



VISION

VISIONARY INSIGHTS INTO THE STRATEGIC INQUESTS OF NATIONS

SVI FORESIGHT

VOLUME 7, NUMBER 10

OCTOBER 2021

Compiled & Edited by:

Zafar Iqbal Yousafzai

Strategic Vision Institute
Islamabad

SVI FORESIGHT

VOLUME 7, NUMBER 10
OCTOBER 2021

**Compiled & Edited by:
Zafar Iqbal Yousafzai**



STRATEGIC VISION
I N S T I T U T E

Strategic Vision Institute (SVI)

Disclaimer: The views and opinions expressed in this edition are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of the Strategic Vision Institute.

Strategic Vision Institute (SVI)

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

SVI aims to project strategic foresight on issues of national and international import through dispassionate, impartial, and independent research, analyses, and studies. The current spotlight of the SVI is on national security, regional and international peace and stability, strategic studies, nuclear non-proliferation, arms control, and strategic stability, nuclear safety, and security and energy studies.

SVI Foresight

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

Contents

<i>Editor's Note</i>	1
<i>Incidents of nuclear trafficking in India and its repercussions</i>	3
<i>Sher Bano</i>	
<i>User-Trial of Agni-V: What actually is concerning for South Asian Strategic Stability?</i>	5
<i>Ahyousha Khan</i>	
<i>Hypersonic Weapons, Missile Defense and Strategic Stability in South Asia</i>	7
<i>Amber Afreen Abid</i>	
<i>Afghanistan Counterterrorism Act 2021: Implications for US-Pakistan Relations</i>	9
<i>Zafar Iqbal Yousafzai</i>	
<i>Hindu extremism under Modi regime</i>	10
<i>Zafar Iqbal Yousafzai</i>	
<i>Pakistan's proposal for strategic restraint regime: commitment towards non-proliferation</i>	12
<i>Sher Bano</i>	
<i>Pakistan consolidating conventional deterrence through its military capabilities</i>	14
<i>Amber Afreen Abid</i>	
<i>Induction of HQ/9P Air Defence System by Pakistan: Criticality of Air Defence Systems</i>	15
<i>Ahyousha Khan</i>	
<i>Post US withdrawal from Afghanistan</i>	17
<i>Asif Haroon Raja</i>	

Editor's Note

The rising incidents of nuclear theft and trafficking, India is badly failing in its responsibility as a responsible nuclear state. These peculiar instances are the cause of concern not only for Pakistan but for the international community as well. The most recent incident was in the month of August, during which the Indian authorities seized 250 kg of the radioactive element californium. The seized material was worth 573 million dollars. Previously there have been two more incidents reported in the same year. Likewise, Pakistan has been arguing for a very long time that conventional asymmetries between both Pakistan and Indian armed forces are encouraging a nuclear arms race in the region that would lead to a huge conflict. The three-point formula offered by the Strategic Restraint Regime includes balance among the conventional forces, dispute resolution particularly the Kashmir conflict, and measures for missile and nuclear restraint that would result in long-lasting peace in the region. Pakistan has always reacted with restraint to Indian provocations and threats but it's high time that both nations collectively agree on measures to stop vertical proliferation in the region.

Similarly, Modi-led BJP is trying to assure the Indian populace: Hindu nationalism is a key to making India great and providing a suitable environment to Hindus. There is nothing in Hindutva but hate for other minorities in India. This radical philosophy is leading India to a fascist state, allowing only Hindus to have all the rights. The 180 million Muslim population if disgruntled through regressive policies, India may descend into chaos and bloodbath and even may break apart.

This volume of the *SVI Foresight* provides a very thought-provoking insight on diverse issues: Hypersonic Weapons, Missile Defense and Strategic Stability in South Asia, Afghanistan Counterterrorism Act 2021: Implications for US-Pakistan Relations, Hindu extremism under Modi regime, Pakistan consolidating conventional deterrence through its military capabilities, User-Trial of Agni-V by India and Induction of HQ/9P Air Defence System by Pakistan: Criticality of Air Defence Systems.

It is hoped that readers will find a good blend of articles focusing on various aspects of the contemporary security discourse in South Asia. The *SVI Foresight* team invites and highly

encourages contributions from the security and strategic community in the form of opinion-based short commentaries on contemporary political, security, and strategic issues. Any suggestions for further improvements are welcome at our [contact address](#). Please see [here](#) the copy of the *SVI Foresight* electronic journal. You can find us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) and can also access the [SVI website](#).

Zafar Iqbal Yousafzai

Senior Research Associate/editor

SVI, Islamabad.

Incidents of nuclear trafficking in India and its repercussions

Sher Bano

The specialized nuclear materials are very scarce. Only some states have significant deposits of such costly and rare material. Hence the safety and security of these materials is also the responsibility of the states which possess them. However, with the rising incidents of nuclear theft and trafficking, India is badly failing in that responsibility. These peculiar instances are the cause of concern not only for Pakistan but for the international community as well.

