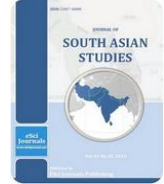




Available Online at ESci Journals

Journal of South Asian Studies

ISSN: 2307-4000 (Online), 2308-7846 (Print)
<http://www.escijournals.net/JSAS>



REVISITING NUCLEAR SECURITY BETWEEN INDIA-PAKISTAN: NUCLEAR RISK REDUCTION MEASURES

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ABSTRACT

This paper has laid emphasis on the Rajive Gandhi Action Plan for nuclear disarmament made in December 1985. The essential features of the Plan are; First, a binding commitment by all nations to eliminate nuclear weapons. Second, all nations must participate in the process. Third, there should be tangible progress at each stage. Fourth, changes are necessary in the mindset, institutions, and doctrines to “sustain a world free of nuclear weapons. The elaborate features of Plan paved the way for Nuclear Risk Reduction Measures between India and Pakistan. Towards this objective NRR, the first agreement on not attacking each other’s nuclear installations and facilities was signed in 1988. Rajive Action Plan has offered tremendous help in avoiding any crisis as also in crisis mitigation. More than that, it provided the guiding light for further initiatives in India-Pakistan relations, including making further Nuclear Risk Reduction Measures. The NRRM can help to address the dangers between geographically contiguous states. NRR measures may help India and Pakistan to divest the nuclear energy for developmental purposes. NRRMs are further important to prevent nuclear weapons or facilities falling into the hands of terrorists. This paper has invoked the historical era of Silver Lining cooperation between India and Pakistan on Nuclear weapons and Nuclear Risks.

Keywords: Disarmament, India, Pakistan, Nuclear Crisis, Nuclear Weapon, Nuclear-weapon-free zone, Security.

INTRODUCTION

It would always be hard even today for people to tell whether the invention of nuclear weapons gave birth to an angel or a devil. Driven by the most primitive impulse of every state for security and power in the International Relations, the emergence of nuclear weapons seems to be just and moral. Some argue that nuclear weapons have actually brought the world peace and stability to a daunting halt for its huge destructive power and thus its specific deterrence effect.

Around 20 years ago, Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi, at the Unites Nations General Assembly, presented a time bound action plan for achieving nuclear weapon free world. In 2008, at the general debate of the United Nations General Assembly in UN Headquarters, China proposed the idea of a *harmonious world*. And on September 23, 2009, at Obama’s speech to the United Nations General Assembly, he proposed to ‘outline a

comprehensive agenda to seek the goal of a world without nuclear weapons and to support efforts to strengthen the NPT.’ All these showed a kind of consensus on the prospect of the world moving towards disarmament.

During the Rajiv Gandhi, period India and Pakistan were entrenched in serious conflicts, the notable two were; 1984-85 crisis over the rumors of Indian attack at Pakistani nuclear installations and 1987 Brasstacks crisis when both of them took one of the largest military exercises along their borders. These situations caused serious considerations on the possibility of large-scale war and escalation to nuclear war in future, although both of these states were not nuclear-weapon states in an overt manner at that time. The visionary, practical and optimistic approach of Rajiv Gandhi contributed to elucidate the possibility of the nuclear crises in future and he strived hard to establish a successful Agreement of non-attack at nuclear facilities. He unfolded a new episode of NRRMs between India and Pakistan at the very nascent stage, when the nuclear overtones to the

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Indo-Pakistani conflicts were just creeping in. His efforts were focused on bringing an understanding, at least on the nuclear front between the two countries and to maintain nuclear sanity in the region. Therefore, it can be concluded that in India-Pakistan case, it was not only the response to any nuclear crises that lead to the nuclear risk reduction measures but also the political leadership of Rajiv Gandhi contributed to elucidate the possibility of any nuclear crises in future.

The developments of the Rajiv Gandhi years left significant lessons for the coming times that we clearly witnessed in post-1998 scenario, when the relevance of NRRMs was revisited with enthusiasm and hope. It was marked by the continuation of the legacies of Rajiv Gandhi. NRRMs were vigorously endorsed to prevent the outbreak of nuclear conflict in the region. However, this is not the end. Conflicts are still very much part of India-Pakistan. The nuclear threat is far visible than the Rajiv Gandhi years. NRRMs are thus, the glimmer of hope for India and Pakistan. There is a need for constituting more vigorous and verifiable nuclear risk reduction arrangements.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

