

Indo-US civilian nuclear deal: challenges and options for Pakistan

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Abstract

The strategic cooperation in terms of the Civilian Nuclear Deal between India and the US has facilitated both the states in terms of supply of nuclear energy, advancement in technology, regional nuclear symmetry, energy crisis, military arsenals and the development in the economic sector. With some mutually agreed terms under the instrument, India agreed to allow the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to keep a check and have access to India's civilian nuclear program. Moreover, the US will be allowed to build its companies of nuclear reactors in India, whereas India also promised to place all future thermal reactors under the supervision of the IAEA. Furthermore, the deal benefitted both India and the US on one side, while on the other side, it adversely affected Pakistan and disrupted the balance of power in South Asia. This article explores the drastic challenges that Pakistan faces and affects its nuclear status in the region. The method used for the research is qualitative, and data is analysed from secondary sources. Moreover, the study's objective attempts to interpret multiple options that could help the stakeholders overcome the challenges and restore the balance of power in the South Asian region.

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1. Introduction

The US President W. George Bush entered into a nuclear deal with India on October 8, 2008. This mutual collaboration was a direct result of the recognition of India by the US as a substantial sphere of power in the upcoming years. India has proved itself in terms of a stabled economy and is considered the engine of the rising global economy in Asia that gained the US attention in the region. Although this deal led both countries toward nuclear trade but provided both of them to abide by the conditions like; Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) waiver, intra-state laws of US and India's specific safeguard agreement with IAEA (Rajagopalan, 2008). This agreement has strengthened the ties between both the countries and lessened India's feeling of isolation. Whereas the US needed a trustworthy partner to compass its political and geographic interest in the Persian Gulf and Indian Ocean to overshadow the growing leverage in the region. The collaborative framework targeted to prove India as a global power and to play an active role in international politics. Cooperation between Washington D.C. and New Delhi, especially in technological and nuclear projects has disrupted the relations and balance of power between India and Pakistan.

This deal further upgraded the offensive capability of India against Pakistan. Civilian nuclear agreement further paved the way for India's nuclear framework legitimizing its nuclear power from unlawful status. As in 2005 US President announced that it will participate in India's nuclear program, but the US congress hold its view that President is empowered to transfer nuclear technology if India has signed Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) but India refused to sign NPT and asserted that the country has China in its East and Pakistan in its West as its neighbours. Therefore, India refused to sign NPT keeping in view its national security. For this purpose, the Hyde Act was passed between both the states with the provision that the US will facilitate India in their civil nuclear power program and India was allowed not to sign NPT (Khan, 2013).

Ahmad (2015), writes that Pakistan was confronted with new challenges in the wake of Indo-US agreement. Apart from that Pakistan showed its interest to conclude the same nuclear agreement with the US but did not receive a positive response from US. As a result, Pakistan began to quest for alternative options to confront new challenges in order to ensure its national security. It was an alarming situation when Pakistan sensed the danger that India may veil its civilian nuclear power program into a nuclear arm, which will threaten the security of Pakistan. Moreover, Pakistan now needed to strengthen its deterrence and stability in nuclear field, as India and the US have attempted to work together in many sectors like; increase in the market economy, growth in GDP, significantly in civil nuclear power program, supporting and promoting democracy and dependable energy productions.

Similarly, both India and Pakistan have a history of antagonistic relations with each other. This factor has been proven by the fact that the then military dictator General Pervez Musharraf in 2001-2002 during the military stalemate between Pakistan and India stated that there could

have happened a nuclear war between both these countries, and Pakistan could set up a nuclear attack against India within no time and it was the time to realize India about Pakistan's nuclear capability. Whereas India stated that if Pakistan could do so India would also attempt a step (never to stop a nuclear war) against Pakistan in South Asia. Besides this both the countries share territorial problems, mainly Kashmir issue, and other strategic skirmishes with India. Therefore, to overcome future hurdles Pakistan need to strengthen its economy and must pursue nuclear energy (Khan *et al.*, 2016).

It is obvious point for South Asian countries that to develop nuclear weapons under this agreement would have severe implications for the region. This deal between India and the US not only led to friendly relations between both countries ranging from nuclear facilities towards every sector i.e., social, political, and economic. Hence, it also opened the most beneficial ways for India to enhance their nuclear energy, while apart from that India has agreed with IAEA, under which the agency would inspect the nuclear program to check its use and nature in terms of civilian and war purposes. Moreover, stockpiles of nuclear fuel that India has produced so far will be exempted from inspection, further this agreement only concern with the civilian nuclear facilities while the other number and capacity of armament programs, which are not restricted, have not yet been discussed. It has been observed that India under this deal has specific interests to develop its economy, strengthen its nuclear energy and to explore India's coal industry to utilize renewable energy means and also to make India's electricity sources more efficient. However, it seemed that both countries led to the strategic partnership under this mutual agreement and equivocally Indo-US joined hands for nuclear proliferation for both armaments and technological advancements (Tabassum, 2008; Gul et al., 2021).

