**PAKISTAN AND INDIA NUCLEAR STAND OFF**

**Doom’s Day Scenario**

[**Researchers warn India-Pakistan nuclear war could kill 100 million**](https://www.dawn.com/news/1508756/researchers-warn-india-pakistan-nuclear-war-could-kill-100-million)

**The year is 2025 and militants have attacked India's parliament, killing most of its leaders. New Delhi retaliates by sending tanks into Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK).**

Fearing it will be overrun, Islamabad hits the invading forces with its battlefield nuclear weapons, triggering the deadliest conflict in history — and catastrophic global cooling, with temperatures not seen since the last Ice Age.

This scenario was modelled by researchers in 2019 and published by Dawn on October 3rd 2019 , which envisaged more than 100 million immediate deaths, followed by global mass starvation after megatons of thick black soot block out sunlight for up to a decade.

India has a “no first strike” policy, but reserves the right to mount a nuclear response to any hit by weapons of mass destruction.

Pakistan has declared it would only use nuclear weapons if it could not stop an invasion by conventional means or were attacked first with nuclear weapons.

The authors wrote that although their scenario had Pakistan pulling the trigger first, they did not mean to imply they believed this was more likely.

Around 75-80 million people were killed in World War II

This most extreme scenario would involve the use of 100 kiloton weapons, more than six times as powerful as the bombs dropped on Hiroshima.

A single airburst from such a bomb could kill two million people and injure 1.5 million — but most of the deaths would occur from the raging firestorms that followed the blast.

“India would suffer two to three times more fatalities and casualties than Pakistan because, in our scenario, Pakistan uses more weapons than India and because India has a much larger population and more densely populated cities,” the paper said.

But nuclear Armageddon would be only the beginning.

The research found that the firestorms could release 16 million to 36 million tonnes of soot (black carbon) into the upper atmosphere, spreading around the world within weeks.

The soot in turn would absorb solar radiation, heating the air up and boosting the smoke's rise.

Sunlight reaching the Earth would decline 20 to 35 per cent, cooling the surface by 2 to 5 degrees Celsius and reducing precipitation by 15 to 30pc.

Worldwide food shortages would follow, with the effects persisting up to 10 years.

**“The spe­c­ter of nuclear war haunts tensions between India and Pakistan, and the disputed territory of Kashmir could provide the spark that lights South Asia’s nuclear fuse,”**

**(**Stratfor :**US Think Tank 2019)**

According to the report, the possibility of “the conflict going nuclear may have increased on Aug 16”, when Indian Defence Minister Rajnath Singh seemed to abandon India’s “no first use” doctrine. Mr Singh tweeted that “India has strictly adhered to this doctrine. What happens in the future depends on the circumstances”. And “the circumstances are not hopeful”,.

It also notes that while previous Pakistani governments had supported Kashmiri insurgents, the present Pakistani government, which came to power in August 2018, was “not involved in his predecessors’ interference in Indian-controlled Kashmir”.

It points out that last Feb­ruary, Pakistan downed an Indian fighter jet but retur­ned its pilot, Abhinandan Varthaman, on March 1.

Indian PM Narendra Modi “did not acknowledge” Islamabad’s conciliatory gesture. “Nor has his government been willing to discuss Kashmir,” whose people were promised a plebiscite on their future by India’s first prime minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, in 1947.

## “[Kashmir now a flashpoint, has potential of turning into nuclear war'](https://www.dawn.com/news/1505188/kashmir-now-a-flashpoint-has-potential-of-turning-into-nuclear-war) (PM I.K)

He expressed his resentment over the lukewarm global response after India's revocation of occupied Kashmir's autonomous status, and said, "Unfortunately, because of this whole thing about big markets, [some] countries look at big markets, they look upon India as a market of one billion people, they don't realise that if they do not intervene right now, it will have consequences for not only the subcontinent but the world's trade — everyone will be affected by this."

