THE CHANGING TRENDS OF SECURITY: INFLUENCE ON SOUTH ASIA

Post cold war era has witnessed changing trends in security. The traditional concept of security is now being replaced by non traditional security which stresses upon broader view entailing vast concerns of social, political, economic and environmental issues leading to the comprehensive security which is becoming a more popular version of security. This shift in security paradigm is being felt in South Asia also, which comprises of world’s 1.5 population, which remains a deprived and a poor region because of the huge defense spendings. But now there is realization that the region needs to divert its resources from military towards economic and social uplift of the people, thus the stress from high politics to low politics. Both Pakistan and India need to go for more cooperative relations as to bring peace in the region which in turn will bring comprehensive security leading to the betterment of the people of South Asia.

In recent times with fast pace of globalization and complicated issues being faced by states, the understanding of security has become crucial for betterment of humanity. New and complex concerns have replaced traditional issues. The same goes for security which is undergoing changes, new concept of security is becoming more acceptable to that of traditional military security, which only stresses on military and defence aspects. But now states so as to secure security need to pay more attention to the present day problems being faced. These contemporary concerns include terrorism, poverty, population growth, health, environment, cultural, religious and ethnic
antagonism. In coming years the above mentioned issues will be posing more problems, thus making states more insecure. If we take the most general meaning of security, it implies being secure from threats. Then how much are the states nowadays secure from the number of threats being faced other than military ones?

The concept of security is ambiguous and elastic in meanings. Generally security is taken as to be free from threats. It is a complicated and a contested concept. It is iridescent and manifold if seen in different perspectives or from different angles. Broadly speaking the concept of security can be divided into two categories: traditional concept of security that emphasizes the importance of state security, and non-traditional or broadened concept of security that seeks social security. Before we go into the graphic detail about what constitutes traditional concept of security and non-traditional concept of security and their implication in the South Asian region, let us briefly look into the theoretical evolution of these two concepts.

The traditional military oriented security was seen in world politics in 1940s till the end of cold war, by the then prevalent Realist scholars, who emphasized on attainment of military power. The Realists were the traditionalists who dominated the international relations in 1940s. They believed in ‘power politics’ with states as the main actors, giving stress on attainment of more and more military power. Throughout the cold war the traditional concept of security remained dominant paradigm as both policy makers and experts strongly adhered to the conviction that international relations are essentially conflictual and that war is the only solution, a bitter reality that cannot be overlooked or denied. State security remained primary concern and objective of the followers of traditional concept of security. For them state is the pre-eminent actor in world politics and all other actors such as individuals, international organizations, NGOs etc are either secondary or unimportant. From the Realist perspective, states face security dilemma and national security is achieved through the military means. The core values of traditional concept of security are
national security and state survival; foreign policy of any state is formulated around these two basic priorities or values.

A growing number of contemporary writers have sought for an ‘expanded conception’ of security, including a wide range of considerations. After the end of cold war, the concept of security became a hot subject of debate, dissection and discourse not only among the scholars but also among the strategists, policy makers and economists. The traditional concept that had emphasized the “centrality of state as pivot of political life” or state-centric security throughout the cold war was questioned and post cold war realities rendered it somewhat implausible and untenable. The fast pace of globalization and immense interaction amongst states demonstrated that security stakes of states are interlinked and interdependent, thus requiring role and contribution of all, leading to collective action for satisfaction of human security. However post cold war era and 9/11 incident brought abut shifts in understanding of security. A number of non orthodox approaches have emerged viewing security differently.

Now the concept of security is not confined only to military threats. Non-military threats have gained much more importance and attention, thus leading to emergence of the concept of ‘soft’ security rather than the ‘hard’ security which prevailed during the cold war era. Non-military issues such as economy, trade, environment and terrorism etc. have become part of ‘low’ politics or ‘soft’ security which is the current broader view, leaving behind the only military issues captioned as ‘high’ politics or ‘hard’ security, coming under the narrow view in security studies. In early 1990’s a new approach emerged as the ‘Copenhagen School’ led by Barry Buzan, which believed in a profound widening of security to non-military issues and also made an attempt to include sub- state groups into security analysis. This school has established itself in a decade.

Further beyond the above mentioned school is the ‘deepening’ approach led by Pluralists and Social Constructionists; these embrace the idea of human security
arguing that object of security should be individual people and not the state or sub state groups. In 1990s United Nations Development Program (UNDP) further developed this concept of human security. ‘The concept of security must change from an exclusive stress on national security to much greater stress on people’s security, from security through armament to security through human development from territorial to food, employment and environmental security.’