NRRM has set some important mutual responsibilities on India and Pakistan to prevent any nuclear disaster in the region. NRRM laid emphasis on the bilateral peace and its spillover effect on regional peace, a vision of the region free from any nuclear eventuality. Their fore, liberalism is used as theoretical perspective to draw a comprehensive understanding of NRRM. Liberalism believes in individual liberty freedom, cooperation and peace and progress in regional as well as global politics. Liberal theory makes us understand that a mutual bilateral cooperation can spill over into an institutional cooperation for managing the nuclear disasters. Consequently, the NRRM will help in formation of regional or global security community by states' common fears and interests. The states may lay emphasis on civil nuclear cooperation rather than security rivalry.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS STUDY

NRRM are very significant for averting the dangers and disaster between two geographically contiguous nations. NRRM would be helpful in Confidence Building to defer security dilemmas and help India-Pakistan in divesting Nuclear energy for peaceful development. NRRM is the means to silver line cooperation between two nations to prevent Nuclear weapons falling into the hands of

terrorists. This paper has, their fore evoked the arguments regarding NRRM for mutual understanding between two nations. It further tries to impress upon the leadership, how PM Rajive Gandhi's leadership was more decisive in garnering cooperation and building understating to prevent Nuclear Disasters and Risks.

NRRM are ideal and realistic by linking the interests of two nations to the larger welfare of India and Pakistan and South Asian community. The paper has significantly highlighted the role of NRRM in establishing multilateral and integrated mechanism for preventing the nuclear threat and helpful for nuclear mitigation. NRRM has provided the basis for further NRRM and CBM. Conflicts are still very much part of India-Pakistan. The nuclear threat is far visible than the Rajiv Gandhi years. NRRMs are thus, the glimmer of hope for India and Pakistan. There is a need for constituting more vigorous and verifiable nuclear risk reduction arrangements.

NUCLEAR WEAPONS: SECURITY SCENARIO AND POLITICAL WILL

Every state's searching for absolute security would in practice make this world more insecure, unstable and immoral. Because of deterrence mentality, non-nuclear states always tried all means to pursue nuclear weapons (material/technology) in the name of security consideration; while the historical, border, ethnic, religious as well as economic problems became more and more complicated due to the rising of non-government factor and the easier access to nuclear technology; Also the World War II demonstrated the inhumanity of nuclear weapons by devouring nearly one hundred million people in just a few minutes. As described by Playing Game Theory, the emergence of nuclear weapons results in security dilemma in which all states pursue security through the possession of nuclear weapons but proves to be no security at all. In this sense, although nuclear weapons came into being in the context of searching for security, while a world free of nuclear weapons would not come just for security consideration but instead on the basis of restrained political control of each state. Nuclear disarmament therefore does not truly depend on technological upgrading or technique procedures, but it largely depends on politics among states.

As discussed earlier, stemming from traditional concept of balance of power and the doctrine of nuclear deterrence, nuclear weapons have been for long time regarded as an anchor bringing world peace and

stability. For its huge destructive and dangerous power, some thought nuclear war just cannot happen, some thought nuclear weapon is the symbol of being a big power, and some thought as nuclear weapons have already been there, the solution for that might be to upgrade defense technology so as to ensure its exclusive edge in that domain. However, with the development of information technology, the attention of extremism\terrorism in IR and the ineffectiveness of current non-proliferation regime, the nuclear weapons, deterrence effect is fading as the world is becoming more insecure with the existence of nuclear weapons. The threshold for being a nucleated state has become lower and lower. The combination of nuclear/bio-chemical weapons and terrorism make nuclear war to happen, which greatly undermines the basis for nuclear deterrence. Also, as the ineffective defense system against nuclear missiles has proved, it still has a long way to go before being absolutely secure. The possession of nuclear weapons thus saps huge resources without ensuring security the state possessing these weapons.

India-Pakistan Nuclear Risk Reduction Measures Rajiv Gandhi period (1984-89) was the 'first phase' of the India-Pakistan Nuclear Risk Reduction Measures (NRRMs). During this period India-Pakistan relations were entrenched in turmoil as ever. At the same time, however, a few path-breaking steps were also taken in the wake of highly tensed situations during these years. The most notable development was to establish NRRMs between India and Pakistan. It was a fresh and innovative approach adopted to allay tensions and anxieties generated by the possibility of nuclear crisis in the region, as both the states were suspicious of each other's covert operations of nuclear programmes. What signified the achievement of this period was institutionalization of an 'agreement of non-attack at nuclear facilities of each other', which has been functioning till present. In accordance with the latter and spirit of this agreement, both sides conscientiously exchange lists of their nuclear installations on January 1st each year; that has been of tremendous help in avoiding the crises as also in preventing crisis escalation to nuclear level in the region at times.

These NRRM initiatives taken during these years have tremendously influenced the course of India-Pakistan nuclear relations. It is evident from the fact that after both the states became overt nuclear powers in 1998, India again offered a list of NRRMs to Pakistan to allay

the heightened tensions and apprehensions of nuclear crisis on the lines of previous years' legacies. Also, there have always been numerous calls for India and Pakistan to tread on to further adopt deeply committed and intense NRRMs initiatives for making the region at least, nuclear-safe, if at the moment, not nuclear-free.

