



India's Cold Start Doctrine and Pakistan's Counter Strategy

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Abstract:

This paper highlights the objectives and Modus Operandi of India's Cold Start Doctrine, as well as Pakistan's counter-strategies to protect its national security from Indian attack. The bilateral relations of both states became distrustful, conflicting, and hostile, as India and Pakistan gained independence from British rule. India-Pakistan relations are complicated because the century's most active fault line runs between them. In order to become a major power in South Asia, India is focusing on developing Pakistan-centric war doctrines, as Pakistan is the only country in the region with military parity. The Cold Start Doctrine is one such attempt as it aims to achieve military and political objectives through shallow penetration into strategically important positions. It is a limited war doctrine that operates below the nuclear threshold. Pakistan, on the other hand, is strengthening its conventional edge by developing counter-strategies and doctrines as its national security paradigm evolves. Pakistan successfully developed a conventional advantage and substantial parity with India, and its tactical nuclear weapons provide a deterrence against any conventional challenge from India.

Keywords: Cold Start, IBGs, TNW, NFU, Nuclear Threshold, SRBMs, LRBMs and MRBMs

INTRODUCTION

South Asia has a geographical area of about 5.1 million square kilometers and a population of 1.8 billion people, accounting for one-fourth of the world's population (Batra, 2012). As a result, this region is both the most populous and the most densely populated in the world. Because of South Asia's history, geography, and unique geostrategic proximity to great powers such as China and Russia, it has always been an important sector of proxy conflict for dominance and supremacy. After the terrorist attacks on the Indian parliament in 2001, the long-running rivalry between India and Pakistan entered a new phase. The Cold Start Doctrine (CSD) was quickly developed and implemented for army mobilization under the "Hit & Mobilize" strategy. In fact, the Indian Cold Start Doctrine is one of the offensive military strategies used by India for both deterrence and achieving specific goals. Under the nuclear threshold, this doctrine has a very effective deterrent impact. The CSD was not solely the work of Indian military generals or strategists; rather, it was inspired by the "Blitzkrieg" war strategy. During World War II, Nazi Germany developed and implemented this military strategy. The German forces used this offensive war strategy with such speed, swiftness, and maneuverability that they swept through France, Holland, Norway, Poland,

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and a large portion of the Soviet Union all the way to Stalingrad. The Nazi army stormed their enemies, and the main objective of this technique was to quickly capture enemy territory by disorganizing the enemy army. This military doctrine was introduced to South Asia as a result of New Delhi's strategic adventurism. Since then, there have been a number of unresolved bilateral issues between the two countries, resulting in cross-border fighting, terrorism, false flag operations, and persistent propaganda and allegations against Pakistan. In the face of these outstanding issues, India devised a doctrine aimed at achieving quick and shallow strategic gains. It is aimed that during a conflict, India will infiltrate their Integrated Battle Groups (IBGs) into Pakistan up to 80 to 90 kilometers, where they will be reinforced by Air Force, Navy, heavy missile, and cyber-attacks, preventing Pakistan from pursuing the "Nuclear First Use (NFU)" doctrine. After capturing eight strategically important and key positions, Islamabad could easily be forced to make humiliating concessions, particularly on the issue of Kashmir. As a result of this doctrine, Pakistan has made some strategic advancements in its force readiness, technology, and military strategy. These innovative strategies have enabled Pakistan to ensure regional deterrence stability, and a new force posture can ensure the defence of its sovereign integrity against any aggression from India.

Since the two countries emerged as successor states to British India, they have had unresolved territorial and political issues. The main source of this mistrust and enmity is India's covert strategy and hegemonic designs against Pakistan, which pose existential threats to the country's vital national interests, integrity, and survival. In its quest to become the region's sole major power, India is inadvertently reactivating the fault line with Pakistan. As a result, India has developed a number of Pakistan-centric war doctrines and shifted its strategic mindset from defensive to proactive. According to those military doctrines, CSD is the most lethal conventional threat to Pakistan's sovereignty. The study focuses on these questions: Why India has inflicted Cold Start Doctrines (CSD) against Pakistan? What are its security implications on Pakistan? How Pakistan has developed its strategy to counter this military doctrine?

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study will employ a qualitative research strategy. This type of research entails interpreting and analyzing existing qualitative work. The study will be based majorly on secondary sources, such as available scholarly work by renowned and recognized scholars. This literature will be gathered from newspapers, journal articles, books, columns, and the official websites of the United Nations Security Council, as well as the Foreign and Defense Ministries of both states.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Political scientists and scholars of international relations have compiled a massive amount of valuable intellectual work explaining South Asia's security politics and Pakistan's foreign policy.