In a nutshell, this strategic collaboration of Indo-US and the discriminatory waiver allowed to India by the Nuclear Supplier Group (NSG) in terms of peace and stability have grave consequences for Pakistan. International experts have stated that the NSG waiver had granted India to increase its fissile material stocks with considerable implications for strengthening the strategic value in the South Asian zone. On the other hand, Pakistan is obliged to form nuclear deterrence to counter big threat (that could have been neglected) but only at great risk to the sovereignty and national security of the country (Chaudhry, 2016). This study is projected to contribute towards the guidance of the stakeholders and foreign policymakers of Pakistan towards India, it may guide the foreign policymakers in the strengthening of nuclear energy development and other sectors like military and economy. Thus, it will be helpful to diffuse the tensions between India-Pakistan and consequently with US to a great extent.

2. Literature review

The Indo-US Civilian Nuclear Deal is the name given to the joint agreement between both the countries i.e., India and the US. According to Bhat and Gupta (2015), the joint accord of 2005 is a step forward towards a new beginning in Indo-US relations. The main postulates of this agreement were the Hyde Act, NSG i.e., Nuclear Suppliers Group waiver, 123

Agreement and International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguard. Both countries have a lot of benefits through this deal in terms of economic and strategic relations. This deal has been observed as a big step in strengthening the bilateral relationships between India and the US. The terms and conditions between both the nations had not been good as it is today and one of the reasons behind such unrest was the nuclear factor. At first, the US assisted India, but when India refused to sign the non-proliferation nuclear agreement and tested its first nuclear burst in 1974 that has resulted in sanctions on India by the US and again in the 1990s India attempted five nuclear tests which led to economic sanctions on India by the US and the tensions remained on and off.

At the beginning of the 21st Century, the US policy towards India got changed into a more friendly relation and the superpower decided to enter into a mutual dialogue with India. The bilateral discussions on several issues got boosted when in 2000 the US President visited India and both the states aimed to upgrade their relations in terms of constructive partners of each other. Different views have been presented over this deal that whether this agreement would face critics globally that it is a step toward nuclear proliferation or policy to use nuclear energy in the wake of a peace settlement. However, the exceptional treatment of the US concerning this deal would also lead to an alarming situation for Pakistan in the region (Mishra, 2019).

President Bill Clinton of US visited India to enter into a strategic partnership in various fields to strengthen the bond between both the countries. Moreover, in 2001 when the Bush government came into power, he also aimed to strengthen relations with India. Kerr (2012) mentions in his article that President Bush of United States on July 18, 2005, had announced the mutual accord with the Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and stated that US would seek approval or agreement from the US Congress to implement US policies and laws, and would work with India as allies to maintain peace and enable Civilian Nuclear Deal and promote trade with India. But the US Congress and the NSG had restricted this deal that India possesses nuclear armaments and India is not a recognized country for nuclear weapons under the NPT. But after several discussions and India's assertion on not signing NPT that they are the close neighbour country of Pakistan and China and may attempt for a nuclear explosion to safeguard their land as a defensive policy. Finally, India aimed to enter into a nuclear deal with the US and ensured that India would accept safeguards on all nuclear weapons or nuclear materials for prevention from going into a nuclear explosion. As a result, an agreement took place named as Civilian Nuclear deal under which India separated its military and civil nuclear facilities and placed its civilian nuclear facilities under IAEA, whereas in return US agreed to work for civil nuclear facilities of India (Bhat & Gupta, 2015).

According to Kalis and Kumar (2015) since India and the US came into an agreement on the nuclear deal it consequently threatened the regional security in South Asia, specifically Pakistan. Further, in one way or the other the deal has compelled Pakistan to adopt all available and suitable options to go into a strategic alliance with big powers like Russia or

China in terms of its regional and domestic security. Pakistan has found this agreement as a great challenge. Somehow it would be difficult for the country Pakistan how to manage. The former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's Advisor on Foreign Affairs Sartaj Aziz stated, "Indo-US nuclear deal would have adverse impacts on peace stability in south Asia. Furthermore, if the IAEA showed their concern to approve the safeguards agreement, it will lead India's access to nuclear fuel and may lead to an arms race between Pakistan and India." Pervaiz Musharraf, in this regard stated, "Pakistan has to balance its strategies following minimum deterrence." The nuclear deal would compel Pakistan to increase its deterrence stability, technological advancements, offensive and defensive capabilities and nuclear resources. In addition, Pakistan also needs to improve delivery systems and second-strike capabilities through warheads etc. to overcome the major devastating challenges by collaboration between Washington D.C and New Delhi on the Civilian Nuclear Deal.