The present paper, therefore, provides a historical account of the various developments towards establishing Nuclear Risk Reduction Measures (NRRMs) during the tenure of Rajiv Gandhi as Prime Minister of India. It evaluates the contribution of Rajiv Gandhi vis-à-vis evolution of India-Pakistan NRRMs and significance of these initiatives for India-Pakistan nuclear relations. The paper argues that the visionary, practical and optimistic approach of Rajiv Gandhi was instrumental in the adoption of nuclear risk reduction initiatives; at the time when both India and Pakistan were not nuclear-weapon states, but only narrowly aware of each other's covert nuclear capabilities. Since then, NRRMs have been significant elements of India-Pakistan nuclear relations. They are considered as the most preferable route to maintain the nuclear sanity between India and Pakistan, even after the attainment of overt nuclear capacities and keep enormous significance for both the countries to balance their nuclear equations through mutual trust and understanding at least, on nuclear front.

Indo-Pak Nuclear Security Stemming to A New Understanding

The initial efforts to establish NRRMs between India and Pakistan stemmed from the year 1984 when there were persistent reports that India would attack Pakistan's nuclear weapon production facilities and Pakistan threatened to retaliate with a similar attack on the Indian facilities (Chari, 2003). George Perkovich describes the situation thus: In October 1984, reports appearing in the US media allege that US intelligence has briefed Congress that Indian military advisors are asking Prime Minister Indira Gandhi for permission to attack Pakistan's uranium enrichment facility at Kahut....The intelligence is apparently based on the inability of US intelligence sources to locate two Jaguar squadrons based at Ambala, Punjab (Kaur, 2018). This leads to speculation that the squadrons could have been relocated in preparation for a possible pre-emptive strike on Pakistan. In return, on 10 October 1984, the US Ambassador to Pakistan Dean Hinton publicly warns New Delhi that the United States will be "responsive", if India attacks Pakistan (George, 1999 & Kaur, 2018).

India denied all these charges. A senior Indian Air Force officer later disclosed that the Jaguars were hidden in the woods adjacent to the airfield in Ambala as part of a passive air defense drill (George, 1999 & Kaur, 2018). However, Bharat Karnad asserts that Indian military officers were planning such attack in alliance with Israel. To quote:

"Israel reportedly broaches India on plans to strike Pakistan's uranium enrichment plant at Kahuta. According to the Israeli proposal, the strike against Kahuta would be conducted using Israeli combat aircraft, with logistical help from India. As a first step, Israeli warplanes would use the Indian Air Force (IAF) base in Jamnagar close to the Kutch coast, from where they would fly off to refuel at a satellite airfield somewhere in northern India. In the final stage, the planes would fly on the lee side of the Himalayas to avoid early radar detection before penetrating Pakistani airspace, thus giving the Pakistani Air Force (PAF) little time to react. Prime Minister Indira Gandhi initially agrees to the plan. But she later vetoes it after being warned of the potential for negative reactions from the United States" (Chari, 2004; Karnad, 2002; Amber G. 2017).

It was the first time that India-Pakistan conflict witnessed nuclear overtones in otherwise crisis prone history of their conflict. In October 1984, Indira Gandhi got assassinated and her young son, Rajiv Gandhi, took the charge as Prime Minister of India. On the Pakistani side, it was the military rule of General Zia at that time. India-Pakistan relations were traversing through a period of heightened tension due to the aforementioned crisis. Rajiv Gandhi tried to bring regional stability with a new zeal and to reshape the foreign policy of India towards Pakistan and also the U.S for that matter. His approach was more cooperative and focused than that of his mother. He initiated a process of India-Pakistan nuclear confidence building measures, soon after he took the charge as Prime Minister of India and met President Zia of Pakistan in the United States. In a note to Parliament on Jan 22, 1985, while mentioning his meeting with President Zia, he stated: "Meeting was very cordial.....I was very hopeful. I am still very hopeful of positive relationship with Pakistan" (*Lok Sabha Debates* 1985).

