense/denial of access to the American navy to Chinese controlled waters. This includes the capacity to support China's territorial claims in the East China Sea and the South China Sea and its claim (not accepted by the international community) that it can regulate foreign military activities in what it claims to be its 200-mile maritime exclusive economic zone.

The United States remains the dominant military power in the region. Although eventually China's military capabilities could approach those of the United States, this is unlikely to occur for several decades given the advantages the United States has in military technology, global power projection capabilities and together with its allies the United States currently accounts for 70% of global defense. The Trump administration strongly committed to expanding US military capabilities at all levels including the wholesale modernization of strategic nuclear forces (although casting doubt on its commitment to actually honor its commitments to allies) and the Biden administration

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<sup>70</sup> Josh Rogin, *Chaos Under Heaven – Trump, Xi and the Battle for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* (New York, NY: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2021), 10.

<sup>71</sup> Office of Secretary of Defence, "Military and Security Developments involving the People's Republic of China 2020," *US Department of Defence*, Report-2020, Available at: <https://media.defense.gov/2020/Sep/01/2002488689/-1/-1/1/2020-DOD-CHINA-MILITARY-POWER-REPORT-FINAL.PDF> (accessed on 3 April 2021).

is likewise proposing continued high levels of defense spending. The United States is not only significantly ahead of China in military technology but given the continuing disparity in military spending and the unrivalled R&D infrastructure, the technological dynamism of the US and the existing stock of high-technology military hardware, a significant gap between the US and China remains for now despite Department of Defense concerns about Chinese growing capabilities.<sup>72</sup>

There are some specific issues that have been raised in relation to the concerns about the reduction in the qualitative edge of US military superiority. One is the prospect that China might use intermediate range ballistic missiles to target US aircraft carriers. The missile in question is the DF-21D, a variant of the road mobile DF-21 with a solid propellant motor armed with a 250 kt nuclear warhead. The DF-21D is to be used with conventional warheads, launched against surface ships from land. US estimates give the missile a range from 1,550 to 2,000 km (Chinese reports claim a range of 2,700 km). The accuracy of the missile is estimated at 700 m (circular error probable).<sup>73</sup> The extent to which it represents a realistic threat is doubtful, especially given that an attack by such missiles against a US carrier group would represent a very significant escalation that would raise the armed conflict to a wholly different level. The United States has very significant defensive capabilities for attacks against ships as well as tactical ballistic missile defenses. Military planners would assume that they only come into play once some level of direct hostilities had already been initiated.<sup>74</sup> Another issue that has been debated in the literature is the

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<sup>72</sup> James Steinberg and Michael O'Hanlon, *Reassurance and Resolve* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2014), 22.

<sup>73</sup> *Jane's Weapons Strategic Yearbook 2021-22* (Couldson: Jane's, 2021), 15.

<sup>74</sup> Harry J. Kaziani, "Is China's 'Carrier Killer' Really a Threat to the U.S. Navy (Blog)," *The National Interest*, September 2, 2015, Available at: <https://nationalinterest.org/blog/the-buzz/chinas-carrier-killer-really-threat-the-us-navy-13765> (accessed on 14 March 2021).

quantitative advantage China has in attack submarines in the region and the China is now deploying more ships overall than the US navy, although these metrics are not defining the military balance per se and are rightly considered to be misleading.<sup>75</sup>

Discussions of the regional military balance need to consider the fact that both the United States and China are nuclear powers. Neither China nor the United States have made explicit statements about nuclear deterrence in a potential conflict over Taiwan or the South China Sea.<sup>76</sup> Estimates of China's nuclear capabilities vary to some extent, but it is generally agreed that China's stockpile includes about 270 operational warheads and is going to increase in the foreseeable future to about 350 warheads. Even if the stockpile increases further over the next ten years it will remain substantially smaller than that of Russia or the United States. One important indicator in any confrontation with the United States would be the capability of Chinese ICBMs to target the continental United States. The US Department of Defense estimates that China has deployed about 100 Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles (ICBMs). Independent experts suggests that there are currently about 78 launchers deployed of the three (Dongfeng) DF-31 versions which can reach parts of Alaska and the Western continental United States. In addition, there are 10 each of the more modern DF-5A and DF-5B, while the new DF-41 ICBM is believed to be not yet operational.

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<sup>75</sup> Michael A. McDevitt, *China As A Twenty First Century Naval Power* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2020), 23.

<sup>76</sup> Office of the Secretary of Defense, "Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China," *US Department of Defense*, Report 2020, Available at <https://media.defense.gov/2020/Sep/01/2002488689/-1/-1/1/2020-DOD-CHINA-MILITARY-POWER-REPORT-FINAL.PDF> (accessed on 3 April 2021); David Logan, "Dangerous Myths on China's Nuclear Weapons (Commentary)," *War on the Rocks*, September 18, 2020, Available at: <https://warontherocks.com/2020/09/the-dangerous-myths-about-chinas-nuclear-weapons/> (accessed on 22 April 2021).

The DF-5B may have multiple independently-retargetable re-entry vehicles (MIRVs) with five warheads each. China is developing and deploying precision strike nuclear delivery systems which may mean that China is moving to the adoption of a limited “high alert duty” strategy to permit some launch-on warning. Overall, China has a modest capability to strike the United States and most of its nuclear weapons are based on medium range ballistic missile that can strike parts of Russia or other regional targets. The PLA is developing precision strike nuclear delivery systems such as the dual use DF-26 intermediate-range ballistic missile (IRBM) and survivable road-mobile ICBMs with the CSS-10 mod 2 (DF-31A) class missile capable of striking locations within the continental United States. There has been some discussion that suggests China has moved a portion of its nuclear force to a Launch on Warning (LOW) posture and is adopting a limited “high alert duty” strategy. However, the requirements for a true LOW strategy are extremely demanding in terms of reconnaissance, early warning and command and control systems and is problematic in the context of an asymmetry of capabilities because LOW may invite further retaliatory strikes against China. The evidence so far suggests that there are discussions on this in the PLA and so far, there is no implementation of an LOW posture.<sup>77</sup> There is clearly a substantial imbalance, as the United States has a stockpile of 3,800 nuclear warheads (not counting those slated for dismantlement), fields 404 Minuteman ICBMs with three warheads each and together with submarine launched missiles and heavy bombers has deployed an intercontinental strategic arsenal of 1,365 nuclear warheads.<sup>78</sup>

Any possible theatre of war between China and the United States differs from the Cold War example of Central Europe in so far as there

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<sup>77</sup> Samanvya Hooda, *Launch-on-warning and China's Nuclear Posture*, (New Delhi: Institute for Chinese Studies 202), 12.

<sup>78</sup> Hans M. Kristensen & Matt Korda, “Chinese nuclear forces, 2020,” *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* Vol.76, no.6 (2020), 443.



is no actual territory for the deployment of large-scale conventional forces. Any military operations would be carried out by naval forces unless China invaded Taiwan. Using nuclear weapons against naval targets is not appropriate to the targets and involves an unnecessary risk of escalation. Likewise, the use of nuclear weapons against Taiwan would be problematic because China considers the population of Taiwan to be their own citizens and therefore would essentially kill millions of their own people. Although the United States is committed to the security of Taiwan, there is no nuclear guarantee, and the United States has not deployed nuclear weapons anywhere on land in the region. Moreover, the United States has not deployed on ground forces in Taiwan. This means that the use of tactical nuclear forces is not plausible from a military perspective. Overall, the analysis of regional security does not indicate that nuclear deterrence is sufficient to prevent low-level military conflict, although it would limit escalation to attacks on Chinese territory. For China and the United States, nuclear weapons are deterrents of last resort. Given the strategic balance, China could not contemplate nuclear escalation unless there is a major attack on the Chinese mainland which is highly unlikely. Likewise, the United States is protecting strategic interests that are far from the homeland, which puts a limit on the risks it may be willing to take in their defence.<sup>79</sup>

## **Conclusion**

The dominant discourse in Russia and China about relations between the Great Powers in the contemporary system of global security is of a “multipolar order” defined by the UN Charter and international law. By

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<sup>79</sup> Michael O’Hanlon, “Russia, China, and the risks of war: My conversation with General Mark Milley,” *Brookings*, December 23, 2020, Available at: <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/order-from-chaos/2020/12/23/russia-china-and-the-risks-of-war-my-conversation-with-general-mark-milley/> (accessed on 27 April 2021).

contrast the United States government in the time of Biden administration has focused on a norm based international order, in which the United States would engage with other countries to stabilize the global economy and defend democracy against authoritarianism but without the use of military interventions. China and Russia reject this formulation and champion international law and the principles of the UN Charter, using these principles to defend national sovereignty and non-interference in internal affairs. The principal sources of conflict that could give rise to armed conflict are US opposition to China's efforts to extend control over its neighborhood with the use of political, economic, and military instruments, in particular in relation to the maritime territories adjacent to China and Taiwan. In the case of Russia, it is the effort to extend hegemony over the former Soviet space that is the main source of conflict which involves the use of force in campaigns of hybrid warfare. From the US perspective, and contrary to the classic realist approach which sees the asymmetry of power as the primary source of armed conflict, it is the asymmetry of norms that gives rise to threats of armed conflict. In this framework of a norms based international system, the concept of "multipolarity" has no place because it involves by definition the exercise of power by states over other states which violates the basic principles of a norms based international system.<sup>80</sup> These competing interpretations of the structure of the international system and the sources of armed conflict are not going to be resolved very soon, because in all three cases they form part of the defining identity and the core interests as defined by the current power elites. However, this does not mean that the world

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<sup>80</sup> This is notwithstanding the fact that the language of multipolarity has found its way into the rhetoric of the US Department of Defense, see Cheryl Pellerin, "Stratcom Commander Describes Challenges of 21st-Century Deterrence," *US Dept of Defense*, August 17, 2017, Available at: <https://www.defense.gov/Explore/News/Article/Article/1281946/stratcom-commander-describes-challenges-of-21st-century-deterrence/> (accessed on 18 March 2021).

is returning to a strategic nuclear confrontation or the imminent threat of a high-intensity armed conflict between the Great Powers.

The literature is currently dominated by the contrary view, namely that the risk of nuclear war is increasing. This is based on the observation that political relations among the major powers have become more confrontational, that nuclear weapons have been “re-legitimized” and that new technologies could impact on strategic stability and deterrence. This study has argued that while the first of these contentions is undoubtedly true, the conclusions drawn are unwarranted. Even if all of the novel technologies to deliver nuclear weapons realize their potential, none of the major nuclear powers will acquire the capacity to eliminate substantial second-strike capabilities of the other parties. The threats to strategic stability are exaggerated. The increasing capacity to conduct precision nuclear strikes has not increased the likelihood of nuclear use because it is also being acquired by the adversaries of the United States, thereby increasing the risks associated with nuclear strikes for all involved. Although the rhetoric of political and military establishments has re-emphasized nuclear capabilities, this does not mean nuclear weapons have become more “legitimate,” as evidenced by the support for the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (rejected by the nuclear powers). More important even for this argument is that despite the rhetoric, nuclear weapons have not acquired greater military utility. Missions previously assigned to nuclear weapons can now be performed by conventional weapons. This study has emphasized that even high intensity conventional warfare on a large scale remains a very unlikely scenario and the forces for such a confrontation are not in place either in Europe or the Far East. The changed security environment may mean that nuclear weapons are insufficient to deter sub conventional war. This is another indicator that their use has become less rather than more plausible. However, the behavior of nuclear powers leads to

the conclusion that they can still deter major conventional war that could escalate to nuclear war. Nuclear weapons are used for deterrence or as a weapon of last resort to defend against an overwhelming threat to national survival. In the absence of a realistic conventional threat to the national survival of either Russia, China, or the United States, deterrence remains the only plausible role for nuclear arsenals.

## India's Soft Power Image: A Case Study of the Indian Economy under Modi

Masood Khurshid and Dr. Asma Shakir Khawaja<sup>1</sup>

### Abstract

*Soft power, being power of attraction, is non-violent and enables behavioral change through tangible and intangible persuasion. Unlike coercive military power, it emanates from the culture, political ideals, strategic aspirations, and economic dividends of a state. Soft power image may require decades to be established but remains vulnerable to state actions. Soft power, as an essentially a fluid concept, involves multiple, multidimensional, and multilayered policies. India's sustained economic growth played a pivotal role in constructing its soft power image. Narendra Damodardas Modi became India's Prime Minister in 2014 with the promise to improve economy - the idea generally known as shinning India. Modi's demonetization decision in 2016 triggered economic meltdown which is worsening till to date. This research study is analytical and descriptive in nature, and endeavors to focus on the Indian economy as a case study vis-à-vis impact of its slowdown on India's soft power image. It hypothesizes that India's soft power*

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*image under Narendra Modi has eroded significantly owing to his domestic and economic policies.*

**Keywords:** India's Soft power, Indian Economy, Narendra Modi, Hindutva, Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).

## Introduction

National Power is the ability or capability of a nation to secure the goals and objectives of its national interests in relation with other nations. It is the capacity to use force or threat of use of force or influence over others for securing the goals of national interest. Hans J. Morgenthau explained power as "the power of man on others" and as a "man's control over the minds and actions of other men."<sup>2</sup> However Schwarzenberger in his book *Power Politics* described Power as "the capacity to impose one's will on others by reliance on effective sanctions in case of non-compliance."<sup>3</sup> National power is defined as a combination of power and capability of a state which it uses to fulfill its national interests and goals. It is the capability and preparedness of a state to compel her enemy to do something or to deter her from doing something. In contemporary international system war is not cost effective in terms of economic cost, human cost, and destruction. Therefore, modern day warfare is about attaining national interest without fighting. Several theorists have considered it as the supreme excellent strategy. In this context soft power is a force multiplier. It becomes the states' international image which is an important focus of international politics in today's era of image fare.

Known as the power of attraction, the soft power is defined as the

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<sup>2</sup> Mihaela Neacsu, *Hans J. Morgenthau's Theory of International Relations* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 54.

<sup>3</sup> ND Arora, *Political Science for Civil Services Examinations* (NEW Delhi: TATA Mcgraw Hill Education Private Limited, 2010), 35.

ability of a state to achieve what it wants through attraction rather than coercion. It enables a change of behavior in others without competition or conflict, by using persuasion and attraction.<sup>4</sup> Unlike hard core military power, it emanates from the culture, political ideals, and policies of the country. Hence, the soft power remains intangible and difficult to quantify like other powers. However, the effectiveness of soft power increases with effective projection.<sup>5</sup> It is noteworthy that soft power is not to command others through orders, nor is it the power to bribe or buy their support through economic inducements.<sup>6</sup>

Soft power projection is slow, gradual, non-violent but a persistent process. As per Indian commentators, Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi was able to gain freedom for India through the strategy of non-violence and therein lays the genesis of India's claims that it has been using soft power long before the concept was floated by Joseph Nye in 1990's. Potentially, India's soft power resources include culture, sports, music, art, film, literature, and even beauty pageantry.<sup>7</sup> However, few scholars also include India's democratic credentials, economy, claims of secularism, multi ethnicity, social, ethnic and religious diversity, active and vibrant civil society and Indian diaspora in the soft power resources list.

Despite possessing considerable soft power resources, Narendra Modi is costing India its soft power image. Modi's mindset, approach and some of his actions have seriously shaken the very foundations of India's soft image. For example, abrogation of Article 370 in Indian Occupied Kashmir on 5 August 2019, and incorporation of Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) in Indian constitution has had multifaceted

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<sup>4</sup> Khara Nabin Kumar, "Understanding of India's Soft Power Dynamics," *Asian Review of Social Sciences*, Vol.7, no.3 (2018), 126.

<sup>5</sup> Rohan Mukherjee, "The false promise of India's soft power," *Geopolitics, History, and International Relations*, vol. 6, no.1 (2014), 46.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

impact on India's soft power image. Such actions made India's claims of democratic credentials, secularism, human rights, and respect for rule of law sound extremely hollow. The situation has not been any different on economic front. Moody's has not only forecast slower real GDP growth of 5.6 per cent in 2019-20, from 7.4 per cent in 2018 but also downgraded India's economic outlook to negative from stable.<sup>8</sup> The pandemic COVID 19 and Modi's response to it had negatively affected the economic growth and human development indexes in the country.<sup>9</sup>

The year 2014 marked the phenomenal transformation of Narendra Modi from an international outcast, who was barred from entering United States for nearly a decade, into an international wannabe. However, right after Modi became the Prime Minister of India, international community embraced the lifelong member of a militaristic organization Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), inspired by Nazism.<sup>10</sup> The man who as Chief Minister of Gujarat thrived on fomenting violence to massacre Muslims had been elevated to be the mascot and torchbearer of India's soft power image. Ever since then Modi has been recasting the story of India from that of a secular democracy, accommodating a uniquely diverse population to that of a *Hindu Rashtria* (nation) that dominates its minorities, especially the country's two hundred million Muslims.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> "Moody's cuts India's GDP growth forecast to 5.6 per cent for 2019," *The Economic Times*, December 13, 2019.

<sup>9</sup> Hugo Erken, Raphie Hayat and Kanji, "Coronavirus: The Economic Impact of COVID-19 on India March 13," *Rabobank*, March 13, 2020, Available at: <https://economics.rabobank.com/publications/2020/march/coronavirus-economic-impact-covid-19-on-india/> (accessed on 9 February 2021).

<sup>10</sup> Arundhati Roy, "India: Intimations of an Ending, The rise of Modi and the Hindu far right," *The Nation*, November 22, 2019.

<sup>11</sup> Filkins Dexter, "Blood and Soil in Narendra Modi's India," *The New Yorker*, December 2, 2019.



India's economic growth has decelerated since mid-2018, with real GDP growth slipping from nearly 8 per cent to 5 per cent in the second quarter of 2019 and high unemployment rates.<sup>12</sup> India's retail price inflation in November 2019 jumped to a 40-month high, which shows that the growth in Asia's third largest economy has slowed to a six-year low, prompting some economists to warn that the country could be entering into a stagflationary phase.<sup>13</sup> Standard & Poor Global Ratings has though maintained a BBB- rating for India, which is its lowest investment grade rating, but has warned to downgrade India's sovereign rating if the country's economic growth does not recover.<sup>14</sup>

Given Modi's policies of religious and political polarization aimed at marginalizing minorities particularly Muslims and mismanagement on economic front, it is important to analyze the Indian soft power under Modi. While giving broad brush to different components of India's soft power image, this research study endeavors to focus on the Indian economy as case study vis-à-vis impact of its slowdown on soft power image.

### **Theoretical Framework**

This research study analyses Indian soft power image and economy under Modi as a specific case study. Analysis and quantification of the impact of soft power is challenging task as owing to its very nature, the soft power is both intangible and immeasurable. Hence, a qualitative analysis approach has been applied. Indian soft power image under Modi is relatively under-researched hence there is limited material

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<sup>12</sup> "Moody's cuts India's GDP growth forecast to 5.6 per cent for 2019," *The Economic Times*, December 13, 2019.

<sup>13</sup> "India's rising retail prices stoke worries of stagflation," *The Economic Times*, December 13, 2019.

<sup>14</sup> "S&P to cut India's sovereign rating if economic slump persists," *The Economic Times*, December 11, 2019.

available which can be used as reference. While Nye is known to have coined the term 'soft power' the essence of this theory can be traced back to concepts in Taoism. Lao Tzu, considered to be the founder of Taoism, propagated the idea of soft power in his text 'Tao TeChing' where he states that the best way to rule is not through competitive means using weapons and armies but "indirectly" which benefits all without fighting against each other.<sup>15</sup>

It is significant to note that the basic concept of soft power revolves around 'power,' itself. However, it has altered the definition of "power," and broadens it from traditional to non-traditional paradigms. Power can be viewed either through a structural point of view where questions like "who has power and why they have it" or from the procedural point of view which asks, "how the power is exercised."<sup>16</sup> The first viewpoint looks at power structures like superpowers and their qualities.<sup>17</sup> The second point of view, which is more relevant to this paper, includes the ways and means to wield power.<sup>18</sup>

Indian philosopher Chanakiya Kautaliya, in his famous book *Arthashastra*, wrote that a state is powerful only if it is strong and has the strength to change/influence minds.<sup>19</sup> His ideas of the benefits of wielding power, however, focus on "material gain, spiritual good and pleasures."<sup>20</sup> Robert A. Dahl suggests that power is when one entity wields influence over a second entity to make the second entity do

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<sup>15</sup> Aditi Tandon, "European Union's Soft Power in India: Opportunities & Challenges," *Theses.cz*, March 2011, Available at: [https://theses.cz/id/u9fvbv/FinalThesis\\_AditiTandon.pdf](https://theses.cz/id/u9fvbv/FinalThesis_AditiTandon.pdf) (accessed on 20 February 2021).

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

something which it otherwise would not have done.<sup>21</sup> Taking these concepts of power into consideration one can assume that power is influencing or wielding control to obtain a desired result.<sup>22</sup>

Indian political analyst, Shashi Tharoor also agrees with the definition of soft power by Joseph Nye. He describes soft power as “power of example” and “the ability of a country to attract others because of its culture, its political values, and its foreign policies.”<sup>23</sup> He emphasizes that soft power is not only what a country chooses to display or the attractive image that is built by government efforts, but it is what others see despite these efforts, and decides whether or not the country wants it so.<sup>24</sup> Furthermore he considered the contemporary communication age as a key in propagating soft power.<sup>25</sup> This point is often missed out by theorists on power and particularly soft power. With rapid advancements in technology and communication, the ways through which a country's values, culture and policies are presented to the world are manifold.<sup>26</sup> A state's image is up for viewing and judgment by anyone who has access to communication devices.<sup>27</sup>

## **1. India's Soft Power Image**

India was once regarded as a cultural melting pot due to its image as a multi-cultural and multi-religious state. India stakes claim to rich and illustrious history with many different people from the Greeks to the

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<sup>21</sup> Aditi Tandon, “European Union's Soft Power in India: Opportunities & Challenges,” *Theses.cz*, accessed on December 20, 2019, Available at: [https://theses.cz/id/u9fvbv/FinalThesis\\_AditiTandon.pdf](https://theses.cz/id/u9fvbv/FinalThesis_AditiTandon.pdf) (accessed on 20 February 2021).

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

Moghuls and lately the English, Portuguese and French influencing its traditions that were initially set by the Indo-Aryans. People abroad generally thought of India as a country with rich culture, popular cuisines available across the globe, *Yoga* and strong Bollywood's presence. The combination of democratic and post-colonial traditions with the historical Gandhian ideals of non-violence and India's experience with political pluralism and religious diversity, led scholars such as Wagner to state that India assuredly "qualifies" as a soft power.<sup>28</sup>

Indian economy thrived in last couple of decades. As a large market with huge population, India became the favorite destination for investors. "Incredible India" campaign in 2002 made India a popular tourist destination. Riding the crest of nationalism and promises of shining India, Modi stormed to power in 2014 with thumping majority. As discussed earlier, Modi has been a member of right-wing Hindu nationalist group Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) for nearly four decades. His involvement in the genocide of Muslims in Gujarat (2002) is well documented. Understandably, ascent of Modi did carry some concerns both at home and abroad. However, international community was quick to forget and forgive Modi's historical baggage due to the soft image of India and relevance of soft and hard power India owes. During his first term as Prime Minister, Modi focused on creating unabashed Hindu India. BJP under Modi contested the elections of 2019 through massive exploitation of Hindu nationalism. They constructed Hindu Nationalism on anti-Pakistan and anti-Muslim rhetoric. Through their policies of division and polarization, they raised

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<sup>28</sup> Shah Aayushi Liana, "Political Identity as a Soft Power: India in the 21st century," *Universiteit Leiden*, May 23, 2018, Available at: <https://studenttheses.universiteitleiden.nl/handle/1887/65654> (accessed on 24 February 2021).

a wall of hatred to draw a line/wall between 'Muslims, Pakistan and them.' In order to divert public focus from the failures of Modi regime, BJP made non-issues as most important election slogans such as nuclear strike against Pakistan, false pride in coercive power, and surgical strikes against Pakistan etc. Modi made national security narrative based on security dilemma as central theme for the election. As a result, he returned to power with even more majority. It is evident that hatred, false promises and Hindutva have emerged as most important political dividends.

