



VISION

VISIONARY INSIGHTS INTO THE STRATEGIC INQUESTS OF NATIONS

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FEBRUARY 2022

Compiled & Edited by:

Zafar Iqbal Yousafzai

Strategic Vision Institute
Islamabad

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Strategic Vision Institute (SVI)

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Strategic Vision Institute (SVI)

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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.

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Editor's Note

India's nuclear program is providing for a number of issues. India after decades working on nuclear program, India has yet to adopt a workable solution for the high level nuclear waste and other safety measures regarding nuclear activity. The radioactive waste generated by nuclear mining and nuclear power plants is a serious challenge for India to make necessary arrangements where it has not only endangered the lives of the millions of Indians, it is also a risk for the outer world where India is illegally transfer their nuclear radioactive waste. We have recent example of seizing a ship in Kenya carrying nuclear waste from Mumbai, India.

In the present global arena it has become detrimental to achieve technological advantage in order to attain to noticeable part in the international decision-making. A prepared army and state-of-the-art weaponry is the key to the state security and prestige, which further aids in the international decision making and attainment of desired national interests. The Indian officials and government want to utilize space for the offensive purposes as well, which will certainly increase the chances of any misadventure, deterrence and crisis instability, thus increasing the risk of war in south Asia, between the two nuclear power states. Hence, the Indian outer space program is antagonistic towards Pakistan.

Pakistan being a responsible nuclear state has always supported the peaceful uses of nuclear technology. Pakistan has been part of many international efforts to strengthen the international nuclear non-proliferation regime. Pakistan has also put forth the proposal such as Nuclear Restraint Regime that comprise of nuclear and missile restraint, resolution to nuclear free zones, conventional balance to regional test ban treaty. However, on the other hand India has always opposed all such efforts by Pakistan and has tried jeopardizing the regional peace and security. Pakistan has been interested in peaceful application of nuclear technology since the age of "Atoms for Peace", however now this interest has become priority for Pakistan to fulfill the growing energy needs of the country.

A UK-based investigation firm in January presented a report that Indian officials are committing war crimes in Kashmir. The Modi-led BJP regime is making efforts to change the demography of Indian occupied Kashmir, in case there is a plebiscite in the future. The said firm in January 2022 filed an application calling on the British police to arrest Indian government officials for "war crimes" in Indian-administered Jammu and Kashmir. The report called on the London metropolitan police to arrest India's home Minister Amit Shah and army chief Gen.

Manoj Mukund Naravane on account of alleged war crimes in Jammu and Kashmir. The UK law firm added, “A legal appeal for the arrest of two Indian government officials under the Universal Jurisdiction principle has been made to London’s Metropolitan Police, following the release of a report which accuses the individuals of war crimes against Kashmiri Muslims.”

Moreover, this volume presents a number of articles analyzing the burning important issues for global peace, security, non-proliferation and India’s nuclear and space weaponization that negatively affect peace and stability in South Asia.

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](#).

**Editor SVI Foresight,
Islamabad.**

India's Mismanagement of Nuclear Waste

Zafar Iqbal Yousafzai

Since the establishment of Indian nuclear program, India has not adopted appropriate mechanism for the radioactive waste management. Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management formulate the safety standard of radioactive waste while every country making use of nuclear energy are obliged to implement those principles and regulation. However, the Atomic Energy Regulation Board in India has failed to perform its assigned duty.

Even at the time of the Indo-US nuclear deal, a diplomat from Kolkata had sent a cable to Washington: India lacks nuclear safety measures. Nuclear radiation is a constant threat to the Indian populace in many areas. The Subarnarekha River spring out from the plateau of Chota Nagpur in eastern India and joins the Bay of Bengal.

Similarly, now India illegally transports its radioactive waste to Africa for dumping. We have recent example of seizing a ship in Kenya carrying nuclear waste from Mumbai, India. This article aims at analyzing India's mismanagement of its nuclear waste in which international safety measures are compromised. "This is clearly a means of dumping dangerous substances in East Africa. We have proof that what was declared is just part of the contents, but the radioactive material is also in the ship, and is emitting high radiation," a person told to media on the condition of anonymity.

Kenya is a cosigner to the Indian Ocean Memorandum of Understanding (IOMOU) that enacts international commitments to thwart, seize, ban and fight illegal transferring of nuclear and elements and Weapons of Mass Destruction proliferation. It is pertinent to mention that high level radioactive radiation emanating from nuclear waste cause a number of serious diseases: Skin problems, cancer, as well as radio vascular diseases. However, the Indian government does not admit it.

However, the issue first came into light in India when a professor of Physics, Dipak Ghosh of Jadavpur University conducted an investigation and research to diagnose the reasons of

diseases among the populace living alongside the Subarnarekha River. When his team gathered data and samples and analyzed it, they were shocked by the result that the water was polluted by alpha radioactive particles, quite harmful for human health. It was found that these radiations were 1000 times more harmful than other radiations. Besides, it was found the levels of safety were 160 percent higher than the parameter set by World Health Organization. In an interview, Professor Gosh said, “It was potentially catastrophic.” Hence, it was concluded that millions of people living along the coast were prone to these radioactive radiation.