Pakistan also responded positively to the efforts of Rajiv Gandhi to build confidence in the matters related to nuclear power. In August 1985, in an address to the Pakistan National Assembly, the then Pakistani Minister

of State for Foreign Affairs, Zain Noorani, stated that Pakistan didn't have the capacity or the intent to produce nuclear weapons, and was willing to join India in a binding international agreement to renounce nuclear weapons (Kaur, 2018). He stated: "We firmly hold the view that a non-nuclear regime in South Asia will be in the best interest of all countries in the region" (*Xinhua*, 1985). In October 1985, while addressing the United Nations General Assembly, Pakistani President Mohammad Zia ul-Haq reaffirmed, "Pakistan's policy of developing nuclear energy is for peaceful purposes only, and its irrevocable commitment not to acquire nuclear weapons and nuclear explosives" (Kaur, 2018). Furthermore, he stated that Pakistan was ready to enter "any agreement or arrangement with India on the basis of sovereignty and reciprocity to keep our area free of nuclear weapons" (Nguyen, 1985).

Both the Prime Ministers also met on the aegis of UN General Assembly meeting. Indian Prime Minister, Rajiv Gandhi, called the latest meeting with Pakistani President Mohammad Zia ul-Haq, "very definitely" productive and stated that bilateral talks would soon begin on improving border security and economic cooperation (Kaur, 2018). He added that "technical" exchanges on nuclear questions were also under consideration (Steven, 1985). In December 1985, President Zia paid a historic visit to India on the invitation of Rajiv Gandhi and they jointly announced that they had pledged "not to attack each other's nuclear plants" (Steven, 1985). They also agreed to "expand trade and economic ties, resume talks on a peace treaty, reduce border tensions, and investigate each other's allegations of cross-border subversion" (Wilson, 1985). President Zia expressed contentment on the agreement. In his own words: "The most important aspect [of the talks] is that we have decided not to attack each other's nuclear facilities (Steven, New York Times, October 27, 1985)." Rajiv Gandhi also hailed the agreement as "a first step in establishing confidence in each other. We cannot jump to the final step without going through a process of confidence building" (Steven, October 27, 1985).

This agreement was proposed by the Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi to General Zia who verbally agreed to adhere to it. However, it was not formally signed. It took three more years before it was finally signed.

Nuclear Risk: Paused Retreat

The favorable and optimistic ambiance created by President Zia's confidence building visit however did not

last long. The process of previous year 1984-1985 lost his track in imminent years 1986-87. India and Pakistan engaged in one of the biggest military standoffs in their history. In early 1986, the Indian Army began planning a large military exercise—Brasstacks—along the western border with Pakistan to test its ability to conduct mobile armored warfare. The exercise was divided into four phases from May 1986 to March 1987 (Bajpai, 1995 & Kaur, 2018). Both India and Pakistan were accusing each other's non-peaceful nuclear programs as the hindrance to the normalization of their relations.

In July 1987, Pakistani Prime Minister, Mohammad Khan Junejo, tried to initiate talks on nuclear confidence building. During a press conference in Japan, he offered to allow India to inspect the Kahuta uranium enrichment plant near Rawalpindi in exchange for reciprocal inspections by Pakistan of an Indian nuclear facility (Kaur, 2018 & Kyodo News Service, Tokyo, July 8, 1987). But India rejected this proposal. Indian Minister of State for External Affairs, K. Natwar Singh, stated in Parliament that Pakistan's proposal for mutual inspection of each other's nuclear facilities is "neither practicable nor workable" (Kaur, 2018 & Press Trust of India, August 7, 1987). In September 1987, Pakistan again urged India to accept its proposal to declare South Asia a nuclear-weapon-free zone (Kaur cited the Kyodo News Service, Tokyo, July 8, 1987). On 24 September 1987, in a speech to the United Nations General Assembly, Pakistani Prime Minister, Mohammad Khan Junejo, proposed that Pakistan and India should jointly accept a nuclear-free zone and regional test ban treaty in South Asia (Kaur, 2018). He stated: "Pakistan is prepared to go further and subscribe to a comprehensive test ban in a global, regional, or bilateral context (Kaur, 2018). The conclusion of a bilateral test ban agreement between Pakistan and India would serve to assure each other, and the world, that neither country has any intention of pursuing the nuclear weapons option" (Kaur cited Pakistan Proposes Nuclear Test Ban in South Asia, *New York Times*, September 25, 1987). India however, again rejected the idea of nuclear test ban. Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi stated, "We [India] feel it will not stop their nuclear program. We don't think, especially in the situation in Pakistan, that we will be able to achieve a freezing of their nuclear weapons program just by inspections" (Steven, October 11, 1987). Therefore, nothing moved quite positively on the nuclear confidence building front in these years. In June 1988

Pakistani High Commissioner to India, Shah Nawaz, made a statement that Pakistan was willing to sign a bilateral nuclear test ban treaty with New Delhi, as well as issue a joint statement with India renouncing nuclear weapons. With regards to defense spending, he appealed to India to accept Pakistan's proposal for a bilateral agreement "to limit arms and reduce military budgets" (Xinhua, Beijing, June 13, 1988 cited in Kaur, 2018). However, this enriched statement also did not bear much fruit. It was only after the death of Pakistani President Zia and the establishment of democratic rule under Benazir Bhutto, India and Pakistan resumed negotiations to improve their bilateral relations.

