
Nuclear Diplomacy: A Case Study of French and Pakistani Behaviour

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The nuclear proliferation in South Asia has been reaching the most dangerous point where the nuclear confrontation seems not avoidable. Since the nuclear blasts of both India and Pakistan in 1998, there is constant threat that both the nations might be engaged in a conflict that would eventually lead them to an exchange of nuclear weapons. Hardly one year passed, this happened in 1999 when both states fought at the Kargil heights but due to the intervention from international community the conflict did not convert in to the nuclear war. The situation again became worse in 2001-2002 India-Pakistan border confrontation. Though the situation became normal apparently but the threat between both the states existed constantly and after the Mumbai terror in November 2008 strain in relations has been extending and nowadays things have been surfacing again that seems to take the two nuclear rivals to a danger. The nuclear doctrines of both States are showing their intentions. Pakistan's nuclear doctrine clearly shows that its nuclear weapons are India specific and have no other purpose than just to defend the state from Indian aggression, whereas in contrast Indian nuclear doctrine shows somewhat an image of emerging global power by comparing it with other states, China in particular. The nuclear doctrines of both States have a huge impact on South Asian security. It looks

impossible to stop the nuclear race in South Asia because Pakistan is maintaining credible minimum nuclear deterrence against India and India against China whereas China against other powers.

Motivated by the need to address supposed security threats, Pakistan and India are seeking to expand their nuclear capabilities like ballistic missile and cruise missile-based nuclear delivery systems. Such nuclear competition is dangerous given mounting mistrust and a dearth of diplomatic measures in place to reduce risk of confrontation.

The future of South Asian security is not very bright due to the fact that Kashmir issue is still hanging which is the bone of contention between both states and has emerged as the nuclear flash point in the area. There is a need to solve the issue as quickly as possible so that the peace of South Asia can be restored and the threat of nuclear war in South Asia would be eliminated. The linkage between Kashmir and nuclear proliferation in the region was reinforced when India after the explosions started threatening Pakistan over Azad Kashmir.

Expressing concern over nuclearization of South Asia, the international community underlined the centrality of Kashmir as a nuclear flash point and stressed that security and stability in the region reliant on the settlement of this root cause of tension and arm race. The U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright said that Kashmir issue had played a crucial role in the nuclearization in South Asia. The Task Force report titled '*After the Tests*' co-sponsored by the Brookings Institution and the US Council on Foreign Relations, pointed out Kashmir problem as the "most dangerous point of contention between India and Pakistan. It is the issue with the greatest potential to trigger a conventional or even nuclear war."¹ Henry L. Stimson Center's report titled '*Nuclear Risk-Reduction Measures in South Asia*,' referring to the significance of Kashmir dispute in taking nuclear risk-reduction measures in South Asia, carried a study on '*Nuclear Risk-Reduction Measures in Kashmir*.' The study prepared by Brian Cloughley highlighted that "the peace of the world may be more directly affected by the Kashmir problem in the nuclear era in the

subcontinent.² The report of United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) highlighted the danger of nuclear conflict at the borders of "disputed territory" of Kashmir. The UN Security Council resolution 1172 regarding nuclear test by India and Pakistan also recognized the Kashmir issue as root cause of tensions between the two neighbours.³ The P-5 Foreign Ministers' meeting held in June 1998 also in its recommendations underlined bitterness of Kashmir problem and as bitterness and accentuated for its resolution.⁴

The nuclear capability of India and Pakistan increased the prospect of a nuclear war in South Asia. Given the gravity of the situation, the establishment of a nuclear restraint in South Asia is a dire need of time, but the India-United States strategic alliance had brushed off the environment for a nuclear non-proliferation in the region. The eruption of an armed conflict in the Kargil and Drass sectors along the LoC damaged the whole spirit of the agreement. The clash had brought the two rivals on verge of a nuclear war. The United States which later played a very significant role to prevent combat from intensifying further and finally ceased the conflict, called the situation as "most serious" and "risks spinning out of control." The world powers were convinced that the Kargil conflict had shaken the regional peace and security, secondly, it could disturb the status quo on the LoC. The Kargil conflict was the first military confrontation in a nuclearized South Asia. It not only altered the strategic environment in the region, but demonstrated that Kashmir was a hazardous issue that would persistently continue as a nuclear flash point, providing ground for Kargil like conflicts.

Nuclear modernization in the region continues with the development of longer-range and more reliable delivery systems, as well as qualitative and quantitative increases in fissile material and warheads. The Indo-U.S. nuclear deal has stiffened focus on this issue due to its potential impact on proliferation in South Asia. Nuclear proliferation in South Asia is a consequence of the security impasse surviving in the area. Security dilemma rises when a country's policies to increase its security negatively impact

the security and threat perceptions of other countries. The South Asian nuclear security dilemma is complicated as it involves several security interests of countries, including of Pakistan, India, China, United States and Russia . Thus the nuclear proliferation in the area is on climb.

Security dilemma of South Asia can be analyzed as from India's perspective, the prime threat is from China, so Indian nuclear and missile development program is developed in order to counter Beijing's might with a secure deterrent. While Beijing's crucial threat perception emerges from the United States' role in the Asia-Pacific region. Thus on its part United States also has developed strategic and nuclear partnership with India to maintain a strategic balance with China. Indian China focus policy has been accelerating nuclear arsenal stockpiling that naturally has great impact on Pakistan's security options. It is widely accepted that Pakistan's nuclear policy has been a constant response to the perceived threat from India. Trying to maintain the strategic balance or to prevent the present imbalance from broadening, Pakistan also on path to expand its own nuclear proficiencies. It is notable that both countries signed an agreement to minimize nuclear accidents on February 21, 2007. But things were not on right track. In Russian view the region is a source of threats to Russian security in terms of political instability, international conflicts, terrorism and drug trafficking. Russia intends to respond to these threats. Russia has clear priorities in South Asia. India is seen as a privileged strategic partner. Russia aims to achieve suitable strategic interests in South Asia, which is part of the concern of the Russian South Operational-Strategic Command, established in 2010. The Russian naval forces intend to establish a permanent presence in the Indian Ocean — probably through ships and submarines of the Black Sea Fleet, which became part of the South Operational-Strategic Command in 2010.

India-Pakistan rivalry based on long-standing security disputes cause to shape nuclear doctrines and proliferation dynamics in the

region. The intensity of disputes brings in security dilemmas that ensure continued dependence on nuclear weapons in South Asia.

Kashmir, which lies at the heart of the dispute, is more than a simple territorial problem. For Pakistan, Kashmir is crucial because it is seen as an unfinished agenda of partition. Islamabad and New Delhi have conducted several rounds of peace talks aimed at bringing a lasting settlement to the Kashmir issue. This peace process has involved several confidence-building measures. Nevertheless, Kashmir dispute is nowhere near resolution. This implies that both New Delhi and Islamabad are more inclined toward strengthening existing military capabilities, both conventional and non-conventional, to prevent an unfavorable scenario in a future standoff.

Further Readings

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