

NUCLEAR DETERRENCE OR DIPLOMACY: MANAGING THE INDIA-PAKISTAN CRISES

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ABSTRACT

Relations between the two ‘colonial cousins’ – India and Pakistan have been on an unstable footing since the partition in 1947. These countries have become more prone to war after their nuclearization programme, compared to their pre-nuclear era – making the geopolitical situation in South Asia very unstable. The proponents of ‘nuclear deterrence’ argue that it is this deterrence that has been successful in averting an all-out war between India and Pakistan, despite their five military crises between 1986-87 and 2008. Nevertheless, the opponents of ‘nuclear deterrence’ claim that through it had some psychological effect on the crises, it has failed to avert military engagement between India and Pakistan. This article argues that, despite the role of ‘nuclear deterrence’, it was the function of diplomacy which prevented these two nuclear states from engaging in all-out wars. In doing so, this article examines the role of nuclear deterrence and diplomacy in the five India-Pakistan crises. It finds that diplomacy has been more instrumental in averting wars and reducing tensions in times of crises than nuclear deterrence.

Key Words: Nuclear Deterrence, Diplomacy, War, Peace, India, Pakistan, Kargil, Kashmir

INTRODUCTION

India and Pakistan have fought three wars in 1947-48, 1965, 1971, a limited war at Kargil in 1999, and encountered many other crises between 1987-87, 1990, 2001-02, and 2008 after they became nuclear weapon states. The element of insecurity and decades of mutual hostility had led both India and Pakistan to opt for nuclearization. India’s nuclear program has been based on two rationales. First, India perceived some elements of insecurity from China as a result of war and border disputes between them, and from Pakistan, in the form of territorial issues of the Kashmir region. Second, India aspires for major power status, and feels nuclearization will assist it in achieving this goal. On the other hand, Pakistan’s nuclear program was completely based on the element of insecurity, coming primarily from India. The unresolved border dispute since Partition in 1947, has pitted these states against each other, both facing-off in numerous armed conflicts for the last 70 years.

The issue of nuclear threat in South Asia came to the limelight for the first time during the 1986-87 crisis. The subsequent crises in 1990, 1999, 2001-02 and 2008 also resulted in severe military confrontations. In these conflicts, both countries threatened each other with the use of nuclear weapons, although not actually using them – hence heightening the security

concerns and treat perceptions in South Asia. It should be noted here that ‘nuclear threat’ did have some psychological effect, thus deterring these countries from actually deploying their nuclear arsenal. However, this deterrence did not stop them from engaging in conventional wars. This article argues that, when these countries faced a series of crises, it was the employment of ‘diplomacy’ by the warring parties and by the major powers that had effectively managed and averted both India and Pakistan from engaging in all-out war.

NUCLEAR DETERRENCE

Nuclear deterrence is a strategic concept aimed at preventing war. The rationale is that, having nuclear arsenal or capabilities will deter unfriendly countries from acting against or waging war. Since, a nuclear bomb is a weapon of mass destruction (WMD), it has the ability to result in catastrophic consequences if used, and the adversaries may be deterred from taking any actions that will trigger the use of this weapon. Essentially, the possession of nuclear capability is meant for deterrence. The notion of nuclear deterrence follows the basis of the ‘first user’ principle, which means a country may use nuclear weapons in self-defence against an attack threatening its core security interests. Nuclear weapons are also seen as the decisive bargaining chip that can be used in international negotiations, as countries with nuclear capability would be in a stronger position to clinch better terms in negotiation.

Nuclear deterrence should be credited for reducing major wars in the post Second World War period. Despite the arms race in the Cold War period (1945-1989), no nuclear state had used nuclear weapons to resolve conflicts. However, it will be erroneous to claim that only nuclear deterrence has contributed to relative peace that we enjoy now. Here we argue that the role of other factors such as international diplomacy has played a significant role in managing inter-state relations.

