



## RESEARCH PAPER

### A New Star Wars between Eagle and Dragon: Implication for South Asia

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PAPER INFO	ABSTRACT
<p><b>Received:</b> February 03, 2021</p> <p><b>Accepted:</b> June 10, 2021</p> <p><b>Online:</b> June 20, 2021</p> <p><b>Keywords:</b> 'Star Wars' Dragon, Eagle, South Asia Space Militarization</p> <p><b>*Corresponding Author:</b></p> <p>Fazalabbasawan 110@gmail.com</p>	<p>During the last few decades, space has gained extensive importance in many aspects of military operations. The 'Star Wars' started in military competition and is still a main component of military. Today Eagle is sole super power of the world and space as well but this position is not sure in future due to Dragon rising, as global power in both hard and soft power. A strong example of this doctrine was Dragon ASAT test in January 2007, which was a clear wakeup call for Eagle and greatly influenced the security and military capabilities of the Eagle and rest of the world as well. India is also investing huge amount on its space program and signed a bilateral agreement with U.S and Israel to establish collaboration in the both civilian and military space program and nuclear deal as well. This space cooperation and nuclear deal has deeply affected the security environment of South Asia and opened the eyes of both China and Pakistan. A new 'Star Wars' between Eagle and Dragon is also the base of South Asian space race that is a disaster for the peace and security of South Asia and would make dangerous zone of the world. Therefore, Pakistan must accept and deal with the reality that conflicts and wars in today's world will be driven by the increasing interdependence between conventional, nuclear, and space war. The terms in this article Eagle &amp; Dragon refer U.S &amp; China: Eagle refers for U.S and Dragon for China.</p>

## Introduction

The strategic importance of space systems has raised the fears of possible conflicts in the near future among the great powers; great powers wanted to use this technology to improve the tools of warfare and to dominate the others. In this regard space is a new domain or territory of conflict among powers (Johnson-Freese, 2017). Nations establish different research and development program to develop such technologies and weapons that can destroyed the world in minutes (Japan is best example during world war) the main objective behind the development of such weapons is to secure state security. The technological advancements have shown its both positive and negative effects on the world and especially on the nature of warfare. Now the pattern of space policy changed, due to

economic, political and technological reasons and powers planned for to weaponize space (Samson, 2011). Today Eagle is pursuing the policy of space denial, which has prompted other nations to formulate a similar kind of space policy which resulted into a new space race among great powers. Colin Gray quoted, that “the whole situation, pointing out that the outer space is a unique place, and no state entirely owns it; however, the physical characteristics of the space make it an ultimate high ground in which conflicts can arise among nations, which could cause severe damage to the security of the space assets of the superpowers” (Weichert, 2017).

The Eagle sees Asia, as a zone of most military conflictual and competition in future. Therefore Eagle wants to double its military to counter rising Dragon. Today, the Eagle is most dependent on space and the protection of space assets is its top priority. Due to this, Eagle going to make an alliance with India, Israel, Japan and South Korea to counter China as an emerging power with ASAT capabilities. This new arm race between Eagle and Dragon is also the base of the Asian space race that is a disaster for the peace and security of the world and would make life insecure in the earth. Now Eagle started offensive and defensive space strategy to counter Dragon (Tellis, 2007). China space program is defensive not offensive and its grand strategy to use space for the welfare of human beings and no intentions to start or engage in any arm space race. China believes that space is a global heritage that uses and explore for the peaceful purpose (Chunsi, 2008).

### **Rising Dragon and Eagle Space Policies**

China (Dragon) has made great progress in space and taken its place as a tier-one space faring nations with its manned space capabilities and pursuing full-spectrum space programs like the manned space program, rocket design and ASAT capabilities (Khan & Khan, 2015). Dragon primary threat is Eagle (U.S) due to its offensive behaviour and interference in Asia. Eagle and Dragon not only launch human flight into space but also developed space weapons to conduct war in space (Zhang, 2013).The white papers of Dragon space policy clearly show its objective behind space exploration. Dragon space policy based on commercial and scientific purposes as compared to Eagle space policies (Goswami, 2018). Michael Krepon, explained Eagle space policies that Eagle wanted to rule in space like the rule in-roads (heaven & earth) and not ready to permit any nations to limit Eagle freedom in space. Eagle offensive and defensive space behavior allow Dragon to develop counter space capabilities and the launch of Dragon ASAT test was a message to Eagle to change its space behavior and policies and sign Prevention of Arms Race in Outer Space Treaty (PAROS) treaty to stop space race and protect the common heritage of globe (Krepon, 2008).