Moreover, the team of professor Gosh discovered that the deadly footmark was due to the nuclear mining and fuel fabrication. Though the Indian government claims there is enough precautions for the nuclear power generation, there are serious loopholes which has put the lives of millions of Indians in danger. Though nuclear power is environmentally benign and economically viable, it needs to adopt safety protocols as well.

Ironically, talking about the reports of health issues in the region, the India’s nuclear chief sustained that the unhygienic conditions and poverty is the main cause of the illnesses. Experts, health workers and doctors say the nuclear authority has repeatedly turned down our reports. The nuclear industry is trying to abate the evidence of diseases, locals claim. However, India’s Atomic Energy Commission denounces these reports. Despite substantial evidences, the commission asserts that the problems have been solved and no case has been proven since then.

Hence, after decades working on nuclear program, India has yet to adopt a workable solution for the high level nuclear waste and other safety measures regarding nuclear activity. The radioactive waste generated by nuclear mining and nuclear power plants is a serious challenge for India to make necessary arrangements where it has not only endangered the lives of the millions of Indians, it is also a risk for the outer world where India is illegally transfer their nuclear radioactive waste. We have recent example of seizing a ship in Kenya carrying nuclear waste from Mumbai, India. Moreover, the International Atomic Energy Agency shall also take measures to warn India of any violation of the rules and standards set by it internationally.

<https://www.eurasiareview.com/23022022-indias-mismanagement-of-nuclear-waste-oped/>.

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India's Space Weaponization Program and Implications for Crisis Stability and Nuclear Deterrence in South Asia

Amber Afreen Abid

The aim to attain a global power status has led many countries to spend millions of dollars in space Weaponization. The Weaponization and militarization of space has been the topic of discussion in recent times. India, trying to attain regional hegemony, power and prestige is not lacking behind in the race and is not turning any stone unturned to be ahead in the outer space race. The Indian Weaponization of space is detrimental to the South Asian security and deterrence stability. Thus, the matter needs to be addressed internationally instead of abetting India in its dangerous endeavors.

In the present global arena it has become detrimental to achieve technological advantage in order to attain a noticeable part in the international decision-making. A prepared army and state-of-the-art weaponry is the key to the state security and prestige, which further aids in the international decision making and attainment of desired national interests. The Indian officials and government want to utilize space for the offensive purposes as well, which will certainly increase the chances of any misadventure, deterrence and crisis instability, thus increasing the risk of war in south Asia, between the two nuclear power states.

The Indian outer space program is antagonistic towards Pakistan. The Indian intentions had been obscure since the Star Wars Program was presented by President Ronald Reagan. India since then showed ambiguity in its space program and didn't term it as peaceful or otherwise. Pakistan reiterated on the fact that India's space program is not for peaceful purposes, when in March 2019 India conducted its ASAT weapon test.

The stationing of missiles in space is another threat to Pakistan's security, in a scenario where India is acquiring BMD system as well. The intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance increases with the command in space Weaponization, and real-time information could be gathered of the adversary, esp. in a crisis. It increases the chances of pre-emptive strike and counterforce attacks. Such situation increases the security dilemma of a state lacking in space technology.

India also has signed BECA (Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement) with US, which will allow India to get hands on the advanced geospatial intelligence and satellite data. This kind of agreement with a super power would amplify India's capabilities and worsens the

stability of south Asia, as it will provoke aggressive India to for offensive measures. Thus, the super power should consider the stability scenario of a region before abetting such technologies to one country.

Pakistan on the other hand has a peaceful space weapon. Pakistan doesn't want an arms race in space as well, but the offensive actions by India provoke Pakistan to take necessary measures in order to maintain the crisis stability and deterrence stability in South Asia. Pakistan always has to make up for the irresponsible actions taken by its adversary, which always tries and provokes Pakistan for the arms race. India's advanced space weaponization program along with the advanced ISR system further create hurdles for the conflict resolution in south Asia. Thus, the weaponization of space holds destabilizing outcomes for the security of the south Asian region.

<https://www.eurasiareview.com/28022022-indias-space-weaponization-program-and-implications-for-crisis-stability-and-nuclear-deterrence-in-south-asia-oped/>.

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Promoting International Cooperation in Peaceful Uses in Context of International Security

Sher Bano

In November, 2021 the first committee of 76 UNGA (United Nations General Assembly) approved a draft resolution on arms control and international security submitted by China. This has been a concrete action taken by China in order to safeguard world peace, uphold multilateralism and promote common development that reflects the interest of entire international community and common position among the developing countries. The resolution was an important step against the biased approach of international community to the Non-Proliferation Regime (NPR).

