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JULY 2022

Compiled:

Ghulam Mujtaba Haider

Edited by:

Zafar Iqbal Yousafzai

Strategic Vision Institute
Islamabad

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STRATEGIC VISION
I N S T I T U T E

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.

Contents

Editor's Note.....	3
Artificial Intelligence and future warfare.....	5
NATO Bracing for a New Security Competition	7
Pakistan wants peace in space but weaponization is inevitable.....	10
The future of Pakistan's trade cooperation with Central Asia.....	12
NATO in Pakistan's neighbourhood.....	13
An Appraisal of Meta's First Human Rights Report	16
Hybrid Warfare: A New Face of Conflict in South Asia.....	18
Pakistan's Commitment to Strategic Restraint	20
Is Russia's Invasion Of Ukraine Reversing American Retrenchment From Middle East?	22
How to deal with the TTP?	25
Hypersonic missiles proliferation and the risk of nuclear stand off	26
An ideological forecast of India's Hinduised Policy.	28
Pakistan's Energy Security and Role of Nuclear Technology	30
Ballistic Missile Defence Systems in South Asia.....	32
Kautilya's Relevance in Modi's India.....	34

Editor's Note

For past 50 years PAEC has been working indigenously to meet the country's energy requirements despite international embargos. Nuclear energy can play a distinguished role in Pakistan's energy sector because it is cheap, reliable, and is environment friendly as compared to other power generation resources such as oil and gas etc. For any country to make progress it requires uninterrupted supply of energy at an affordable price that is also termed as energy security. Moreover the energy policy of a country has direct bearing on the economic security, environmental security, and national security as well. In Pakistan, nuclear technology is being used in the multiple sectors e.g. agriculture, industry, medicine, environment etc. Out of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), nuclear energy in Pakistan is contributing to 12 SDGs.

On the other hand, Neo-Fascist trends in Indian politics sustained by the far-Right Hindu ultra-nationalism of Hindutva have human security implications at domestic, regional and global levels. Since India enjoys the status of the largest democracy in the world, the rising Hindutva nationalism poses threat to India's tolerant pluralist democratic identity. The legal secular architecture of Indian state has been threatened by mainstreamed Hindutva constitutionalism and the Hindu cultural protectionism. It has been creating multi-dimensional human insecurity issues for lesser Hindus and minority communities in India.

Moreover, Pakistan is facing the TTP issues as their activities have accelerated since the Taliban takeover. Hence, Pakistan shall raise the issue of TTP in the SCO foreign ministers meeting in Tashkent which would highlight this issue and could help it push towards a resolution. Moreover, the formation of the TTT (Tehrik-e-Taliban Tajikistan) could also be highlighted that this militant movement can further spread in Central Asia and beyond. Pakistan shall condition its cooperation with the Taliban to an action against TTP. The Taliban needs Pakistan at the moment and persuading them is not a herculean task if both carrots and sticks are used.

It is hoped that readers will find a good blend of articles focusing on various aspects of the contemporary security discourse in South Asia and beyond. 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, nuclear and strategic issues. Any suggestions for further improvements are welcome. Please see [here](#) the copy of the

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Zafar Iqbal Yousafzai

Editor, SVI Foresight

Artificial Intelligence and the future warfare

Dr. Iqtidar Hussain

AI (Artificial Intelligence) has proved to be a path-breaking experience in many fields in the contemporary world. AI is catching the attention of defense professionals, policymakers, entrepreneurs, and multinational corporations around the globe. The pioneer of AI, John McCarthy defines it as “the science and engineering of making intelligent machines, brilliant computer programs.” The capacity of AI generally refers to the ability of machines to outperform human actions in terms of intelligence, judgment, autonomy, and knowledge discovery.

AI has the potential to develop software applications based on self-learning that replicates the qualities of the human mind, resembling decision-making, problem-solving, reasoning, planning, etc. However, Stephen Hawking, a renowned scientist, viewed AI as both destructive and constructive for human beings at the same time. Similar views are also underlined by experts, developers and practitioners of AI technology.

Impacts of AI technology

AI technology can impact security paradigm developments and may create diverse national and international security challenges. For instance, AI could enhance military actions’ range and pace and make autonomous operations possible. However, it may be unpredictable or vulnerable to eccentric forms of manipulation. Consequently, researchers have different views regarding the influential role of AI in future warfare and special operations. Very few scholars believe that AI will have little impact on national security. In contrast, many researchers, field experts and analysts believe AI will have significant national and global security implications.

In the global context, AI will play a significant role in future warfare; in this regard, strategic rivals the U.S, China, and Russia are making considerable investments in AI technology to achieve national security objectives. Particularly, the U.S ministry of defense is investing multi-billion dollars in integrating AI with its defense system. As such, the U.S, China, Russia, and other states are developing AI applications for military functions and strategic purposes.

In this context, the Beijing administration released a strategy in July 2017 to play a leading role in AI by 2030. Within two months, President Putin says publicly Russian intent to pursue AI

technologies. He said, whoever becomes the leader in this (AI) field will rule the world. Likewise, in January 2018, the U.S national defense strategy identified AI as a powerful technology that will “ensure the U.S will be able to fight and win the future warfare.” Autonomous weapon systems made with the assistance of Artificial Intelligence have been instrumental in enhancing national security. In this regard, militaries could engage AI in multiple ways, including target identification and engagement.

Artificial Intelligence has already been incorporated into the U.S military operations in Syria and Iraq. AI research is ongoing in the military sector, such as robot military, cyber operations, command and control, and intelligence collection. Robots military will be capable of doing perfectly some military operations in future warfare across the globe. However, the ongoing evolution of AI in the military sector will impact strategic stability by changing the aspects of military supremacy regionally and globally. Integrating AI into security matters may increase a new arms race among regional and global rivals and competitors. Furthermore, this integration would significantly affect the nuclear domain in the near future.

In the regional context, India is increasingly interested in the potential advantages of AI for military applications due to its hegemonic aspirations in South Asia. In this regard, India has established a laboratory, “The Center for Artificial Intelligence and Robotics (CAIR)”, under the Defense Research Development Organization (DRDO). CAIR-DRDO aims to integrate AI technology with the Indian defense system. Furthermore, in 2019, the Indian Army Chief Bipin Rawat underlined the full-spectrum integration of AI technology in military systems as soon as possible.

India is collaborating with Japan to employ AI technology in its defense sector

Pakistan has perceived the AI technology-based development in the Indian defense sector. In this regard, to maintain strategic stability in the South Asian region, Pakistan has taken some initiatives in the field of Artificial Intelligence, such as establishing the department of robotics and intelligence machine learning at the NUST and the National Center of Artificial Intelligence (NCAI). However, Pakistan’s ongoing AI technology developments are limited compared to Indian investments. Pakistan should increase its investment in Artificial Intelligence technology to ensure national security and strategic deterrence.

To sum up, AI has several implications for national and global security. It could further blur the lines of warfare. AI-based autonomous weapons will likely cause another arms race among global and regional competitors. Resultantly the state would build the AI-weapon inventory to have the strategic and operational edge.

This would boost the militarization of AI regionally and globally, affecting strategic stability. This may be why the analysts highlight the disadvantages posed by the AI technology renaissance in the defense sector in the current era. AI is a rapidly growing part of technology with considerable implications for global and national security. Indeed, AI will change the face of warfare in the near future.

