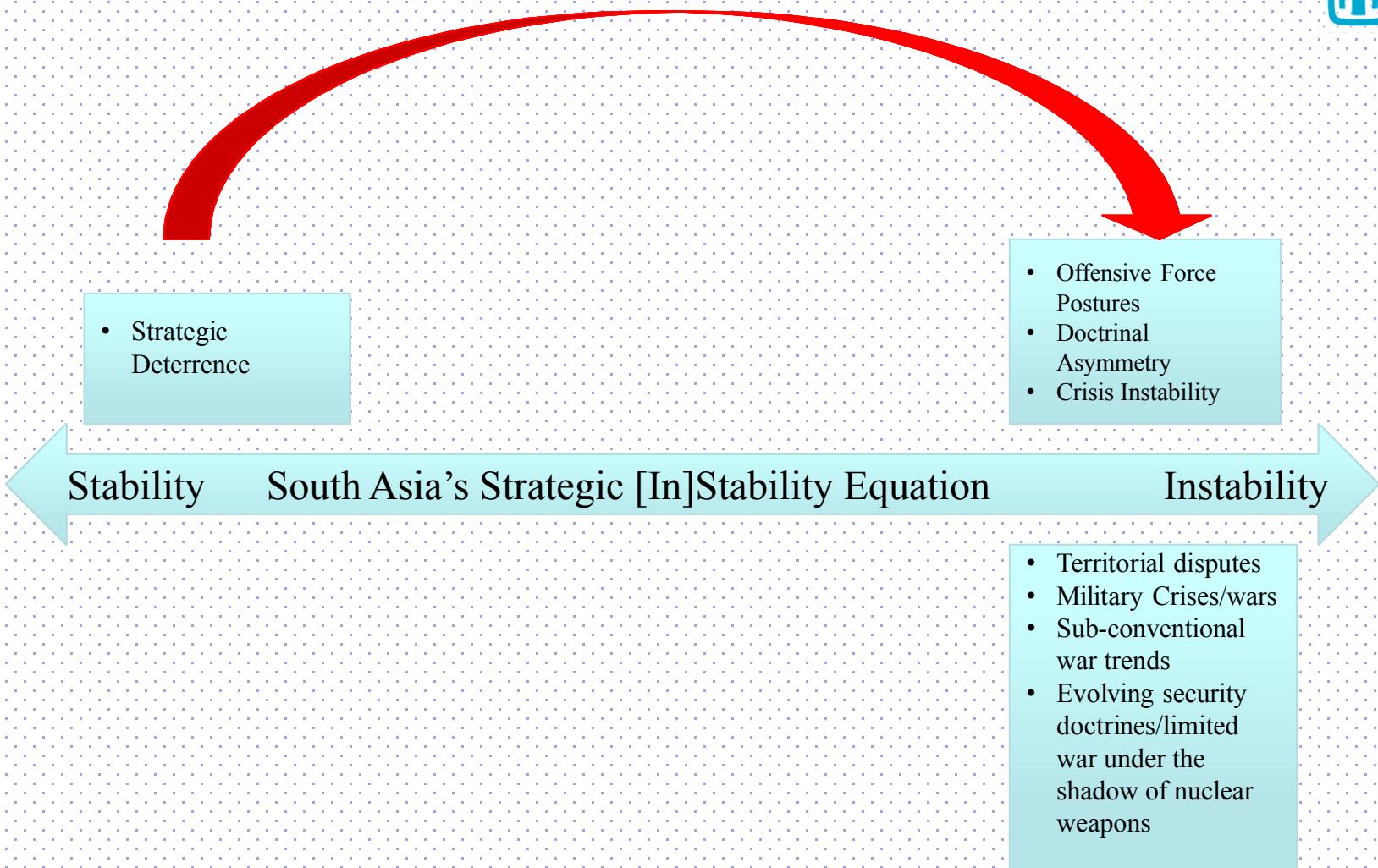


The Quest for Escalation Dominance: Pakistan's Response of Full Spectrum Deterrence

