CHAPTER-VII
CONCLUSION

When it catches fire in the forest (vnani dehto vanhe), wind is there to assist it (sakha bhavati marutah). Same wind destroys a small lamp (sa eva deep nashayay), therefore if one doesn’t have power/ wealth, he does not have friends (krshe kasyastiti sahrdam.).

The above Subhaashita is rightly applicable to the security perspective of any country which is based on its geo-political and defence preparedness. One will support you if you are powerful or else the same will destroy you. So the only alternative with any nation is to become a mighty and powerful to sustain and enhance its position in the world. India’s nuclear programme seems to justify above Subhaashita. Recognizing India as a nuclear and economic power, the international regimes have modified their rules in favour to accommodate India. Whereas, India has not compromised on any of her national interest in this process, it has been pursuing its traditional stand of defiance against the discriminatory nature of the international nuclear regimes, although with diplomatic moves.

The World War-II transformed the way the wars were used to be fought and ushered the dawn of the nuclear era. The economically and militarily powerful countries at that time i.e. the US, erstwhile United Soviet Socialist Republic (USSR), the United Kingdom (UK), France, and China having built nuclear arsenal wanted to control nuclear weapons so as to prevent other countries to build or acquire them. They used international nuclear regimes as tools to check other countries from acquiring nuclear weapons. As a result nuclear policy became an important and integral constituent of foreign policy after Second World War. The domestic and international factors of country along with international nuclear regimes have influenced the foreign policies of the countries particularly developing countries. Jawaharlal Nehru founded the foreign and nuclear policies of the country on strong grounds of independence and sovereignty.
His successors have followed foreign policy formulated by him though with some modifications warranted by the contemporary times. Even the weak minority governments and coalition governments in India have carried on the foreign and nuclear policies without any significant departure from the past.

The nuclear or threshold nuclear countries acquire or build and pile up nuclear weapons to augment their security as also to give protection to their allies. Nuclear Power is not related only to military use rather it is increasingly being used for production of electricity and treatment of fatal diseases. With the emergence of various new issues such as spread of nuclear weapons in the post-war period in the international order, the regimes such the Unites Nations (UN) and nuclear regimes such as International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) were created to deal with them.

With the passage of time a number of nuclear regimes emerged which tried to limit the use and proliferation of nuclear weapons. The non-proliferation and technology regimes which came up after the IAEA were Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), Zangger Committee, Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG), Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR), Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) etc. However, these nuclear regimes were not taken well by the developing countries which had always criticised them. The nuclear weapon countries have been using these regimes as an instrument of interference and sanctions against non-nuclear countries. Some of these treaties and regimes emerged as a reaction when non-P5 countries started carrying out nuclear explosions, for instance the NSG came up after nuclear explosion carried out by India in 1974. During the Nehru era, India played a very important role in international affairs at various platforms of United Nations as well as founder member of Non-Aligned Movement. The principles of non-violence and peaceful coexistence of Panchsheel reinforced the credibility and strength of India’s decision not to build nuclear weapons for military purposes. Nuclear policy like other national policies had the imprints of the doctrine of Non-Violence and Panchsheel at outset. Since times of Nehru, India has been supporting peaceful use of nuclear energy and the cause of disarmament and proliferation. India commenced civilian and peaceful use of nuclear energy under the leadership of Nehru and Homi Bhabha. The Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) and Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (TIFR) later called
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Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC) were established at that time to develop India’s civil nuclear programme.

In 1962 the Sino-Indian war dealt a severe blow to Panchsheel principles and added another dimension to India’s foreign policy thinking by altering its threat perceptions. Two years after Lop Nor Nuclear test in 1964 by China gave another shock to India and it was considered not only threatening call but also awakening call for India’s security. Apart from above two events, war with Pakistan in 1965 proved to be another provocative point for India to rethink on nuclear weapon option. However, the demise of Nehru and Homi Bhabha as also induction of Lal Bhahadur Shastri as Prime Minister believed to have slowed development of nuclear programme. The scientific community and political leadership of the country held diametrically opposite viewpoints as a result the role of nuclear weapons in Indian foreign policy came to the forefront. Most of the Indian scientists were in favour of going nuclear and building weapons, while Indian political leaders were against it.