Waltz (1981) in addressing the question “what will the spread of nuclear weapons do to the reached the conclusion that the number of the nuclear states are going to be increased—suggesting that nuclear proliferation will take place horizontally. He claims that the nuclear deterrence will work for new nuclear states as it had worked in the past for major nuclear powers. In response, Sagan (1994, 2001) criticizing Waltz’s view point claimed that proliferation is not going to ensure stability among nuclear states. He argued, in the past, countries were on the verge of war, despite having in possession nuclear arsenal. In the Cuban missile crisis in 1962, the United States and Soviet Union, both nuclear powers, almost went to war. He further claimed that the military has a war mindset; soldiers are trained to wage war with enemy states—making wars and armed conflicts real possibilities. He cited, the U.S military’s intention to attack and destroy Soviet nuclear capability in 1950s. Sagan further claimed that the role of the military in policy making was becoming crucial, especially in newly born nuclear states, like Pakistan. Moving away from Waltz position, Sagan contended that nuclear deterrence will have limited effect in new nuclear effects, in the likes of India and Pakistan, because their ‘command and control’ may not be as robust and reliable as in the United States and Soviet Union. Ganguly and Biringer (2001) proposed that Confidence Building Measures (CBMs) may effectively reduce tensions between India and Pakistan as both countries build trust and friendship in managing conflicts. These states have fought four wars and have been involved in

numerous other crises over several decades—resulting in hostility, mistrust and antagonism for each other. As such, any attempt to establish durable peace, can only be achieved when these states see the prospects of peace through confidence building. Each party must feel comfortable with the measures taken by the adversary towards peace and resolution of conflicts. Ganguly and Biringer (2001) argued that cooperation is possible in an anarchic world, as nuclear deterrence had worked to avert war between India and Pakistan. They claimed that India and Pakistan can cooperate with each other even in an anarchic structure of their relationship and avert war. Further, they said that the United States should play a role to bring about peace between these states, and it is only possible when the United States and international community recognize the nuclear status of these states and help them to strengthen their command and control systems.

Kapur (2005; 2008) contested the view point of proliferation optimists arguing that India and Pakistan have failed to secure peace after conducting nuclear tests in 1998. Contrary to proliferation optimists such as Davin Hagerty and Summit Ganguly who claim that nuclear deterrence has provided peace to India and Pakistan. Kapur argued that the significant degree of strategic instability has facilitated Indo-Pakistan violence in contrast to Cold war example where the strategic stability between the United States and Soviet Union allowed lower level violence. He also disputed claims made by the proliferation pessimists as Scott D. Sagan that the military organizations are creating destabilization between the two states. He states that although the nuclearization of India and Pakistan had created a new wave of destabilization, the militaries of the two states have nothing to do with it. Nuclearization, according to Kapur, is the major cause of Indo-Pak crises. He further asserts that with nuclear weapons Pakistan has resorted to adventurous policies to attract the attention of the international community to the Kashmir dispute. He also claimed that, “despite Pakistan's extensive military capabilities, it suffers from a significant degree of conventional insecurity vis-à-vis India – a fact of which Pakistani policymakers are keenly aware and that, in their view, makes nuclear deterrence essential to Pakistan’s defensive policy.” Pakistan’s view is that the nuclear deterrence has averted the chances of any war in the region. But India has brought changes into its defensive policy and has decided to react to Pakistani adventure. He finally asserted that the danger of a conventional war leading to a nuclear exchange can only be averted through diplomacy and not nuclear deterrence.

BRIEF HISTORY OF INDO-PAK WARS

India and Pakistan have fought three major wars since their independence. Their partition was not smooth and the relations between India and Pakistan continued to be beleaguered by territorial issues along the Kashmir dispute which led them towards crisis one after another in their history of 70 years.

Indo-Pak war 1947-1948

India and Pakistan fought their first war soon after independence in 1947 when Pakistan tried to annex the state of Kashmir on its side. Tribesmen from Pakistan’s tribal region and Pakistani soldiers entered Kashmir. Worried about the incursion, Maharaja Hari Singh, Kashmir’s ruler requested India for help to face the insurgents. India agreed to help, in return for Kashmir’s accession to India. With lack of options, Maharaja Hari Singh signed the instrument of

accession. India sent its forces Kashmir and took control of sixty five percent of Kashmir's territory, while Pakistani tribesmen and soldiers took control of the remaining thirty five percent. Subsequently, the international community intervened and brokered a ceasefire. Despite calls to accord the people of Kashmir the right of 'self-determination', protracted armed conflicts have plunged Kashmir into a conflict zone.