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<https://www.globalvillagespace.com/artificial-intelligence-and-future-warfare/>

NATO bracing for a new security competition

Hamdan Khan

‘Transformative’ is how NATO’s Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg described the alliance’s 2022 Madrid summit and rightly so. Held soon after the fateful G-7 summit — wherein the leaders from seven industrialized nations vowed to pool \$600 billion to fund infrastructure projects in developing countries in a bid to counter China’s multi-trillion dollar BRI — NATO’s Madrid summit in effect laid the groundwork for the security competition between the USA-led ‘democracies’ and the ‘authoritarian’ strategic competitors — China and Russia.

Unsurprisingly, the happenings in Ukraine topped the agenda, and to enable the beleaguered country ‘prevail as an independent state’, the NATO leadership promised ‘long-term support’ to Ukraine — which includes providing training to the Ukrainian military and supplying them with cutting-edge weapons systems.

Western leaders have been framing Ukraine as the new frontline in the clash between democracy and authoritarianism, and President Biden pledged during the summit to support Ukraine “as long as it takes”. Conversely, the leadership in Moscow has linked the security of Russia with the outcome of the war in Ukraine. The high stakes on both sides suggest that the tussle in Ukraine is

unlikely to end anytime soon and would continue to fuel the security competition between Russia and the USA-led NATO.

Provided the context, it's hardly surprising that NATO's Strategic Concept 2022 describes Russia as the 'most significant and direct threat' to the alliance and has pledged to respond to the 'hostile actions' by Russia in a 'united' way.

Predictably, the USA — the only nation with a global military footprint — is in the vanguard once again. After sending 20,000 additional troops to Europe earlier, President Biden committed during the summit to establish a permanent headquarters of the US Fifth Army Corps in Poland and maintain 3,000 men strong additional rotational brigade and another 2,000 personnel combat team headquartered in Romania. Moreover, POTUS announced to increase the number of Navy destroyers in Spain's Rota Naval Base and send two additional F-35 squadrons to the UK, besides stationing additional air defense capabilities in Germany and Italy. Further, he announced to work towards strengthening USA-NATO interoperability along the alliance's eastern flank bordering Russia.

Apart from the USA, European countries are also scrambling to redress their decades of underinvestment in defense. Days after the Russian invasion, German Chancellor Olaf Scholz announced to increase the defense spending above 2% of the GDP — a ceiling not touched in more than three decades. Given Germany's decades-long pacifist military posture aimed at shaking off the country's aggressive military past, a commitment to such a significant raise — which also includes an instant allocation of €100 billion to modernize the country's shabby armed forces — is indubitably a watershed for Germany's military future.

Other European nations — most notably, Belgium, Romania, Italy, Poland, Norway, and Sweden — soon followed suit pledging to significantly increase their defense spending, and traditionally non-aligned Finland and Sweden underwent a fundamental policy transition to avail protection under NATO's Article V, besides announcing a substantial increase in their military expenses.

Although Russia is categorized as a direct threat to NATO, the primary strategic challenge to the USA-led 'democratic' world is posed by an aggrandizing China. Before the summit, NATO allies wrangled over how to address China in the strategic concept and finally settled on branding the world's second-largest economy as posing 'systemic challenges' to Euro-Atlantic security. However, given the commercial façade of the West's relationship with China — especially that

of Germany and France — a balancing attempt was made by maintaining open the door for ‘constructive engagement’ with Beijing.

Likewise, NATO’s Strategic Concept categorizes the ‘deepening strategic partnership’ between China and Russia as ‘running counter’ to Western interests and values. Remarkably, in a first, the USA’s Pacific allies Japan, Australia, South Korea, and New Zealand were invited to attend a NATO summit, which is a testament to Washington’s stratagem to assemble a global coalition aimed at countering ‘no limits’ partnership between China and Russia. The formation of opposing coalitions led or at least dominated by contesting superpowers provides the harbinger of what could be the new balance of power configuration with global latitude.

Hardly surprising, an increased emphasis on values and rules accompanied by the frequent mentioning of ‘authoritarian actors’ challenging western ideals in NATO’s updated strategic concept and Western leadership’s addresses are reflective of Western governments’ propensity to affix an ideological angle with intrinsically power struggle and to render even starker the binary between the forces of democracy and authoritarianism in a renaissance of the Cold War ideological tussle.

In a blunt departure from its preceding mission statement issued in 2010, which adopted an optimistic tone about arms control and non-proliferation, and envisioned lessened reliance on nuclear weapons in NATO’s strategy — Strategic Concept 2022 categorizes nuclear as the foremost among the mix of capabilities to realize NATO’s fundamental task of ‘deterrence and defense’. Strategic Stability is deservedly described to be undermined by the steady erosion of the arms control framework for which paradoxically the Western world also shares responsibility. Moreover, citing the expansion and modernization of Russian and Chinese nuclear arsenals and their delivery means, the alliance has vowed to undertake all the necessary measures to maintain the credibility and effectiveness of its deterrence capability — besides working to ensure cross-domain integration and coherence of capabilities and activities. The developments bear out that the era of arms control and nuclear reduction is all but over and the world is moving into an unprecedented era of the nuclear arms race, wherein at least three strategic competitors would be vying for nuclear supremacy — unless some highly unlikely arms control framework averts the imminent tripolar arms race, fraught with unforeseen challenges.

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Pakistan wants peace in space but weaponization is inevitable

Akash Shah

At a time when other nuclear states like the United States of America, Russia, China and India are establishing or enhancing the preexisting, designated space forces and assets, it might sound odd for another nuclear state like Pakistan to champion the cause of peaceful space exploration. Pakistan has always maintained that it is against the exploitation of space for military purposes in any shape and form and that it believes space to be a ‘common heritage of mankind. The idea, however, has its merits as ground realities do support the stance that Pakistan has taken but given the geopolitical realities and its own geography that has proved to be more of a bane, eventually, Pakistan might have to follow the course.

Firstly, it is important to assess the merits of Pakistan’s approach to a peaceful space. Being a small country that has faced an existential threat from its much larger eastern neighbor India since independence, Pakistan realizes that the economic cost of national security is simply too high. Since it became a matter of life and death, Pakistan had to go down the path of nuclear weapons after the Indian nuclear tests. The national resolve culminated in establishing deterrence stability in South Asia. However, the country has faced economic and diplomatic repercussions for detonating the nuclear devices in response to Indian tests in 1998.

Space exploration is an expensive venture

Cost per launch has plummeted in recent decades’ courtesy of innovation in the space industry, still, the average per launch cost is around \$62 million. It costs \$1200per pound of the payload that a rocket carries, notwithstanding the humongous costs associated with research and development of the payload worthy of sending into space. And to put things in perspective, Pakistan’s entire budget allocated for its space research agency, SUPARCO, stand at nearly \$38 million or 8.7 Billion PKR for FY 2022-23. The cost itself would not have been a problem had the country’s economy been thriving.

But the truth is that the situation is as bad as it could get and it has never been in a state where substantial resources could be allocated for the space program, either civilian or military. Hence,

it is logical to think that Pakistan would want to prevent the weaponization of outer space because if the precedent of the nuclear race is an indicator, once it becomes an existential matter, every country would opt for guns instead of bread. It sets the country onto a path where the common people suffer the most as scarce resources are redirected towards defense. Hence Pakistan prioritizes utilizing the limited resources it has to explore space for much-needed socioeconomic development.