## Possibility of nuclear war

Asked if he shares concerns voiced by Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi about an accidental war between the two nuclear-armed powers, he said: "Absolutely. What is happening is that India is more or less conducting a genocide. The sort of racial attacks [made] on the population, I don't think it has been witnessed since Nazi Germany. The eight million Muslims in Kashmir are under siege for almost six weeks now. And why this can become a flash point between India and Pakistan is because what India is trying to do is divert attention from its illegal annexation and their impending genocide in Kashmir.

"They are taking attention away by blaming Pakistan for terrorism. And this is what they did last February when there was a suicide attack by a young Kashmiri boy, blowing himself up against an Indian military convoy and India blamed Pakistan for it and then bombed us.

"So we fear that this will happen again because what they are doing in Kashmir will lead to a reaction, some sort of reaction, and they will then blame Pakistan for it to divert the world's attention from the genocide in Kashmir."

**KASHMIR is generally described as a nuclear flashpoint. Reference to Pakistan and India being nuclear-armed neighbours is often cited in times of heightened tension between the two countries and as a reminder that they must avoid an all-out conflict. The Aug 5 2019 Indian**[**move**](https://www.dawn.com/news/1498227)**to annex India-held Kashmir (IHK), the draconian lockdown in the Valley since that date, and reckless Indian claims to Azad Kashmir have created a radically new and dangerous situation which has been the subject of extensive comment.**

Indian Nuclear Doctrine

India 's Draft Nuclear Doctrine has to be viewed as a "declaratory policy" giving out broad guidelines for the proposed development and use of its nuclear arsenal-existance and under development. Hence Indian domestic critism of its not spelling out "employment strategy" or "configuration of nuclear capability" or costing" are misplaced. These aspects will never be spelt out as intentions and capabilities are always "TOP SECRET."

The major policy declarations made in the Draft Nuclear Doctrine are:

 1. Fundamental purpose of Indian Nuclear Weapons is to deter the use of and threat of use of nuclear weapons by any a state or entity against and its forces.

 2. India will not resort to use or threat of use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear weapons state or those not aligned with nuclear weapon powers.

 3. India will not be the first to initiate a nuclear strike.

 4. India shall pursue for a credible minimum, deterrent. Any nuclear attack on India and its forces shall result in punitive retaliation with nuclear weapons.

 5. Nuclear weapons shall be tightly controlled and released for use at the highest political level.

 6. India 's nuclear arsenal will be based on the triad concept i.e. land based ballistic missiles, sea based assets and air borne platforms.

Statements by Indian officials and scholars have indicated that the Indian government could be considering a revision of its “No-First Use” nuclear doctrine to include the option of pre-emptive strikes. Under the existing doctrine, India could carry out retaliatory strikes against Pakistani cities, but that too could change to include pre-emptive strikes against Pakistani nuclear assets

“A pre-emptive nuclear strike by India would be very difficult but not impossible due to the acquisition of technology from the US and Israel as well as indigenous development of its nuclear assets,” said Dr Christopher Clary, an assistant professor of political science at the University of Albany in New York. According to Dr Clary, India could be playing up the idea of counterforce strike to deter Pakistan by adding credibility to its posture, keep the option of such a strike available to itself in the eventuality of a breakdown in deterrence, pre-empt an imminent attack or bait Pakistan into an arms race for exhausting its limited resources.

Dr Mansoor, a postdoctoral fellow at the Belfer Centre for Science and International Affairs at Harvard University, said that India by expanding its capabilities could be moving towards a possible change in its nuclear posture and realisation of its counterforce targeting aspirations.

Dr Mansoor said that India could be doing this to inflict a decapitating first strike on Pakistan and maintain escalation dominance in case of a conflict. He also highlighted the conventional discrepancies between India and Pakistan.

**Pakistan’s Nuclear Doctrine**

**A** doctrine could be defined as a set of principles formulated and applied for a specific purpose, working towards a desired goal or aim.