Indo-Pak war 1965

Pakistan seemingly dissatisfied with the status quo started another operation to annex Kashmir in 1965. Some of the Pakistani officials were of the opinion that Kashmiris were prepared to revolt and they only needed external support to get rid of Indian occupation. Pakistan thus started a covert operation, and soldiers were sent to Kashmir to help Kashmiri uprising against India and facilitate Kashmir's annexation to Pakistan. It didn't turn out as planned as Kashmiris were not ready for a war as Pakistan had perceived. Pakistan's covert operation which resulted in India's armed response resulted in a full-fledged conventional war between the two states.

International community intervened and a ceasefire was brokered. The Soviet Union played a mediatory role in concluding an agreement between the two states in Tashkent in 1966 which is known as Tashkent Agreement. This agreement signed between Indian Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri and Pakistan's President General Ayub Khan formalized the end of the war.

Indo-Pak War 1971

East Pakistan's grievances against its Western part reached its peak when Sheikh Mujeeb ur Rehman representing the East Pakistan got a majority vote in 1970 elections but he was not allowed to form a government as the Establishment of the country was not ready to share power with them. East Pakistanis revolted and Pakistan tried to suppress the insurgency with force. The use of force resulted in civil war and there was an exodus of refugees into Indian territory.

India while looking at the situation thought of it as a good opportunity to give a major Pakistan a major setback. It sent its troops to help the rebels in East Pakistan which resulted in war between the two neighbours and succeeded in cutting the supply line of Pakistani soldiers present in East Pakistan which led to the surrender of Pakistan's soldiers. International community negotiated a ceasefire. The ceasefire was achieved. The war resulted in a humiliating defeat for Pakistan as the United Nations (UN) recognized Bangladesh as a sovereign state. India and Pakistan signed the Simla Agreement in 1972 resolving the issue of more than ninety thousand Pakistani soldiers in Indian custody. The results of the 1971 war were devastating for Pakistan as it was humiliating for any sovereign state to lose half of its territory and its more than ninety thousand soldiers surrender to the enemy forces.

INDO-PAK CRISES AFTER NUCLEARIZATION

India and Pakistan have militarily confronted five crises after their nuclearization, suggesting that they have been more prone to war after nuclearization. Nuclear deterrence was not sufficient to avert crises and maintain peace between the two South Asian nuclear states. Diplomacy evidently was more successful than nuclear deterrence in averting war in all the five crises in 1986-87, 1990, 1999, 2001-02 and 2008.

Indo-Pak Crisis 1986-87

The confrontation started when India launched a large military exercise involving 600000 army personnel code named “Brasstacks” at the end of 1986 that continued till early 1987 in Rajasthan area near the Pakistani province of Sindh. Indian Chief of Army Staff and some of his fellow generals seemed willing to start a new front against Pakistan. This situation alarmed Pakistan as memories of 1971 war still fresh in Pakistani minds when India advanced into Pakistan’s territory and dismembered East Pakistan from the rest of the country. Pakistan perceived that India could have planned a similar strategy to dismember Sindh from the rest of the country. Pakistan responded by moving its forces to the border in Sindh and Punjab and also mobilized its forces on the Kashmir border as it was considered as India’s weak point. The tension between the two countries was at its height by 23rd January, 1987.

Indian Chief of Army Staff General Sundarji was willing to initiate a new front against Pakistan and he had also taken Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi into confidence about the move initially but later on, it failed to get Indian Prime Minister’s approval. He was confident that India can inflict a major damage to Pakistan and put an end to its help to insurgents in different Indian states. When he was asked in a meeting if India could defend itself if Pakistan retaliates with nuclear weapons, had replied that India could defend itself couldn’t give any precise plan which could convince the participants of the meeting about protecting Indian cities from a possible Pakistani nuclear strike.

The international community played a very important role in reducing tension between the two countries and especially the United States’ assurances to both sides helped to defuse the tension. The U.S President Reagan’s phone calls to Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and Pakistan’s President Zia ul Haq played a very important role in defusing tension between the two states.