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(PAKISTAN)

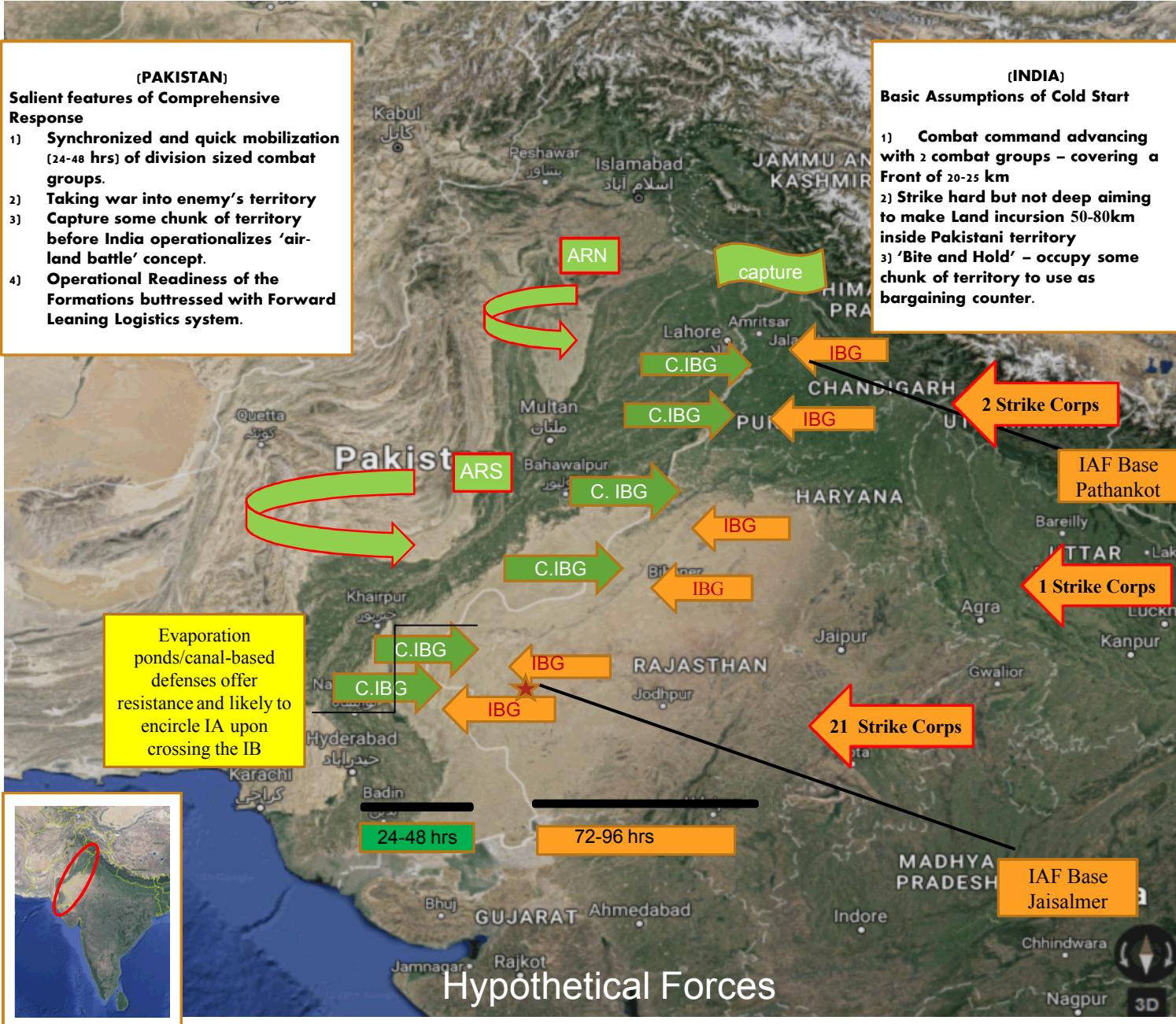
Salient features of Comprehensive Response