Before we discuss the nuclear doctrine of Pakistan it would be appropriate to dilate somewhat on the factors that have conceived the concept which has formulated the nuclear doctrine. Pakistan’s main concern has been with her security and territorial integrity which has been threatened and violated by India many times since 1947 when both countries became independent. Pakistan has fought three wars and two border conflicts short of war with India. In 1971 Pakistan was dismembered by Indian military intervention. Today troops of both countries are in an eyeball-to-eyeball deployment on either side of the Line of Control in Kashmir and along the Siachin Glacier in the northern areas. These facts have a great bearing on Pakistan's concern for a viable security parameter.

It is now a matter of recorded history that in August 1947 while Pakistan was trying to cope with the onerous administrative and logistics problems facing the new state, independent India sent her Army and Air Force into the princely state of Jammu and Kashmir in October 1947 to settle a dispute by resort to arms. Having used force against a neighbour barely two months after gaining independence, India continued to use force as an instrument of her foreign policy in pursuit of her national goals and objectives in the region. After Kashmir Indian troops entered Junagadh and Manawadar, the following year it was Hyderabad, in Deccan. In 1961 the Portuguese territories of Diu, Daman and Goa were attacked and captured. In 1962 a border conflict was initiated against China and for the first time India was defeated by a neighbour of comparative size. The reverberations from this defeat still rankle the command structure of the large and well-equipped Indian Army. India has also used force to absorb tiny Sikkim. Sent troops into Sri Lanka on the pretext of peace keeping, blockaded Nepal to change her government and flown troops into Maldives islands as a show of force. These actions by India over the years certainly do not inspire confidence in her small neighbours.

Unfortunately in South Asia a balance of power cannot be maintained by conventional means alone. Owing primarily to India's sheet size and ample resources. India is larger than all her neighbours combined, in South Asia by a wide margin. Add to this India's ambitions across her frontiers in the region and beyond and you have a situation fraught with long-term defence and security implications for Pakistan. India's recent large scale military manoeuvres on land at Sea and in the air often close to the Indo-Pak border and her acquisition of 1.6 Billion dollars worth of modern arms from Russia is certainly a cause of some concern in Pakistan.

Surprisingly India's defence experts and thinkers have also been advocating the use of military force as an instrument of state policy. Mr T.T. Paulose wrote in the 'Hindustan Times', New Delhi on March 12, 1998. 'The humiliating defeat at the hands of China (in 1962) awakened India to the new realities of military power as a major factor in international politics and inter-state relations'. Similarly Mr Sidharth Mishra writing in 'The Pioneer', New Delhi on March 10, 1998 said. 'If we want to be respected and accepted by the international community as a force to reckon with, a greater attention to the Armed Forces becomes an essential pre-requisite'.

There was no military justification whatsoever for India to have detonated a series of nuclear devices in May 1998. There was no threat to India's security from her small neighbours. In any case nothing had changed on her borders to cause any alarm. As far as China was concerned, her Army Chief had visited India and there was an agreement for mutual reduction of troops along their common border. By her nuclear tests India disturbed the defence parity maintained in the region. This had been achieved by an undeclared mutual nuclear capability and without the visible deployment of ballistic missiles on both sides. This state of ambiguity had helped to preserve military equilibrium in the region resulting in 27 years of continues peace in South Asia. In comparison there were three Indo-Pak wars in the first 24 years of their independence.

The International Herald Tribune had this to say in an editorial in its issue of May 30-31, 1998. 'Restraint was widely urged on Pakistan after India conducted five nuclear tests. But those doing the urging had to know their appeal was hollow. Pakistan, feeling that nothing less than its survival was at stake, was being asked to give up a matching nuclear option in return for an uncertain set of international guarantees. India's tests were strategically gratuitous (uncalled for, motiveless). They did not emanate from any threat that reasonable people could perceive, certainly not one from Pakistan. Pakistan's five tests on Thursday (May 28) however, had a claim of strategic justification. That is why India's tests enraged many in Washington and elsewhere, while Pakistan's were received more in sorrow than in anger'.

