THE RATIONALE FOR THE INDIAN NUCLEAR 'EXCEPTIONALISM'

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INTRODUCTION

As a non-signatory to the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), India has long been an outcast of the nuclear non-proliferation regime, and deprived of the entitled benefits the regime membership offers. The Indian nuclear weapon programme was seen by the non-proliferation ayatollahs as a case of nuclear proliferation and, hence, the country was debarred from civilian nuclear commerce. This was despite the fact that India shared the aims and concerns of the regime – such as the pursuit of nuclear disarmament, strengthening of the nuclear non-proliferation structure, free and easy global access to the benefits of peaceful nuclear technology and, finally, averting nuclear proliferation to non-state actors.

The winds of change for India began to blow in 2005 when the joint statement signalled greater cooperation in civilian nuclear aspects between New Delhi and Washington. Later, the Indo-US Civilian Nuclear Cooperation Agreement was signed between the United States and India which acknowledged the prolonged Indian non-proliferation record and its shared global nuclear concerns and responsible international conduct. The agreement is often referred to as the 'nuclear deal'. India, technically a non-signatory to the NPT, was enabled to participate in nuclear

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commerce—to access enriched uranium, fuel for its civilian nuclear reactors, and purchase nuclear reactors, nuclear fuel and the related technologies for civilian use. India was brought into the mainstream nuclear non-proliferation regime, along with recognition of its non-proliferation record and voluntary adherence to regime goals and principles. It was referred to as "a responsible state with advanced nuclear technology"[1] by Washington which furthered the mainstreaming of the country into the nuclear non-proliferation regime. The process was tricky and involved lengthy negotiations. The Indian nuclear reactors for civilian uses were accepted to be separated from the military ones under the deal, wherein the former were brought under the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) inspections. Amendments were brought to the domestic laws of the USA and largely in the norms laid down by the nuclear non-proliferation regime. India promised adherence to the IAEA Additional Protocol[2], which it also ratified in 2014. India's nuclear 'exceptionalism' was certainly a result of prolonged observance by the country of the norms laid down by the nuclear non-proliferation regime, proving in short that "compliance is rewarded."[3] Kelly Wadsworth has argued that though "India is unlikely to sign the NPT, but (the nuclear deal suggests that) behaviour matters more than NPT signature."[4]

1. White House, *Joint Statement Between President George W. Bush and Prime Minister Manmohan Singh*, 2005. Available at: http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2005/07/20050718-6.html. Accessed on November 21, 2015.
2. The Additional Protocol helps to provide much greater assurance on the absence of undeclared nuclear material and activities to the IAEA. It is a legal document that grants the IAEA complementary legal authority to verify a state's safeguards obligations.
3. Kelly Wadsworth, "Reward India's Non-Proliferation Good Behaviour", available at: http://csis.org/publication/pacnet-52-reward-indias-nonproliferation-good-behavior. Accessed on October 5, 2015.
4. Ibid

THE DEAL THAT HONOURED THE INDIAN EXCEPTION: A BRIEF ANALYSIS

The cementing or the de facto acceptance of Indian nuclear capabilities became the hallmark feature of India's nuclear exceptionalism. The Indo-US Civilian Nuclear Cooperation Agreement was indeed a bilateral negotiation with broad multilateral ramifications. The strategic partnership between India and the USA was the fruit of prolonged diplomatic efforts on both sides. The cooperation was enabled by the respective strategic calculations of national interests by both states. On the one hand, Washington's interest in engaging India was a combination of factors like the need to support the weakened nuclear non-proliferation regime by acknowledging outside adherents like India; the US' War On Terror (WOT) post 9/11; the potential rise of China as a power not just in Asia but in the world; the need for new markets for goods, especially nuclear technology for the USA. On the other hand, the deal provided India the opportunity to engage and integrate with the nuclear non-proliferation regime from which it had long been isolated on the grounds of being a non-NPT state.