Nuclear Risk Reduction Measures Agreement

Rajiv Gandhi visited Pakistan to attend the fourth South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) summit in December 1988, which was the first visit by an Indian Prime Minister to Pakistan in preceding 28 years. On 31 December 1988 during the summit, Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and Pakistani Prime Minister Bhutto signed a bilateral agreement not to attack each other's nuclear facilities (Kaur, 2018).

This agreement was the climax of the nuclear risk reduction discourses of the Rajiv Gandhi years. It was considered as a historic achievement for Indo-Pak relations, as the discourse on agreement as a nuclear risk reduction measure, rolling from the Gandhi-Zia meet Dec 1985, culminated into a signed and authorized agreement. After signing it Pakistani PM Bhutto remarked, "A momentum for peace has begun. I think that in both of our countries there is a groundswell for peace. An extremely important step has been taken toward improving relations between India and Pakistan" (Kaur, 2018; Fisher, 1988; Rehman, 1989).

The agreement stated that both sides shall refrain from directly attacking, encouraging, or participating in any action aimed at destroying or damaging any nuclear facility. These facilities include nuclear power and research reactors and fuel fabrication, uranium enrichment, isotope separation and reprocessing facilities, as well as any other facilities containing radioactive material (Kaur, 2018). It also requires the annual exchange of lists detailing the locations of all nuclear related facilities in each country and remains one of the functioning NRRM agreements between India and Pakistan.

Unlike Western experience of nuclear risk reduction measures, which emerged after the precipitation of

serious nuclear threat, the evolution of the nuclear risk reduction measures between India and Pakistan during the Rajiv Gandhi period cannot be attributed as a responsive outcome of any serious nuclear threat. P.R. Chari notes: "The involvement of nuclear installations in the Indo-Pak crises of 1984-85 does not qualify these events as nuclear crises (Chari, 2003)." It cannot be considered as full-blown nuclear crisis in spite of being related to nuclear facilities and installations, as at that time both India and Pakistan were not nuclear weapon states. The case during this crisis was to conventionally attack the nuclear facilities. So, there was not a serious nuclear threat per se.

We also cannot altogether deny the nuclear overtones attached to this crisis. Although India and Pakistan had not taken any nuclear test and were not nuclear weapon states at that time, yet the presence of latent nuclear capabilities of both the countries was forcing them to foresee the possibilities of nuclear threat. India had already shown the presence of nuclear material through peaceful explosion in 1974. In the 1980s the details of Pakistani nuclear program were also persistently emerging. In Feb 1984, Pakistani nuclear scientist, A.Q. Khan, publicly declared that Pakistan had acquired the capability to enrich uranium, which means that it could produce a nuclear bomb at short notice (Kaur, 2018 & Perkovich, 1999). This created large discomfort among the Indian military and political circle. India wanted to stop Pakistan in her venture to make nuclear weapon and thus planned a strike at nuclear facilities on the enrichment facility at Kahuta along the lines of the one conducted by the Israelis against the reactor at Osiraq in 1981, owing to Indira Gandhi's *realpolitik* approach to manage with such a situation.

LEADERSHIP ROLE IN NRMS

Unlike *realpolitik* approach of Indira Gandhi, Rajiv Gandhi devised the NRMs way to deal with the situation and to diffuse the crisis. The essence of these measures also owes to the approach of Rajiv Gandhi, who tried to manage it not with force or war, but with confidence building and cooperation. It is in this sense that the leadership of Rajiv Gandhi deserves credit for devising NRRMs with Islamabad. For, during 1984-85 crises, while Indira Gandhi dealt with the crisis without any inclination towards trust building with the other side as she was more radical and war oriented, Rajiv Gandhi's approach dealt with the crisis differently. He showed keenness and vigor to find an enduring solution with

trust building initiatives. He took initiatives to negotiate with Pakistani President Zia-ul-Haque on the agreement not to attack on each other's nuclear installations and facilities. As a result of his positive approach a formal agreement was signed by him and his Pakistani counterpart Benazir Bhutto in 1988.