The resolution called "Promoting International Cooperation in Peaceful Uses in the Context of International Security" stresses upon the significance of peaceful use of nuclear technology and science for social and economic development. It urges the international community to remove restrictions upon the peaceful uses of science and technology on the developing countries that fulfill the obligations by the NPR on non-proliferation. In more than

thirty years this was the first time that such measure on international arms controls and disarmament issue was proposed by China in the United Nations. The acceptance of such a resolution by the UN was the beginning of an inclusive, fair and open dialogue process within the United Nations General Assembly Framework. This resolution is of great significance for safeguarding the legitimate interests and rights of all the countries to pursue the peaceful use of science and technology and to address the challenges posed by science and technology development properly.

The head of Chinese delegation to UNGA, Cheng Suang stated that the recent technological wave, rights and the peace enjoyed by all countries should be protected and respected. With the passage of such a resolution China had played a very constructive and positive role in international arms control and disarmament. Twenty-six countries including Syria, Russia, Cuba and Pakistan also took part in the joint resolution presented by China that presented the concerns and appeal of developing countries on peaceful uses of nuclear technology.

Pakistan being a responsible nuclear state has always supported the peaceful uses of nuclear technology. Pakistan has been part of many international efforts to strengthen the international nuclear non-proliferation regime. Pakistan has also put forth the proposal such as Nuclear Restraint Regime that comprise of nuclear and missile restraint, resolution to nuclear free zones, conventional balance to regional test ban treaty. However, on the other hand India has always opposed all such efforts by Pakistan and has tried jeopardizing the regional peace and security. Pakistan has been interested in peaceful application of nuclear technology since the age of “Atoms for Peace”, however now this interest has become priority for Pakistan to fulfill the growing energy needs of the country. Pakistan cannot attain this objective alone; it requires supportive and non-discriminatory environment. Pakistan should be granted entry into the NSG through a uniform criteria-based approach but the increasing trend of discrimination and double standards of western countries have made it difficult. The politics of international NPR of granting waivers to certain states particularly India serves as one of the reasons that the confidence in international non-proliferation regime has eroded. Pakistan despite of fulfilling all the criteria’s of IAEA has not been granted the membership by NSG.

Pakistan wants to participate in the NSG with an assurance that it would promote principles of international nuclear non-proliferation regime. Pakistan has a spotless non-proliferation record however India's non-proliferation record is far from exemplary. India had been the first country that diverted the peaceful use of nuclear resources towards weapon use. Interestingly the NSG was created as a result of India's 1974 explosion and aimed to prevent the diversion of civil nuclear technology for military purpose. Moreover, the safety and security of nuclear installations of India is also questionable due to recent incidents of theft. Despite that US and other countries are ready to enhance civil nuclear cooperation with India.

This resolution on arms control and peaceful application of nuclear technology by China would urge the international community to ease the restrictions on peaceful application of nuclear technology and have non-biased approach towards all the nuclear weapon states. The international community needs to admit Pakistan's continuous efforts of compliance with international practices of safety and security and regulatory control. The international arrangements like NSG and other cartels that are supposed to promote peaceful uses of nuclear energy needs to acknowledge Pakistan's efforts in this regard. Granting NSG waiver to India while ignoring Pakistan's outstanding record in peaceful uses of nuclear technology raises many questions on credibility of international arrangements. There is a dire need of new contenders with non-discriminatory approach.

<https://www.eurasiareview.com/28022022-promoting-international-cooperation-in-peaceful-uses-in-context-of-international-security-oped/#:~:text=The%20resolution%20called%20%E2%80%9CPromoting%20International,for%20social%20and%20economic%20development..>

India's human rights violations in Indian occupied Jammu and Kashmir

Zafar Iqbal Yousafzai

The Modi-led BJP regime policies in Kashmir are quite suppressing and aggressive, and Kashmiris are victims of extreme war crimes committed by the Indian forces. A UK-based investigation firm in January presented a report that Indian officials are committing war crimes in Kashmir. The Modi-led BJP regime is making efforts to change the demography of Indian occupied Kashmir, in case there is a plebiscite in the future.

The said firm in January 2022 filed an application calling on the British police to arrest Indian government officials for “war crimes” in Indian-administered Jammu and Kashmir. The report called on the London metropolitan police to arrest India’s home Minister Amit Shah and army chief Gen. Manoj Mukund Naravane on account of alleged war crimes in Jammu and Kashmir. The UK law firm added, “A legal appeal for the arrest of two Indian government officials under the Universal Jurisdiction principle has been made to London’s Metropolitan Police, following the release of a report which accuses the individuals of war crimes against Kashmiri Muslims.”

The report further added that the Indian officials are also responsible for torturing journalists, extra judicial killings, and targeting Muslims in the Himalayan region. The director of the firm Hakan Camuz said that Kashmiris have only one way that is international law to turn to as Kashmiris are seeking justice in their own country. “This report is dedicated to the families who have lost loved ones without a trace, and who experience daily threats when trying to attain justice,” added Khalil Dewan, the author of the report. On the other hand, Indian authorities have yet to comment or issue an official statement on the report.