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India transcended two salient hurdles through the nuclear deal and got (a) accommodation in the regime without reopening the grand bargain of the NPT which itself was a nearly impossible process in both legal and practical terms; (b) a waiver from the daunting and nearly impossible task of generating consensus domestically to ink the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) and the NPT, the two treaties which the country has criticised for decades for their blatant discrimination. Apart from these, there was a pressing need in India for importing civilian nuclear technology, goods, fuel and even reactors to cater for its ever increasing demand of energy.

There were costs involved for both parties in engaging in this diplomatic endeavour. The US brought about serious alterations in its domestic laws: the US Congress passed the Hyde Act in 2006 to support

the deal with India. In 2008, External Affairs Minister Pranab Mukherjee and US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice put the final seal on the 123 Agreement[5] and operationalised it. Indian Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh too faced severe criticism in the Parliament, and debates continued for months, in the media as well as in academic circles. However, the national interests of both the parties were largely catered for in the deal. It was indeed a fruitful, synergic, bilateral agreement. The nuclear deal, thus, brought the long awaited fresh air in the regime, at least from the perspective of the non-proliferation enthusiasts who felt the Indian inclusion was long pending and deserving.

Looking back on the journey shows that in the backdrop of the Indian nuclear tests— Pokhran-I and Pokhran-II in 1974 and 1998 respectively—the Indian nuclear diplomacy had a considerably difficult time negotiating and explaining its rationale for going nuclear and its civilian nuclear energy goals to the world. The tests had inculcated a sense of mistrust between India and the world. At first, Washington and the regime, did not distinguish between Islamabad's and New Delhi's nuclear journeys, routes, decisions and intentions, and, therefore, applied a policy of "Cap, Roll Back and Eliminate" to both. It became the chief strategy of their diplomatic endeavours for the elimination of new nuclear weapons in South Asia. The new millennium, however, welcomed the sincere diplomatic engagement between India and the USA as both intended, if not to simply vaporise, at least to encounter, the irritants and elements of mutual mistrust between the two democracies. A series of intense negotiations began which continued for years before the deal came through. The dialogue between Jaswant Singh and Strobe Talbott, as Lalit Mansingh says, was "a record of sorts in bilateral diplomacy, the two leaders met 14 times at ten locations in seven countries over a period of 18 months.''[6] The tough diplomatic journey between the two states can

5. Section 123 of the United States Atomic Energy Act of 1954, titled "Cooperation With Other Nations", establishes an agreement for cooperation as a prerequisite for nuclear deals between the US and any other nation, which is why it is called the 123 Agreement.
6. Lalit Mansingh, "Indo-US Nuclear Deal and Indian Foreign Policy", in P R Chari, ed., *Indo-US Nuclear Deal: Seeking Synergy in Bilateralism* (New Delhi: Routledge, 2009), p.175.

be aptly referred to as "from estrangement to engagement."[7]

In short, the nuclear deal achieved in 2005 with the USA acted as a catalyst for reopening both the spectrum of possibilities and the stagnant civil nuclear interaction between India and the world. To quote Dinshaw Mistry, "President Bush, Secretary of State Rice and a small group of advocates sought to change the long standing US non-proliferation policy to advance what they believed was a more important US foreign policy objective, that of strategic engagement with India."[8] A détente, thus, achieved resulted in several alterations in state attitudes, norms and domestic legislations in both New Delhi and Washington. India was enabled to enter nuclear commerce along with easing the brunt of the multiple sanctions on it since the post-Pokhran days. It pledged to: (a) separating its civilian nuclear facilities from the military ones and that the civilian nuclear facilities would come under safeguards through an Additional Protocol with the IAEA; (b) "reaffirming its unilateral moratorium on nuclear testing and the futility of running a nuclear arm race; (c) working with the US to conclude a multilateral Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty (FMCT); (d) refraining from transfers of enrichment and reprocessing technology and supporting international efforts to limit their spread"[9]; and (e) "to secure its nuclear materials and technology through comprehensive export control regulations, and harmonise them with the guidelines of the MTCR, NSG".[10] India's assurance for greater adherence to the prescribed guidelines, principles and norms of all the multilateral export control regimes was clubbed with a reverse assurance of a meaningful integration with, and membership of, the regime institutions to India in the near future.