Finally, then Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi also took a sensible decision not to go for an offensive against Pakistan. India started negotiations with Pakistan and the diplomatic efforts were accelerated to resolve the issue and that helped both states to start withdrawing their forces to the normal positions by 19th February, 1987.

Indo-Pak crisis 1990

India and Pakistan faced another crisis in 1990 when New Delhi decided threatened Pakistan of war consequences after heightened insurgency in Kashmir. India alleged that Pakistan supported militants for launching attacks in Kashmir while Pakistan rejected the allegation. It claimed that it only provides moral and diplomatic support to Kashmiris.

India decided to bring an end to this wave of insurgency by destroying the militant infrastructure in Pakistan. India made two moves during this period. First, it increased the number of its soldiers in Kashmir. Second, it moved some of its forces on the border. War threats were released from Indian politicians which made Pakistan feel worried that India may cross the Line of Control and it started thinking about the military options to tackle such Indian aggression. Pakistan's military and political leadership decided to secure Pakistan's sovereignty on any cost with conventional or unconventional means.

The US intelligence detected that Pakistan was mobilizing its nuclear forces to face Indian aggression. Hersh (1993) states that the 1990 crisis between India and Pakistan was very grave as the two states were almost at the brink of war. According to Hersh, Pakistan's Army Chief Mirza Aslam Beg feeling the conventional military inferiority of his country decided to use nuclear weapons in case of an Indian attack against Pakistan. He ordered the scientists to evacuate the Kahuta Research Laboratory, shifted nuclear weapons to the launching site. While Hagerty (1995-96) in disagreeing with Hersh's view point finds that the nuclear deterrence worked to avert conventional war between India and Pakistan. The two nuclear powers were on the brink of the war but didn't opt for it and the nuclear deterrence was instrumental in averting war between these two states.

Pakistan's Chief of Army Staff, Mirza Aslam Beg asked the scientists at Kahuta start assembling nuclear warheads and leave Kahuta. The international community got reports that Pakistan had started shifting its nuclear arsenals to Baluchistan. The increasing tension between the two nuclear states created considerable international concern.

The United States perceived a threat of a nuclear conflict in the region and the U.S President George Bush asked Robert Gates to visit India and Pakistan and take all measures to reduce tension between the two nuclear powers. Robert Gates visited India and Pakistan and held meetings with the political and military leaders and convinced them that war was not going to benefit any side. Robert Gates also assured India that it has asked Pakistan not to support insurgents and Pakistan will surely follow the route.

Wieninger (2004) states that Richard Kerr, the former CIA Deputy Director in an interview with Hersh about the 1990 crisis reportedly said: "There is no question in my mind that we were right on the edge. This period was very tense. The intelligence community believed that without some intervention, the two parties could miscalculate, and miscalculation could lead to a nuclear exchange." Hersh also quotes Robert Gates as saying: "There was a view that both sides were blundering towards a war, and we were afraid that it would go nuclear." And finally, the crisis which seemed to be a very serious in nature was averted and tension abated as both states started taking measures to bring things to normalcy. Therefore, it was diplomacy which was

more successful in reducing tension, averting war and maintaining peace between the two countries than nuclear deterrence.

Kargil war 1999

Cheema (2004) while discussing the 1999 crisis states, “Kargil conflict was a grim that the open testing and declaration of nuclear weapons in 1998 did not necessarily terminate the potential for a spill-over of conventional hostilities into a nuclear exchange between India and Pakistan.” There is a difference of opinion amongst scholars on the Kargil Crisis. Some call it a conflict between India and Pakistan while others call it a limited war fought between the two nuclear states which had claimed more than 1500 lives. According to the definition of war, if the number of casualties in any conflict reaches 1000 then it is considered a war. The second claim, therefore, has to be accepted because the number of casualties in the Kargil conflict exceed 1000. Kargil war started when Pakistan in a covert operation sent its forces into Indian territory to take control of the heights at Kargil. Pakistan planned to cut the Indian supply line to Kashmir and Siachen and it became successful in its intensions to a greater extent. India accused Pakistan of incursion into its territory. Although denied by Pakistan, it had in fact been supporting militants in Kashmir by giving them help including training and arms. Pakistan claimed that Indian brutalities in Kashmir had resulted in Kashmiri Mujahideen’s reprisal at Kargil (Kapur, 2005).