After acquiring nuclear weapons capability India's stance towards Pakistan completely changed. Mr L. K. Advani the pro-nuclear Indian home minister made statements showing India's intention to cross the Line of Control in Kashmir under the pretext of 'hot pursuit'. These statements were supported and often repeated by Indian-occupied Kashmir's chief minister Dr Farooq Abdullah. The Indian Corps Commander in Kashmir Lt. Gen Kishan Pal addressed an unprecedented news conference to advocate his plans of attacking Azad Kashmir territory across the Line of Control. These provocative statements could not have been made without Delhi's approval. These were followed by appropriate military moves by India. An extra infantry division was sent into Kashmir and another one was placed at short notice to move. During my tour to the Line of Control the local army commanders informed me that India had started to dump artillery and other ammunition into forward locations. This is often a prelude to war.

With Pakistan's atomic tests her nuclear weapons capability was overtly demonstrated for all to see: friends and foes alike. It was surprising to note that India's aggressive tone based on her military muscle immediately changed for the better. There was now talk of peace and negotiations. The war hysteria seemed to have subsided. This is what deterrence is all about. By a demonstrated nuclear capability and parity on either side of the border, a form of defence equilibrium has been restored between India and Pakistan. If not disturbed any further this should augur well for future peace in the region.

It is the considered opinion of defence analysts at home and abroad that when only one side possesses nuclear devices, it is a weapon of mass destruction, and is likely to be used. But on the other hand when both sides have acquired nuclear devices, it becomes a deterrent that could avoid an armed conflict and the enormous destruction that would follow.

India's attitude after Pakistan tested six nuclear devices is well described by Professor Stephen P. Cohen of Illinois University, USA, whom I have known for 20 years. Stephen is a US expert on South Asia, has visited India and Pakistan and written about the two armies. He wrote in the New York Times on June 3, 1998 that, 'In the three weeks since India conducted its nuclear tests, the tough talk of Indian leaders seems to have faded to a whisper. They are now proposing that their country and Pakistan sign a treaty agreeing not to be the first to use such weapons against each other'. It is certainly a good beginning.

Now that India and Pakistan are both nuclear weapon states, greater responsibility rests on the leaders of these countries to ensure that peace and amity returns to South Asia. Some rules must be laid down and a policy formulated for the manufacture, storage and use of nuclear weapons. In other words an official doctrine for the use of nuclear weapons. Although Pakistan has not made any official announcement, India has given some policy options. Mr G. Balachandran writing about India's nuclear doctrine in 'The Hindu' of Delhi on February 15, 1999 says 'While there has not been any detailed enunciation of the nuclear doctrine, a major element has been announced by the government. That is a policy of no-first use. India will not be the first to initiate the use of a nuclear weapon. It will only retaliate with nuclear weapons if such weapons are first used against India.'

Mr K. Subrahmanyam, convener of the Indian National Security Advisory Board explained India's approach to the no-first-use doctrine in a newspaper article. According to him, 'The Indian no-first-use doctrine is not just a declaratory policy unrelated to deployment and command and control. It is rooted in the perception that the core of deterrence lies in the uncertainty about the adversary's likely capability to cause unacceptable damage to oneself after the initial use of nuclear weapons against him. The survivability of the assets to strike back in retaliation constitutes deterrence and not the provocative forward and risky deployment as was carried out by the nuclear weapons powers'. This approach to deterrence would be applicable to Pakistan as well.

India's offer of a treaty to be signed by the two countries, agreeing not to be the first to use nuclear weapons against each other is one-sided and would benefit India only, as it has a superior conventional force. It may be more appropriate for both countries to sign a mutual test ban treaty to start with, followed by a no-war pact.