The most recent incident was in the month of August, during which the Indian authorities seized 250kg of the radioactive element californium. The seized material was worth 573 million dollars. Previously there have been two more incidents reported in the same year. The first incident occurred in the month of May during which 7kilograms of natural Uranium were seized by Indian police. As per the Maharashtra anti-terrorism squad, the material was worth 2.9 million dollars. Later in the month of June, the Indian police arrested seven people, and 6.4 kg of Uranium was seized from them. In the wake of such incidents, the reasons for Pakistan being concerned are legitimate because such incidents are hazardous for both regional and international security. However, despite such evident lapses in India's nuclear security, there has been a deafening silence from the international community.

Because of the largely indigenous and fast pace inputs into its nuclear facilities, India has been facing safety issues from the start. During 1995 and 1998 nearly 147 incidents involving safety-related mishaps took place in Indian atomic energy plants as per the Indian parliamentary report. The first incident of uranium theft took place in 2001 during which two men were arrested by West Bengal police with nearly 200 grams of semi-processed uranium. During the span of 2001-10, there have been frequent incidents of nuclear theft in India. In 2013 as per the Indian government sources, uranium ore was illegally acquired by the guerilla rebels residing in northeast India from the government-run milling plant. They used it to build a rudimentary bomb before getting arrested. In the year 2018, a uranium smuggling network was discovered by the Kolkata police. Hence the nuclear theft in India has become a norm rather than an occasional mishap.

To prevent such incidents, Pakistan has repeatedly called for measures to be taken for a thorough investigation of all such occurrences. As per the recent statement by Pakistan's foreign office spokesperson, these incidents of nuclear theft in India are a matter of deep concern because they point toward poor enforcement and regulatory mechanism, lax controls, and the existence of a nuclear material black market in India. It also makes the safety and security of India's nuclear program questionable. In order to avoid the serious repercussions of India's poor safety and security standards, the international organization such as IAEA needs to investigate all such incidents and hold India accountable. India being the party to "CPPNM" (Convention on Physical Protection of Nuclear Materials) and its additional protocol must guarantee the safety and security of nuclear material in transit and at nuclear installations. Moreover, India also being a member of the Nuclear Safety Convention must establish an autonomous regulatory authority but has failed to do so. The resolution 1540 of UNSCR also makes it binding to strengthen their administrative and legal structures in order to avoid the non-state actors to access dangerous nuclear materials. Still, there is a lack of any jurisdiction that would investigate such security lapses despite resolution 1540.

Even though nuclear security is a national responsibility, there needs to have a proper evaluation before granting any state privileged status in a nuclear regime. All the states that supported the decision of granting India with a special NSG waiver and that also support its entry into the group need to rethink. These incidents of nuclear theft combined with the fascist Hindutva ideology could be a grave threat to both regional and international security. The international community needs to demand more transparency and responsible behavior from India. There is also a need to review future nuclear cooperation with the country.

India's poor nuclear safety and security have also increased the risk of nuclear terrorism. Despite statutory and institutional arrangements, the non-proliferation record of India is problematic. Moreover, the safety and security of its nuclear infrastructure also remain questionable. India has a non-transparent policy on cases related to nuclear trafficking. This uncommunicative approach by India regarding loopholes in its safety and security apparatus can prove to be damaging for not only national but also for regional and international security. The international nuclear establishment needs to intervene and ensure that India secures and consolidates its nuclear infrastructure and material.

The writer is working as a Research Affiliate at the Strategic Vision Institute (SVI), a non-partisan think-tank based in Islamabad, Pakistan.

<http://southasiajournal.net/incidents-of-nuclear-trafficking-in-india-and-its-repercussions/>

User-Trial of Agni-V: What actually is concerning for South Asian Strategic Stability?

Ahyousha Khan

In the last half of September 2021 Indian news/media channels broke the news that India will conduct the user trial of its Agni-V intercontinental ballistic nuclear missile. The test has importance because it is reported in Indian media that it will be tested as MIRV (multiple independent re-entry target vehicle). It is pertinent to mention here that news came into the media because after postponing the test of Agni-V last year due to COVID-19, India is supposed to conduct the test this year in October. Like all other military developments especially missile developments with the capability to carry nuclear warheads, Agni-V will have multiple consequences on the strategic stability of South Asia. But, what needs to be addressed here is that will the consequences be “rattling” as Indian media has portrayed or will they not affect the “deterrence equation” of South Asian nuclear rivals.