The nuclear realities after the Indo-US Civilian Nuclear Cooperation Agreement have been portrayed by commentators with the presence of "NPT+1"[11] on the global canvas. By professing its regional and global

7. As Ajai K. Rai, *India's Nuclear Diplomacy After Pokhran-II* (New Delhi: Pearson Longman, 2009). He has used the term "Estrangement to Engagement" to describe in detail the post Pokhran-II diplomatic endeavours among India and the USA.
8. Dinshaw Mistry, *The US-India Nuclear Agreement: Diplomacy and Domestic Politics* (New Delhi: Cambridge University Press, 2014), p.52.
9. Chari, n.6, p.6.
10. Ibid.
11. Pankaj K. Jha, *India and the Oceania: Exploring Vistas for Cooperation* (New Delhi: Pentagon Press, 2016), p. 61.

responsibilities, India has emerged as an informal participant which assured being a reliable and responsible partner of the nuclear non-proliferation regime for the 21st century.

AN 'EXCEPTIONAL STATUS' FOR INDIA: FACTORS FOR EMERGENCE

'Exceptionalism' stands for grant of an extraordinary status that does not conform to normal rules. Why India was chosen for an 'exception' by the nuclear non-proliferation regime and by the USA is, indeed, interesting. The Indian nuclear 'exceptionalism' was expectedly welcomed with sharp accusations of partiality, favouritism, bias, discrimination. The answer to the pertaining question "Why the exceptionalism for India?" lies broadly in the country's responsible nuclear journey and clean track record of non-proliferation. Unsurprisingly, often cited as a diplomatic achievement of India in the year 2005, the Indo-US Civilian Nuclear Cooperation Agreement was actually not an immediate product, nor a premature reward. The nuclear deal was a consequence of India's prolonged quest for purely peaceful uses of nuclear technology, its history of supporting nuclear disarmament, a clean track record of nuclear non-proliferation, responsible nuclear behaviour and doctrine, and the efforts of its nuclear diplomatic fraternity as well as generations of leadership.

Quest for Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Technology

Since the very beginning of the nuclear age, India, surprisingly, had no ambitions for attaining parity in nuclear weapons and weapon technology, unlike the prevailing trend. However, India aspired to taste the fruits of civilian nuclear technology in the hope of utilising the atom for development. Seven months before the India's independence, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru clarified the stance in the Constituent Assembly when he said, "In essence, today, there is a conflict in the world between two things, the atom bomb and what it represents, and the spirit of humanity."[12] But the peaceful uses of the atom as well as the contrasting duality of the nature of atomic technology was well identified, acknowledged and grasped by India. A

12. Ashwini Kumar Chopra, *India's Policy on Disarmament* (New Delhi: ABC Publishers, 1984), p.2.

preference between weapon and energy usage of nuclear technology was actually "a choice between co-destruction and co-prosperity,"[13] respectively. In the direction of civilian nuclear energy generation and other peaceful uses of atomic technology, India, on both the national and international stages, was at the forefront.

- **Domestic Efforts**

  A research institute called the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research was instituted in 1945 with the aim of developing technologies for the peaceful use of the atom. The shared vision of Homi Jahangir Bhabha, the director of the research institute, and Pandit Nehru, the prime minister of the country, stood for the goal of "making India self-reliant in the energy field"[14] and utilising the atom for the best of Indian interests of development and growth. As Nehru once clarified, "We are not interested in, and we will not make, these bombs, even if we have the capacity to do so, and in no event will we use atomic energy for those most destructive purposes"[15]. The intent was clearly distinct from the destructive aspect of the atom, which was mirrored in the Indian policy decisions of abstaining from the evil uses of atomic technology. All the three virtues: (a) a sense of responsibility in international conduct; (b) active restraint in behaviour; and (c) respect for non-violence, were embedded in the Indian strategic culture.