While Modi's politics and policies thus far had multifaceted impact both at home and abroad, it is important to explore how Modi's policies and governance priorities have impacted on India's image as soft power. Four factors shortlisted for the analysis of India's image as soft power under Modi are democratic credentials, Hindu nationalism, secularism and economy.

#### **i. Democratic Credentials under Modi**

India being the world's largest democracy, considers its successfully-functioning democracy as the biggest asset in terms of soft power which has thrived despite many issues and problems.<sup>29</sup> It claims to have demonstrated that democracy can function successfully even in a poor, illiterate country and is not only the privilege of the developed Western countries.<sup>30</sup> Shashi Tharoor pointed out in May 2004, that the world's largest exercise of democratic franchise resulted in "a Roman Catholic leader making way for a Sikh to be sworn in as Prime Minister by a Muslim, in a country with 81 per cent Hindus" something that

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<sup>29</sup> Khara Nabin Kumar, "Understanding of India's Soft Power Dynamics," *Asian Review of Social Sciences*, Vol.7, no.3 (2018), 129.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

“caught the world’s imagination and won its admiration.”<sup>31</sup> However, the perception seems to be changing rather fast as Indian democracy under Modi is going through tremendous turmoil.<sup>32</sup>

The Muslim-majority state of Indian Illegally Occupied Kashmir (IIOK) has been under the lockdown since 5 August 2019, when Modi stripped away its autonomy by abrogating Article 370 of Indian Constitution through a presidential order. All human rights have been suspended, the region is under lockdown, the Internet has been shut down, and communication has been paralyzed in the IIOK. Thousands of people are under custody, draconian laws have been imposed and state is demonstrating coercive use of force against innocent civilians. It is a state of emergency asphyxiating more than 7 million people.<sup>33</sup> Human rights violation across India in general and IIOK in particular have risen to unprecedented levels under Modi. Impunity for human rights violations and lack of access to justice, and the Armed Forces (Jammu and Kashmir) Special Powers Act (AFSPA) and the Jammu and Kashmir Public Safety Act (PSA) impede accountability for human rights violations.<sup>34</sup> The subject constitutional amendment in the Citizenship Act (CAA) is inherently discriminatory as it gives priority to Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist, Jain, Parsi and Christian resident in India before 2014, but

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<sup>31</sup> Shah Aayushi Liana, “Political Identity as a Soft Power: India in the 21st century,” Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> For intense statistical analysis see Lydia Finzel, “Democratic Backsliding in India, the World’s Largest Democracy,” *Variety of Democracy*, February 24, 2020, Available at: <https://www.v-dem.net/en/news/democratic-backsliding-india-worlds-largest-democracy/> (accessed on 26 February 2021).

<sup>33</sup> Raj Pushkar, “Fallout from abrogation of Article 370 in Kashmir,” *Asia Times*, September 3, 2019.

<sup>34</sup> “India Events of 2018, *Human Rights Watch*, Available at: <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2019/country-chapters/india> (accessed on 28 February 2021).

excludes Muslims, including minority sects.<sup>35</sup> Brutal handling of country wide protests against controversial new Citizenship Amendment Bill/Act (CAA) defies all basic norms of democracy. Delhi police even stormed Jamia Millia Islamia University campus, injuring hundreds of students in a baton charge and firing tear gas shells inside classrooms and the library. In a so-called world's largest democracy, the internet has been shut down 95 times in the year 2019 alone.<sup>36</sup> It also saw the world's highest number of internet shutdowns in 2018 with 134 reported incidents. To put this in perspective, the second-highest country on the list was Pakistan with 12 internet shutdowns in the year 2018. Modi is recasting the story of India, from that of a secular democracy to that of a Hindu nation that subjugates its minorities, especially the country's two hundred million Muslims. Draconian sedition and counterterrorism laws are used to bar free expression. Foreign funding regulations are used to target nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) critical of government actions or policies.<sup>37</sup> Modi and his allies have squeezed, bullied, and smothered the press into endorsing what they call the "New India."<sup>38</sup> Modi's dictatorship considers use of force and violence as panacea for all the ills in India. Space for dissent, right to protest and freedom of speech has shrunk significantly in India under Modi thus massively undercutting her soft power image.

As per a report by digital rights and privacy organization ACCESS, India had world's highest number of internet shutdowns in 2020. Of the

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<sup>35</sup> "New citizenship law in India fundamentally discriminatory", *UN News*, December 13, 2019, Available at: <https://news.un.org/en/story/2019/12/1053511> (accessed on 4 March 2021).

<sup>36</sup> Nazmi Shadab, "Why India shuts down the internet more than any other democracy," *BBC NEWS*, December 19, 2019, Available at: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-india-50819905> (accessed on 4 March 2021).

<sup>37</sup> "India Events of 2018," *Human Rights Watch*, Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> Filkins Dexter, "Blood and Soil in Narendra Modi's India," *The New Yorker*, December 2, 2019.

total 155 internet shutdowns globally, India alone accounted for 109. The next highest was Yemen, with six shutdowns, and Ethiopia with four.<sup>39</sup>

US-based non-profit Freedom House downgraded India from a free democracy to a "partially free democracy." Similarly, Sweden-based V-Dem Institute<sup>40</sup> declared India as an "electoral autocracy." Furthermore, India was described as a "flawed democracy," as it slipped two places to 53rd position in the latest Democracy Index published by The Economist Intelligence Unit. Almost all of these reports acknowledged the policies of Indian government under Modi as detrimental and responsible for the down sliding of Indian democracy. These reports highlighted the increased pressure on human rights groups, intimidation of journalists and activists, and a spate of attacks, especially against Muslims and considered it as a deterioration of political and civil liberties in India. Freedom House wrote in its report that civil liberties have been in decline since Modi came to power in 2014, and that India's "fall from the upper ranks of free nations" could have a more damaging effect on the world's democratic standards.<sup>41</sup>

The response of Indian government on these reports further indicated authoritarian practices. On the Freedom House report, the

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<sup>39</sup> Berhan Taye, *Shattered Dreams And Lost Opportunities: A Year in the flight to Keep it on* (New York: Access Now, 2020), 26.

<sup>40</sup> The Sweden based Institute, The Varieties of Democracy; (V-Dem) is an independent organization working in the University of Gothenburg Sweden has published report titled "Autocratization Turns Viral". The V-Dem produces the largest dataset on democracy with almost 30 million data points for 202 countries from 1789 till date, based on local knowledge, it meets the global standards. The V-Dem report findings, based on methodological and theoretical expertise, factual information, have explained that India with 1.4 billion people is no longer an electoral democracy owing to human right abuses and atrocities (though India is not alone in this group).

<sup>41</sup> Soutik Biswas, "Electoral autocracy': The downgrading of India's democracy," *BBC News*, March 16, 2021, Available at: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-india-56393944>. (accessed on 17 March 2021).



ministry of External Affairs stated that India had “robust institutions and well established democratic practices” and did not “need sermons especially from those who cannot get their basics right.”<sup>42</sup> The political judgements of the report were “inaccurate and distorted.”<sup>43</sup> In parliament, the chairman of the upper house, Venkaiah Naidu, did not allow an opposition MP to pose a question related to the V-Dem report saying: “All countries which are commenting on India should first look inward and then comment on India.”<sup>44</sup> These reactions reflects the inability of Indian (so-called) democratic forces to accommodate alternate opinion.<sup>45</sup> The V-Dem report illustrates that the media, academia, and civil society in India are not free enough for them to be called a democracy.<sup>46</sup>

## **ii. Hindutva**

Modi led Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) stems from an ideology inspired by Nazism, known as Hindutva, an extreme form of Hindu nationalism.<sup>47</sup> Hindutva stands for the extreme authoritarian rule of Hindus of a so-called “Ancient India,” which they describe as their motherland.<sup>48</sup> The mother organization of BJP is Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) is the prime promoter of the Hindutva ideology and the fountainhead of its wing organizations Bajrang Dal,

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<sup>42</sup> “Freedom House report ‘misleading, incorrect, misplaced’: India on ‘partly free’ status,” *The Economic Times*, March 5, 2021.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> Soutik Biswas, “Electoral autocracy,” Ibid.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

<sup>46</sup> Naheed S. Goraya, “Democracy Broken Down India- Says ‘V-Dem’ Democracy Report 2021,” *STRAFASIA*, April 2, 2021, Available at: <https://strafasia.com/democracy-broken-down-india-says-v-dem-democracy-report-2021/> (accessed on 17 March 2021).

<sup>47</sup> “Exposing Hindutva: An Ideology Of Hindu Fascism,” *ICNA Council for Social Justice*, September 4, 2019, Available at: <https://icnacsj.org/2019/09/exposing-hindutva-an-ideology-of-hindu-fascism/> (accessed on 25 March 2021).

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP), and Hindu Sena.<sup>49</sup> In a significant move, the VHP and the Bajrang Dal have been considered religious militant organizations by the CIA.<sup>50</sup> Strategically, the RSS targets vulnerable, illiterate and impoverished populations to promote the agenda of Hindutva. Hindu extremists have been extremely violent against minorities particularly Muslims with mob lynching and hate crimes becoming the norm. Hundreds of Muslims were lynched after being accused of consuming or possessing beef or transporting cattle while Hindu slaughterhouses have made India the largest exporter of beef in the world.<sup>51</sup> From September 2015 to June 2019, *Halt the Hate* has recorded a total of 902 reported hate crimes in India. A total of 181 incidents of alleged hate crimes were recorded between the months of January and June 2019. In 37 reported incidents, the victims were killed.<sup>52</sup>

In his second term, Modi has unleashed blatant Islamophobia through criminalizing the triple-talaq which effects the Muslim community only as it is a religious issue in Islam and cannot be settled through constitutional amendments, rather such order was against the principle of human rights and religious freedom. Constructing a Hindu temple on a site where a 470-year-old mosque was demolished in 1992 by Hindu protesters, cancelation of Indian citizenship of Bengalis in Assam for regional political gains, changing the constitutional status of Muslim-majority Jammu and Kashmir and detaining its political leaders and CAA to cancel the citizenship of Muslim, are all the continuation of

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<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> "Hate Crime Reports On An Alarming Rise – Reveals Amnesty International India's 'Halt The Hate,'" *Amnesty International India*, accessed on December 22, 2019, Available at: <https://amnesty.org.in/news-update/hate-crime-reports-on-an-alarming-rise-reveals-amnesty-international-indias-halt-the-hate/> ( accessed on 25 March 2021).

same policy.<sup>53</sup> It is an edifice that is leaving India increasingly isolated. Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe promptly canceled a visit to India following the citizenship bill's enactment, as did two Bangladeshi ministers.<sup>54</sup> India is now in the throes of a fervent nationalism that extols every Indian achievement, real or imagined, and labels even the mildest political disagreement or protest "anti-national" or even "seditious."<sup>55</sup>

### **iii. Secularism**

Secularism is a mode of governance in which state remains neutral in religious matters and is not supposed to tilt in favour of a particular religion or impose any specific religious set of beliefs. Secularism also means that religion is a private and personal matter and followers of all religions must be treated equally. Constitutionally, India is a secular state. The preamble of 42nd amendment of the Indian constitution (1976) mentions India as a secular nation.<sup>56</sup>

However, contrary to the Indian constitutional claims, with its penchant for shock-and-awe tactics, the Modi led government pushed through parliament a controversial Citizenship Amendment Bill that fast-tracks citizenship for people fleeing persecution in Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Bangladesh – provided they are not Muslims. By excluding members of just one community, the bill, which was quickly signed into law by President of India, Ram Nath Kovind, is

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<sup>53</sup> Shashi Tharoor, "Narendra Modi's Second Partition of India," *Project Syndicate*, December 17, 2019, Available at: <https://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/modi-islamophobia-second-partition-of-india-by-shashi-tharoor-2019-12> (accessed on 25 March 2021).

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

<sup>55</sup> Shashi Tharoor, "India's democratic dictatorship," *ASIA TIMES*, September 14, 2019.

<sup>56</sup> Moonis Ahmer, "The myth and reality of Indian secularism," *Express Tribune*, December 14, 2018.

fundamentally antithetical (contradictory to the spirit of) to Indian constitution.<sup>57</sup>

Modi government has a pattern of policies of exclusivism and socio-religious polarization. Since Modi's rise to power, vigilante groups have targeted Muslims accused of seducing and marrying young Hindu women to convert them, a phenomenon some have labeled *Love Jihad*.<sup>58</sup> This campaign was followed by the *Ghar Wapsi* (homecoming) movement, which aimed to convert Muslims and Christians to the Hindu faith as a reaction to Muslim and Christian proselytism.<sup>59</sup> The issue of *Gau Rakhsha* (cow protection) was an even more effective way of organizing activists through this movement.<sup>60</sup> They established an armed militia "*Gau Rakhshak*" to protect cows. This militia patrolled on highways, local markets, villages, and butchers to ensure that Muslims were not taking cows to slaughterhouses. Like most of the radical groups, this was also related to the radical party, "*Sangh Parivar*" and functioned much like the *Bajrang Dal*, a powerful militia that was created in 1984 during the heydays of the *Ayodhya* movement.<sup>61</sup> Reflecting upon the intentions and policies of his government, in December 2014, BJP and RSS leader *Rajeshwar Singh* vowed that "Muslims and Christians will be wiped out of India by December 31,

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<sup>57</sup> Shashi Tharoor, "Narendra Modi's Second Partition of India", *Project Syndicate*, December 17, 2019, Available at: <https://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/modi-islamophobia-second-partition-of-india-by-shashi-tharoor-2019-12> (accessed on 28 March 2021).

<sup>58</sup> Christophe T Jaffrelo, "The Fate of Secularism in India," *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, April 4, 2019, Available at: <https://carnegieendowment.org/2019/04/04/fate-of-secularism-in-india-pub-78689> (accessed on 28 March 2021).

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid.

2021.<sup>62</sup> Similarly, during sixth All India Hindu Convention in Goa held in June 2017, 150 Hindu outfits openly called for turning India into a Hindu Rashtra by 2023.<sup>63</sup> BJP's anti Muslim agenda was evident in its electoral politics when they did not give the party ticket to one single Muslim. This was their way to appease radical Hindu vote bank as they rely upon fascist Hindu vote bank. Suffice to say that dream of secular India is dead, and Modi's actions are testifying validity of two nation theory.

## **2. Indian Economy Under Modi**

For about twenty-five (25) years since economic reforms were launched in the summer of 1991, India had a positive image in the world politics. India's unique socio-political attributes, its ability to flourish with its diversity when large parts of the world were struggling with it had enhanced its global stature.<sup>64</sup> Not to forget that India was a safe and secure market for multi-national. It was not only the second fastest growing economy but as per Global Economic Survey 2010-11, India was ranked fifth amongst 112 countries in wielding economic clout globally after the US, China, Japan and Germany, and ahead of European powers France and the UK.<sup>65</sup> India moved up three notches from eighth in 2000 to fifth in 2009, thanks to the sustained 9% plus growth in the years preceding the global financial crisis that saw the

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<sup>62</sup> "Muslims and Christians will be wiped out of India by December 31, 2021," *Sabrang*, December 14, 2014, Available at: <https://sabrangindia.in/article/muslims-and-christians-will-be-wiped-out-india-december-31-2021-bjp-leader-rajeshwar-singh> (accessed on 28 March 2021).

<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

<sup>64</sup> Shekhar Gupta, "The economy is India's most potent weapon, but it's losing its power," *The Print*, September 7, 2019, Available at: <https://theprint.in/national-interest/the-economy-is-indias-most-potent-weapon-but-its-losing-its-power/287915/> (accessed on 29 March 2021).

<sup>65</sup> "India ranks fifth in wielding economic clout," *The Economic Times*, July 25, 2011.

country's share in global GDP rise to 5.4% in 2010 from 4.6% in 2000.<sup>66</sup> In the period 2011-15, robust economic growths enabled more than 90 million people escape extreme poverty and improve their living standards.<sup>67</sup>

However, Indians had gotten used to taking economic growth for granted. After a decade of annual growth averaging more than 9%, India's economy weathered the post-2008 worldwide recession and grew at a still impressive rate of 7% until 2014-15.<sup>68</sup> In the elections of 2014, while Congress party was facing one major corruption scandal after another, Modi convinced voters that he was the answer to their economic woes.<sup>69</sup> He spouted slogans like "minimum government, maximum governance" and promised that the "government has no business to be in business."<sup>70</sup> On the strength of such promises, he led his Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) to a sweeping general election victory in 2014 and followed that with a landslide reelection in 2019. However, the election win of the BJP, has surprisingly little to do with its economic track record, which was excellent when Modi was chief minister of Gujrat.<sup>71</sup> Modi has succeeded politically despite—not because of—the economy, which is in the midst of a protracted downturn that began on his watch.<sup>72</sup> For his second term, the prime

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<sup>66</sup> Ibid.

<sup>67</sup> "The World Bank in India," *The World Bank*, accessed on December 25, 2019, Available at: <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/india/overview> (accessed on 6 April 2021).

<sup>68</sup> Shashi Tharoor, "India languishing in a Modi slowdown," *ASIA TIMES*, October 16, 2019, Available at: <https://www.asiatimes.com/2019/10/article/india-languishing-in-a-modi-slowdown/> (accessed on 6 April 2021).

<sup>69</sup> Milan Vaishnav, "The Strange Triumph of Narendra Modi," *Foreign Affairs*, November 4, 2019, Available at: <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/india/2019-11-04/strange-triumph-narendra-modi> (accessed on 18th January 2021).

<sup>70</sup> Ibid.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid.

minister has doubled down on the grand economic promises he made in his election campaign 2014, and gone still further, setting a goal of turning India into a US \$5 trillion economy by 2024.<sup>73</sup> But his government has struggled to articulate just how it will bring about India's economic renewal.

Notwithstanding the tall claims and objectives, the inequality in the Indian socio-economic paradigm is strikingly high. The growth in the Modi era has been non-inclusive as 1% of the wealthiest in India increased their share in wealth to 60% in the last five years, and the richest 10% in India own more than four times wealth than the remaining 90%.<sup>74</sup> The unemployment in India is 7.8%,<sup>75</sup> highest in forty-five (45) years. Inequality was worsening before the present administration took office, but with growth slowing down and unemployment rising, the effects are more painful.

Quarterly economic growth has hit a six-year low at 5%, down from 8% a year earlier.<sup>76</sup> For a government given to bragging that it runs the world's fastest-growing large economy, this is a serious embarrassment.<sup>77</sup> The setbacks are on all fronts, the manufacturing sector saw just 0.6% growth in the April-June quarter 2019, with key sectors like automobiles reporting sales declines of over 20%. Tax revenue has remained well below target, while unemployment figures

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<sup>73</sup> Ibid.

<sup>74</sup> "Economic Slowdown and its fix," *drishti*, September 17, 2019, Available at: <https://www.drishtias.com/daily-updates/daily-news-editorials/economic-slowdown-and-its-fix> (accessed on 9 April 2021).

<sup>75</sup> "India Unemployment Rate," *Trading Economics*, February 2021, Available at: <https://tradingeconomics.com/india/unemployment-rate> (accessed on 9 April 2021).

<sup>76</sup> Ninan T N, "Indian economy will struggle through Narendra Modi's second term," *NIKKEI Asia*, September 5, 2019, Available at: <https://asia.nikkei.com/Opinion/Indian-economy-will-struggle-through-Narendra-Modi-s-second-term> (accessed on 9 April 2021).

<sup>77</sup> Ibid.

had been suppressed until the April-May elections.<sup>78</sup> Foreign investors have been pulling money out of the stock market, prompted in part by a sharply higher rate of tax announced in the July 2019 budget.<sup>79</sup> Modi government is clearly in state of denial, even as growth rates have fallen, the government has held out the prospect of India becoming a US \$5 trillion economy in five years, from less than US \$3 trillion this year.<sup>80</sup> That implies a sustained rate of growth not achieved in the last decade.<sup>81</sup>

### **i. Reasons behind the Decline of Indian Economy**

Few of the major reasons behind the nosedive of Indian economy<sup>82</sup> under Narendra Modi are:

#### **a. Demonetization**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced demonetization of ₹500 and ₹1000 notes in November 2016 in order to wipe out black money from the country. Demonetization is considered as his biggest economic blunder, as it took 86% of India's currency abruptly out of circulation.<sup>83</sup> Millions of jobs were lost and hundreds of thousands of small and micro enterprises – employing people dependent on daily cash flow to sustain themselves – went under.<sup>84</sup> This showed up Narendra Modi to be a whimsical

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<sup>78</sup> Ibid.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid.

<sup>82</sup> AFP, "Indian economy nose diving under Modi," *Global Village Space*, August 23, 2019, Available at: <https://www.globalvillagespace.com/indian-economy-nose-diving-under-modi/> (accessed on 15 April 2021).

<sup>83</sup> Shashi Tharoor, "India languishing in a Modi slowdown," Ibid.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid.



stuntman with no regard for due process or consequences.<sup>85</sup> This was a completely misguided policy misadventure; as much as no doctor would ever recommend taking out 86% of a patient's blood to cure a disease, no economist, whether a Marxist or a free-marketeer, would recommend a shock to the total currency supply in the economy to the tune of 86%. Predictably, the consequences for economic activity were severe than the prior assumptions.

## **b. Poor Execution of Tax Reforms**

Before the economy could recover from the currency ban shock, the government enacted a transition to a new indirect taxation system of the Goods and Services Tax (GST) in 2017.<sup>86</sup> If demonetization was a bad idea badly implemented, GST was a good idea badly implemented.<sup>87</sup> Modi's reputation as a capable administrator was also dealt a severe blow by the hasty and ill-conceived implementation of the GST, even though as a policy this was a sound one.<sup>88</sup> The constant bickering with states highlighted his inability to work with members of a team and finally when the plan was rolled out, the entire system froze up because of the numerous glitches in the format.<sup>89</sup> Rates were rationalized several times to plug the original holes in conception. The GST is a classic example of how not to go about a much-needed taxation reform.<sup>90</sup>

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<sup>85</sup> Maitreesh Ghatak, Udayan Mukherjee, "The Mirage of Modinomics," *The India Forum*, May 16, 2019, Available at: <https://www.theindiaforum.in/article/mirage-modinomics> (accessed on 15 April 2021).

<sup>86</sup> Parveen Chakravarty, "Viewpoint: How serious is India's economic slowdown?," *BBC NEWS*, August 27, 2019, Available at: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-india-49470466> (accessed on 15 April 2021).

<sup>87</sup> Sashi Tharoor, "India languishing in a Modi slowdown," *Ibid.*

<sup>88</sup> Ghatak and Mukherjee, "The Mirage of Modinomics," *Ibid.*

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*

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

### c. Auto industry

The auto industry, seen as a bellwether for activity, is facing worst crisis in last two decades and has reportedly laid off 350,000 workers since April 2019.<sup>91</sup> India's automotive industry which accounts for around 40 per cent of manufacturing GDP suffered a contraction in passenger and commercial vehicle sales of 23 per cent year on year from April to September.<sup>92</sup> Sales of motorcycles and other two-wheelers — often a leading indicator of the strength of the rural economy — contracted 16 per cent.<sup>93</sup>

For a man who made false promises regarding sustainable economic development, the current economic environment does not present an encouraging picture.<sup>94</sup> India was ranked 58<sup>th</sup> in 2018 in the annual Global Competitiveness Index compiled by Geneva-based World Economic Forum (WEF, only in one year, has moved down 10 places to rank 68<sup>th</sup> in 2019.<sup>95</sup> India is among the worst-performing BRICS nations along with Brazil. Narendra Modi's basic approach to rely upon the heavy-handed measures of command-and-control in administration,<sup>96</sup> could not bring about the desired results. Modi has almost irreparably damaged social cohesion through his actions and policies which is central to sustainable economic growth. Social cohesion is of paramount importance in a country as diverse as India in terms of religion, ethnicity, language

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<sup>91</sup> Tish Sanghera, "India's economic growth hits six-year low," *Aljazeera*, August 30, 2019, Available at: <https://www.aljazeera.com/ajimpact/indias-economic-growth-hits-year-190830163732276.html> (accessed on 13 March 2021).