India has military superiority over Pakistan in troops ratio and conventional arms. This superiority is being augmented every year from indigenous and outside sources, while there is no apparent danger to her security from her small neighbours. India's recent agreement with Russia for import of 1.6 billion dollars worth of modern arms is a case in point. On the other hand Pakistan's defence capability has somewhat been reduced owing to the unwillingness of the United States and Russia to allow the import of modern weapons from their countries. French weapons are far too expensive. China remains a steadfast friend and supporter.

What would be Pakistan's reaction in case of an overwhelming Indian conventional attack. In this context it would be worth reminding ourselves what the deputy supreme commander of NATO said some years ago. Field Marshal Montgomery whom I had the honour of meeting said in October 1954. 'I want to make it very clear that we are basing all our operational plans on using atomic and thermo-nuclear weapons in our defence. With us it is no longer: 'They may possibly be used'. It is very definitely: 'They will be used, if we are attacked'. The reason for this action is that we cannot match the strength that could be brought against us unless we use nuclear weapons .... There are some who say that if war is joined, nuclear weapons will not be used: I would disagree with that. My opinion is that the fear of atomic and thermonuclear weapons is a powerful deterrent to war: but once a World hot war has started, both sides are likely to use them. We would certainly use them if we are attacked'.

From the above it is absolutely clear what Western Europe would have done if attacked by the USSR. To offset Soviet superiority in manpower and conventional weapons NATO would use nuclear weapons if attacked. Another point that was evident from the Field Marshal's statement is that a deterrent is viable only as long as a nation is prepared to use it. the political will is essential, and certainly an important factor.

During the cold war and the East-West nuclear confrontation the first firm doctrine for the employment of nuclear weapons was given by John Foster Dulles, US Secretary of State during the Eisenhower administration in 1954. It was the doctrine of 'Massive Retaliation' which meant that any Soviet attack would be answered with a massive retaliation with nuclear weapons against the Soviet Union. In 1962 it was changed to 'Flexible response' during the Kennedy administration, the emphasis being on 'Damage Limitation' and 'Counter Force Targeting'. It became the official NATO nuclear doctrine in 1967. This was later changed to 'Strategy of Assured Destruction'. As destruction would be caused to both sides, it became 'Mutual Assured Destruction (MAD). In 1972 in the Nixon administration Kissinger as the National Security Adviser came up with the 'Strategy of Limited Nuclear Options', also known as the 'Schlesinger Doctrine'. The main feature of this doctrine was escalation control through a series of limited and selective strikes with pauses in between to allow for a negotiated cease-fire.

In 1979 during the Carter administration the nuclear doctrine was contained in the 'Countervailing Strategy' which was essentially a refinement of the 'Schlesinger Doctrine'. It enhanced the flexibility and gave the President a number of options for retaliation. It also sought to convince the USSR that it would be denied victory in a nuclear conflict. The emphasis being on counter force targeting. During the Ronald Reagan era the 'countervailing strategy' was replaced by the 'Prevailing Strategy' which aimed at securing an American victory in all eventualities rather than denying victory to the USSR.

It will be noted that various alterations and changes took place in the United States nuclear doctrine under different administrations but the underlying theme remained constant. That nuclear weapons would be employed against the USSR in any future conflict to offset their numerical superiority in manpower and conventional arms, which could not be brought at par.

During any future Indo-Pak armed conflict India's numerical superiority in men and conventional arms is likely to exert pressure beyond endurance. In a deteriorating military situation when an Indian conventional attack is likely to break through our defences or has already breached the main defence line causing a major set-back to the defences, which cannot be restored by conventional means at our disposal, the government would be left with no other option except to use Nuclear Weapons to stabilize the situation. India's superiority in conventional arms and manpower would have to be offset by nuclear weapons. The political will to use nuclear weapons is essential to prevent a conventional armed conflict, which would later on escalate into a nuclear war.