- **International Efforts**

  India was optimistic and enthusiastic of the proposal of 1946 of the Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) for the establishment of an international agency for the control, development and use of atomic energy. The Bernard Baruch Plan was for the creation of

13. Jawaharlal Nehru's *Speeches, Vol. 1* , September 1946-May 1949 (Delhi: Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, 1949), p.24-25 ; Nehru cited in George Perkovich, *India's Nuclear Bomb* (1991), p.15.
14. B. M. Jain, *India in the New South Asia: Strategic, Military and Economic Concerns in the Age of Nuclear Diplomacy* (New Delhi: Viva Books, 2011), p.42.
15. Quoted in Brochure, "National Nuclear Energy Programme" (New Delhi: Lok Sabha Secretariat, 1985) , p.7.

Domestic restraint in the direction of possession of nuclear weapons was coupled with Indian efforts for, and international support to, the idea of nuclear disarmament. The Indian call was persistent for the alternate path of complete global nuclear disarmament.

an International Atomic Development Authority as an institution with: (a) managerial control ownership of all atomic energy activities potentially dangerous to world security; (b) power to control and inspect; (c) the duty of fostering beneficial uses of atomic energy; (d) and research, development and responsibilities to comprehend and detect, misuse of atomic energy.[16] The multilateral negotiations on the matter brought forward several proposals and viewpoints. The AEC's proposal planned an unjust infringement of sovereignty of states by transferring ownership of all the atomic raw materials, ownership and management of mines and of all plants producing atomic energy to an international authority.[17] But the Soviets laid greater stress on the prohibition of atomic weapons and related stocks in advance before any deliberation on the authority on atomic energy. India, however, intelligently nurtured its opinion and perspective and emerged as an upholder of a sovereign voice on the matter internationally. It introduced a resolution in the United Nations (UN) General Assembly that stressed on the need for effective international control of atomic energy.[18] Indian internationalism was well in consonance with the Indian domestic vision on atomic energy matters.

The quest for peaceful nuclear energy remained the backbone of the state's international behaviour and the national policies it pursued. After Pandit Nehru, Prime Minister Shastri too remained firm on the redundancy of nuclear armaments in the Indian arsenal, even in the aftermath of an

16. Official Records of the Atomic Energy Commission, No.1, 1st year meeting, June 1946, p.7.
17. Chopra, n. 12, p. 213.
18. Resolutions Presented by India on October 7, 1948, at the Third Session of the UN General Assembly, Document A/C, 1/315.

unanticipated war that was imposed on the country by China.

Nuclear Disarmament

Domestic restraint in the direction of possession of nuclear weapons was coupled with Indian efforts for, and international support to, the idea of nuclear disarmament. The Indian call was persistent for the alternate path of complete global nuclear disarmament. At the height of the Cold War bipolarity and nuclear rivalry, the Indian policy of non-alignment called for reduction of nuclear arms rivalry and the related threats to humanity. India, thus, did not just transcend from the 'accepted' norm of the Cold War by not adhering to either of the Communist or Capitalist ideological camps but actually contributed actively and positively by treading the alternate path of nuclear disarmament and non-violence. "The moralist visionary, Nehru, abhorred the wanton destructiveness of nuclear weapons and saw them as anathema to the unique spirit of India."[19] This unique spirit, embedded in Indian strategic thought, was the product of India's civilisational history, culture and spirit of peace and coexistence. The element of maturity was integral in the Indian foreign policy in general and in the Indian nuclear policy in particular.

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The Acheson-Lilienthal Report of 1946 discussed possible methods for international control of nuclear weapons and international ownership of the complete nuclear fuel cycle. India, from the pre-independence days, voiced its support for the same. The Indian advocacy of nuclear disarmament was born pre-independence when the unacceptable inhuman effects of the nuclear bomb were felt at the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in Japan in the dusk of World War II. India voiced the demand for world nuclear disarmament at several multinational platforms and devised plans for

19. Perkovich, n.13, p.14.

conducting it gradually. In 1954, Nehru responded to the reckless nuclear testing by proposing a "standstill agreement" on further tests pending by both the superpowers. The same was presented at the UN to "the Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld a few days later…India has ever since been a persistent advocate in the UN of nuclear disarmament, the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, and a comprehensive nuclear test ban treaty."[20]