Jaspal (2007) mentioned that strategic blueprint in South Asia has made it clear that cooperation between Washington D.C and New Delhi increases the insecurity of Pakistan and elevated the sine qua non for the balance of power in the region. Pakistan concerning nuclear energy must need to invest highly in its military armoury development, though it will slow down the pace of economic development of Pakistan but the principle of achievement is inevitable that "to win something have to lose something" and Pakistan to gain the balance of power must have to go through a lot in terms of hindering of economic development and increase investments in military equipment. On the other side, the country must need to strengthen its relations with neighbouring countries, particularly China.

Khan (2014) writes that the shift in the world structure compelled the US to take some diplomatic and strategic steps toward South Asia because the countries like Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa, are emerging powers and Iran and Turkey, etc. are the main threats to contain the US in the future as a hegemonic power. The US has technological and military superiority in the global world therefore, it holds the potential to dominate developing countries and to dictate the world diplomatically. India is important for the US because the main objective of the New World Order was to establish diplomatic relations with regional powers in various parts of the world and these regional powers would serve US interest over the globe, whereas mutual deal between India and US is also the outcome of the threats to the US by emerging powers and to fulfil its hegemonic designs. However, Indo-US Civilian Nuclear Deal brought a great shift in Pakistan's foreign policy i.e., to upgrade its relations with China in terms of collaboration in the field of nuclear energy.

In a broader sense, the successive discussions and several summits have boosted the relationship between India and the United States. It was considered that the strategic arrangement took place not between the two states but between the two strong democratic powers where the US democracy is the essential and strong centrepiece of the US foreign policy. It is quite clear by the US administration that the state is not part of the proliferation policy in terms of this deal but for non-proliferation, which is an essential objective for the

United States of America. But the question arises that by making India part of this strategic deal based on the non-proliferation framework the US will only strengthen the wider regime. The Indo-US co-operation over Civilian Nuclear Deal is an attempt to serve the mutual interests in the upcoming years and both the countries under this deal strive for the establishment of new realities that would soon emerge. The mutual collaboration under the Civilian Nuclear Deal is a preliminary step toward the realignment of the global powers in the future (Prasad & Kumar, 2019).

Akhtar (2009), in his article writes that George W. Bush Administration responded to the question that why US is not willing to conclude the same pact with Pakistan? Answering that; the US is not willing to go into a nuclear deal with Pakistan as Pakistan is an irresponsible nuclear country possessing unpleasant credentials that are opposed to India's good record on non-proliferation. Including many factors, one of the factors that have made Pakistan more detrimental than that of India was the threat of falling nuclear weapons into the hands of Jihadists. The transformation in the relations between India and the US is considered one of the most important developments in the United States foreign policy in the past years, both state leaders considered the mutual strategic agreement on nuclear cooperation as the most significant step up till now in their strategic alignment. Though the cooperation over nuclear energy faced many opponents and critics calling it as a separation from the norms of non-proliferation however, the deal also deepened the economic ties of both the countries with each other. Apart from that, the agreement brought the exceptional case in favour of India i.e., to accept India as a nuclear state outside the NPT and removed the prohibition of nuclear commerce previously made under NPT and the export laws of US.

The deal would facilitate India in such a way that it would become eligible to purchase the United States' nuclear technology, which includes equipment and technological materials that India could utilize in uranium enrichment, plutonium reprocessing, materials used for nuclear bombs and India would receive an imported fuel for nuclear reactors. Furthermore, proponents of the deal viewed that this agreement would bring the state of India more close ally of the US; where both the countries would collaborate to achieve their common interests fighting together for the elimination of terrorism, pursuing to gain the objective of spreading of democracy, and foremost the prevention of Asia's dominancy whereas on the other hand the objections to this deal have also been found and the main critics were India may divert its nuclear fuel in the weapons of mass destruction (Pan, 2010).

Pakistan after realizing its insecurity in the region by this Civilian Nuclear Deal has brought a great transition in its foreign policy based on deterrence policy to a higher confidence level in context to the regional economic collaboration which would surely provide an opportunity to Pakistan to act as a connecting bridge between Central Asian states and South Asian states. An initiative taken under different associations in terms of collective cooperation by member countries of South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) and Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) has strengthened the bond between these countries where

interests and visions would be shared with full collaboration. Hussain (2006) furthermore elaborated that Pakistan's collaboration on the Gas pipeline with Iran has also been considered a constructive beginning. Whereas being a bridge between South Asian and Central Asian states would boost up the cooperation on nuclear energy and would bring the revolution and a turning point in the 21st Century.