India in responding to provocation mobilization its troops to the border to fight Pakistan’s soldiers taking control of the heights at Kargil. The conflict soon escalated and the Indian Air Force started bombing Pakistani soldiers. The war seemed to be a real possibility between the two nations just after a year when they had tested their nuclear weapons in 1998.

The international community, worried about the situation initiated diplomatic efforts to avert full-fledged war between the two South Asian nuclear states. The United played a very important role in reducing the tension between India and Pakistan during the Kargil conflict. The U.S President Bill Clinton convinced the leaders of the two states to reduce the tension and relations improved after Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif’s meeting with the U.S President Bill Clinton in which the US President clearly told the Pakistani PM that if Pakistan was not going to withdraw its soldiers from Kargil then it should make itself prepared to face a full-fledged war as India has decided to go for a war within the next 72 hours. Finally, the situation returned to normalcy when Pakistan withdrew its forces. Wieninger (2004) states that Kargil crisis changed the perception of the nuclear deterrence theory and its proponents as it indicated that the nuclear weapons cannot be relied upon for peace.

Diplomacy had a more pivotal role than nuclear deterrence in reducing the tension and averting a full-fledged war between India and Pakistan. Though nuclear deterrence also played its role to some extent as India seemed conscious and didn’t want to accelerate Kargil conflict to a full-fledged war and it seemed clear from the decisions of Indian government as it removed a military general from the post who ordered to post Indian forces on the border near to Pakistan and also took action against a pilot which crossed an Indian aircraft into Pakistan’s territory and missed gunshots from Pakistani forces but the role of international community and especially the

United States became more stronger one. Finally, the diplomacy worked more than the nuclear weapons in reducing tension between the two South Asian nuclear weapon states.

Indo-Pak crises 2001-02

Cheema (2004) states that after the terrorist attacks on the Indian Parliament on 13th December 2001, during which twelve people including the five men who attack the building were killed, there were persistent calls in India for military action against Pakistan during most of 2002. India amassed its forces to the border, cut most of the communication channels and maintained a belligerent stance, causing bilateral relations to reach its lowest point. Pakistan having no other option, countered by mobilizing its forces against India and there was a stand-off between the two countries. The situation in South Asia was critical as there was a possibility a full-fledged conventional war leading to a nuclear conflict between the two nations. The threat appeared real as Pakistani President Musharraf refused to renounce the use of nuclear weapons. India alleged that it is the Pakistan based militant group Jaish-e-Muhammad that launched the terrorist attack. Pakistan refuted the allegations and stated that it had no links with the terrorist attack.

The terrorist attacks on the United States on 11th September, 2001 which targeted World Trade Centers and Pentagon and claimed about 3000 lives had changed the entire international political scenario. The United States launched a global campaign to get the support of the international community on its war on terror and United States decided to target terrorists wherever they are. And in this connection, it initiated attack against the Taliban government which was giving shelter to Al-Qaeda activists and its leader Osama Bin Laden who were responsible for launching terrorist attacks on the US mainland. India wanted to take benefit of the situation and launch attacks on terrorist hideouts in Pakistan. And that was the reason that it brought its forces on the border. The situation was worsening with the passing time. The war seemed to be a real possibility between the two countries.

International community played its role in attempting to defuse the situation with the United States on diplomatic over drive to keep both states away from starting a war. It pressured Pakistan to take action against the militants, while also convinced India to exercise restraint and give Pakistan some time to take steps against the militants. The pressure from the international community forced Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf to publicly announce that he would take strong action against the militant groups in the country and banned two major militant groups but refused to hand over 20 militants to India. Additionally, Pakistan arrested about 2000 militants in the country and closed down about 300 offices of the banned militant organizations. The steps taken by Pakistan to curb militancy reduced tension between the two countries.