Kissinger discusses global politics and international diplomacy in his well-known book *World Order*. The author has used a methodological and comprehensive approach to comprehend the art of diplomacy and foreign policy decision making in the modern era (Kissinger, 2014). The book deconstructs the policies and strategies that have shaped the world over the last two thousand years. Furthermore, it encompasses almost the entire globe, with a focus on China, India, the Middle East, Europe, and the United States.

Morgan explained three operational levels of deterrence tactics, national security strategy, and critical component of international system security in his book *Deterrence Now* (Morgan, 2003). The book explains defence and security strategies in foreign policy, as well as how countries formulate them in order to protect their vital national interests.

Hussain describes India as an emerging great power in the South Asian region seeking to establish hegemony in the book "Pakistan and a World in Disorder: A Grand Strategy for the Twenty-First Century" (Hussain, 2016). The statements of its political and military leaders indicate that it intends to influence the current political discourse. India is attempting to increase its political and military power.

Mirza describes South Asia's strategic importance in his research article titled "Subcontinent security and its impact on global security; challenges and the way forward". The presence of natural and human resources is one reason, and the region's unique security situation is another (Mirza, 2009). South Asia is beleaguered by a fractious regional and global political environment. Nuclearization and political conflict over the Kashmir issue had pushed this region to threatening implications.

Pant asserts in his book *Handbook of Indian Defence Policy: Themes, Structures, and Doctrines* that during the 1970s, New Delhi shifted from defensive to offensive mode (Pant, 2015). However, with the nuclearization of South Asia in the last decade of the twentieth century, the doctrinal shift has accelerated. Due to new geostrategic developments in the region, India has increased its defense budget and reduced its reliance on Moscow for weapons. South Asia's new geopolitics coincided with China's rise and the United States' containment policy in collaboration with India.

Osgood defines limited war as the achievement of some limited objectives without the mass mobilization of armed forces in his book titled *Limited War, the Challenge to American Strategy*. According to Thucydides, states fight wars for three reasons: fear, honour, and national interest (Osgood, 2019). The state fights a total war because of external fear, whereas a limited war is fought for honour and interest. Before going to war, states always perform minor strategic calculations.

Paul discusses the strategic profile of South Asia in his book titled "The Indo-Pakistan conflict, an enduring rivalry". The book is based on a comparison of military capabilities of two states as well as their long-standing bilateral conflict (Paul, 2005). According to the author's analysis, India's military forces and defense policies are engaged on two fronts: Pakistan and China. Both countries are nuclear powers with formidable military forces armed with cutting-edge conventional weapons. Furthermore, India has been at odds with both of them since its independence. The author goes on to say that, while Pakistan has fewer weapons than India, it also has an exceptionally high level of technological superiority and self-reliance on its weaponry system.

Ahmed argues in his book "India's Doctrine Puzzle: Limiting War in South Asia" that since 1971, India's doctrine has shifted from a defensive and reactive to a more proactive and offensive one (Ahmed, 2014). The Cold Start doctrine of 2003 was an offensive strategy centered on India and Pakistan to counter nuclear retaliation. Furthermore, over the last two decades, India has harvested a number of military and strategic doctrines.

Kazmi in his book "A Concise History of Pakistan", has briefly referred to Pakistan's diplomatic history and its security concerns immediately following its emergence as a nation state (Kāzmī, 2009). The author discusses the initial challenging regional environment that compelled Pakistan to define its foreign policy objectives, which were Security and Survival, long before formulating the general principles of foreign policy. The founding father established the principles of foreign policy because he believed in honesty and fair play.

Lodhi painted a picture of Pakistan facing various challenges in his book "Pakistan Beyond the Crisis State". This book brings together seventeen Pakistani scholars from various fields. The book begins with a discussion of how Pakistan's past influences its present and future (Lodhi, 2011). The book continues with chapters on the Pakistan army, fighting against Talibanization as the country's primary security threat, and conventional counterinsurgency tactics.