Pakistan's Nuclear Doctrine would therefore essentially revolve around the first-strike option. In other words we will use nuclear weapons if attacked by India even if the attack is with conventional weapons. With his American experience of a graduated nuclear response Professor Stephen P. Cohen feels that Pakistan would use what he calls an 'option-enhancing policy' for a possible use of nuclear weapons. This would entail a stage-by-stage approach in which the nuclear threat is increased at each step to deter India from attack. The first step could be a public or private warning, the second a demonstration explosion of a small nuclear weapon on its own soil, the third step would be the use of a few nuclear weapons on its own soil against Indian attacking forces. The fourth stage would be used against critical but purely military targets in India across the border from Pakistan. Probably in thinly populated areas in the desert or semi-desert, causing least collateral damage. this may prevent Indian retaliation against cities in Pakistan. Some weapon systems would be in reserve for the counter-value role. These weapons would be safe from Indian attack as some would be airborne while the ground based ones are mobile and could be moved around the country.

With some experience and the passage of time a degree of sophistication will certainly be introduced in Pakistan's nuclear doctrine of the first-use of nuclear weapons to provide the government more options in the use of nuclear weapons. This would also avoid unessential collateral damage to cities and other population centres in both countries. The object would be to employ nuclear weapons if attacked yet cause the least civilian casualties and damage to infrastructure.

It must be appreciated that a nuclear device is not just another weapon with increased firepower. It is in fact a weapon of mass destruction and a whole new system, requiring new rules of command, control, communications, deployment and engagement. It is obvious that the control of this devastating weapon must rest firmly in the hands of the highest political authority in the country. In our case the Prime Minister. It is envisaged that the Prime Minister's decision would be based on an earlier discussion in the Federal Cabinet, of the grave situation in the country pursuant to an armed conflict with India or danger of such a conflict. The matter would also have been discussed in the Defence Committee of the Cabinet which is responsible for defence and security of the country.

Although the decision to employ the nuclear option is that of the government. Yet it must be decided before hand as to when and to whom would the authority to use nuclear weapons be delegated in a crisis situation. India our potential enemy has numerical superiority in conventional forces and would have the advantage of initiative as an aggressor, time would therefore be of essence to the defender with numerical inferiority. Delegation of authority to use the nuclear option would therefore be essential. It may eventually be given to the commander of forces in the field under specified circumstances depending on the course and direction in which the battle unfolds to our eventual disadvantage.

Fast and secure communications is another essential factor in a nuclear environment. Communications from the Prime Minister and his security team through the shortest chain of command to the actual launch area of the nuclear weapon must be secure at all times.

As an ultimate precaution there must be presumed delegation of authority in cases where the seat of government has been wholly or partially destroyed and rendered ineffective by the enemy's nuclear strike. This would also be applicable when a higher military headquarters has been knocked out and ceases to function effectively, temporarily or permanently.

Intelligence gathering would gain added importance in a nuclear environment. It would be essential to have accurate, up to date and timely information about our potential enemy's additional troop, aircraft and ship deployments and their likely intentions. His preparations for a nuclear first strike must be known at the earliest.

For the daily conduct of the war it may well be appropriate to have a small committee under the Prime Minister with the ministers of Defence and Foreign Affairs as members along with the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee. The Defence Secretary acting as secretary of the committee. In the final analysis it is possible that the Prime Minister representing the political will of the nation and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee, representing the views and recommendations of the three services would be working together to provide the correct direction to the war effort.

It is suggested that Army's Air Defence commands on geographical basis suitably augmented should be responsible to trace, identify and destroy incoming enemy missiles and to launch our own nuclear weapons. Two Air Defence Commands should control nuclear weapons on our Eastern borders, with the dividing line at Bahawalpur. By designating one headquarters to control and launch nuclear weapons, unity of command and safety of launch is maintained. There would therefore be one officer of three-star rank taking his orders from General Headquarters (GHQ), unless it has been delegated to a threatened Corps in a crisis situation.