### **Donald Trump Speech on Space: A New Army and New Race**

During a speech in California Donald Trump announced that he would like to create some kind of outer space military, to fight wars in outer space should the need arise. It is a new star war if Donald trump gets his way. In space the United States is going to do Colonel Glenn proud. Donald trump quoted that “We are finally going to lead again. You see the rockets going up left and right, you have not seen that for a long line. Very soon, we are going to mars. You would not have been going to mars if my enemy or opponent won. That can tell you. You would not even be thing about it”. Space is a war fighting domain just like

the land, air and sea. We may even have a space force, develop another, Space force, we have the air force. We shall have the space force. A new branch of the Military dedicated to space force (Cousins, 2018). May be it is coincident but if you saw the video that leaked a week ago Military jets tracking and Trumps Says' OK. And argued we need a Military in outer space.

Donald Trump is not the first Republican that has suggested creating outer space military for the U.S. There was actually a project for a new American Century document from many years ago. This was pointed out by Robbie Martin, The director of the Film a very heavy agenda. This documentary suggested some kind of outer space military forces just to show our powers in U.S against like China and Russia and potentially intercept any kind of satellite destruction that they may engage in (Cousins, 2018).

Now they trying to figure out how to make their F15 fighters Jets fly in outer space or may be, they are developing these new space-ships with rocket launchers on them because that's going in the interest of technology builder and U.S as well. Trump sign new space policy on new moon and manned mission with new exploration and discovery, and started a new mars mission and perhaps someday discovering new world (Cousins, 2018).

### **The Dark Arena**

Today Eagle is sole super power of the world and space as well but this position is not sure in future due to Dragon rising, as global power in both hard and soft power. Eagle is more dependent on space assets all over the world, therefore Eagle most vulnerable to its space assets and any country even a weak state can defeat Eagle by destroying its space assets even China can use or exploited space in the event of conflicts (Klein, 2006). Furthermore Eagle, quest for space dominance is a challenge for Dragon national interest and force Dragon to build defensive space capabilities to counter Eagle. A strong example of this doctrine was Dragon ASAT test in January 2007, which was a clear wakeup call for Eagle and greatly influences the security and military capabilities of the Eagle and rest of the world as well. Eagle space assets highly served its both military and civilian purpose and destruction of its assets is the destruction of its economy and military regarding this context space race is inevitable, if powers follow this doctrine. Now there is the need of the hour to stop this harm and unstoppable arm race and protect the global heritage of mankind (Seedhouse, 2010).



**Figure 1 Source:** (Wooldridge, 2018).

## China's Outer Space Program: Military Satellites Capabilities

Tellis quoted that "China's space program represents a major investment aimed at enabling Beijing to utilize space in expanding its national power" (Tellis, 2007). During the Mao's reign, Dragon started its space program with great ambitions. In this regard Dragon also stands at the forefront of this revolution and became the moderate member of the "space faring" club in 1985, by launching its satellites into the outer space. In the subsequent years, Dragon had made great progress in space technologies, especially in military exploration of the outer space. The Dragon military strategy is to conduct the warfare beyond all boundaries and limitations in any future war on the other hand. (Seedhouse, 2010). In Figure 2 the Space assets in use by the-major world powers include launches through 31-August-2015

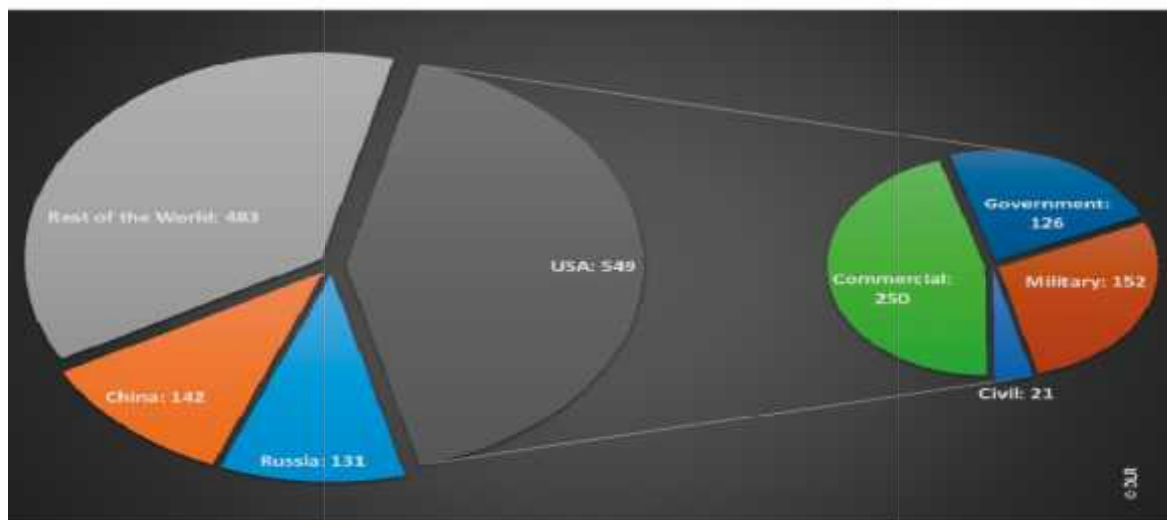


Figure 2 Source: [www.researchgate.net](http://www.researchgate.net)