Pakistani authors Hoodbhoy and Mian (2002) highlight the relationship between India and Pakistan after their nuclear tests in 1998 and contend that the two states relations have deteriorated after their nuclear tests. They state that after attaining nuclear capability the two states have faced one crisis after another and that there is a growing unwillingness among the leaders in the two South Asian nuclear states to confront the changed realities, as Einstein famously remarked, “the bomb has changed everything except our way of thinking.” Focusing

on the crisis in 2002 when the two states engaged in a major military mobilization on their borders, they argue that Indians seemed to be well prepared to strike the targets in Pakistan in 2002. When Pakistan learnt about the changing situation and perceived the Indian threat it also prepared itself for a war. Both states seemed to be on the brink of war. The massive military mobilization and the threat of war in Spring 2002 exposed several important features of the dynamics shaping nuclear South Asia, especially the repeated use of nuclear threats and the apparent fearlessness of policy makers and the public with the prospect of a nuclear war. Hoodbhoy and Mian focus on the U.S role to resolve the issues between India and Pakistan as it has done in the past. They state that if the two states continue to exhibit their immature attitude, South Asia would have very dark future. Hoodbhoy and Mian fear that perhaps a new chapter may someday have to be written in the text books dealing with the theory of nuclear deterrence. They state that India and Pakistan will lead to war if the United States is not going to play its role in defusing tension between the two countries in future crises.

Indo-Pak crisis 2008

India having had a history of terrorist attacks on its mainland faced another major setback on 2 November 2008 when terrorists launched a major offensive against it by targeting Mumbai. Ten terrorists attacked the city and targeting the major land marks as the railway station, bus station and international hotels. At least 170 people—including foreigners were killed in the attack which also left almost 300 people injured. Indian forces launched a major operation against the terrorists which continued for almost four days. Nine terrorists were killed while one was arrested.

Indian alleged that Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) a Pakistan based militant group was responsible for launching these terrorist attacks on its territory and accused Pakistan of supporting terrorists. Pakistan condemned the attack but denied involvement. India threatened war if Pakistan fails to hand over the 40 suspects involved in terrorist attacks as the suspects had their roots in Pakistan.

Rejecting the Indian allegation the Pakistani government asked the New Delhi to provide proof of Pakistani citizens involved in these terrorist attacks. It refused to hand over any of its citizen without any solid proof from the Indian side but assured India that if proofs are genuine, it will take action against the accused according to its law.

As tension escalated, the international community, especially the United States and the United Kingdom intervened to reduce tension between the two South Asian nuclear states. The United States asked both India and Pakistan to exercise restraint and forced Pakistan to take action against the militant groups using its territory to hit at Indian targets. Under extreme pressure from the international community, Pakistan closed some of the offices of the militant group Lashkar e Taiba and made some of its activists under house arrest and closed its websites (Ganguly, 2009). The international community again succeeded in alleviating tension between the two countries. Therefore, it was diplomacy and not nuclear deterrence that successfully reduced tension between the two countries.

CRITICAL ANALYSIS

Shaikh (2006) argues that “Pakistan's 'revisionist' stance on Kashmir as 'the unfinished business of Partition' is a key factor keeping the conflict alive—a conflict that, now it is hedged in by nuclear weapons, has become more rather than less crisis prone.” Knopf (2002) states that the Kargil war forced the proliferation optimists to alter their stance as the war between the two South Asian nuclear states totally discarded the concept of nuclear deterrence. Ganguly (2013) states that Pakistan, while having a small civilian nuclear program focused on its military dimension after its 1971 defeat. After the dismemberment of the country into two, Pakistani leaders took cognizance of the fact that their conventional military was inferiority to India's and this perception led to opt for manufacture nuclear weapons. Ganguly (2013) further states that before start of Kargil conflict, General Musharraf, Pakistan's Chief of Army Staff publicly declared that the chances of a full-fledged war in the region between India and Pakistan were over after the acquisition of nuclear capabilities by the two states, but that the chances of conventional conflict still remained between the two states.