After promoting development of nuclear technology in the mid-1970s, the US started offering nuclear cooperation in an effort to pre-empt acquisition or manufacturing of nuclear weapons and technology related to them. Above three factors generated intense debate in India regarding the security and nuclear issues particularly weapons and it became most debated and discussed theme of seminars and conferences. After this event it took 10 years for India to finally go for nuclear explosion in the form of Pokhran-I better known as Peaceful Nuclear Explosion (PNE). Powers-that-be at that time were completely moonstruck and could not get any prior cue about India’s clandestine preparations for nuclear explosion. It was the single most achievement of the Indira Gandhi as far as national security was concerned.

Following footsteps of his father Nehru and Shastri, she was disinclined for using nuclear programme for military purposes. A Couple of factors including the war with Pakistan and decline in her popularity registered swing in the attitude of Indira Gandhi about nuclear capability. As a result she ordered the PNE of 1974 though prior to this India remained silent for more than two decades about its nuclear programme. A ‘nuclear option’ was India’s approach which had financial, political and international
implications. To discourage non-nuclear countries from pursuing nuclear development, the new nuclear regimes were created. The NSG was widely seen as a retort to India’s PNE and after that the NPT was measure in the direction of non-proliferation efforts.

India was not accepted as a nuclear power by the nuclear countries; hence, a number of sanctions were clamped on it. Regardless of various kinds of outer pressures, India did not feel disheartened and it carried on nuclear development programme. The single party governments maintained ambiguity by not explicitly pursuing weapon option but they had not discarded it altogether. India was among the leading critics of the discriminatory and biased international nuclear regimes as they were established merely to serve the vested interests of nuclear powered countries and impeding the nuclear progress developing countries like India. For that reason certain countries such as India do not compromise national interests and therefore, do not recognise and follow rules, regulations and guidelines of the regimes.

The decade of 1970s was a watershed period in the Indian politics, as it witnessed the emergence of coalition politics in the Indian polity. The first coalition government formed by the Janata Party in 1977 changed the political scenario of the country. However the initial coalition governments formed were not very strong and could not complete their full term in office. As far as the foreign and nuclear policy of the country was concerned, an overall continuity was maintained in the policy and no major departure was noticed. The Janata Party’s stand on the nuclear policy varied in itself, as Prime Minister Moraraji Desai being a nuclear dove never followed an aggressive nuclear policy. Whereas his ministers, particularly Atal Bihari Vajpayee always took a firm and strict stand on the same highlighting the security interests and India’s need to become a nuclear power in the wake of the same. Taking a strict note of actions of the international nuclear regimes the Janata Party government continued to pursue the traditional stand of defiance of the NPT. The Desai government did not succumb to external pressures, and continued to develop the nuclear energy in the civilian area. Though, Desai was against the use of nuclear weapons, but his statement regarding the indigenous production of the metal oxide fuel showed his commitment towards the same. Although, the developed nations tried to blackmail and capitalise the personal belief of the Morarji Desai, but keeping his personal choice (of being anti-
nuclear) aside, Desai refused to compromise on this issue. Rejection for creation of nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region again confirms the continuity which was maintained by the Janata Party under Moraraji Desai. After the Desai period Chaudhari Charan Singh became the Prime Minister of India. The most significant step which was taken by his regime was the open declaration against the Pakistani nuclear developments. He overtly not only warned the Pakistani government but also declared a strict Indian stand against any unwanted or illegitimate activities pursued along borders of India. Bringing the Pakistani nuclear developments to the forefront, he started a new era of security issues and debates. Since his term was very short, therefore, he could not take any significant decisions regarding India’s nuclear policy.

