



STRATEGIC VISION
INSTITUTE

VISION

VISIONARY INSIGHTS INTO THE STRATEGIC INQUESTS OF NATIONS

SVI FORESIGHT

VOLUME 8, NUMBER 10

OCTOBER 2022

Compiled:

Ghulam Mujtaba Haider

Edited by:

Amber Afreen Abid

Strategic Vision Institute
Islamabad

SVI FORESIGHT

VOLUME 8, NUMBER 10

OCTOBER 2022

Compiled:
Ghulam Mujtaba Haider

Edited by:
Amber Afreen Abid



STRATEGIC VISION
I N S T I T U T E

Strategic Vision Institute (SVI)

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

Strategic Vision Institute (SVI)

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

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

SVI Foresight

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

Contents

Editor's Note.....	3
Black Day in Kashmir: How India Robbed Kashmir of its Right of Self-Determination.....	5
Causal Sequence of India's Drive to Resume Nuclear Testing.....	6
An Account of China's Interests and Capabilities in the IOR.....	8
India's Renewed Strategy or Double-Game in Afghanistan.....	11

Editor's Note

The issue covers various contemporary topics of strategic importance, and offers opinion-based short commentaries on a number of issues including, the Indian atrocities in Kashmir, and India's dirty politics in the region.

A robust non-proliferation regime is the central pillar of such a rules-based order. Pakistan stands committed to the objectives of nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament for the benefit of all humankind. India, however, wants to keep its option open to resume nuclear testing, especially in view of the failure of its thermonuclear device in 1998. In the past India also turned down Pakistan's proposal for a bilateral nuclear testing moratorium, which indicates India has plans to conduct further nuclear tests. This, however, will be a blatant infringement of the norms against nuclear testing established by, yet to enter into force, CTBT. India has also voted against the observance of CTBT on October 28, 2022. This indicates India intends to embark upon another round of nuclear testing; it will deal a fatal blow to the non-proliferation regime and trigger a new round of nuclear testing not only in the region but globally as well.

Moreover, the Indian atrocities in Kashmir have also been discussed in this volume. Since then, the people of Kashmir have vehemently rejected the illegal Indian occupation, the darkness of the day continues for Kashmir. Blatant human rights violations have been on the rise. India, in the past 75 years, has been carrying on state terrorism in the occupied Muslim-majority region. Unfortunately, despite the unfolding humanitarian crisis in the occupied region, the silence of the world community is a tragedy in itself. The world must be reached on every relevant forum to force India to stop the demographic changes in the occupied territory and give Kashmiris their right to self-determination as promised under the UNSC resolutions. Moreover, India is also playing in Afghanistan. Warming up of both the sides would not only enable India to compete with Pakistan in Afghanistan, but also with another rival, China. Therefore, a proactive Afghan policy and reinvestment in soft-power strategy is the need of the hour for Pakistan, to cope with emerging challenges, and ensuring a peaceful and stable Afghanistan.

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, nuclear and strategic issues. Any suggestions for further improvements are welcome. 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](#).

Amber Afreen Abid
Editor, SVI Foresight

Black Day in Kashmir: How India Robbed Kashmir of its Right of Self-Determination

Zukhruf Amin

When Pakistan gained independence in 1947, it was widely believed that Kashmir, a state with a predominantly Muslim population, would accede to Pakistan. However, on October 27, 1947, India invaded Jammu and Kashmir – completely disregarding the wishes of the people of the region, the Indian Independence Act, and the United Nations’ Universal Declaration of Human Rights. This day went down in history as the Black day in the history of Kashmir. Conferring to the Partition Plan, the princely states were given a choice initially to accede either to Pakistan or India on the basis of their demography and geography. However, India illegally occupied Hyderabad, Junagarh, Jammu, and Kashmir. Hyderabad and Junagarh were Hindu-majority states, but their rulers were Muslims. Being a Muslim-majority state where Muslims constituted 87% of the population, Kashmir had a natural tendency to accede to Pakistan. However, the Hindu ruler of Jammu and Kashmir, Maharaja Hari Singh, shattered the future of Kashmiris by announcing its accession to India under a controversial document titled the “Instrument of Accession.”