Agni-V is India’s intercontinental ballistic missile with the capability to deliver 1,650 kg of payload. It has a range of over 5000 km with three-stage solid propulsion. The first two stages of Agni-V have the same features as the Agni-III intermediate-range ballistic missile. According to open sources and CSIS Missile Treat Initiative, India initiated the development of the Agni-V missiles at the end of the last decade in 2008. India’s missile development agency DRDO initially named the missile Agni-III+ but later on change the name to Agni-V in the year 2010. In the year 2012 first flight test of Agni-V missile was conducted, later on, subsequent missile tests were conducted in years 2013, 2015, 2016, and 2018. Other than the range of the Agni-V missile another important aspect of this missile is that it is a “cannisterized” road-mobile launch missile, which gives it an edge to be launch from different places in a much reduced time. Regarding the MIRVing capability of the Agni-V ICBM, there is a variation in the statements and views of the Indian officials. The former head of the DRDO claimed in 2013 that Agni-V missiles are developed with MIRVing capability, this claim was later on denied by his successor head of

DRDO. But, recent media reports are again buzzing with the news that prospective test of Agni-V will also test its MIRV capability.

Regardless of the fact that the Agni-V user trial test will test its MIRV capability, it is a known fact that DRDO is involved in the continued development of the MIRV technology and maneuverable missile systems, which will have implications on deterrence stability. The most important aspect in the Indian pursuit of cannisterized inter-ballistic missiles, MIRVs, and maneuverable technology is India's dubiousness regarding its own nuclear doctrine and policy, its constant attempts to avoid the concept of mutual vulnerability and its continuous disregard for the deterrence dynamics of nuclear South Asia. India's nuclear doctrine states that India will adhere to the policy of "NFU" and "CMD", however, the development of cannisterized weapons depicts that in reality, India's aspirations are more inclined towards counter-force nuclear posture, where weapons will be ready to use at any instance. Furthermore, Indian officials have stated that the development of Agni-V ensures the credibility of India's nuclear deterrence, which depicts that focus is only on "credibility of deterrence" rather than credible minimum deterrence as stated in Indian nuclear doctrine.

In the case of South Asia, to ensure the credibility of its nuclear deterrence India does not need the ICBM as its small range and intermediate-range weapons have the capability to uphold credible deterrence. Therefore, the development of ICBM is not a rattling issue for Pakistan but the significant problem for Pakistan is India's reliance on "cannisterized" technology for this purpose, which will reduce the time of launch and attack; it will enhance the ambiguity in crisis situations. From its experience of cannisterization of Agni-V missile, India this year tested its Agni-Prime ballistic missile with a range of 1000-2000 km, which is also a cannisterized weapon and specially designed to target Pakistan. Agni-Prime is also based on a two-stage solid propellant. Cannisterization of these missile technologies represents that India never intended to apply the NFU posture and is continuously and steadfastly resorting to the counter-force posture based on the view to launch the first strike.

Lastly, if dynamics of deterrence and strategic stability are analyzed carefully in the wake of the development of Agni-Prime and the process of induction of Agni-V it is important to highlight that deterrence works with the sense of mutual vulnerability. So, Agni-V really does not rattle Pakistan. But it in fact rattles the requirements of restraint that are required from India

to sustain the strategic stability in South Asia. Moreover, it brings us to the point of need of measures of arms control, which are required in South Asia.

Ahyousha Khan works as a Senior Research Associate at Strategic Vision Institute, Islamabad.

<https://modern diplomacy.eu/2021/10/08/user-trial-of-agni-v-what-actually-is-concerning-for-south-asian-strategic-stability/>.

Hypersonic Weapons, Missile Defense and Strategic Stability in South Asia

Amber Afreen Abid

Pakistan's nuclear weapon capability is calibrated through India's development in the conventional and unconventional sectors. Pakistan maintains strategic stability in the region and maintains credible deterrent forces. However, India's burgeoning behavior in the region continuously pushes the region towards an arms race, by the introduction of new technology like ballistic missile defence systems and hypersonic missiles.

The reliability on such weapons is highly debatable. The defence against the ballistic missiles is not very likely, as the superpowers have spent years on it, still their credibility is questionable. However, keeping aside the effectiveness of such weapons, they will behave as a destabilizing factor in the region. Even, India can go for the first strike, while relying heavily on the ballistic missile defence system, and undermining the offensive attack in response, thus this high reliance on BMD can destabilize the south Asian region, and upsurge miscalculations, causing deadly consequences. Missile technology would create hurdles for India as well. As, once the protective shield would be developed, the traditionally emotional public, of both India and Pakistan, would be putting pressure on their decision-makers for taking effective steps. The negative trend would start, as the Indian public would feel secure from the attack and would put pressure for the attack on Pakistan.

Travelling with such a high speed leaves the adversary with no time to react, thus it could alter the offensive-defensive posture, increasing the chances of an effective first strike by the potential adversary. This would thrust the other party to keep their weapons on hair-trigger alert, could push it for the pre-emptive first strike during the crisis because of the uncertainty, thus destabilizing the region and adding the element of uncertainty and unpredictability in conflicts,

which is really devastating in nuclear-armed adversaries. This kind of situation could well be related to the cold war era, wherein false alarm leads to the global conflict, accidentally.

