



RESEARCH PAPER

**Myth or Reality of Indian Strategic Doctrine of Military
Modernization: The Rise of Offensive Posture in South Asia and
Pakistan's Response**

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ABSTRACT

The main objective of this article is to examine the Indian military modernization and Pakistan's response to its surgical strikes –that exposed Indian flawed strategy. This paper also analyses the Indian military strategists persistently with massive military modernization developed new strategic strategies to intimidate and exert pressure on Pakistan. India and Pakistan both have framed military strategies to deter each other. India developed extremely and offensive military strategies, and promoted its strategic culture- vis- a-vis Pakistan. Pakistan has also, in response, developed Full Spectrum Deterrence (FSD) strategy against India both for strategic and conventional possibilities. In May 2025, both countries fought a 'short' war and Pakistan gained and preserved air superiority and also re-established the technological 'deterrence' in South Asia. This paper provides empirical data that how Pakistan responded India's doctrine of "punitive action" despite India's military superiority in the region. In this paper we have employed 'defensive and offensive' realism theory and used interpretative methodology to understand the developing security strategies of India and Pakistan.

Keywords: India, Pakistan, Military, Deterrence, Security, South Asia, Threat, Strategic Culture

Introduction

Indian military modernization is a reality but its military doctrines to achieve superiority against Pakistan is a myth. We will provide scholarly work to explain the Indian strategic failure against Pakistan. Since independence India is operationalizing different military strategies against Pakistan and demonstrated a unique 'strategic culture and Pakistan's response has been similar with its much bigger rival (Akhtar & Jan, 2019) Pakistan inherited naïve military and struggled for its security and sovereignty. across border terrorism has remained a key issue- owing to disputed Kashmir valley. The most hazardous border in the world is shared by India and Pakistan. Unresolved issues like Kashmir, Siachen, Sir Creek, water conflicts, terrorism, conventional imbalances, and the potential of war merely increase the instability in the region. The "dissuasion" posture against Pakistan persisted significant to India's overall military strategy (Anand, 1999). Under Nehru doctrine India followed the strategy of 'non- alignment' to keep Indian influence in Indian Ocean and "to keep the great power (s) out of Indian Ocean" (Babar & Mirza, 2021; Yaseen, Muzaffar & Khan, 2022).) and also wanted to dominate the regional states and prevented them from letting great powers establish bases in their territories" (Potter, 2016) .

With regard to international developments, Nehru maintained a neutral and uncommitted approach, which was reflected in the little military-to-military contacts that India had. During the 1960s and 1970s India moved for military alignment with the United States to seek military assistance to fight against Pakistan and China. The post-Nehru India was more aggressive in its foreign policy –towards Pakistan. Prime Minister Indira had set

a new strategy that was aggressive and “significantly changed the defence posture of India (Babar & Mirza 2016; Muzaffar, M. & Khan, I. 2021). The aim of Indira’s doctrine was to achieve hegemon status and to maintain relations with other great powers-the United States (US) and the Soviet Union. Indira Gandhi favored military excursions and waged war against Pakistan in 1971. India deployed forces in Sri Lanka and Maldives in the 1980s ((Hanif, & Muzaffar, 2025a; Bilveer, 1989). The Indo-Soviet “Peace, Cooperation, and Friendship Treaty” 1971 proposed to establish a framework for the Soviet’s military support to India in the region. In order to maintain India’s hegemonic status in South Asia. Indira Gandhi and the first Indian intelligence Chief, R.N Kao, prudently planned the military strategies. These strategies included the Pakistan’s disintegration 1971 (Nandakumar & Sanket 2021). Gandhi’s second strategy to change the regional balance and tested the first India’s nuclear bomb, ‘Smiling Buddha’ in May 1974. India’s nuclear weapon threatened the regional peace and compelled Pakistan to have its nuclear weapon to balance the power in South Asian region (Hanif, & Muzaffar, 2025).

