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CONFLICT, PEACE AND NUCLEAR ARMS: AN EXAMINATION FROM SOCIO-PHILOSOPHICAL PERSPECTIVES WITH A SPECIAL REFERENCE TO INDIA'S RECENT SUCCESSFUL TEST OF AGNI-V



ABSTRACT: -

India, on 26 December, 2016, successfully tests and fires Agni-V. It is the first ever indigenously developed inter-Continental ballistic Missile (ICBM) of the nation. It is one of the most advanced missiles, which is capable of striking a target more than 5000 km. The induction of it in Indian arm force leads the country one step ahead in its defence capability and security. The fact of the matter is that from the perspectives of poverty, the defence of terrorism and restoring peace, the continuous research and development of nuclear weapons and massive funding for it are questionable issues. However, a closer scrutiny reveals that the possession of nuclear weapons among the super power countries indirectly plays an effective role in restoring peace rather than destabilizing it. The history bears the evidence in favour of it in the last century during the period of cold war between two super power nations, namely, the United States of America and the then Soviet Union. And it is believed that it will happen in future.

KEYWORDS: Agni-V, Social security, Terrorism, Peace, Nuclear arms, World War.

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METHODOLOGY:

Analytic. An examination is made based on current affairs and related contemporary historical evidences.

INTRODUCTION

It was at 11.05 a.m. on 26 December, 2016; India has achieved a milestone and silently created a history. It was the day on which the Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO) of India successfully tested its first ever indigenously developed inter-Continental ballistic Missile (ICBM) Agni-V from Odisha coast's Wheeler Island. It has the capability to strike targets anywhere in Asia and parts of Africa and Europe. The missile can carry a nuclear warhead of more than one tonne and can strike a target covering distance more than 5000 km (1). The achievement and development of Agni-V undoubtedly takes India a one step ahead in the perspectives of its defence capability and security. And at the same time India permanently secures its place among the super power countries.

PROBLEMS

Apparently it seems that the achievement of Agni-V is a great success to our nation. Is it really so? We shall examine the question from three different perspectives and make an attempt to reach a reasonable conclusion.

PERSPECTIVE OF POVERTY AND SOCIAL SECURITY

India is a developing country. Poverty, unemployment, malnutrition are spreading all across

the nation. A large number of people in India as per the government record live below the poverty line. Most of the working people in India work in unorganised sectors. They lack of any kind of social security and so live in a vulnerable condition. Till date illiteracy is a major challenge to India. The situation is more pathetic where the question of socio-economic condition of women is concerned. Girl child marriage, killing of girl foetus, dowry and dowry related domestic violence on female, dropout of school and so till today major challenge to India. There is a significant number of villages in India, where scarcity of drinking water is a problem. Many villages do not have electric power supply till today. The Government of India has spent thousand cores of rupees in order to develop such a highly technological missile like Agni - V. We are all aware about the fact that the use of such a kind of destructive weapon is undesirable. It is the inclusive growth what India actually needs and for that a lot to invest in the social sectors like health and education and to boost infrastructure. Mere equipped with nuclear power does not and cannot help India in order to achieve the inclusive growth. The republic of China and Russia both are considered to be advanced nuclear power nations but that do not make those countries develop from socio-economic perspectives; which many so called comparatively small and less powerful nations secure for their countrymen. Hence, it may be said that India develops Agni-V in expense of its social security and the development of people at large, which cannot be acceptable from the perspective of the poverty and social security (2).

PERSPECTIVE OF TERRORISM

Terrorists and the act of terrorism is the biggest threat to the present world. Countries across the world are now facing more or less the challenges of terrorist activities. Terrorists have no war rules. They do not discriminate and differentiate between civilians and soldiers. If we go through the records, it will be found that common innocent people are the main victims of terrorism. Civilized world should raise voice and act to stop all kinds of terrorist activities to save the world. However, the fact is that there are nations which shelter the terrorist and patronize terrorist activities for their own narrow interests. Terrorism is an organised activity and most of the terrorists group already have latest war weapons. If somehow they obtain the technology of making and using nuclear arms, that would be the fatal for the human civilization. It is the fact that the security council of United Nations continuously makes vigilance across the world regarding the development of nuclear arms and related research activities. There are cases in recent past that some actions have been taken against some countries to destroy their research and development centres considering the fact that these are not safe for the world. The truth is that every system has a loophole. If the technology of making and use of nuclear arms leaks to a terrorist group, the world will face a massive devastative situation. Hence, from that perspective, the recent and further activities in developing nuclear weapons are not in line with tackling terrorism. Rather it will be in some sense dangerous for the future of the world (3).