With the intent to change the demographic landscape and influence the results of any plebiscite in the future, the Indian troops and the Dogra forces massacred over a thousand Kashmiri Muslims within a few months in the occupied region. The killings triggered a series of critical events between the newly independent nations of Pakistan and India, which resulted in the Kashmir dispute. In August 1948, a report by a special correspondent got published in The Times, London, which revealed that almost 237,000 Muslims were systematically exterminated – unless they escaped to Pakistan along the border – by the forces of the Dogra State headed by the Maharaja in person and aided by the RSS and Sikh. In addition to the brutality, the Boundary Commission headed by Radcliffe, which demarcated the partition line, gave Gurdaspur – a Muslim-majority area to India – providing it the land route to Kashmir. It is widely believed that if the principles of justice were followed during the partition, India would have no land route to access Jammu and Kashmir. As a result, the Kashmiris strongly opposed the blatant invasion by India. They were determined to recapture Srinagar. It was then, that India took the matter to the

UN Security Council on January 01, 1948. Resultantly, consecutive resolutions were passed by the Security Council which invalidated the illegal invasion of Kashmir. Under the resolutions passed on August 13, 1948, and January 05, 1949, the UN approved a ceasefire, demilitarization of the occupied region, and a free and impartial plebiscite under the UN's supervision, to decide the future of the state.

The darkness of the day continues for Kashmir. Since then, the people of Kashmir have vehemently rejected the illegal Indian occupation. Blatant human rights violations have been on the rise. India, in the past 75 years, has been carrying on state terrorism in the occupied Muslim-majority region. There are increased incidences of pellet-firing guns, forced disappearances, fake encounters, murders, gang rapes, and other atrocities at the hands of the Indian security forces. From January 1989 to September 2022, the Indian troops have martyred 96,158 Muslims, widowed 22,950 women, orphaned 107,880 children, and arbitrarily arrested 165,200 civilians. Narendra Modi's Hindutva-driven repressive policies of targeting the Muslims in Jammu and Kashmir are a constant reminder, that the situation in Kashmir has the ingredients of an unprecedented escalation. The abrogation of Kashmir's special status, granting Hindus domiciles, redrawing the electoral boundaries, and giving voting rights to non-locals, is part of a larger political agenda of the Modi-led BJP government. Unfortunately, despite the unfolding humanitarian crisis in the occupied region, the silence of the world community is a tragedy in itself. The world must be reached on every relevant forum to force India to stop the demographic changes in the occupied territory and give Kashmiris their right to self-determination as promised under the UNSC resolutions.

Zukhruf Amin is a Research Officer at Strategic Vision Institute, Islamabad.

Causal Sequence of India's Drive to Resume Nuclear Testing

Komal Khan

“India may be compelled to test again, and when it does, it is in U.S. interest to avoid penalizing it,” stated Ashley Tellis at the Idea Exchange, a forum organized by the Indian Express. Ashley Tellis is an American analyst of Indian origin and is presently the Tata Chair for Strategic Affairs and a senior fellow at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. This statement of Ashley Tellis is significant in line with a series of events which clearly point towards India's plans to conduct further nuclear tests basically to prove their thermonuclear

weapons designs. This will be a blatant infringement of the norms against nuclear testing established by the yet to enter into force CTBT.