"Nehru was counted among a few of the intellectual leaders, top statesmen and scientists of the world who, back in the 1950s, were continuously making appeals for cessation of nuclear tests"[21] and complete nuclear weapon disarmament. The imprint of Nehru's scientific temperament, pacific intentions and global vision for nuclear disarmament was well reflected on the country's nuclear decisions as well as on its various policy selections internationally. Undoubtedly, India was blinded neither by the glare of nuclear weapon possession nor by the potential of such weapons for world domination. Even in adverse circumstances, when the external security situation worsened, the Indian stance and efforts for complete nuclear disarmament remained firmly in place. The problem of proliferation of the nuclear weapons reached heights in the immediate neighbourhood. The Chinese nuclear testing and the 1962 uninvited and unprecedented encounter with India contributed to fresh threats and insecurity for India. India witnessed the Chinese nuclear tests in 1964 when negotiations for nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation issues through the European Nuclear Disarmament Conventions (ENCDs) were in full swing.

At the UN Third Special Session of the General Assembly on Disarmament in 1988, India unveiled the Action Plan for a Nuclear Weapon Free and Non-Violent World. On the bilateral level, in a brief span of two years—1986-87—the Indian leadership engaged with the leadership of both the USA and the Soviet Union. India signed the Joint Declaration of Principles of a Nuclear Weapon Free and Non-Violent World with President Gorbachev in New Delhi in 1986. The next year, in his meeting with President Reagan, Prime

20. Sergio Duarte, "Towards a World Free of Nuclear Weapons", A Conference Commemorating the 20th Anniversary of the Rajiv Gandhi Action Plan, New Delhi, 2008, available at http://www.un.org/disarmament/HomePage/HR/docs/2008/2008June09_India.pdf. Accessed on September 23, 2015.
21. U.N. Gupta, *International Nuclear Diplomacy and India* (New Delhi: Atlantic Publishers, 2007) p.17.

Minister Rajiv Gandhi expressed his disinterest in, and intention of forging, the nuclear weapon technology, unless constrained by neighbours.

Track Record of Non-Proliferation

India has a long record of advocating nuclear disarmament and also a reputation of nuclear non-proliferation. The Indian perception on nuclear non-proliferation is explicit from Air Cmde Jasjit Singh's identification of nuclear non-proliferation as one of the five interconnected and interrelated critical challenges[22] confronting the world. Though the four states that have certainly built nuclear weapons for themselves—India, Pakistan, Israel and North Korea—are beyond the pale of the NPT, the story is incomplete without recounting that the nuclear haves that promised to surrender their nuclear weapons at an early date post-NPT, didn't do so either.

THE CASE OF PAKISTAN: A CONTRAST WITH INDIA

The fear of illicit transfer of nuclear technology has always been a concern. Pakistan's clandestine nuclear weapons activities were revealed when "the activities of the scientist Dr. Abdul Qadir Khan and his 'theft' of critical secrets regarding enrichment technology from the Dutch firm URENCO"[23] came to light. Pakistani nuclear weapons are summed up as the ones "developed in secrecy and tested in defiance…nuclear weapons program has been a point of pride for Pakistanis, a worrisome portent for Indians, a source of profit for nuclear proliferators, and a security concern for US policymakers."[24]

22. The five challenges related to nuclear programmes and policies that coincide between India and the world in the 21st century, as identified by Air Cmde Jasjit Singh are: the challenge of nuclear power, the challenge of nuclear weapon programmes and ensuring credible affordable defence through deterrence, the challenge of nuclear non-proliferation, the question of nuclear disarmament; and the global security architecture, especially shaped by these factors and their future role.
    Jasjit Singh, "Global Nuclear Challenges: An Introduction", in Manpreet Sethi, ed., *Global Nuclear Challenges: Energy, Proliferation and Disarmament* (New Delhi: Knowledge World, 2009).
23. Abha Dixit, "Status Quo: Maintaining Nuclear Ambiguity" in David Cortright and Amitabh Mattoo, eds., *India and the Bomb* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1996), p.62.
24. Shehzad H. Qazi "Making the Bomb: Pakistan's Nuclear Journey", a book review of *Eating Grass: The Making of the Pakistani Bomb* by Feroz H. Khan. Available at: http://www.worldaffairsjournal.org/article/making-bomb-pakistan%E2%80%99s-nuclear-journey. Accessed on September 23, 2015.

