

AGNI

STUDIES IN INTERNATIONAL STRATEGIC ISSUES

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AGNI

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OBJECTIVE

AGNI is the journal of the Forum of Strategic and Security Studies [FSSS]. The aim is to use this instrument to explore the perceptions and developing logic on strategic issues, that have a bearing on global stability and harmony, from a wide range of analysts, policy makers and academics world wide, who influence strategic thought in their countries or region, so as to create greater awareness and a wider understanding of the elements giving drive to formulation of State policies and responses.

CONTRIBUTIONS

The FSSS shall publish, solicited or unsolicited, studies by experts or groups conducting them, on strategic issues that have a direct or indirect bearing with immediate or long term implications, on regional or global security.

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Each paper should be summarised in an abstract of not more than 500 words. The article should be accompanied by the particulars of the author to include a CV in 100 words or so and address for correspondence.

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EDITOR'S PAGE

The unrest in Kashmir continues unabated because Pakistani agents and separatists continue to coerce the local population to submission and the establishment is unable to control separatist leaders who are propagating secession and establishment of Islamic laws. Political leaders must counter this move by encouraging traditions of secularism of Sufism which has been the main characteristic of Kashmiri Muslims. Hundreds of mosques in Kashmir have become a meeting ground of stone-pelters, subversive elements and for spreading misinformation. Anti secessionist forces should launch a major campaign against the religious and separatist organizations and counter all such elements vigorously.

India, in a major departure from its past policy of restricting armed forces from crossing the border to retaliate government authorized cross-border attacks; a surgical strike launched on September 29 in POK destroyed 7 terrorist launch pads killing 40 to 45 terrorists of diverse terrorist outfits. It was good move that boosted the morale of our armed forces and imposed caution on Pakistan

In This Issue:

Ramtanu Maitra in his article on China-Pakistan economic corridor observes: The CPEC is a key element of China's future defensive and offensive mechanism, but for Pakistani authorities it is like manna from heaven. The estimated \$46 billion project, most of it financed by China, was announced during Chinese President Xi Jinping's April 2015 visit to Islamabad. The idea, however, has been floated back in 2013 by Chinese Premier Li Keqiang during his visit to Pakistan. Subsequently, a month after President Xi's visit, Pakistan's newly elected Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif signed a MoU formalizing the project during a visit to Beijing. Between 2013 and 2015, when the proposed Chinese investment figure for the CPEC was made public, China made steady investments in Pakistan. It is likely that the Chinese investment in the project will be significantly more and that higher costs will not pose an impediment in executing the project.

VBN Ram in his exposition on threats to Afghanistan's stability says: Chances of peace between the Taliban and the Afghan government have, without doubt, got hamstrung because Pakistan presents the biggest roadblock. According to Dawlat Waziri the Spokesman for the Afghan Defense Ministry-the Afghan government is working on "Shafaq Operation" to clear areas under the control of insurgents during the upcoming winter. Though this operation has barely touched areas like Ghor province, where 33 civilians recently got killed and scores grievously injured during retaliatory attacks against the killing of two Taliban commanders by the latter's sympathizers, it is also believed that this atrocity was committed with help from the Islamic State. The representatives of Ghor in the *Mishrano Jigra* (the Upper House) came hard on the government for neglecting security.

Brig. VP Malhotra in his article on Balochistan notes: The strategic importance of Balochistan is due to its location opposite the Straits of Hormuz, its coast line and natural resources in the backdrop of illiteracy, poverty and sparse population, which makes the Baloch vulnerable. The root cause of insurgency in Balochistan is the denial of the benefits of the natural gas and other mineral resources of the province, denial of any meaningful role in decision making relating to the construction and administration of the Chinese aided Gwadar port project, influx of a large number of Punjabis, other non-Baloch population, refugees from Afghanistan and IDPs, and discrimination in matters of recruitment. The resentment against low level of representation, however, needs to be analysed keeping in view the sparse population of Balochistan and the literacy level.

Ali Ahmad in his analysis of Strategic pro-activism in context of the prevailing tension between India and Pakistan observes: The three characteristics of war have been associated in Clausewitzian literature with the military, the political class and people respectively. For the military, war is an uncertain enterprise, covered by a fog of war and subject to friction. It requires the military leader to impose order on it and, in doing so, shape it to deliver military objectives. The political leadership is to ensure the control through its subordinate, the military, over war as a means to political ends. The people are associated with elemental hatred and enmity generated in war, utilized by the government and the military as an enabling resource to prosecute the war.

The Uri episode and surgical strikes provide a moment, though not of war *per se*, but of a visible interaction between the three elements of Clausewitzian Trinity in operations other than war. This article attempts such an analysis using the Trinitarian lens and in doing so appraises the immanent shift from strategic restraint to strategic pro-activism surgical strikes herald.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Afsir Karim". The letters are cursive and connected, with a distinct style for the 'A' and 'K'.

Major General. Afsir Karim (Retd)

Editor