An Analysis of South Asian Security Complexes through the lens of Regional Security Complex Theory

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ABSTRACT

This research paper is an attempt to offer a broader analysis of South Asian security complexes through the lens of Regional Security Complex Theory. For the development of Regional Security Complex Theory, Buzan and Ole used South Asia as a prime case. According to them, South Asian states are facing multi-dimensional security challenges mainly due to internal security dynamics which are also linked with external factors and this factor makes security scenario of South Asia more complex. The most dominant country in the region is India due to growing economy, huge military spending, and large population. Its dominance in South Asia makes it a unipolar region (where only one country dominates and faces no competition) but at the same time, its hostile relations with Pakistan and vulnerability in case of any predicament make South Asian order bipolar. This research study has employed the qualitative method in which secondary sources of data have taken from existing literature, published and unpublished research works. One of the main finding of this research is that a strong partnership and cooperation between among regional states particularly between Pakistan and India to counter terrorism and extremism is very important and at the same time, an amicable solution on Afghan conflict is must for regional peace and stability.

Keywords: *Regional Security Complex Theory, Security Complexes, South Asia*

Introduction and Background

Regional Security Complex Theory is primarily based on the notion of security dynamics and regional models. According to Barry Buzan and Ole Waver, different regions are the vital and integral part of world politics. They developed a theoretical framework for analyzing regional level as an independent subsystem which includes characteristics that are distinctive, sturdy and independent from global level phenomenon. They developed this useful framework of 'Regional Security Complex Theory' for analyzing regional perspective of security in the book 'Regions and Power: the Structure of International Security'(Barry Buzan, 2003). According to Buzan and waver, RSCT can penetratingly differentiate between regional and global level. Regional Security Complexes exist throughout the global system and "are defined by durable patterns of amity and enmity taking the form of sub global, geographically coherent patterns of security interdependence.(Barry Buzan, 2003)" According to Buzan, with regional complex theory, global security and regional security can separately be analyzed on the basis of something more realist and materialist than the constructivist concept of

imagined political communities bound together by shared ideas and characteristics. First and foremost, the conceptualization of Regional Security Complex Theory requires the clarification of several key definitions; namely, what is meant by the term 'region' and term 'security'. Regional security complex is best to understand "outside –in" and "inside-out" security analysis as it gives clear view of security dynamics by distinguishing superpowers, great powers and regional powers. Super powers are those who have capability to maintain their hegemonic statuses at global level, great powers are those who can go beyond two or more than two regions to pursue their interests and regional powers are those who are influential in just their own region. Regional security complex theory uses regional structure such as regional boundaries, anarchy-hierarchy, power polarity, discourses of peace and hostility- securitization and desecuritization to evaluate important changes in the region (Barry Buzan, 2003). It is known fact that patterns of relations among regional states whether it is friendly or hostile because of conflicts or domestic factors actually shape the regional security dynamics. According to the Regional Security Complex Theory (RSCT), to analyze the security of a region, RSCT requires analysis at four levels:

i. The first level of analysis regional security is within state or domestic level, where domestic security challenges, state's power structure, nature and vulnerabilities are analyzed in order to understand its security policies and challenges.

ii. Second level of analysis is regional level, where relations among regional states are analyzed. This nature of relations among regional states forms the regional security complex.

iii. In the third level intra-regional interactions have been analyzed because the relation of one region with other regions can affect significantly an RSC.

iv. Finally the global level, where it examines the role of global powers in the region, and also whether the superpower is influencing a region to pursue its own interests and thus how it affects RSC.

Domestic Security Complexes

Regional states are experiencing extreme level of poverty, deprivation, lack of basic education and health facilities, underdevelopment and insufficient resources. Due to economic crisis, all these problems have been aggravated. Due to this crisis, exports have been reduced, unemployment rate has been increased and foreign direct investment has dried up. In comparison to many other countries of the world, social and human development indicators are much lower in South Asian states. A large number of people are homeless in these states and do not have access to clean drinking water, food, basic health and education facilities (Malik, 2014). As a result of this situation, South Asia has developed a culture of religious, ethnic, communal and sectarian intolerance. The rise in terrorism, religious extremism, violence and militancy are few evidences of this intolerant culture in South Asian societies. A brief overview of threats to internal security of India, Pakistan and Afghanistan is discussed below.