Pakistan's security concerns became more cautious after the strategic partnership between India and the United States. Therefore, Rabbi (2017) examined the challenges that have shattered Pakistan's security concerns at a high level. Pak-US concluded many accords before this strategic co-operation between Indo-US whereas India doesn't have any such pacts with the US. Therefore, transition of US foreign policy from Pakistan towards India was indeed surprising and heart breaking for Pakistan in this concern. The first challenge for Pakistan was how to become US ally again, as Pakistan was put at a side-line. Secondly, Pakistan confronted with a draconian attitude of the US that made Pak-US relations more aggravated. Third, Pakistan confronted with security issues regionally and globally under the Civilian Nuclear Deal of Indo-US, because Pakistan always been a dependent state in terms of military equipment assistance and Economic aids. Although China always forwarded a helpful hand to Pakistan in troublesome circumstances, but Pakistan has always enhanced its military arsenals from United States assistance. As a result of changes in US foreign policy towards South Asia, Pakistan in this regard also confronted slowdown in their economic development because the country had relied on economic assistance for long.

Lodhi (2012) stated that as Pakistan suffered a lot from US negative response in terms of Military arsenals equipment and nuclear energy advancements assistance, henceforth pressure on Pakistan's security concerns exerted greatly, because being an underdeveloped South Asian country Pakistan is incapable of producing such nuclear material because of lack of Uranium production and other technological advancements. Pakistan has to formulate well-organized diplomatic responses toward India and US, as the challenges are not mere but drastic. Moreover, several diplomatic tactics can also lessen the fear of such destructive challenges of adverse implications under this strategic arrangement. In addition to that India bringing an unexpected new challenge for Pakistan including a transition towards Iran to become its cordial ally in different fields to destabilize Pakistan from every aspect and to become a hegemon power in South Asia. Some analysts viewed that Pakistan could formulate its short-range conventional capabilities in terms of missiles and ballistic missile defence arrangements. Thus, it must be of great consideration for Pakistan to maintain dynamic diplomatic relations keeping in view its strategic collaboration with China in terms of China's assisting with most advanced weapons, similarly with rebuilding close ties with Saudi Arabia to lessen the influence and interest of India in Gulf region.

The external challenges for Pakistan are also of great importance and cannot be neglected in this connection. Goraya and Mazhar (2019) write that the geostrategic location of Pakistan is though very beneficial on the one hand, but on the other hand the country is engrossed with

many security challenges and facing the hard times of security crises in and outside the country widely. Pakistan is encircled by the threat and fear in the world. The country has China in its North which is the emerging power specifically in terms of economy, and India in its East the state possessing enormous assets of industries and always in confrontation with Pakistan on several major issues. The next is Iran and Afghanistan in its west both the countries are never easy going allies because of the internal slowdown in different fields, whereas the Arabian Sea lies to its South which is the gateway to the Central Asian countries via Gwadar Port. Such strategic surroundings can be termed as the relations with Afghanistan off and on, never quitting ceaseless antipathy with India, the relationship having ups and downs with the US, and a diplomatic affability with China. In such a way Pakistan is at the same time harshly going under the crises of Security concerns and economy that need effective and worthy policies to settle it down. Pakistan lacks security approaches and is in trouble due to the uprising of terrorism. It cannot be denied that Pakistan has adopted several policies to settle the issue of security concerns, but many got failed and proved to be unproductive efforts. In nutshell to the matter, it is considered an increase in tensions for Pakistan in addition to the challenges under the Indo-US Civilian Nuclear Deal.

Mentioned by Sidhu and Einhorn (2017) Pakistan's recent environment in terms of security is designed by a composition of political, economic, diplomatic, technological factor, military tendencies and as well as by the various episodes based on diverse incidents and acting entities at the global, regional, and national levels. Pakistan thinks that India is dogging for the dominant power position and extravagantly spending to form and make advance its strategic workforce beyond its domestic security requirements. As the world's major entities possesses nuclear power to pursue to keep balance and increase the effectiveness of their nuclear armaments. The global trends, in addition to the Indo-US Civilian Nuclear Deal, have inimically shattered the regional harmony and balance of power, risk of strategic firmness and particularly lessen the outlook for peaceful dispute settlement within South Asia.

Pakistan's security concerns become under threats from India for instance; the ceaseless unsettled Kashmir conflict, despite several United Nations resolutions has always been at the centre of the skirmishes between Pakistan and India. The lack of well-spoken, maintainable, purposely based table talks and the rising of strategic collaboration between the United States and India are the subject of deep concern for the state of Pakistan. Moreover, India is also promoting and supporting terrorist movements in Pakistan for which Pakistan must need to use the deterrence policy, keeping in view its national security. Pakistan, in this regard formulated its nuclear program to deter external belligerency and to protect its national interest and sovereignty. Pakistan is highly engaged in arms control and nuclear non-proliferation across the border community to upgrade nuclear security arrangements and best practices and activities at the international level.