Returning to power after the fall of Janata Party government, Indira Gandhi followed her dual track nuclear policy but again in a covert manner. She ensured that the weaponisation of the nuclear programme remained on track as she recognised the security threat from China and Pakistan and the flourishing ties between them. Continuing with past precedents, India continued its support to disarmament and non-proliferation efforts, however, not budging from its position of signing the NPT and abandoning weapon development programmes. For the first time during this period Indian army joined the chorus for the development of nuclear potential as a part of defence preparedness. In the backdrop of whole scenario, Indira Gandhi decided to conduct another nuclear explosion, but the decision had to be annulled as America came to know about it. Against the American wishes, India under the leadership of Indira Gandhi stoutly kept developing nuclear programme and hence, inching towards weaponisation and she also secured fuel supply from the US. In can be inferred from above developments that decision making in a single party governments (especially on issues related to national interests) is easy, quick and bold, whereas, in a coalition government the situation is comparatively difficult. India has been pursuing its own sovereign and autonomous foreign and nuclear policies and decisions of not accepting the safeguard agreements of the IAEA), not signing the NPT, keeping ‘nuclear option open’ and retaining ambiguity in nuclear programme can be seen in this light. These decisions can be considered the hallmark of the Indira Gandhi-led Congress government during 1967 to 1984 except 1977-80.
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After the death of Indira Gandhi, his son Rajiv Gandhi took reins of the country. Being of scientific temperament and having modern outlook, he started working on that vision for developing India on those lines. Rajiv Gandhi was in favour of a world free from nuclear arms and related armaments. Like his mother, he did continue ‘dual track’ nuclear policy and the inking of agreement in December 1988 between India and Pakistan to not attack nuclear installations of each other. Rajiv Gandhi was actively involved in efforts aiming at disarmament and non-proliferation. His time bound Action Plan for the disarmament and non-proliferation is in place till date. But at the same time he kept opposing international regimes for promoting status quo, discrimination, hegemony and even monopoly. As response to the security threats and to show its military might, Rajiv Gandhi ordered the military operations like Brasstacks and Trident. Rajiv Gandhi was criticised for slowing down the nuclear programme due to pressure of the nuclear regimes, but it was felt that it could have been strategic move by India at that time to display commitment for peace and anti-nuclear, disarmament and non-proliferation efforts. However, the influence of external determinants particularly on Indian nuclear programme cannot be dismissed in entirety. The death of Rajiv Gandhi plunged India into instability and the coalition era again engulfed Indian polity. A national frame leader V.P. Singh formed coalition government known as the National Front Government followed by Chandrashekhar. The performance of coalition governments in sphere of nuclear policy has not been very satisfactory because of instability within the country in state of Jammu and Kashmir, Punjab, and North-East. Communal violence after BJP’s Rath Yatra and decision of implementing Mandal Commission’s report for 27 percent reservation to OBCs backfired and the government fell. The period of V.P. Singh was marked by crisis with Pakistan over the Kashmir issue that could have escalated into nuclear conflict, had the US not intervened to calm down both nations. In the nuclear arena, V.P. Singh government could not keep tab on nuclear activities of neighbouring Pakistan and it also did not take any credible measure to strengthen India’s nuclear programme. Hence, the National front government proved to be weak coalition government as it had weak decision making capability. However, the National Front government exhibited continuity in nuclear policy by not altering it.
The only credible step taken was the creation of a study group to formulate patterns to control the nuclear arsenal and use it effectively during a war-like situation.

Next in line was the Government led by the Prime Minister P.V. Narsimha Rao, a Congress Party led minority government remained heavily preoccupied managing financial crisis of foreign debt and it initiated of economic reforms in the country to tide over the crisis as also part of conditions of International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. These two institutions being the US controlled adversely affected India’s nuclear decisions making process. America was tried to bargain with India for offering to resolve financial crisis by pressuring India to sign the NPT and later on pressuring to co-sponsor the CTBT resolutions inside the United Nations General Assembly. It was seen by India as a compromise with its national and security interests. India had to deal with new international system after the end of Cold War and had to reassess its foreign policy priorities. The economic reforms initiated by the Rao government had direct implications for the nuclear programme of the country as well. Since the reforming ties with other nations created more acceptability of India’s nuclear potential so, its emergence as an economic power was seen with tolerance and respect. While developing economy of the country and economic relations, Rao government did not compromised on India’s security and national interest issues. This was validated from his decision taken at the UNSC during the passage of a resolution on proliferation of WMD. The economic tie-ups with world benefited India’s progress in its nuclear programme as well. It was during this term that India successfully tested the Agni and the Prithvi missiles. To save India from international sanctions and to developing cordial relations with other countries, Narasimha Rao put slight brakes on India’s nuclear programme. It was seen as necessary diplomatic moves to ward off any pressure to sign non-proliferation and disarmament treaties which India had been criticising for being prejudiced. Rao government had started the preparation of Pokhran-II, but due to leakage of the information in the international media, the tests were abandoned.