Indira Gandhi wanted to dominate the region. She approved another military doctrine drafted by the Indian Army Chief, General Krishnaswamy Sundararajan. Sunderji Military Doctrine 1981 was followed by the Indian army from 1984-2004. This doctrine was an offensive-defensive military doctrine to swift response “to counter any aggressive action from Pakistan” (Ali, 2015). Under this military strategy “seven defensive holding corps of Indian military was stationed near border of Pakistan to conduct attacks” against Pakistan. In 2001, Indian Parliament attacked, India accused Pakistan mobilized its forces towards Pakistan in 2002. Operation Parakaram was the military deployment that resulted a serious military standoff between two nuclear states but Sundarji strategy of conventional military superiority failed during Operation Parakarm-that was countered by Pakistan military. Pakistan’s conventional deterrence is better (Ladwing & Walter, 2015) than India that responded Indian army and established peace on Eastern borders. In this article we have explored the answer of these questions; why did India introduce various military doctrine against Pakistan and how did Pakistan respond to Indian military strategies and strikes?

Cold Start Doctrine 2004: An In Effective Military Strategy

Internal events-Indian and Jammu and Kashmir- pushed the Indian military to revisit its military strategy .The Indian military formulized the Cold Start Doctrine (CSD). CSD later called as proactive strategy which was operationalized under nuclear threshold (Ali M. Z., 2016). But it was a military strategy ,the Indian government –led by Prime Minister Manmohan Singh- never embraced this doctrine (The Guardian, 2010). India applied this doctrine to compel and pressurize Pakistan. Operationalization of CSD as military strategy against Pakistan decreased the chances of resolving issues between the rival countries in South Asia.

Indian military’s strategy and doctrine of offensive-defence dominated In 2014. Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) came to power under the leadership of Prime Minister, Narendra Modi, the CDS gained more importance because of Modi’s ‘Hindutava’ approach towards Pakistan. In order to implement the CDS, India modernized both its strategic and conventional military forces. This spectrum is made up of the interdependence of Army, Navy and Air Force and information warfare force, cyber security force, and space modernization community.

The Indian Air Force experienced its ability to conduct joint operations –against Pakistan-with the Indian Army. Combats intensified along the Line of Control in 2015 and in 2019 as a result of India’s persistent ceasefire violations. India’s attempt of surgical strikes in 2016 and 2018 generated controversy. The post- Pulwama incident- which involved an engagement of both India and Pakistan air forces endorsed the importance of CSD to the Indian military. To operationalize CSD, Indian military carried out different joint military exercises near to Pakistan’s border (Khalid, 2018). Since 2004, CSD had

significantly grown into a challenging strategy that was prepared to be used against Pakistan in a limited conventional confrontation. Success to some extent, operationalization of CSD against Pakistan remained difficult for the Indian army because of lack of the coordination among its tri -services and presence of conventional capabilities and nuclear weapons of Pakistan. The CSD had required responsive forces, greater firepower, synergy and integration, superior air force, long-range air defence and better reconnaissance and surveillance capabilities. The CSD was exposed after the Mumbai attacks-India deployed its forces to its borders with Pakistan and Pakistan also responded (Nayak & Krepon, 2012).

In 2017, Indian Army Chief, Bipin Rawat, acknowledged the existence of CSD for operationalization of conventional military operations. India organized war-simulated CSD in order to accomplish tactical and operational level objectives against Pakistan (Baig, 2020) and posed “perpetual threats “to Pakistan (The Indian Express, 2017; Tahirkheli, 2022). The motive behind CSD of Indian military was to execute conventional military offensive strike in Pakistan’s territory in reaction to any hostile action against India . *In fact, surgical strike was a part of CSD and Indian military doctrine.*