<sup>92</sup> Amy Kazmin, "Indian economy: problems pile up for Narendra Modi," *Financial Times*, October 9, 2019.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid.

<sup>94</sup> Ghatak and Mukherjee, "The Mirage of Modinomics," Ibid.

<sup>95</sup> "India slips 10 spaces on global competitiveness index; Singapore on top," *The Economic Times*, October 9, 2019.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid.

and caste and lack of it can seriously impair economic vitality.<sup>97</sup> If rampaging mobs can get away with murder with impunity, and crowds can dictate who can buy or sell what, irrespective of what the law might be, what kind of environment does it create for commerce and industry?<sup>98</sup> Such situation is discouraging for foreign direct investment, if they feel like being hostage to mob decisions. For example, the cow vigilantes have undermined the rural economy by literally creating a mass of abandoned cows that are raiding farms for food because farmers simply abandon cows when they no longer give milk, and they can no longer be sold for slaughter.<sup>99</sup> Here it would be significant to note that India is second largest beef exporter in the world. India exports 18.14% of total beef exports in the world.<sup>100</sup> The policy of Cow Vigilantism may cost India a good amount of foreign exchange. This also reflects upon the dichotomy within the policy making structure of India. On one hand Modi is capitalizing its radical Hindu vote bank and on the other hand he is exporting same 'holy cow meat' to run Indian economy.

Banks in India are reeling under a huge burden of Non-Performing Assets (NPAs), with debts exceeding US \$150 billion and one financial institution after another coming under the scrutiny of regulators and law-enforcement authorities.<sup>101</sup> Loans have dried up, owing to banks' leeriness of piling up more NPAs; investment has slowed to a trickle as a result. With sinking demand for new housing causing a slump in the residential property market, many builders are struggling to repay their

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<sup>97</sup> Ghatak and Mukherjee, "The Mirage of Modinomics," Ibid.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid.

<sup>100</sup> Rob Cook, "World Beef Exports: Ranking of Countries," *Beef2Live*, March 22, 2020, Available at: <https://beef2live.com/story-world-beef-exports-ranking-countries-0-106903> (accessed on 12 February 2021).

<sup>101</sup> Sashi Tharoor, "India languishing in a Modi slowdown," Ibid.

loans to banks, worsening the crisis. With consumers lacking resources, banks unwilling to lend, and investors afraid to borrow, it is unclear where the much-needed fillip to economic growth will come from.<sup>102</sup>

### **Impact of Indian economic slowdown on Soft Power Image**

In year 2014, Narendra Modi made economic development as core theme of his election campaign. The phrases like “*Acche Din*” and “*Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas*” were coined and everyone could immediately relate to them. Hoping for better economic future, they all rooted for him.<sup>103</sup> Little did Modi realize that campaigns are run on promises, but governance is judged by performance. As the US politician Mario Cuomo put it: “One campaigns in poetry but governs in prose.” It is easy to make promises but hard to keep them. Like the stock market, one can create a bubble by stoking expectations. However, at some point the numbers need to add up. That is why it is wise to under-promise and over-deliver.

Before May 2019 elections, realizing his failures on economic front, Modi opted to turn to Hindu nationalism to bolster his poll numbers, a decision that helped him perform better than expected in national elections in spring 2019.<sup>104</sup> After securing re-election, Modi continued exploiting Hindu nationalism, while neglecting issues of genuine public concerns like land reform, reducing trade barriers, addressing mass corruption, implementing economic policy etc. Since fascist nationalism is overshadowing the government’s orientation, the gap between have and have nots is widening on religious, ethnic, and social spheres. This leads to deepening conflict fault lines within structure of Indian society.

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<sup>102</sup> Ibid.

<sup>103</sup> Ghatak and Mukherjee, “The Mirage of Modinomics,” Ibid.

<sup>104</sup> Bremmer Ian, “I Argued That Narendra Modi Was India's Best Hope for Economic Reform. Things Have Changed,” *TIME*, December 20, 2019.

The Modi government has compounded its economic fecklessness with political recklessness, plunging India into turmoil.<sup>105</sup> The combination of ineptitude and bigotry that has laid the country low has left long-time admirers of the Indian model speechless in disbelief<sup>106</sup> and making mockery of India's much acclaimed soft power image.

India's economic meltdown under Modi has and continues to seriously damage her greatest asset of past two decades which was the soft power image. Over the years preceding Modi era, India had mustered tremendous global goodwill and her image as rising 'good guy' was gaining ground. It was partially because of India's stable democracy but predominantly because of her rising economic strength. India has always been a democracy, but her soft power image only began to improve once its economy started getting better. With its penchant for shock-and-awe tactics,<sup>107</sup> Modi has completely shaken important pillars of Indian soft power empire in short span of few years. He has not only undermined Indian democratic credentials but has destroyed very fabric of Indian proud claim of secularism and has sent the economy in downward spiral. Impact of economy on the soft power of a country has best been explained by famous Indian journalist Shekhar Gupta: "When your economy is growing at 8 per cent or above, it is a case of what you might call *saat khoon maaf* (you can get away with seven murders). At 7 per cent, it becomes *paanch khoon maaf*. But once your growth is 5 per cent, you are in a dodgy zone."<sup>108</sup>

For about 25 years since economic reforms were launched in the summer of 1991, India had been acknowledged by the world.<sup>109</sup> India was not only the second fastest growing major economy even in a

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<sup>105</sup> Shashi Tharoor, "Narendra Modi's Second Partition of India," Ibid.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid.

<sup>108</sup> Shekhar Gupta, "The economy is India's most potent weapon, but it's losing its power," Ibid.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid.

world growing at express speed, but it was also grabbing global attention for its rising tech prowess, innovation, friendliness to foreign capital, stable markets and tax regime. India also drew global admiration for the way it shepherded itself out of the 2008 global downturn.<sup>110</sup> Foreign direct investment provided big powers and their multi-national corporations a stake in India's stability and security. This is how a red-hot economy became India's greatest soft power strength in a period when its military spending lagged, and modernization lost pace and direction. A growing GDP was now more powerful than all the mega-tonnage of nuclear weapons. The Nobel laureate economist of Indian origin, Dr. Abhijit Banerjee has warned that the Indian economy is going into "a tailspin" and his prescription is for the government to focus to increasing demand rather than on deficits or stability. He considered Indian economy in really bad shape.<sup>111</sup>

As long as Modi government was able to maintain the momentum of economic growth, both India and Narendra Modi benefited from it in terms of image and global stature. Indian global influence only started to wane when Indian economy started its journey on slippery slope with Modi's decision of demonetization. India's downward economic spiral coupled with Hindutva centric political decisions have massively dented India's image as soft power. Shekhar Gupta even attributes Trump's repeated offers of mediation on Kashmir between India and Pakistan to reduced Indian clout due to her economic meltdown. Notwithstanding the unpredictability of Trump, it is highly unlikely that he would have made this bold offer if Indian economy were as strong and thriving as earlier.

P.V. Narasimha Rao started economic reforms in the summer of 1991, markets, GDP and trade boomed, and India's friends appeared in

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<sup>110</sup> Ibid.

<sup>111</sup> ET Bureau, "Economy in tailspin...doing very badly, says Nobel laureate Abhijit Banerjee," *Economic Times*, October 16, 2019.

unlikely global capitals.<sup>112</sup> Note the contrast between the first Clinton Administration (which included Assistant Secretary of State Robin Raphel who questioned the Instrument of Accession), and the second term when Bill Clinton declared that lines on the subcontinent's map could no longer be redrawn with blood.<sup>113</sup> If a fast-growing economy was a decisive strategic asset even in the early 1990s, a slowing one is bound to be a liability in 2020.<sup>114</sup>

Former Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh has warned of "social disharmony, economic slowdown and a global health epidemic" facing the country. He termed Indian economic situation as "grim and morose." He further wrote, "Social unrest and economic ruin are self-inflicted while the health contagion of COVID-19 disease, caused by the novel Corona Virus, is an external shock. I deeply worry that this potent combination of risks may not only rupture the soul of India but also diminish our global standing as an economic and democratic power in the world."<sup>115</sup> While analyzing the latest Muslim killings in India by Hindu radicals, to mitigate anti-CAA protests he wrote, "Social harmony, the bedrock of economic development, is now under peril. No amount of tweaking of tax rates, showering of corporate incentives or goading will propel Indian or foreign businesses to invest, when the risk of eruption of sudden violence in one's neighborhood looms large. Lack of investment means lack of jobs and incomes, which, in turn, means lack of consumption and demand in the economy. A lack of demand will only further suppress private investments. This is the vicious cycle that our economy is stuck in."<sup>116</sup> He cautioned Indian policy makers and write, "The India that we know and cherish is

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<sup>112</sup> Shekhar Gupta, "The economy is India's most potent weapon, but it's losing its power," Ibid.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid.

<sup>114</sup> Ibid.

<sup>115</sup> Manmohan Singh, "India has slid to being a majoritarian state in economic despair, writes Manmohan Singh," *The Hindu*, March 6, 2021.

<sup>116</sup> Ibid.

slipping away fast. Willfully stoked communal tensions, gross economic mismanagement and an external health shock are threatening to derail India's progress and standing. It is time to confront the harsh reality of the grave risks we face as a nation and address them squarely and sufficiently."<sup>117</sup>

## Conclusion

This research study explored following findings:

- a. Soft power projection is a slow, non-violent, and persistent process which takes time to achieve the desired outcome or create the requisite impact but only a few actions can undo all the hard work.
- b. Soft power arises from the attractiveness of a country's culture, political ideals, and policies. Soft power of a country is enhanced when her policies, both foreign and domestic, are seen as legitimate in the eyes of international community.
- c. Prior to Modi's rise to power, India's soft power image across the globe was on the rise primarily due to her economic strength, democratic credentials, cultural expansion, promotion of yoga and secularism credentials.
- d. Modi's mindset, approach and some of his actions and policy decisions have seriously shaken the very foundations of India's soft image empire.
- e. Modi has removed the mascot of secular democratic India to show the real face of Fascist Hindu Nationalism.
- f. Fear of the eruption of unprovoked violence, the rise and strengthening of Hindu Radical violent pressure group and their influence on decision making has made India a risky investment. The economic risks have multiplied by economic meltdown,

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<sup>117</sup> Ibid.



which has negatively impacted the consumer ship and reduced the middle class.

- g. Façade of Indian claim of secularism has been completely exposed in Modi's India thus vindicating the validity of two nation theory.
- h. Indian economic meltdown was triggered by Modi's ill-conceived policy of demonetization which took 86% of India's currency abruptly out of circulation.
- i. India's economic downward spiral under Modi has and continues to seriously damage her greatest asset of past two decades which was the soft power image.
- j. Economic situation of a country has huge impact on her soft power image or global stature as in this context growing GDP could be powerful than all the mega-tonnage of nuclear weapons.
- k. Due to lack of effective economic policy, there are high chances of devastating effects of the Corona pandemic on economic-social and security realms in India.

## India-Israel Defence Cooperation: Security Implications for Pakistan

Saddaf Sultaana<sup>1</sup>

### Abstract

*The burgeoning India-Israeli defence cooperation is escalating the already existing arms competition in the South Asian region resulting in action-reaction dynamics owing to the security competition between India and Pakistan. This paper highlights India-Israel increasing defence collaboration in hi-tech weapon systems including Air and Ballistic Missile Defence system, which is creating a security dilemma leading to greater security concerns for Pakistan. Resultantly, Pakistan's counter-effort to secure itself is enhancing arms competition. Exploring the advancements in India-Israel defence cooperation, this paper examines the security implications of both states evolving defence cooperation which is creating challenges and threat matrix for Pakistan. This paper also explains how the rapid pace of arms trade between the two countries is disturbing the South Asian deterrence and strategic stability.*

**Keywords:** Arms race, Action-Reaction Dynamics, Air and Ballistic Missile Defence System, Deterrence, Security dilemma, Strategic Stability

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## **Introduction**

In the past two decades, India-Israel defence cooperation has expanded exponentially. Many agreements have been signed for buying or jointly developing military systems as the two countries have shown mutual interest to widen their influence in South Asia and the Middle Eastern region, thereby enhancing their strategic and defence cooperation. The most obvious example is in the field of Air and Ballistic Missile Defence cooperation, in addition to a wide range of other military systems too, leading the well-established and modernized Israeli technical expertise to fill critical gaps in Indian defence industry.<sup>2</sup> This partnership has become increasingly institutionalized with ever-stronger links between government officials, defence organizations and corporate sector. This in part points to the fact that both states have similar security concerns and corresponding socio-political outlooks where India's pursuit for upgraded military technology and "Israel's need for economizing defence research are complementary."<sup>3</sup> Moreover, India-Israel ties are conducive to the US strategic interests because of its power struggle with China and Russia as well as varied interest in South Asia, the Indian Ocean and the Middle East.

The increasing India-Israel defence cooperation and rapid development of the conventional and non-conventional military weapons is triggering the existing arms race in the region between the two nuclear weapon adversaries, i.e., India and Pakistan. This development is resulting in an action-reaction spiral<sup>4</sup> as it constrains

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<sup>2</sup> Christer Ahlstrom, "Arrows for India: Technology Transfers for Ballistic Missile Defence and the Missile Technology Control Regime," *Journal of Conflict & Security Law*, Vol. 9, no. 1 (2004), 123.

<sup>3</sup> P.R. Kumara Swamy, "India and Israel: Emerging Partnership," *Journal of Strategic Studies*, Vol. 25, no. 4(2002), 202.

<sup>4</sup> Charles L. Glaser, "The Security Dilemma Revisited," *World Politics*, Vol. 50, Issue. 1(1997), 175-176.

Pakistan to effectively deter the emerging threat from India-Israel defence partnership and to maintain the strategic and conventional balance vis-à-vis India. Therefore, the paper briefly evaluates the implications of growing India-Israel defence cooperation for Pakistan while underlining the security dilemmas and explains how this defence cooperation is driving the nuclear arms-race and disturbing the South Asian strategic balance. Moreover, India-Israel enhanced joint defence ventures and increasing Air and Ballistic Missile Defence cooperation plays a significant role in escalating the missile competition in the region. Following this, the research also addresses the repercussions of this transition for regional politics and places the emerging India-Israel nexus in the wider geopolitical context, shaped by the great power politics and competition between the United States, China, and Russia.

The paper proceeds in four sections; (i) the first section aims to develop a conceptual framework to investigate the premise that India-Israeli defence cooperation is generating a new arms race in South Asia; (ii) the second section traces the evolution and development of India-Israel relationship and explores the major areas of defence cooperation, the co-development of military programmes and the growing relationship within the military and security domain besides explaining the importance of these ties for the two states (iii) the third section looks at the issue of Air and Ballistic Missile Defence cooperation and the importance of strategic defence ties between India and Israel, (iv) the fourth examines important queries about why India is procuring the advanced missile technology, how it affects the South Asian region, how India-Israel cooperation in Air and Ballistic Missile Defence system is threatening the South Asian strategic stability and how Pakistan may react to these alarming developments by taking counter-measures.

This research would remain restricted to examining only India-Israel defence partnership and its security implications for Pakistan. Although

India's rapid development and procurement of advanced military weaponry is also directed towards China, but this study does not include that debate.

### **Conceptual Framework**

The growing development in India-Israel defence cooperation, especially in advanced Air and Missile defence technology is not only upsetting the deterrence stability in South Asia but also posing a significant security threat for Pakistan. This paper examines the whole phenomenon under the Realist paradigm and explains the security dilemma theory to understand the action-reaction dynamics that mandated Pakistan to improve its defensive capabilities. The Indian military modernization is therefore escalating tensions and increasing the probability of nuclear warfare in the South Asian region.

Realism considers state as the primary actor in the international system, pursuing its national interests rationally, while survival, power and security are the core values of a state's functions. According to Gilpin,<sup>5</sup> Morgenthau<sup>6</sup> and Schmidt<sup>7</sup> anarchism or non-existence of a central power, which illustrates the international structure, forces the states to act in pursuit of survival and achieving their national interests. Generally, the perception of self-interest and survival constrains the states to increase their security, which deteriorates the security of other state, especially the neighboring state. This creates a chaotic environment which then leads to the security dilemma.

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<sup>5</sup> Robert J. Gilpin, "The Richness of the Tradition of Political Realism," *International Organization*, Vol. 38, no. 2 (1984), 292.

<sup>6</sup> Hans Joachim Morgenthau and Kenneth W. Thompson, *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*, 6th edition (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1985), 165-166.

<sup>7</sup> Brian C. Schmidt, "On the History and Historiography of International Relations," in *Handbook of International Relations*, eds. Walter Carlsnaes, Thomas Risse and Beth A. Simmons (London: SAGE Publications, 2002), 28.

In international relations theory, the term security dilemma reflects the basic logic of defensive realism and is very much relevant to the South Asian security architecture.<sup>8</sup> The concept of security dilemma was introduced by John Herz and Herbert Butterfield in 1950. John Herz writes that “wherever anarchic society has existed, there has arisen the “security dilemma” of men, or groups, or their leaders. Groups or individuals living in such a constellation must be, and usually are, concerned about their security from being attacked, subjected, dominated, or annihilated by other groups. Striving to attain security from such attacks, they are driven to acquire more and more power in order to escape the impact of the power of others. This, in turn, renders the others more insecure and compels them to prepare for the worst. Since none can ever feel entirely secure in such a world of competing units, power competition ensues, and the vicious circle of security and power accumulation begins.”<sup>9</sup> He further adds that “conflicts caused by the security dilemma are bound to emerge among political units of power.”<sup>10</sup> Hence, the security dilemma arises when states increase power gradually for their security due to fear and ambiguity about the intentions of other states under anarchy.

Robert Jervis has also explained the concept of security dilemma very rigorously. According to Jervis, “an increase in one state’s security can make others less secure, not because of misperceptions or imaged hostility, but because of the anarchic context of international relations.”<sup>11</sup> The uncertainty among states about each other’s intentions leads them towards security dilemma as Jervis states that

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<sup>8</sup> Feroz Hassan Khan, “Security Dilemma in South Asia: Building Arsenals and Living with Distrust,” *Naval Postgraduate School*, 2015, Available at: <https://calhoun.nps.edu/handle/10945/57244> (accessed on 4 March 2021).

<sup>9</sup> John H. Herz, “Idealist Internationalism and the Security Dilemma,” *World Politics*, Vol. 2, no. 2(1950), 157.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 158.

<sup>11</sup> Robert Jervis, *Perception and Misperception in International Politics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976), 62.

“even if they can be certain that the current intentions of other states are benign, they can neither neglect the possibility that the others will become aggressive in the future nor credibly guarantee that they will remain peaceful.”<sup>12</sup> Hence, military build-ups, arms race, development of nuclear technology and missile systems are major indicators of the security dilemma.

The competition of two nuclear-weapon states and the adversarial relationship among India and Pakistan has already complicated the security dynamics of South Asia and made the region a nuclear flashpoint. Also, the presence of China and the United States, because of their strategic interests in the region, added more complexities in the existing security dilemmas. Here security dilemma seems to be dominant, as an action-reaction dynamic is created due to the competitive environment in the region and seems more like a “power security dilemma.”<sup>13</sup> For instance, China is building arms in response to the United States strategic capabilities; while the United States developmental trajectories are to project itself as a global power and also to contain the increasing influence of China in Asia Pacific as well as resurgent Russia. Hence the United States is strengthening its relationship with India to counter China’s rise which ultimately incentivizes a nuclear arms competition between India and Pakistan.

Moreover, India views its nuclear weapon program as a means to attaining regional dominance and great power status as well as looking for a viable and effective defence against the missile advancement of Pakistan. Hence, India increased cooperation with the United States and enhanced its strategic partnership with Israel to get more advanced weaponry and defence technology. As the “vibrant India-

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<sup>12</sup> Robert Jervis, “Was the Cold War a Security Dilemma,” *Journal of Cold War Studies*, Vol. 3, no. 1 (2001), 36.

<sup>13</sup> Barry Buzan, *People, States and Fear: The National Security Problem in International Relations* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1983), 157.

Israeli axis is a clear US interest,” therefore, the United States openly endorses “a powerful, progressive India bolstered by Israeli technological expertise.”<sup>14</sup> In this regard, India-Israel growing cooperation in military technology and sophisticated weaponry, especially in missile systems, is further enhancing the nuclear arms race in the region. Moreover, India’s increased defence budget every year, rapid modernization of conventional and non-conventional weapons and power projection behavior constantly undermines the regional strategic environment and subverts nuclear deterrence in the South Asia region. These developments directly threaten Pakistan and compel it to increase its reliance on nuclear deterrence to ensure peace and avoid war. Although India and Pakistan are seeking enhanced security which has resulted in an action-reaction cycle generally recognized as security dilemma. Hence, a complex nuclear geometry is taking shape because of the security dilemma as India’s increasing defence partnership and technological cooperation on missile defence with Israeli is not only destabilizing the contemporary dynamics of credible nuclear deterrence but also intensifying the menace of the nuclear outbreak in the region.

### **The Genesis of Cooperation**

India and Israel came into existence in 1947 but their relations were dormant almost for four decades. India chose not to initiate formal ties with Israel, keeping its dealings on the low ebb because of its traditional policy preferences towards the Arab states. However, during this time, both states were discreetly cooperating in multiple areas, such as security, intelligence sharing and transfer of military equipment. Israel never wavered from supporting India militarily in

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<sup>14</sup> Martin Sherman, “Indo-Israeli Strategic Cooperation as a US National Interest,” *Ariel Centre for Policy Research*, 1999, Available at: <https://www.amazon.com/Indo-Israeli-Strategic-Cooperation-National-Interest/dp/9659023944> (accessed on 4 March 2021).



most of its major conflicts, be it the border conflict with China or a war with Pakistan.<sup>15</sup> With regards to the intelligence-sharing, extensive cooperation also developed between the Research and Analysis Wing (RAW) of India and Israel's Mossad 'under the leadership of Indira Gandhi (1966-77 and 1980-84) and Rajiv Gandhi (1984-89).'<sup>16</sup>

Throughout the Cold-War era, the Soviet Union was India's major defence partner and "emerged as India's primary supplier of defence equipment."<sup>17</sup> But after the collapse of the USSR, India had to look for alternative alliances and military competences; therefore, the sophisticated weapons of Israel were the obvious choice. Israel soon became a reliable defence partner of India and the "second-largest source of armaments."<sup>18</sup> After the Cold-War period and subsequent changes in the international geostrategic environment, both India and Israel not only formalized their diplomatic relations in 1992 but also established formal defence cooperation in 1997.<sup>19</sup> Since then, a number of military visits, exchanges and meetings held between New Delhi and Jerusalem that have reached new heights with passing years.

The Kargil conflict between India and Pakistan also played a vital role in revitalization of Indian defence cooperation with Israel. During the war, Israel proved to be a reliable partner by providing India with various hi-tech weaponries that it required. This included: laser-guided missiles for fighter jets, unmanned aerial vehicles, surface-to-surface

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<sup>15</sup> Harsh V. Pant, "India-Israel Partnership: Convergence and Constraints," *Middle East Review of International Affairs*, Vol. 8, no. 4 (2004), 61.

<sup>16</sup> P. R. Kumaraswamy, *India and Israel: Evolving Strategic Partnership* (Bar-Ilan University: Begin and Sadat Centre for Strategic Studies, 1998), 5.

<sup>17</sup> Harsh V. Pant, "India-Russia Ties and India's Strategic Culture: Dominance of a Realist World View," *India Review* Vol. 12, no. 1 (2013), 3.

<sup>18</sup> Teresita C. Schaffer, *India and the United States in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Reinventing Partnership* (Washington, D.C. The CSIS Press, 2009), 79.