Unfortunately for Pakistan, its geography does not complement the intended approach toward space. It borders India and China, the revisionist states on a regional and global scale respectively. It is evident from the technological build-up that both these states are eyeing space control. Revisionist China conducted an Anti-satellite (ASAT) test in 2007 to showcase its ability to target any space-based critical infrastructure if need be. In response, India conducted its own ASAT test in 2019 which many experts foresaw ever since China's ASAT test.

Pakistan is apparently the last link of the strategic chain in which the United States and China influence each other's strategic behavior, India follows the lead and eventually, Pakistan has to reluctantly react. Anything India tests considering a threat from China, might not exclusively be used against China only. Furthermore, India has been continuously improving its space-based ISR capabilities. It has long-term strategic implications for Pakistan in terms of its nuclear deterrence.

In 2011, National Command Authority (NCA) approved Pakistan Space Vision 2047. In his speech, then SUPARCO chairman highlighted the mission statement as “space as a strategic sector, exploit all aspects of space science, technology and its application for national well-being and national security.” The fast-paced transition in space technologies for military purposes in Southern Asia might eventually lead Pakistan to follow the suit of its neighbors and pursue the requisite course for its national security needs.

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<https://www.globalvillagespace.com/pakistan-wants-peace-in-space-but-weaponization-is-inevitable/>

The future of Pakistan's trade cooperation with Central Asia

Zafar Iqbal Yousafzai

Pakistan trade volume with Central Asia is less than \$1 billion despite vast opportunities in the central Asian region. Likewise, Pakistan could not exploit energy-rich Central Asia for its energy needs. The two energy projects: 1) CASA-1000 that has to extend to Afghanistan and Pakistan to export hydroelectricity has yet to be completed; 2) TAPI (Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan and India) gas pipeline is facing issues due to the ongoing turmoil and uncertainty in the region, especially Afghanistan. However, the US withdrawal and the Taliban coming to power has brought hope in Pakistan to enhance its trade with the Central Asian states.

When the Central Asian States got independence following the disintegration of the Soviet Union, Pakistan wanted to have access to the region as a market as well as to cater its energy needs from the region. Pakistan's cooperation with the Taliban in the 1990s was one of the reasons it wanted to secure safe access to Central Asia. Pakistan had successfully passed some of its convoys to Central Asia in late 1994 however, the prevailing chaos and uncertainty did not allow the trade to continue. In the last three decades, there has been very slow growth in Pakistan's trade with Central Asia.

There are some core issues that do not allow Pakistan's trade with Central Asian states as well as Central Asia's use of Karachi port. First of all, security is the main reason that hinders trade cooperation between Pakistan and Central Asian states. Afghanistan is the gateway for Pakistan to Central Asia and its fragile security and instability greatly affect Pakistan's trade with CARs. Afghanistan has been unstable since Daoud staged a coup against his cousin King Zahir Shah in 1973 and declared Afghanistan a republic. Since then, several phases of instability and war have happened to Afghanistan which has greatly affected its neighbors, especially Pakistan. First Sardar Daoud was assassinated as a result of the Saur Revolution when the People Democratic party of Afghanistan took the charge. The next decade was taken by the Soviet invasion followed by the civil war and Taliban rule till 2001. However, the US invasion of Afghanistan did not make Afghanistan stable but war kept continuing.

Secondly, the access to Central Asia and Central Asian states' access to the Pakistani ports have been costly due to the insufficient infrastructure that keeps them restricted to enhance their trade and cooperation. Thirdly, the cost of the transportation is also an issue in using the Pakistani

ports. As compared to the Pakistani ports, Iran's Bandar Abbas is near to the Central Asian states that cut its costs thus making it viable for CARs to utilize it. All these issues not only keep Central Asia away from using Pakistani ports but also keep Pakistan aloof from access to the Central Asian markets.

Hence, Pakistan needs to take appropriate measures to cope with these challenges and remove hurdles. Since the US has withdrawn from Afghanistan, the war has ended and there is relatively peace in Afghanistan. Thus, Pakistan needs to persuade the Taliban to provide access to Central Asia in addition to providing security. Pakistan can also cooperate with China to enhance means of communication and infrastructure in Afghanistan that access could be feasible for trade. China is planning to extend CPEC to Afghanistan that will be beneficial to give Afghanistan and Central States access to its ports. Central Asian states also want Afghanistan a stable country as they are also affected like Pakistan by Afghanistan instability.

Hence, a regional approach is needed to stabilize Afghanistan that will help the regional countries to connect for trade purposes and utilize one another's potentials.

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<https://criticaloutsider.com/2022/07/26/the-future-of-pakistans-trade-cooperation-with-central-asia/>

NATO in Pakistan's neighbourhood

Komal Khan

The US withdrawal from Afghanistan in the Kabul fall would admittedly impact NATO's capacity and future strategy for its overseas intervention beyond NATO premises. NATO's shift to a partnerships strategy indicates NATO's intention to fill in the emerging partners as policing states for the United States in the East, including India specifically in the Indian Ocean Region.

The international environment is witnessing strategic international competition for restructuring the international order in a transitioning post-bipolar world; therefore, pushing the United States to reassure its former centrality primarily in the Euro-Atlantic and the Asian regions. This necessarily brings into front NATO as a primary agency to emphasize the political component of the US-led multilateral potential alliance to establish the transatlantic link; however, extending

its operability beyond its traditionally allocated regional domains under cooperative security and crisis management mechanisms.

The NATO 2030 Report and the Strategic Concept 2022 outline its fixation with China as an identified adversary and the military power having security implications, thereby constructing a new reality to which the alliance and the international order have to adapt to militarily. The United States is the basic stakeholder in reviewing the NATO agenda for European allies as evidenced in the Trump administration's anti-China drive in NATO since 2017. The driving factors have been Europe's growing obsession with strategic autonomy and speculations regarding European defense and the credibility of NATO. Moreover, China's infiltration into European affairs has also been proven by its occupation of the US-EU dialogue in technology and bilateral trade.

Understanding the matter better

To meet the purpose, the Strategic Concept 2022 provides for a 360-degree approach implemented via partnerships in the North, the South, and the East. In this regard, after the London Summit in 2019, Secretary General of NATO, Stoltenberg initiated the NATO 2030 process to reflect on NATO's political dimensions in adaptation to the international competitive environment; wherein the themes in seminars focused on 'deterrence, defence, foreseen challenges of advanced technology, rule-based order, international stability and partnerships and the Russia and China were declared as challenging powers.

The US withdrawal from Afghanistan in the Kabul fall would admittedly impact NATO's capacity and future strategy for its overseas intervention beyond NATO premises. NATO's shift to a partnerships strategy indicates NATO's intention to fill in the emerging partners as policing states for the United States in the East, including India specifically in the Indian Ocean Region. For instance, the Madrid Summit held on June 27-30 included Japan and Australia as the first-time attendees. NATO extension in the Asian region has implications for the regional strategic stability in China's neighbourhood, and unfavorably for Pakistan as well because strengthening India ultimately increases the power imbalance in South Asia.