Perspectives of Peace and the concept of Universal Brotherhood

The United Nations through its different activities has been trying to restore peace and universal brotherhood in the world. However, the fact of the matter is that there are some members of it which continuously funding to develop more and more advance nuclear weapons. The two activities, namely, restoring peace and developing nuclear weapons are contradictory and cannot go together. If a nation really wants to restore peace, it should destroy its nuclear arms contrary to further developing it. It is unfortunate that all the nuclear power countries like America, Russia, China, India and others are engaging to develop more and more powerful nuclear arms. That is a serious concern to the world and its future. A study says that if the nuclear reactor already piles in different countries blast together, a dense cloud will be created above the Earth, which will block Sun ray to touch the Earth for 10 long years; and during that period a single grass will not be grown in the Earth. That means a complete vanish of life from the Earth. It is a total destruction of human civilization and its history. Hence, any kind of activities regarding the question of developing nuclear arms actually a threat to peace and universal brotherhood. And so cannot be acceptable (4).

COUNTER ARGUMENT

It is indeed true and the fact that the nuclear arms is a kind of threat to the world. It is also true that in order to make continuous research and development to improve and increase the capability of nuclear weapons requires heavy funding. The maintenance and the security of such weapons are also expensive affairs. The huge amount of funds can well be utilized or invested in social sectors for the benefit of mankind. In spite of all, we can not necessarily say that the possession of nuclear arms destabilize the world. A closer observation reveals that the possession of nuclear arms among the super power countries makes an indirect positive impact to restore peace in the world. The most devastative war what the world had faced is unquestionably the Second World War. It was ended with the tragic incident of nuclear attack on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in Japan. The dreaded scenes still haunts the mankind. After the World War-II, the world had been polarised into two different and opposite kind of socio-political-economic outlook. One is leading by the United States of America and the other is the then Soviet Union. Both of them are super power and are equipped with advanced nuclear arms. There was a cold war between the two super power countries for almost four decades. They have exchanged hot statements; sometimes strategically confronted in some parts in the world, but never directly fought with one another as it was in the World War-II between Germany and Russia and among other countries. Their inner confrontation leads both the countries to compete in some other fields, such as development of atomic energy, astrophysical research and even in sports(5). During the period of cold war there was some kind of stability which indirectly restores peace in the world or in other words it might be said that the World War-III did not happen. Simply because both the countries was aware of each other power and capability and realized that no one can gain nothing by involving a war; rather it would be disastrous for both of them. Hence, it may not be completely wrong to say that the capability and advancement of nuclear arms in a sense restore peace and stability in the world (6).

LATEST AND IMMEDIATE DEVELOPMENT

Let us turn our attention to India and its recent successful test of Agni-V. India is one of the fastest growing economies in the world and a member of BRICS nations. India among the emerging economies is just behind of China and its main competitor. It is the fact that since last couple of years China has started some military activities adjacent of Indian borders and making some significant military deals with neighbouring countries of India, which some extent disturbing and challenging for India from its security perspective. The development and achievement of Agni-V in a sense is an answer to all the military activates of China. It is the fact that all the territory of China is now come under the range of Agni-V. The success of Agni-V expresses a strong message to China that India is now equipped enough to tackle the military aggression of China (7). The matter is well supported by the statements of the spokesperson of China's foreign ministry Mrs Hua Chunying. She criticising media reports in India and outside says that it is a mere speculation of media that this act of India of developing Agni-V is targeted at China. She has said "I think ... India and China are not rivals but partners." (Emphasis mine) She stated further "As for us, we think that the leaders of China and India have an important consensus which is that China and India are both important developing countries and emerging economies," she said more "... The Chinese side is willing to work with countries in the region including India to jointly safeguard lasting peace, prosperity and stability of the region..." (8). (emphasis mine)

CONCLUSION

It is the fact that the strategically confrontation will continue between the two emerging nations. But it is believed that the competitiveness never cross the limit and will be restricted in bilateral level. Very recently the Doklam stand-off is a prime instance of it. It creates serious conflict between the two nations but has been solved with discussion and not by exchanging bullets. Hence, we may come to the point that inspite of there are some pertinent questions regarding the development of Agni-V and India's continuous funding in research and development activities for advancement of nuclear arms, it has a significant impact regarding the sovereignty of nation and restoring stability and peace in South Asia.

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