

Title: India's Evolving Deterrent Force Posturing in South Asia: Temptation for Pre-Emptive Strikes, Power Projection and Escalation Dominance

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The book discusses the prospects of Indian force posturing in South Asia, predominantly under the umbrella of nuclear upheaves. It also focuses on its induction of sophisticated weapon systems, incorporate competing military strategies and reshuffling of deterrence force posture. The book makes a critical addition to indigenously strategic force posture of India and its adverse behaviour against the regional powers, especially China and Pakistan. This volume is a comprehensive account of counterforce strategy of India under the umbrella of nuclear revolution.

The book is divided into ten chapters to elucidate India's evolving force posturing. The first chapter highlights the integrated concepts and elaborates the main argument of the volume. It presents the rationale of discussing India's force posturing and its relevance with the strategic stability of the region. The significance of this research work and its impact is presented in this chapter. The second chapter of the book provides conceptualization of the essential factors of nuclear revolution. This chapter further elaborates the theoretical discourse of South Asian nuclear revolution and induction of new technologies viz-a-viz sophisticated delivery systems by the nuclear rivals' i.e. Pakistan and India. The chapter delves into the testing of theory of nuclear revolution while analyzing vulnerabilities of deterrent forces of Pakistan and India. It builds the relevance of the nuclear revolution theory to the nuclear environment of South Asia where competing military strategies increase the chances of conflict. Since there are chances of serious conflict between the nuclear rivals, the chapter predicts that both the South Asian states may not indulge into the risks of escalation despite competing military strategies due to the WMD threat and having mutual vulnerabilities.

The third chapter discusses that the prospects of conflict escalation and crisis instability between Pakistan and India are progressively increasing with the passage of time. Although chances of full-scale war or all-out war are comparatively less than the limited war-fighting options. The South Asian security environment is being destabilized due to the evolving military strategies of the region and thus, chances of conflict are multiplied. Although it is a risky choice as Pakistan has opted for the nuclear option considering asymmetrical power balance with India in order to maintain credible deterrence. Interestingly the chapter provides a comprehensive illustration of the risky CSD and "Full-Spectrum" nuclear option of Pakistan and determines that both these strategies curtails the risk of full-scale war. The fourth chapter examines

the existing dynamics of Pakistani and Indian asymmetry in economic, geo-political and military field keeping in view the development of dual-use sophisticated technologies, global political scenario and the stability-instability paradox of South Asia. The chapter proposes that these emerging trends will lead towards a critical situation where the security dilemmas between both the states will exacerbate.

The fifth chapter traces to the main contours of Indian maritime strategies in the Indian Ocean, its endeavours of power projection as well as escalation dominance. The contemporary Indo-Pacific politics and emergence of the concept of "Sea Power Dominance" has also impacted South Asian politics. This transformative era is a landmark for Indian growing industrial, military, geo-economic and maritime potential in collaboration with the US as a strategic partner as well as its regional/global allies in the Indo-Pacific political scenario. The sixth chapter provides Pakistan a framework to counter the up-coming internal challenges in societal, geo-economic, technological and military fields. Pakistan needs to incorporate innovative technologies of the modern age that are sophisticated and meet the requirements of the future warfare techniques will ultimately neutralize the recent 5th generation warfare challenges.

The seventh chapter determines that the Indian missile system have certain implications particularly on Indian force posture and generally on South Asian deterrence stability. The chapter critically examines the military strategies of South Asian nuclear rivals that can lift unilateral moratorium on nuclear tests, destabilize nuclear taboo and trigger large arms race between both the rival states. Thus, the chapter presumes that the risk of miscalculation, misperception and inadvertent war becomes higher.

The eighth chapter elucidates the incident of Pulwama in detail and considers it as a case in point where limited strike options were practiced and immediate retaliation was evident. The said crisis proves that both the rival states can cross the Line of Control (LOC) in order to inflict damage to the other side. The chapter comprehensively analyses the whole scenario and identifies that any serious crisis between Pakistan and India has the potential to escalate towards the nuclear option if not managed wisely. The ninth chapter proposes to revisit the South Asian Strategic Restraint Regime (SRD) proposal while analysing the current challenges as well as the opportunities available for the South Asian nuclear rivals. It states that despite preventing nuclear weapons usage in the region, Pakistan and India failed to prevent the epidemic of limited conflict and this conflict, by all means, may escalate towards nuclear crisis. There is a need to vigilantly draw strategic force posturing to counter the risk.

The last chapter of the book concludes the whole debate by embarking upon India's deterrent force posturing coupled with several other conventional viz-a-viz nuclear force modernization plans and its impact on South Asian politics. However, the mediating role of third parties may play a significant role in crisis management of both the rivals to bring strategic stability in the region.

The book is an interesting account of the entangled dynamics of the Indian force posturing along with the bilateral issues between the South Asian nuclear rivals and role of regional, as well as extra-regional, link factors where the vicious circle of the regional security dilemma is disturbed due to the advent of sophisticated technology, BMD system development, maritime expansion and geo-economical conflicting interests in the region. The book is worth reading for the academicians, policy-makers, students of International politics and security studies. Although numerous literature discusses the discourse of strategic stability in South Asia, yet this volume addresses a significant research gap that delves into the impact of evolving strategic force posturing of India and the authors provide an insight of the up-coming challenges in the region as well as recommends that third party mediation may address the issues of inadvertent war in the South Asian Region.

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