The interoperability mechanisms led by NATO in the Asia Pacific include: First, the NATO partners' inter-operability. In this, Britain and France have been extending their maritime presence in the Indo-Pacific. Second, is NATO's engagement with the non-NATO members: notably Australia, Japan, and South Korea. NATO-India interoperability is significant with respect to Pakistan's regional security. India already partnered with NATO in the Shared Awareness and Deconfliction (SHADE) counter-piracy operations off the coast of Somalia as part of naval extension policy.

The way forward

The resurging drive for strengthening democracy and the cases of democratic erosion in Hong Kong, Ukraine, and Taiwan incorporate the US allies and partners particularly Japan, Australia, South Korea, and India as non-NATO partners in international security and order preservation. Notably, the precedent has been set by incorporating Pakistan as a non-NATO ally in restoring democracy in Afghanistan. Hence, the possibility of India's incorporation in NATO's multilateral operations is inevitable, significantly, when India has already been assigned a key role in the containment of China in the Indian Ocean and Asia Pacific region.

In 1999, Samuel Huntington in the 'The Clash of Civilizations' derives the relationship between conjunctural events occurring in international politics and the consequent structural changes incorporated in the US foreign policy while maintaining the core continuity, simultaneously, and that is security of the national interest. From Clinton's administration to Biden's foreign policy, stable coalitions, multilateralism, and consensus building have been coherent policies; however, Biden is considering the crisis management strategy through multilateral coalitions as a viable option for promoting the US interests.

Therefore, NATO's Strategic Concept 2022 in the context of China's containment policies may be taken as a reflection of Biden's Indo-Pacific Strategy 2022 which nominates India as a credible partner, a militarily advanced policing state, a naval power and an economic market for the transatlantic community in Asia.

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<https://www.globalvillagespace.com/nato-in-pakistans-neighbourhood/>

An appraisal of Meta's first human rights report

Zukhruf Amin

Earlier this month, Facebook released its first annual human rights report, after a long period of facing accusations that it had turned a blind eye to online abuses that simultaneously fueled violence in states including India. The report, which is a by-product of a rigorous study performed in 2020 and 2021, includes a short summary of the controversial Human Rights Impact Assessment (HRIA) of India.

The assessment was commissioned by Meta Group in 2019, on potential human rights violations in India and other countries on social media platforms. The human rights groups including Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International initially demanded the detailed report of India's assessment to be released – accusing Meta of brushing the matter under the carpet. The rights groups have repeatedly warned about online hate speech and misinformation through social media platforms, fueling tensions in India.

Understanding the matter better

A US-based law firm Foley Hoag LLP conducted the HRIA study on India, reiterating that Facebook and other social media platforms were likely to be involved in grave human rights issues – caused by third parties. As discussed by Foley Hoag, the range of these issues in India from March 2020 to June 2021, including limiting the freedom of expression and information, third-party advocacy of hatred that stoked up hostility, violence followed by discrimination, and violation of privacy and security rights of individuals.

In November 2021, a report published by The New York Times mentioned an internal Facebook study from 2019, which highlighted that the news feeds of users in India were under the risk of polarized nationalist content, and misinformation, leading to violence. The controversial content moderation by Meta has also raised concerns about how it handles misinformation and persistent hate speech on its social media platforms. The tech giant and its platforms' failure to contain the spread of inflammatory content, particularly misinformation and hate speech, has manifested serious damage in India.

Hence, it questions the credibility of how the tech giant scrutinizes its hate speech policies in today's world, especially if the accused belongs to the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). For some

human rights activists, officials of Meta are too close to BJP. The business prospects between two are significant. So, the company's relationship with BJP is in contrast to the former objective of removing hate speech from its platforms.

It is noteworthy that India is Meta's biggest market, providing it a maximum number of users. According to data, India ranks second in terms of social media users. It has reached 755 million social media users in 2022. The figure is expected to increase up to 1.17 billion by 2027. Considering the outreach, these platforms have become increasingly important in Indian politics; especially after Modi came to power. In India, where BJP routinely employs inflammatory rhetoric against the Muslim minority, misinformation and hate speech can potentially transcend into violence.

The human rights groups such as the Committee to Protect Journalists, Reporters Without Borders, International Federation of Journalists, CIVICUS, Amnesty International, and Human Rights Watch have raised concerns that the targeting of journalists by the authorities, coupled with stifling dissent, emboldens Hindu fanatics to intimidate and harass journalists and online users, critical of BJP. Many women journalists in India, particularly those who are critical of Modi e.g., Rana Ayyub, also face intimidation, harassment and backlash on social media platforms.

Not only this, during a surge in the COVID-19 pandemic 2021, the government under the Information Technology Act, had directed the social media platforms to remove content that echoed poor handling of the pandemic. In February 2021, BJP successfully pushed Twitter to block more than 500 accounts, the majority of which were related to the farmers' protests.

Considering the nexus between Meta and BJP, and the former's reluctance to release the full report of HRIA, it is perceived that the tech giant aims to evade accountability and criticism. The rise in human rights abuses in India point toward Meta's destabilizing role, it plays in whitewashing violence, hatred, and hate speech across India. The report fails to provide detailed insights on the actual human rights impact in India and any effective recommendations for reviewing and enacting its privacy policies. For a country with the second-highest number of social media users, it is important to ensure transparency around the business model. It is crucial for the company to closely examine the gaps in its policies that incite violence, misinformation and hate speech.

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<https://www.globalvillagespace.com/an-appraisal-of-metas-first-human-rights-report/>

Hybrid warfare: A new face of conflict in South Asia

Amber Afreen Abid

Hybrid warfare or hybrid threat seems to be the emerging modality in the changing nature of warfare. In the nuclear era, more attention has been given to the sub-conventional conflicts, because of the lethality of the nuclear weapons; the deterrence being created by the nuclear-weapon states prevents other nuclear-weapon states to wage a total war.

Furthermore, international legal bindings of prohibiting the use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon states eliminate the probability of an all-out war. Thus, the thrust of war has been envisioned by revisionist actors in the form of a new kind of warfare, predominantly through cyber-attacks and subversion, fake news campaigns, sponsoring of proxy forces, or even through economic blackmail. Hybrid warfare is a challenge, which brings into play an array of tactics and strategies thereby inflicting harm to the adversary, whilst exploiting the revolution in technological affairs. It targets the vulnerabilities of any society, with the aim to divide and dissuade the population, undermines the key institutions, and even deteriorates the bond between the states and international organizations. In a nutshell, hybrid warfare is a full-spectrum of war, which encompasses both physical and psychological aspects of the adversary.

Pakistan has also been the victim of hybrid warfare. Since its inception, India has been trying to wage a war or indulge in a conflict with Pakistan, in one way or the other. India is sparing no effort to target Pakistan at the domestic level which encompasses all the political, social, economic, and religious factors. In this regard, it has been leaving no stone unturned in defaming and maligning Pakistan in the international arena through its fake propaganda. Pakistani society is an amalgam of ethnic groups, sectarian faction, and cultural blocs, that are being exploited by India and used as a fault line as a grey-zone in conflict. India is operating a radicalized militant group in Pakistan and is fueling the unrest in Baluchistan. In pursuit of this, Afghanistan's land is being exercised by India in its endeavor to destabilize Pakistan by operating terrorist organizations for launching sub-conventional warfare inside Pakistan.