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India

India is a secular, multi-ethnic and multi-religious country. The social order is very complex as it composes of 2000 casts; dividing Hindu community into rigid hierarchical groups, eight main religions; Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, Sikhism, Buddhism, Jainism etc, and around 15 different local languages in different states of the country (Manor, 1996). India is the biggest state by area, population and economy in the region, with a diverse and complex society. India is facing multi-dimensional threats such as ethnic clashes, religious conflicts, separatist movements, terrorists' attacks and armed insurgency in Kashmir. The separatist movements on the basis of ethnicity are gaining momentum in the states of Assam, Nagaland, Manipur, Tripura, Meghalaya and Mizoram demanding separation from the country (Varshney, 2007). The separatist movement in Punjab (Khalistan Movement) is based on both religion and ethnic grounds (Singh, 2000). The Hindu-Muslim religious clash is a major conflict in India (Varshney, 2001). There are number of incidents of lynching of Muslims but one major incident happened in the state of Gujarat in 2002 when Narendra Modi was chief minister of Gujarat. A train of pilgrims was coming back from the destruction Ayodhia Mosque which was disputed. The train caught fire and fifty seven pilgrims got burnt. Muslims were believed to be responsible for this incident and in reaction to that under Modi's watch, right-wing Hindus went burnt and killed 2000 Muslims in Gujarat and these mobs were helped by state police. (Majumde, 2011) The conflicts in the country are mainly ethnic and religious in nature. There are number of other factors which are contributing in worsening the situation such as underdevelopment, poverty, gender inequality, corruption, bad governance and lack of basic health and education facilities.

In 2018, United Nations Human Rights issued a report on Human rights violation in Kashmir raised concern that there is an urgent need to address this issue as Indian security forces are involved in brutal killings, abductions, forced disappearances and rapes of Kashmiri men and women (Watch, 2018). According to Human rights organizations, in comparison to year 2012, there was almost 30 percent increase in communal violence during general election in 2014 (Watch, 2014). According to the Indian Ministry of Home Affairs, in the year 2013, almost 133 people died and over 2000 got injured in almost 823 incidents of communal violence and a total of 644 and 650 incidents of communal violence were reported in the year 2014 and 2015 respectively (T. E. Times, 2019b).

These details were given by the ministry but according to the report issued by National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), almost 1,227 incidents of communal violence were reported in the year 2014 only (Express, 2015). In the beginning of 2019, Dan Coats, Director of National Intelligence USA told US lawmakers that the policies of BJP under Prime Minister Narendra Modi have intensified communal conflicts in most of the BJP majority states (T. E. Times, 2019b). According to Human Right Watch report 2018, extreme violence has been continued against minorities especially Muslims and Dalits (lowest cast in Hinduism) by Hindu extremist groups (Watch, 2018). The rise in Hindu extremism in the country especially under the BJP government in recent years has serious consequences. It is a major threat not only to the internal security of India but also to the regional security.

Pakistan

Pakistan is a multi-ethnic, multi-cultural and multi-lingual society. These social features make this society diverse but at the same time pose serious threats to its internal security and serious challenges to its governance. Since its inception, Pakistan has been suffering due to lack of political stability and incompetent governance which has created serious challenges such as sectarianism, terrorism, religious extremism, intolerance, food, water and power shortages and top of all economic instability. Underdevelopment, poverty and inaccessibility of due share in country's wealth are the root causes of separatism in Baluchistan and various ethnic and sectarian conflicts among various groups (Sahir & Qureshi, 2007).