Unlike Pakistan, the India nuclear programme is indigenous. India never went the way of "beg, borrow, steal" in attainment of its nuclear weapons. The quest of India and Pakistan for the bomb has been contrasting from the beginning. The nexus and nuclear technological exchanges between Pakistan and China, and Pakistan and North Korea, are well known. These transfers have proved pivotal in the nuclear weapon production in India's western neighbourhood. "Even as the 1965 War was getting underway, Pakistan sent its recently retired Air Mshl Asghar Khan, to China to seek aircraft and weapon systems to meet Pakistan's 'dire needs'."[25] The growing axis between Pakistan and China was seriously altering the security and strategic dynamics of South Asia. India was well aware that further proliferation of nuclear weapon technology was certainly counter-productive for plans of its abolition, yet the threat emerging from a nuclear neighbour,made it evident that India would need to rethink, and give serious consideration to, the weapon option of the technology. The "Chinese nuclear assistance (to Pakistan) has been a matter of deep concern and has altered the security situation globally."[26] This bilateral relationship had severe negative ramifications for the nuclear non-proliferation regime. "Eating grass"[27] but making the nuclear weapon symbolises the fanatic streak and desire of Pakistan's decision-making, and is evidence of its nuclear proliferation. Pakistan holds the belief that nuclear weapons can compensate for conventional military inferiority even as it continues its acts of terrorism. It has enthusiastically pursued the Tactical Nuclear Weapons (TNWs) and miniaturisation technologies which have not just been provocative in nature but also recognise its belief in nuclear war-fighting, which India, on the other hand, considers an "alien concept"[28].

Right from the Nehruvian days, India's has accepted nuclear technology as an exceptional one, deserving exceptional arrangements for its security

25. Shalini Chawla, *Nuclear Pakistan* (New Delhi: Knowledge Word, 2012), p. 67.
26. Ibid., p. 88.
27. Pakistan President Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, in an interview with the *Manchester Guardian* in 1965, said that if India built the bomb, "we will eat grass, even go hungry, but we will get one of our own." "Eating Grass" was also adapted as title of a book on the Pakistani nuclear journey by Feroz H. Khan.
28. As pointed out by Air Mshl Vinod Patney during an interview with the author, October 20, 2014.

and safety. The Indian state has provided its nuclear facilities, materials and technology with a high level of safety and security. India also has never been ever involved in illicit transfer of the technology to states or non-state actors. India has been a founder member of the IAEA and has retained its good reputation in nuclear non-proliferation since then.

Responsible Nuclear Behaviour

The Indian record is that of a responsible nuclear power with an element of restraint embedded in its international behaviour and conduct. Unsurprisingly, the country has also been referred to as a responsible nuclear state with advanced nuclear capabilities in the 2005 Indo-US Civilian Nuclear Cooperation Agreement Joint Statement. The Kargil War was imposed on India in the aftermath of it going nuclear. Evidence supports the fact of Indian nuclear restrain. It responsibly resisted the provocations from the other side and, thus, limited the scope of the war. The Indian Nuclear Doctrine further states the blueprint of India's nuclear intentions and future nuclear behaviour. The country has maturely projected restraint by strict abidance of the unilateral moratorium on nuclear testing, as promised.

- **Kargil War and Indian Nuclear Restraint**

  As was witnessed by the world in 1999, just a year after the Indian nuclear tests, Pakistan attempted to test the Indian resolve. The Report of the Kargil Review Committee published in the post-war period, mentions that the Pakistani actions causing the Kargil War of 1999 reveal that "the possibility of a conventional war between two nuclear powered states (India and Pakistan) cannot be ruled out."[29] Nuclear deterrence, thus, does not come automatically with nuclear capabilities but has to be communicated and nurtured. Thus, keeping in mind the possibility of nuclear misadventures by its potential adversaries, India has ensured building nuclear deterrence but of a credible minimum

29. Group of Ministers Report of Kargil Review Committee, February 2001, available at: http://www.vifindia.org/sites/default/files/GoM%20Report%20on%20National%20Security.pdfAccessed on January 18, 2016, p.8.