Considering the spillover of untrue and fallacious information, the complexity of warfare has tremendously being increased. India is involved in various operations against Pakistan in order to defame and discredit the country, in its pursuit to isolate it internationally as well. Its conspiracy of defaming and maligning Pakistan has also been put out in the EU DisinfoLab Report of 2020. According to that report, India is operating the largest ever fake media network, with 750+ fake media websites, and resurrecting the dead scholars, and propagating the false news in the international media. Moreover, it misused the politicians who genuinely want to defend human rights, and provided platform to far-right politicians when convergent objectives were pursued. Moreover, India is also keenly involved in terrorists and separatist activities, and trying its level best to sabotage the economic project of Pakistan- the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), which certainly is a headache to the adversary. India is using a variety of subversive tactics of hybrid warfare, in order to destabilize Pakistan both externally and internally. Pakistan has encountered many security challenges successfully but has been prone to the non-traditional security challenge-the hybrid warfare, waged by India. Therefore, in the contemporary state of affairs, Pakistan must identify and efficiently counter the gradually escalating non-traditional threats such as the hybrid threats.

There is a need to pen down a grand strategy for countering all the traditional and non-traditional threats posed by the adversary. Pakistan needs to devise a comprehensive strategy to counter the aggression of hybrid warfare. It is appropriate for Pakistan to develop Hybrid Warfare and Stratagem Centre, with its aim to address policymakers of the threats posed by the hybrid warfare, develop metrics to get a grip on events, and to make them susceptible of the threats and cognizance for curbing them in the future.

Media, on the other hand, is seen as one of the lethal and a sophisticated weapon to target the enemy's will and exploits its weaknesses. It is used to target the opponent population by changing their perception regarding their government. Therefore, media has to play a pivotal role in curbing the fake news propaganda and misinformation, as it is the most significant tool used in propagating bogus information; besides, media should strictly promote Pakistan's narrative in fighting against this ubiquitous threat.

Furthermore, the law enforcement agencies should work in coordination with each other and should be properly trained and equipped to fight against this abstract threat, additionally, they

should be able enough to smartly utilize Artificial Intelligence as well. The government must provide adequate awareness and vigilance to the local population of the country, in order to make them aware of the actions and ill-will of the adversary in its attempt to dissect the society, as the objective is to target the common people. Hence, the cautious and observant society is the first and foremost step in the line of defense against this new challenge, and the entire country needs to play the crucial role in curbing the spiteful act of the foe.

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<https://criticaloutsider.com/2022/07/29/hybrid-warfare-a-new-face-of-conflict-in-south-asia/>

Pakistan's commitment to strategic restraint

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 preemptive 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.

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Is Russia's invasion of Ukraine reversing American retrenchment from Middle East?

Hamdan Khan

In mid-2021, media reports claimed that the Biden administration was withdrawing military assets from the Middle East — which included removing missile defense systems from countries like Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, and Saudi Arabia and reducing the number of fighter jets deployed in the region. In September 2021, even while the attacks by Houthi rebels continued, it was reported that the USA has removed Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) and Patriot missile defense batteries from Saudi Arabia — the latter were deployed to bolster the kingdom's defenses after the attack on Saudi oil facilities in 2019 blamed on Iran.

Surprising it might have seemed, the retrenchment from the Middle East was in accordance with Washington's changed geostrategic and geo-economic priorities. For years, the energy riches of the Middle East and the security of Israel drove Washington's deep involvement in the region, further added to by the war against terrorism. The imperatives started to slacken during the last decade, leading to the Middle East's diminished significance to the West. First, the Shale Revolution in the USA drastically reduced the superpower's dependence on Middle Eastern energy resources; although, maintaining a smooth flow of oil from the Persian Gulf so as to avert a global oil price shock endured as Washington's concern. In the meantime, the European Union (EU) increased its energy imports from Russia, accounting for almost a quarter of the bloc's overall energy consumption in 2020. Second, a combination of peace accords with Arab nations

and large-scale military modernization and expansion mitigated the security threats for Israel. Third, exhausted by years of war on terrorism and responding to the geostrategic challenge posed by China, Washington sought to reorient its priorities toward Asia-Pacific — the primary theatre for the superpower rivalry.

Fast forward to 2022, the Russian invasion of Ukraine has spurred a global energy crisis with consumers facing skyrocketing prices worldwide and the EU countries aiming to fill up their storage capacity before the winter looms, in the wake of apprehensions of a gas shutdown from Russia. Although EU nations have announced to end their energy imports from Russia by 2030, an instant gas shutdown by Putin would exponentially exacerbate the energy crisis in Europe with severe economic and social implications besides throwing into disarray the global energy market. Not surprisingly, the Middle East is back in the limelight — at least in the foreseeable future — owing to its vast energy resources, which provide the most feasible and readily available alternative to energy imports from Russia — apart from doubling down by the EU on efforts to transition to renewable sources of energy.

Considering the circumstances, there was no surprise that energy likely dominated the agenda for President Biden’s first visit to the Middle East in his current role. Before the trip, in an Op-Ed for the Washington Post, Biden underscored the vitality of Middle Eastern energy resources for mitigating the impact of the Russian invasion of Ukraine on global energy supplies and during the trip, urged GCC +3 leaders — who gathered in Saudi Arabia for a regional summit of Gulf countries also attended by Biden — to pump more oil into the global oil market to keep the energy prices low. Despite that no firm public commitment was made by Arab countries to increase their oil production, President Biden adopted an optimistic tone, and the Senior State Department Energy Security Advisor also sounded confident that the oil-rich Gulf nations would take “a few more steps” in the weeks ahead to increase oil production — a claim he premised on President Biden’s conversations with the Gulf leaders.

Notwithstanding the intangible outcomes, the visit did break the ice between President Biden and de factor Saudi ruler Crown Prince Muhammad Bin Salman — with whom POTUS hitherto avoided interaction and on his campaign trail, vowed to turn Saudi Arabia into a “pariah” state for suspicions that the Crown Prince might have ordered the killing of Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi.

In his address to the GCC + 3 Summit meeting, Biden tried to assuage regional concerns about the USA's retrenchment from the region and assured that Washington would remain an active and engaged partner in the Middle East. Alluding to the emerging global challenges, Biden asserted that American interests are "closely interwoven" with the Middle East. Besides, doubling down on the American leadership, the President pledged not to "walk away" from the region, leaving the void to be filled by the rivals — China, Russia, and Iran.

The latter concern by the POTUS is not unfounded. China — employing its economic statecraft — has made deep ingress in the Middle East by entering into various types of partnerships with regional countries within the long hierarchy of Chinese partnerships. China is the biggest importer of Middle Eastern oil, and the economic interdependence between the Middle East and China has grown massively over the years. Meanwhile, Russia, after getting militarily involved in the ongoing civil war in Syria, has also been steadily increasing its footprint in the Middle East — overtures reciprocated enthusiastically even by the Gulf States that have traditionally been aligned with the USA.