<sup>19</sup> N. A. K. Browne, "A Perspective on India-Israel Defence and Security Ties," *Strategic Analysis*, Vol. 41, no. 4 (2017), 327.

missiles, avionics and artillery,<sup>20</sup> all of which helped India to recapture "Tiger Hill"<sup>21</sup> and demonstrated operational edge against Pakistan. Similarly, in 2002 Israel delivered military support to India against Pakistan, when India decided to commence a limited military attack "Operation Parakram,"<sup>22</sup> although the operation ended without turning into an arm conflict. The terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, the Indian parliament attack in 2001, the Mumbai attack in 2008, and the Balakot strike in 2019, all pushed India to procure advanced and modernized military technology and missile systems from its defence partners especially Israel to enhance its regional power projection.

Soon the military exchanges and official visits began to take place and both states signed several defence agreements. For India, Israel is a reliable and ideologically like-minded arms supplier. The 'special friendship' between the premiers of both states made India Israel's largest arms client in 2017.<sup>23</sup> According to a report, published by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) in March 2020, India is now the topmost buyers of Israeli arms, and purchases almost half of all the exports of the Israeli defence equipment and technologies. In 2017, India overtook the United Kingdom as fifth largest defence spender in the world<sup>24</sup> and with the increase in its defence budget from 2017 to 2019; it became third military spender in the world after the US and China. The SIPRI report also reveals that India increased its military spending and arms export because of

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<sup>20</sup> Harsh V. Pant, 65.

<sup>21</sup> Sushant Singh, "Israeli help and Indian jugaad in recapture of Tiger Hill," *The Indian Express*, July 5, 2017.

<sup>22</sup> Harsh V. Pant, Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> Harsh V. Pant and Ambuj Sahu, "Israel's Arms Sales to India: Bedrock of a Strategic Partnership," *ORF Issue Brief*, Issue No. 311 (September 2019), 2.

<sup>24</sup> "The Military Balance: An Annual Assessment of Global Military Capabilities and Defence Economics," *The International Institute for Strategic Studies*, Vol. 118, no.1 (2018).

growing tension and rivalry with its regional neighbors.<sup>25</sup> These developments show an alarming trend towards India's militarization duly supported by Israel as a key player.

Following the route to get more modernized weaponry, Prime Minister Modi is determined to strengthen relations with Israel and therefore, took the next step under 'Make in India' initiative to diversify its military and defence ties for technology transfers. The initiative was launched in September 2014, to make India a global hub and to encourage national and multinational companies to manufacture their products within the country. Under this initiative, the Indian government signed a number of agreements to boost defence production, upgrade technology and defence export capability.

Moreover, Israeli President Reuven Rivlin during the visit to India in November 2016 expressed his confidence in working together with India and agreed to focus on the joint development in the defence sector.<sup>26</sup> During PM Modi visit to Israel next year in 2017, PM Netanyahu also expressed his desire to enhance cooperation with India and stated: "you're making India initiative meet my *Make with India* policy."<sup>27</sup> Hence, both states joined in co-productions and initiated joint ventures under this initiative to promote the culture of defence cooperation. In this regard, various joint development initiatives have taken place between their defence companies in the past few years,

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<sup>25</sup> Pieter D. Wezeman, et.al, "Trends in International Arms Transfers-2019," *SIPRI Fact Sheet*, March 2020, Available at: [https://www.sipri.org/sites/default/files/2020-03/fs\\_2003\\_at\\_2019\\_0.pdf](https://www.sipri.org/sites/default/files/2020-03/fs_2003_at_2019_0.pdf) (accessed on 8 March 2021).

<sup>26</sup> "We can work towards 'Make in India and Make with India'," *The Economic Times*, November 20, 2016.

<sup>27</sup> "PM Netanyahu Welcomes Indian PM Narendra Modi on his Historic Visit to Israel," *Israeli Missions Around the World*, July 4, 2017, Available at: <https://embassies.gov.il/MFA/PressRoom/2017/Pages/PM-Netanyahu-welcomes-the-Indian-PM-Narendra-Modi-on-his-historic-visit-to-Israel.aspx> (accessed on 18 March 2020).

especially to upgrade military technology and co-development and co-production of the missile defence system.

### Major Areas of India-Israel Defence Cooperation

After establishing diplomatic relations, India has been pursuing close partnership with highly sophisticated Research and Development (R&D) industry of Israel and initiated joint R&D projects to boost its defence sector. The major step was opening of the Defence Wing office in Israel in 1997.<sup>28</sup> Since then India-Israeli defence collaboration has diversified into a number of areas, such as Phalcon AWACS, submarine-launched cruise missiles, micro-satellite system for surveillance, laser-guided systems and precision-guided munitions, anti-ballistic missile systems, long-range and advanced medium-range surface-to-air missile systems, anti-aircraft systems and missiles, combat drone technology and up-gradation of arms technology. Some of the major defence collaborations are chronologically furnished below:

- **2004:** India and Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI) signed an agreement for US \$1 billion, under which India ordered three strategic airborne radar systems that would be fixed on Russian (IL-76) transport aircraft. The delivery of these Phalcon AWACS helped India to monitor and survey deeply, intercept communications and radar frequencies and help command IAF responses in case of missile and aircraft attacks.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Efraim Inbar and Alvir Singh Ningthoujam, "Indo-Israeli Defence Cooperation in the Twenty-First Century," *Mideast Security and Policy Studies*, no. 93(2012), 3.

<sup>29</sup> "India, Israel Ink the Phalcon Deal," *Dawn News*, October 11, 2003.

- **2009:** An Israeli Phalcon arrived in India which was inducted into the Indian Air Force Phalcon on 28 May,<sup>30</sup> which helped India to join the global ranks of AWACS operators.
- **2009:** Israel finalized US \$1 billion deal with India for 18 mobile “Surface to Air Python and Derby Missile System (SPYDER).”<sup>31</sup> Indian forces used Israeli Derby missile technology to shoot down Pakistani spying drone after the Balakot air-strikes in 2019,<sup>32</sup> and decided to re-arm its Sukhoi-30 fighter jets with Israeli Derby air-to-air missile as they were unable to retaliate F-16s.<sup>33</sup>
- **2016:** The Indian government approved the purchase of two more AWACS for approximately US \$3 billion in defence sales from Israel to acquire broader aircraft coverage of the territory.<sup>34</sup> These aircrafts help IAF in tracking the aerial threat and also guide the counter-response. Therefore, during the February 2019 military stand-off between Pakistan and India,

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<sup>30</sup> “AWACS will Alter our Dynamics Like Never Before,” *Rediff News*, May 28, 2009, Available at: <http://news.rediff.com/report/2009/may/28/slide-show-1-awacs-will-alter-our-dynamics-like-never-before.htm> (accessed on 19 March 2020).

<sup>31</sup> Yaakov Katz, “India to Buy Rafael’s SPYDER Missile Systems in \$1 billion Deal,” *The Jerusalem Post*, August 23, 2009.

<sup>32</sup> “Israeli Spyder used to shoot down Pakistani drone in Gujarat,” *Business-Standard.com*, February 26, 2019, Available at: [https://www.business-standard.com/article/news-ani/israeli-spyder-used-to-shoot-down-pakistani-drone-in-gujarat-119022600672\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/article/news-ani/israeli-spyder-used-to-shoot-down-pakistani-drone-in-gujarat-119022600672_1.html) (accessed on 19 March 2020).

<sup>33</sup> Vishnu Som, “Outgunned by Pak F-16s, IAF plans to re-arm its Sukhoi with Israeli missiles,” *NDTV*, May 28, 2019, Available at: <https://www.ndtv.com/india-news/outgunned-by-pakistan-f-16s-iaf-plans-to-re-arm-its-sukhois-with-israeli-missiles-2044172> (accessed on 19 March 2020).

<sup>34</sup> Anagha Unnikrishnan, “India Approves Purchase of Two Phalcon Warning System from Israel,” *Air Force Technology*, March 6, 2016, Available at: <https://www.airforce-technology.com/news/newsindia-approves-purchase-of-two-phalcon-warning-system-form-israel-4831275/> (accessed on 19 March 2020).

Israeli made AWACS and AEW&C aircrafts were deployed to monitor the IAF operation and aerial engagement.<sup>35</sup>

- **2017:** India and Israel signed US \$2 billion missile defence deal for advanced Medium Range Surface to Air Missiles (MRSAM), which includes an advanced phased-array radar, command and control, mobile launchers and missiles.<sup>36</sup>
- **2017:** IAI finalized a US \$630 million deal with India to supply advanced 70 km Low Range Surface to Air Missiles (LRSAM) or Barak-8 naval air defence system for four ships of the Indian Navy. It was jointly developed by IAI and DRDO and handed over to the Indian Navy on August 2017.<sup>37</sup> The major purpose of the Barak-8 missile is to protect the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) and key strategic facilities of Israel that are seemingly exposed to 'multiple threats.'<sup>38</sup> Justin Paul George writes in *The Week Magazine* that this missile "was developed to counter the threat of advanced subsonic and supersonic anti-ship missiles that the likes of Pakistan, China, and Syria (in case of Israel) have been buying."<sup>39</sup>
- **2017:** India successfully tested the SPYDER missile system.<sup>40</sup> According to *India Today*, the Indian Air Force will deploy the Israeli SPYDER missile system on its western border to

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<sup>35</sup> Sushant Singh, "Mirage, AWACS, Sukhoi, Popeye: How IAF took down Jaish Training Camp," *Indian Express*, February 27, 2019.

<sup>36</sup> Rahul Singh, "India, Israel seal \$2 billion missile deals: What it means for New Delhi?," *Hindustan Times*, April 7, 2017.

<sup>37</sup> Anna Ahronheim, "Indian Navy Receives First Missile Jointly Developed with Israel," *The Jerusalem Post*, August 29, 2017.

<sup>38</sup> "IAI to provide Barak-8 Missiles Defense System for Navy's New Warships," *The Jerusalem Post*, August 14, 2018.

<sup>39</sup> Justin Paul George, "Israeli Navy to Procure Advanced Missile Jointly Developed with India," *The Week Magazine*, August 16, 2018.

<sup>40</sup> "Israeli SPYDER Missile Test a Hit," *Indian Express*, May 12, 2017.

reinforce its vigilance to strike down any aerial threat from Pakistan.<sup>41</sup>

- **2017:** The Indian Navy procured Integrated Under-Water Harbor Defense and Surveillance System (IUHDSS) for security and protection. The system was launched in India with the collaboration of IAI and strategically installed around the Mumbai Port, not only providing comprehensive monitoring but also enhancing the security of valuable assets against asymmetric threats.<sup>42</sup>
- **2018:** The Indian Cabinet Committee on Security gave the final affirmation to acquire AWACS from Israel.<sup>43</sup>
- **2018:** The Light Combat Aircraft (LCA), used by the Indian Air Force, was equipped with Israeli super radar in 2018 that gave it the combat edge to engage multiple air and ground targets at the same time. IAI also finalized the delivery of AESA (Active Electronically Scanned Array) radars to the Indian Air Force to increase the capability of the Indian Air Force in cross border strikes.<sup>44</sup>
- **2018:** The Indian Army signed an agreement with DRDO to raise one regiment of MRSAM and planned to have five regiments of air defence systems deployed, to combat both China and Pakistan.<sup>45</sup> The system is jointly developed by IAI and DRDO to boost Make-in-India initiative.

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<sup>41</sup> "India Prepares Israeli SPYDER Air Defense Missile System for Pakistan Border," *India Today*, February 28, 2017.

<sup>42</sup> Ami Rojkes Dombé, "IAI's Underwater Harbour Defense System Launched in India," *Israel Defense*, February 7, 2017, Available at: <http://www.israeldefense.co.il/en/node/28461> (accessed on 21 March 2021).

<sup>43</sup> Rajat Pandit, "Government may clear purchase of two more AWACS for around \$800 million," *The Times of India*, September 11, 2018.

<sup>44</sup> Manu Pubby, "Israeli super radars set to give desi LCA fighter jet enhance combat capability," *The Economic Times*, May 10, 2018.

<sup>45</sup> "Israel to Partner DRDO for Developing Missile Defence System for India," *The Economic Times*, July 14, 2018.

- **2018:** India acquired missile-armed drones or Heron TP-armed drones for US \$400 million from Israel capable of detecting, tracking and taking down targets with air to ground missiles.<sup>46</sup> These drones helped India upgrade its Harpy UAV fleet. Because of increasing tension with Pakistan and China, India approved the deal to purchase 10 drones in 2013 from Israel. In the past, India also procured these UAVs from Israel to boost its surveillance capabilities at the borders with China and Pakistan.<sup>47</sup>
- **2020:** India finalized the US \$1 billion deal with Israel to purchase two AWACS because of on-going military confrontation with China in eastern Ladakh. According to *Times of India*, India planned to acquire additional AWACS during the pre-dawn strikes at Balakot and the subsequent aerial combat with Pakistan Air Force in February 2019. The AWACS detect and track incoming fighters, cruise missiles and drones and keep tabs on enemy troop build-ups and movement of warships.<sup>48</sup>

These significant developments and the rapid proliferating strategic and military cooperation between India and Israel indicate that it is not a one-sided relationship where India gained by procuring advanced military technology from Israel, but Israel also needed India as a market for selling its weapons and technology. Initially, India's nuclear deal with the United States helped it to pursue its missile program but since the past few years India is more interested in widening the missile defence cooperation with Israel to facelift its defence industry.

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<sup>46</sup> "India all set to get missile armed drones from Israel," *The Economic Times*, July 14, 2018.

<sup>47</sup> "Govt. clears proposal for buying 15 UAVs from Israel," *The Times of India*, December 29, 2013.

<sup>48</sup> Rajat Pandit, "Ladakh face-off: India to order 2 more Israeli 'eye in sky' for \$1 billion," *Times of India*, August 27, 2020.



## **India-Israel Partnership in Missile Defence System**

The significant changes and transformation in global security architecture after the end of the Cold-War compelled many states to acquire a strong anti-ballistic missile defence system to guard them against any nuclear weapon attack. Ever since the introduction of missile defence system in South Asia, there is an ever-rising competition between India and Pakistan threatening the delicate regional strategic balance. The military and political reasoning of India to develop a missile defence system is to survive a nuclear attack and create the potential for retaliation. Moreover, India wanted to possess BMD technology along with nuclear missile technology to enhance its status among the world's leading countries.<sup>49</sup>

In addition, India alleges its principal adversaries, Pakistan and China, to be the key sources of missile and nuclear threats and used this reasoning as a pretext to initiate its missile defence programme in the late 1990s especially after the reports that Pakistan is deploying Chinese missiles.<sup>50</sup> Brahma Chellaney, an Indian analyst, stated that India was affected not only from the new arms race in Asia, prompted by the United States missile defence system but also by the increased threat from China's built-up of nuclear and missile technology and the sales of its missile systems to Pakistan.<sup>51</sup> Since then, India has been looking for alternatives and decided to collaborate internationally with states like Israel and the United States, so that it could procure the best technology to build a strong Air and Ballistic Missile Defence

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<sup>49</sup> Petr Topychkanov, "India's Prospects in the Area of Ballistic Missile Defense: A Regional Security Perspective," *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, 2012, Available at: [https://carnegieendowment.org/files/WP3\\_2012\\_Topychkanov\\_en.pdf](https://carnegieendowment.org/files/WP3_2012_Topychkanov_en.pdf) (accessed on 24 March 2021).

<sup>50</sup> Gregory Koblentz, "Theater Missile Defence and South Asia: A Volatile Mix," *The Non-Proliferation Review*, Vol. 4, no. 3 (1997), 54.

<sup>51</sup> Brahma Chellaney, "Delhi's Dilemma," *Washington Quarterly*, Vol. 23, no. 3 (2000), 145.

system.<sup>52</sup> India is developing lower and upper tier-system for air and missile defence (Prithvi Air Defence (PAD) missile) and Advanced Air Defence (AAD) missile) as a clear manifestation of power projection for evident geopolitical objectives.

India views Israel as a major player in providing it advanced military technology. Israel has made extensive developments in missile defence system. India admires and wants to benefit from its expertise in the areas of unmanned aerial vehicles and electronic warfare equipment. Therefore, India's DRDO has been collaborating on various defence projects and co-developing defence equipment with major Israeli defence companies such as Elbit, IAI, Israel Military Industries (IMI) and Rafael. India also showed particular interest in Israeli made state of the art anti-missile defence systems, namely David's Sling and Iron Dome, as it may give India a significant edge if there is a missile attack from Pakistan or China.<sup>53</sup> All these developments are testimony to the fact that India-Israel strategic partnership has been contributing constructively to the Indian missile defence system, raising genuine concerns or Pakistan.

Due to the on-going military modernization, India and Israel enhanced their defence collaborations where India has been able to acquire a number of sophisticated weapon systems from Israel to gain a significant advantage over its adversaries. Driven by the desire to integrate missile defence into its nuclear posture in 2003,<sup>54</sup> India signed a US \$1.1 billion deal with Israel in April 2009, to get an upgraded version of Barak-8 air defence missile system.<sup>55</sup> Following

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<sup>52</sup> Ashok Sharma, "India's Missile Defence Programme: Threat Perception and Technological Evolution," *Centre for Land Warfare Studies*, no. 15 (2009), 3.

<sup>53</sup> Efraim Inbar and Alvir Singh Ningthoujam, "Indo-Israeli Defense Cooperation in the Twenty-First Century," *Mideast Security and Policy Studies*, no. 93 (2012), 8.

<sup>54</sup> Ashley J. Tellis, "The Evolution of U.S.-India Ties: Missile Defense in an Emerging Strategic Relationship," *International Security*, Vol. 30, no.4 (2006), 144.

<sup>55</sup> "India Buys Upgraded Israeli Air Defences for \$1.1bn," *Reuters*, November 9, 2009.

this, both states again signed a US \$1.4 billion contract for the development and procurement of Barak-8 Medium-Range Surface-to-Air Missiles.<sup>56</sup> In 2014, IAI successfully tested a jointly developed Barak-8 air and naval defence missile system. This successful first missile test was carried out by Israel's Defence Ministry and DRDO India, wherein the defence ministry termed the test as "an important milestone in the cooperation between India and Israel."<sup>57</sup> The Barak-8 Long-Range Surface-to-Air Missiles were also successfully tested in 2015 and 2016, respectively. Developed jointly by DRDO and IAI, the Barak-8 system can identify and abolish airborne threats like UAV's, jets, missiles and rockets, which include warheads that can be mounted on naval ships as well as the ground.<sup>58</sup>

India and Israel are also quite keen on strengthening their naval cooperation, and announced a deal of US \$630 million in 2017 for the installation of Barak-8 air defence systems aboard four Indian Navy ships: INS Vikrant, Visakhapatnam class guide-missile destroyers, Kolkata class destroyers, and Kamorta class anti-submarine warfare corvettes.<sup>59</sup> To further enhance the maritime cooperation, India signed US \$777 million deal in October 2018 with Israel for the procurement of Barak-8 LR-SAM Air and Missile Defence System for seven ships of Indian Navy. This system is an Air and Missile Defence system which is used by Indian and Israeli navy, air and land forces.<sup>60</sup> Whereas, the

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<sup>56</sup> Yaakov Katz, "Israel Eyeing Big Defence Contracts in India," *The Jerusalem Post*, March 10, 2010.

<sup>57</sup> IAI Successfully Tested the Barak-8 Air & Missile Defense System," *Israel Aerospace Industries*, November 10, 2014, Available at: <http://www.iai.co.il/2013/36782-46165-en/MediaRoom.aspx> (accessed on 24 March 2021).

<sup>58</sup> "India Successfully Tests Missile Defence System Developed with Israel," *Times of Israel*, June 30, 2016.

<sup>59</sup> TOI Staff, "India Successfully Tests Missile Defence System Developed with Israel," *Times of Israel*, June 30, 2016.

<sup>60</sup> "Israel to Supply Missiles Defense Systems to India for \$777 mn," *The Economic Times*, October 24, 201.

Israeli Navy also decided to procure the Barak-8 missile defence system for the protection of its “economic zones and strategic facilities from diversified threats.”<sup>61</sup>

Furthermore, to enhance their combat capabilities and to strengthen missile cooperation, Israel finalized US \$2 billion deal in 2017 with the Indian Defence Ministry to supply advanced missile defence system MRSAM. The MRSAM program is an extension of the project started in January 2006, under which India and Israel signed a US \$350 million agreement to co-develop a new generation LRSAM for Indian Navy ships.<sup>62</sup> IAI also provided additional LRSAM air and missile defence systems to the Indian aircraft carrier.<sup>63</sup> To further extend their defence cooperation, the DRDO and IAI agreed on joint development of Long-Range Surface-to-Air Missile (LRSAM) for Indian Navy and Medium-Range Surface-to-Air Missile (MRSAM) for Indian Air Force.<sup>64</sup> Along with Indian Navy and Air Force, the Indian Army also signed a memorandum in 2018 with DRDO to increase one regiment of advanced MRSAM. The army decided to procure five regiments of the air defence system to be deployed against Pakistan.<sup>65</sup> In January 2021, India and Israel successfully tested MRSAM which can shoot down enemy aircraft at a range of 50-70 kms.<sup>66</sup> These deals boosted bilateral military ties and are considered to be the largest in the history of Israel’s Defence Industries. This continuous missile development by

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<sup>61</sup> “India-Israel missile defence system to be procured by Israeli navy,” *The Times of India*, August 16, 2018.

<sup>62</sup> “India and Israel’s Barak-8 SAM Development Project(s),” *Defense Industry Daily*, October 25, 2018.

<sup>63</sup> Franz-Stefan Gady, “India, Israel Conclude \$2 Billion Missile Deal,” *The Diplomat*, April 11, 2017.

<sup>64</sup> “India, Israel Decided to Set Up Defence Ties,” *The Times of India*, December 23, 2009.

<sup>65</sup> “Israel to Partner DRDO for Developing Missile Defence System for India,” *The Economic Times*, July 14, 2018.

<sup>66</sup> “India, Israel successfully test cutting edge MRSAM air and missile defence system,” *India Today*, January 6, 2021.

India with the help of Israel is quite alarming as it directly triggers a nuclear arms race in South Asia which seriously affects the deterrence stability in the region.

### **India's Advancement in Missile Defence System: An Alarm for South Asian Strategic Stability**

Ever since the successful nuclear tests in 1998, India has been enhancing the pace of ballistic missile defence system development by obtaining advanced military and technological assistance from other states, such as the United States, Israel, France, and Russia.<sup>67</sup> India is pursuing the missile defence programme to expand its power projection within the immediate South Asian neighborhood and the broader Asia-Pacific region. The procurement of missile defence technologies from states, like Israel and the US, is helping India in its quest for the great power status as well as to exercise regional hegemony. This continuous advancement in missile defence system by India challenges the basis of deterrence and provides “a false sense of security to the Indian leadership, thus increases instability and deepens Pakistan’s security dilemma vis-à-vis India.”<sup>68</sup>

India believes that a continued upgradation of its missile defence programme as the key to guarantee its security and is a defensive measure to confront the growing missile threats from Pakistan and “to defeat Pakistan’s nuclear deterrent.”<sup>69</sup> Indian strategic experts believe that South Asian security environment is complex and uncertain because the continuous growth of nuclear weapons by Pakistan

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<sup>67</sup> Harsh V. Pant and Ambuj Sahu, “Israel’s Arms Sales to India: Bedrock of a Strategic Partnership,” *ORF Issue Brief*, Issue no. 311 (September 2019), 4.

<sup>68</sup> Ghazala Yasmin Jalil, “Indian Missile Defence Development: Implications for Deterrence Stability in South Asia,” *Strategic Studies*, vol. 35, no. 2 (2015), 30.

