**History of Pakistan’s Nuclear Programme**

Pakistan’s Nuclear Program started during Ayub Khan period as a response to Indian nuclear designs which were detrimental to Pakistan’s future. Initially, in 1956 the program was aimed to produce energy by the enactment of Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission. Pakistan’s plan to produce nuclear energy for country’s energy needs was justified by International Atomic Energy Agency’s findings in its study of Pakistan’s electric power needs. Indeed, Nuclear energy is economical as compared to production of energy through fossil fuel, oil, natural gas, coal or hydro-electric projects therefore it is more economical.

**Indian hegemony**

After the 1971 War and preparation of Indian nuclear weapon projects, Pakistan felt threatened and it had to respond to the challenge. In January 1972, Bhutto met with top Pakistani scientists and decided to develop a nuclear weapon capability. Undoubtedly, It was difficult for Pakistan to bear the expenses but the nation made no compromise on its security and developed a nuclear deterrence as the state had witnessed the always present hostile relations between both neighbors and the consequent wars of 1948, 1965 and 1971. It was the time when Dr. Abdul Qadeer Khan, a Pakistani scientist was brought home from Holland and he offered his services for the nation’s security. The Indian nuclear explosion of May 1974 at Pokhran”Smiling Buddha” compelled Pakistan to go nuclear as the explosion had introduced a shift, heavily in Indian favor, in power relation between both countries. So, This led to a journey which ultimately resulted in Pakistan’s nuclear capability though after many hardships.

**International relations under the shadow of Nuclear Race.**

The Indian explosions were perceived as a threat that might cause a great deal of destruction and catastrophe if used against any major Pakistani city. Another cause of worry was that India was rapidly developing medium range missiles.           Indian explosions added to the worries of the West and particularly USA as well and they started to work against nuclear proliferation and they opposed Pakistan’s acquisition of nuclear technology. The Western block was more concerned about the possession of nuclear weapon by a Muslim country than by India. They feared that a nuclear weapon by any Islamic country like Pakistan would be an Islamic bomb which might eventually pass to any other Muslim country in the Middle East, thereby posing a threat to American patronized Israel. Therefore, Pakistan came under strong pressure when it started to develop its nuclear capability. Pressler amendments and many other diplomatic tactics were used to undermine Pakistan,s commitment to her right of Nuclear capability. Z.A Bhutto was pressurized to stop the program but he refused to do so. Bhutto was followed by Zia-ul-Haq, he too stood affirmed against US pressure and Pakistan’s nuclear program went ahead. Dr. Abdul Qadeer and his team worked day and night with passion for the acquisition of nuclear capability for Pakistan’s security. Dr. Abdul Qadeer Khan in 1984 declared that successful cold tests had been conducted but Pakistan’s acquisition of the nuclear bomb was officially confirmed by the successful explosion during the premiership of Muhammad Nawaz Sharif on May 28, 1998. On May 1998, seven nuclear explosions were carried out at Chagai and this very day is celebrated in Pakistan as *Yaum-e-Takbeer*.

**Impact upon Pakistan economy.**

The nuclear deterrence has kept India at bay and has been helpful toestablish a durable peace between India and Pakistan. The nuclear tests were highly criticized by the international community and the international bodies like United Nations Security Council passed a unanimous resolution urging India and Pakistan to close down the nuclear weapon programmes and both were asked to sign CTBT. Pakistan accepted it on the condition that India shall be its earlier signatory. The nuclear power acquired by Pakistan for her self-defense entailed economic sanctions by the international community particularly from the US and Western countries. Although Pakistan was generously helped by Saudi Arabia during these moments of diplomatic stagnation and exclusion yet the economy had a free fall as a consequence.