The hypersonic missiles are not only offensive weapons, but the missile of such kind in future could potentially be used as a tool of nuclear warfare as well. The hypersonic weapons, compounded with the fact of short reaction time, could potentially add to the conflict by altering a conventional attack into a nuclear war, as there is uncertainty whether a missile is carrying a conventional or unconventional warhead, and thus could be necessarily retaliated with a nuclear weapon, causing nuclear war. Thus, arms control agreements necessarily need to be undertaken, for removing this concept of warhead ambiguity, which out of the fear a country takes, having the known that the enemy is having a hypersonic weapon, and in case of crisis it wouldn't have the time to react, thus launches a nuclear attack.

The introduction of new technology would only bring instability in the region, and would eventually greet the arms race in the region, which is an expensive game and would result only in chaos in the already volatile south Asian region. Furthermore, the concept of deterrence would be ruled out, as the fear of mutual vulnerability would be diminished, and one side feeling vulnerable on the other could go for the offensive first strike; or out of the fear of attack, the other side could ultimately strike first. Moreover, for neutralizing the defensive posture, due to India's offensive burgeoning behavior, effective countermeasures would be taken by Pakistan, and resultantly arms race will rise in the region.

Any development in the region would not be compromised by Pakistan that would affect its strategic deterrence capability and ultimately the sovereignty. Pakistan is fully aware of the emerging threats, and will consequently maintain its deterrent posture credible, while maintaining the minimum credible requirement.

Amber Afreen Abid is Research Associate at Strategic Vision Institute, Islamabad.

<http://southasiajournal.net/hypersonic-weapons-missile-defence-and-strategic-stability-in-south-asia/>.

Afghanistan Counterterrorism Act 2021: Implications for US-Pakistan Relations

Zafar Iqbal Yousafzai

With the US withdrawal from Afghanistan at the end of August 2021 ended the US-Pakistan cooperation in Afghanistan that lasted for two decades. Despite huge losses borne by Pakistan in war on terror since the US invasion of Afghanistan, Washington is not happy with Islamabad over the precarious situation and the Taliban takeover in Afghanistan. As in the past, US-Pakistan post-9/11 relations are also bumpy. Pakistan is putting forward its efforts and cooperation and loses caused in war on terror while the US accuses the former of supporting the Taliban.

It is clear now and Washington has acknowledged that it lost the war in Afghanistan. However, it is now in search of factors that caused the defeat in Afghanistan. At the end of last month, twenty-two Republican senators moved a bill in the US Senate named: ‘Afghanistan Counterterrorism, Oversight, and Accountability Act’. The bill calls for an assessment of the US campaign in Afghanistan, and also sanctioning the Taliban and those who assisted them.

It seeks to ban Taliban representatives from membership of United Nations General Assembly or any other world body. However, the bill carries critical clauses for Islamabad which experts believe can be sanctioned, if substantial evidence is provided. This article seeks to analyze how this bill if passed and enacted can impact the future course of US-Pakistan relationship.

The main elements that bring US-Pakistan relations to its lowest ebb is trust deficit between both the states. Though US-Pakistan relationship started with cordial exchanges between both states yet the first factor that affected it was the Indian factor. Washington’s tilt towards New Delhi angered Islamabad and the perception that US follows only its own interests while ignoring Pakistan took root and it still exists. Pakistan remained a close ally in the Cold War and during the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in late 1979. However, whenever the US interests were served, it turned its back to Pakistan.

When the Soviets withdrew from Afghanistan, Washington imposed the Pressler Amendment Act that provided for sanctions on Pakistan. Islamabad took this development as a

great betrayal by Washington since it was its ally in defeating the Soviets in Afghanistan. Nevertheless, following the September 11 attacks on the US mainland, it needed Pakistan to invade Afghanistan to bring the culprits of 9/11 to justice. This time too, Pakistan fully cooperated with the US and provided them with logistic and intelligence support. Pakistan arrested a handful of Al-Qaeda terrorists and handed them over to US authorities. However, the ‘do more’ mantra did exist in the post-9/11 US-Pakistan affairs and Washington continued its carrots and stick policy.

Still, Pakistan helped the US at every stage, even during the talks that led to the end of the war. However, the recent bill in the US Senate reminds us of the Pressler Amendment. Nonetheless, the current situation is quite different from that of the 1990s. There is multi polarity in the global order. There is the rise of China and Russia that challenges US hegemony. China at the moment is ready to fill the gap that the US has left in Afghanistan. The Chinese political and economic aid to the Taliban is an indication that they may likely fill the gap.

Though the bill will still be discussed and it will take time however, it has impacted US-Pakistan relations and also widens the trust deficit that already exists. The Pressler Amendment was enacted but was conditioned on evaluation by the president on a yearly basis. On the one hand, experts see this bill as a result of differences between Democrats and Republicans while on the other, some see it as a source of pressure on Pakistan, the Taliban and even other countries close to the Taliban like Russia and China. If the US sanctions Pakistan or pressurizes it, it will affect the future course of US-Pakistan relations and will embolden Islamabad to go for other options than Washington. Similarly, it can further bring Pakistan close to China and Russia.