‘The broad goal of security is to enable people to live without fears for their survival, well-being and freedom. Security thus, is not only the absence of war and conflict, but also the control of infections, diseases, the prevention of poverty, the elimination of illiteracy and the protection of sudden reversals that threaten the quality of their daily lives.’ Nowadays governments are giving more stress on issues such as drugs, health and global warming, which fall under the ‘comprehensive security’. In the late 1950s Prime Minister of Japan Ohira for the first time used the term comprehensive security. The concept was based on the idea that security was comprehensive in nature and should not be restricted only to military issues. It however did not exclude military capabilities. This approach became quite popular.

Later on in 1990s the concept of cooperative security emerged, it carried a few of elements of all others and included cooperative efforts for achieving security. These efforts would be towards issues of common concern. This has become an attractive security concept as it works around the welfare of all parties going for cooperative measures.

There is growing awareness among the people especially of the developed world that international boundaries are a weak barrier to the problems that afflict the poorest parts of the world. No doubt concept of security is undergoing changes. Military oriented security is being replaced by comprehensive and cooperative security, which gives a broader view of security.
Dimensions of security in South Asia

The geo-strategic position of the region has enhanced its importance to the world. It is neighboring Afghanistan, Iran and China and it is very near to Gulf states and Central Asia. It is not only of high interest on the agenda of United States but is keenly watched by rest of the world. But the two major states, Pakistan and India have been foes, thus bring instability to the region.

Considering the security of South Asia, it concerns the well being of nearly 1.3 to 1.5 billion people seeking stability and economic development. Security, which should not be taken as protection in military terms also involves the economic well being of the people for lasting peace, stability and cooperation.\(^{18}\)

Since inception both the largest but antagonist states of South Asia, India and Pakistan have been indulged in hostile relations leading to crisis, and even wars. Pakistan and India joined the nuclear club as \textit{de-facto} nuclear powers when they crossed the nuclear threshold by conducting nuclear tests in May 1998. The importance of security, peace and stability of the region soared to an all-time high and the region became the most dangerous nuclear flash point in the world. The strategic importance of the region after the cold war and the demise of Soviet Union became a frequent and favourite subject of debates. Rapidly growing economy of India and Pakistan providing access to Central Asian states oil and gas resources have further highlighted the importance of South Asian region, but in this region, peace and security is the pre-requisite.

The security approach which is dependent on military is inadequate to deal with the nature of threats to the security of South Asia. Therefore it is now imperative to consider the non military threats.\(^{19}\) The policy makers of both the countries have been paying more attention to enhance the defensive and offensive capabilities against each other, which have undermined the socio-economic development of both countries. Even though the achievements in missiles technology and nuclear capability have enhanced the image of both the countries in the world but
both countries have to divert huge proportion of their resources towards these fields. The question arises that how both the antagonist states can improve their social security without neglecting national security. Both countries can keep both national security and social security well balanced by introducing and incorporating liberal ideas to their policies.

The nuclearization of South Asia in 1998 has further complicated security arrangements between the two rival states and has made the region a nuclear flashpoint. The event of 9/11 has further highlighted the status of the region, nowadays South Asia has become a very sensitive region due to terrorism and nuclearization. With world’s 1/5th population, the region provides immense opportunities to its large population. The nuclear neighbors share a long border but look upon each other with hatred, suspicion and mistrust. Pakistan is strategically located at the cross roads of three important ancient civilizations. It can act as a bridge between Central Asia and the Middle East and South Asia. This will only be possible when Pakistan is willing to provide transit facilities to its neighbors specially India due to its growing its economy. This could not be materialized due to the ongoing antagonism between Pakistan and India for the last more than 60 years. Both have been involved in an arms race with huge stockpiles of weapons assuring mutual destruction. The security paradigm of the region is dominated by this dangerous strategic competition.

The traditional hostility has led the decision makers of both the states to adhere to the military security thus spending large amounts of their resources towards militarization. Consequently, already underdeveloped region has failed to enhance the economic and social conditions of its people, as a result this region has lagged behind in over all development. To upgrade their offensive and defensive capabilities, managers of both the countries have been laying more emphasis on military strength and for this purpose, huge expenses on defence expenditure on both sides scored high. Not only this, but huge amounts are being spent on maintenance and research towards military. An expensive arms race is being witnessed especially of
nuclear weapons that required immense resources. Testing of new and more devastating missiles are a regular feature. This is all being done by spending a large amount of budget on their military capabilities, as a result, both posses a large, modern and sophisticated military.