In response to CSD, Pakistan also improved its military strike capability-Pakistan conducted first ever joint military exercises with Russia in 2016 (Dawn, 2016) and established nuclear and conventional deterrence (Akhtar, 2021) in order to prevent India from any strike under CSD. Pakistan responded to Indian military CSD in two ways; first by developing Technical Nuclear Weapons (TWNs), second by Azm-i-Nau military exercises (. Technical nuclear weapons put hindrances on CSD while Azm-i-Nau (New Resolve) military exercises were response to Indian traditional aggressive actions. The regional threat environment was evolving and transforming between India and Pakistan. Azm-i Nau exercises transformed Pakistan’s military capability, it also included both the internal challenge from terror groups of various shades and the conventional threat of external aggression (Dawn, 2013.). Pakistan army introduced the new ‘Army Doctrine’ that covered the full spectrum of established (conventional) and political threats ((Hanif, & Muzaffar, 2024; Dawn, 2013)

Indian Hybrid (Military) Warfare: Pakistan Specific Strategy and R&AW

Hybrid warfare is military strategy which involves both conventional and non-conventional means. Hybrid warfare strategy is not new. States have used secret operations to destabilize, and destroy their adversaries without –officially- waging war gathering information (Mirza, 2020). In South Asia India has archival record in employing hybrid-military- warfare strategy against Pakistan “India is involved in hybrid warfare against Pakistan by using the Soil of Afghanistan and supporting militancy and terrorism in the country (Alvi, 2021). Since the 1960s, India is carrying out secret operations against Pakistan (Akhtar, Jan & Akram, 2021). Indian spy, Kashmir Singh, was arrested in 1973, President Musharraf pardoned him and he returned to India in 2008. Another spy, Ravindra Kaushik, entered Pakistan in 1975, he graduated from Karachi University -under the codenamed of Nabi Ahmad Shakir, and joined Pakistan Army and got promoted to the rank of major. He kept passing information to R&AW, he was captured when another Indian spy was arrested and he uncovered Kaushik’s presence in Pakistan. Pakistani authorities arrested an Indian agent, Sarabjit Singh, in 1990. Singh died in Pakistani jail in 2013. Indian serving personnel have been captured by Pakistan security agencies. In 2016, Indian Spy, Kulbushan Yadav, a serving officer was arrested from Pakistan in an intelligence based operation who was involved in covert activities in Baluchistan and Karachi (Osman, 2017).

In 2014, Ajit Doval , the National Security Advisor and the architect of the new security doctrine of India ‘ Offensive Defence’ transformed the Indian security and India’s response or attack against Pakistan. Doval’s doctrine has transformed India’s military strategy vis-à-vis Pakistan. Under his doctrinal shift India has staged several surgical strikes after the attacks in Indian Occupied Kashmir. Offensive Defence doctrine is based on three

levels while dealing with enemy; first defensive, second is defensive- offensive and third is offensive. While dealing with Pakistan second strategy (Yaseen, et. al., 2016; Syed, 2019) is being executed that is defensive-offensive military strategy to destabilize Pakistan. Director General Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) said "India has been involved in terrorists' attacks in Balochistan and sponsored terrorists (The Nations, 2025). Hybrid warfare strategy is also a part of Indian military doctrine and continues since its inception.

Joint Indian Armed Forces Doctrine (JIAF) 2017: Pakistan's Response

The objective of this doctrine was engaging in sub-conventional warfare as outlined in India's Joint Armed - Doctrine 2017. After experiencing the failure from the previous military doctrines India came up with new doctrine JIAF which provided the trajectory of surgical strikes against Pakistan. Prime Minister, Modi, was persuaded by the Army Chief, Bipon Rawat, and his team that India was capable of launching surgical strikes against Pakistan. In 2016, after Uri attack, India claimed surgical strikes against Pakistan (Hanif, 2020) but the claim of Indian surgical strike was rejected by Pakistan. Palwama attack- which resulted in forty casualties of the Indian soldiers- had increased tension between India and Pakistan. On 26 February 2019 Indian Air force carried out an airstrikes in Pakistan's territory, Balakot. Pakistan viewed India's attack as a violation of sovereignty. Balakot conundrum dramatically changed the India's air superiority's myth when Pakistan shot down Indian jet -Mig-21- and arrested pilot, Abhinandan.