For decades, Kashmiris have been fighting for their right of self-determination and raising their voice against the illegal occupation of India and the brutalities they commit. Since 1989, thousands of Kashmiris have lost their lives in their struggle of self-determination. Similarly, a recent report from Human Rights Watch says, thousands of Kashmiris have died due to Corona cases where the Indian authorities failed to provide sufficient health care facilities.

Similarly, Kashmiris are also denied their due rights entitled in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) adopted in 1948. The declaration was adopted by the United Nations and thus applied to all members of the United Nations and also restricted them from any fundamental human rights violation mentioned in the UDHR. However, India by suppressing Kashmiris violates many articles of the UDHR. Article 3 of the UDHR provides for the right to life, freedom and safety. However, Kashmiris are denied all these three basic rights.

A report issued by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights recorded the highest number of killings in Kashmir by the Indian forces in 2018. Moreover, 162 deaths were recorded in 2019, a deteriorating situation for the Kashmiris. The use of Pellet-firing guns has become a daily routine by the Indian forces for dispersing peaceful demonstrations.

Similarly, article 5 of the UDHR provides freedom from inhuman treatment and torture. However, in any demonstration, the Indian forces arrest peaceful demonstrators and put them behind the bars. Hence, Kashmiris do not enjoy freedom provided by article 5 of the UDHR.

Likewise, article 13 of the UDHR provides for freedom of movement. However, Kashmiris remained under curfew for two years from August 5, 2019 to 2021. India revoked articles 370 and 35a that included the Indian occupied Kashmir in the Indian territory while abolishing the special status of Jammu and Kashmir. Also, article 18 of the UDHR provides for freedom of religious belief. Yet, the Indian forces attempt to forcefully convert Kashmiri Muslims. Moreover, during the curfew in 2019 and 2020, Muslim population was not allowed to pray in congregation as well as the call for prayer was banned. A resident of Srinagar during the curfew expressed his emotions in these words, “the closure of the mosque has robbed me of my peace. I’ve been subjected to spiritual torture.”

The human rights violation in Kashmir has become a global issue raised by a number of human rights organizations including the United Nations. Narendra Modi’s policies are not only suppressing innocent Kashmiris but also the minorities inside India. Similarly, any escalation in violence in Kashmir can also bring India and Pakistan on the brink of war, a war that would have severe consequences for the world in general and the region in particular.

<https://criticaloutsider.com/2022/02/28/indias-human-rights-violations-in-indian-occupied-jammu-and-kashmir/>.

Testing Times for Biden and NATO over Ukraine Crisis

Asif Haroon Raja

NATO's role in the Cold War

NATO was formed in 1949 under the umbrella of the US military power to protect Western Europe from Soviet aggression. The USSR, made up of 15 Republics, formed the Warsaw Pact as a counterpoise whose membership increased to 23. The NATO membership till the fragmentation of the USSR in 1991 was 12 Western Europe members. Turkey, Spain, Greece and Portugal joined a little later. The 16-member NATO operated throughout the Cold War for the defence of Western Europe. It was the nuclear deterrence which kept the USSR at bay.

NATO's Eastward expansion

After the end of the Cold War in 1991 and fragmentation of the USSR and Warsaw Pact, NATO had no justification to exist and should have been liquidated. But it was decided to absorb former Warsaw Pact members into NATO beginning with Poland, Hungary and Czech Republic in 1991. It was used in Iraq in 1991, and for the breakup of Yugoslavia into six independent states of which Richard Holbrooke was the architect, and next to bomb Serbia in mid-1990s. NATO, helped by the CIA, kept expanding eastwards. Its membership has now swelled to 28 members who include the three Baltic states of Estonia, Lithuania and Slovakia, located in the backyard of Russia.

The Russian Federation under Yeltsin had strongly protested against NATO expansion, but the headstrong USA, wanting to monopolize the world and to checkmate the resurgence of Russia, paid no heed to his protests. Once Vladimir Putin took over power in 2001, Russia began to reassert its authority at the regional/global level.

Post 9/11 happenings

While the US and NATO got engaged in chasing the ghosts of 9/11 and got deeply involved in the self-imposed war on terror, proxy wars and regime changes in Afghanistan and in the Middle East, which drained the US economy specially during George Bush regime, as well as of Europe, Russia and China embarked upon reform programs to build their respective economies and technologies and made substantial progress.

Regime change in Georgia

The pro-Moscow regime in Georgia was toppled through CIA sponsored color revolution in 2003. Putin took his time to react, and his first offensive act was in Georgia in 2008, where the Russian troops responded to the Georgian forces assault on rebellious South Ossetia, and succeeded in retaking control of the two important provinces of Abkhazia and Ossetia in a short, swift and fierce war. NATO refrained from mounting a counter offensive.