Now looking at the other side of the picture, due to the massive spending on military, as a consequence the other side gives a bleak picture of the socio-economic conditions of its people which were neglected leading to under development in many sectors. The region is poverty ridden leading to grave social and economic problems.

There have been ups and downs in relations of both countries since their creation. From 1965 war to Tashkent Agreement then 1971 war and debacle of East Pakistan and then Simla Agreement, 1998 detonation of nuclear weapons to the public embrace between the two prime ministers at Lahore; both witnessed high tensions at Kargil and then the serenity of Agra in 2001; the confrontation during 2002 and then the handshake at 12th SAARC Summit in Islamabad and recurrent rounds of CBMs. The latest developments manifest that bilateral relations between the belligerent neighbors have been improving, but any results of the composite dialogue process are yet awaited. “Even though progress has been essentially on softer and less contentious issues, the security environment has improved significantly”.

“Although Karl Deutch’s ‘security community’ may not be just around the corner in South Asia, the region could be more peaceful, stable and secure if the countries bring about changes in their attitudes. ‘South Asian security could be enhanced by way of making the countries of the region more interdependent and less ‘clausewitzian’, people to people contacts and the SAARC could still be the best hope for the socio-economic development and eventually for security’.” Both need to develop a culture of peace and understanding as there is realization in both the countries that their common enemy is
poverty. The defense expenditures are growing but have failed to provide absolute security to either side.\textsuperscript{22}

The core issue between the two as repeatedly said by President Musharraf, is Kashmir issue.\textsuperscript{23} India and Pakistan could institutionalize the dialogue process on Kashmir by constituting a Joint Working Group, which should include representatives from the government and also from the civil society.\textsuperscript{24} This will help to sustain the dialogue process.

However, there are certain apprehensions also; “it is taken as even if the Kashmir dispute is resolved in favor of Pakistan’s wishes, it remains a moot question whether this can bring much sought amity between India and Pakistan, as the pre and post-partition memories have seared the minds of many people in both countries, which becomes a stumbling block to open a new bright chapter in friendly relationship”\textsuperscript{25}

The outcome of any clash, whatever the cause is, going to be disastrous, as now that both of them possess nuclear weapons.\textsuperscript{26} As to avert a nuclear confrontation in South Asia both need to institutionalize CBMs. Mutually acceptable solutions need to be found through genuine debate and talks.

The relations between India and Pakistan have been based on fear and mistrust, which both sides have been unable to overcome. It is fundamentally important to improve the relations between the two neighbors through people to people contact. This will also assist in building trust and overcoming mutual fear. But due to its unorganized nature the people to people level contacts have not brought about respective results. These people to people level contacts should be institutionalized at all levels, in particular, exchange of parliamentarians, academicians, journalists, artists, writers and students from both sides will play a vital role in improving the relations. “Freedom of movement in terms of greater people to people contact and now trade and commerce opportunities can act as a catalyst for charge both in the Kashmir as well as between India and Pakistan”.\textsuperscript{27}
Sincere efforts need to be promoted for bilateral and regional economic cooperation. Trade links need to be exploited to realize full potential of trade between India and Pakistan. As to increase trade between the two, efforts should be made to give each other the status of most favorite nation.

At the 12th SAARC summit, the Islamabad Declaration concluded deciding that the member states wanted to strengthen this organization and in this context the role of Pakistan and India is significant. As to make SAARC more effective such acts should be avoided when in 2005 India refused to attend the SAARC summit. Strengthening of SAARC will definitely have a constructive impact over the relations between India and Pakistan.

Public debate should be initiated in both the countries to know exactly what they want from each other and what they are ready to give each other. This debate can be held outside and inside the Parliaments. Both need to show spirit of give and take to facilitate vital decisions.

A detailed multi-dimensional approach is to be adopted for conflict resolution in which bilateral dialogue is the only rational option and other alternatives are inconceivable. Both states must show honesty and flexibility in resolving the disputes, since there can be no meaningful negotiations from inflexible position.28

Conscious efforts are needed by both the countries to lessen popular hostility towards each other. Especially mindset of military establishment needs to be changed. New Delhi and Islamabad should avoid controversial statements that have negative implications. Declaratory statements have significant impact in the confidence building process. Media can play a very important role in this regard, so both the states should direct their media to help the government in molding public opinion and developing a positive mindset.
Both countries must be watchful of the intentions of hardliners on both sides of the divide as hinted by the Pakistani foreign minister when he said that majority of Pakistani and Indian people wanted peace and resolution of the issue through dialogues, but some hard-liners on the both sides were blocking the way of dialogues, as they wanted war. Both governments should involve the conservative forces in the bilateral confidence building measures. These rightist forces can be tackled better by accommodating them in the process and not isolating them. The governments should consciously work towards facilitating travel of such polarized groups to the other side.

