

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION

This thesis concluded that the availability of patrons, the existence of a conventionally-superior proximate threat, and India's assertive civil-military arrangement determines India's nuclear posture adoption, which will result in a doubly dangerous environment for India-Pakistan and an intense non-threatening security dilemma between India-China. India's adoption of the assured retaliation posture drives India's defensive behaviour in their use of nuclear weapons against Pakistan under an assertive civil-military arrangement, resulting in a highly reactive and hostile bilateral relations. This resulted in the inadequate environment to establish any cooperation or even a maintainable agreement between India and Pakistan. Meanwhile, India's patronage to the U.S. under the catalytic posture shifts China's focus to counter the U.S.' power projection rather than directly deter India's nuclear power within the region. Conflicts between India and China tend to opt for de-escalation rather than extended skirmishes that could destabilize the region and attract the U.S.' attention to intervene. The dynamics of their relations enabled India and China to maintain various cooperation, in the economic sector and even military, despite their ongoing dispute and tension in their borders. Hence, the continuous hostility in India-Pakistan relations and the antagonistic cooperation between India-China.

This thesis found that despite having a similar pattern of conflict, India showcased different behaviour in their bilateral relations toward Pakistan and China. Both Pakistan and China have issues with India that involve a territorial

dispute and religious-political sentiments. However, India and Pakistan did not have any successful CBMs or cooperation within their bilateral relations, whereas India and China can still reach a point of compromise on their conflicts in order to maintain their diplomatic relations with each other. Added with their possession of nuclear weapons, India, Pakistan, and China's proximity with each other increases the tension that India experiences as the pivot country in the region. Although the established nuclear doctrines all declare a minimum credible deterrence policy, different focus of deterrence creates a rather disproportionate gap of power that leads to a cycle of accumulation of nuclear power.

India, Pakistan, and China's status as nuclear power states increases their urgency to establish a nuclear doctrine, which would be translated into their nuclear posture against each other. Focusing on India, being in an ongoing conflict with Pakistan and China forces them to be transparent with their nuclear doctrine and articulate their posture clearly. This serves as a means to deter the possible nuclear offense or retaliation attacks from either Pakistan and China. Hence, India emphasizes its no-first-use policy and assuring their capabilities in delivering a proportionate retaliation attack.

Under the Modi administration, nuclear tensions are quite prevalent with the 2019 Standoff and Doklam Crisis, which displays India's different articulation of nuclear doctrine towards Pakistan and China. The 2019 Standoff with Pakistan shows a rather hostile nature, resulting from both countries' series retaliatory attacks. Nuclear threats were thrown at the conflict as the intensity of retaliation strikes were high, although no nuclear weapons were used by the end of the conflict

as they were only used as a means of deterrence by India and Pakistan under India's assured retaliation posture. It portrays the doubly dangerous world as the result of their growing security dilemma. On the contrary, while the Doklam Crisis did have an overshadowing fear of nuclear, the tension was deescalated through discussions and disengagement from the conflict. This shows the degree of leniency China has towards India due to India's patronage to the U.S. and supported by their defensive nuclear doctrine under a catalytic posture, thus enabling a foundation of cooperation between India and China. Thus, it displays India's world of maintainable security dilemma against China.

From the result of the research, the writer views that the adoption of nuclear posture and the clarity of its projection of intention influences the successfulness of nuclear deterrence. While nuclear doctrine serves as the legal basis of a state's nuclear behaviour, it could not be used as the sole judgment of a state's course of action. Clarity, transparency, and consistency of the interpretation of the nuclear doctrine would be necessary in projecting their intention in using nuclear to ensure the deterrence. However, India's complicated political dynamic in Southern Asia serves as a contributing factor in determining India's perception of threat. Posture adoption needs to be clearly stated through their course of actions to reassure the fruitfulness of nuclear deterrence.

It needs to be noted that this thesis has its own limitations relating to its research scope and there are other factors that might affect the different behaviour India portrays towards Pakistan and China. As this thesis focuses on the adoption of nuclear posture, the research focuses on the nuclear power projection by India,

Pakistan, and China which have a rather discreet source of data. The possibility of higher or lower aggregate power is quite high as nuclear deterrence relies on the extent of ambiguity and transparency of a state project, thus affecting the degree of insecurity India perceived to Pakistan and China. Additionally, the data provided are also constrained by the time limitation, including the aforementioned countries' nuclear capabilities until 2019. Other than that, nuclear power is not the only projection of power that might affect their bilateral relations, especially when most of the conflicts rely on conventional power. Considering India has other confrontations in other arenas with both countries, it might affect the perception of threat from Pakistan and China. Hence, this thesis acknowledges that India's different bilateral relations towards Pakistan and China are not exclusively affected by nuclear postures.

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