Ukraine crisis

Seeing that NATO's appetite for expansion knew no bounds, Putin lost his cool when the coup orchestrated by the CIA in Ukraine ousted the democratically elected president Victor Yanukovich in early 2014. Ukraine had opted for independence in 1991 but it had a pro-Moscow regime. It prompted Russia to annex Crimea in March that year, a strategic port of Ukraine. Its seizure enabled Russia to solidify its naval presence in the Black Sea, which not only helped in keeping NATO's Navy at bay, but the port also provides direct access to Syria,

Russia's lone toehold in the Middle East and dependent upon Russia's oil and gas supplies as well as security.

Soon after the occupation of Crimea, rebellion broke out against the federal government in Kyiv in Ukraine's two industrially advanced eastern provinces of Luhansk and Donetsk. Neighboring Donbas province was already up in arms against the government. The separatist movements backed by Russia have caused 14000 fatalities. The separatists in Donbas are in sufficient numbers and are well trained and equipped to carry out deep assaults inside the country. One-third of the population of Ukraine is Russian speaking.

Matters worsened when Georgia and Ukraine expressed their keenness to join NATO. It was widely speculated that in case the two countries were made part of NATO, it would result in confrontation with the west. The Ukraine crisis brewed up as a result of continued US-NATO jingoism and their efforts to expand the latter's outreach into the Eastern Hemisphere. The two dragons (USA-Russia) are currently at loggerheads over the issue of Ukraine.

Russia's offensive posturing

Alarm bells sounded in Moscow when it was gathered that Ukraine was about to become the 29th member of NATO. Already miffed by the installation of Ballistic Missile Defence components in Poland and Romania, Putin decided to put an end to the western intrusions and has taken a firm stand on Ukraine. Putin and Xi Jinping met in Beijing on 4 February on the eve of Winter Olympics, and Xi pledged to fully support his strategic partner on the issue of Ukraine.

Putin has made it clear that he is not ready to make any compromises until and unless the US agrees to halt its eastward expansionist drive and meddlesome role, withdraw NATO troops from the states that have joined NATO, and commit not to enroll new members in NATO. Russia has demanded pulling out NATO combat units from Poland and Baltic Republics, and not to deploy nuclear missiles in Poland and Romania. It wants NATO to return to its pre-1997 borders. China has thrown its weight behind the Russian demands. More importantly, the two communist leaders have asserted that the US governed unilateral world order will thenceforth be challenged since it only serves the interests of the USA and its strategic partners.

Russia's troop mobilization

Russia has mobilized a massive combat force on the border of Ukraine. Tanks, artillery, rockets and heavy weapons have been moved forward. It is estimated that 100,000 to 130, 000 troops have been marshalled which include ground, air, naval and paratroopers. The deployment is on three sides of Ukraine. The Russian Navy in the Black Sea has been bolstered and is

carrying out the biggest naval drills. Russia's ally Belarus in the north is conducting joint military drills from 10-20 Feb to face NATO's possible confrontation. Russia has sent 8000 troops to take part in the exercises close to Ukraine.

Undeterred by almost daily threats hurled by the US and European leaders, Putin has warned Washington that he might send military assets to Latin America if the US doesn't back off from its intrusions into Eastern Europe. He has given a loud message to all the inhabitants of Eastern Hemisphere that Russia is the dominant power and it calls all the shots and none else.

Russia's objective

The objective of Russia is not to destroy Ukraine, but to abolish NATO. It intends to achieve this goal by not employing direct force, but making use of indirect strategy to further debase the reputation of NATO by mounting psychological pressure and rattling the nerves of western forces. Putin has stoked hysteria in the west without beating drums of war and is achieving tangible results through troop deployments and posturing.

He has further ratcheted up tensions by stating on 15 Feb that he has no intentions to invade Ukraine and is pulling back some of the forces after the termination of exercises. This conciliatory gesture was timed with a resolution moved in the Russia's Parliament to recognize the two breakaway regions as independent states. Reference to the Minsk agreements by the west is out of place when seen in context with repeated violation of the US promises not to expand eastwards.

Western hysteria

Seeing the unflinching resolve of Putin and heavy deployment of Russian troops , the US and the EU fear that sooner than later, the Russian forces would invade and occupy eastern Ukraine if not the whole of it as they had done earlier in Georgia. It would be easier for the invaders to limit their intrusion into Eastern provinces which are demanding greater autonomy, and into the Russian speaking areas. About 3 million Ukrainians have been living in Russia since 2014 and a large segment among them is pro-Russia. Deprived of eastern part and Crimea, it will become extremely difficult for Zelensky regime to survive.