Under the prevailing troubled circumstances on the regional and national levels, Pakistan in this response needed to carefully review its policies and new options to become an acceptable

and normal nuclear state without giving a heavy cost of its security concerns. It has been observed since long and history is witness to the fact that various approaches have been chosen in preference to normalize the upset culture of the South Asian region. If Pakistan wants to become a normal and recognized nuclear state while remaining out of the NPT, it needs a focused arrangement and stable ground. For instance, in step first, the nation's (non-negotiable) security requisites should be appropriately determined. Secondly, the terms and conditions needed to be negotiated should be well-identified. Thirdly, the table talks should begin with the peddlers of the global nuclear non-proliferation governance for the approval of the normal nuclear country. And Pakistan should clear its mind with the deniable fact that India in this regard has greatly focused on this matter and today it became the strong ally of the United States under the strategic collaboration on the civil nuclear deal and gaining benefits in terms of nuclear energy (Yamin, 2017).

In modern times every country is trying to change its foreign policy accordingly or diplomatically towards other states, but the Indian foreign policy towards Pakistan demonstrates confused policies. Indian politicians and political figures stated that Pakistan in terms of international relations has a difficult challenge to face different patterns in different fields. One of the major challenges Pakistan has the challenge to face the ceaseless rivalry because there is a serious contradiction between India's status quo and Pakistan's nuclear capability. The on and off relationship between both the countries has always made the two states strong foes than that of close friends. War, regional skirmishes, power for nuclear proliferation has never declared the victory of one country over the other but except the manufacturing industry of international armament, Moreover The regional hegemony of India directly or indirectly has always brought drastic challenges to Pakistan for which the country needed to draw a clear roadmap either with other major powers like China or with other neighbouring states under different projects for the remedial policies (Bhatti *et al.*, 2019; Naomi et al. 2021).

3. The deal: benefits for India and US

3.1. Terms of the deal

Terms of Indo-US civil nuclear deal are given as follows:

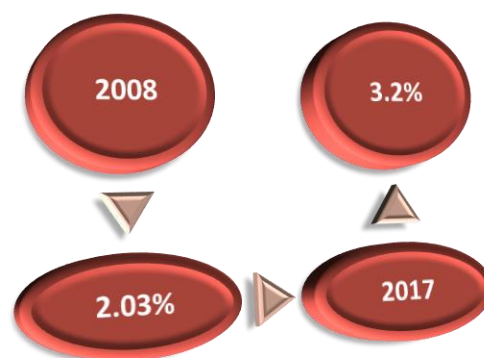
- India agreed to allow the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to keep a check and access India's civilian nuclear program.
- India also promised to place all future thermal reactors under IAEA. Furthermore, the Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh asserted to hold the unshared authority to determine nuclear reactors, whether civilian or military, which means that India can make nuclear facilities, either military or civilian in the future as per the national security requirements of India.

- India had to be agreed on virtually non-confinement legal restrains concerning its nuclear policies and its nuclear armament program.
- The deal will enable the purchase of United States nuclear technology, including equipment and technological materials that India could utilize in uranium enrichment, plutonium reprocessing and materials used for nuclear bombs. Further, India would receive an imported fuel for nuclear reactors.
- The US will be allowed to build its companies of nuclear reactors in India.

3.2. Satisfaction of interests on the part of India

Civilian nuclear cooperation signed between Washington D.C and New Delhi, will facilitate both the countries equally. The commitment took place between both sides according to which the deal included strengthening the bilateral security of both the countries and building six US nuclear energy plants in future in India. Moreover, the deal benefitted India in operating its domestic power plants, providing access to critical technologies in strategic regions and areas that included alternative energies. The Civilian Nuclear Energy pact also separated India from its military and civil nuclear programs. After examining India's nuclear reactors, India has 15 of its nuclear reactors under the IAEA and a report has been given on India's plans on nuclear power programs that the country is intended to triple the capacity of nuclear energy prospects to become third-largest independent economy off polluting fossil fuels by 2024. This deal further widened India's approach scope, which enabled her to enter into the agreements of the same nature with other international partners under NSG-waiver. Consequently, India is empowered to import uranium by signing a long-term Civilian Nuclear Energy pact with other countries including Russia, Australia, Argentina, South Korea, Kazakhstan, UK, Sri-Lanka, Japan, Canada, Vietnam, Bangladesh, and France. Both the states also viewed to collaborate in international security at a wide range and also pledged to cooperate for non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, their delivery systems and would get access to keep an eye on such weapons to terrorist groups and non-state entities (Mitra, 2019).

Figure 1: Ratio of India's electricity generation of power production



Source: (Mitra, 2019, p. 12)

Figure 1 shows the increase in the ratio of India's electricity generation and nuclear power share of the total power production, which rose to 3.2% in 2017 which was previously 2.03% in 2008. This implies that India under the civilian nuclear program could speedily enhance its capability to produce nuclear energy.