President Biden's recommitment to the Middle East, for now, has set in motion the reversal of the USA's retrenchment from the region, which is not likely to overturn until the EU countries find reliable alternatives to fulfill their energy needs. Nonetheless, the damage inflicted to the USA's influence in the region and reputation as a reliable partner while the retrenchment was being attempted is unlikely to be remedied. Provided the growing influence of China and Russia, the USA is no longer the dominant player in the region while the Gulf States are also diversifying their geostrategic and geo-economic options, which point toward the Middle East turning into yet another contested zone for the intensifying strategic competition between the USA-led Western bloc and the China-Russia entente.

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<https://www.eurasiareview.com/23072022-is-russias-invasion-of-ukraine-reversing-american-retrenchment-from-middle-east-oped/>

How to deal with the TTP?

Zafar Iqbal Yousafzai

The TTP-Pakistan negotiations due to the stringent demands on the part of TTP are in impasse. Pakistan recently sent a 13-member delegation headed by renown Deobandi scholar Mufti Taqi Usmani to persuade the TTP to soften their demands including the reversal of the FATA merger however, they could not budge.

The emergence of TTP, one of the Pakistan's deadliest organization in 2007 is still strong and keep presence in our backyard, Afghanistan despite several operations by the Pakistani government in the tribal belt of Pakistan. Both carrots and sticks have failed to resolve the issue. Several peace agreements were made previously yet all failed to yield the desired results.

Since long, Pakistan has been asking Kabul to take action against the outlawed outfit, the TTP that has been carrying attacks inside Pakistan. However, the previous Afghan government did not take any actions against them as TTP is not an issue for Afghanistan. However, the return of the Taliban gave a false hope to Pakistan that they will take action against the TTP and hence this menace will be eliminated. However, the situation proved more disastrous when attacks on the Pakistani security forces heightened following the Taliban takeover.

Since May 2022, Pakistan has once again started serious efforts to negotiate with the TTP and bring them to mainstream. President Dr. Alvi once offered amnesty to the TTP if they renounce their militant activities however, that could not bring the desired results. Likewise, Pakistan sent tribal elders' delegation, its government officials and now religious scholars to talk to TTP to soften their demands and negotiate with the government of Pakistan. However, there is no significant development out of these efforts.

The question is how to deal with this issue? When Taliban freed all the prisoners from jails across Afghanistan after they came to power, many TTP leaders and members got freed in it. That move provided strength to them and they came back to their positions. In such a situation, a coherent policy was the need of the hour which could help settling the issue.

Pakistan could pressurize the Taliban in many ways to take action against TTP. First, Pakistan could adopt a carrot and stick policy to persuade the Taliban for taking action against TTP. Pakistan could offer them aid as well as political support with string: action against TTP.

Secondly, Pakistan could highlight that the Taliban have pledged in the Doha agreement that they will not allow the Afghan soil to be used against any state while the TTP is using the Afghan soil against Pakistan. Hence, it's a blatant violation of the Doha agreement.

Similarly, there could be signaling in the Tribal belt in shape of forces mobilization that the government intends to launch another operation if negotiations do not succeed with TTP. Likewise, there could be focus on the border management to curb the movement of the TTP members from Afghanistan. Hence, these signals will send a message to TTP that there are sticks as well with the carrots Pakistan is offering to them. So, they will focus on a negotiated settlement rather than such demands which is even not possible for the government to fulfil it.

Pakistan shall also raise the issue of TTP in the SCO foreign ministers meeting in Tashkent which would highlight this issue and could help it push towards a resolution. Moreover, the formation of the TTT (Tehrik-e-Taliban Tajikistan) could also be highlighted that this militant movement can further spread in Central Asia and beyond. Pakistan shall condition its cooperation with the Taliban to an action against TTP. The Taliban needs Pakistan at the moment and persuading them is not a herculean task if both carrots and sticks are used.

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Hypersonic missiles proliferation and the risk of nuclear stand off

Akash Shah

The United States of America has successfully tested two hypersonic missiles developed by Lockheed Martin. The Air-Launched Rapid Response (ALRR) weapon underwent a booster test which successfully attained a speed greater than Mach 5.0, the threshold for a weapon to be categorized as 'hypersonic'. A spokesperson of the project in a statement said that in the next stage, "all-out" tests will be conducted, referring to the warhead. The development comes a month after of similar unsuccessful attempt. Apart from Lockheed Martin, other weapon system manufacturers like Northrop Grumman and Raytheon also claim to have built hypersonic delivery systems.

In recent decades, China, Russia, and the United States are in a race to build better and faster hypersonic missiles. Although ballistic missiles, especially Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles or ICBMs, do attain hypersonic speed during their flight course, their predictable flight path makes them vulnerable to interception. Hypersonic Cruise Missiles (HCM) on the other hand could fly very fast and very low, to avoid detection from enemy radar. They also have the ability to maneuver during the flight which them almost impossible to take down hence making them even more lethal.

Understanding the matter better

A highly significant development in this regard came last year when China tested its Hypersonic Glide Vehicle in tandem with the Fractional Orbital Bombardment System, designed to send objects into low Earth orbit. Both these technologies are not new per se, but their combination is something that makes the development unique in certain ways. The test caught the world's attention, especially in the Northern hemisphere. Since then, the policymakers in Washington have made it one of their top priorities to bridge the gap in the hypersonic arsenal with China and Russia.

It is pertinent to ask what makes this kind of weapon so unique that every country which has real or perceived threats outside its borders is rushing to build an inventory of its own. The answer however is fairly simple these missiles increase the likelihood of hitting the target more often than other types of missiles which could rather easily be intercepted.

But the same advantage, in reality, increases the risk of a nuclear standoff multiple folds. Hypersonic missiles are capable of carrying both conventional and nuclear warheads and since they can beat, dodge or outrun the interceptor missiles, countries in possession might be tempted to use them for counterforce targeting and hitting the missile silos of the enemy. It puts the country on the receiving end of a use-it-or-lose-it dilemma.

These weapons put the survivability of the nuclear arsenal at risk

There just wouldn't be enough time to wait and confirm if the missile is carrying a conventional or nuclear warhead. A second strike could be launched within minutes and it could turn into Armageddon in no time. Conflict in Ukraine has made the discussion of a nuclear standoff even

more frequent since the end of the cold war. And the hypersonic missile tests are not helping the cause at all.

This is precisely the reason why Pakistan insisted on the international community to take a harder stance when supersonic, 'rouge' Brahmos missile crashed into Pakistan. Ideally, such proliferation needs to stop which hampers the already fragile crisis management regimes and protocol in South Asia. As per a congressional report, India is among the few countries that are actively involved in the development of hypersonic missiles.

With a history of continuous anti-Pakistan rhetoric from its policymakers and, as evident from the Brahmos incident, an incapable or incompetent one may argue, force structure, India in possession of hypersonic missiles is only going to challenge the notion the deterrence stability in South Asia. However, like countless other things, the looming threat to international peace once again originates and expands from the global north. And for the threat to be effectively countered, the efforts would have to start from the same region.

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<https://www.globalvillagespace.com/hypersonic-missiles-proliferation-and-the-risk-of-nuclear-stand-off/>

An ideological forecast of India's Hinduised policy

Komal Khan

The Neo-Fascist trends in Indian politics sustained by the far-Right Hindu ultra-nationalism of Hindutva have human security implications at domestic, regional and global levels. Since India enjoys the status of the largest democracy in the world, the rising Hindutva nationalism poses threat to India's tolerant pluralist democratic identity. The legal secular architecture of Indian state has been threatened by mainstreamed Hindutva constitutionalism and the Hindu cultural protectionism. It has been creating multi-dimensional human insecurity issues for lesser Hindus and minority communities in India.