Importance of Ukraine

Ukraine is important to both Russia and the EU since it is the largest country in Europe and is located at the crossroads of East and West Europe. It is Europe's breadbasket and a major exporter of grains. It provides direct access to Russia's Gazprom gas field and oil pipeline to Europe. 35% of the gas and one-quarter of crude oil are supplied by Russia to Europe. Germany

followed by Italy and Netherlands are the largest importers of Russian gas. Hence Ukraine is the vital ground for Russia's geo-economic interests. Imposition of sanctions on gas from Russia will oblige the EU to import it mainly from the US. Ukraine will lose Russian pipeline royalties.

China, which is the only country that has overcome Covid-19 crisis to a large extent and is on its way to become the leading economic power by 2028 owing to its gigantic BRI project, will not be much affected by a conflict in Ukraine. But being a strategic partner of Russia and the US being their common foe, it is extending assistance to Moscow generously to offset negative impact of Covid and western sanctions.

The two communist giants are collaborating to break the monopoly of the US dollar in international trading. The last straw on the camel's back will break in case KSA decides to overturn the 1973 oil agreement and OPEC starts trading oil in other currencies. King Salman is however in no mood to cancel the agreement.

Western military preparedness

The US and NATO after suffering military defeats in Afghanistan and the Middle East are not in a comfortable position to undertake another military venture and that too against resurging Russia aligned with emerging superpower China and nuclear North Korea. Unlike Russia which is contiguous to Ukraine and has short ground/air supply lines, the US is far away, while NATO is a house divided.

NATO has about 4000 ground troops, tanks, air defence units and intelligence/surveillance units in Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia and Poland. Five air defence units were moved from Germany to Romania on 14 Feb. The US is planning to send 3000 additional US troops to Poland. NATO's naval fleets in the Black Sea, Red Sea and the Pacific Ocean have been augmented. The Ukrainian military has been supplied with Javelin and stinger missiles, anti-tank missiles NLAW.

The UK and other NATO countries are also sending armaments to Ukraine and pledging their support, while Germany has declined to send arms since it has Russia-to-Germany Nord Stream 2 gas pipeline in mind. Both are old trading partners. The US had long argued that the Nord pipeline project would threaten European energy security by increasing the continent's reliance on Russian gas and allowing Russia to exert political pressure on vulnerable Eastern and Central European nations, particularly Ukraine.

Differing perceptions of NATO members

France, Germany and Turkey are pro diplomacy and are engaged in diplomatic efforts to find a way out of the impasse and to stave off confrontation. So far there is no breakthrough but Germany has an edge over others due to its old business links and might succeed in defusing the explosive situation.

Defying the dictates of the US, Hungary has inked a gas deal with Russia. Croatia and Bulgaria have let their intentions known that they will not deploy troops in support of NATO's venture in Ukraine. Canada has decided to pull out its troops from Ukraine and is relocating them elsewhere in Europe. Other than Turkey, all other countries have advised their citizens living in Ukraine to leave the country ASAP. The US, Canada and Australia have shifted their diplomatic staff from Kyiv to the southern city Lviv of Ukraine due to insecurity of the capital city.

Turkey is maintaining excellent ties with Russia and its relations with the US dipped after it procured S-400 air defence system from Russia and the US reacted by canceling the F-35 jets deal. Ankara sees the Ukraine crisis deliberately fueled by the US-NATO to weaken Turkey by forcing its navy to fight in the Black Sea. The two powerhouses of Europe – Germany and France want to free NATO of the perverse influence of the US.

Britain, the traditional puddle of the US, is playing a double game. On one hand it is fueling war tensions by sending armaments and Special Forces to Ukraine as well as bolstering the defenses of Poland and the Baltic States, and on the other hand Johnson is hailing the virtues of diplomacy.

President Vladimir Zelenskyy has termed the decision to shift diplomats a mistake and an overreaction which would encourage Putin to go ahead with his offensive. He is urging Putin to take up the offer of a dialogue. East Europe particularly Poland and Romania are bracing for refugee influx in case of full or limited war in Ukraine.

Fallout Effect of War in Ukraine

Conflict in Ukraine will lead to food insecurity and the world cannot afford further food shortages created as a result of prolonged Covid-19, its impact on the global supply chains and shrinking of the global economy. Europe will be worst affected since it is bearing the brunt of the virus as well as trade sanctions imposed by the US on Iran.

The crisis has surged up the Brent oil price by 5-7%. Price of the oil barrel is \$ 95. In case Russia goes ahead with its invasion plan, the petrol price would spike to above \$ 125 per barrel. Western sanctions on Russia could also affect the Turk-Stream gas pipeline project,

which runs from Russia, bypassing Ukraine, under the Black Sea to Turkey and then to Europe. What is certain is that NATO will come out of the Ukraine crisis weaker and debased.

Joe Biden in a quandary

Joe Biden is faced with an uphill task of shoring up support both at home and abroad ahead of a potential Russian invasion of Ukraine. NATO cannot however militarily support Ukraine until it becomes part of it. Putin will not let it happen at any cost. Article-5 has become hollow making NATO an empty cartridge. The US aim is to keep its European and other allies away from trading with China and Russia.

