

India's Policy toward Nuclear Disarmament in Today's Strategic Environment

Vinod Malik*

Assistant Professor, Department of Defence Studies, Govt. College Meham, Rohtak

Abstract – The old order has lapsed and the new order has yet to take shape, hence in this transition phase, the future trajectories can be gauged through the build-up of nuclear weapons in Asia. The nuclear binaries of Cold War have given rise to a more multipolar nuclear order. The dissemination of nuclear power to new actors has led to a more complex matrix and the control has become that much more evasive. The use of sub-conventional war under the nuclear attire has led to what strategists define a stability-instability paradox. There is a constant struggle to achieve a balance of power through nuclear deterrence which nations believe can bring happiness and , no wars and stable atmosphere. If in Lower half Asian the nuclear dynamics of Pakistan, China and India (The China because of its geographical proximity with India and its alliance with Pakistan) are significant factors; then in East Asia, it is the 'Extended Nuclear Deterrence' of US and the power relation between China and North Korea that impact stability. The lowering of threshold by both Pakistan and North Korea through their strategy of tactical nuclear weapons in case of Pakistan, and the constant endeavour of North Koreans in developing larger ranged IRBM's , is creating instability in the region. The charade of idealism and realism is much more pronounced in Asia then in any other region. The demonstration of power through the doctrinal caveats in the form of 'First Use', and 'Active Defence' are more distinct here. The arms build-up and the ambition of rising powers to develop niche technologies and carve a space for themselves are already challenging the current power structure. The emerging nuclear trends are thus the signposts, which can aid in deciphering or decoding the future.

-----X-----

Historically, Pakistan's insecurities had mainly been India centric, and Pakistan now believes that it has tried to counter its insecurities, through its development of nuclear arsenal. Pakistan's nuclear strategy revolves around 'First Use', and a gradual 'Option Enhancing Policy, through a step by step escalation. The policy includes; first a public or private warning, followed by use of atomic weapon on our neighbour territory against us and they are using that for attacking forces, and ultimately the use of atomic arms for the critical but purely army installations on Indian soil. They have also gone to the extent of defining their four thresholds, on violation of which they will go in for a nuclear response; those being

- Spatial
- Military
- Economic
- Political

Thus, there is clarity in their thought process, and they have stated quite often that "We will use nuclear weapons if attacked by India even if the attack is with conventional weapons". Thus, they have developed

their force structure accordingly. Their force structure is based on the principles of achieving a "Full spectrum Response". Hence, Pakistan has built an extensive nuclear infrastructure comprising: -

- Facilities for uranium mining,
- Uranium enrichment,
- Reactor fuel fabrication and
- Spent fuel reprocessing units.

Thereby allowing it to produce not only Highly Enriched Uranium but also Plutonium. Pakistan may have produced 12-24 kg/year of plutonium and has an inventory of 100-200 kg of plutonium and 16-40 plutonium weapons, and their inventory is constantly growing. Pakistan's missile ranges vary from 60 km Tactical Nuclear Weapons (TNW) 'NASR' (assumed to carry a sub kiloton nuclear war head), to its MRBMs-Shaheen. The trend is now towards developing a 'Sea Based Deterrence'. It is endeavouring to mate atomic tipped Cruise rockets with customary diesel-electric submarines, along these lines building up an ocean-based variation of its atomic able,

indigenously created Babur rocket (Pakistan navy conducted cruise missile tests from naval platforms in 2012). Though Indian military is confident of countering a Pakistani attack but the Pakistan's strategic trends need to be observed. The major factor in TNWs is that of nuclear weapons becoming vulnerable to theft, accidents and the risk of unauthorised launch. Pakistan is a hub for terrorist organisations, furthermore, the likelihood of non-state entertainers securing atomic weapons cannot be ruled out. Also, Pakistan's civil nuclear energy programme is growing due to Chinese assistance, and due to lack of global nuclear safety and security standards there is always a possibility of non-state actors acquiring the fissile material to make a dirty bomb. Hence, for India the major threat emanates from 'Nuclear Terrorism'.¹