The gap in the verbal mooting and final signing of the agreement has been attributed to two reasons. First, Rajiv Gandhi, who had just won the elections by the biggest margin in India's history, might not have been keen on entering into an agreement with an undemocratic military dictator, who clearly did not have a popular mandate. Second, India was perhaps still considering the possibility of attacking Kahuta, which was just becoming operational and clearly housed the Pakistani nuclear weapon capability (Sidhu, 2011). The Parliamentary debate on Rajiv Gandhi's initiatives, however, sets out the reason more clearly. In the Parliament Rajiv Gandhi was criticized for his cooperative and friendly move towards Pakistan. The debate was held in response to an offensive statement made by a Pakistani Minister soon after the visit of Zia to India and the announcement of agreement not to attack nuclear facilities. Rajiv Gandhi was alleged as ignoring the security concerns of India by offering cooperative hands, as Pakistan was termed as facilitator of India's internal problems, especially related with Punjab and Kashmir along with other charges of arms proliferation and raising Kashmir issue at the UN. In response to this criticism, the then Minister of External Affairs, B.R. Bhagat, stated that India was seriously observing the moves of Pakistan. In reaction to the statement of Pakistani Minister, he raised his apprehensions about Pakistani semi elected rule which, according to him creates the wrong climate for processing the agreement." He further commented, "We maintain that only bilateralism can be the basis of discussions and solutions of all problems between India and Pakistan.....There is some achievement that has been made but still we have to go a long way to evolve a framework of cooperation. With Pakistan we are emphasizing. Let us try to build confidence among the people and among the countries. The confidence building measures are very important.....our emphasis is on CBMs" (*Lok Sabha Debates*, 1987).

Therefore, the intentions towards CBMs were not anomalous on the part of Rajiv Gandhi as examined. It was only the circumstances, the unfavorable

environment that put Rajiv Gandhi's proposed reciprocal visit to Pakistan for institutionalizing this agreement at halt. However, his commitment towards this Agreement and other confidence building initiatives was irrevocable. He expressed his inclination towards resumption of dialogue with Pakistan on nuclear and other issues and to visit Pakistan on the premises of SAARC Summit in Nov 2006 and eventually, got it materialized in 1988.

Rajiv Gandhi thus, undoubtedly brought a significant shift in the course of Indo-Pak bilateral relationship. He played a proactive role in allaying tensions, suspicion and the instabilities caused by the anxieties of the alleged imminent Indian strike against the nuclear assets in 1984-85. It is in this backdrop, that the Government came up with the idea of establishing nuclear risk reduction measures (NRRMs) between India and Pakistan for clearing the prevailing confusion in matters nuclear and in eliminating the future possibilities of unintended and unauthorized nuclear crisis in this region. It was, nonetheless, a pioneering contribution of Rajiv Gandhi. Except this crisis, during his tenure as a Prime Minister, India-Pakistan faced one more serious conflict in 1986-87. In response to this crisis also, he came up with the series of confidence building initiatives in the latter half of 1988, including his own visit to Pakistan.

The adoption of nuclear risk reduction initiatives was a result of his optimistic and practical approach. India and Pakistan were not nuclear states, but still he shaped nuclear risk reduction arrangements before actual nuclear threat surfacing between them. These initiatives were innovative as well as practical in the sense, as it was only with the help of NRRMs India could adopt the middle way to manage nuclear tensions. It was neither the disarmament nor the deterrence way. Rajiv Gandhi was an ambitious Prime Minister and endorsed the concept of 'nuclear free world' worldwide. But he could not support it practically for India as Pakistan was steering intensive nuclear programme introducing a new element in the entire security dimension of the region. Neither, he wanted to bring nuclear deterrence on the surface by formulating nuclear weapon. So, initiating the NRRMs process was a well thought out decision to solve the problem through negotiation, trust formation and bringing mutual understanding on nuclear front. It was the appropriate substitute of disarmament, a method to hold the nuclear capability for self-defence as well as to ensure the nuclear safety at the same time.

It has also been argued that Rajiv Gandhi adopted NRRMs just because India was not prepared to take nuclear burden and was not self-sufficient in preparing nuclear-weapon and he took NRRMs to handle with the time. In Lok Sabha debates we can get reference to it as:

"In October 1985, he formed a small committee of experts and tasks them with outlining the architecture and costs of a potential nuclear deterrent. The committee members included Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) Chairman Dr. Raja Ramanna and strategic analyst K. Subrahmanyam..... In November 1985, the committee tasked with assessing the potential cost of a nuclear deterrent holds its last meeting. During this meeting, Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi is advised by an economic advisor that the high cost of a nuclear deterrent will have an adverse impact on the Indian economy" (Kaur, 2018).

But it can always be counter argued in the light of the fact that the legacy of NRRMs is still holding up, even when India and Pakistan became nuclear states. NRRMs have always been endorsed as the most preferable route to manage bilateral conflicts whenever they have taken nuclear overtones and eventually to prevent the nuclear outbreak.