The writer is working as a Senior Research Associate at the Strategic Vision Institute, Islamabad.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/829469/afghanistan-counterterrorism-act-2021-implications-for-us-pakistan-relations/>.

Hindu extremism under Modi regime

Zafar Iqbal Yousafzai

India came into being in the name of secularism where all minorities will have their due rights irrespective of their religion or color. However, soon after the independence, India indulged in aggression and suppressing the Muslim population living inside and around India.

Besides many other states, Kashmir was illegally occupied and it's still under the Indian brutal occupation. With the passage of time, the Indian secular nature as a state declined. Nevertheless, since Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) has come to power, the situation in India is quite intolerable for the Muslims. Religious intolerance and Hindu nationalism are thriving across the country.

Bhartiya Janata Party came to power in 2014 and Narendra Modi became the Prime Minister which led to the rise of Hindu nationalism and helped prop Hindutva ideology. Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) is instrumental in a brutal campaign against minorities especially Muslims. In Modi's first term from 2014-19, BJP brought many anti-minorities laws which intent on erasing minorities' identity. The National Register of Citizens (NRC) in Assam started to target the non-documented Indian where mix Bengali and Hindus living. The changes in citizenship law fear minorities along with Muslims that they will be declared stateless and may face detention in camps.

These measures were not taken for the first time in Indian history. We have witnessed the Delhi riots or Sikh massacre in 1984 where thousands of Sikhs had been killed. The massacre was an organized plan that allowed the anti-Sikh mobs to attack Sikhs against the assassination of Indra Gandhi, the then Prime Minister by his Sikh bodyguard. It is believed many Congressmen were behind the 1984 Sikhs massacre. The massacre left minorities in India hopeless vis-à-vis their future.

Similarly, the recent anti-Muslim campaign in India is not a new phenomenon. The 2002 Gujrat anti-Muslim program under Narendra Modi led to the Muslims massacre killing more than one thousand Muslims. The state was functional for encouraging rioters to attack every Muslim house and put it under fire. Modi, the chief minister of Gujrat at that time believed to turn a blind eye to the rioters which caused hundreds of casualties and widespread violence. Above all, the current second term of the BJP is quite dangerous not only for Muslims but for India as a country as well which is leading it to division on a religious basis. The Citizenship Amendment Act of 2019 allowed all faiths from Bangladesh, Afghanistan, and Pakistan to get Indian citizenship except Muslims. Similarly, Muslims were excluded from the National Register of Citizens as well, lifting no way for Muslims to get Indian citizenship.

Likewise, the Modi government abrogates articles 370 and 35A that abolished the independent status of Kashmir. Besides, 12 million Kashmiris were kept without internet for 18

months, jailed their political leaders, denied children to go to schools, and banned journalists from covering the area. The move exposed Modi's aggressive policies and led to the deterioration of relations with Islamabad.

Narendra Modi led government has been trying to justify their policy of integrating Kashmir with the rest of India to create a safe environment for Kashmiris and those Hindus who flee the state of Jammu and Kashmir in the 1990s, however, Kashmiris outrightly rejected this notion and is constantly arranging protests against the Indian occupation.

Hence, Modi-led BJP since the 2014 election is trying to assure the Indian populace: Hindu nationalism is a key to making India great and providing a suitable environment to Hindus. There is nothing in Hindutva but hate for other minorities in India. This radical philosophy is leading India to a fascist state, allowing only Hindus to have all the rights. The 180 million Muslim population if disgruntled through regressive policies, India may descend into chaos and bloodbath and even may break apart. Hence, the Modi-led government should revisit its repressive policies both inside India Kashmir.

<http://southasiajournal.net/hindu-extremism-under-modi-regime/>.

Pakistan's proposal for strategic restraint regime: commitment towards non-proliferation

Sher Bano

Strategic Restraint Regime (SSR) was first offered by Pakistan to India in the year 1998. It consisted of three significant elements; reduction in armed forces, stable deterrence and peacefully resolving all the lingering disputes. It was proposed in response to Cold Start Doctrine as a result of which India planned combined military strikes inside Pakistan in order to prevent Pakistan from using strategic weapons. While speaking at the UN, Pakistan's permanent representative said that Pakistan's offer for Strategic Restraint Regime still remains on the table in order to ensure peace and stability in the region. In light of the increasing threat of India's pre-emptive strike, SSR would curb the arms build-up highlighting Pakistan's commitment towards non-proliferation in South Asia.

The Strategic Restraint Regime would reduce the dependence of India and Pakistan on external powers by offering a pathway that excludes the great power factor from security calculus. There are three interlocking elements of SSR such as missile and nuclear restraint, conventional balance, and conflict resolution needs to be adopted collectively because of their interlocking nature. SSR consists of measures for conventional balance and nuclear restraint, conflict resolution through a result-oriented dialogue, non-deployment or acquisition of BMDs, maintaining nuclear weapons on low alert status, avoiding any kind of missile, nuclear or conventional arms race, and nuclear test moratoriums. However, despite Pakistan's continuous efforts, India has been reluctant in engaging in such issues due to its quest to attain global power status which it will never be able to attain. Unless the regional disputes are resolved among both states, India's global ambitions will always remain a challenge.