In the wake of differing perceptions in Europe, it will be difficult for him to forge a united alliance of the West. Although he claims that there is "total unanimity" in the Western alliance's approach to the crisis, signs of variances are visible. French President Emmanuel Macron is skeptical about the positive outcome of the Biden-Putin talks. Croatia being a member of NATO, its President Zoran Milinkovic blamed the escalation of tensions on the Biden administration and the pressure from hawks from the Republicans and the Democrats.

Republican lawmakers are pushing the White House to preemptively levy sanctions against Moscow. The Democrats argue that it would undermine any chance of moving Russia to step back. Ukrainian President Zelensky doesn't foresee Russian invasion, but is feeling itchy.

The messy end of the war in Afghanistan last year, the surge in COVID and now Omicron cases in the USA, overlapped by economic concerns of inflation and labor shortages and his issues with his legislative agenda, Biden is facing a weary American public who are seeing a number of unfulfilled promises. They expect from him to make the divided nation cohesive and to restore the prestige and image of the USA that was eroded during the disastrous spell of Trump. His public support is fast waning.

The situation in Ukraine presents another test of Biden's proficiency. He has said repeatedly that he will not send U.S. troops to Ukraine, but he has ordered 8,500 to be on high alert for deployment to the Baltic Region. He is hurling warnings of "enormous consequences" and severe sanctions for Russia as well as Putin personally, if Russia takes military action against Ukraine. He is repeatedly raising alarm bells that the Russian troops are well poised to barge into Ukraine any day. What Biden can do is to maximize economic pressure on Moscow through sanctions and trade cuts with the EU. The other is military coercion to deter Russia from undertaking an invasion. These options might work only if NATO and the EU remain firm and united, which they are not. So far, both sides are resorting to shadow boxing.

In case Putin comes out of this crisis as a victor by resorting to a war or other tactics short of war, it will make Biden politically weak and his party will have slim chances to win the midterm elections in November 2022. An active lobby in the USA is advocating avoiding war in Ukraine, peace with Russia, scaling down interventions in the Middle East, and focusing only on China and to contain its economic growth at all cost. For them, Taiwan and the South China Sea are more important than any other conflict point. The US military Industrial Complex however favors war in Ukraine and further interventions so as to keep the war industry running. The saner elements are questioning as to why the situation has been brought to such an impasse when it could have been easily defused by Biden, announcing that Ukraine will not be allowed membership of NATO.

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Evolving Indian Nuclear Doctrine and Posture: Implications for Pakistan

Sher Bano

The Indian nuclear doctrine is an important variable that would determine the strategic stability of South Asia especially because ambiguity exists in India's declared nuclear doctrine. After its declaration in 1999 by Nuclear Security Advisory Board (NSAB), India's nuclear doctrine of NFU (No First Use) in the DND (Draft Nuclear Doctrine) has evolved over the years. Later the CCS (Cabinet Committee on Security) reviewed the DND in the year 2003 and declared it India's official nuclear doctrine. But over the years there has been a shift in India's nuclear posture from No First Use to preemption. Mr. Rajnath Singh (Indian Defense Minister) statement in the year 2019 amid the increased tensions between the two countries made headlines and was also the assertion of India's evident shift from the NFU. Even though Pakistan had never given any credence to India's NFU, this statement further exposed the pretense of Indian NFU. The shift from NFU to preemption is purely Pakistan-centric. This evolution has exposed Indian aspirations of nuclear war-fighting rather than sustaining deterrence. Such offensive nuclear posture of preemption by India would likely increase the tension in the region and would disrupt the strategic stability of South Asia.

Over the period of time, serious concerns have been raised by the various statements made by the Indian academicians and politicians about the Indian No First Use policy. The Indian National Security Advisor, Shivshankar Menon made a statement in 2010 in which he said that the No First Use Policy is only meant for non-nuclear-weapon states as per the Indian Nuclear Doctrine. This indicates that the use of nuclear weapons can be a resort against NWS (Nuclear Weapon State), especially against Pakistan. The Indian Defence Minister, Manohar Prasad Prakash Singh in the year 2016 questioned that “Why do lots of people think that India has an NFU policy? Why should I blind myself? Another prominent Indian scholar Vipin Narang states at the conference at Carnegie that India will never let Pakistan go first. All these statements make it quite evident that India would not hesitate to take a nuclear first strike against Pakistan if there is a crisis situation. Pakistan’s threat perceptions have enhanced further due to the drift in India’s force posture. To overcome India’s offensive nuclear posturing, Pakistan is compelled to maintain a credible nuclear deterrence posture.