Pahalgam attack in Kashmir increased tension between the two nuclear states and India attacked Pakistan's cities that resulted direct air confrontation between Indian and Pakistani air force. In May 2025, the Indian Air supremacy faced a great setback when Pakistan Air Force shot down six Indian fighter jets including expensive and state of the art -Rafale- made in France. India attacked Pakistan's cities after Pehalgam attack in Jammu and Kashmir. India accused Pakistan - without providing evidence -and attacked different cities in Pakistan. On May 7th India and Pakistan were engaged in one of the biggest dogfights in recent history-125 jets clashed (News Week, 2025) was a testing period to establish the air supremacy-Pakistan Air Force had established air-space supremacy in one hour dogfight and altered the notion of Modi that Rafale would change the game if India had in 2019 (India Today, 2019). Pakistan Air Force used Chinese J-10C fighter jets and maintained supremacy. Pakistan Air Force also used the most modern technology during one hour dogfights; (News Week, 2025).

By successfully downing multiple Indian fighter jets-including advanced Rafales and Su-30MKIs, the Pakistan Air Force not only safeguarded key strategic assets but also averted what could have been a much larger humanitarian and infrastructural loss. Their use of cutting-edge J-10C jets and PL-15 missiles highlighted both technological capability and effective military training (Fatima & Saba 2023). In recent India-Pakistan conflict the use of J-10C has damaged the Indian-French made- art of the state, Rafles and Indian ambitious to be superior in its military might in the region.

India's military doctrine to strike Pakistan and setting the new normal has evidently been reverted. Amid pre-emptive and offensive air strikes Pakistan has always been responding and retaliated with domination and upholding the deterrence in the region. Indian strategy of 'punitive' and kinetic operation remained in effective (Akhtar, 2025).

Land Warfare Doctrine 2018

In 2018, Indian military doctrine was officially drafted to achieve the military strategic goals. This doctrine was introduced to deal with two and half front war, two fronts are Pakistan and China while half its internal security challenges (Mitra, 2019). The Indian military deployment is- practically- against Pakistan not against China (Joy, 2019). Land warfare doctrine focused on surgical strike, hybrid warfare, massive military

modernization, Intelligence Surveillance Reconnaissance (ISR) capabilities, joint military exercises, Integrated Battle Groups (IBG) and multi front scenario (Ali, 2021). The primary objective of this doctrine was to prevent war through deterrence. The consequences of this doctrine are concerning for Pakistan, as India's significant investments in the country's already superior conventional forces increases Pakistan's security uncertainties (Hanif, 2020). The presence of IBGs confirms India's readiness to attack Pakistan on the land. The Army's land warfare doctrine also envisioned modernizing the army as an important element in carrying out limited war.

India military doctrines display that they moved from threat based approach to capability based approach. India continues to modernize its military in both area specific and threat based manner. Under land warfare doctrine India has enough area for strategic and military maneuvering against Pakistan for subsequent reasons (Naizi, 2021). First in contrast to India's large spending in nuclear and conventional sector, and second India's conventional superiority against Pakistan.

In response to Indian military doctrines and India's preemptive strikes against Pakistan, Pakistan has improved its strategic, tactical and conventional military forces to efficiently respond to Indian military hegemonic doctrines. Pakistan military adopted "New Concept of War Fighting" (Yousaf, 2013) to improve coordination among tri services and reduce mobilization time of Army. Under Full spectrum strategy against India, Pakistan is possesses ability to activate its Armed forces much faster than India. To deter any threat from India, Pakistan announced its nuclear policy of full spectrum deterrence and "first use".

