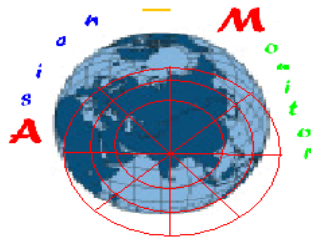




WESTFÄLISCHE
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Der ASIEN-MONITOR analysiert und bewertet regelmäßig aktuelle politische und gesellschaftliche Entwicklungen in Asien und greift dabei auf die in Münster versammelte Expertise (Politikwissenschaft, Ethnologie, Geschichte, Sinologie) zurück. Er wird von der Professur für die Politik Südasiens am Institut für Politikwissenschaft der Westfälischen Wilhelms-Universität Münster unter der Leitung von Prof. Dr. Susanne Feske veröffentlicht.

The Nuclear Arm's Race between Pakistan & India: an Escalating Threat to Regional Peace and Security

von Umer Khayyam

'Nuclear disaster could well engulf the populace, the committed and the uncommitted alike. Mankind must put an end to war or war will put an end to mankind' (J. F. Kennedy – UN General Assembly 1961). Thus, it was realized quite long that the possession and advancement in nuclear arms' technology would certainly abolish the human race someday, if appropriate and applied precautionary measures not set. But the desire of nuclear fissile, its advancement through pertinent innovative research via joint 'international cooperation' has finally dragged the mob to an edge, where we can't deny the probability of another nuclear disaster in South-Asia.

The strive of survival on the planet earth, both Pakistan and India successfully coped to acquire the nuclear technology and declared as nuclear powers in May 1998, when both rivals tested their nuclear technology successfully. That was certainly the beginning of a new nuclear arms' race that has persuaded the regional security and threatened the world's peace. So, after procuring the menacing nuclear technology from the West, both rivals have profoundly started mega production of the nuclear arsenals.

To attain self-sufficiency at home with maximum advantage on the rival, both sides initiated large-scale production and churning-out of plutonium than any other country on the planet. Forthwith, both India and Pakistan today stands with 200 cross-continent nuclear warheads in their pockets. Yet, the production of long-range deadlier nuclear weapons continues and it's being heavily financed by Islamabad, and New Delhi, \$2.2 billion and \$4.9 billion, respectively (globalzero.org).

Nevertheless, the intensive advancement in nuclear technology by India and Pakistan is tailed while overlooking 'Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT)' – to get rid of any obligation to develop, test and re-transfer of nuclear technology, besides it's sale. The huge production of nuclear arsenals at home is justified under the so-called state's defense, security, besides the political prestige. However, the chances of nuclear technology by India and Pakistan, likewise the elongation of heavy nuclear artillery, other than external security, is the standing 'Kashmir dispute' – an entity with an unclear future. The Kashmir dispute lies at the heart of the rivalry between the two states, dangerous than any external threat.

Thus, pursued to maintain the *status quo*, the nuclear arms' race has caused in an insecurity paradox in the region. The regional instability on one-end and continued expansion of nuclear technology with international actors on the other heightens 'loose nuke' for both countries to expand their nuclear technology and exercise it, if necessary. Pakistan's expansion of nuclear technology with China has created anxiety in Delhi. To counter that, India's nuclear proliferation with Russia remained the main concern for Pakistan. However, it was a no-war, no-pace situation. Until the recent past, both sides have maintained a 'zero-tolerance' level.

Out of the blue, the climate has changed in Indian favor. The Civil-Nuclear and Arms acquisition deal by Obama, during his visit to Delhi last month, has one-more time endangered the strategic environment of South-Asia. The pact signed has given India a comparative advantage. It gives India an upper hand in speedy production, subsequently testing of her nuclear fissile. The deal even openly supports 'Indian strategic fuel reserve'. Furthermore, it allows India an immediate expansion of its uranium resources to plutonium for nuclear weapons, which will increase India's plutonium production capacity roughly to

fourfold and alarmingly in the 'un-safeguarded reactors'. The pact guarantees no precautionary measures, even for the ratification of CTBT of unclear weapon testing. Additionally, the treaty offers India a free and un-ending expansion of the nuclear reactors.

The debate didn't end here, but under the adjacent contract US has offered permanent help to let India be another permanent membership of UN Security Council. The offer surely gives India a chance of successful lobbying for her interests at the international level. Whereas, membership of the Nuclear Supplier Group-NSG will back India to work on its nuclear technology with certain exemptions like, import of uranium. Moreover, an exception from NSG rules also means an open access to international fuel and technology market, and the export of nuclear technology to those, striving for it. US bestowed privilege to India, particularly after decades long international legislation of non-proliferation, has suddenly opened the doors for other nations, like, North & South Korea, Iran, Algeria and others to acquire advanced sensitive nuclear technology from India. For US, India will most probably act like a middleman for the sale of US arms in the poor world. Whereas, the derivative nuclear arms produced on US based technology will never be subjected for inspections by the IAEA.

The bluff treaty ends with US-India 'Space Cooperation'. US ensured her eternal backing to enhance Indian capacity of intercontinental nuclear missiles' launch. Ultimately, the US-India multi-dimensional bilateral treaty will certify both quantitative and qualitative essentials of the Indian missile delivery system. This new collaboration is a clear sign of backdoor proliferation and armament of Indian nuclear industry, supported by advanced intercontinental delivery system and its testing. Furthermore, the US obligation of restraining the fissile material's production from unsafeguarded nuclear reactors restrained has also lost its position.

The US-India nuclear and arms' accusation pact significantly disturbed the decades' long zero-tolerance between the two opponents. Mutual cooperation to end further production of fissile material for nuclear production, ratification of the 'Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty' and endorsement of NPT remained a nightmare in South-Asia. Apparently, Pakistan became more conscious about the results of any nuclear escalation. India too is quite

rational to avoid any nuclear war in South-Asia, even after a clear advantage on Pakistan. Both sides obviously smell the intensity of any nuclear disaster that could lead to massacre of millions with billions others to suffer indirectly. Consistently, they admire any fire-call from either the command would surely lead to massive massacre and billions others to suffer.

However, the intensive accusation and massive production of nuclear arms is absolutely not for show-off or worship. The current escalating situation portrays something quite horrible. The new US-India nuclear cooperation has, within weeks, placed the region on high alert. Both the competing rivals with enormous backup started flexing their muscles and nuclear capabilities against one another. The rising political tension, cross border firing, rise of extremism on both sides of the border while blaming the other side, proxy war in Afghanistan, water resource tension etc. are collectively fading the already instable environment between the border states. The growing conventional war and its transformation to nuclear escalation is promptly to happen. Indeed, the nukes from both sides are positioned. The fire-call from either the side is getting certain, which would not be restricted to conventional war.

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