- 1) **Synchronized and quick mobilization (24-48 hrs) of division sized combat groups.**
- 2) **Taking war into enemy's territory**
- 3) **Capture some chunk of territory before India operationalizes 'air-land battle' concept.**
- 4) **Operational Readiness of the Formations buttressed with Forward Leaning Logistics system.**

(INDIA)

Basic Assumptions of Cold Start

- 1) Combat command advancing with 2 combat groups – covering a Front of 20-25 km
- 2) Strike hard but not deep aiming to make Land incursion 50-80km inside Pakistani territory
- 3) 'Bite and Hold' – occupy some chunk of territory to use as bargaining counter.



Escalation Dominance

Escalation Dominance (Theory)

- Ability to escalate a conflict in ways that will be disadvantageous or costly to the adversary
- Adversary has no escalation option

The ideal situation:

- Able to choose the rung on the ladder at which the issue would be resolved.
[RAND Study]
- **A weaker state ... can have ‘escalation dominance’ far out of proportion to its relative power.**
- High stakes and limited options can inspire desperate measures.

Pakistan’s Full Spectrum Deterrence Strategy

“Pakistan’s deterrence strategy revolves...escalation dominance at all rungs of military ladder; from low intensity to conventional and nuclear war.” [Peter R. Lavoy]

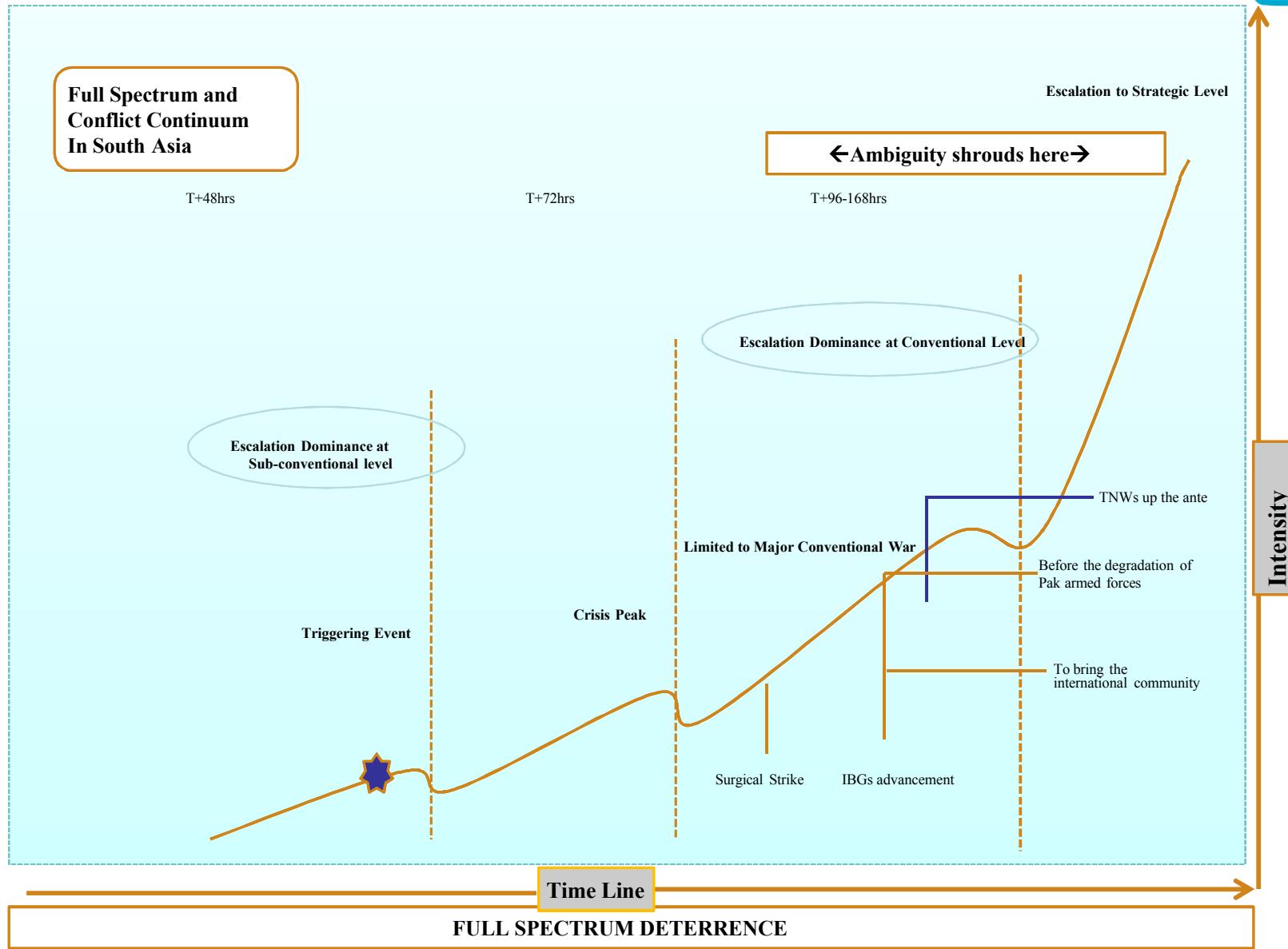
NASR--- Pakistan’s resolve to use nuclear weapons in *First*.