Indian Military Doctrines and Security Implications for South Asia

India not only aims to keep its nuclear weapons but also to accelerate the modernization of its conventional forces for security and to become hegemon in the region, creating an increasing conventional asymmetry between India and Pakistan. The conventional military imbalance is reflected in defense budget of Pakistan and India, as India spends more on its defense and maintain to acquire modern military equipment, missile defense system, aircrafts and fighter jets, naval vessels and ballistic missiles. India, under Modi regime, in the last few years doubled the defense budget and for 2024-25 financial year India defense budget increased by \$77.4 billion, has marked a 99.5% increase from the last year (Delhi Policy Group, 2025). In 2025-2026, consequently, Pakistan also increased 20% (&62 billion) after the clash with India. India is the third largest military spender and retains its position (Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, 2022). Narendra Modi has increased military modernization and India is growing its military relations and signing arm deals with US, Israel, France and Russia and compelled Pakistan to maintain its conventional balance with India by developing security partnership with China.

India has been one of the top purchasers of modern conventional forces in the world. It also continues to build a ballistic missile defence system, supported by the advanced technology it buys from France, Israel, and other powerful nations. The conventional balance fluctuates in favor of India as a result of its advanced conventional forces that forced Pakistan to moreover depend on nuclear weapons or strengthen its own conventional forces in order to counterbalance the developing conventional military imbalance in South Asia. Recent few hours' conflict between India-Pakistan has transformed the myth of Indian conventional superiority. The 'new normal' notion and 'preemptive' offensive strategy has reduced Indian moral capability but it increased Pakistan's conventional and professional capability – India's new normal has been rejected (Dawn, 2025).

India has a military supremacy in South Asia's strategic realm, which gives them the confidence to take any hostile action, such as launching a preemptive strike against Pakistan. Indian 'new normal' military strategy has an adverse effect on South Asia's

strategic stability. Since both countries have been hostile since their independence, the region is more unstable and prone to war. The India massive military modernizations in recent years possess serious consequences to Pakistan. Pakistan also ramps up its defence budget by 20% after India conflict (Aljazeera, 2025) despite its fragile economy. However to counter India's massive military modernization Pakistan depends on its indigenous weapon manufacture and China. Pakistan military doctrine maintains "deterrence" against any aggression from India while combining conventional and nuclear forces. The Indian military's development of contemporary aircraft, long-range air defense systems and standoff precision-guided munitions aimed to weaken Pakistan's conventional deterrence and open up opportunities for India to implement a limited war plan or surgical strike options, but Pakistan's military capability redefined the supremacy of military capability and forced India to rethink its military doctrines. Indian military buildup have caused security dilemma for Pakistan and provoked arm race in the region.

Perpetual Arm Race Between Arch Rivals

Conventional imbalance between India and Pakistan is creating serious security and defense challenges and it has pushed Pakistan to indulge in arm race and buildup of conventional military capabilities. India's sureness in Ballistic Missile Defence (BMD) program's steady advancement and its efforts to build up its arsenal of hypersonic missiles add a new variation to Pakistan's and India's adversarial strategic relationship. India has been developing missile that can reach Pakistan's territory, whereas, Pakistan has also developed and expanded its missile programs both ballistic and cruise missiles. Both have their maritime domain (Jalil, 2020). Pakistan has struggled for nuclear restraint measures in region despite India's confrontation (Awan, 2021). Because of financial crisis Pakistan was compelled to get military assistance from China. Pakistan maintains its military budget by considering Indian threat. The nuclear arms race in South Asia has augmented the deterrence and stability but also has changed unpredictably dangerous ways as unequal waves of additional investments in military capabilities and delivery systems, as the recent India-Pakistan post-Pahalgam conflict demonstrated the military might of the two nuclear states. In order to maintain conventional balance against India, China has exported its advanced equipment to Pakistan. Chinese armed forces provided assistance to Pakistan's navy and air force (Hille, 2022). In recent air dogfight Pakistan used made in China J-10C jets and dominated Indian air power (Davidson & Amy, 2025). China has been Pakistan's important security partner after the cold war and provided conventional weapons and engaging in joint military exercises to establish superiority against India.