**Nuclear Policy under Coalition Governments**

The study has looked at the role of coalition governments through nuclear perspective. It is also important to know the opinion of people about the necessity and
acceptability of the coalition governments itself and the NES data spanning from 1999-2009 has tracked the perception of the people about coalition governments as shown in the Figure 7.1. It was found that the acceptability of the coalition governments has increased over the years from 24 percent in 1998 to 29 percent in 2009, whereas, conversely the unacceptability has decreased over the decade from 50 percent to 35 percent. The data shows that Indian voters have accepted the change in the government pattern from single party to coalition governments. And today formation of a coalition government is not equated to weak and unstable government.

The nuclear policy of India in the late 20th century and at the dawn of second decade of the 21st century was in continuity with the past policies of Congress Government but with a difference. The coalition governments that came to power the country proved to be weak and lacked the courage and ability to take strong decisions with regard to nuclear policy, because of structural reasons. However, the formation of Coalition Governments on continuous basis after 1995 under different ideologies and strategies has left a deep imprint upon the country’s nuclear policy-making in the 21st century. The decision of United Front Government led by Prime Minister Deve Gowda took an important decision of boycotting the CTBT discussion and sensing the opinion of people in the country decided not to sign the CTBT in 1996. It was first time that a Coalition Government could take such a historical decision of not signing CTBT which had the potentials of jeopardizing India’s nuclear policy. But the governments of Deve Gowda as well as I K Gujral withstood the international pressure and made no compromises with country’s nuclear policy. The ‘Look East’ policy was kicked off. This step was also necessary in order to have stable, peaceful and supportive relations in the region for the fulfilment of larger goal at the international platforms. The most crucial step taken by the UF government was to reject the CTBT out rightly. It was for the first time that a weak coalition government had taken such a bold step at any international stage, displaying immense courage, the UF government clarified security needs and requirement of not doing away with the nuclear weapons, when her neighbours possess them openly. Although, due to internal weakness the government rejected the option of going ahead with the nuclear test, but the overall pursuance of its nuclear policy was very commendable.
Figure 7.1: Level of Acceptability of Coalition Governments from 1998-2009

![Bar Chart]

Source: Compiled from the Centre for the Study for Developing Societies, National Election Study data sets of 1998, 1999, 2004 and 2009

After the fall of the United Front Government, the NDA Government led by Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee repeated history as far as the nuclear policy and decision making was concerned. It was during his premiership that India conducted series of nuclear tests known as Pokhran-II on 11th and 13th May 1998. The BJP had been advocating for it since long and that was one of the promises, they had made during election campaigns in 1998. On May 11, 1998, the Indian nuclear establishment gave the world a huge shock with its decision to conduct nuclear tests, and Indian government managed to do all preparations of the test in a completely clandestine manner. After the explosion, the world without any exception gave sharply negative responses. The Indian government was ready to face all the repercussions of the nuclear explosion and it managed well to a great extent. The NDA regime leaving besides her predecessor governments dealt with the security issues in a very aggressive and strategic manner. It saw the nuclear test as a step towards fulfilling promise to build a
strong India. The Hindu nationalism played a very important role in the background of the decision to test. At the domestic level the whole country including the opposition parties welcomed the nuclear explosion. Only a little wave of criticism came from the Leftist parties which rejected the Vajpayee Government’s justification of the nuclear explosion based on the Chinese threat.