3.3. US comforts as a result of Indo-US civilian nuclear deal

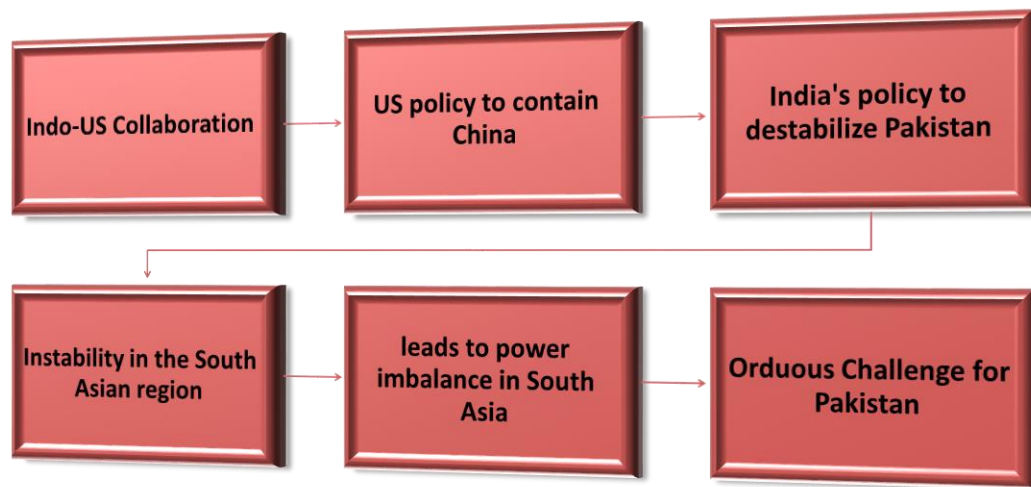
The strategic partnership of the US with India in terms of nuclear energy power program will generate long-term benefits for the United States in a wide range of decisive circles. However, following the Indo-US Civilian Nuclear Deal has been the hallmark of the United States foreign policy regarding nuclear non-proliferation. This deal is intended to improve bilateral trade, but the US arms industries would cause incline its trade in favour of United States. Moreover, the companies of the US would get massive benefits from building up Civilian Nuclear Energy infrastructure and supplying nuclear reactors to India, which will serve the interests of the United States economy (Singh, 2006).

According to Bhat and Gupta (2015), the joint accord is of great importance to the US, the deal provides enormous benefits ranging from strategic cooperation to economic development. The mutual deal can potentially upgrade the economic riches of the United States of America, which will generate 40\$ billion business worldwide in the upcoming years as India expects to build up around 24 nuclear reactors in the next fifteen years. Under this deal, India would import nuclear reactors from the US, opening up markets for American companies and employment opportunities for US citizens and workers. Moreover, partnership with India will help the United States to balance the emerging power of China which is undoubtedly an important alarming issue for the US. The US is losing its global markets; this deal will benefit its nuclear industries to compete in the global markets.

4. Prospects of impacts on Pakistan's regional nuclear symmetry

Indo-US nuclear nexus may affect the region in general and Pakistan in particular; specifically, in security dimensions. The long-standing Indo-Pak antagonistic legacy the Kashmir conflict, water crises, etc are the main issues that led to the disturbance in balance of power in the South Asian region. Therefore, India as a US ally always tried to destabilize and demoralize Pakistan internally and externally. The strategic collaboration of Indo-US is among the major steps which will strengthen the bond between both the sides in strategic and economic fields, which will directly or indirectly bring unfavourable consequences for Pakistan. Undoubtedly the deal is of important for both parties, but it is also projected that it will lead towards arm race in the region. Mahmood (2005) writes that the US considers no longer Pakistan as a regional power in South Asia and accepted India comparatively a more trusted strategic partner. Moreover, the strategic pact may; or for sure compel Pakistan to seek the same strategic pact with other countries to build and improve its defensive mechanism.

Figure 2: Interprets the regional instability as major challenge for Pakistan



Source: Mahmood (2005, p. 03)

Pakistan has been facing very serious challenges as a consequence of friendly relations between India and the US. Pakistan needs US participation in resolving the Kashmir dispute, with India whereas the US always claims to settle the tensions between India and Pakistan, but never acted as a positive player. Such circumstances brought another great challenge for Pakistan to strengthen diplomatic relations with India and the US to tackle the regional security issue, which is their foremost objective. Furthermore, the fact cannot be denied that Pakistan supported the US and provided logistic support in the war against terrorism. However, US tilt towards India shows that for the US, Pakistan, as compared to India, is a comparatively weaker competitor. The US somehow considers Pakistan a place where still the terrorist organizations operate, which is indeed a puzzling situation for Pakistan and a challenging matter as well. On the other hand, the cooperation on the civil nuclear deal may lead to the outbreak of nuclear war between India and Pakistan in the future in the disputed region of Kashmir. Pakistan is facing a formidable challenge with its low stockpiles and arms manufacturing capabilities vis-a-vis India which is more advanced with its conventional and non-conventional military capabilities, offensive aircraft, cruise missiles, ballistic missiles, advanced defensive missile systems, nuclear submarines, etc. Hence, to rebalance its power against India, Pakistan would surely increase its dependency on armament supplier states (Jaspal, 2007).