<sup>69</sup> Zafar Nawaz Jaspal, “Countering Indian Ballistic Missile Defence & Strategic Stability in South Asia,” *Margalla Papers*, Vol. XXII, no.1 (2018), 12.

presents an unprecedented obstacle for India's security.<sup>70</sup> Rajeshwari Pillai writes in *The Diplomat* that "Pakistan was always a more prominent and unpredictable rival for India, and thus India has felt compelled to respond with greater swiftness."<sup>71</sup> These developments put Pakistan under perpetual existential threat dragging the region into an action-reaction spiral, hence Pakistan developed missiles to counter India's missile defence system and to maintain strategic stability. Zafar Nawaz Jaspal mentioned that India's Ballistic Missile Defence (BMD) system and nuclear capability forced Pakistan to acquire BMD structure and deploy operational nuclear weapons for the sole purpose of solidifying its defensive posture.<sup>72</sup> He further argued that Pakistan cannot ignore India's BMD program and thus must increase the size of its offensive ballistic missile force in response to its assessment of India's missile program.<sup>73</sup>

India's quest to develop and deploy missile defence systems is transforming the regional strategic dynamics due to the evolving security environment and is eroding the overall concept of deterrence. The continuous build-up of nuclear forces by India together with its BMD system is emerging as a substantial threat for Pakistan. It is not only affecting the regional security but also driving Pakistan to increase and modify its nuclear weapons capability, quantitatively and qualitatively. Moreover, India's expansion of nuclear capabilities and desire to develop a robust air and missile defence systems strongly motivates Pakistan to strengthen its cooperation with China and

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<sup>70</sup> Avinash Patel, "The Challenges and Opportunities in Developing an Indian Missile Defence System," *RUSI Defence Systems*, vol.15, no.3 (2013).

<sup>71</sup> Rajeshwari Pillai Rajgopalan, "Where would India fit in a Missile Defense Partnership in the Indo-Pacific," *The Diplomat*, January 24, 2019.

<sup>72</sup> Zafar Nawaz Jaspal, "Ballistic Missile Defense: Implications for India-Pakistan Strategic Environment," *NDU Journal*, Vol. XXV, (2011), 2.

<sup>73</sup> Zafar Nawaz Jaspal, "Countering Indian Ballistic Missile Defence & Strategic Stability in South Asia," 17.

improve the effectiveness of its nuclear forces.<sup>74</sup> This action-reaction aspect, connected with the missile defence system, would consequently result in the greater regional instability. Hence, to rebalance the strategic stability and to overcome the alarming developments in Indian missile defence program, it is obligatory for Pakistan to adopt effective countermeasures by establishing more vigorous deterrence along with enhancing its offensive military capabilities.

In its pursuit for acquiring the missile defence system, India is ignoring the fact that this whole scenario is not only undermining the strategic stability of the entire region but is also adding “a new dimension to one of the scariest arms races on the planet.”<sup>75</sup> India’s BMD system is creating a regional security dilemma by jeopardizing the security of other countries, especially Pakistan as it encourages Pakistan to devise more advanced nuclear missiles and Multiple Re-entry Vehicles (MIRVs) to neutralize India’s BMD shield. According to Kenneth Weiss, the ballistic missile defence system destabilizes nuclear deterrence among states, influences an arms race in the region and generates misperceptions and miscalculations during the crisis.<sup>76</sup> Consequently, the BMD deployment undermines the balance of strategic nuclear deterrence between India and Pakistan and intensifies a nuclear arms race.<sup>77</sup> In addition, the possession of an advanced missile defence system by India is rigorously upsetting the deterrence

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<sup>74</sup> Petr Topychkanov, “India’s Prospects in the Area of Ballistic Missile Defense: A Regional Security Perspective,” *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, Working Paper No. 3 (2012), 27.

<sup>75</sup> Sebastien Roblin, “Get Ready, Pakistan: India is Developing its own Missile Defense Shield,” *The National Interest*, October 15, 2017.

<sup>76</sup> Kenneth G. Weiss, “The Limits of Diplomacy: Missile Proliferation, Diplomacy, and Defence,” *World Affairs*, vol. 163, no. 3 (2001), 118.

<sup>77</sup> Zafar Nawaz Jaspal, “Countering Indian Ballistic Missile Defence & Strategic Stability in South Asia,” 19.

stability, arms race stability and crisis stability<sup>78</sup> of the whole South Asian region.

### **India-Israel Defence Ties: Security Implications for Pakistan**

The defence and military partnership of India and Israel seems to be enduring because of their mutual strategic interests and continuous collaboration. Israel is facilitating India to acquire requisite defence equipment's, defence production capability and upgraded weapons to maintain their alliance and sustain its ambition to be a major regional as well as a global power. Sophistication in military technology with the help of Israel and the allocation of high budget for defence purpose indicates that India wants to counter the joint threat of Pakistan and China. Hence, India's regional and global hegemonic approach and growing defence cooperation with Israel is not only destabilizing the regional strategic balance but also carries severe consequences for the stability of South Asian region. Their clandestine relations during the Cold-War era and strong alliance after the Cold-War period proved to be a potential threat especially for Pakistan's security. India's obsession with power projection against strategically compatible Pakistan and strong rival China tempts it to find a reliable defence partner and Israel comes in handy.

In the last two decades, India has strengthened its defence partnership with Israel by pursuing military modernization. Timothy Hoyt writes that "military modernization is most advanced in states which are deeply involved in regional political-military rivalries, or which boast significant military and economic advantage over most of their neighbors. Many developing states face potential external threats, from regional neighbors or outside forces. These threats usually create a demand for advanced military capabilities and an

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<sup>78</sup> Frank P. Harvey, "The Future of Strategic Stability and Nuclear Deterrence," *International Journal*, Vol. 58, no. 2(2003), 321.



expanded military-industrial base.”<sup>79</sup> Therefore, to enhance its operational and deployment capabilities, India is continuously procuring advanced missile defence system, sophisticated delivery mechanism and advanced nuclear technology, which is ultimately raising the level of threat, insecurity and arms race in the region. Various agreements on missile and defence cooperation with Israel have definitely enhanced military superiority of India while disintegrating the balance of power and compelling Pakistan to allocate extra resources on the defence sector.<sup>80</sup> Also, the development in air, naval, satellite and space program has provided India with a strategic gain over Pakistan.

Moreover, the surveillance equipment (i.e., UAVs, cross-border sensors, and Airborne Early Warning Systems), which India is getting from Israel,<sup>81</sup> would help India in carrying out swift and quick operations or strikes against Pakistan and to infiltrate Pakistan’s territory. February 2019 Balakot crisis between India and Pakistan is a recent example that determines the pace of India-Israel defence partnership in which India used Israeli weapons to launch strikes inside Pakistan’s territory.<sup>82</sup> Such incident only increases the chances of war between both the states albeit limited, intensify threat matrix for Pakistan and destabilize the peace and stability in the region. Robert Fisk clearly stated that the defence ties between India and Israel have strengthened in the past few years which include sophisticated training

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<sup>79</sup> Timothy D. Hoyt, *Military Industry and Regional Defence Policy: India, Iraq and Israel* (New York: Routledge, 2006), 3.

<sup>80</sup> Masood-ur-Rehman Khattak, “Strategic Significance of Indo-Israel Defence Collaboration: Implications for Pakistan’s Security,” *IPRI Journal*, Vol. XVI, no. 2(2016), 65-66.

<sup>81</sup> Nicolas Blarel, “India-Israel at 25: Defense Ties,” *“Middle East Institute,”* April 4, 2017, Available at: <https://www.mei.edu/publications/india-israel-25-defense-ties> (accessed on 4 April 2021).

<sup>82</sup> Judah Ari Gross, “India used Israeli arms for strike inside Pakistan,” *The Times of Israel*, February 26, 2019.

and arms trade. According to him, "Israel has been assiduously lining itself up alongside India's national BJP government...while India itself has now become the largest weapons market for the Israeli arms trade."<sup>83</sup> Hence, India-Israel strategic and defence partnership is an existential threat to the national security of Pakistan and affecting regional security calculus as well.

For India, who is dreaming to become an "Asian giant," Israeli military technology and security cooperation provides it with the finest way to cope with its security issues. Governed by geostrategic and geopolitical priorities, the strategic partnership with Israel is enabling India to attain its greatest policy objectives, i.e. to gain regional hegemony. It is being ensured by strengthening its defence sector, to expand its military power beyond its region. The goals are wide-ranging and also include geo-economic objective, blocking Pakistan's access to and undermine its influence in the Middle East and Central Asian states. It seeks to ultimately destabilize and weaken Pakistan's defensive balance capability both at the eastern and western front and counter China's influence in the region. India aspires to annex the illegally occupied Kashmiri territory following Israel's annexation policy. In short, India-Israel strategic alliance, indeed, is emerging as the major threat to strategic stability in South Asia and carries far-reaching implications for Pakistan's security.

Analyzing the aspects of India-Israel growing proximity and defence ties, it is noted that the strategic equilibrium in the region is shifting in the favor of India. The progression in their relationship not only undermines the military balance of South Asia but also destabilizes the conventional balance vis-à-vis Pakistan. Harsh V. Pant stated that "the

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<sup>83</sup> Robert Fisk, "Israel is Playing a Big role in India's Escalating Conflict with Pakistan," *Independent*, February 28, 2019, Available at: <https://www.independent.co.uk/voices/israel-india-pakistan-conflict-balakot-arms-trade-jaish-e-mohammed-a8800076.html> (accessed on 4 April 2021).

most immediate effects of this close defence relationship between India and Israel can be seen in Pakistan's worry that the strategic balance in the subcontinent is fast tilting against it. It finds it difficult to match the conventional military capability of Israel-India combined."<sup>84</sup> Hence, the conventional and unconventional military superiority of India is helping it to establish hegemony in the region and destabilize Pakistan's security. Moreover, India and Israel are constantly solidifying their military ties because it is not only India who is apprehensive about the nuclear arsenals of Pakistan, but Israel had also serious concerns about Pakistan's nuclear weapons program.<sup>85</sup> This specifies that India-Israel defence and missile cooperation is not only activating an arms race in South Asia but also destabilizing the deterrence equation besides affecting the strategic stability in the region.

## **Conclusion**

An expansion of defence cooperation between India and Israel along with the acquisition of military and nuclear capabilities by India through its strategic partnership with Israel would not only undermine the regional balance but will also have severe consequences for the stability of South Asia in future. This cooperation reveals India's strong commitment to dominance and power projection in the broader Southern Asian region that includes Indian Ocean and Malacca Straits. Moreover, India considers Pakistan and China a major irritant in its quest for hegemony. Therefore, the defence partnership with Israel is seen as the guarantee to ensuring its ambitions.

All the major arms deal with Israel including the transfer of technology and production of missiles are part of Prime Minister Modi's *Make in India* initiative. The steady progress and cooperation

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<sup>84</sup> Harsh V. Pant, "India-Israel Partnership: Convergence and Constraints," *Middle East Review of International Affairs*, Vol. 8, no. 4 (2004), 66. and Moshe Yegar, "Pakistan and Israel," *Jewish Political Studies Review*, Vol. 19, no. 3/4 (2007), 131.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid.

in missile defence system with Israel under this initiative is generating a regional security dilemma by endangering the security of other states. Development and acquisition of defence system, as well as missile proliferation, is rigorously undermining the strategic stability and has the potential to accelerate arms race in the region. In this process India seems to have ignored that its actions are worsening the security dilemma, increasing insecurity, intensifying arms race and provoking Pakistan to take countermeasures, which in turn will further deteriorate the security environment of South Asian region.

## Pakistan – India Security Paradox: Between Deterrence and Coercive Diplomacy

Dr. Maryam Azam<sup>1</sup>

### Abstract

*Pakistan and India, as two nuclear neighbors in South Asia with a hostile historical legacy, have limited strategic options to pursue in an environment where uncertainty and threat are constant. In this context, India has moved in the recent past from a traditional deterrence towards a more escalatory posture under Modi led fascist regime. The primary emphasis of this study is to analyze how do India's intimidating tactics, particularly hybrid warfare undermine the security balance between India and Pakistan constantly causing the bilateral relations to swing between deterrence and coercive diplomacy. Indian war gaming tactics are a direct threat to conventional and nuclear deterrence.*

**Key words:** Deterrence, Coercive Diplomacy, Hybrid Warfare, Security, Pakistan, India.

### Introduction

Coercion, threat, enmity, and cynicism define the security equation of Pakistan and India. Their frictional relationship expounds on the deep complexities that exist between the two nuclear neighbors. Policy and defense analysts have observed multiple instances of coercive

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diplomacy and deterrence in the framework of Pakistan-India relationship. Shabana Fayyaz explains that India during 2001-2002 military stand-off and after the Mumbai attacks of 2008 took a coercive posture against Pakistan.<sup>2</sup> She believes that the US' incessant support to India is the main reason behind the stability imbalance between Pakistan and India.<sup>3</sup>

Another pertinent explanation is given by Michael Krepon who examines India-Pakistan relations within the framework of stability-instability paradox by emphasizing on the fact that both states responded to the 2001-2002 crisis differently, but the post-crisis milieu incorporates increasing short range ballistic missiles, limited diplomatic engagement and a proactive military doctrine. In this context, the avenues of deterrence stability became limited between them.<sup>4</sup> Moreover, Sander Ruben Aarten focuses on the notion of deterrence stability between India and Pakistan, which according to the writer has been disrupted since 2015. Pathankot incident and alleged claims of India against Pakistan, Indian covert support to Baloch separatist groups, cancellation of 2016 SAARC conference in Pakistan and escalation on the Line of Control have triggered friction between India and Pakistan which has negatively affected deterrence stability.<sup>5</sup> Similarly, Zafar Nawaz Jaspal is of the view that the non-linear and unconventional nature of hybrid warfare explicates that Modi government has opted a hardline approach towards Pakistan. The writer identified the use of proxy forces in supporting terrorist groups within Pakistan, and deception and information war as primary tools to

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<sup>2</sup> Shabana Fayyaz, "Countering Strategic Coercion: A case Study of Pakistan," *Margalla Papers*, Vol. XXIII, no. II (2019), 88.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Michael Krepon and Julia Thompson (eds.), *Deterrence Stability: Escalation Control in South Asia* (Washington DC: The Stimson Centre, 2013), 9.

<sup>5</sup> Sander Ruben Aarten, *Deterrence (In)stability Between India and Pakistan* (Netherland: Asser Press, 2020), 215.

destabilize the national security of Pakistan by India.<sup>6</sup> Similarly, Masood ur Rehman believes that the covert actions of India against Pakistan is not a new phenomenon as Research and Analysis Wing (RAW) is operating since 1968. Ajit Doval in this regard gave the notion of Offensive-Defensive strategy through which in the recent times, the exploitation of hybrid domain had been extensively carried out by India.<sup>7</sup>

In quantitative terms, Pakistan shares a disproportionate security equation with India. The latter is spending on its military over US \$70 billion<sup>8</sup> with a total wealth of approximately US \$12.6 trillion<sup>9</sup> and possesses a large geography and nukes. Despite this, India has been unable to fulfil its cold start doctrine of using military options against Pakistan. This trend illustrates that nuclearization of Pakistan was an effective strategy to minimize its security compulsions by developing an effective deterrence. Lately however, it has been observed that the bilateral relations between Pakistan and India have moved from a normalization phase to a sensitive phase encompassing a coercive posture particularly since Narendra Modi became the Prime Minister of India in 2014. Political and military incitement by Modi government has directly affected the security equation between Pakistan and India with direct impact on regional security. Therefore, it is significant to assess how the Indian provocation is acting as an independent variable and consequently affecting the bilateral and regional security balance.

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<sup>6</sup> Zafar Nawaz Jaspal, "Pakistan's National Security: Hybrid Warfare Challenges & Countermeasures," *National Security and Anti-Terrorism Information*, 2020, Available at: <https://cati.nwupl.edu.cn/bgpl/ndbg/71279.htm> (accessed on 2 February 2021).

<sup>7</sup> Masood Ur Rehman Khattak, Muhammad Khan and Ghulam Qumber, "Evolution of New Indian Military Strategy: Implications for Pakistan," *Margalla Papers*, Vol. XXIII, no.1 (2019), 139.

<sup>8</sup> Adil Sultan, "Counterforce Temptations in South Asia," *Journal of Security and Strategic Analyses*, Vol. VI, no.2 (2020), 39.

<sup>9</sup> "Total wealth in India touches \$12.6 trillion," *The Hindu*, October 19, 2019.

Pakistan joined the nuclear club on 28<sup>th</sup> May 1998 as a response to Indian nuclear tests in order to balance the score with its traditional rival. The nuclear impulse of Pakistan was primarily Indian centric. In this context, Pakistan and India employed the policy of deterrence to restrain any future escalation. Deterrence was the most potent defensive strategic tool during the Cold War relied upon by the United States and the Soviet Union.<sup>10</sup> It has been effective in substantially containing military aggression and conflict escalation between nuclear states. It is based on the idea of restraining the adversary from taking any unwanted action. Traditionally the two ways to ensuring deterrence has been by denial and by punishment. Wherein the intention is to contain the aggressor from resorting to unwanted action, mostly through a balancing act in the former case, and by threatening severe penalties in the latter.<sup>11</sup> The psychological impact through inflicting fear of consequences is one of the major goals of deterrence.

Nuclearization of South Asia in 1998 moved Pakistan-India deterrent equation from conventional weapon deterrence to nuclear deterrence. In this context, this paper intends to explain how Indian provocation through coercive and hybrid tactics is affecting the deterrence equilibrium between the two nuclear neighbors of South Asia. Also, this paper illustrates that to what extent in the recent years, the use of coercive diplomacy has intensified, predominantly by India.

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<sup>10</sup> Richard Ned Lebow and Janice Gross Stein, "Deterrence and the Cold War," *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 110, no.2 (Summer 1995), 157.

<sup>11</sup> Michael J. Mazarr, "Understanding Deterrence," *RAND Corporation*, 2018,

Available at:

[https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/perspectives/PE200/PE295/RAND\\_P\\_E295.pdf](https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/perspectives/PE200/PE295/RAND_P_E295.pdf) (accessed on 4 February 2021).



## **India's Coercive Posture and Escalatory Maneuvers**

Tensions between Pakistan and India have considerably increased under the Modi regime. Threat intimidation<sup>12</sup> and limited use of military force have increased as is evident from frequent unprovoked indiscriminate firing on the Line of Control (LOC) and Working Boundary (WB). According to Pakistan's Foreign Ministry spokesperson, India executed 3,012 ceasefire violations at LOC in 2020. Previously, India violated the Line of control 3,200 times in 2019, 1,629 times in 2018, and 860 times in 2017.<sup>13</sup> Recently in December 2020, India attacked United Nations (UN) vehicle carrying two observers who were on their routine mission in Azad Kashmir.<sup>14</sup> Besides this, the violation of Pakistani air space by India is another issue that escalated tensions between both states. Pakistan shot down Indian plane on 27<sup>th</sup> February 2019 on account of its violation of air space. It was a major military standoff that fueled the then ongoing tensions between India and Pakistan. Later, it was Pakistan's goodwill gesture that diffused the situation when Pakistan returned the captured Indian pilot. This escalatory trend has brought Pakistan and India to a state of brinkmanship in which friction between both states has negatively contributed to the existing hostilities. Another intimidating posture by India is the threat of a surgical strike which undermines the balancing

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<sup>12</sup> For instance, number of statements by Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Indian Defence minister, Rajnath Singh, and Indian National security advisor Ajit Doval related to defeating Pakistan in seven to ten days, indirectly threatening a nuclear war against Pakistan and highlighting to expand the battlefield in new India doctrine respectively are intimidating threats by Indian leadership. See, "India defence minister makes veiled threat of nuclear war," *The Express Tribune*, August 16, 2019.

<sup>13</sup> Amrita Nayak Dutta, "LoC ceasefire violations doubled to 3,200 this year, spiked after Balakot & Article 370," *The Print*, December 27, 2019, Available at: <https://theprint.in/defence/loc-ceasefire-violations-doubled-to-3200-this-year-spiked-after-balakot-article-370/341774/> (accessed on 4 February 2021).

<sup>14</sup> Naveed Siddiqui, "FO summons Indian envoy to lodge protest over LoC ceasefire violations," *Dawn*, December 23, 2020.

posture between Pakistan and India. It refers to a precisely calculated and targeted military attack. In 2016, India claimed surgical strike in Pakistan in the aftermath of an attack on an Indian army base in Indian Illegally Occupied Kashmir. Recently, Pakistan's Foreign Minister, Shah Mehmood Qureshi shared quoted an intelligence sources according to which India is planning a surgical strike against Pakistan.<sup>15</sup>

Coercive diplomacy through diplomatic act, confrontational speech, aggressive posture, and threat of use of force have become a recurrent practice between India and Pakistan on the diplomatic front. These coercive acts fuel tensions and escalate the political heat at the bilateral level. It has been observed that ever since the election campaign of Narendra Modi, his statements reflected hatred and animosity towards Pakistan. After winning the elections, his government has been actively employing coercive language and content at the diplomatic front. Therefore, the war of words has been extensively increased between India and Pakistan, which in turn has restricted the space of negotiations and dialogue. Various statements by Indian apex political and military leadership including Narendra Modi and General Manoj Mukund Naravane, Indian Chief of Army Staff offer an insight into the belligerent rhetoric. Modi in an address to an election rally in Chhattisgarh said, "We have the mother of nuclear bombs. I decided to tell Pakistan, do whatever you want to do but we will retaliate."<sup>16</sup> On another occasion he stated that, "India has succeeded in isolating you [Pakistan] in the world. We will ramp it up and force you [to] live alone in the world."<sup>17</sup> In another statement,

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<sup>15</sup> Asad Hashim, "Pakistan alleges India preparing for 'surgical strike'," *Aljazeera*, December 18, 2020, Available at: <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/12/18/pakistan-alleges-india-preparing-for-surgical> (accessed on 9 February 2021).

<sup>16</sup> Claire Anderson, "India-Pakistan nuclear WAR fears as Modi threatens Pakistan with 'mother of bombs'", *Express Tribune*, April 25, 2019.

<sup>17</sup> "Modi threatens to 'isolate' Pakistan globally," *The Express Tribune*, September 24, 2016.

Prime Minister of India said that India can make Pakistan “bite the dust” in less than 10 days in any new war.<sup>18</sup> Similarly, a statement by General Manoj that, we reserve the right to preemptively strike across the Line of Control (LoC),<sup>19</sup> reveals an aggressive tilt in India’s posturing.

### **Understanding Nuclear Deterrence in South Asian Setting**

Nuclear threshold became a new security question for India and Pakistan along with the South Asian security. Nuclear deterrence mainly prevents the states from any military action with the threat of nuclear attack.<sup>20</sup> Therefore, the threat of use of nuclear weapons intends to restrain adversaries from any undesirable action, thus maintaining a survivable retaliatory force. Pakistan and India opted for credible minimum deterrence (CMD) which aims to maintain a defensive posture. The main objective of CMD is to attain and balance the number of nuclear weapons against its potential adversary. Within the doctrine of CMD, credibility incorporates the command and control system, safety measures related to nuclear program along with the capacity of the state to deter, resist and sustain any penalty.<sup>21</sup> In the recent past, Pakistan incorporated Full Spectrum Deterrence (FSD) in arrangement with CMD which further diversifies the nuclear capability of Pakistan by introducing tactical nuclear weapons (TNW) into the

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<sup>18</sup> “PM Modi says India can now defeat Pakistan 'in 10 days',” *Gulf News*, January 19, 2020.

<sup>19</sup> Naveed Siddique, “Pakistan rejects new Indian army chief’s ‘irresponsible statement on pre-emptive strikes across LoC’,” *Dawn*, January 2, 2020.

<sup>20</sup> Zafar Nawaz Jaspal, “India-Pakistan Paradox of deterrence strategic relations,” *Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad*, Vol. 29, no.4 (2009), 29.