Based on an evaluation of the available literature on the Indo-Pak strategic rivalry, it can be stated that it is a trending topic in South Asian security politics. This long-standing rivalry between the two countries paved the way for an arms race and nuclearization of the region. India's military doctrines are constantly shifting from a defensive to an offensive posture. However, Pakistan foresaw a number of policy options that would not only lift the country out of its misery and unprecedented depths of security challenges, but would also strengthen its geopolitical standing in the region. This study seeks to comprehend and assess the impact of Indian conventional doctrines in the region, as well as to determine how Pakistan can maintain a strategic balance of power.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The geopolitics of South Asia, as well as hostility in India-Pakistan bilateral relations, can be best understood in the context of deterrence theory. The Indian army's Cold Start Doctrine (CSD) and Pakistan's counter strategy to ensure its deterring stability are better understood through the lens of international relations' Deterrence theory (Krepon & Schoenberger, 2013). Deterrence is required for the stability and prevention of escalation between India and Pakistan in the broader context. The driving force in conflict resolution and management is credible nuclear and conventional deterrence. Bernard Brodie is regarded as the father of this deterrence theory. He believes that the military's primary function has shifted from winning wars to preventing them (Brodie, 1946). It is essentially a theory that theorizes how a state can deter a more powerful adversary by using its destructive power. This theory gained popularity during the Cold War, when the United States and the Soviet Union avoided direct military conflict by lowering the nuclear threshold. This theory's proponents believe that deterrence can be achieved by maintaining a balance of power and terror between the belligerent states. During the cold war, the concept was widely debated and argued. In general, deterrence refers to a situation in which one party threatens to retaliate if the other party engages in unacceptable behaviour. Deterrence refers to a situation that prevents an attack or aggression. Deterrence theory stipulates the conditions for preventing wars in strategic literature (Danilovic, 2002).

COLD START DOCTRINE; A CONVENTIONAL CHALLENGE TO SOUTH ASIAN STABILITY

South Asia's strategic stability is under threat as a result of the Cold Start Doctrine (CSD) under nuclear umbrella. The CSD has two goals: one is deterrence, and the other is to achieve strategic goals. The doctrine was adopted in 2004, following the 2001 attack on the Indian Parliament and

the failure of "Operation Parakaram," for the possible achievement of some limited objectives using conventional forces in a proactive manner based on the "Hit and mobilize" strategic concept (Khan & Khalid, 2018). The doctrine aimed to viciously strike Pakistan with a targeted operation in such a rapid maneuver that Pakistan would fail to respond to the international community politically and diplomatically. The Indian army coined the term "Cold Start" doctrine in April 2004. The goal of this limited war doctrine was to launch a conventional strike against Pakistan, causing significant harm to the Pakistani army before the international community intervened to resolve the dispute (Rizwan, 2018). The CSD, developed and used by a country with high-tech conventional and non-conventional weapons operating under a nuclear umbrella, has put the entire region at risk and triggered an arms race. India is in such a rush to modernize its military capabilities in order to dominate the South Asian region as a major power while also ostensibly hitting valuable targets. As a result, it creates instability and chaos, jeopardizing the region's security and posing a potential threat to Pakistan's sovereignty. It assumes that India can cross the international border, temporarily occupy Pakistani territory, and launch punitive military strikes against military and military targets without igniting a general war (Ahmed, 2014).

Cold Start envisioned the movement of eight Integrated Battle Groups (IBGs), each with armored, mechanized infantry and artillery, as well as integrated close air support (Cohen & Dasgupta, 2013). These groups were to be stationed along borders, ready and standing, with their sights set on the target, allowing them to quickly infiltrate the targeted area. The doctrine was inspired by the "Blitzkrieg" strategy of war coined by the Germans during World War II. It was distinguished by surprise, speed, and deliberation, with exceptional end results against superior forces, as it is their strategy to carry out operations with speed, perfection, surprise, and swiftness. The Germans used and gained strategic gains in World War II, whereas Israel used and gained strategic gains in the Arab-Israel wars of 1956 and 1967. During a combined commanders meeting in 2015, Narendra Modi stated that in the future, conflicts would be shorter and wars would be rare, whereas the Indian Chief of Army Staff (COAS) Bipin Rawat testified that wars will be intense and short because there will always be international pressure in wars between two nations (Pegahi, 2019). We must be aware of this; therefore, whatever action we take must be swift in order for forces to be ready and successful (Anwar, 2017). The Indian Chief of Army Staff, Gen. Bipin Rawat, threatened more surgical strikes across the Line of Control (Rabbi, 2017). The Indian Cold Start Doctrine's Modus Operandi and practical implementation is based on an offensive integrated formation of forces equipped with T90 tanks, T72 Mi, heavy artillery, massive infantry and mechanized corps, and strong air and naval support. Attack helicopters and advanced fighter jets are being used to maneuver the situation and aid ground forces. The Indian armed forces have formed eight integrated Battle Groups (IBGs) that are stationed 60 to 80 kilometers from the Pakistani border. These IBGs are stationed at the following critical strategic locations (Khan & Khalid, 2018).