The most pertinent of all is the unresolved Kashmir issue among both states. The durable peace in the region is unattainable unless the Kashmir issue finds a plausible solution. Similarly, geographic instability and vertical nuclear proliferation are the results of a conventional imbalance in the region. It is quite evident from history that arms control measures have always helped to bridge the trust deficit and reduce the tension among the rival states. The Strategic Restraint Regime offered by Pakistan covers all such contours that are necessary for stability and holistic peace in the region. Pakistan while reiterating its call for Strategic Restraint Regime proposed that it would be mutually beneficial for both states. It would also provide both states with viable options to deal with the emerging technologies that have added new layers of complexities to the stability of the region. Moreover, it would also help to address the disruptive technologies such as BMDs "Ballistic Missile Defense Systems", hypersonic glide vehicles, Agni-V, and curb the nuclearization of the Indian Ocean. All these emerging technologies would disrupt the deterrence equilibrium in the region if necessary measures are not taken for arms control and disarmament.

Pakistan by introducing SSR and by offering various arms control measures has always been open for dialogue and confidence-building measures. Pakistan has always adhered to unilateral restraint even in terms of growing nuclear asymmetries in the region. It was India's development of BMD that led Pakistan to develop MIRV "Multiple Independent Reentry Vehicle", furthermore it was the nuclearization of the Indian Ocean that forces Pakistan to develop SRBM. Various proposals were put forth by Pakistan in front of India such as the non-

development of the BMD system which could have curtailed the development of MIRV and offered to declare the Indian Ocean a Nuclear Weapon Free Zone but all went in vain as India refused to engage in any of the among proposals. The Lack of cooperation and reciprocity has only increased the instability in the region.

In order to address the conventional and non-conventional asymmetries and to address the regional and global challenges, Strategic Restraint Regime offers a comprehensive and holistic approach towards nuclear disarmament. Pakistan has been arguing for a very long time that conventional asymmetries between both Pakistan and Indian armed forces are encouraging a nuclear arms race in the region that would lead to a huge conflict. The three-point formula offered by the Strategic Restraint Regime includes balance among the conventional forces, dispute resolution particularly the Kashmir conflict, and measures for missile and nuclear restraint that would result in long-lasting peace in the region. Pakistan has always reacted with restraint to Indian provocations and threats but it's high time that both nations collectively agree on measures to stop vertical proliferation in the region.

<https://www.eurasiareview.com/26102021-pakistans-proposal-for-strategic-restraint-regime-commitment-towards-non-proliferation-oped/>.

Pakistan consolidating conventional deterrence through its military capabilities

Amber Afreen Abid

The military preparedness of a country is essential for the maintenance of peace and stability of the country. It requires military preparedness, vigilance, and rigorous training. It eventually prepares the enemy for the crucial circumstances of whatsoever kind of conflict or scenario falls upon. The military induction of the latest weaponry and advancement in technology signifies the maintenance of stability in the region, thus promoting peace. Therefore Pakistan consolidating conventional deterrence is important to fight the enemy's aggression.

Deterrence has always remained a fundamental notion in the maintenance of peace throughout history. Thus, military up-gradation becomes a symbol of peace, by creating conventional deterrence in the already volatile South Asian region. Pakistan has recently

inducted the VT-4 tank, in the pursuit to modernize the military in a fast-changing era of military modernization and warfare. The VT-4 Tank is compatible with the world's modern tanks; it integrates advanced armour protection, fire-power capabilities, maneuverability, and the latest technology. The up-gradation of military technology is essential to give an edge over the aggressive enemy.

For more than two decades Pakistan and India have stepped into the nuclear domain, but the importance of conventional deterrence for the maintenance of strategic stability can't be overruled, especially when the enemy tries to exploit the space below the nuclear belt. India has always tried to get in the way of strategic stability by embarking upon limited war strategies. A number of military doctrines have been introduced by India in the last few years. The Cold Start Doctrine was introduced in 2004, a blitzkrieg kind of strategy by India, to intrude into Pakistan's geographical territory, and capture it as a bargaining chip; the 2017 Joint Armed Force doctrine, followed by Land Warfare Doctrine-2018 (LWD-18), were all orthodox offensive strategies to punish Pakistan through various means of territorial, cyber and space.

The currently in view military policy of Theatre Command Structure by India is another step towards military aggressive Indian posture, by creating theatres, inculcating the tri-services and inflicting maximum damage to the enemy, is the new aggressive Indian strategy in the pipeline. In the view of these aggressive military strategies, the limited war under the nuclear threshold could potentially become a conflict accelerator, disturbing the strategic stability in the region with disastrous consequences.