Subsequently, on October 28, 2022, in the First Committee of the United Nations General Assembly which deals with issues related to international security, non-proliferation, disarmament and arms control, India voted against the observance of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), despite 150 votes in favor. India voted against the CTBT both at the CD and in the UNGA in 1996 and refused to give any assurance to the US at the time of finalization of the India-US nuclear deal. It also turned down Pakistan's proposal for a bilateral nuclear testing moratorium. All these are indicative of the fact that India wants to keep its option to resume nuclear testing open especially in view of the failure of its thermonuclear device in 1998. It appears that justification is being created first through Ashley Tellis' recent book followed by the Indian Express forum for India to venture on this dangerous path once again.

India has always taken advantage of the international trends and is now poised to take advantage of the US obsession with China. According to a report published in The Washington Post, the Trump administration was taking into consideration resumption of nuclear testing and withdrawal from the CTBT in meeting with the senior officials of the U.S. national security agencies held on October 15, 2020. The rationale for this was based on the reports of low-yield nuclear tests being conducted by China and Russia; however, it was not followed through due to the likely adverse consequences for the non-proliferation regime.

Tellis' comments and India's vote against CTBT seem to be an effort to test the waters. Although, the 1994 Proliferation Prevention Act requires mandatory sanctions against any non-nuclear weapon state [As per NPT India is not a de-jure nuclear weapon state] that carries out a nuclear detonation it is unlikely that such sanctions would be long lasting if at all imposed, given the waiver authority of the US President and the bipartisan support for India in the US Congress as has been seen in case of Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act (CAATSA) when India purchased S-400 from Russia.

India's economic potential and presence of large numbers of Indian Americans in American think tanks and in the current administration has created conducive environment for tolerance of any transgression by India. Therefore, the case is being built by an influential expert like Ashley Tellis in his report/book entitled 'Striking Asymmetries: Nuclear Transitions in

Southern Asia arguing that if India is to act as an effective strategic counter weight to China it has to re-test and prove its thermonuclear weapons capability.

However, what Tellis is not highlighting is the fact that should India embark upon another round of nuclear testing, it will deal a fatal blow to the non-proliferation regime and trigger a new round of nuclear testing not only in the region but globally as well. Should the US administration take the bait it will lose all moral authority to condemn the violation of international norms against nuclear testing by countries like the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and would also be a party to causing irreversible damage to the existing nuclear order and global strategic stability.

Komal Khan is a Research Officer at Strategic Vision Institute, Islamabad.

An Account of China's Interests and Capabilities in the IOR

Komal Khan

On 09 March 2022, a supersonic missile crossed the Indian border, covering a distance of 124km across the border, and crashed into Pakistan, destroying a civilian building. That was a BrahMos cruise missile, with a range of 450km, jointly developed by India and Russia. This is the first ever incident in nuclear history, wherein a missile has been fired from a nuclear state into another nuclear state.

For China, unhindered access to IOR is a strategic requirement. For that, the critical SLOCs around Eurasian rim-land must be secured. Presently, access to IOR is dependent on China's stable relations with the United States, whose navy dominates IOR; and the U.S. allies like India, having sizeable presence there, thereby sustaining an integrated deterrence in the IOR as part of the U.S. strategic reassurance policy.

China's interests are growing in the Indian Ocean, which directly affects coastal states, including South Asian nations. The Indian Ocean hosts critical Sea Lanes of Communication (SLOCs) ferrying crucial imports and exports, including vital energy supplies. Presently, China is the largest importer of crude oil in the world. Meanwhile, around 90 percent of China's international commerce, by volume, is transported by sea. Global trade and transit routes pass through IOR and the South China Sea, while 80 percent oil and gas ships traverse through

Malacca Strait. Similarly, being a global manufacturing hub, Chinese economy is dependent on raw materials and minerals imports from African and the Indian Ocean littoral states via sea. China is also focusing on developing its ‘blue economy’, which was estimated to be more than 1.2 trillion USD in 2020 and is growing at an average rate of 7 percent annually.