India’s aspirations to go for a nuclear first strike against Pakistan are further revealed by its pursuit of offensive nuclear capabilities. India had been developing its space-based ISR (Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance) capabilities, ground-based capabilities, and new precision weaponry for the past few years. Such capabilities would further strengthen India to go for a first strike or preemption. The adoption of a Pakistan-specific policy of first use by India would lower the Indian nuclear threshold. This would result in having grave implications upon the existing nuclear deterrent posture of Pakistan that covers a broad range of threats from India also including Indian conventional advantage. It would result in generating an unnecessary arms race among the adversaries that would undermine the strategic stability of the region. This would also force Pakistan to review its doctrinal and force posture against Indian aspirations for preemption. The possibility of India’s shift towards preemption would indicate that Indian nuclear arsenals would remain in a state of readiness. Such a scenario would increase the threat of accidental or unauthorized use of nuclear weapons by India. This scenario would result in creating a complex security dilemma for Pakistan and would undermine the deterrence equilibrium in the region that is ensured by the nuclear capability of Pakistan.

India has also been maintaining an offensive sea-based nuclear posture through a massive naval buildup in recent years. India has acquired SSBNs (Nuclear powered submarines) that assure the second-strike capability by launching a multitude of nuclear weapons. India has an

operational Ballistic Missile Defence system (BMD) and has also purchased the most advanced S-400 system from Russia. With such assurance of being protected against any counterstrike by Pakistan through its BMD, the probability that India might launch a land, sea, or air-based preemptive strike against Pakistan increases. This might create a false sense of security among the decision-makers of India and in the time of crisis, they might act aggressively. To counter the probability of a first strike, Pakistan must keep a close eye on the shifting nuclear policy of India. Pakistan has built medium and short-range ballistic missiles and MIRV (Multiple Independent Reentry Vehicle), other than that Pakistan has also built sea-based delivery systems such as Babur 3 and SLCM (Submarine Launched Cruise Missile) which ensures a credible second-strike capability. Against India's notion of preemption these would serve as credible and reliant deterrents.

<https://strategic-times.com/blog/2022/02/28/evolving-indian-nuclear-doctrine-and-posture-implications-for-pakistan/>.

Continued Indian atrocities in IIOJK: Role of International Community

Amber Afreen Abid

Kashmir is the unfinished agenda of the sub-continent lingering on for more than 74 years, which needs to be resolved. It is one of the oldest agendas of the United Nations, tabled by India in 1948 as a very sharp and eloquent diplomat Nehru as a time buying technique. The Indian atrocities in Kashmir continue since 1948, when they sent in the forces to Jammu and Kashmir by allegedly making Maharaja Hari Singh the instrument of accession in Simla, in October 1948.

The atrocities, human rights violations, and terrorist activities in Kashmir continue, alone in the last month 27 civilians have been killed, 19 injured, 25 have been abducted, and around 15 houses have been destroyed. The Indian right-wing party BJP during their election campaign openly said that they will resolve the Kashmir issue once they will come to power, which has resulted in the abrogation of Article 370 and 35 A. India is also making demographic changes in Kashmir, and wrongly telling the world that they are doing so for the betterment of Kashmiri people, hence trying their best diplomatic efforts, using their economic clout to present a changed narrative in their favor.

According to the investigative research by UK Law firm Stock White Investigations (SWI), not a single military person has been charged despite more than three decades of Indian army violence and human rights abuses in Jammu and Kashmir. SWI has submitted the report to UK's Metropolitan police which is specifically dedicated to investigating human rights abuses and war crimes. The report has proved that the impunity has been waged against the people of Kashmir under the pretext of the Global War on Terrorism, so the counter-terrorism aides the human rights abuses by India, especially their right to self-determination and justice. The SWI has taken the initiative to expose Indian atrocities and human rights abuses in Jammu and Kashmir and believes that the Kashmiri people should be granted justice under the Internal Law, to which they have taken the initiative in their country. The SWI has filed an application for the arrest of the Indian army Chief ad senior Indian government officials for their alleged roles in war crimes in Jammu and Kashmir. It was based on around 2000 testimonies based on the past few years which show the Indian army's role in war crimes in IIOJK. The SWI believes that it is the commencement of the journey to genuine justice, and the perpetrators should be held responsible and dealt with accordingly no matter who they are.

India has taken concrete steps in Kashmir to which Pakistan has efficiently responded. Prime Minister Imran Khan has highlighted the Indian atrocities in Kashmir in all the international forums. Pakistan also celebrates solidarity day on February 5th every year, and on every other important occasion, Pakistan raises the voice for Kashmir and remind the world and international forums to resolve the issue in accordance with UN resolution esp. that passes on January 5, 1949, by India and Pakistan that guaranteed the Kashmiris their right of self-determination and impartial plebiscite to be conducted there.

Pakistan remains steadfast in its struggle to the resolution of the Kashmir dispute and to their right to self-determination. Pakistan strongly stands by the UN Resolutions, which are 17 in number and has to be anchored by when resolving the Kashmir dispute. Moreover, the international community should impartially play the role in standing by the Kashmiris, immediate population consensus under UN should be carried out in both parts of Kashmir, and partial plebiscite should be done in order to reach the solution in accordance with the will of Kashmiri people.

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