NRRMs: Legacies and Importance

Rajiv Gandhi years were marked by significant precedents for India and Pakistan. The agreement of non-attack was one such development of the period. This agreement remains one of the most important institutionalized NRRM between India and Pakistan till present. This has been actively pursued by the two countries and has survived the tumultuous course of the past two decades. It could be argued that this Agreement has internal inconsistency of not being verifiable and not defining the 'nuclear facilities'. However, it is pertinent to note here that the strength of the Agreement lies in its sustainability and successfully mitigating the nuclear crisis in post 1998 scenario also. It worked, even when any of the previous understandings between the two countries did not work.

Most importantly, Rajiv Gandhi's legacy of NRRMs has significantly contributed to the course of Indo-Pak nuclear equations and in evolving overall CBMs, especially in the context of their nuclear tests during 1998, which had worsened the milieu in Indo-Pak relations. Right after the 1998 nuclear tests, India turned on to historical precedents and offered a list of NRRMs to Pakistan emulating the Rajiv Gandhi's initiatives. In a

Memorandum of Understanding signed by the Indian and Pakistani Foreign Secretaries at the Lahore Summit in 1999, both countries agreed to pursue a list of confidence-building measures, which included measures aimed specifically at nuclear risk reduction.

Also, Indo-Pakistani crises that followed the reciprocal nuclear tests in May 1998 had a visible nuclear dimension; they include the Kargil conflict and the border confrontation following a Pakistan-sponsored terrorist attack on the Indian Parliament on December 13, 2001. The situations that arose could have erupted into a "shooting war (Chari, 2003)." The tone of India's NRRM initiatives perhaps prevented the Kargil conflict taking any nuclear overtone and outbreak of any direct military confrontation during Operation (Parakaram, 2002).

Now, however, the track-record of their NRRMs agreements has helped India and Pakistan to better manage their nuclear equations and to mitigate the risk of a nuclear confrontation, the dangers of a potential nuclear exchange as highlighted during the two Indo-Pakistani military crises in 1999 and 2001-2002 still daunts to a large extent. To quote Kampani:

"Concerns about peace time and crisis stability in South Asia have also grown in parallel with the expansion of Indian and Pakistani nuclear weapons programs. These concerns precede the 1998 nuclear tests and are centered on India and Pakistan's lack of secure second-strike capabilities; their geographical proximity and Pakistan's lack of strategic depth; their sibling rivalry; the absence of sophisticated early-warning capabilities; and the problems of relatively weak command and control arrangements" (Kaur, 2018; Kampani, 2005).

The two countries have been considered the most potential flashpoint for a nuclear conflict. In this backdrop, the two countries have always faced the international and domestic pressure to ensure the nuclear safety in the region; either in the form of UN or US pressure for being the parties to the international treaties on nuclear disarmament, which has often been resisted by both of the countries or civil society pressure to ensure nuclear safety in the region, especially during the times of the heightened tensions. In this situation, NRRMs are the most practical route for India and Pakistan. Therefore, taking help from Rajiv Gandhi years' legacies, India and Pakistan can be suggested to take following measures, aimed primarily at NRRMs to maintain their nuclear balance and to sustain nuclear stability in the region:

- To institutionalize a number of NRRMs on the lines of 'Agreement of non-attack on the nuclear facilities'. Institutionalization is necessary. Mere discourses do not lead to the desirable results. Also, there is a need for such measures which remain erect passing the tumultuous course of time. The tensions are there to stand in future also. The disarmament solution does not seem to be feasible at least in the future. The need is to build confidence and trust to bring the nuclear sanity. This may lead to the foreseeable political solution of the conflict also.
- As this Agreement was not verifiable, they can start with the non-verifiable measures and then can move on to verifiable.
- To bring a thaw and tolerance at political level also, it should be given preference.
- To make continuous efforts as Rajiv Gandhi made. The regime changes in Pakistan did not stop him to further press the agreement and finally got it signed.

NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT: GOVERNANCE INITIATIVE

In the context of foreign policy, conceptual view is not only a direct perception of what the material world is, but also the value judgment of what it should be. A World free of Nuclear Weapons complied with China's strategic thinking of peaceful development, peaceful diplomacy and harmonious World.

With regard to nuclear disarmament, First and also the most important, we should again emphasize the crucial and milestone role of the NPT for nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament, although it was challenged by a lot of crises. Till now, the challenges faced by NPT mechanism mainly related to its inability to achieve consensus, to cope with the withdrawal from the Treaty and the violation of non-proliferation and to make progress on Article VI (nuclear disarmament).

The first related to its different binding power on contracting parties and non-contracting parties. Although non-contracting parties were bound to bear huge pressures even sanctions from international community, there existed incredible "benefits" and "reasons" such as commercial advantages on importing/exporting of nuclear material/facilities for denying joining the nuclear non-proliferation system. Before all nuclear state agree for comprehensive and complete nuclear disarmament and ratify the NPT, non-signatories to this treaty will not be able to attract non-contracting parties.