The strategic decision in the form of the nuclear explosion placed India in a difficult situation at the international platform. In spite of that, India, with her diplomacy and growing economic position, managed to ingest all the economic sanctions placed on her as fallout of tests. Though, the NDA government of 1999 had to face number of hardships due to being a weak coalition in the initial years, but irrespective of that it took very premeditated decisions as far as the foreign and economic policy of the country was concerned. Despite so much of criticisms and sanctions, it was the NDA Coalition government which sailed India through the hours of economic crisis at global level. India’s economy was still opening up and the interdependence was increasing but it withstood the enormous pressure of signing the NPT, the CTBT and joining of the FMCT discussions. All such decisions taken by the NDA government only showed exemplary courage and determination of not making any compromises with its nuclear policy. It entered into historic strategic dialogue with the US government which resulted in lifting of international pressure from India and slowly sanctions being lifted against India after the visit of President Clinton to India. It also initiated affable relations with the China and the Pakistan in the later part of her term and hence, maintained continuity in the policy of her predecessor government of friendly relations with neighbouring nations. On the whole the NDA government’s challenging decision to go ahead with the nuclear explosion strengthened India’s hegemonic image and role in the South Asian region as well as at the international level, making India among the top most powerful countries of the world. The Vajpayee regime also fulfilled its manifesto promise of giving top priority to the national security by creating National Security Council and by standing firmly in front of the economic sanctions levied by fourteen nations of the world and by baring strong criticism and international pressure for conducting nuclear tests. Under the Premiership of Vajpayee India emerged out to be a strong player in international politics and diplomacy. With
just six months India managed to free itself from all kind of sanctions and by the end of the term of the NDA regime India had cordial relations with her neighbours, both Pakistan and China.

After the defeat of the NDA in 2004 general elections, the UPA formed the Government for a consecutive period of ten years (UPA I & II) led by Prime Minister Manmohan Singh. The nature and role of Indian National Congress under the UPA also underwent massive transformation so far its politics and ideology is concerned. Its inhibition of forming a coalition government with smaller regional parties came to an end. The UPA government also wanted to gain grounds on nuclear issue in comparison to BJP party. Its nuclear policy is heavily guided by the mix of both, economic needs along with the security imperatives. The opening towards these regimes is for the sake of energy security as the country needs energy on massive scale. Even the countries like the US with which India has formalized ‘Indo-US Nuclear Agreement-2005’, they are also of the strong view that India is one of the fastest growing economies of the world. It must be helped in overcoming its energy needs.

India signed Civil Nuclear Deal with the US during Prime Minister Manmohan Singh’s summit meeting with President George W. Bush on 18th July 2005. The Indo-US Joint statement of 18th July 2005 provided the framework for cooperation in the field of civilian nuclear power. Washington promised to convince the US Congress to make changes in its domestic legislation, and to persuade the NSG to make suitable adjustments in its regulations. India also took some important steps in return. This resulted in India being recognized as a responsible state with advanced nuclear technology and provided India with a tacit U.S. recognition of a de facto nuclear weapon state outside the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). Also the US offered to cooperate with India on civil nuclear energy issues. In continuation of the existing relations and the joint statement of the two Heads of the Nations Indo-US Nuclear Deal was introduced in 2008, throughout the next years this nuclear accord seized India’s debate on the nuclear policy.

In the absence of a liability regime in India, the nuclear trade and the programme was facing problems. It was also a requirement in the various bilateral
nuclear treaties which India did with other nations particularly the Indo-US nuclear deal. As per the prerequisites of the changing times, the UPA-II Government came up with the draft of the Indian Civil Liability Act in 2010. But the Indian Government had to face criticism for enacting such a strict law, as it was argued that it would compromise the interests of the Indian industry vis-a-vis the multinational companies. Taking into account the domestic opposition, the Singh Government made the final law very strict and again it had to face criticism but from the different countries of the world which were actively involved in the nuclear trade with India. Even the domestic companies of India also showed their resentment with such stringent law.

In the aftermath of the 2011 Fukushima Diachi nuclear accident in Japan, the safety concerns shook the whole world including the nuclear weapon possessing nations and the international nuclear regimes. India also actively reacted to the situation and set up committees for the study of the safety concerns of India’s nuclear programme. But this accident somehow created an ostracized environment for the nuclear power development in India, as the environmentalists and the local people out of fear started condemning the establishment of new nuclear power plants, Kudankulam is an example in this regard. The overall position of the UPA government on nuclear policy was commendable, and in fact the culmination of the Indo-US nuclear deal was welcomed with great enthusiasm and fervour. The relaxations in the terms of the NSG to provide space to India and various nuclear bilateral agreements in its aftermath provided India with a legitimate status of a nuclear power. Along with that it also opened new prospects and opportunities for the nation’s nuclear development, making India a strategic and key player in the nuclear world. After the Pokhran-II, Indo-US nuclear deal was one of the most significant and the most debated aspect in the foreign policy. It came with the special waiver from the NSG which led to the opening up of trade in nuclear fuel and technology with supplier countries. The conclusion of the nuclear deal with America, the IAEA safeguard agreement and the clean waiver from the NSG, made India a legitimate nuclear power possessing nation. In the second term of the UPA government the results and dividends were yielded out of the important nuclear pacts done with various governments. As India got supply of nuclear fuel from France, Russia and Canada which resulted in highest generation of nuclear power till date and
indigenous nuclear fuel production also reached its peak. Along with this achievement the UPA phase is also credited for having initiated the construction of seven new NPPs. After criticism, India enacted world’s strictest liability law for which it had to face the criticism of domestic as well as the foreign companies who had kept an eagle’s eye on India’s nuclear market. For them, it became very difficult to indulge in nuclear trade with India due to the capping of nuclear operators liability, of supplier’s liability with the maximum cap. Further, after the Fukushima Nuclear disaster, the world and national public opinion was diverted against the nuclear power due to the security and safety concerns. Taking this into account the government took immediate steps of re-evaluation of the safeguards in the NPPs and formed a committee to look into the matter.