<sup>21</sup> Rajesh Rajagopalan, “India’s Nuclear Doctrine Debate,” *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, June 30, 2016, Available at:

<https://carnegieendowment.org/2016/06/30/india-s-nuclear-doctrine-debate-pub-63950> (accessed on 20 February 2021).

deterrent equation.<sup>22</sup> Under this policy, Pakistan plans to attain full range weapons to contain the adversary at the strategic, tactical, and operational level. This extension from CMD to FSD can be explained vis-à-vis three main threats identified by the National Command Authority (NCA). These include nuclearisation of the Indian Ocean, Indian conventional military buildup and Indian development of Ballistic Missile Shield (BMD).<sup>23</sup> Keeping in view these realities, the following framework provides an understanding of nuclear deterrence and its associated issues between India and Pakistan. Prominent theorists including Kenneth Waltz, John Mearsheimer, Stephen Van Evera and Peter Lavoy predicted that nuclear weapons would prevent wars between the states because of cost calculus. On the other hand, a number of pessimists apprehend the ineffectiveness of nuclear deterrence in preventing war and conflict escalation due to several reasons. Scott D. Sagan in this regard provides a different view stressing that most of the military organizations due to their biases and interest failed to adhere to nuclear deterrence. In addition, those political leaders who lacked cognitive capability, emotional stability and rational thinking may end up provoking conflict and ending nuclear deterrence.

In this context, keeping in view the close geographical proximity of India and Pakistan, Indian scheming approach under the Modi regime

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<sup>22</sup> Tactical nuclear weapons include short range ballistic missile (SRBM) capability. For instance, Nasr battlefield ballistic missile. For details, see, Mansoor Ahmed, "Pakistan's Tactical Nuclear Weapons and Their Impact on Stability," *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, June 30, 2016, Available at:

<https://carnegieendowment.org/2016/06/30/pakistan-s-tactical-nuclear-weapons-and-their-impact-on-stability-pub-63911> (accessed on 22 February 2021).

<sup>23</sup> India developed a two-tiered BDM system reportedly in 2012 and 2016 for its two main cities, i.e. Mumbai and Delhi. See, Baqir Sajjad Syed, "Pakistan to retain full spectrum deterrence policy," *Dawn*, December 22, 2017.

through conventional and non-conventional means has become an existential threat as it could dislodge the credibility of nuclear deterrence.<sup>24</sup> Therefore, the recent developments in India including its increasing strategic partnership with the US and spending on conventional weapons has considerably increased the asymmetry between India and Pakistan on conventional weapons which would undermine the existing deterrence equilibrium.<sup>25</sup> In 2016, India and the US signed The Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement (LEMOA), which allowed the US to use Indian bases and vice versa; India can use US bases across the globe. In addition to using the facilities, US and India can use each other's services and refueling facilities.<sup>26</sup> Strategically, this agreement was to contain China, but it also raises genuine security concerns in Pakistan. Recently, following the 2+2 bilateral high-level talks between India and the US, The Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement on Geospatial Cooperation (BECA) was signed in October 2020. This agreement will allow India to have access to sensitive geospatial and aeronautical data including data required to deter and hit missiles, drones and other targets with precision.<sup>27</sup> This would seriously challenge Pakistan's security and military strategy ultimately adversely affecting the deterrence equation between India and Pakistan.

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<sup>24</sup> Scott D.Sagan, "The Perils of Proliferation: Organization Theory, Deterrence Theory, and the Spread of Nuclear Weapons," *International Security*, Vol. 18, no. 4 (Spring 1994), 69.

<sup>25</sup> Zafar Nawaz Jaspal, "New Indo-US defense agreement BECA is a military challenge for Pakistan," *Arab News*, December 14, 2020, Available at: <https://www.arabnews.pk/node/1777246> (accessed on 22 February 2021).

<sup>26</sup> Anwar Iqbal, "US-India defence pact to impact Pakistan, China," *Dawn*, August 30, 2016.

<sup>27</sup> "US-India 2+2: Crucial defence deal signed," *BBC News*, October 27, 2017, Available at: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-india-54655947> (accessed on 24 February 2021).

## Indian Coercion in Kashmir

Pakistan-India relations have been at the lowest ebb since August 2019 when India annulled article 370 and 35(A) in an attempt to increase federal control in the Indian Illegally Occupied Kashmir (IIOK). India, as part of its political and security strategy, has been using coercive diplomacy to build pressure on Pakistan to dissuade its support to the people of IIOK. After the abrogation of Article 370 and 35(A), India imposed more than a yearlong communication blackout IIOK, denying basic human and fundamental rights to the people of Kashmir. Moreover, incidents of torture, state violence, abduction and an additional deployment of 8,000 troops in IIOK<sup>28</sup> illustrates Indian coercion in the area. The issue of Kashmir will remain a pivot and escalatory source in India-Pakistan relations which must and can only be dissuaded through diplomatic strategies.

## Hybrid Tactics

Hybrid warfare has altogether changed the theater of war. It refers to the employment of conventional and mostly unconventional methods by using all elements of national power to inflict coercion and damage to the adversary. Hybrid warfare tactics aim to exploit the national vulnerabilities of the adversaries through political, psychological, economic, informational, social, and infrastructural attributes.<sup>29</sup> In this context, for the past several years, India has been extensively involved in hybrid tactics to destabilize Pakistan at the internal and external front. Dissemination of fake news and propaganda, building a

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<sup>28</sup> Mangeet Negi, "8,000 more troops deployed in Jammu and Kashmir after govt moves to revoke Article 370," *India Today*, August 5, 2019.

<sup>29</sup> Patrick J. Cullen and Erik Reichborn-Kjennerud, "Understanding Hybrid Warfare," A *Multinational Capability Development Campaign project* (2017), 4, Available at: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/647776/dar\\_mcdc\\_hybrid\\_warfare.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/647776/dar_mcdc_hybrid_warfare.pdf) (accessed on 24 February 2021).

particular media perception of Pakistan, provoking anti-state sentiments and identity-based conflicts through informational domains, support to certain separatist and militant groups and attempts to sabotage the CPEC project are some of the core tactics being employed by India against Pakistan. In 2018, COAS General Qamar Javed Bajwa said that “We are now confronting hybrid conflict where the focus is shifting to subversion on religious, sectarian, ethnic and social issues. This needs a comprehensive national response.”<sup>30</sup> This statement reflects the complicated domain of coercion and conflict which Pakistan is facing along with the traditional conventional security threat from India. Recently, DG ISPR Major General Babar Iftikhar stated that “Unfortunately, it’s a major onslaught, it’s a major part of the fifth-generation warfare. Pakistan is being subjected to [...] hybrid applications in a massive way and we are aware of that.”<sup>31</sup> With this in view, the following explain the nature of Indian hybrid warfare against Pakistan which is being extensively used by India for destabilization.

- **Fake News and Informational War**

It has been observed that India employs fake news and propaganda technique against Pakistan by using electronic and social media. One such example is the proliferation of disinformation and anti-state content through Twitter, Facebook, Web links and YouTube accounts. In December 2020, a European group based in Brussels revealed an alleged Indian disinformation network, which works to destabilize Indian adversaries, particularly Pakistan. According to the report, there were total of 265 fake local media networks, suspicious NGOs and

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<sup>30</sup> “Media first line of defence in hybrid war: DG ISPR,” *The Nation*, November 28, 2018.

<sup>31</sup> “Pakistan being subjected to 5th-generation warfare in 'massive way' but we are aware of threats: DG ISPR,” *Dawn*, December 3, 2020.

Think tanks operating in 65 countries.<sup>32</sup> Their main aim was to undermine the image of Pakistan and China by producing and disseminating their fake content within India and across the globe. This network was previously exposed in 2019 but they continued their activities by renaming their website domains. For example, 'EP today was relaunched as EU Chronicle in May 2020.'<sup>33</sup> EU Chronicle Twitter account extensively posted material about alleged abuses against minorities and terrorism in Pakistan. Recently, Twitter suspended that account but the website of EU Chronicle till the writing of this paper is still functional.<sup>34</sup> This trend of disinformation, use of fake pictures, videos and chaos based content to build an anti-narrative against the state has been investigated in a report by Digital Rights Foundation. The report illustrates that Pro-Indian Twitter accounts were identified in campaigning against Pakistan particularly from 21<sup>st</sup> October 2020 to 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2020, when the case of Pakistan's status in the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) was under review. According to the report, the main trends to execute deception through this campaign included the following elements:

- i. There were two kinds of twitter accounts, i.e., verified and unverified accounts which were used to organize the campaign. Verified accounts uploaded content related to civil war and unrest in Pakistan by

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<sup>32</sup> Gary Machado Alexandre Alaphilippe and Roman Adamczyk, "Indian Chronicles : Deep Dive into a 15-Year Operation Targeting the EU and UN to Serve Indian Interests," *EU Disinfo Lab*, Report-2020, 76, Available at: <https://www.disinfo.eu/publications/indian-chronicles-deep-dive-into-a-15-year-operation-targeting-the-eu-and-un-to-serve-indian-interests/> (accessed on 13 March 2021).

<sup>33</sup> Ramsha Jahangir, "Indian network lobbying against Pakistan exposed," *Dawn*, December 10, 2020.

<sup>34</sup> "EU Chronicle: News from the European Union," Available at: <https://euchronicle.com/> (accessed on 12 February 2021).



manipulating the Karachi bomb blast incident<sup>35</sup> and the protests of opposition. In addition, they tried to propagate that how Punjab, the largest province and Karachi, the hub of financial activity is being subject to chaos and unrest.

- ii. Mostly, pictorial content has an immediate and considerable psychological effect. Fake pictures were uploaded on the Twitter accounts to disseminate misinformation.

In October 2020, Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) requested Twitter to respond and take action against the anti-Pakistan propaganda on Twitter. It was revealed that the Hashtag (#) “civil War in Pakistan” and “civil war in Karachi” was used in more than 18,700 and 3,384 tweets respectively.<sup>36</sup>

- **Dissemination of fake news through Twitter**

Another tactic of propaganda and disinformation employed by India is the outsourcing of news content in support of Baloch separatist groups in Pakistan. It was observed that a number of Indian websites publish sympathetic and glorifying content for anti- Pakistan groups. The following table explicates Indian news outlets which extensively posts on Balochistan mostly in support of militant groups.

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<sup>35</sup> Qazi Hassan And Imtiaz Ali, “At least 5 dead, 20 injured in an explosion in Gulshan-i-Iqbal building in Karachi,” *Dawn*, October 21, 2020.

<sup>36</sup> “PTA asks Twitter to punish those behind anti-Pakistan propaganda,” *Dawn*, October 23, 2020.

Table 6.1: Indian news outlets that support Baloch insurgency

Websites	Content
News Intervention (website and Twitter account) <a href="https://www.newsintervention.com/blf-bla-launch-massive-attacks-against-pak-army-across-occupied-balochistan/">https://www.newsintervention.com/blf-bla-launch-massive-attacks-against-pak-army-across-occupied-balochistan/</a>	Extensive material related to the activities of Baloch militant groups is posted on their website and twitter account
The Hindu (website) <a href="https://www.thehindu.com/news/international/expained-the-baloch-liberation-army/article28273960.ece">https://www.thehindu.com/news/international/expained-the-baloch-liberation-army/article28273960.ece</a>	News reporting related to Baloch insurgent attacks on Pakistan security forces
The Hindustan Times <a href="http://www.hindustanimes.com">www.hindustanimes.com</a>	Content related to free Balochistan, Baloch groups demanding support from India is occasionally posted
OpIndia <a href="http://www.opindia.com">www.opindia.com</a> <a href="https://www.opindia.com/2019/07/exclusive-interview-dr-allah-nazar-baloch-balochistan-liberation-front-blf-on-pakistan-usa-china-india/">https://www.opindia.com/2019/07/exclusive-interview-dr-allah-nazar-baloch-balochistan-liberation-front-blf-on-pakistan-usa-china-india/</a>	Exclusive interview of Dr. Nazar Baloch, head of BLF, banned militant group in Pakistan. His exclusive interview and glorification by Indian media houses is observed to be a common practice

Source: Table composed by the author

### • Indian support to Militant Networks

The Modi-Doval<sup>37</sup> nexus in India explicitly supports the use of kinetic and non-kinetic tactics against Pakistan. In 2014, Ajit Doval while talking about a policy response to Pakistan stated that “Indeed,

<sup>37</sup> Ajit Kumar Doval is the national security advisor of Prime Minister Modi. He is known for supporting an offensive, aggressive strategy particularly towards Pakistan.

terrorism is a tactic to achieve ideological or political advantages.”<sup>38</sup> Consequently, Indian involvement in manipulating identity-based conflict within Pakistan has been frequently reported by political and military leadership. For instance, Indian support to militant networks in the Tribal belt and Balochistan has increased with time. Moreover, particularly since 2013, Indian efforts to disrupt the CPEC project have considerably increased as India from this strategy can inflict damage to her two main rivals, i.e. Pakistan and China. An operational CPEC corridor would eventually reduce Indian economic and strategic influence in the Asian belt. For this reason, India is reportedly supporting certain Baloch separatist militant factions to conduct terrorist activities in Gwadar, Turbat and Ormara. For instance, in 2019, Baloch Liberation Army (BLA) attacked a five-star hotel in Gwadar. Later, the National Security Advisor of the Prime Minister of Pakistan, Mooed Yusuf, stated that in addition to this attack, India has been involved in four high profile terrorist attacks in Pakistan.<sup>39</sup> In this context, Pakistan has often provided dossiers to the United Nations related to Indian involvement in the internal affairs of Pakistan.<sup>40</sup> Ambassador Munir Akram of Pakistan while presenting the dossier to the UN Secretary-General stated that, “We urge the Secretary-general to play his role in persuading India to halt its terror and subversive campaign against Pakistan.”<sup>41</sup> The dossier also revealed Indian financial

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<sup>38</sup> “The Doval Doctrine,” *Frontline: Indian National Magazine*, November 13, 2015.

<sup>39</sup> “India behind at least 4 high-profile terrorist attacks in Pakistan; 'We have evidence to the T'," *Geo News*, October 13, 2020, Available at: <https://www.geo.tv/latest/313067-india-behind-at-least-4-high-profile-terrorist-attacks-in-pakistan-we-have-evidence-to-the-t> (accessed on 28 February 2021).

<sup>40</sup> Pakistan has been repeatedly providing dossiers to United Nations regarding Indian involvement in supporting terrorist activities in Pakistan. In 2015, Pakistan provided three dossiers to the United Nations which contained evidence related to Indian involvement in Balochistan, Tribal belt and Karachi. Then in 2017, the then UN Ambassador Maleeha Lohdi presented a dossier to UN secretary general.

<sup>41</sup> Anwar Iqbal, “Dossier on India’s terrorism shared with UN,” *Dawn*, November 26, 2020.

support to Baloch separatist groups.<sup>42</sup> The recent statement of the Foreign Minister of Pakistan, Shah Mehmood Quershi endorsed this issue. He stated that, “the evidence provided by Pakistan provides concrete proof of Indian financial and material sponsorship of multiple terrorist organizations, including U.N.-designated terrorist organizations Jamaatul Ahrar, Baloch Liberation Army and Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan.”<sup>43</sup> Though Pakistan has stressed on the link between militant groups and India before as well, in 2020 Pakistan’s strategy to deal with this issue has become more vigorous, pronounced and open. In addition to that, apex political and military leadership has also highlighted India’s alleged involvement and its repercussions on the future relations of India and Pakistan.<sup>44</sup> However, despite these efforts, Pakistan has not been unable to get a prompt response by the United Nations which reflects that Pakistan needs to focus more on its diplomatic efforts in projecting Indian malicious agenda.

- **Espionage and the role of Intelligence agencies**

Espionage and the activities of Indian intelligence agency RAW is another technique through which India has tried to interfere and manipulate the internal affairs of Pakistan.<sup>45</sup> On March 3<sup>rd</sup> 2016, Pakistani law enforcement agencies caught a serving Indian navy officer Kulbhushan Yadav at the Pakistan-Iran border.<sup>46</sup> During the

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<sup>42</sup> Sikander Ahmed Shah, “Sponsoring Terrorism,” *Dawn*, November 18, 2020.

<sup>43</sup> Naveed Siddique, “‘Irrefutable evidence’: Dossier on India’s sponsorship of state terrorism in Pakistan presented,” *Dawn*, November 14, 2020.

For Indian interference in Balochistan, see, Maryam Azam, “Mapping Militant Manifestations in Balochistan,” *IPRI Journal*, Vol. XX, no. 2(2020), 82-83.

<sup>44</sup> For details, see, Madiha Afzal, “Terrorism in Pakistan has declined, but the underlying roots of extremism remain,” *Brooking Institution*, January 15, 2021, Available at: <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/order-from-chaos/2021/01/15/terrorism-in-pakistan-has-declined-but-the-underlying-roots-of-extremism-remain/> (accessed on 28 February 2021).

<sup>45</sup> Muhammad Bilal, “India’s Hybrid War against Pakistan,” *Modern diplomacy*, April 15, 2020.

<sup>46</sup> He was infiltrating from the Saravan border area in Iran to Balochistan.

investigation, he confessed that he was working for RAW and his assignments included intelligence gathering and building links with Baloch insurgents as well.<sup>47</sup> This act of human intelligence (HUMIT) has been one of the major incidents revealed since the end of the Cold War. The case of Kulbhushan Yadav<sup>48</sup> explicates the intentions of RAW to infiltrate in Pakistan through covert activities.

- **Indian sphere of influence in Afghanistan**

Indian presence and sphere of influence in Afghanistan is explicitly a destabilizing factor for Pakistan. Cross border militant infiltration has been the main security concern for Pakistan. Therefore, competition between Pakistan and India to gain influence in Afghanistan has emerged as an important domain between both states. India's main strategic objective in Afghanistan is to support such a political setup in which Pakistan has minimum political influence. Besides this it supports anti-Pakistan militant groups such as Tehrik i Taliban Pakistan to get them a safe hideout in Afghanistan.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> For details, See, "Transcript of RAW agent Kulbhushan's confessional statement," *Dawn*, March 30, 2016.

<sup>48</sup> In 2017, India filed an application in International Court of Justice (ICJ) against Pakistan for denying consular access to Yadav and regarding the Pakistani court decision of sentence. Though ICJ in 2019 asked Pakistan to provide consular access to Yadav as per the Vienna Convention on consular relations, 1963 but on the other hand rejected India's plea to annul the Pakistani court decision. For details, see, "International Court of Justice, Reports of Judgments, Advisory Opinions and Orders," *Jadhav (Pakistan vs India)*, Judgment 17 July 2019, Available at: <https://www.icj-cij.org/en/case/168> (accessed 5 March 2021).

<sup>49</sup> Larry Hanauer and Peter Chalk, "India's and Pakistan's Strategies in Afghanistan: Implications for United States and the Region," *RAND Corporation*, 2012, Available at: [https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/occasional\\_papers/2012/RAND\\_O P387.pdf](https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/occasional_papers/2012/RAND_O P387.pdf) (accessed 5 March 2021).

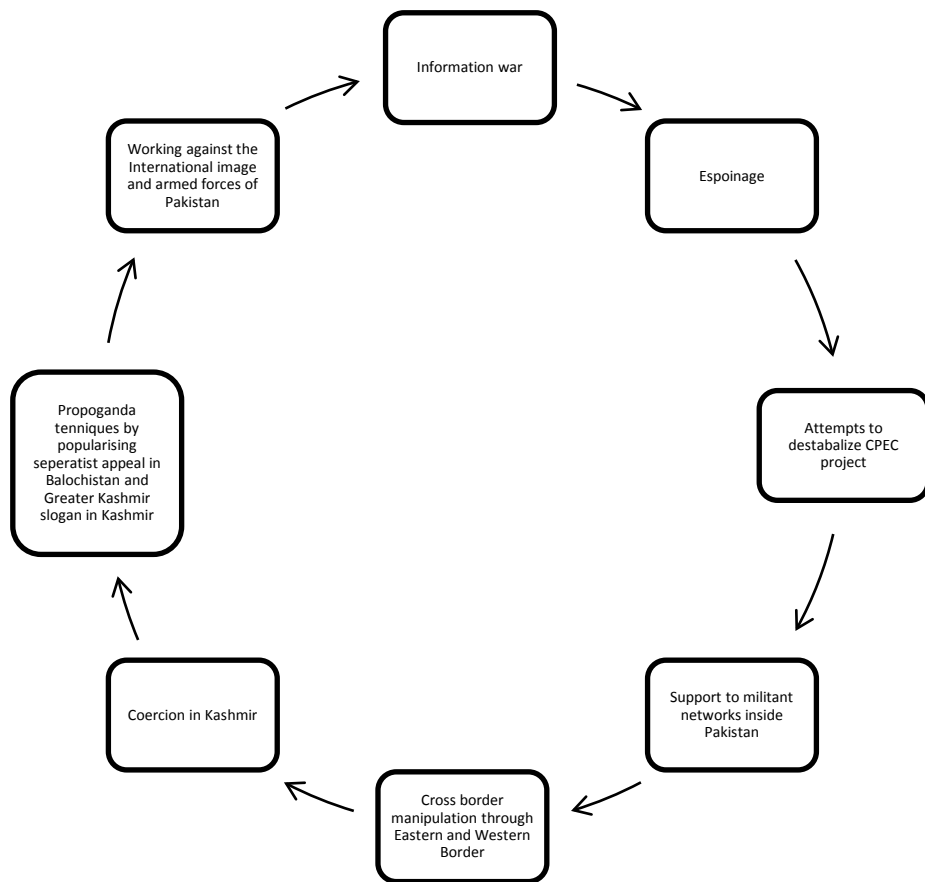


Fig 6.2 Indian Hybrid Warfare against Pakistan

Source: Composed by the author

DG ISPR, Major General Baber Iftikhar in a statement said that “Uncontrivable evidence reveals that Indian embassies and consulates operating along Pakistan’s borders have become the terror sponsoring hub against Pakistan.”<sup>50</sup> The liaison between Afghan intelligence KHAD

<sup>50</sup> Ayaz Gul, “Pakistan Claims 'Irrefutable Evidence' of Indian Links to Terrorism on Pakistani Soil,” *Voice of America*, November 14, 2020, Available at: <https://www.voanews.com/south-central-asia/pakistan-claims-irrefutable-evidence-indian-links-terrorism-pakistani-soil> (accessed 5 March 2021).

and RAW<sup>51</sup> has been central in creating Afghanistan a safe hideout for militant groups.

## **Conclusion**

The above discussion entails that Indian coercive acts and hybrid tactics in the recent past have been a major contributing factor in escalating tensions between Pakistan and India. Therefore, misperception, distrust along with Indian intimidating tactics can undermine bilateral and consequently the regional security balance. An extension from coercive diplomacy would limit the chance of reconciliation and dialogue between both states. Therefore, a basic deterrence needs to be maintained to avoid any major conflict escalation. In addition to that, as a counter move to Indian coercive and hybrid stratagem, Pakistan needs to adopt an overall defensive containment strategy to deter India through conventional and non-conventional means. In this respect, the following recommendations are proposed:

- Pakistan must strengthen its cyber security system and its associated legislation to contain Indian assaults,
- Sustainability in border security arrangements is central to Pakistan's security,
- Pakistan should continue the Intelligence-based operations against militant networks and their handlers. These operations are integral to the containment strategy for India's hybrid tactics,

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<sup>51</sup> The links between KHAD and RAW are not new. They have been operating jointly since the mid-1980s. For this reason, RAW has been able to build a strong foothold in Afghanistan which provides them easy geographic access to Pakistan as well. For details, see, Jayshree Bajoria, "RAW: India's External Intelligence Agency," *Council on Foreign Relations*, November 7, 2008, Available at: <https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/raw-indias-external-intelligence-agency> (accessed 8 March 2021).

- Pakistan should maintain the policy of full-spectrum deterrence in accordance with CMD,
- An active diplomatic activity and engagement is required to respond to the war of words, false flag operations and fake news. Pakistan may use the policy of diplomacy by conferences and should call an annual International conference on Kashmir at the state level by inviting diplomats and heads of the state,
- The policy of cautious response on the line of control and working boundary against unprovoked Indian firing must continue as a balancing act.