The Indian Draft Nuclear Doctrine was released in 1999 with the aim to clear the prevalent apprehensions and random guesswork regarding India's nuclear intentions globally. It clearly reaffirmed "India's readiness to join multilateral negotiations for the reduction and elimination of nuclear weapons."

variant. The Indian nuclear restraint during the Kargil War and the firm belief that nuclear weapons are "weapons of deterrence" and not "weapons of waging wars" suggests maturity. Pakistan, on the other hand was "preparing its nuclear forces for deployment"[30] during the war in the hope of winning a military advantage though being fully aware of the ghastly destructive results of nuclear escalation.[31]

- **Indian Nuclear Doctrine and Moratorium on Nuclear Testing**

The Indian Draft Nuclear Doctrine was released in 1999 with the aim to clear the prevalent apprehensions and random guesswork regarding India's nuclear intentions globally. It clearly reaffirmed "India's readiness to join multilateral negotiations for the reduction and elimination of nuclear weapons."[32] India's promise of credible minimum nuclear deterrence combined with a No First Use (NFU) evidently certified the maturity of the Indian side. India soon extinguished the concerns regarding Pokhran-II. India certainly did not want to unnecessarily flex its muscle of its indigenous technological achievement of nuclear weapons. Through further testing and multiplying the stockpile, it

30. Strobe Talbott, "The Day a Nuclear Conflict Was Averted", 2004. Available at: http://yaleglobal.yale.edu/content/day-nuclear-conflict-was-averted. Accessed on January 20, 2016.
31. The ghastly destructive results of nuclear escalation would have been bad and holocaustic not just for the parties fighting the war—India and Pakistan—but also the world, in the sense that it would have broken the global nuclear non-use taboo and logic and viability of nuclear deterrence. Nuclear use, thus, would have caused unacceptable damage to humanity, in general.
32. As elaborated by Jayant Prasad, permanent representative to the Conference on Disarmament at Geneva, on February 13, 2007.

also did not want to engage in the "war of numbers"[33] with neighbours. The echo of "responsible India" was evident in the draft nuclear doctrine, in the sense that the very first paragraph, instead of obvious glorification of the country's technological and national pride through nuclear weapons, iterated the unfortunate "virtual abandonment of nuclear disarmament" in the world. As WPS Sidhu believes, the nuclear doctrines of states most often discuss the "deployment" of the arsenal and "never advocate abolition"[34]. The Indian effort was unique in the sense that the very doctrine explicitly affirmed firm belief in nuclear disarmament.

On the other side, India has successfully lived up to its self-imposed unilateral moratorium on nuclear testing to which it had pledged in 1999. India, realising the futility of nuclear testing due to reasons of prestige, has refrained from any such activity.

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Indian Civilian Nuclear Energy Needs In the 21st Century

India recorded a "GDP growth rate of 9.3 percent in 2005."[35] The problem of energy scarcity in India called for diversifying energy generation through

33. 'War of numbers' here signifies the thrust of unnecessarily exceeding one's count of nuclear weapons simply to match or outnumber the adversary's expected weapon count. India found it useless to unnecessarily multiply its nuclear stockpile as it intended to maintain a minimum credible nuclear deterrence. The count of warheads had been decisive in traditional warfare but India believes that it becomes useless in the nuclear game. Unlike the Cold War nuclear arm race between the USA and the USSR, India is of the opinion that numbers hardly matter, as the very presence of nuclear weapons in an equation evaporates the distinction of weak and strong. This is a result of the unacceptable damage associated with eliminates. Thus, the war of numbers is overall futile.
34. WPS Sidhu, "This Doctrine is Full of Holes", *The Indian Express*, September 8, 1999.
35. According to the World Bank: GDP growth (annual %) country wise data table. Available at: http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.KD.ZG?page=1 , Accessed on September 18, 2015.

plural sources, mostly clean, sustainable and environment friendly. Nuclear as a "source of energy holds tremendous promise of expansion (in India) and can significantly contribute to the continued economic growth, its energy security and environmental health."[36] The civilian nuclear cooperation between the two states, India and the USA, thus, had the plausibility of requirements of both states in the 21st century. India was in need of power, that too from cheaper, cleaner and safer sources than other existing options. The USA was keen on expanding its trade in civilian nuclear technology and goods with "reliable partners"[37] which was not just desirable from the economic and business point of view for a capitalist system but was also feasible from the non-proliferation perspective. A commonality of vision for the promotion of civilian nuclear technology led the deal with synergic cooperation efforts from both sides.