India and Pakistan fought three wars in the initial period of 25 years but after acquiring nuclear weapons they had fought only one limited war at Kargil in 1999 and other four major crises between 1986 and 2008—though threatening to erupt into war ended up in routine clashes. The nuclear deterrence was not successful to a greater extent to reduce the tensions between the two countries. It was diplomacy and not the nuclear deterrence which reduced tension between the two countries in all the crises between 1986 and 2008. The role of international community is very appreciable as it played a very important role in reducing the tensions between the two states in times of crises. The United States must be credited more than any other state for its role in reducing the tension between India and Pakistan. Chari, Cohen and Chema, (2007) state that the previous four crises from 1986-87 to 2002 have global implications. First, South Asia became the nuclear flash point; second, the Indo-Pakistan crises contradicted several important theories of the field of International Relations. Third, the Indian intention to become a world power and Pakistan's intention to have a strong defense are going to have importance in their future relationship with each other. Finally, these crises offered important doctrinal and strategic lessons not only to these South Asian nuclear powers but also to other states of the world. They further maintain that the crisis in 1990 became a major focal point as there was great anxiety that South Asia had become a hot spot and any war between India and Pakistan could generate into a nuclear conflict as both these nations had nuclear capabilities, and the United States, Russian, Japanese and European analysts agreed on that point. Narang (2009/2010) states that nuclear deterrence has enabled Pakistan to aggressively pursue its longstanding revisionist policies against India, prompting frequent and intense crises in the region.

If shuttle diplomacy had not played a vital role in reducing tension, it would have been difficult to avert war between the two states. And any conventional war between India and Pakistan meant a nuclear exchange between the two immature nuclear states. These two immature nuclear weapon states threaten each other of using nuclear weapons and bringing extreme destruction to the opposite side.

These two states appeared indifferent to the colossal destruction which will be inflicted on the humanity because of their war oriented policies and eagerness to use nuclear weapons against each other. Pakistan's stance was that nuclear weapons provided it an opportunity to

pursue its adventurous policies. It supported Kashmiri Mujahidin and other militant groups waging jihad in Kashmir. It thinks that nuclear weapons in the region have averted conventional war. Pakistan considers itself weak in conventional capability in comparison to India, it perceives that it can counter India's conventional threat with its nuclear weapons. Pakistan's perception is that India would not initiate a conventional war against due its threat of using nuclear weapons in a war. While things are change on Indian side as they think that the chances for a conventional war are still there as Pakistan could not dare to use nuclear weapons in conventional war due to threat of Indian retaliation. Both India and Pakistan's approaches contradict each other. Therefore, no one can claim that these approaches are leading towards the success of nuclear deterrence in reducing tensions, averting wars and maintaining peace between India and Pakistan.

If we analyze the different Indo-Pak crises after their nuclearization, we will be able to discern that it was the role of the international community, especially the United States in defusing tension between the two countries.

The issue of a nuclear threat surfaced for the first time when both states threatened each other with nuclear weapons in 1986-87 when India started military exercises near the border and Pakistan perceived an Indian threat mobilized its forces on the border. The world feared that these two states could go to war if efforts were not made to stop them pursue that path. The leaders from both countries openly cautioned that they had nuclear capabilities and that they can inflict major losses on their adversary. The United States played a very crucial role in defusing tension between the two countries during 1986-87 crisis. The US President called Pakistani President General Zia ul Haq and Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi on the phone and asked them to take steps to defuse the tension between the two states.

The next coming crisis between the two states was in 1990 when insurgency in Kashmir was at its height and India had threatened to declare war against Pakistan to put an end to the insurgency as India accused Pakistan of providing support and shelter to the insurgents. India alleged that Pakistan has been supporting infiltration of militants into its territory. Pakistan perceiving a threat made up its mind to face any Indian aggression. The Pakistani military had also considered all options including the use of nuclear weapons in case they faced major setback in the war. The United States alarmed by the risk of a nuclear war between India and Pakistan started diplomatic efforts to ease the tension between the two countries. The US President George Bush sent Robert Gates, the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) to Islamabad and Delhi on 20-21 May along with senior offices Richard Hass and John Kelly to seek a peaceful solution to the escalating crises. Both sides responded with positive gestures and the US intervention was a diplomatic victory. Therefore, it was the US diplomacy which reduced the tension between the two nuclear states.