War on terror in Afghanistan is another factor which has badly affected Pakistan's internal security. It was initiated by America after 9/11 attacks on US by the members of terrorist group Al Qaeda. In return of this terrorist activity, US attacked Afghanistan and Pakistan joined U.S's war against global terrorism. Pakistan deployed its military troops in Federally Administrated Tribal Areas (FATA) and Provincially Administrated Tribal Areas (PATA) to maintain its hold over the areas. After removal of Taliban regime due to US-led invasion in Afghanistan, Taliban and their supporters were pushed to leave Afghanistan and find out safe places to hide in nearby places and carry out their terrorist activities, so they moved to adjacent tribal areas of Pakistan and carried out deadly attacks from Pakistan's soil. Due to the presence of Pakistan's military in those areas, Taliban and other terrorist groups started attacking Pakistani security forces and civilians. In response, Pakistan's military launched several operations on massive scale to curb the menace of terrorism. Unfiltered mobility at Pak-Afghan border was the biggest challenge as there were direct terrorist attacks from Afghan soil on Pakistani civilians at public places and security personnel. Resultantly, it badly affected the overall socio-economic development of Pakistan. According to the official reports, the economic loss is estimated around US$ 120 billion and Pakistan has lost almost 70,000 civilians and security forces personnel in suicide bombings and terrorist attacks (H. Khan, 2013). Pakistan launched several military operations across the country to curb terrorism. When Army Public School in Peshawar was attacked by militants where they brutally killed innocent children and staff members, Government of Pakistan developed a National Action Plan in 2015 to crack down on terrorism (Saffee, 2015). After the successful military operations of Zarb-e-Azb, Khyber I-IV and Rad-ul Fasad which were launched as a measure to counter terrorism under National Action Plan, Pakistan has achieved progressive improvement in country's overall security. There is a significant decline in suicide attacks, bombings and causalities.

A Sydney based research institute for Economics and Peace issued terrorism index report in 2017. According to the report, Pakistan has achieved significant success in combating terrorism and there is a significant decline in terrorist incidents and causalities.("Impact of War in Afghanistan and Ensuing Terrorism on Pakistan's Economy,") Despite of all these efforts, Pakistan continues to be the victim of state-sponsor terrorism from its neighbors. In March 2016, Pakistan's law enforcement agencies arrested one Indian spy named Kulbhushan Jhadav while entering into Pakistan at Pak-Iran border. Later on, he confessed that he is a serving Indian naval officer and his objective was to create instability and unrest in Baluchistan and Karachi. In December 2010, Ahmed Shuja Pasha; former Director

General Military Operations Pakistan presented a report to the member of National Assembly. According to the report, Baloch separatists are getting funding from Russia, UAE and India to create insurgency in the province (P. Today, 2015). The unrest and conflict in Afghanistan is one of the major hurdles in regional peace, security and development. Pakistan hosted millions of Afghan refugees which has not only burdened Pakistan's economy but also created internal security threats as Pakistan is still facing terrorist attacks from militants hide-outs present in Afghanistan.

Under National Action Plan, Pakistan's government decided to take serious actions against all terrorist groups and organizations operating from Pakistani soil and damaging Pakistan's image globally. In the wake of Pulwama attack in Jammu and Kashmir 2019, Pakistan's law enforcement agencies arrested 44 members of different banned organizations including son and brother of Masood Azhar; Chief of Jaish-e-Muhammad (Post, 2019). According to authorities, this crackdown is a part of National Action Plan and it will continue against banned outfits to curb terrorism and violence across the country.

Current insurgency and conflict in Baluchistan and Pashtun Tahafuz Movement (PTM) against extra judicial killings, forced disappearances and abductions in Baluchistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa pose serious threats to internal security of Pakistan (Ahmed, 2018). Internal political and economic instability has extremely affected the overall development of the country.

Afghanistan

Afghanistan is a mountainous and landlocked country which is bordered by China, Pakistan, Turkmenistan, Iran, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. Afghanistan has been the main battle field for USA and NATO forces since 9/11 incident, which has caused the instability in the whole region but specifically in Pakistan as a front-line state in war on terror. Decades of war have left Afghanistan one of the poorest underdeveloped countries in the world.

War on terror in Afghanistan has become the longest war in America's history. Afghanistan's security situation has become worse as Taliban are even stronger now than before and attacks from Taliban are bigger, deadlier and more frequent now. USA has realized that there is no military solution for Afghan conflict as this conflict not only has damaged Afghanistan's economy and infrastructure but has become the costliest war for America as well. As Trump's Administration decided to end this longest and costly through negotiations with Taliban, regional countries especially Pakistan and China have welcomed USA's decision but want to make sure that this should be done in a very systematic way otherwise country would be in more chaos which is not favorable to China and Pakistan. Pakistan is facilitating USA-Taliban talks as a mediator (T. J. Times, 2019). India has shown its concern regarding sudden decision of USA to withdraw from Afghanistan as it was enjoying an influential role in Afghanistan under America's Umbrella (Iqbal, 2018). Internal as well as external factors are complicating internal security environment of the country because everyone wants a piece of Afghanistan because of its massive natural resources reserves and it is a gateway to Central Asia which is also considered as one of the most resource-rich region. (SAREEN, 2018). Afghanistan's internal security situation has become one of the reasons of

poverty, forced migrations to neighboring states (especially Pakistan) and internal displacements (Saghafi-Ameri, 2011).