CONCLUSION

The above factors suggest, and assure, that being different and proving one's credentials of responsibility in nuclear behaviour certainly takes more than a generation of leadership and diplomatic efforts. The requirement of continuity in foreign policy decisions and intentions along with generation of diplomatic confidence internationally are necessary. Indian nuclear diplomacy, thus, has been quite remarkably constant and mature in its approach. From strict denial to nuclear weapons in the 1950s and 1960s, the state compellingly pursued the weapons option in the face of deteriorating strategic stability in the South Asian region. However, it never compromised on its firm belief on the need for nuclear disarmament which was "unconditional and unqualified". One can observe that India took nuclear disarmament far more seriously than other states that, in due course of time, have tried diluting the spirit of the motion.

36. Manpreet Sethi, "Inputs for a Nuclear Energy Policy for India", in Jasjit Singh, ed., *Nuclear Power and Non-Proliferation: Conflict or Convergence* (New Delhi: Knowledge World, 2004), p. 81.
37. "Reliable partner" here has been referred to states like India. The term here signifies the characteristics of a prolonged non-proliferation record, responsible nuclear behaviour and absence of 'rogue state' attributes. India, even being a non-NPT which was in possession of nuclear weapons has had shown no signs of unduly exploiting the nuclear status and has continued projecting restrains and maturity. A stable government, a well established democracy and a civilisation of strategic culture qualified the state as a reliable partner the US could count on.

In the 21st century, the completion of the Indo-US Civilian Nuclear Cooperation Agreement suggests, and reassures, that in an international system, ridden with a history of cases of nuclear proliferation and illicit transfers, against the spirit and principles of the export controls and the nuclear non-proliferation regime, a country's nuclear non-proliferation record and good behaviour would be rewarded in the long run. Bad proliferation behaviour has historically received condemnation and punishment, therefore, good behaviour similarly, deserves equivalent credit and encouragement. In regard to the 2016 North Korean nuclear tests, the "hard hitting international response that the UN, along with US, South Korea, Japan"[38], not to exclude China, would give, proves that any serious pursuit of nuclear proliferation deserves and "has to be (in) a way to make nations pay for 'bad behaviour."[39] On similar lines, this paper on the Indian case of 'exceptionalism' has looked at the other side of the coin, that the deal, instead of being discriminating and biased, actually hails and incentivises adherence to the non-proliferation regime's norms and principles—awarding and recognising "good behaviour" with the same enthusiasm that it condemns and punishes bad behaviour with stringent sanctions and strategies of global isolation of the country.

As the meaning of 'exceptionalism' is "the condition of being different from the norm"[40], India has proved its credentials of being an exception. The four cardinal features; (a) an impeccable record of nuclear non-proliferation; (b) nuclear responsibility, as highlighted through the No First Use (NFU) doctrine and credible minimum nuclear deterrence; (c) nuclear restraint by abiding by its self-imposed moratorium on nuclear testing; and (d) constant support to nuclear disarmament since the very beginning of the nuclear age, all combine to make the Indian case worthy of winning the nuclear exceptionalism it has achieved.

38. Hina Pandey, "Analysing the Recent DPRK's Nuclear Test and China's Possible Role", available at: http://capsindia.org/files/documents/CAPS_Infocus_HP_09.pdf. Accessed on January 20, 2016.
39. Aparna Pande, "North Korea's Pakistan Connection", January 2016. Available at: http://www.hudson.org/research/12117-north-korea-s-pakistan-connection. Accessed on January 22, 2016.
40. "Meaning of 'Exceptionalism'," available at: http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/exceptionalism .Accessed on September 20, 2015.