## **Pakistan's Nuclear Security Regime: Overcoming the Gap between Domestic Nuclear Governance and International Perception**

Shahneela Tariq<sup>1</sup>

### **Abstract**

*Nuclear security has always remained a prime concern of international community which has now increasingly been worried about the threat of nuclear terrorism. Pakistan has always been attentive to this threat and has ensured nuclear safety and security of its nuclear program and facilities. Pakistan's enduring commitment towards nuclear security can be assessed through its international ranking and participation in international nuclear security arrangements including the Nuclear Security Summits. All civilian nuclear facilities in Pakistan are under the IAEA safeguards. Yet there is a wide gap between the true understanding of Pakistan's domestic nuclear governance and international perception. This research analyses the fundamentals of contemporary international nuclear security regulations in an attempt to examine the efforts made by Pakistan in building a comprehensive system of nuclear security in compliance with International Nuclear Law.*

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**Key Words:** Nuclear Security, International Nuclear Law, Pakistan's relations with IAEA, Nuclear Security Regulations

## Introduction

Cooperation and collaboration at the global level are the growing trends among states in the 21<sup>st</sup> century but their security and survival remains to be a prime concern. Driven by this concern, the national security is often aimed at maximization of power to protect the national borders against the unavoidable war. The states are often engaged in balancing the threat through various means. The need to acquire nuclear weapons is often the outcome of the efforts to 'balance the threat.'

The emergence of 'nuclear terrorism' as a new security threat after the incidents of 11 September 2001, demanded increased global attention towards nuclear security. The world was introduced to a unique entity that was not under obligation to abide by any national or international jurisdiction. The phenomenon of terrorism is highly complex that has increased the international obligations on all sovereign states in possession of nuclear technology and material to ensure nuclear security and compliance with the international commitments through the implementation of nuclear security regulations and laws.

The General Conference resolutions of IAEA have put the responsibility of security of nuclear materials and technology entirely on the nation states as it is directly linked with the national security.<sup>2</sup> Pakistan as one of the nine nuclear weapons state deals widely with

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<sup>2</sup> International Atomic Energy Agency, "IAEA Annual report 2017," IAEA, 2018, Available at: <https://www.iaea.org/sites/default/files/publications/reports/2017/gc62-3.pdf> (accessed on 28 April 2020).

the IAEA for the management and maintenance of its nuclear power program. There are five nuclear power plants, which are operational in Pakistan, while two under construction plants are expected to be completed by 2030.<sup>3</sup> All civilian nuclear facilities, material and technology in Pakistan is under the safeguards of IAEA. Pakistan has also signed tripartite agreements with the IAEA for the transfer of nuclear technology from other countries. However, significant literature has been produced questioning the security of Pakistan's nuclear program and the inability of country's security measures to keep its nukes secure.

These concerns are mainly based on insider-outsider threat phenomenon, wherein the nuclear facilities have been perceived to be exposed to the possibility of terrorist attacks or theft by the outsiders with insiders help. These concerns have mainly developed due to prevailing socio-political instability in Pakistan. Moreover, the Abdul Qadeer Khan's episode became the baseline for foreign authors to ignore the overall efforts done by Pakistan till date. As mentioned by Naeem Salik that "any systematic flaw was corrected right after Pakistan's first nuclear test in 1998 with the establishment of National Command Authority (NCA) and Strategic Plans Division (SPD) in 1999."<sup>4</sup>

However, the concerns over Pakistan's ability to safeguard its nuclear program reignited with Mehran Naval base attack in 2011 and Karachi Naval base attack in 2014, which caused alarm among the foreign experts and scholars about Pakistan's security measures. The

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<sup>3</sup> "Statement by Pakistan Delegation, 61<sup>st</sup> Annual General Conference of IAEA," *International Atomic Energy Agency*, 18 September 2017, Available at: <https://www.iaea.org/sites/default/files/gc61-pakistan-statement.pdf> (accessed on 5 May, 2020).

<sup>4</sup> Kenneth, N Luongo and Naeem Salik, "Building Confidence in Pakistan's Nuclear Security," *Arms Control Association*, April 30, 2007, Available at: <https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2007-12/features/building-confidence-pakistan%E2%80%99s-nuclear-security> (accessed on 5 May 2020).

report published by Harvard Kennedy School - Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, discusses that “stockpiling of nuclear weapons, nuclear material and tactical nuclear weapons introduced by Pakistan has increased the dangers. The emerging technologies have enhanced the possibilities of nuclear theft by an entity who wishes to steal nuclear material or technology for harmful purposes.”<sup>5</sup> Furthermore, Pakistan has been criticized for not being a part of INFCIRC/869, while India has been a part of it, which mainly deals with the periodic review of domestic legislative framework on nuclear security.<sup>6</sup>

The fears of international community however, no matter how legitimate, are essentially unfounded when it comes to Pakistan. It is dominated by false western narrative which needs to be dismissed to clear the ‘fog of rumours’ as mentioned by Gen. Khalid A. Kidwai.<sup>7</sup> Nuclear Security Index of the year 2020 by Nuclear Threat Initiative (NTI) also highlights that Pakistan is the most improved nation in theft ranking with weapons-usable nuclear materials by 7 points increase in an overall score of 13 in the year 2016.<sup>8</sup> This improved ranking has been based on the effective measures taken in Security and Control domains, nuclear safety and security regulations, and compliance with Global Norms by subscribing to nuclear security INFCIRC/869.

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<sup>5</sup> Methew Bunn, Nickolas Roth and William H. Tobey, “Revitalizing Nuclear Security in an Era of Uncertainty,” *Belfer Centre Harvard Kennedy School*, Report-2019, Available at: [https://www.belfercenter.org/sites/default/files/2019-03/RevitalizingNuclearSecurity\\_Mar19.pdf](https://www.belfercenter.org/sites/default/files/2019-03/RevitalizingNuclearSecurity_Mar19.pdf) (accessed on 2 May 2020).

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Malik Qasim Mustafa, “Report- Roundtable Pakistan’s Role in Nuclear Security Summit Process,” *Institute of Strategic Studies*, 2016, Available at: <http://issi.org.pk/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/Report-Roundtable-NSS-March-25.pdf> (accessed on 2 May 2020).

<sup>8</sup> “Australia Ranks 1<sup>st</sup>, Pakistan is Most Improved Country,” *NTI Nuclear Security Index*, 2020, Available at: <https://www.ntiindex.org/news/australia-ranks-1st-pakistan-is-most-improved/> (accessed on May 5 2020).

Western discourse on Pakistan's nuclear security is mostly based on assumptions as opposed to the real facts. The country is putting in place robust nuclear security mechanisms, consisting of regulations, human resource, and infrastructure for more than two decades now that has also been acknowledged and appreciated by the IAEA officials.<sup>9</sup> Therefore, a need has been felt to keep the focus of this paper mainly on how to overcome the gap between domestic nuclear governance and international perception. The effort has also been made to highlight Pakistan's compliance, good practices, nuclear credentials, and effective safety and security measures in line with the international nuclear law. Furthermore, this paper recommends steps to reduce the disconnect between nuclear security community and academic writers in Pakistan to build and extensively disseminate a fact-based nuclear security discourse.

### **Nuclear Security under International Nuclear Law**

The law dealing with the benefits and risks of nuclear technology is called Nuclear Law. Whereas the legal framework dealing with the states and international organizations is categorized as International Nuclear Law. It consists of 'international regulations of nuclear safety and security; resolutions adopted by concerned international legal bodies; bilateral & multilateral agreements; and export control regime.'<sup>10</sup> Nuclear security is one of the most important components of the international nuclear law, which is based on the non-proliferation agenda. According to the definition presented by the IAEA, nuclear security can be described as the: "prevention and

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<sup>9</sup> IAEA Director General in Pakistan: Nuclear Power and SDGs Highlighted," *International Atomic Energy Agency*, Available at: <https://www.iaea.org/newscenter/news/iaea-director-general-in-pakistan-nuclear-power-and-sdgs-highlighted> (accessed on May 5, 2020).

<sup>10</sup> Noreen Iftikhar, "International Nuclear Law: A Case Study of Pakistan," *Strategic Studies*, Vol. 38, no.4 (2018), 71.

detection of and response to, theft, sabotage, unauthorized access, illegal transfer or other malicious acts involving nuclear material, other radioactive substances or their associated facilities.”<sup>11</sup>

### **Pakistan’s Quest for its Security and Survival**

Pakistan has always believed in peaceful relations with all nations, the Founding father of Pakistan, Muhammad Ali Jinnah said in 1948:

Our foreign policy is one of friendliness and goodwill towards all the nations of the world. We do not cherish aggressive designs against any country or nation. We believe in the principle of honesty and fair play in national and international dealings and are prepared to make our utmost contribution to the promotion of peace and prosperity among the nations of the world. Pakistan will never be found lacking in extending its material and moral support to the oppressed and suppressed peoples of the world, and in upholding the principles of the United Nations Charter.<sup>12</sup>

Constitution of Pakistan also stresses on the peaceful co-existence with other states as stated in the article 40 of the Constitution that:

The state shall endeavour to preserve and strengthen fraternal relations among Muslim countries based on Islamic unity, support the common interests of the

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<sup>11</sup> International Atomic Energy Agency, “Nuclear Security Series Glossary, Version 1.3,” IAEA, 2015, Available at: <https://www-ns.iaea.org/downloads/security/nuclear-security-series-glossary-v1-3.pdf> (accessed on 20 May 2020).

<sup>12</sup> “Guiding Principles and Objectives of Ministry of Foreign Affairs,” *Ministry of Foreign Affairs Government of Pakistan*, Available at: <http://mofa.gov.pk/guiding-principles-and-objectives/> (accessed on 20 May 2020).

peoples of Asia, Africa, and Latin America, promote international peace and security, foster goodwill and friendly relations among all nations and encourage the settlement of international disputes by peaceful means.<sup>13</sup>

Pakistan was a strong proponent of South Asian region to be made into a nuclear weapon free zone and wanted to establish a peaceful nuclear power program under the Atom for Peace Agreement in 1950s. The country further strengthened its commitment by joining the IAEA as a founding member in 1957. Since then, Pakistan has worked extensively with IAEA to enhance her energy production and entered into several agreements with IAEA on nuclear safety and security.

Two major events changed the strategic perception of Pakistan as the major powers were not fully able to provide security umbrella to Pakistan to protect its national security against India. These events were (1) Separation of East Pakistan and emergence of Bangladesh in 1971, and (2) Indian nuclear test in 1974, which resulted into the creation of Nuclear Suppliers Group to control and limit the nuclear exports. It was alarming for Pakistan to see that these events did not really affect the US relations with India. Instead, it caused hurdles for Pakistan's ambitions to acquire civilian nuclear technology for economic development and peaceful purposes. These events changed the strategic culture of South Asia from cooperation to competition, pushed Pakistan to face a nuclear armed adversary and so began Pakistan's quest for its security and survival.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> National Assembly of Pakistan, "The Constitution of The Islamic Republic of Pakistan," *National Assembly of Pakistan, 2018*, Available at: [http://www.na.gov.pk/uploads/documents/1549886415\\_632.pdf](http://www.na.gov.pk/uploads/documents/1549886415_632.pdf) (accessed on 22 May 2021).

<sup>14</sup> Rabia Akhtar, *The Blind Eye: U.S. Non-Proliferation Policy Towards Pakistan from Ford to Clinton* (Lahore: The University of Lahore Press, 2018), 327.

However, after becoming a nuclear state in 1998, Pakistan presented the idea of 'Strategic Restrained Regime,'<sup>15</sup> based on ensuring a nuclear restraint between India and Pakistan and resolution of all outstanding disputes between the two countries. This offer was reiterated in 2006 by then Pakistan Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz at the Heritage Foundation event and again in 2016, during the 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting of National Command Authority (NCA). The work is still in process but these efforts from Pakistan stand testimony to its willingness to contribute to global peace and stability.

The global perception about Pakistan is based on biased and flawed western literature that considers Pakistan a great potential threat to global peace, as highlighted by Stephen J. Cimbala that "Pakistan has the tendency for nuclear proliferation as it was done by high official in AQ Khan's episode. Furthermore, terrorist attacks on Pakistan naval bases can be taken as indication of possible nuclear theft."<sup>16</sup> However, the facts and assessment of Pakistan's nuclear security efforts are often borrowed from other western authors whose works have been based on previous unrelated events. They do not in any way reflect the reality that has been appreciated by world leaders and international organizations. As mentioned by President Obama that "we have confidence in their (Pakistan's) security procedures and elements and believe that the security of those sites is adequate."<sup>17</sup> Similar views have been shared by Director of National Intelligence James R. Clapper

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<sup>15</sup> M. Khan, Ahmed Khan and Syed T. Hyder, "Strategic Restraint Regime in South Asia," *Margalla Papers* Vol. XXII (2018), 83.

<sup>16</sup> Stephen J. Cimbala, *Getting Nuclear Weapons Right* (USA: Lynne Rienner Publishers. Inc. 2018), 23.

<sup>17</sup> "Interview with General David Petraeus," *Real Clear Politics*, May 10, 2009,

Available at:

[https://www.realclearpolitics.com/articles/2010/08/15/interview\\_with\\_general\\_david\\_petraeus\\_106766.html](https://www.realclearpolitics.com/articles/2010/08/15/interview_with_general_david_petraeus_106766.html) (accessed on 22 May 2021).



Jr. during congressional testimony that “I am reasonably confident about Pakistan’s appropriate safeguards for its nuclear program.”<sup>18</sup>

Gen. Kidwai in his speech mentioned that “Pakistan’s nuclear security regime deals with full spectrum of insider-outsider nuclear threats.”<sup>19</sup> This has been reiterated by the report prepared by Pakistan’s Foreign Ministry for the Nuclear Security Conference 2020 by IAEA.<sup>20</sup>

### **Domestic Nuclear Security Regime of Pakistan**

The issue of ‘nuclear security’ has been extensively addressed by the IAEA. It characterizes nuclear security culture as: the assembly of characteristics, attitudes, and behaviour of individuals, organizations and institutions which serves as a means to support and enhance nuclear security.

Nuclear security regime requires a well-established legislative framework & regulations for the administration of nuclear technology and material. It further requires an integrated system of institutions and nuclear security measures that include intelligence, prevention, detection, and response systems. Notably, the human element cannot be eliminated from nuclear security debate. It is essential to have leadership and employees, who are loyal to the national security of the state, working in the security business.

Pakistan’s domestic nuclear security regime is an extensive network of: (1) legislative framework, consisting of regulations and administrative

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<sup>18</sup> Greg Miller, Craig W, and Barton G., “Top-secret U.S. intelligence files show new levels of distrust of Pakistan,” *The Washington Post*, September 2, 2013.

<sup>19</sup> International Atomic Energy Agency, “Nuclear Security Culture, Implementing Guide,” IAEA, 2008, Available at: [https://www-pub.iaea.org/MTCD/Publications/PDF/Pub1347\\_web.pdf](https://www-pub.iaea.org/MTCD/Publications/PDF/Pub1347_web.pdf) (accessed on 27 May 2020).

<sup>20</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “Pakistan’s Nuclear Security Regime 2020,” MOFA, 2020, Available at: <http://mofa.gov.pk/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/NSRFinal08-02-2020.pdf> (accessed on 27 May 2020).

measures, (2) institutions and strategic national organizations, for the implementation of legislative framework, and (3) international cooperation to incorporate international best practices into the national legislation. Pakistan's nuclear security regime is regularly assessed and revised to meet international standards.<sup>21</sup>

### i. Legislative and Regulatory dimension of Nuclear Security

Pakistan's legislative and regulatory system covers physical and radiological security and consists of following four major regulatory systems:

- **Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission Ordinance (1965):** Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission Ordinance 1965 established Atomic Energy Commission in Pakistan for the promotion of peaceful uses of nuclear energy in Pakistan and also to ensure compliance with international commitments.<sup>22</sup>
- **Pakistan Nuclear Regulatory Ordinance (2001):** Promulgation of this ordinance mainly established Pakistan Nuclear Regulatory Authority for regulation of nuclear safety and radiological protection. PNRA also became the authority to ensure safe and secure nuclear installations in Pakistan.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Ministry of Law and Parliamentary Affairs, "The Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission Ordinance, 1965," IAEA, 1965, Available at: <https://inis.iaea.org/collection/NCLCollectionStore/Public/21/072/21072764.pdf> (accessed on 4 April 2020).

<sup>22</sup> Ministry of Law, Justice, Human Rights and Parliamentary Affairs, "Ordinance No.III of 2001," PNRA, 2001, Available at: [https://www.pnra.org/upload/legal\\_basis/Ordinance%202001\(Amennded\).pdf](https://www.pnra.org/upload/legal_basis/Ordinance%202001(Amennded).pdf) (accessed on 4 April 2020).

<sup>23</sup> "The Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission Ordinance, 1965," *International Atomic Energy Agency*, May 29, 1965, Available at: <https://inis.iaea.org/collection/NCLCollectionStore/Public/21/072/21072764.pdf> (accessed on 16 April 2021).

- **Export Control Act (2004):** This Act was passed under Strategic Export Control Division (SECDIV) of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs that has been revised in 2011 and 2015. This Act aims to control nuclear related good, technology and material. Export Control Act of 2004 is in line with Nuclear Suppliers Group control list.<sup>24</sup>
- **National Command Authority Act (2010):** This NCA Act of 2010 has complete powers over the nuclear program including nuclear sites, material, technology, export controls and personnel working in the sensitive nuclear areas. It also deals with the research and development programs in nuclear and space technologies.<sup>25</sup>

These measures provide legal independence to their respective authorities to maintain and manage state's nuclear architecture. This regulatory framework has tailored measures to cover the security of nuclear and radioactive material (Physical protection and safety during the transportation of radioactive material), enforcement mechanisms and import-export laws in line with the international requirements.

## **ii. Institutional dimension of Nuclear Security**

Pakistan has a well-established network of institutions and strategic organizations to ensure the execution of legislative and regulatory framework. This network is a comprehensive set of effective Command and Control System under 'National Command Authority (NCA),' which is the decision-making body on all nuclear related matters. A rigorous nuclear safety system lies under Pakistan Nuclear Regulatory Authority. 'Strategic Export Control Division' under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs,

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<sup>24</sup> Strategic Export Control Division, "Act No. V of 2004," *Senate Secretariate*, 2004, Available at: <http://www.secddiv.gov.pk/uploads/Doc-1%20Export%20Control%20Act-2004-0c0c.pdf> (accessed on 10 April 2020).

<sup>25</sup> Senate Secretariat, "The Gazette of Pakistan," *NTI*, 2010, Available at: [https://media.nti.org/pdfs/1\\_20.pdf](https://media.nti.org/pdfs/1_20.pdf) (accessed on 10 April 2020).

was established to further strengthen the security of nuclear material and technology. To effectively run the security business PINSTECH is a leading institute that conducts research and is actively collaborating with IAEA on joint research projects. Furthermore, 'Pakistan Centre of Excellence on Nuclear Security (PCENS)' is a state of art training institute, which is providing a comprehensive space to national and international scientists and engineers to get training on nuclear safety and security.

- **National Command Authority (NCA):** National Command Authority has complete authority on nuclear program under the Federal Government of Pakistan, chaired by Prime Minister. In 2007 National Command Authority Ordinance was promulgated in the national legislation to take safety and security measures. It was re-issued in 2009 and 2010 and was adopted by the Parliament as National Command Authority Act 2010.<sup>26</sup> National Command Authority is a classic example of civil-military relationship for nuclear security. It consists of two divisions: 1) Employment Control Committee (ECC), which is a political-military body, responsible for nuclear policy including employment of strategic forces and deployment of nuclear use. 2) Development Control Committee (DCC), a military-techno body, deals with technical, financial, and administrative tasks of the nuclear program.
- **Strategic Plans Division (SPD):** It was established to bring all nuclear related methods under one umbrella and to avoid any unwanted event, which could put a question mark on Pakistan's nuclear security. SPD was established in 1999 as the secretariat of NCA and deals with all nuclear related aspects including,

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<sup>26</sup> Naeem Salik, *Nuclear Pakistan; Seeking Security & Stability* (Islamabad: University of Lahore: Printing Press, 2018), 94.

policy making, arms control, command and control, safety and security and research and trainings. SPD is the key to Pakistan's nuclear management that follow a multi-layered security system to respond to the full spectrum of insider-outsider threats.<sup>27</sup> Furthermore, there is a special and broad mechanism to monitor the employees through an internal intelligence mechanism under section 7 of NCA Act.

It was essential to have a body to secure nuclear arsenals from inside threats and to change the mind-set of the individuals and organizations that were working in the nuclear related areas. Personal reliability program (PRP) was initiated by the SPD and Security clearance and screening of the people hired in the nuclear safety and security department was made necessary.<sup>28</sup> An integrated intelligence network was formed to check inside-out threats and to decrease the risk of nuclear theft and sabotage. The SPD security division under the command of a two-star general, reportedly has 25,000 personnel that includes 1,000 personnel in the Special Response Force in the event of an attack on nuclear facilities. The strength was previously estimated to be 20,000.

- **Pakistan Nuclear Regulatory Authority (PNRA):** To ensure nuclear safety of Pakistan's nuclear program, 'Pakistan Nuclear Regulatory Authority Ordinance 2001' was approved as a crucial step to strengthen nuclear security architecture. PNRA is a competent and fairly independent institute that is responsible

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<sup>27</sup> Feroz Khan, *Eating Grass: The Making of the Pakistani Bomb* (California: Stanford Security Studies, 2012), 45.

<sup>28</sup> "Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "Pakistan's Nuclear Security Regime," MOFA, 2020, Available at: <http://mofa.gov.pk/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/NSRFinal08-02-2020.pdf> (accessed on 25 June 2020).

for nuclear safety and security in Pakistan. PNRA mainly acts as the planning, development and execution authority of policies related to nuclear and radiation safety.

Henceforth, PNRA is the regulatory body that issues a license to PAEC to set up a nuclear power plant and start a nuclear energy project under the safety measure of IAEA. Furthermore, PNRA ensures compliance with the terms and conditions of the license through a stringent oversight mechanism and provide assistance in case of emergency and accident. In this regard PNRA has established extensive regulations on safety of nuclear sites, population, and the environment. The 'IAEA Code of Conduct on Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources',<sup>29</sup> has been used as a guideline for regulating safety and security of radioactive sources in Pakistan. Notably this is a voluntary action of Pakistan to meet the international standards as a responsible nuclear state.

Most recently in April 2019, PNRA promulgated "Regulations on Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and Nuclear Installations" in its nuclear legislation. This regulation is a complete set of safety and security mechanism that meets the international standards of nuclear safety and security. National Institute of Safety and Security (NISAS) is a training institute under PNRA that offers technical trainings on nuclear safety and radiation safety, which was inaugurated by the IAEA Director General during his visit to Pakistan in 2014.<sup>30</sup> Nuclear

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<sup>29</sup> Anwar Habib, "Nuclear Regulatory Regime in Pakistan," *The South Asian Strategic Stability Institute (SASSI) University*, December 31, 2018, Available at: <http://sassi.org.pk/nuclear-regulatory-regime-in-pakistan/> (accessed on 25 June 2020).

<sup>30</sup> "National Institute of Safety and Security," *Pakistan Nuclear Regulatory Authority*, Available at: <https://www.pnra.org/hrd.html> (accessed on 20 June 2020).

Emergency Management System (NEMS) is another important body in coordination with PNRA and PAEC that works for timely response and management of nuclear and radiological emergencies. Whereas 'Nuclear and Radiological Emergency Support Centre-(NURESC)' is responsible to implement the policies of NEMS and works as the central point at domestic level.