The third crisis which was also called a limited war between the two powers was the Kargil conflict in 1999. The Kargil war refuted the claim of the proponents of the theory of nuclear deterrence that there would be no more wars between the nuclear powers. The world did witness a limited a war in 1999 between two South Asian nuclear powers. Again the international community played a role in defusing the tension with the United States President

Bill Clinton playing a very important role convincing the leaders of the both states not to go for a full-fledged war and adopt measures to normalize the situation in the region.

The fourth crisis between the two nuclear powers erupted in 2001-02 when terrorists attacked on Legislative Assembly of Kashmir and the Indian Parliament. India mobilized its troops –reportedly 500,000 on the border and prepared itself for war, and Pakistan also responded in the same way. The United States again played a very positive role in defusing the tension between the two countries and pressured the leaders on both sides to exercise a restraint and to take steps to reduce the tension. The US diplomatic efforts became successful in reducing the tension between the two countries.

India and Pakistan again came to the brink of war in 2008 when terrorists attacked the Indian city Mumbai killing a large number of innocent people. India alleged Pakistani based terrorist group for the terrorist attacks. It also alleged Pakistan for its backing to the terrorists as they were using its territory for launching terrorist attacks against India. Both states seemed to be at the edge of the war. The United States made its diplomatic efforts to reduce the tension between the two states. The United States convinced the leaders of India and Pakistan to take steps to defuse the tension between the two countries. The United States efforts became successful and the tension between the two states was defused.

The root cause of crises between India and Pakistan was the menace of terrorism as the terrorists created the circumstances for a war between the two countries. Terrorism seems to be stronger than nuclear deterrence as one terrorist attack on Indian territory can lead the two states towards a full-fledged war which could also result in a nuclear exchange causing massive destruction with millions of casualties. The terrorists exploit the trust deficit present between the two states. India and Pakistan should take measures to fill the trust deficit gap prevailing between them by taking confidence building measures to handle crises.

Both states should also correct their misperceptions about nuclear deterrence. Pakistan is of the perception that India would not go for a conventional war against it as the two states have nuclear weapons capabilities. It has also kept the option of using nuclear weapons open as a last resort. Pakistan faced with conventional inferiority against India has kept the option of using nuclear weapons open in times war when its sovereignty is at risk. India's misperception is that nuclear weapons have averted the possibility of a nuclear war and that it can go for a conventional war against Pakistan. It claims that it has the option of conventional war against Pakistan on its cards whenever it needs, but if Pakistan is targeted, it would seek recourse through nuclear strikes against its rival.

Nuclear deterrence only works when both sides admit its effectiveness. The major reason behind its failure in South Asia is the changed perceptions of India and Pakistan towards nuclear deterrence. India doesn't admit the proposition of the proponents of nuclear deterrence that nuclear powers cannot opt for war. Pakistan, on the other hand, has a very different perception regarding nuclear deterrence. It thinks that the chances of any war in the region are over and views it as an opportunity to follow its adventurous policies in the region. Therefore, the contradicting concepts followed by India and Pakistan in relation to nuclear deterrence have

reduced the effectiveness of nuclear deterrence in averting war between the two states in South Asia.

CONCLUSION

The Pakistani and India's governments have different perceptions on the nuclear deterrence theory. Pakistan considers nuclear deterrence as an option to support its adventurous policies in the region. The Indian government, however perceives that Pakistan would not attack India with nuclear weapons in case of a conventional war because it clearly knows about India's nuclear capabilities to inflict severe damage on Pakistan. Indian's stance is that the chances of a limited war are still there and it wants to keep the option of a limited war with Pakistan open all the time due to the superiority of its conventional military capabilities.

The nuclear deterrence could have had some psychological effect in the five crises that erupted between India and Pakistan after their nuclearization but it was not adequate in reducing the tension, averting conventional war and maintaining peace between the two countries. Diplomacy was more successful and it was the international community's diplomatic push which was the key factor in reducing tension between India and Pakistan and not nuclear deterrence. If the international community, especially the United States had not acted to reduce the tension between the two countries, both nations might have fought a war and had opted for nuclear strikes. Therefore, diplomacy was more effective in averting full-fledged wars in South Asia. The credit for peace goes to diplomacy which the international community deployed in defusing tension between the two countries during five crises between 1986-87 and 2008.

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