1. IBG's-1 is to be stationed in Jammu to attack Azad Kashmir.
2. IBG's-2 is deployed in Amritsar to attack Lahore.
3. IBG's-3 is placed in Chandigarh to attack Kasur.
4. IBG's-4 is holding position in Suratgarh to attack Bahawalpur.
5. IBG's-5 is deployed in Bikander to attack Rahimyar Khan.

6. IBG's-6 is stationed in Jalmur to attack Sindh.
7. IBG's-7 is placed in Bermer to attack Mirpur Khas.
8. IBG's-8 is deployed in Palanpur to attack Hyderabad.

The Indian army developed the concept of a "cold start" doctrine in April 2004(Ladwig III, 2007). The goal of this limited-war doctrine was to launch a conventional strike against Pakistan, causing significant harm to the Pakistani army before the international community intervened to resolve the dispute(Rizwan, 2018). The CSD, drafted by a country armed with conventional and non-conventional nuclear weapons, has put the entire region at risk and set the region on the path to an arms race. Indians are so inquisitive that they have rushed to modernize military equipment and technology in order to dominate the entire region. It has the potential to create uncertainty and instability, putting the entire region in grave danger.

FULL SPECTRUM DETERRENCE: PAKISTAN'S COUNTER STRATEGY

This is undeniably true; the Indian military is far more powerful and superior to Pakistan's due to their size, military equipment, and financial capabilities however, there are some commonalities between them;

Share common strategic culture and Both have common historical origin from the Royal British Army. Deployed in more or less the same geographical space, topography and security environment. Despite the fact that the Indian armed forces have an advantage over the Pakistani army, this exceptional numerical and statistical status. The Indian army has failed to maintain control over Pakistan. This could be attributed to a consistently mobilized status as well as the development of viable and strong military doctrines in recent years. The Cold Start Doctrine (CSD) was based on the famous German doctrine of Blitzkrieg from World War II. According to this doctrine, the attack force consists of a dense concentration of armored, motorized, and mechanized infantry facing moving in formation with air support. "Blitzkrieg tactics, employing armies led by highly mobile and maneuverable panzer and motorized forces, supported by dense waves of ground attack aircraft to defeat large but essentially immobile French, British, and Belgian forces"(Glantz, 2010).

A. Military Exercises

The Indian armed forces intended to replicate the doctrine in South Asia and developed the Sunderji doctrine; however, the doctrine was proven useless during the Indo-Pakistani standoff following the parliament attack. Because the Indian mobilization took so long, the Pakistani armed forces went into defensive mode along the Line of Control (LoC) and Indian borders. Later, General Kiyani, then Pakistan's COAS, stated in 2007 that India may need at least five to seven years to train its armed forces and evolve its military equipment in accordance with its new doctrine. From 2007 to 2013, Pakistan conducted joint military exercises with the Azm-e-Nau, the country's flagship. These military exercises resulted in the New Concept of War Fighting (NCWF), which introduced new strategic options during the war. Pakistan has successfully practiced military exercises in the footsteps of General Heinz Guderian with an extra support of Panzer division to the infantry division in order to ensure the country's defence from Indian CSD and their continuous campaign of military exercises in the bordering areas.

Major General Muzammil stated that India had conducted approximately 12 military exercises in the previous two years. "We cannot continue to be oblivious to what is going on around us," he said (Army plans largest exercise since '98 Zarb-e-Momin", 2010). The Azm-e-Nau military exercises were Pakistan's strategic response to the expected Indian mechanized offence (Pakistan's ongoing Azm-e-Nau-3 Military Exercises Defines Strategic Priorities, 2010). The military exercises were the largest in terms of force mobilization since the Zarb-e-Momin exercises in 1989, and they were held in the Cholistan desert, Sialkot, and the province of Sindh. During these exercises, the troops were divided into two groups, Blue Land (Pakistan) and Fox Land (India). Fox land attacked Blue land in a quick maneuvering manner, with heavy tanks and mechanized vehicles, and occupied it in a CSD manner. Blue Land later demonstrated "dispersal techniques" based on Pakistani military doctrine by quickly recapturing the occupied area (Military exercises Azm-e-Nau-3 start, 2010). Following four years of war gaming and exercises, the Pakistani military has adopted a "new concept of war fighting aimed at preempting India's CSD." The new concept aims to reduce troop mobilization time and establish a joint army, navy, and air force response to any conventional threat (AFP, 2015).