Induction of Technical Nuclear Weapons (TNWs)

India's military is continually modernizing through doctrinal change and broad acquisition of military equipment. India is advancing its goal with rapid military modernization including the acquisition of a new arsenal and the technical transformation of the Indian military. In terms of conventional and non-conventional capabilities India is ambitious to modernize its military capabilities. Pakistan has retaliated against India's aggressive strategic posturing by operationalizing full-spectrum deterrence-May 2025 Pakistan's retaliation is an empirical evidence that compelled India for ceasefire via US (The New York Times, 2025). India security outlook has changed drastically which in result disturbed the power balance in the region and also created security implications for Pakistan. Like -Soviet Union and United States- during the cold war both states developed TNWs to stop each other from any hostility, Pakistan has also been following the same strategy by developing TNWs after the Indian military buildup which is specifically Pakistan centric. The deployment Technical nuclear weapon like Nasr by Pakistan is to stop India for operationalization of Cold Start Doctrine and to balance conventional disparity against India. India at same retaliates by developing its own technical nuclear weapons (Ahmed, 2016).

Pakistan's TNWs is response to India's limited war strategy in order to create instability at low level of conflicts and whereas maintaining deterrence and stability at high level of conflicts. Presence of low yield nuclear weapons made impossible for India to start conventional war against Pakistan though India claimed use of surgical strikes against Pakistan in 2016 and 2019 conflicts but would not opt for limited war (Laghari, 2020). Development of TNWs in South Asia has complex dynamics. The action (CSD) and reaction (TNWs) by India and Pakistan is upsetting strategic security and peace of the region. In case of Pakistan development of TNWs increased its conventional capability against India (Jalil, 2017) and it is proven.

End of The Myth of Modernized Military: A Four Days War May2025

There has been a risk of limited war between Pakistan and India for many decades because of ongoing tussles between both states. As both states have nuclear weapons, there is a high risk of escalating limited war into total war because of conventional imbalance between them. In south Asia, Pakistan and India- because of their geographical location- have direct and high risk factors, therefore, Indian leaders viewed the winning of war against Pakistan. Strategy of limited war is part of India's nuclear doctrine for accomplishing its political and military objectives by causing instability and uncertainty in the region (Khan, 2012). The availability of modern technology, modern weapons have also made Pakistan to respond and retaliate to dominate the Indian deterrence and new normal strategy in South Asian region. During the Indian 'Operation Sindoor' in May 2025 the world has witnessed a strong reaction of Pakistan against the Indian aggression and forced the world to intervene in stopping a dangerous escalation in the region. The myth of Indian military might has forced the world to rethink its strategic relations in world politics. The US, Prseidnt Trump' has recognized Pakistan's military capability that has changed the perception of Indian military supremacy .

India's Increasing Maritime Posture

India's coastal area is the biggest in the region and struggling to dominate these waterways. India's naval policy, which was initially centered on using the sea for economic gain has changed dramatically over time in response to changing geopolitical realities, particularly China's increasing influence in the region. India's military posture has evolved from a limited costal defense strategy to regional dominance. A major shift was seen 2015 marine doctrine, which introduced a more comprehensive vision that characterized India as a net security provider with extensive domains of interest including important maritime chokepoints. Since then, India has made significant investments in enhancing its navy and strengthened defense cooperation through bilateral and multilateral agreements, including alliances with the US and other countries (Nawaz, 2023). These changes demonstrate India's goal of becoming the Indo-Pacific's leading maritime power and countering China influence the region. The Indian Ocean Region (IOR) has remained central of global maritime trade and strategic competition. The IOR is essential to sustaining the flow of international trade. IOR observes about 100,000 large commercial ships transit through its waters each year and two-thirds of all oil exports worldwide (Haider, 2023). In an effort to strengthen its naval capabilities in the Indian Ocean in the face of China's expanding maritime existence India planned to build two nuclear-powered attack submarines to counter China's expansion in IOR (Honrada,2024). These SSNs have the capacity to conduct longer underwater missions and be more rapid and quicker than traditional diesel-powered submarines. Even though its submarine fleet is currently limited, India's ambition for SSNs, known as Project 75, is part of its ambition to continue dominating the Indian Ocean (Hondrada, 2024).