The real change in China, since December 2015, has been the substitution of China's Second Artillery Force (SAF) with the PLA Rocket Force. Despite the fact that this new Force will undoubtedly have every one of the attributes of SAF and the centre capacity will keep on residual upgrade of China's key power. In any case, the noteworthiness is, that the new Force will currently be considered as the fourth branch in China's military, on equivalent balance with the Peoples Liberation Army's all three wings, and not an expansion of military taking care of the land rocket powers. President Xi Jinping called the PLA Rocket Force the "centre power of vital prevention, a vital support to the nation's situation as a noteworthy power, and a significant structure obstruct in maintaining national security". China's ordinary rocket power will likewise be under the rocket power. Subsequently, the strategy of "Double Deterrence" will turn out to be more nuanced. He further expressed that the new Force expected to upgrade China's atomic discouragement, its counter-strike capacities and to improve China's capacity to direct medium and long-extend accuracy strikes.

Preparing is another zone where one can discover loads of activities being directed by the Chinese powers. China's authentic media likewise refers to various Second Artillery Force preparing practices including move, disguise, and dispatch tasks under recreated battle conditions which are proposed to expand survivability alongside expanded versatility and survivability of the new age of rockets. These innovations and focussed preparing programs fortify China's atomic powers and support its key strike abilities.²

India's nuclear arsenal and missile capabilities have grown, though at a slower pace in comparison to other nuclear weapon states in Asia. India is specially building its second-strike capabilities by developing its triad. Nuclear submarine 'Arihant' and other efforts in missile development (the K series SLBMs) along with upgradation of the naval wing with niche technologies through Indo-US collaboration, a much anticipated and thought

processed event. Our country's AGNI series with its advanced planned ICBMs with MIRV capabilities can help in strengthening India's nuclear deterrence.³ India's development of Ballistic Missile Defence (BMD) and its plans to procure S-400 air defence system from Russia will help in countering the threat arising from the enhanced number of SRBMs deployed in its neighbourhood. However; the three-fold challenge which India faces are: -

- The process of indigenisation and modernisation of weapons in India is slow, inconsistent and marred with bureaucratic delays. This delays deployment of new weapons, thus leading to an increasing strategic gap which impacts deterrence.
- Due to India's geographic proximity to Pakistan, India is vulnerable to nuclear terrorism. There is always a possibility of a "Radioactive Dispersal Device (RDD)" (which is a conventional bomb spiked with radioactive material) or 'Dirty Bomb' attack. Hence, the Indian government needs to sensitise its people and security forces (police and paramilitary forces) regarding this threat.
- Pak-China collusive attack though a distant possibility cannot be ruled out because China is in the process of developing economic corridors through Pakistan. For China, Pakistan is geopolitically more important to it now than in the past, primarily because of the connectivity which Pakistan provides to China in terms of land corridors and also the Chinese accessibility to Gwadar port.⁴

REFERENCES

1. George Perkovich and James M. Acton, Abolishing Nuclear Weapons.
2. Daryl Kimball and Wade Boese, Arms Control Today, July/August 2008.
3. Elizabeth Roche, Why an NSG membership is important to India, www.livemint.com, Updated on 08 Jun 2016, <https://www.livemint.com/Politics/Gglv7xn2DuFpDbmGTcGpK/Why-a-NSG-membership-is-important-to-India.html>, (Accessed on 02/05/2019)
4. Daryl G. Kimball, Political and Security Challenges on Disarmament—and Opportunities to Achieve Progress, Arms Control Association, Events, April 18 2016, <https://www.armscontrol.org/events/remarks/2016-04-18/Statement-by-Daryl-G->

Kimball-Political-and-Security-Challenges-
on-Disarmament-and-Opportunities-to-
Achieve-Progress, (Accessed on
09/11/2018)

Corresponding Author

Vinod Malik*

Assistant Professor, Department of Defence Studies,
Govt. College Meham, Rohtak