China’s Defense strategy whitepaper issued in 2015, directed People’s Liberation Army-Navy (PLAN) to ensure security at open seas. It essentially means that at present, PLAN is a blue water maritime force with the capabilities to undertake prolonged missions in high seas. The paper also emphasizes ensuring protection of sea lines of communication (SLOCs) across the Indian Ocean”. Additionally, Military Strategy white paper emphasizes that China should develop a ‘modern maritime military force’ to ‘safeguard national sovereignty and maritime rights and interests, protect the security of strategic SLOCs and overseas interests’. This shift in PLAN’s mission has emerged at a time when Beijing is expanding its economic cooperation through BRI and requires PLAN to safeguard its interests, assets and citizens in foreign lands and seaports. Beijing is focusing on exerting influence, mitigating its vulnerabilities, and securing its maritime trade in the IOR. China surpassed the United States as the world’s largest crude oil importer in 2017.

To advance its interests, Beijing has enhanced its economic and naval cooperation with IOR littoral states by investing in a number of new ports in the IOR. This Chinese policy is being implemented through ‘Maritime Silk Road’, a sea-based component of the broader BRI. At its core, BRI envisions connectivity across regions, enhanced industrial cooperation among partner countries. Maritime Silk Road, meanwhile, focuses on establishing a network of ports through building new ports, expanding existing ones and developing industrial zones in these port cities. A major artery of Maritime Silk Road goes from China’s Eastern seaboard to European ports via South China Sea, the IOR, and Mediterranean Sea, which then links to the Atlantic. Beijing is pursuing long term lease rights to ports in friendly countries along strategic waterways. These agreements are being inked between Chinese state-owned companies and local governments of IOR. Long-term presence in IOR countries is intended to bolster local economies and connect them with Chinese ports. In case of Gwadar (Pakistan) and Kyaukpyu (Myanmar), goal is to stimulate development of China’s inland underdeveloped provinces through economic corridors by linking them with Indian Ocean.

This economic cooperation has been followed by building overseas military facilities, joint exercises and expansion of defence and maritime cooperation. China stated its forays in IOR in 2008 near Horn of Africa. In 2009, first antipiracy missions were undertaken in Gulf of Aden. It became a regular feature with expanding scope. From 2014 onwards, Chinese submarines have also ventured into Indian Ocean, making port calls in Colombo and Karachi. Chinese patrols have gradually increased as claimed by the New Delhi that it spotted 14 Chinese ships in August, 2018. After two years of negotiations with the Djibouti administration, China opened its first foreign military base in August, 2017. PLAN troops were stationed and ships were deployed to officially termed 'logistical facilities'. It now has deployment of a Marine company and related equipment. Its location in Horn of Africa in IOR enables Beijing to project power, deploy deterrent forces and undertake military operations in faraway seas.

However, to contain China in the IOR, the primary partner to the US in this regard is India, based on India's policing of the Indian Ocean for the sake of India's own maritime interests, and also as an assigned balancer against China by the United States. India has opted for two strategies: cooperate with China where possible and also propose alternate connectivity initiatives. In 2014, India joined the China-led Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) as a founding member. It also joined New Development Bank. In 2017, India gained full membership into the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, are regional security forum where China plays a leading role. Meanwhile, to take advantage of its growing economic prowess and geographical location, New Delhi proposed five new initiatives Neighbourhood First policy (2014), the Act East policy (2014), Project Mausam (2014), Security and Growth for

Beijing and New Delhi are pursuing soft-balancing strategies and diplomatic engagement. This has led India to address the needs and concerns of smaller states as they pursue enhanced cooperation with China. India remains under wary of potential upgradation of China – South Asia political and security cooperation and particularly, the Chinese naval presence in strategic ports. If smaller states consent to Chinese naval presence; particularly, Sri Lanka and the Maldives; it will escalate regional competition in South Asia. If it happens, this will also complicate stability for smaller states, and potentially undermine the ability of Small South

Asian countries to attract economic support and investments from both the regional economic powers – India and China.

Komal Khan is a Research Officer at Strategic Vision Institute, Islamabad.