It can be argued that autonomy in pursuing nuclear programme indigenously and use of judicious mix of nationalism as well realism by India for more than 5-6 decades has diluted the monopoly of nuclear regimes and has forced nuclear regimes to take cognizance of country of India’s size and might. It is important to look into factors which resulted into all these changes. Policies formulated by coalition governments from time to time has enabled the country to enter into situation where it seems, the more India grows powerful and bridges the gap with the developed countries, the more it would be accommodated by the nuclear regimes. India has been able to conduct itself at international level in a manner that convergence in strategic, economic, ideological interests and the mutual accommodation with powers controlling regimes has grown. The adoption of Nuclear Doctrine under the NDA and further its continuation by the UPA and determination of maintaining minimal credible deterrence has led to opening of India towards nuclear regime which has enabled it in developing capabilities from first strike to second strike capability and expediting its three stage indigenous nuclear programme.

Nuclear decision making of the country is different in case of single party government and multi-party coalition government because inter-governmental and intra-governmental challenges vary in both cases. Generally, coalition governments are considered as weak governments and in this scenario the amount of influence which is projected by the regimes on the nations can be enormous, which can be detrimental for
the nations. The decision making pattern in India has also undergone detrimental change with regard to this, but at the same time it is also evident from the overview that Indian governments’ single party or coalition have barely compromised on the fronts of national interests. Coalition governments in past two decades have succeeded in taking a stand at international level which is important for, maintaining autonomy in its nuclear and strategic issues. Given the past records of India as champion of disarmament and proliferation, the present coalition governments have expressed their willingness to accommodate the regimes in direction of disarmament. Policies adopted for opening up towards nuclear regimes will strengthen India’s strategic cooperation with all powers of the world. Governments in India are of the firm view that going nuclear has given more strategic space to India for forcing a change on part of international nuclear regime. So, continuity on nuclear policy matter is expected for times to come irrespective of the size and nature of the coalition government which comes to power. Mutual accommodation with regimes has significance for not only India’s nuclear policy, rather also for space programme, missiles programme, and energy security. Increased interactions with the regimes are in interest of India to move forward towards the goal of becoming a global power. It is also interesting to note that increasing aspirations on part of middle class people has enabled coalition governments to pursue their nuclear policy in a forthright manner without succumbing to any kind of pressures and turning India into powerful country. As far as the role of the international nuclear regimes is concerned a remarkable diversion and change has been seen in this front. This change is the result of the growing economic power of the country and its role as a responsible nuclear power. Without compromising on her national and security interests India has also relaxed its strict critical policy against these regimes and has opted a diplomatic stand. Now, India has been accepted as a nuclear power and utilizing this position India wants to fulfil her larger goals of becoming a supplier nation of nuclear technology and also to attain permanent membership in the UN Security Council. India’s steps in the direction of establishing her active participation at various international platforms like the NPT Review Conference in 2010, Nuclear Security Summit, Conference on Disarmament, establishment of Global Centre for Nuclear Energy Partnership and the changing policy of various international nuclear regimes towards India etc., are conditioning favourable
circumstances for India to carry on sovereign nuclear policy. Now India is seen not only as a significant player but also as a strategic partner in the development and execution of international nuclear policy.