The rising Dragon has round about 83 active satellites in outer space and comes after Russia, who has 101 active satellites on the other hand Eagle is a sole super power in space and came in No.1 with 401 active satellites in outer space. Sanjay Poduval explained that Dragon space program also has military applications and some parts of the military space program are evident to the global world clearly (Poduval, 2012).

### Chinese Anti-Satellite (ASATs) Test

An Anti-satellite (ASAT) weapon has the capacity to destroy or the satellite system directly in space these weapons can be land, air and sea based. During the cold war both powers had conducted several ASAT test but in 1985 both powers stopped to conduct it due to its potential space debris. In 2007, Dragon destroyed its own defunct weather satellite with an ASAT which changed the nature of space-age or space race and further fuel toward the weaponization of space. Dragon ASAT test attracted the world to the deployment of offensive weapons in space. The purpose of the ASAT was to show the Eagle and other powers, its growing military capabilities opened the eyes of Eagle and India as well (Hitchens, 2008).

On a side note, space has already been. Space militarization simply means to use space-based devices or technology for military purposes like navigation, surveillance and intelligence on the other hand space weaponization is deferent a term which simply means to destroy the satellite either from space based weapons or from earth based: to use any space or earth based weapons to target the satellites it can be a missile or any jammers (smart spy technology). However, some people argued that space has been militarized from its beginning but the debate over the weaponization of space is still continued (Khan, Khalil, & Imam, 2020).

The ASAT test by Dragon was to counter Eagle strategic ties with India (Khan & Ullah, 2020). According to Tellis Dragon was in favor of prevention of weaponization in the outer space but the strategic U.S-India collaboration and partnership has compelled it to conduct ASAT test (Tellis, 2007).

### **China's Military Space Development: US Perspective**

It's a need of an hour that we have to recognize ourselves and our adversaries in order to get victory to fight over every battle ground (Chinese Internal Assessment). The Dragon ASAT test which represented as an offensive measure towards eagle space assets which threaten its survivability because Eagles having strong reliance over space. As a result, the Dragon which feels danger from the excessive space resources of Eagle and its continuous supremacy over space therefore, Dragon launches ASAT test to counter eagle hegemony over space through escalating conflict to harm their national interests especially in a form of regional conflict i.e. Taiwan conflict. Currently, Dragon considered space as a best place for future conflict with Eagle (Hays, 2011).

Barry Watts who's famous for military space expertise argued that "U.S. danger of a "Space Pearl Harbor" forecasted wrongly about the Chinese purpose over space military during the period of 2000 to 2010. Hence, Watts concluded that, at the end of this decade, Dragon efforts in military space scenario is to take advantage over Eagle by originating conflict in the specific area of western pacific. Secretary of Defence Robert Gates presented an annual report in 2011, which highlighted the military innovations in between Eagle and Dragon which became the cause of improvement in PLA's capacity to carry out high-intensity, regional military operation, including "anti-access and area denial" (A2/AD) operations (Seedhouse, 2010).

The annual report also concentrate over the increasing involvement of Dragon in, navigation, intelligence, reconnaissance, surveillance, meteorological, communication constellations and cyberspace warfare and counter space capabilities which has been expanded over the years and strengthen the People Liberation Army (PLA) war fighting capabilities. On the other perspective, this report also focuses on the internal capabilities of PLA to damaging, destroying and interfering with enemy's reconnaissance and communication satellites and signifying such systems like early warning and navigation system that could be utilize to attack suspected targets to blind and defeat the enemy. It resulted in 2008 when Eagle tested its most destructive ASAT weapon in retaliation of Dragon ASAT test which shows the aggressive attitude of Eagle towards Dragon. Micheal Krepon highlighted the Eagle danger over Dragon's modernized space capabilities and said if any nation feel threatened from the ASAT capabilities so they must draw their boarder strategies to prevent from risk of planted satellites (Krepon, 2008).

Therefore, the nations who are strongly dependent on its space assets must move towards weaponization of space for the survival of their space resources. Tellis explained that “Dragon space program as the expansion of its national power and to preserve their internal stability and neutralize the external threats to ensure its national security and national interest” (Tellis, 2007).