The hope of peace lies in the unprecedented developments in the Pakistan-India relations since 2003. They have moved towards rapprochement in a coordinated and cautious fashion, over a fragile foundation of their relationship.

Kashmir dispute has remained the real bone of contention between India and Pakistan. They had wars and serious conflicts over Kashmir. They allege each other for cross border terrorism. Consequently, appalling relationship entails arms race. Heavy military spending incapacitates India and Pakistan’s abilities to address their socio-economic problems even to a minimal standard. Arms buildup simply cannot be financed without neglecting economic development at home. The economic development’s negligence carries its own dynamics. These dynamics pose a negative influence on the internal security of a state. Therefore, it is imperative that both states should resolve their conflicting issues rationally. More precisely, the CBMs, strengthening of SAARC, regional trade and respecting the sovereignty of each other could shun aside the perils of security dilemma and develop amelioration in Indo-Pakistan relationship, and issues like Baghlihar dam should not be allowed to disrupt the peace process.

Both countries need to harness economic and socio cultural co-operation as to enhance popular support for peace efforts. An increase in trade and cultural exchange will result in
enhanced communication between the two thus helping in creating an atmosphere without tensions.\textsuperscript{31}

Positive aspect of this process is that for the first time Kashmiris are involved in talks and both sides have realized that they must show some flexibility. India has realized that its pace of economic growth and development cannot afford more conflicts, and India wants to get over its regional conflicts. It’s now aiming at a global role i.e. acquiring a permanent seat at UN Security Council. Both states have realized now that they need to resolve conflicts because a little miscalculation or misperception on the part of both states may prove fatal.

\textbf{Conclusion}

The conflict between India and Pakistan has undermined the political, social and economic security in the region which needs to be addressed by dialogue. Lasting peace is also a pre-requisite for the development of the people of the region. It is a positive indication that experts from India and Pakistan are talking about conflicts ranging from Kashmir to Siachen, Wuller Barrage, Sir Creek and nuclear confidence, and both are serious in preventing in outbreak of war. But along with this, it is a fact that both the neighbors are constantly increasing their defense budgets, regularly testing nuclear missiles, developing and procuring new and sophisticated weapons. As to create a more positive security environment in the region there is a need for a working relationship between Pakistan and India. On contentious issues both will have to show compromises. Mutual trust and good will have to be created. Rigidity in their behavior is to be removed as to lessen, mistrust. Along with official diplomatic relations both need to channelize track II and track III diplomacy. South Asia gives a picture where there is poverty and under development and also is facing intra-state and inter-state conflict. It is therefore vulnerable both from traditional and current definition of security. Thus making the task of the statesmen of both sides is even more difficult. In bringing about lasting and cherished goal of peace and prosperity in South Asia both the states have to develop habit of resolving of conflicts.
“Income, education, and health levels are lower in South Asia than in most regions, south Asia includes about 23% of the world's population but as much as 39% of the world's poor, where the poor are defined as those whose local purchasing power is equivalent to less than US $1 a day”. Huge resources are required to uplift the condition of people of the region with developing economies, the only way is to ease the tension in the region is to encourage cooperative security thus eventually leading to diversion of resources spent on military towards other sectors as to benefit the people. For a stable and peaceful South Asia, both Pakistan and India need to carry on the peace process by which they can lessen tensions and also may even resolve some of the contesting issues.
Notes and References


2. Ibid.


4. Ibid.


11. Ibid, p 13


15. Ibid, p 297
16  Ibid p 298
19  P.R. Chari, “Security and Governance in South Asia: Their linkages” in P.R. Chari (ed.) Security and Governance in South Asia, (Colombo: Regional Centre for Strategic Studies, 2001) p 17
20  Talat Masood, “Taking the peace process forward”, Dawn (Lahore), October 19, 2005
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25  Joseph Benjamin (ed), Indo Pak Relations, Prospect and Retrospect (New Delhi: Reference Press, 2004), p 2
27  Talat Masood, opcit.
29  The News, (Islamabad) May 28, 2005