The ultranationalist far-right worldview' propounded by Hindu extremist organizations like the RSS and the BJP has been serving the colonial legacy of 'divide and rule' in modern India. Even Congress holds the responsibility for contributing to this divide that has resulted in human

insecurity in India. This very political projection of India as an ‘exclusively authentic Hindu nation’ is the cause of foreseen identity crisis that has been developing in India – the state which is already highly divided on religio-ethnic and communal lines. The Neo-Hindutva identity politics has been ‘Hinduising’ the Indian social fabric, its organizational structure and the Indian polity. The purpose of this construction is to make popular gains.

However, domestically, it has human security implications that include social and political radicalizations, forced religious conversions, annexation, demographic manipulations, and identity crisis moved via cultural eliminations, human lynching, hate crimes and violence, human right violations, and even genocide. India’s worsening record of human right violations, with special reference to the Kashmir issue, is undeniable a cause of global concern.

This identity crisis has spill-over effects in neighbouring states as well, like Nepal, Sri-Lanka, Bangladesh, Myanmar and Pakistan as well. India’s encroachments of the sovereign rights of Sri-Lanka, Nepal, Bhutan, and Bangladesh through bilateral defense and security agreements have been the cause of political, economic, and social instability within the region. These states constitute the region which India claims under the vision of Hindu Rashtra. India’s ‘policy of Hindu Rashtra’ implemented through various modes of Hybrid Warfare has challenged the human security in South Asia and beyond.

The aggressive Indian foreign policy against regional actors like Pakistan and China is executed via on and off conflicts, mini wars and annexations, as in case of Kashmir, hence leading to humanitarian crisis spill overs beyond India’s borders. Moreover, India’s politics of proliferation of xenophobia, as in the form of Islamophobia and anti-China narratives, has found like-minded agents abroad. Hence, this politics of identity in India is a significant contributor to intensification of ethno-religious and racial extremism at global level.

As per Hindutva ideology, the strategic autonomy of India is being conditioned to the use of force in international relations. Moreover, the strategic occupation of India as a regional policing agent, aimed at making absolute gains against regional rivals, on behalf of competing global hegemon, is a trending sentimental populist resolution in Indian politics.

This war-mongering in Indian foreign policy is threat to human security amid growing populism at regional and global level. Notably, the human security crisis caused by the politics of Hindutva is in violation of the international humanitarian law. Lastly but most significantly, as

noted by the Commission on Human Security in 2003, security is the fundamental obligation of state. However, in case of India, the state has repeatedly failed to do so. Even to extremity, Indian state has repeatedly become agent of human insecurity for its people. Therefore, Indian state and the international community as well needs to prioritize and assist in sustaining ‘human security’ over the state security in domestic, regional and global politics.

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<https://criticaloutsider.com/2022/07/29/an-ideological-forecast-of-indias-hinduised-policy/>

Pakistan’s energy security and role of nuclear technology

Sher Bano

For past 50 years PAEC has been working indigenously to meet the country’s energy requirements despite international embargos. Nuclear energy can play a distinguished role in Pakistan’s energy sector because it is cheap, reliable, and is environment friendly as compared to other power generation resources such as oil and gas etc. For any country to make progress it requires uninterrupted supply of energy at an affordable price that is also termed as energy security. Moreover the energy policy of a country has direct bearing on the economic security, environmental security, and national security as well. In Pakistan, nuclear technology is being used in the multiple sectors e.g. agriculture, industry, medicine, environment etc. Out of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), nuclear energy in Pakistan is contributing to 12 SDGs. This is reflective of the importance that the nuclear technology carries for the socio-economic development of the country. Pakistan accords utmost importance to nuclear security and technology regulations and considers it a prime national responsibility. Over the years Pakistan has established a comprehensive and effective national nuclear regulatory regime which covers nuclear material and other radioactive materials and associated activities.

For any country to make progress, it requires uninterrupted supply of energy at an affordable price that is also termed as energy security. It means that the energy resources that should be accessible, affordable, and must be reliable when required. It is important because there is a direct relationship between Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and the energy consumption of a country. Currently, Pakistan’s GDP per person is US \$1100 to 1200. The energy policy has direct bearing on the economic security. A country cannot progress without accessible and

affordable energy. It also has direct implications on the environmental security; because reliance on fossil fuels e.g. coal etc. will have adverse effect on the climate change and temperature would rise. Consequently, all these factors combined will have direct bearing on the national security as well because if the country is not economically strong than it becomes difficult for it to maintain its defence apparatus.

Pakistan had faced an energy crisis during the previous decade primarily because of a huge gap in the supply and demand of electricity. According to the 2011-2012 report of the Economic Survey of Pakistan, the country was losing around USD 4.8 billion of Gross Domestic Production (GDP) annually for almost five years due to the energy crisis. According to few scholars, energy shortage also lies within the energy mix of Pakistan, which relies excessively on thermal sources (natural gas, oil, and coal), causing high electricity prices. Today at the end of the decade energy crisis in Pakistan is mitigated by planting several new energy generation plants (some of them were part of CPEC), and according to the most recent estimates of April 2020, the energy generation capacity in Pakistan is 35,972 megawatts as compared to 33,452 megawatts of April 2019. In one year, Pakistan's electricity generation capacity saw a growth rate of 7.5 %. At present, energy demand in Pakistan is 25,000 megawatts; however, transmission and distribution capacity is only 22,000 megawatts, which explains interruptions in power supply in the country. Through nuclear power, Pakistan is generating 8% electricity in total energy mix with five operational nuclear power plants, and now KANUPP-2 would also be included.

Pakistan's adherence to international practices of nuclear safety and security is evident from the fact that for the past 48 years, Pakistan is producing electricity through nuclear power reactors, and not a single major accident has occurred so far. IAEA has declared that the KANUPP-2 reactor ACP-1000 meets the safety standards of the 'Generic Reactor Safety Review' (GRSR). The review of ACP-1000 by the IAEA shows that the reactor has active and passive technology and that it fulfills the safety standards and requirements. Moreover, since March 2017, this reactor has been under IAEA safeguards. Such strong credentials are no doubt an acknowledgment of Pakistan's efforts for peaceful uses of nuclear technology. At the same time, it would help Pakistan to meet the energy demand through a more peaceful, secure, and safe use of nuclear energy.

Hence to attain a sustainable future, Pakistan is increasing its reliance on more clean energy alternatives. Pakistan is on its way to building more nuclear power plants to increase further

nuclear power's role in overcoming future energy needs. Pakistan would also need international cooperation to meet its goal to have self-sufficiency in nuclear power and further develop its nuclear power industry.

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Ballistic missile defence systems in South Asia

Amber Afreen Abid

The actual use of nuclear weapons by the two South Asian nuclear rivals has been barred since overt nuclearization and the sense of mutual vulnerability is there. The mutual vulnerability entails that the two states has the power and capability to attack each other but due to the fear of terrible relation in response, they refrained from indulging in such activity, and the nuclear deterrence prevails, which becomes the reason for regional stability. India, however in its pursuit to attain regional hegemony and prestige, trying to remove this sense of mutual vulnerability by going for the aggressive military force postures and attainment of technology.