<https://www.globalvillagespace.com/pakistan-consolidating-conventional-deterrence-through-its-military-capabilities/>.

Induction of HQ/9P Air Defence System by Pakistan: Criticality of Air Defence Systems

Ahyousha Khan

In the mid of the October, Pakistan Army inducted HQ-9/P air defence systems to make Pakistan's air defence impenetrable. HQ-9/P is state of the art High to medium-range air defence system (HIMADS), which is also considered to be strategic long-range SAM (Surface to Air Missile). The missile system is capable of a great degree of flexibility and precision in intercepting multiple targets including air crafts, cruise missiles and BVRW (beyond visual

range weapons) at the range of 100 km. HQ-9/P HIMADS also has a single-shot kill probability. Probability to kill refers to the ability of successful engagement between target and weapon. At the commissioning ceremony of the air defence system, COAS of Pakistan said that weapons will significantly contribute in (CLIAD) Comprehensive Layered Integrated Air Defence of Pakistan. This news holds importance for Pakistan because in recent year's airborne/based threats are increasing due to technological innovations. Today, Pakistan is facing an amalgamation of high to low air threats, especially on its eastern border, where these threats are not only increasing in numbers but also have a degree of variation in their intensity.

Therefore, impenetrable-able integrated air defence systems are becoming a necessity for Pakistan, especially in evolving regional geopolitical and security systems. Comprehensive layered Integrated Air defence system or Modern Integrated air defence systems consists of personals, systems, equipment, weapons, radars, batteries and most important structure to counter adversaries attempts or desires to penetrate one's air space through any airborne means. This amalgamation of different systems has to perform three critical functions which include: "air surveillance, battle management and air control". A single air defence system does not explain the entirety of integrated air defence, rather systems like HQ-9/P are part of larger systems or in other words "systems of systems", which include many other systems. For the effectiveness of the "Comprehensive Layered Integrated Air Defence" synchronization and integration among the air defence systems is necessary.

Thus, currently other than HQ-9/P high to medium-range air defence system with Surface to air missiles Pakistan army has also inducted LY 80 air defence system, HQ16A medium-range air defence system and short-range FM 90 air defence system. To further enhance the integration Pakistan is also conducting Air defence exercises, "Al-Bayza". This year during Al-Bayza-II Air Defence exercises at Army Air Defence Test ranges in Karachi Pakistan tested various weapon systems that have the capability to launch surface to air missiles. In Pakistan, air defence systems and their integration for the development of the comprehensive layered integrated air defence system are not newly formed. At the end of the 1980s, Pakistan realized the need for an integrated and state-of-the-art air defense system, since then Pakistan has established a separate arm is the Pakistan army, which is going through selective induction and modernization of equipment and weapons not only in the army but also in the air force. According to open sources, Pakistan Air Force is using MBDA Spada 2000 low to medium, all-weather air defence system with the capability to simultaneously engage 4 targets. In air defence systems Pakistan has the

capability to indigenously produce MANPADs (Man-Portable Air Defence Systems) that provide significant coverage of at low-level air defense.

Today Pakistan is just carrying on with modernization plans with inductions of these new air defence systems because the threat environment has become versatile and challenging. Moreover, Pakistan's adversary at its eastern border is also more inclined towards risk-taking behavior. India's quad copters frequently crossed LOC and in most instances are shot down, in 2019 India vertically escalate the crisis when its air force infiltrated into Pakistan's air space and in response, Pakistan shot down Indian planes the next day. Moreover, India's inventory of different missile systems, UAVs, helicopters, and aircraft (including recently inducted Rafael) is growing which puts the burden to maintain strategic stability and peace on Pakistan by maintaining deterrence vis-à-vis its adversary.

Therefore, air defence systems deny the adversary to launch an air-borne strike against one's air space without fear of being intercepted and destroyed. Thus, in the case of India's changing strategic thinking where it believes that escalations at certain levels are possible will be countered. Hence, to summarize, the nuclear aggressive designs of India create a security dilemma for Pakistan, provoking it to go for the conventional and unconventional military preparedness. This continuous modernization has become essential for preventing the enemy to go for any misadventure for the maintenance of strategic stability in the volatile South Asian region. The strong conventional deterrence creates anxiety and fear in the heart of the adversary, that waging a war in such a scenario could potentially cause a humiliating defeat and could potentially supersede the desired benefits. The conventional deterrence in South Asia is aptly controllable by Pakistan, and military modernization is the essential tool for catering to any future threat matrix.

<https://moderndiplomacy.eu/2021/10/30/induction-of-hq-9p-air-defence-system-by-pakistan-criticality-of-air-defence-systems/>.

Post US withdrawal from Afghanistan

Asif Haroon Raja

"The aim of human happiness and solidarity is not violence, wars and aggression. All wars perpetuate violence, fear, and vindictiveness and are aimed at the destruction of civilizations and dehumanization of succeeding generations". Bruce Gambrell Foster, "The Scourge of War: The Shameless Marketing of Violence."