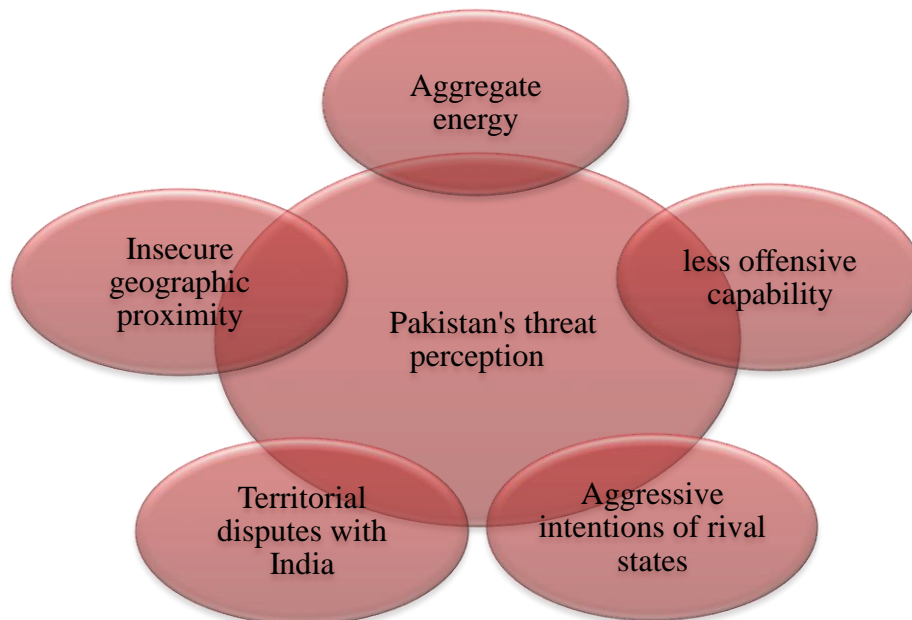
As reported by Mustafa and Bashir (2014), by the end of the cold war the global politics went through the series of changes, altering the concept of security and the art of war as well. Today the states are facing new dimensions of war, and terrorism is amongst one of those dimensions. These newly evolved circumstances have converted the security concept into “Enlarged Security” best identified by a leading scholar on the English School of International Relations, Professor Barry Buzan; that the concept of security is not limited to be secure from external threats but to be secure from every aspect ranging from militarily to economy and political institutions. Keeping in view these perceptions Pakistan’s state security has always been India-

centric, whereas US policy was to contain China (communism) and is still in this race of China's containment such tussled conditions opened a new chapter for Pakistan's relations with India and the US.

Pakistan's multitude issues are just because of its lack of resources and less offensive and defensive capabilities to compete with the rival forces. Durrani (2012) spoke about Pakistan's situation keeping in view its status in the South Asian region that because of its lack of resources Pakistan is unable to interest, while other countries including US and China with rich resources have great political influence in the region. Pakistan needs to work more on the improvement of its offensive and defensive capabilities. Though the task is challenging, Pakistan has to play its role diplomatically to grow its influence. Moreover, Pakistan is confronted with new dimensions of war internally as well. There are some or several militants in the areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province including Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), Dir, Chitral, and areas of Baluchistan including Quetta sponsored by external forces with whom Pakistan is continuously engaged in fighting, and the local people supporting such groups is a witness to this fact.

Hussain (2017) states that the deal as one of the threatening sources disrupted Pakistan's regional nuclear symmetry and sustainability in the South Asian region. The following figure shows Pakistan's disrupted security apparatus and threat perception.

Figure 3: Illustrates Pakistan's threat perception in the South Asian region



Source: Hussain (2017, p. 15)

Firstly, India's aggregate energy (power) is challenging for Pakistan because India's aggregate power as compared to Pakistan is sustainable, which has been powered by the US in technological sector under Indo-US civilian nuclear deal (Hussain, 2017). Secondly, Pakistan

is confronted with less offensive capabilities to ensure its regional security against any menace. In addition, India has strengthened its nuclear sector by the mutual deal with the US to expand its offensive capability, particularly against Pakistan. Thirdly, aggressive intentions of rival states also contribute to Pakistan's threat perception mainly including India and US. Mistrust in Indo-Pak relations has been characterised since partition. Both the countries have fought three wars since its inception i.e., 1947, 1965, and 1971 and 1999 (the limited armed battle in the Kargil region of Kashmir known as "Kargil War" or "Kargil Conflict") (Sheikh, 2012). Whereas, concerning Pak-US relations the security and terrorism-oriented framework has dominated Pak-US relations time and again since September 11, 2001 attacks. Fourthly, Pakistan's territorial disputes with India hold up the international and domestic fears about the possibility of war between the two nuclear powers. Fifthly, Pakistan's insecure geographic proximity mainly with India and Afghanistan, disrupts the sustainability in the South Asian region including an insecure border with Afghanistan and issues with India over Kashmir. These cross-cutting insecurities with Indo-Afghan has notably explained that why Pakistan has prioritized a strong military at the expense of socio-economic development in the country (Kronstadt, 2021).