**Main Findings of the Research**

1. With regard to effects of external determinants such as major world powers and international nuclear regimes on Indian nuclear policy, the study finds that their impact has been small and temporary which had slowed down Indian nuclear programme on some occasions. However, nuclear development had never halted altogether. The successive Indian governments managed to retain autonomy and sovereignty regarding decisions on nuclear policy making. Without succumbing to the pressures of the external factors, India has emerged as an independent nuclear weapon state which is now accepted by the world.

2. By developing its technological capabilities and intensifying efforts at advanced nuclear research, India has enhanced its capability while facing pressures and strict guidelines of the nuclear regimes. India is known for her self-sufficiency in the nuclear fuel cycle and commercial success of her indigenous nuclear reactors. With 90-110 nuclear warheads, India has moved from first strike to second strike capability and is included among five countries which have completed their nuclear triad. As part of response capability and survivability, India follows command, control, communications, computing, intelligence and information (C4I2) system which is also part of its nuclear doctrine. These are achievements of India in nuclear field.

3. India had followed dual-track nuclear policy under single party governments which were explicitly in favour of carrying on civil nuclear program, but, weapon development had continued simultaneously. The decision making with regard to nuclear policy seems to be somewhat easy under the single party governments as compared to the coalition governments. For instance, the decisions like approval of Subterranean Nuclear Explosion Project (SNEP) by L.B. Shastri and conduct of the PNE by Mrs. Indira Gandhi were taken within a short period of time. However, decision-making with regard to nuclear policy
under coalition governments seems to be difficult and slow because of obstructions created by various coalition partners like in case of Indo-US Nuclear deal.

4. In early years after independence, India initiated values of peaceful co-existence, non-violence, and non-alignment and since then, it has been supporting and promoting these values. Continued support to genuine efforts of disarmament and non-proliferation is reflection of India’s commitment to traditional values. Even in its Nuclear Doctrine India has opted for no-first strike policy, while, maintaining credible deterrence as also incorporating a provision in the doctrine that it will not attack a non-nuclear weapon country with nuclear weapons. Hence, the traditional values are guiding Indian nuclear policy till date.

5. The political parties participating in coalition government have different ideologies, interests, regional aspirations and vote bank orientations. Therefore, they pull the government in different directions and consensus becomes difficult on important decisions. As it was in case of the first coalition government, there were ideological differences between Prime Minister Morarji Desai (moderate leader) and his Foreign Minister A.B. Vajpayee who came from different political backgrounds creating confusions about India’s nuclear policy. Similarly, during the passage of the Indo-US Nuclear deal Left parties toed different line from that of the UPA-government even though they were their coalition partners. They brought the government on the verge of collapse by moving no-confidence motion in the parliament. Therefore, the study argues that the decision making regarding the nuclear policy becomes difficult and slow in the coalition governments, however, it does not impact the nuclear policy and programme in longer run and the national interest and sovereignty remains protected.

6. The UPA government took to the next level Indo-US relations that began improving during the last days of NDA regime. The UPA finalised agreement on Civil Nuclear Cooperation with the US and got the NSG waiver without compromising the national and security interests, and it did not sign any
discriminatory treaty. Resultantly, it has opened new avenues of nuclear cooperation and trade with other countries.

7. In the past, India had opposed nuclear regimes because in the name of non-proliferation and disarmament, they inhibited the nuclear development of threshold nuclear nations. India wanted to keep its weapon option open even though its economy was weak and closed and it was also not technologically well-advanced and developed in the nuclear field. But over the period it has overcome economic and technological barriers and has developed its nuclear programme. After conducting nuclear explosions in 1998, India has declared moratorium on future tests and the country become major nuclear market and investment destination which have changed the whole gamut of relations with major nuclear countries and international nuclear regimes. To meet shortage of electric power that India needs for its growing economy and industrial development, now, India has started dealing with nuclear regimes for its benefits. The recent waiver from the NSG indicates India’s new attitude towards nuclear regimes.

8. Till date India has not signed any international nuclear treaty which might have jeopardised India’s national and security interests and its nuclear programme. In the contemporary times India as well as major nuclear powers and regimes have changed their attitudes for mutual benefits but it seems that India may not sign any treaty on unfavourable terms and conditions, thus, maintaining its traditional position. The recent strict Civil Nuclear Liability Law of India is reflection of India’s position of not compromising at any front.