The second was on state actors and non-state actors. The

existing international laws and regulations, whether on the provisions of NPT or the safeguards system of IAEA, or the nuclear export control systems of NSG, did not involve the responsibilities of non-state actors on non-nuclear proliferation. Apparently sovereign states had little experience and effective measures to cope with this new issue.

The third was on the relations between nuclear powers and non-nuclear powers. In nature, NPT embodied the text a kind of compromise and exchange between nuclear countries and non-nuclear states, because nuclear powers committed to conduct nuclear disarmament and to provide nuclear assistance to non-nuclear states in the exchange that non-nuclear states promised not pursuing the possession of nuclear weapons. However, if judging from the moral perspective, no country is endowed to have the right to possess and use nuclear weapons. So, due to the fact that nuclear countries had already enjoyed the competitive edge in security, it was obligatory to make some kind of security guarantees and compensation for non-nuclear state, such as the announcement of not firstly using or threatening to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear countries/nuclear-free zones. But till now, only India and China made this commitment.

Lastly, it was about rights and obligations. NPT authorized the five nuclear powers to legally possess nuclear weapons, thus resulting in their dominance in international security relations. This had the "quality" significance, while by contrary the nuclear disarmament just reduced the numbers and to a large extent it was the "quantity" effect. The returns for non-nuclear states not developing nuclear weapons was just the principled and vague commitments from nuclear powers to provide nuclear assistance, but not the clear, specific and credible security guarantees. This greatly undermined the performance of NPT.

This raises the question about how to make up current deficits in nuclear disarmament. The following section identifies some of the initiatives regarding nuclear non-proliferation.

First, for moral and humanitarian concerns, a world free of nuclear weapons should be, in principle, taken as the ultimate goal of nuclear disarmament. Support the total and thorough elimination of nuclear weapons. Ask no-first-use pledges of all nuclear weapons states.

Secondly, due to the effectiveness of current non-proliferation institutions, actively promote the

resurrection of CTBT (Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty) so as to provide a legal framework for non-proliferation protection. If possible, speed up the negotiations on prohibiting the production of fissile materials, thus reducing the risk of proliferation from the source. Moreover, when dealing with non-proliferation cases, prudently consider about the measures such as sanction, isolation or even small-scale war, diplomatic negotiations and political talks should still be taken as the main channel to solve problems.

Thirdly, emphasize the special responsibilities and model effect of the states with the largest and most advanced nuclear arsenals in nuclear disarmament. The cooperation between U.S and Russia on disarmament on STAR 2 will influence the whole process. Besides, further transparency on nuclear stockpiles is required for all nuclear weapon states, voluntary decreases in nuclear arsenal and the extension of nuclear free zones. At the same time, nuclear disarmament should be carried out with the reduction of conventional weapons.

Fourth, the possibility of the comprehensive solution for nuclear security problem is also why good governance is important. For most developing countries, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction is not the most urgent threat, their primary task is to develop economy and reduce poverty. More resources from international community are required to narrow down the poverty gap and improve overall social welfare level. Politically, respect the right of each state to pursue its own path of development and the right to peacefully use nuclear energy, especially under the context of global climate change and resources shortage.

CONCLUSION

India faces national security threat from two fronts—Pakistan on north western side and China on north eastern border. Though China is also committed to No First Use policy; even then Chinese nuclear weapons in terms of quantity and quality are superior to those of India. China has also in relation to India well developed means of delivery of nuclear weapons (Kamath, 2013). A policy of no first use only enhances India's sense of insecurity (Kamath, 2013). It shows that India is not in competition with China in developing nuclear weapons (Kamath, 2013). These weapons of mass destruction, if used at all, are used as weapons of self-defence (Kamath, 2013). Hence, it could be argued that since Indira Gandhi, India is following "no first use," if the global community opens up a global mechanism of no first use

that can make nuclear weapons more secure.

The framers of the Indian Constitution as well as the leaders of independent India tried their best to incorporate the noble principles of non-violence in the Constitution as well as in domestic and foreign policies of the nation. However, the hard realities of a greedy and turbulent world have forced her to open her eyes towards the necessity of safeguarding her sovereignty and promoting her national interests. It is, therefore, observed that considering the regional and global contexts the necessity of the Rajiv Gandhi's action plan is still relevant. His efforts were focused on bringing an understanding, at least on the nuclear front between the two countries and to maintain nuclear sanity in the region. Therefore, it can be concluded that in India-Pakistan case, it was not only the response to any nuclear crises that lead to the nuclear risk reduction measures but also the political leadership of Rajiv Gandhi contributed to elucidate the possibility of any nuclear crises in future.

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