Pakistan’s Security Narrative: “Pakistan Follows a Policy of Ambiguity.” [Lt. Gen. Kidwai]

Full Spectrum Deterrence: “Plugging the Gaps”

- Seek strategic equivalence with India and deter threats ranging from sub-conventional to strategic levels.
- Deter all forms of aggression through the combination of conventional and strategic forces.



Defining the Role of Nasr in Full Spectrum Deterrence

- Deterrence or War-fighting?
 - Efficacy of tactical nuclear weapons against moving armored divisions
- Or Escalation Dominance?
 - Pakistan might use—actually employ—a low-yield nuclear weapon as a signal to the world.
 - To bring in the reluctant international community to cease hostilities at its chosen rung of the ladder
 - Within the greater ambiguity about possible nuclear thresholds (when and where)
 - Deliberately upscale the war before the considerable degradation of its armed forces
- The perceived role of tactical nukes is to achieve 'Escalation Dominance' in the conflict.
- Objective and Challenge for India:
 - Determine the “pre-nuclear” phase of deterrence - how long this phase would be?

Possible Pakistani Policy and Posture under Full Spectrum Deterrence

- India-centric
- Force Posture is reactive – elastic in terms of capabilities
- Based on flexible/graduated response doctrine:
 - Battlefield nuclear weapons
 - Robust arsenal with a variety of warheads and delivery systems.
- Reserves credible *First-Use* option i.e. tactical nuclear weapons came to birth.
- Limited War for India is a Total War for Pakistan.

Challenges to Full Spectrum Deterrence Strategy

Credible Minimum Deterrence and Full Spectrum cannot be synced together.

Reactive Force Posture vs. Minimalism

How certain is the 'deliberate ambiguity' and 'calculated risk' in the fog of war?

Putting Nuclear Resolve to Test !

Conclusion

- A Possible Interpretation of India's Objective: Fight and win limited war under the nuclear threshold with minimum risk of escalation.
- A Possible Interpretation of Pakistan's Objective: It cannot defeat India therefore try to reduce its vulnerability to Indian coercion:
 - Deliberately raise the risk of nuclear escalation
 - Seek escalation dominance at different rungs of the ladder
 - Deny India any incentive to initiate the war at first
- Pakistan, with high stakes and less options, might quickly escalate and seek escalation dominance in case its conventional response falters.
- Full spectrum deterrence appears to increase the risk of violence at all levels of war—in an attempt to dissuade aggression.
- Deterrence in South Asia – Rests on a Psychological mind-game. In this game, the players might try to:
 - Pakistan: Up the ante in a risk prone fluid environment
 - India: Punish its nuclear neighbor



Thank You!