The US had made Pakistan its coalition partner and a frontline state to fight the war on terror but throughout the two-decade war, its attitude towards Pakistan was highly discriminatory. It never hid its dislike against Pakistan and fondness for India and its two puppet regimes in Kabul. Pakistan was optimistic that after the withdrawal of foreign troops and removal of the anti-Pakistan Kabul regime and elimination of perverse influence of India, Afghanistan and its western border would become peaceful and would open up vistas for a better future. Pakistan was also hopeful that after doing so much for the double-dealing USA in the 20-year war on terror, the US would bring a change in its acrimonious behavior and become more empathetic and affable but there is no change. The US frostiness towards both Afghanistan and Pakistan coupled with fluid and uncertain conditions in Afghanistan have dampened Pakistan's optimism.

Apart from unfriendly outlook of the US, and lukewarm response of the regional countries towards the plight of war-torn Afghanistan, Islamic State-Khurasan (IS-K) is making Afghanistan insecure by its acts of terror. In addition to the attack in Kabul, two deadly suicide attacks occurred in the Imam-bargahs of Kunduz and Kandahar during the prayers on two successive Fridays resulting in heavy human losses. The victims were mostly Shias who form 10% of the population.

Foreign supported TTP and BLA as well as IS-K have carried out a series of attacks in Waziristan and Baluchistan in the last 2-3 months. The Taliban recently busted one of the dens of BLA in Nimroz, captured several of its militants and recovered a heavy cache of arms. The BLA has also been operating from Sistan in Iran. After the Taliban recaptured power, anti-Pakistan Hamid Karzai started giving friendly signals to Pakistan in the hope of getting a seat in the Taliban cabinet. But on prompting of his masters, he again changed colors like a chameleon and is threatening Pakistan not to meddle in Afghan affairs.

With over 11 million Afghans living below poverty lines, the resource constraint Taliban regime is finding it extremely difficult to feed the hungry, provide salaries to the workers and daily wages to the laborers. Humanitarian crisis similar to Yemen is being deliberately created by the spoilers of peace eager to deter Russia, China, Pakistan and Iran from filling the power vacuum in Afghanistan and to discredit the new regime. The IMF has predicted that if \$ 9.50 billion of the Afghan Central Bank confiscated by the US is not released and no foreign aid is

provided, the Afghan economy may shrink by 30%. The sense of elation felt by the Taliban after achieving great victory is dampening as a result of bleak economic and security conditions and non-cooperative attitude of the international community.

The US after achieving all its objectives from the Afghan Jihad, dropped its most allied ally of South Asia Pakistan from its plate like a hot potato in 1990 and hugged India which had consistently pursued anti-American policies. Since then Pakistan has been taken out of the American security calculus and put in the hit list of Washington. India was made a strategic partner due to converging security interests. Under the changed perceptions, the US has striven to make Pakistan a compliant State and India the policeman of the Indo-Pacific region.

Driven by its wish to make India fight their war with China, the US signed high profile security pacts like civil nuclear deal, LEMOA, COMCASA, and ISA. The US hasn't given up this wish even after China's PLA soundly thrashed Indian soldiers with fists and spiked clubs in unarmed combat in Eastern Ladakh.

Major reasons of the USA's estrangement with Pakistan were that it is a Muslim country with high pitched Islamic ideological fervor and strong armed forces; it has weapon grade nuclear program and variety of sophisticated guided missiles, enjoys strong friendship with China and refuses to accept Indian hegemony. Later on CPEC and Pakistan's intimacy with the new Taliban regime have been added to the list which gives it bellyaches.

Slight change which came in the US attitude after 9/11 was because of geo-political compulsions. Pakistan was taken on board because of its usefulness in Afghanistan. It was first used for the occupation of Afghanistan in 2001. Next it was used to defeat Al-Qaeda. It was then needed to extend the war to fight and defeat the Taliban, which was not possible without the two supply routes provided by Pakistan.

Warmth in relations cooled down when Pakistan refused to fight the Afghan Taliban and Haqqani network (HN). Pakistan's bold act of flushing out HN from North Waziristan in 2015 didn't satisfy the US and the Kabul regime since the duo wanted Pak security forces to deal with the Afghan Taliban the same way. Pakistan's refusal to fight someone else's war annoyed the US. Pakistan's services were again required to make the Doha peace talks with the Taliban successful, and lastly to carry out safe exit of troops from Afghanistan.

After the departure of all the foreign troops from Afghanistan which obviated the danger of body bags, the US doesn't need Pakistan and will view its future relations through the Afghanistan lens only. This can be gauged from the unfriendly statement made by the US Deputy Secretary of State Wendy Sherman in India, "We don't see ourselves building a broad relationship with Pakistan".

The writer is retired Brig Gen, war veteran, defence & security analyst, international columnist, author of five books, Chairman Thinkers Forum Pakistan, Director Measac Research Centre, & Member CWC PESS & Veterans Think Tank.