5. Options for Pakistan

Pakistan's concerns about Indo-US strategic cooperation in terms of civil nuclear energy program have disturbed the power balance in the Sub-continent. In addition to other drastic insecurities, India's submarines based on nuclear missiles tests have shifted the Indo-Pak dispute from land to Sea. However, Pakistan has some possible and limited policy choices to face such challenging circumstances. Foremost, Pakistan needs to search regional partners for nuclear collaboration with the intentions to enhance its offensive capability, increase its aggregate power and advance its military arsenals and technology sector to overcome energy crises and balance the regional nuclear symmetry. Further, Pakistan can materialize its deal with China i.e. (China-Pakistan Defence and Economic Cooperation Pact). Similarly, Pakistan could seek to conclude the same strategic collaboration with China, a time-tested partner. Besides maintaining its strategic and economic terms with major powers Pakistan must need to give high attention to its manufacturing sector and should engage itself in the field of economic, security, trade and cooperation with regional powers, which will help strengthening its relations with these countries at the strategic and operational level (Khokhar, 2018). Likewise, to fulfil the energy needs Pakistan could maintain friendly ties with Iran. Thus, Iran Pakistan and India gas pipeline project can better serve in this regard. Hence, collaboration in the field of military and defence, trade and commerce, scientific research, etc. could also play a significant role. Therefore, Pakistan to become a stable economy should mushroom its trade roots all over the world, due to which all the investors would invest in the stable economic system, and Pakistan would become able to conclude several pacts with the US in different fields (Khan, 2014).

Khokhar (2018) writes that Pakistan should raise the issue at international level to find a new

way to tackle the challenges faced by the South Asian region (particularly by Pakistan). In addition to what has been stated, the country must need to work for regional instability on a priority basis while focusing on internal issues including economic issues, political instability, regional insecurity and power balancing, etc. which must be shut off before going to raise the issue at international level. Apart from other policy options, Pakistan must also give keen attention to revive its foreign policy, which is the focal point of all the policies. Shift in Pakistan's foreign policy relating to its relations with India and the United States could maximize its security. Concerning major policy options, Pakistan's demand for a Civilian Nuclear Deal with the US, and desire to join the multilateral Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) could evolve to overcome its energy shortages. Although US tilt towards India in terms of civilian nuclear program has raised India's prestige. Pakistan in this regard, could show significant nuclear safety, and improved non-proliferation credentials to regulate their civilian nuclear ties with US the in long run (Mustafa, 2017).

According to the Carnegie-Stimson report on "A Normal Nuclear Pakistan, to make prognostications for South Asian stability" (Tat, 2016) mentions, that Pakistan should change its nuclear direction i.e. a shift from "full spectrum deterrence" to "strategic deterrence" (possessing capabilities concerning the deterrence of only unfavourable conditions). Further, this shift will set limitations on Pakistan's nuclear policy and will redirect the country to spend on military and civilian concerns. With the premise, Pakistan shall now focus on how to confront devastating threats while carrying out a plan for remedial steps, which could surely lead Pakistan to ensure its effective status at the international forum in coming years (Khokhar, 2018).

6. Conclusion

The mutual deal has diverse implications for instance, Pakistan is incapable of possessing a large number of nuclear facilities and advancements in the nuclear sector. Pakistan in terms of nuclear power programs, has no such co-operation so far with any other state, which shall be based on a long-term agreement. After analysing the relations between India and the US, it has been observed that the US has adopted a clever tactic to destabilise the balance of power in the South Asian Region between India and Pakistan. Furthermore, under this mutual collaboration, US will support India on the Kashmir issue, which is another great challenge for Pakistan to tackle. The Indo-US such exercises would increase the threat to Pakistan's internal and external security and would, compel Pakistan to think about its country's survival under complete protection and may lead Pakistan to build up its capabilities in terms of military, defence, technological sector and nuclear energy.

The policy options may make Pakistan capable to overbear the devastating implications which are major challenges brought by the de-facto nuclear state (India) towards Pakistan. The remedial policies may make Pakistan capable to overbear the devastating implications which are major challenges brought by the de-facto nuclear state (India) towards Pakistan. Thus,

prospects including advancement in military arsenals, which must need high-cost investments, short-term and long-term projects domestically and externally respectively, diplomatic relations with major powers and nuclear power states, friendly hand towards India and US in different fields, international lobbying, and advancement in manufacturing and technological sector, etc may leads Pakistan towards a secure state.

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