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Indo-Pak nuclear and Kargil conflict

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Abstract

The core argument this article is how Indo-Pak are on Nuclear edge and raise of Kargil Conflict. For the study of present topic the investigator used the analytical methods for this article by reviewing relevant publications, primarily based on the online journals available on Internet, Wikipedia, Elsevier and Journal of the Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses and other related literature.

Keywords: Indo-Pak nuclear, Kargil conflict, nuclear edge

In May 1999, Pakistani forces in civilian garb began occupying key positions along the Kargil heights on the Indian side of the LoC in Kashmir. Initially, India believed that it was a small incursion by Islamist *mujahideen*, but it soon became clear that the force was a professional one and was large in number.

Owing to the harsh climate and geography of the region, Indian forces had withdrawn, as was their custom, from their posts during the long winter. The intruders were thus able to penetrate deep into Indian Territory, in places up to twelve kilometers, along a 150-kilometre front. The Indian Air Force was called in and the Army's counter-attack reinforced with 155-mm howitzers. The terrain made the process of ousting Pakistani forces a slow one. Fighting continued well into July, when Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif called his troops back under American pressure.

The role of nuclear weapons in the Kargil conflict was indirect, yet central. By this time, both countries had conducted nuclear tests in mid-1998. However, while the tests strengthened deterrence by precluding conventional war, they did not prohibit fighting at a level below that of conventional war^[1]. There were two important differences between 1990 and Kargil. First, India and Pakistan were now declared nuclear powers, which removed all ambiguities about nuclear risk. Second, their forces engaged in combat for about two months, which raised the risk of war to a much higher degree than before. This meant caution came at a higher price as well, but we have seen that both were prepared to pay that price.

As with other cold-war confrontations, cooperation yielded some results by way of stabilization. It demonstrated the rapidly declining value of military force between nuclear powers. The empirical evidence from the India-Pakistan relationship, as well as from the other cold-war relationships discussed earlier, is clear. Nuclear weapons constrain their possessors from thinking in conventional ways when they are in situations of immediate deterrence, i.e. when war is near. Doctrines that emphasize types of forces and force balances are of little relevance in such circumstances. Hence, concepts that are built upon notions of credibility or resolve and the distribution of capabilities are inconsequential. Moreover, since nuclear rivals are careful to eschew conventional war as well, absolute and relative conventional military capabilities do not count for much, either, except to the extent that they may be useful in marginal conflict or against other non-nuclear adversaries.

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