B. Tactical Nuclear Weapons (TNW)

Aside from these military exercises, Pakistan has achieved self-sufficiency in the development of advanced tactical missile technology that is sophisticated in terms of ferocity and maneuverability. Pakistan has developed a variety of Short-Range Ballistic Missiles (SRBMs), Medium Range Ballistic Missiles (MRBMs), Long Range Ballistic Missiles (LRBMs), and Cruise Missiles to provide credible deterrence against any Indian aggression. Brief descriptions of some important Missiles with relevance to Indian Hawkish CSD are provided below. Pakistan successfully tested the short-range surface-to-surface missile Hatf IX (NASR). The missile adds a high level of deterrence to the Indian Cold Start Doctrine (CSD) (Haroon, 2014). NASR delivers an appropriate yield nuclear warhead to a range of 60 km with pinpoint accuracy (Kristensen & Norris, 2011). It has a sub-kiloton nuclear warhead with a range of 60 kilometers. Pakistan has successfully developed and tested the short-range Ghaznavi (Hatf-III) ballistic missile, which has a range of 290 kilometers and can strike any target. The successful test was carried out at the conclusion of a Ghaznavi missile group's annual field training exercise, and the "missile is capable of defeating by assured penetration".

- Shaheen 1 is a short to medium range; SSBM guided missile can deliver nuclear warhead to a target as far as 900 km (Kristensen & Korda, 2021).
- The Abdali-1 is a supersonic short range ballistic missile (SRBM), which can effectively hit any target within the range of 200km. This surface-to-surface missile has single stage solid propellant engine and can carry both conventional and nuclear warheads. It has a varied maneuverability options, provides a much-needed capability to Pakistan's Strategic Force (Alam, 2008).
- Raad is another example of missile by which Pakistan attained strategic edge on both surface and sea. Raad is a cruise missile developed to be launched from a variety of aerial platforms. Raad Cruise missile is equipped with stealth technology; it's a low altitude missile capable of delivering nuclear and conventional warhead (Chakma, 2013).

C. Political Response

Pakistan has committed to eliciting the finest possible response and support from the international community on the main issue dividing the two countries, such as the unresolved Kashmir issue.

Pakistan spoke out in support of Kashmir's right to self-determination. For over seven decades, they have been victims of state-sponsored terrorism perpetrated by the Indian government. Pakistan has always advocated for the peaceful resolution of disputes between the two countries and has denied the existence of any threat from CSD. Pakistan has signed various defense treaties and pacts with other countries in order to counter India and protect its national interests. Pakistan has established strong bilateral relations with China, another established superpower that can assist Pakistan in countering India. China and Pakistan's strong bilateral relations were established in 1950. With the passage of time, their bonds grew stronger. Moreover, Pakistan has signed several economic agreements with China including the multi-billion-dollar project CPEC which has strategic implications on the entire region particularly for Pakistan.

CONCLUSION

Since their inception as sovereign states, the two countries have been at odds with one another. As a result of this conflict, both sides pursued opposite containment strategies. Many factors have contributed to these conflicting relationships, including historical and ideological differences, unresolved territorial issues, cultural contrasts and diversity, and a struggle for dominance. These factors have shaped not only the post-independence foreign relations of two countries, but also the South Asian geopolitical environment. Since then, the partition plan of June 3, 1947, has not been fully implemented due to India's intrigue and deception politics. This partial implementation resulted in the emergence of the Kashmir issue, on which both countries engaged not only on political and diplomatic grounds, but also in numerous skirmishes along the LoC. These issues were compounded by the problems of unequal distribution of financial assets, water issues, terrorism, and diplomatic challenges, transforming Pakistan into a state in crisis and a state facing issues of national security. The hostility was not limited to political or diplomatic conflict, but also paved the way for an arms race and nuclearization. Later, in order to maintain its hegemony in the region, India began developing conventional and nuclear doctrines.

One such example is the Cold Start Doctrine, which was implemented following the failure of "Operation Parakaram" under Sunderji doctrine. To avoid nuclear retaliation from Pakistan, the CSD is envisioned and planned for shallow penetration into Pakistan from eight strategically important locations. This strike was planned to be carried out by eight Integrated Battle Groups (IBGs) comprised of the Air Force, Navy, artillery, missile, and cyber forces. This limited war will be fought without the use of nuclear weapons. The war will be so swift and maneuverable that vital strategic objectives will be met before any international response or Pakistan's nuclear retaliation. Pakistan, on the other hand, has successfully devised a counter-strategic response to Indian aggression. Pakistan has developed tactical nuclear warheads for short-range ballistic missiles. Furthermore, Pakistan has mobilized its armed forces with military exercises near the border to ensure force readiness and strengthen its defense capabilities in the event of an unwise miscalculation by New Delhi.

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