

Conclusion

While nuclearisation should have brought about stability owing to fear of nuclear war. Pakistan has instead upped the status in brinkmanship. The game of brinkmanship requires a mutual withdrawal and this is possible only if there is some space to withdraw something one cannot do from a state of passive defence, which brings us to the point of Indian willingness to accept risks. The first aspect of risk manipulation is that India is not totally averse to risk manipulation. This has been explained earlier. The second factor is regarding its nuclear capability. If India wants to take no risks at all in ensuring its launch on command capability, it will go in for a large nuclear arsenal coupled with an elaborate command and control system. But since India has already accepted the risk of a first strike, due to its second strike capability, it is likely to focus on a simple command system, which assures a credible retaliatory capability. When this risk taking and risk manipulation is translated into real term capability, it again points to a modest and affordable arsenal coupled with a simple but effective command and control system.

The analysis of the three factors in the previous chapter and of India's and Pakistan's nuclear programmes bring out the following conclusions:

⇒ India was forced to convert its peaceful nuclear programme into a weapons related one due to the change in the strategic environment internationally and regionally. The transformation was more due to change in the region and was facilitated by India's legacy bequeathed to it by its civilization and

culture. The transition, however, is in keeping and attuned to the requirements of today's international power politics.

- ⇒ India will move beyond recessed deterrence to weaponisation.
- ⇒ India's nuclear arsenal over the next decade is likely to stabilise at about 120 weapons with 20 KT yields.
- ⇒ India's economic compulsions, international opinion and the strong anti bomb lobby may not permit full-fledged development of its triadic deterrent capability.
- ⇒ India will establish a simple but effective command and control system with emphasis on an assured second-strike capability. According to Ashley Tellis "India's indigenous nuclear command system has no parallels anywhere in the world".¹⁷
- ⇒ India's risk taking and risk manipulation posture and the assessed size and shape of its nuclear arsenal emphasizes its commitment to defensive defence; hence the unlikelihood of either an arms race or nuclear confrontation in the region.

Finally, this type of arsenal termed as a 'force in being' by Ashley Tellis has a distinguishing characteristic, which is quiescence at the operational level, but not inactivity at the strategic level of politics. In fact it bestows the advantage of political choice by being active at the grand strategic levels of diplomacy. Its very existence as a potentially complete but dormant capability serves as a deterrent to possible adventurism by Pakistan. It constantly hovers in an adversary's

17. Ashley Tellis Ibid. p.471.

consciousness, commands its attention, keeps it at bay and makes the adversary constantly think of nothing but being on guard against the terrible attack that would follow in retaliation against any of its provocations.¹⁸

India would thus be assured of the effectiveness of its deterrent capability, ensuring its security, while at the same time effectively checking a runaway arms race, which would destabilize the region. India and Pakistan will of course have to traverse a long way to bridge the nuclear gap caused by secretiveness, ambiguity and non-transparency. In the long run, India's nuclear deterrent coupled with confidence building measures may well pave the way towards stability and eventual peace in the region.

18. Ashley Tellis, *Ibid*, p368.