India's Renewed Strategy or Double-Game in Afghanistan

Zukhruf Amin

The geopolitical landscape of South Asia has mostly remained turbulent for quite a long time. India has actively pursued an Afghanistan policy based on Kautilya's strategy for neighborhood that says 'enemy's enemy is a friend'. India has been a major player in Afghanistan against Taliban as well as Pakistan in the last 20 years. In the wake of the fall of Kabul in August 2021, New Delhi found it challenging to lose her influence over Afghanistan against Pakistan. Currently, India's quest for regional hegemony and its obsession for control over South Asia, are the reasons that have motivated her to re-establish its footprint in Afghanistan. After coming to power in August 2021 and being denied widespread diplomatic recognition, the Taliban now has sought international recognition in an attempt to cement control. In June 2022, Indian foreign ministry announced the reopening of its embassy in Kabul. In this regard, humanitarian assistance was the first practical step. Following it, a delegation of Indian foreign ministry officials visited Kabul in June this year. Taliban's Foreign Minister Amir Khan Muttaqi declared the visit a "good beginning" in the Afghanistan-India bilateral ties. The Taliban also asked the Indian delegation to resume projects and the diplomatic presence in Afghanistan including consular services to Afghans. They also urged India to resume the suspended development assistance projects in Afghanistan. Amidst the Indian renewed strategy in Afghanistan, Pakistan has accused India of using Afghan soil to fuel unrest in Pakistan, once again through Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and other hostile agencies, which orchestrates attacks on Pakistan from Afghanistan through India's support.

Owing to its geostrategic location, Afghanistan has remained the focus of Indian regional policy. Since the Taliban in power is a reality now, the opening up of the bilateral ties between the two countries is reciprocal in nature. A closer bilateral relationship with India, will get aid for the war-torn country and at the same time, the Taliban government hopes that diplomatic engagement with India would bring legitimacy to their rule. On the other hand, closer ties with

the Taliban would not only enable India to compete with Pakistan in Afghanistan, but China will also be kept at bay. It is because India's changed Afghanistan policy is mainly influenced by the changing geopolitics in the region in the post-US withdrawal period, rather than looking for a stabilized Afghanistan. Not only this, India aims to create a wedge between the Taliban government and Pakistan by triggering sensitive issues of geostrategic and geopolitical significance using Indian media as well as influencing the foreign media. The major objective is to put a halt to China Pakistan Economic Corridor's (CPEC) extension to Afghanistan, in order to keep the Afghan people and Taliban's dependent on India. In addition to this, India's pursuit of dominance in the region and its hostility towards Pakistan, has overshadowed all other factors of its growing presence in Afghanistan. Dr Manoj Joshi had summed it up in June 2022 when he stated that "If we are not there (Afghanistan), then Pakistan will be the predominant player in the country. India has to respond to its own regional imperatives." Therefore, the agenda of internal instability both in Pakistan and Afghanistan, serves as a perfect fit for India to return to Afghanistan with a renewed strategy i.e., instead of conventional attack, India will inflict reputational damage to Pakistan at regional and global level by mobilizing RAW's activities in Afghanistan; the case in point is Zawahiri's killing and laying it on Pakistan. Moreover, from a geostrategic and geo-economics point of view, India intends to cement control over Afghanistan, as it would enable it to become a formidable part of the Central Asian oil and gas distribution network, thereby acquiring a strong foothold in the region – marginalizing Pakistan's unique position in this regard. Islamabad should tactfully offset Indian intrigues in Afghanistan. Warming up of both the sides would not only enable India to compete with Pakistan in Afghanistan, but also with another rival, China. Therefore, a proactive Afghan policy and reinvestment in soft-power strategy is the need of the hour for Pakistan, to cope with emerging challenges, and ensuring a peaceful and stable Afghanistan.

Zukhruf Amin is a Research Officer at Strategic Vision Institute, Islamabad.