The Arihant-class nuclear ballistic missile submarines (SSBNs) are only operational and India is also working on development of six SBBNs which are intended for nuclear deterrent and in an effort to overcome challenges and have credible second-strike

capability. One of SSBNs, the "The enemy Seeker," was tested and scheduled to go into service in 2024. Another, the "S4", is currently being built and is likely to be outfitted with K4 long-range missiles. In order to survive nuclear war and maintain India's sea-based nuclear deterrent, INS Varsha is a \$3.7 billion underground nuclear submarine base close to Visakhapatnam. The purpose of this base is to improve India's nuclear triad and its strategic position in the Bay of Bengal which is important geographical region for energy route and global trade. As a safe second-strike base in the Bay of Bengal, INS Varsha represents a significant change in India's defense strategy from a continental to a maritime focus (IDRW, 2025). Because it provides direct access to nuclear expertise, its proximity to the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC) improves operating efficiency. INS Varsha is coupled with forward-operating bases in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands and bolstered by defense alliances with nations like as Vietnam and the Philippines as part of India's larger plan to challenge China's maritime supremacy (EurAsian Times,2025)..

Conclusion

India is following a notion that is the "best defense is a good offence", which is called strategic offensive principle of war. Pakistan does not follow this idea. Though challenge for Pakistan is dual- failing to respond to Indian threats would undermine deterrence, and responding to threats would disrupt the stability of the region-but it has mainlyained and reestablished strategic deterrence. To deal with Indian military modernization, Pakistan has developed advanced and modern technological measures and options in order to maintain balance of power with India in the region.

Pakistan, strongly, maintains military balance against India because of presence of nuclear arsenal. As India is continuing upgrading its conventional capabilities, Pakistan the reliance on nuclear weapons may have to increase to maintain nuclear deterrence against India, in the region. To maintain credible nuclear deterrence means Pakistan have to develop such conventional capabilities in order to sustain any military threat and cause damage to enemy. India is increasing its military budget continuously and trying to create conventional imbalance against Pakistan, and Pakistan also has increased its defence budget.

To maintain nuclear deterrence against India, Pakistan has been working on self-reliance by weapon production indigenously. Pakistan's Armed Force has been working on self-reliance, local development of weapons, integration, synergy and synchronization to retaliate against India's any hostile action. Pakistan *has* matched conventional capabilities of India by upgrading its air defense system, obsolete aircrafts and missiles, and drones. Indian Operation Bandar 2019 has exposed Indian military capability when Pakistan retaliated - after Balakot incident- and shot down Indian jets, it is proved that Pakistan conventional deterrence is reliable. Pakistan needs to do contingency arrangement to counter surgical strikes and retaliate with quid pro quo plus strategy by maintaining deterrence in the region. Pakistan has already demonstrated its military, and professional capability in May 2025 that compelled India to accept ceasefire and stop Operation 'Sindoor' a punitive operation against Pakistan's military.

Recommendations

Keepig in view the grave security dilemma in South Asia the world needs to resolve the most serious and legal issues,Kashmir, between the two nuclear states-India and Pakistan. Or Pakistan and India must resolve their bilateral issues and negotiate . Only diplomatic meaures would bring perpetual peace between India and Pakistan. South Asia is a troubling region in the world. Without peace in this region the world may not enjoy peace and development. International community must play role in resolving the longstanding and legal 'Kashmir dispute'. This conflict could be resolved according to the United Nations resolutions.

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