- **Strategic Exports Control Division (SECDIV):** Pakistan's national nuclear regime also comprises of export control domestic legal framework and significant efforts have been made to create Export Control Act in 2004, which is in line with the international export control arrangements i.e., 'Nuclear Suppliers Group.' This includes 'dual use items; material and technology related to nuclear, and biological weapons. In order to effectively maintain this system Pakistan has created a comprehensive set of rules, procedures, safety, and security mechanisms under the export control authority in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, namely "Strategic Exports Control Division (SECDIV)." It is a complete set to deal with inside threats, outside and cyber threats to nuclear security. The system is based on 5Ds that are deter, detect, delay, defend and destroy.<sup>31</sup>

The core purpose of this institute is to control and restrict illegal import/export of nuclear material and technology. SECDIV keeps the Export Control list updated and under review. SECDIV organized an international seminar on international

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<sup>31</sup> Noreen Iftikhar, "International Nuclear Law: A Case Study of Pakistan," *Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad*, Vol. 38, no.4 (2018), 75.

export control in 2018 which was attended by 240 experts from 49 countries.<sup>32</sup>

### iii. International Cooperation

Incidents like Chernobyl in 1986, attack on World Trade Centre in 2001 and Fukushima Daiichi accident in 2011, have been constantly reminding and pushing international efforts towards continuous development process of nuclear safety and security. "International cooperation is vital to ensure global nuclear security," stated by the IAEA Director General during the last Nuclear Security Summit in Seoul, held in South Korea.<sup>33</sup> He further added that: "Ensuring that nuclear power plants are fitted with multiple safety systems helps both to prevent accidents and to guard against possible sabotage."<sup>34</sup>

Given the potential vulnerabilities of nuclear materials and technology, Pakistan has always considered the safety and security of its nukes as a top priority that is also reflected in the official statement of Pakistan during 2016 Nuclear Security Summit:

As a responsible nuclear state, Pakistan takes nuclear security very seriously and accords it the highest priority in its security construct. Our nuclear security paradigm, evolved over the years, is effective and responsive against the entire range of possible threats. Nuclear security

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<sup>32</sup> "International Export Control Seminar: The Present and Future of Strategic Export Controls," *Strategic Export Control Division*, May 10, 2018, Available at: <http://www.secdiv.gov.pk/seminars-workshops/secdiv-international-export-control-seminar-9-10-may-2018-islamabad> (accessed on 2 July 2020).

<sup>33</sup> Pakistan's National Statement at Nuclear Security Summit Washington, 31 March-1 April 2016," *Ministry of Foreign Affairs Government of Pakistan*, Available at: <http://mofa.gov.pk/pakistans-national-statement-nuclear-security-summit-washington-31-march-1-april-2016/> (accessed on 2 July 2020).

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.



regime in Pakistan is dynamic and regularly reviewed and updated.<sup>35</sup>

Pakistan is contributing to the international efforts to strengthen nuclear safety and security culture by collaborating with other states and taking adequate measures to fulfil its commitments under international agreements.

- **Cooperation with IAEA to strengthen Nuclear Security:** Pakistan has a long-standing cooperative relationship with IAEA since its inception and has received significant technical support from IAEA to successfully develop its peaceful nuclear program as Pakistan was one of the early recipients of nuclear technology under Atom for Peace Agreement and received assistance from US, Canada, and France. In view of Pakistan's efforts to maintain nuclear safety and security it has always been given respect by the agency as a proponent of peaceful application of nuclear technology. In 1965 Pakistan promulgated Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission Ordinance, which gave PAEC a statutory status and autonomy to interface with IAEA on making commitments under the IAEA safeguards.<sup>36</sup> Pakistan signed its first agreement with IAEA on Pakistan Research Reactor-1 in 1962. Recently, Pakistan signed a tripartite agreement with IAEA in 2017 on two nuclear power stations, which it will receive from China.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> "Pakistan agreement with IAEA," *International Atomic Energy Agency*, accessed June 20, 2020, Available at: <https://www.iaea.org/newscenter/news/signing-of-a-safeguards-agreement-with-pakistan> (accessed on 5th March 2021).

Pakistan's agreements with IAEA are item specific or facility specific, being a non-NPT state and comes under 66 type of safeguards. Pakistan has made several arrangements with IAEA which are as follows:

Table 7.1: Pakistan's Nuclear Arrangements under IAEA Safeguards

<b>Sr no.</b>	<b>Agreement</b>	<b>Signing date</b>
<b>1.</b>	Pakistan Research Reactor – 1	1962
<b>2.</b>	Karachi Nuclear Power Plant – Unit 1	1968
<b>3.</b>	Pakistan Research Reactor– II (PARR-II)	1991
<b>4.</b>	Chashma Nuclear Power Plant -Unit 1 (C-1)	1998
<b>5.</b>	Chashma Nuclear Power Plant -Unit 2 (C-2)	2007
<b>6.</b>	Chashma Nuclear Power Plant -(C-3& 4)	2011
<b>7.</b>	Karachi Nuclear Power Plant-Units 2 & 3	2017

Source: Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission (Sept 24, 2018)  
<https://www.iaea.org/resources/legal/country-factsheets>

Pakistan's relations with IAEA are reciprocal. It is not only Pakistan that has benefitted from the technical support IAEA has provided, but Pakistan is regularly contributing to IAEA efforts for the security of nuclear technology. Pakistan has voluntarily offered its nuclear expertise and human resource to IAEA and to its member states. Pakistan Centre of Excellence on Nuclear

Security (PCENS)' is a specialized institute in the Pakistan's nuclear security system. Pakistan offered to be the hub for capacity building trainings regionally and internationally under the auspices of IAEA, during the Nuclear Security Summit 2012.

According to the report of Pakistan Foreign Ministry more than 6500 personnel from over 40 IAEA member states have been trained so far in security and intelligence, physical protection, material accounting, delay & response system.<sup>38</sup> In 2016, the Global Network for 'Nuclear Security Training and Support Centres (NSSC Network)' had its meeting in Pakistan, which was held outside Vienna for the first time. The meeting was headed by Pakistan's PCENS that is the major training hub of Pakistan on nuclear security and hosted 50 participants from more than 25 countries.<sup>39</sup>

Pakistan's relationship with IAEA has sustained from several decades as it is evident from Pakistan becoming a member of IAEA Board of Governors in 2018 for the 20th time and has chaired the Board thrice.<sup>40</sup> Furthermore, Pakistan is contributing to the annual IAEA's Nuclear Security Fund 2018 – 2019.

- **Bilateral Agreement with India:** The India-Pakistan bilateral agreement is an exclusive arrangement based on Non-Attack

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<sup>38</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "Pakistan's Nuclear Security Regime," *MOFA*, 2020, Available at: <http://mofa.gov.pk/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/NSRFinal08-02-2020.pdf> (accessed on 22 July 2020).

<sup>39</sup> "International Network for Nuclear Security Training and Support Centers, NSSC Network Annual Meeting," *PNRA*, Available at: <https://www.pnra.org/NSSC.html> (accessed on 22 July 2020).

<sup>40</sup> Aabha Dixit, "New Members Elected to IAEA Board of Governors," *International Atomic Energy Agency*, September 19, 2019 Available at: <https://www.iaea.org/newscenter/news/new-members-elected-to-iaea-board-of-governors-19-september-2019> (accessed on 28 July 2020).

policy, under which both the states will not target the nuclear facilities of each other. The agreement was signed in December 1988 and entered into force in January 1991 known as "Agreement on Prohibition of Attacks against Nuclear Installations and Facilities between Pakistan and India."<sup>41</sup> According to the agreement both states will refrain from participating or undertaking any activity to cause harm to the nuclear facilities of each state. As prescribed in the treaty text: "Works or installations containing dangerous forces, namely dams, dykes and nuclear electrical generating stations, shall not be made the object of attack, even where these objects are military objectives, as such attack may cause the release of dangerous forces and consequent severe losses among the civilian population."<sup>42</sup> Furthermore, the treaty requires each state to share the nuclear installation list on the 1<sup>st</sup> of January each year to avoid any misadventure in the event of war.

- **Support from China:** Pakistan is an all-weather friends with China. Both states share a mutually beneficial relationship. China has immensely supported Pakistan in building its nuclear power program. However, all arrangements have been made under IAEA safeguards.
- **Cooperation with the United States:** Pakistan in 2010 was invited by then US President Barrack Obama to participate in the Nuclear Security Summits. Pakistan accepted to be a part of this initiative as a responsible nuclear state and have made significant efforts

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<sup>41</sup> "India-Pakistan Non-Attack Agreement," *Nuclear Threat Initiative*, October 26, 2011, Available at: <https://www.nti.org/learn/treaties-and-regimes/india-pakistan-non-attack-agreement/> (accessed on 2 February 2021).

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

to incorporate takeaways of the NSS into its national nuclear security regime. Pakistan has updated the security measures at all medical and agriculture centres and is upgrading the security measures at its nuclear power plants. Pakistan also started a training academy under the Strategic Plans Division and is working on setting up a school on Nuclear and Radiation Safety. Pakistan also voluntarily agreed to collaborate with IAEA on its "Incident and Trafficking Data Base."<sup>43</sup>

Moreover, to stop illicit trade and trafficking of nuclear and radiological materials, Pakistan has adopted the US governments "Container Security Initiative."<sup>44</sup> For this purpose, Pakistan has formulated a detection architecture at national level and has stationed this detection system at all the entry & exit points at Port Qasim, Karachi since 2007 and regularly upgrades this facility.

### **Pakistan's domestic nuclear governance and international politics**

There have always been speculations about the safety and security of Pakistan's nuclear program, mainly related to nuclear theft or sabotage from Pakistan's nuclear sites by a third party with an insider help, or a militant group. The on-ground reality however is different from what scholars and experts believe outside Pakistan. These concerns are more political than security related.

As discussed in the previous sections, Pakistan has the most improved infrastructure to deal with nuclear theft and sabotage and it has been proactively participating in several global initiatives to play its

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<sup>43</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "Pakistan's Nuclear Security Regime," *MOFA*, 2020, Available at: <http://mofa.gov.pk/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/NSRFinal08-02-2020.pdf> (accessed on 3 March 2021).

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, 26.

role in nuclear safety and security. This has been occasionally highlighted by officials as former US Department of Defense official Lawrence J. Korb mentions that “given the strategic location of Pakistan and the fact that it has nuclear weapons, it’s easy to see why some might embrace a worst-case scenario. But based on my visit, I don’t buy it at this time.”<sup>45</sup>

Brigadier Zahir ul Haider Kazmi from ACDA branch of SPD, in an interview with Tom Hundley in 2018, emphasized on the importance that Pakistan attaches to the safeguarding of nuclear weapons in a challenging regional environment by highlighting that “who made the case that Pakistan is not much alive to manage the dangers to its nuclear weapons at sea. We are confident yet not complacent.”<sup>46</sup> He added that “Managing nuclear safety and security is not a white man’s burden only, Pakistan is managing its responsibilities quite well. There is a deliberate tendency to forget that Pakistan’s record is as good, if not better, than that of the US.”<sup>47</sup>

Furthermore, Pakistan’s Prime Minister, Imran Khan while responding to an interview question stated that “they have absolutely no need to worry about Pakistan’s nuclear weapons because Pakistan has one of the most professional armies, we have one of the most comprehensive command and control of our nuclear weapons, ... The United States knows about it because we share our intelligence with

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<sup>45</sup> Lawrence J. Korb, “The Security of Pakistan’s Nuclear Arsenal,” *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, May 19, 2009, Available at: <http://www.thebulletin.org/web-edition/features/the-security-of-pakistans-nuclear-arsenal> (accessed on 5 February 2021).

<sup>46</sup> Tom Hundley, “India and Pakistan are quietly making nuclear war more likely Both countries are arming their submarines with nukes,” *VOX*, April 4, 2018, Available at: <https://www.vox.com/2018/4/2/17096566/pakistan-india-nuclear-war-submarine-enemies> (accessed on 5 February 2021).

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

the US about the way we have the safety measures about our nuclear programme.”<sup>48</sup>

There is also a debate on the privacy policy of Pakistan's nuclear weapons program that is being considered as a hurdle in analysing the real situation on ground. As mentioned on several occasions by experts that the security situation in South Asian region is not favourable and Pakistan will never allow access to country's strategic facilities and sensitive information.<sup>49</sup> However, the promotion and collaboration on developing an academic discourse and national narrative on Pakistan's nuclear security regime will further reinforce the overall security culture. The disconnect between the academic understanding of nuclear security and the reality, blocks the way to global discussions on the real efforts being carried out by Pakistan.

Furthermore, Pakistan has always been accused of insider proliferation threats based on Abdul Qadeer Khan's episode, which is long gone, and Pakistan has come quite far in building up strong institutions and achieving international standing as a responsible nuclear weapon state. Pakistan has taken several measures to ensure the security of nuclear technology and materials and submits regular reports to the committee of 1540 Resolution. According to the recent report submitted by Pakistan in 2017, Pakistan's compliance with UNSC 1540 resolution is more than 80%.<sup>50</sup> Furthermore, Pakistan has

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<sup>48</sup> Bret Baier, "Interview: PM Imran talks peace with Taliban, meeting Trump and 'concerns' about Pakistan's nuclear weapons," *Dawn*, July 23, 2019.

<sup>49</sup> Paul K. Kerr and Mary B. N, "Pakistan's Nuclear Weapons: Proliferation and Security Issues," *Congressional Research Service*, July 20, 2011, Available at: [https://www.everycrsreport.com/files/20110720\\_RL34248\\_9faafe233c8fedae84d9d65bd9257f5452bcc00.pdf](https://www.everycrsreport.com/files/20110720_RL34248_9faafe233c8fedae84d9d65bd9257f5452bcc00.pdf) (accessed on 3 March 2021).

<sup>50</sup> Zawar Abidi, "Nuclear Suppliers Group: Prospects and Problems for India and Pakistan," interviewed by Shahneela Tariq as a part of her M.Phil. Research thesis, April 2018.

voluntarily joined 'Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism- (GICNT)' in 2007, which is a joint initiative of Russia and the US for the detection of and response to nuclear theft and sabotage.

Human factor is a vital component of nuclear security. Be it a physical protection or a radioactive protection, the management and leadership play an important role ranging from policy making to the execution of the regulations and transfer of radioactive material. A small, though unintentional error can lead to a disaster. IAEA has put great stress on the importance of human factor in Nuclear Security Regime. Pakistan, since beginning has taken this issue seriously. To incorporate this international practice into the national nuclear architecture, Pakistan took extensive measures soon after testing nuclear device in 1998. In the same vein, in 2000, then President Pervaiz Musharraf announced National Command Authority, an independent body, to vigilantly run the business of command and control of Pakistan's nuclear program.

Pakistan replaced 'Nuclear Safety and Radiation Protection Ordinance-1984' with Pakistan Nuclear Regulatory Authority Ordinance 2001 that established another important entity named Pakistan Nuclear Regulatory Authority (PNRA). The PNRA Ordinance prohibits persons or entities from the manufacturing, production, acquisition, and development of nuclear material if they did not possess a license from PNRA. Additionally, PNRA works as the implementing body for the nuclear civil liability conventions to reduce the risk of trans-boundary damage, and nuclear accidents.<sup>51</sup> In order to effectively manage the nuclear security system PNRA in cooperation with IAEA has introduced National Security Action Plan in 2006 to ensure the safety and security of nuclear material and facilities to prevent illegal nuclear trade and provide immediate response to nuclear accidents.

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<sup>51</sup> Naeem Salik, *Nuclear Pakistan; Seeking Security & Stability* (Islamabad: University of Lahore, Printing Press, 2018), 23.



Under NSAP, the National Nuclear Security Emergency Coordination Centre was established in line with IAEA security series titled “The Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and Nuclear Facilities.”<sup>52</sup> It effectively collaborates and coordinate with other components of security system, i.e., Customs, border forces, provincial governments, and police department of all areas. Furthermore, in compliance with the “Convention on Early Notification of a Nuclear Accident,” and “the Convention on Assistance in the Case of a Nuclear Accident,” Pakistan established “Emergency National Radiation Emergency Coordination Centre (NRECC).”<sup>53</sup> It is a fully equipped centre, dedicated to meet emergency needs nationwide and abroad.

Pakistan became a member of the “Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material (CPPNM)” in 2000 through accession,<sup>54</sup> which provides a mechanism to states for cooperation during international transfer of nuclear material and technology. CPPNM also lists serious offences regarding nuclear material and oblige state parties to incorporate certain measures to make those acts punishable in their national legislation. National Command Authority Act of Pakistan has set out comprehensive rules and regulations which contain special provision of act of proliferation as an offence and provides a detailed mechanism for the prosecution of such offence. Pakistan has also ratified amendment to the CPPNM in 2016,<sup>55</sup> which

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<sup>52</sup> Pakistan Nuclear Regulatory Authority, “PNRA Report 2007,” *PNRA*, 2017, Available at: <https://www.pnra.org/upload/pnrarpt/PNRA%20Report-2007.pdf> (accessed on 24 March 2021).

<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

<sup>54</sup> “Arms Control and Proliferation Profile: Pakistan,” *Arms Control Association*, July 2018, Available at: <https://www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/pakistanprofile> (accessed on 3 March 2021).

<sup>55</sup> Vincent Fournier, “Road Towards Entry Into Force of Key Nuclear Security Agreement,” *IAEA*, April 8, 2016, Available at: <https://www.iaea.org/newscenter/news/road-towards-entry-into-force-of-key-nuclear-security-agreement> (accessed on 26 March 2021).

demonstrate that Pakistan has taken appropriate measures in the nuclear security domain. The ratification of this amendment is also an indication that Pakistan will now be working on upgrading its policies on nuclear material in physical use, storage, and nuclear transportation.

According to Gen. Khalid A. Kidwai, Pakistan has a proven record of nuclear safety and security and it should be a part of all international trade arrangements without any restrictions because Pakistan is fully integrated into international nuclear mainstream. It is a high time to discard discriminatory approach towards Pakistan.<sup>56</sup>

## Conclusion

Pakistan's nuclear security regime is based on robust efforts including, command and control system under National Command Authority, an integrated intelligence network, nuclear regulatory regime, comprehensive export control laws and regulations, and international cooperation on the security of nuclear technology. However, Pakistan is the only country in the world, which has been forced to prove its national nuclear security measures at all levels. Whereas there has not been a single testimony at international level which shows that Pakistan has not done enough to secure its nuclear program.

Pakistan is a fully capable state in terms of ensuring nuclear security which is apparent from its voluntary participation in Nuclear Security Summits and other international arrangements on nuclear safety and security. The literature that has been produced so far questioning the security of Pakistan's nuclear program is not close to reality but presents a biased opinion. According to Pakistani and international officials, Pakistan's nuclear power plants and nuclear

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<sup>56</sup> Ibid., 5.

assets are well protected and are as safe as any other developed nuclear weapons state's assets are.

There is a well-coordinated and carefully laid out command and control system matured with several years of rigorous visible developments. Pakistan has specially trained a huge number of personnel to protect its nuclear materials and technology, which includes all of its military and civil intelligence. No other country in the world has developed such technical skills in nuclear security and Pakistan has a lot to offer to the outside world in trainings and manpower.

Pakistan is a respectable member state of international community which possesses the capability and skills to contribute to the peaceful use and application of nuclear technology. It has a clean record of safety and security of its civilian nuclear program under the safeguards of IAEA and has taken significant and stringent measures during the last two decades to comply with the international nuclear law.



# **BOOK REVIEW**



**China's Model of Development: Lessons for Pakistan**

Ambassador (R) Syed Hasan Javed (Karachi: New Fakhri Printing, 2020, 322 pages)

**Reviewed by Khawaja Dawood Tariq<sup>1</sup>**

Rise of China is a quintessential rag to riches story. In 1978, almost 90 per cent of Chinese population lived below the poverty line. In 2021, Chinese leadership declared victory in war against poverty. The exponential rise of China in last four decades have compelled academics and policy makers to study China's model of development to learn lessons from it. The book under review is collection of personal observations and reflections by a seasoned Pakistani diplomat who practically witnessed the era of reform and growth in China. Ambassador Javed served in China when comprehensive reforms were in full swing.

The book is divided into ten chapters with a postscript. It is based on Ambassador's lectures on 'China's development experience.' The overarching theme of the book is explaining what compelled Chinese leadership to undertake comprehensive reforms. How these reforms impacted the society and what are the results of these reforms. Deng Xiaoping famously said, 'only development matters, nothing else.' The book starts with origins of Chinese civilization. Next chapters delve into history of development in China and epoch of centralized socialist planning in line with Marxist-Leninist ideology. These chapters narrate a story of making mistakes and learning from them. The 'great leap forward' and 'cultural revolution' decimated the Chinese economy and society. In next two chapters, the author details what lessons were learnt and how these mistakes were rectified by reformist leadership. The next two chapters are a detailed study of explaining main components of China's development; leadership of Deng Xiaoping, and

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the role of media and soft power. The author concludes the book by examining the future role of China in an Asian century.

The author recounts nine stages of China's development paradigm. However, it was Deng Xiaoping who recognized that Marxist-Leninist model is not going to work for China without necessary modifications. He advocated socialism with Chinese characteristics. He believed Chinese value system is different than European centric Marxist-Leninist ideology and it was possible to combine market economy with socialist ideological principles, especially while remaining within the Chinese cultural value system.

Xiaoping believed that Socialists do not have to be poor. He recognized that there is a self-imposed poverty trap that China has inflicted on itself. One needs to recognize that China has developed itself not through conquer and plunder or through natural resources but through sheer theoretical and practical experiences, that they've learned over the decades and centuries. It has led them to adopt a hybrid economic regime that allows development at rapid speed.

There was a realization among Chinese leadership that it was necessary to not be ideologically driven in pursuit of their objectives. In 1979, the Chinese leadership realized that it needs a change of mindset in order to take the masses out of poverty and develop China. They created a four-point modernization plan and launched a series of comprehensive policy reforms. This four-point agenda was: developing agriculture, industry, science and technology, and national defence in that order to meet the requirement of emerging market economy.

The Chinese leadership initiated a four-phase transition. The first one was that reformist leadership changed the way self-criticism process was working. It was decided that it has to be done in a scientific and civilized manner with the only rationale being that, it needs to be constructive with regards to self-examination, and it must allow for an honest and unbiased review process, so that any mistake can be corrected. Second, streamlining local governments and



revitalizing local government in the Western part of China to improve efficiency and efficacy of public service and state services. The third would be strengthening market regulatory and supervisory institutions.

In chapter five, the author introduces us to an important aspect as to how the decision-making process actually worked in China after the reforms. A system of three tiers of decision making was introduced; the idea was that there should only be three layers or levels of officers that should process, examine, deliberate, and decide. It was considered an adequate hierarchical mechanism to resolve issues efficiently and with accountability.

The author devises four cardinal objectives of China's Investment Promotion strategy, first, establish special economic zones; second, develop foreign trade; third, to attract foreign investment; and fourth, to develop foreign technology and management expertise.

Chinese leadership sought to keep low profile while keeping ground realities in mind. Anyone wishing to emulate Chinese model of development needs to adhere to five components. First, leadership needs to have the capacity to acknowledge and accept mistakes. Second, they must revitalize social capital. They must have the capacity to undertake comprehensive policy reforms. They need to learn from global best practices. And that can only be done by investing in higher education in training program. They must keep international financial institutions away from policymaking institution.

In the last two chapters, the author reflects on the future of China's economic diplomacy. Since 1978, China has come a long way. It has already established multiple bilateral and multilateral free trade agreements. This is a dawn of Asian century. One can recognize that China is not only a part of international rule-based order, but it is now an agenda setter. Moreover, if it cannot bend the international institutions, it has enough capacity to develop international Institutions e.g. Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank.

The last chapter discusses China's development cooperation, specifically with regards to Pakistan. This chapter marks the end of the book, but it is reminiscent of the long history of economic cooperation between China and Pakistan. It tells the story of how Pakistan played an important role in China's quest of opening up to the world and China for its part has reciprocated technical, diplomatic, and financial support whenever Pakistan was in dire need. Even today, China is Pakistan's largest foreign investor. Pakistan is also an important player in China's Western China rejuvenation policy. CPEC will not only be a source of development for Pakistan, but it is supposed to economically revitalize the western part of China. It is prudent to remember how geo-strategically important Western China is to the Chinese leadership.

There exists international pressure and propaganda against Chinese policies in Western China. China believes that unlike like every other problem, the only solution to the problems in Western China is to ensure development and for rapid development there is a need for the projects to succeed and for that Pakistan's contributions are going to play an important part. Similarly, deep-water port Gwadar is of paramount importance to Chinese future geostrategic calculations.

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