

India's Deterrence Program: Defense or Development

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Abstract : A doctrine, any doctrine, incorporates a set of beliefs or principles held by a body of persons. A national nuclear doctrine represents, therefore, the collective set of beliefs or principles held by the nation in regard to the utility of its nuclear weapons. India's foreign policy has been profoundly affected by the nuclear explosions conducted in May 1998. The departure from the professed peaceful nuclear policies has had several implications for India's defense and foreign policies. The explosions in Pokhran have aggravated tensions in south Asia by disrupting diplomatic initiatives with Pak and China. Diplomacy has been reduced to damage control. The object of India's nuclear deterrence is to persuade an adversary that the costs to him of seeking a military solution to his political problems with India will far outweigh the benefits. The paper focuses on India's guidelines governing nuclear policy, development of nuclear materials for effective deterrence as well as civil development purpose. The paper finds that security concerns and technological capabilities are important determinants of whether India develops a nuclear weapons programs, while security concerns, economic capabilities, and domestic politics help to explain the possession of nuclear weapons.

Keywords : foreign policy, nuclear deterrence, nuclear policy, development

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