India intends for a multi-layered defensive shield, and has indigenously developed a part of it, and has attained the technology form US, Russia, and Israel as well in order to complete its four-layered defensive shield, in its capital New Delhi and Mumbai. This pursuit of BMD system can create a false sense of security in the minds of Indian policy makers, and that could destabilize the region as they could go for any aggressive action against Pakistan, with the intention of defeating enemy at every level.

Besides the procurement of Israeli Iron Dome system, India has acquired Russian S-400 Triumph Air Defence System as well, in \$5.43 billion deal between India and Russia, in 2016. The delivery of this system started in November 2021. The S-400 system is developed by the Almaz Central Design of Russia and can primarily engage the cruise missiles, Unmanned Aerial Vehicles and aircrafts, at an altitude of 30km and 400km in the range. India could be imposed with sanctions under CAATSA for the purchase of military equipment from Russia. But due to US geostrategic and geopolitical interests in the region, there is a high possibility that India could get a waiver.

The introduction of ballistic missile defence system in South Asia can make the already volatile region even more unstable, by increasing the chances of war in the region. The acquisition of such system will make India even more aggressive and could potentially lead to instability. India could potentially attack Pakistan's Political, economic and strategic sites, with a view that they can halt the attack in response to that, which is really absurd.

India is trying to destabilize the deterrence equation, and hence Pakistan has to take appropriate steps before hand in order to maintain the credibility of its deterrence. Pakistan, keeping in view the economic constraints has not indulged in the development of BMD System, but is looking for more viable options to maintain the strategic stability in the region.

Though BMD system has some vulnerability as well, as no system could give 100% protection, as it is effective against the UAVs, aircrafts and cruise missiles, and not against the ballistic missiles, hence, the credibility get undermined. Moreover, India will be only protecting a few cities under this umbrella, and not the whole of the country falls under this, which will spark outrage amongst the Indians as well. Furthermore, given the short flight time between the two countries, the debris can still fall on the Indian side, causing damage over there as well. Moreover, the efficacy of Multiple Independent Re-entry Vehicles (MIRVs) can't be undermined, as BMD can hit only one missile at a time, and the MIRVs or the launch of multiple missiles simultaneously, BMD wouldn't be able to intercept them all, which undermines the credibility of the BMD System.

The end of cold war gave rise to the regional hegemonic mindset, to which South Asia also became the victim. This approach has become the reason for regional chaos and instability. India continues to aspire its hegemonic behavior, continuously indulge Pakistan in conventional and unconventional arms race, the negative impact of BMD will also be driven in South Asia by compelling the vertical arms proliferation, which will further the instability in the already volatile region. Though, Ballistic Missile Defence System is a defensive technology, but India wants to exploit it offensively against Pakistan, by creating a false sense of security and going aggressively towards Pakistan, and to exploit the strategic, economic and political assets for bargain. Furthermore, BMD also undermines the core of regional stability which is the concept of deterrence. The exclusion of the phenomenon of nuclear deterrence will accentuate the arms

readiness, and ‘use it or lose it’ strategy by the other state for its protection. Hence, it could prove to trigger nuclear war in the South Asian region.

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<https://criticaloutsider.com/2022/07/29/ballistic-missile-defence-systems-in-south-asia/>

Kautilya’s relevance in Modi’s India

Zukhruf Amin

Indian strategic thought is envisioned along the pretense of being a hegemon and Kautilya’s principles of [statecraft](#) i.e., Swami (the ruler), Amatya (Ministers), Janapada (Territory), Durga (Fort), Kosa (Treasury), Danda (Military), Mitra (Ally). These elements of statecraft are relevant to contemporary defence and foreign policies of Narendra Modi. Kautilya’s Arthashastra is a comprehensive text on statecraft, economic policy, and defence strategy for ensuring national security. His work has significantly influenced India’s modern strategy. Kautilya envisioned maximization of state power by gaining economic strength. On the foreign policy front, the foremost priority was to gain regional domination. The manifestations of the strategic thought are evident in India’s military modernization and India’s aspiration to be the net security provider in the region. Modi has always considered South Asia as his area of influence. India’s position towards the region and the world has not changed over the period of time with the change in leadership. Such rigid policies indicate towards the driving force which is considered a prominent actor for the Indian decision makers.

When Narendra Modi came to power, the pretense of being a hegemon became evident through his ‘Neighborhood First’ policy. He stated that a “nation’s fate is connected to its [neighborhood](#). For this reason, my government has prioritized enhancing friendship and cooperation with our neighbors”. Therefore, he understood that for India to become a key Asian power, as well to stand by the pretense of global power, it depends on management of its neighborhood. It indicates towards the factor of realpolitik – as envisioned by Kautilya in his strategy for neighborhood.

For Kautilya, foreign policy goals are to safeguard territory of a state and ensure economic well-being. Since coming to power, Narendra Modi has been actively pursuing a realist foreign

policy, focused on his vision for India – a regional power in a favorable neighborhood. India’s Minister for External Affairs S. Jaishankar reiterated Kautilya’s ideology of Mandala that “India’s foreign policy is based on the aspiration of being a [leading power](#), rather than just a balancing power”. It is an acknowledgment of the notion of being close to *Vijigishu* (one who desires victory). Modi’s aspiration to become a major power is a manifestation of *Chakravartin* (the [universal](#) leader) of Kautilya’s ideology. Arthashastra mentions that a state’s strategy is focused on conquering other states and prevailing to gain victory. Narendra Modi’s worldview apparently conforms to this vision of making India emerge as a principal leader in the international system. His aspirations are broader and pronounced than that of his predecessors – One in which India has is bigger and higher than envisioned before.

Clearly focused on Pakistan, Modi’s aggressive posture; in line with Kautilya’s ideology against Pakistan is driven [further](#) by misinformation, fake news, and propaganda and other deceptive means. Pakistan is being targeted by an extensive defamation campaign globally, sponsoring terrorists’ outfits particularly directed against CPEC, etc. India’s pursuance of Kautilya’s policy of forming strategic alliances with global powers, to improve its capabilities, is designed to undermine Pakistan’s strategic interests in the region. The Balakot episode after the Pulwama attacks were a manifestation of employing *Danda* (military) to achieve socio-political gains. On the global front, he perceives himself to be the Kautilyan *Vijigishu* (ruler who [desires](#) victory). This aspiration has inspired him to pursue a grand strategy by establishing closer economic and defense ties with US, Russia, Japan, Australia, and other major powers to confront and contain China’s rise.

Kautilya’s diplomacy has reinvigorated under Modi, by heavily focusing on hegemony. Kautilya as a political realist envisioned on India’s regional diplomacy in its immediate neighborhood. Modi’s aggressive postures in the region align with Kautilya’s ideology of state power projection and to contain China’s influence. India has actively pursued the policy of keeping South Asia as its natural sphere of preeminence. As a whole, Modi’s realism-led geopolitical aspirations are derived from the ideology of Kautilya’s Arthashastra. However, the Indian strategic thought is faced with challenges internally including rising intolerance, human rights violations, and the eroding social fabric of the Indian society. India needs to have an inward looking approach rather than aspiring to be the next global power.

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