The government must decide before hand when and at what stage of a military conflict with India it would be forced to employ the nuclear option. The threshold must be clear and unambiguous. To use the modern Jargon, the bottom line needs to be clearly defined to avoid a miscalculation.

To prevent a nuclear war by mistake, a misadventure or a miscalculation, certain confidence building measures would have to be taken urgently.

Owing to a much smaller number of nuclear weapons that could be maintained in South Asia compared to the nuclear powers, an elaborate command and control structure would not be necessary. The cost would consequently be modest as well. It is estimated to be in the region of 150 to 200 million rupees per year, for the next five years at least.

As far as cost of the nuclear weapons and their delivery system, it would depend on each country's perception and requirement of a minimum nuclear deterrent. According to Amit Gupta in the Armed Forces Journal of September 1998, many analysts agree that India requires 100 to 150 nuclear weapons as a deterrent against China and Pakistan as a minimum. The estimated cost would be 714 million dollars a year for the next 10 years. In Pakistan a minimum deterrent could range between 30 to 50 nuclear weapons. Gen Mirza Aslam Beg calculates the cost to be in the range of 250 million dollars.

In a nuclear environment a Joint Staff HQ with added responsibility would be essential. Under it a new Nuclear Command could be created to control and co-ordinate all Nuclear effort in the country. Instructions to Service HQ would pass through this new command for clarity and security.

It is the opinion of some experts that having achieved nuclear status India and Pakistan should return to the pre-nuclear test era of ambiguity with regard to the nuclear response in an armed conflict. In other words the doctrine itself should provide some answers and leave others to the imagination creating some uncertainty and doubt in the aggressors' mind. This would force caution and some delay, probably second thoughts, resulting in a prevention of conflict.

When all is said and done it must be the concern of both India and Pakistan to avoid a future armed conflict. The possession of nuclear weapons should be used to prevent war and bring peace to the region. The Prime Minister of Pakistan is committed to reducing tension in Indo-Pak relations and solving all disputes with India by peaceful means. India has taken a step forward in the Bus diplomacy which must be reciprocated in full measure for the benefit of the people of South Asia.

# Pakistan’s evolving nuclear doctrine

If Pakistan has not released a nuclear doctrine, it does not mean that it has not got one. It is understandable that a small nuclear power that espouses a limited aim of deterring coercion from a larger neighbour, maintaining calculated ambiguity would be a rational choice. Clear articulation would limit Pakistani options. That said Pakistan’s nuclear doctrine can be ascertained if, for instance, statements by its National Command Authority are read closely.

In September 2013, the NCA signalled that Pakistan would follow Full Spectrum Deterrence which surfaced during NCA meetings in 2015-16. Recently, the 23rd meeting of the NCA has reaffirmed its commitment to FSD.

NCA’s adviser for development Lt Gen (retd) Khalid Kidwai has shed rare light on FSD and articulated that by this policy every Indian target is now in Pakistan’s striking range. Elaborating three elements of FSD, he counted the “full spectrum of nuclear weapons, with full range coverage of the large Indian land mass and its outlying territories.” In other words, FSD manifests that the authorities will utilise whatever methods are important to secure its interests.

Analysts see this FSD approach as a qualitative response by Pakistan to counter the threat created by the Indian Cold Start Doctrine. In 2016, the Indian chief of army staff let the cat out of the bag by accrediting CSD — a politically unauthorised doctrine of a limited war under the umbrella of nuclear weapons. The shift in Indian doctrine has left Pakistan with no choice but to go for offensive options.

Pakistan has adopted a method of gradual declaration of its nuclear doctrine, which neither clearly embraces a first use doctrine nor denies it. This bit-by-bit approach is useful because Pakistan responds to Indian actions that remain dynamic. The ambiguity in Pakistan’s posture is meant to deter a pre-emptive conventional attack and establish deterrence rather than practically initiating a nuclear war. This is why Pakistan has developed adequate conventional response mechanism to a pre-emptive conventional war doctrine. Although Pakistan’s nuclear programme is for solely defence purposes, it has always been under consistent threat from a much superior military adversary.