### **Militarization of Space and its impact’s on South Asia**

There are long standing disputes in a form of ideological, diplomatic controversies, military fights, and status disputes among India, China and Pakistan; three major wars happened between India & Pakistan in 1948, 1965 and 1971, and Sino- India War in 1962. As a result, the relationship has been further converted from diplomatic rivalry to war and tried to alter their military powers. The importance of this triangular relationship among these three regional powers China, India and Pakistan are “geographically” and “strategically” well observed in the outer world (Kapur, 2011).

### **Sino-Indian Adversarial relationship**

In 1962, the war was enunciated between China and India over the territorial disputes and a large part of Indian land was occupied by the Chinese force. The relationship between China and India converted into a strategic relation after the end of cold-war and both nations further developed their economic ties due to interdependency of each other (Kapur, 2011). Sino-India considered each other their opponents on military grounds that’s why they have been started their rivalry competition in the outer space. In 2005, India vetoing from the Prevention of Arms Race in Outer Space (PAROS) Treaty and as well as Indo-US space cooperation including nuclear deal has compelled China to take preemptive measures against the expansion of India and U.S military activities in space of South Asia, which cause the instability in security environment of South Asian region (Hagt, 2008).

### **Indo-Pakistan relationship-Action Reaction**

The nature of Indo-Pakistan relationship is quite critical as both nations are always prepared to defeat each other due to which both nations fought three wars in South Asian region. India has always coercive attitude towards Pakistan through which India focusing on their further development in nuclear technology and Missile programs to counter Pakistan. In 1998, India tested its nuclear devices and in response to the Indian nuclear test Pakistan exploded six nuclear devices in Chagi hills. Pakistan attitude towards India has always been reactionary. The unequal growth of conventional forces in the region became major cause of security dilemma to raise their moderate production in sector of nuclear weapons. India is also investing huge amount on its space program and signed a bilateral agreement with U.S and Israel to establish mutual ties in both civilian and military space program as well as in nuclear deals. This space cooperation and nuclear deal has presented as an eye opener for both China and Pakistan and also extremely affected the security environment of South Asia (Jaspal, 2011).

## **Pak-China Strategic Collaboration**

Pak-China friendship is stronger than steel, sweeter than honey, deeper than oceans and higher than mountains. This friendly relationship between China and Pakistan has become an example for the rest of the world. This relationship proved during Boao Forum of Asia, when the Prime Minister of Pakistan stated that “China’s friend is our friend, and China’s enemy is our enemy” and the Chinese vice Premier Li Keqiang replied “No matter what changes take place at the international level, we will strengthen the Pakistan’s sovereignty and territorial integrity”. The Indo-Eagle space cooperation resulted into the arms buildup by India and the situation in Kashmir or the ongoing war on terrorism which threatened the regional security. China and Pakistan have realized the double face of Eagle and India while China has always been all-weathered and time tested friend of Pakistan and always stood with Pakistan in every conflicting situation of the region. China’s assistance towards Pakistan’s defense and security sector is praise worthy (Ali, 2018).

The strategic triangular relationship among India, Pakistan and China is represented as two enmities of India with Pakistan and China while one friendship i.e. Sino- Pakistan. These three regional powers are interlinked with their borders which originate geo-politics, strategic relationships and cultural difficulties. These three states are always greedy for power more than others especially military power to counter each other (Kapur, 2011). Strategically, now value of space cannot be denied and became the fourth medium of conflict in the region (Lele, 2013). On the other hand, the ongoing space competition between Eagle and Dragon has affected the security environment in South Asia (Sadeh, 2016). The growing Indian ties with Eagle over missile defense program and military space which attract to the regional and global powers. In fact, the recent ongoing proliferation in the outer space has changed the whole world scenario of space race at international and regional level due to which the world enter into a new third world war and this new competition of arms space will not only destroy the peace of South Asia but also the whole world (Jaspal, 2016).

## **Conclusion**

Today, the USA is more dependent on space and not ready to accept any treaty that limited its space freedom and has the right to prevent any nation’s actions that harm its space freedom. USA efforts to develop and deployment of space weapons for military purpose urge other nations to develop such technologies that have serious implication on world general, and particularly for South Asia. The alarming puzzle is that states are endeavoring to develop counter space capabilities to dominate in space. The Eagle continues to develop space-based interceptor for its Missile Defense System (MDS). In response China, Russia and other powers also conducted Research and Development (R&D) to build such capabilities to counter their rivals. The ASAT test by China sparks a new arm space race. The proliferation of space technology from core countries to third world countries is considered as the main reason of developing defensive-offensive space weapons. In 2005, U.S (including Israel and India) veto against the multilateral agreement on the “Prevention of An Arm Race in Outer Space” (PAROS) and increase the deployment of space weapons for continuation of its military supremacy or dominance in the world policies. In sum, this new star wars by great powers; lead states to good bye peace and disbarment and jumped in perpetual nightmares.

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