There are numerous examples of threatening to utilise nuclear arsenals in order to compensate for conventional asymmetry. The US, with respect to Nato, adhered to the idea of first use in its long-standing nuclear policy. When the erstwhile USSR broke up, Russia expressly renounced the NFU pledge. The French nuclear doctrine is a hardcore form of first use in which Paris is theoretically working on nuclear weapons usage against conventional threats.

There is an ongoing debate within India to depart from its NFU policy and to adopt a doctrine that comprises the obvious threat of first use, especially to address the asymmetry with China. In such scenario, a declared nuclear stance of a first use option would construct a dilemma for India. Unlike India, Pakistan’s nuclear strategy has always followed a pattern of providing minute information and upheld a calculated ambiguity about its nuclear doctrine.

Henceforth, Pakistani officials will confront two challenges with respect to disclosure of nuclear doctrine. First, how to classify diverse levels of thresholds and to justify the magnitude of these redlines, where a nuclear retaliation could be seen as a possible outcome? Secondly, policymakers have to decide how to balance between clarity and ambiguity of the extent to which a declared policy could go.

If Pakistan wants to establish FSD then along with nuclear capability, it has to expand its conventional capability. In Pakistan’s doctrine of FSD, a foremost exertion should consider improving its conventional capability and operational concepts to deal with evolving threats. Whereas the credible minimum deterrence should remain a foundation element for a flexible nuclear doctrine, ie, FSD. It is important for Pakistan to acquire an assured second-strike capability to counter widening gaps in Indian Ocean strategic stability.

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## [US plans to build six nuclear reactors in India](https://www.dawn.com/news/1469792/us-plans-to-build-six-nuclear-reactors-in-india)

**WASHINGTON: The United States has assured India that it remains committed to strengthening bilateral civil nuclear cooperation with New Delhi and wants to build six nuclear power plants in the country.**

The United States reiterated this assurance in a joint statement issued after the 9th round of the US-India Strategic Security Dialogue, held in Washington on Wednesday. Foreign Secretary Vijay Gokhale and US Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security Andrea Thompson led their teams in the talks.

“They committed to strengthen bilateral security and civil nuclear cooperation, including the establishment of six US nuclear power plants in India,” said the joint statement issued after the talks. It gave no further details of the nuclear plant project.

The two sides exchanged views on a wide range of global security and non-proliferation challenges and “reaffirmed their commitment to work together to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems and to deny access to such weapons by terrorists and non-state actors,” the statement added.

In the joint statement, the United States also “reaffirmed its strong support of India’s early membership in the Nuclear Suppliers Group.”

On March 12, India’s Additional Secretary for Disarmament and International Security Affairs Indra Mani Pandey and Dr. Yleem D.S. Poblete, US Assistant Secretary of State for Arms Control co-chaired the third round of the US-India Space Dialogue, where they discussed trends in space threats, respective national space priorities, and opportunities for cooperation bilaterally and in multilateral fora.

The United States and India have been discussing the possibility of setting up US nuclear reactors in the country for more than a decade but the need to bring Indian liability laws in line with international norms has delayed the process. Current Indian laws require the maker of a nuclear power plant to shoulder the costs of any accident. The US wants it changed to make the operator bear the costs instead of the maker.

A US company, Westinghouse has been negotiating to build reactors in India for years but Westinghouse filed for bankruptcy in 2017 after cost overruns on US reactors.

The United States and India signed a civil nuclear deal in 2008 and in 2016 they announced an agreement to build the reactors.

India plans to triple its nuclear capacity. Last October, India and Russia signed a pact to build six more nuclear reactors at a new site in India.