All plans of state building at different times in Afghanistan's history failed primarily because of its societal structure which is complex, conservative and tribal in nature (Dasgupta, 2013). However, the main challenge Afghanistan is facing currently is an absence of effective government and Taliban are getting stronger and aggressively betrothed in promoting their own interests in the country.

Inter-State Security Complexes

Inter-state security complexes mainly focus on relations between two states in their security perspective as well as the regional security. For that reason, the subsequent discussion attempts to discuss Pakistan's security relations with two important regional states; India and Afghanistan.

Pakistan-India Relations

Muslims and Hindus of subcontinent struggled for the freedom on the basis of separate religious identities. They got independence from Britain and Pakistan and India came into existence in August 1947. Since the independence, India and Pakistan have been in hostile relations due to the fact that after independence, separate religious identities turned into political and military conflict between India and Pakistan. The Pakistan-India antagonistic relationship shaped the foundation of the Regional Security Complex at domestic and regional level. Barry Buzan explained this point as:

"Before independence, the process of securitization was based on Muslim claims for politico-cultural autonomy. Afterwards, it was partly based on rival claims to territory (especially Kashmir) by the new states, partly on status and balance of power issues, partly on claims of mutual interference in domestic instabilities, and partly on the rival principles of legitimacy embedded in their constitutions. The rivalry generated three wars (1947-8, 1965, and 1971), several serious crises in which war looked a possibility (1984, 1987, 1990, 1999, and 2002) and numerous lesser military incidents. (Buzan, 2003)

In 1947, when Britain decided to leave, it divided subcontinent into two states; Muslim State Pakistan and speculatively secular but practically Hindu State India on 14 August 1947 and 15 August 1947 respectively. This was the largest human migration world has ever seen but it was not peaceful as riots broke out across the region due to various factors and caused violence. Disputed territory of Kashmir is a core issue between the two countries. In 1947 and the following year, Pakistan and India fought first war over Kashmir. In October 1947, few tribesmen belonged to Pakistan's North West Frontier Province (now Khyber Pakhtunkhwa) invaded in Kashmir; a Muslim majority state. When Kashmiri Muslims revolted against Hindu Maharaja and he faced an external invasion as well, the Maharaja of Kashmir asked Indian government to help in return for acceding to India.

He handed over states control to Indian government but it was not confirmed that the Maharaja did this under pressure from the Indian government or took this decision freely. Indo-Pak first War continued till the second half of 1948. Pakistan and India agreed to hold a referendum in the state which is yet to be held.

Currently, Pakistan holds one third part of the Kashmir which is referred to be as Azad (free) Kashmir. India holds remaining two-third part referring to as Jammu and Kashmir State.

In 1965, both countries fought second war over Kashmir (Historian). In 1971, Pakistan and India fought third war and this time over East-Pakistan. Zulifkar Ali Bhutto refused to accept the results of 1970's general election as Mujeeb-ur-Rehman's party won the majority seats. It was Pakistan's internal and political matter but India got involved and supported guerilla war by Awami League workers against Pakistan's military. Pakistani Military cracked down on Dhaka and on India's involvement, Pakistani air force launched pre-emptive strikes on Indian airbases in northwest part of the country. In response India launched a combined air, sea and land attack on Pakistan. Pakistan's military surrendered at Dhaka and East Pakistan became an independent country as Bangladesh on 16 December 1971. In 1999, Kargil war was the first armed conflict that took place after both countries became nuclear powers.

India blames Pakistan based religious organizations Jaish-e-Muhammad which operates under Masood Azhar and Lashkar-e- Taiba which operates under Hafiz Saeed for the terrorist activities in India. According to Indian government, Masood Azhar; Chief of Jaish-e-Muhammad was master mind behind attack on Indian parliament in 2001, terrorist attack on Pathankot air force base, terrorist attack on army camps in URI and terrorist attack on Central Reserve Police Force (CRFP) in Pulwama Kashmir (Post, 2019). Indian government could not provide any actionable evidences against Pakistan. In 2016, Indian media stated that India has launched surgical strikes on militants in a response to alleged attack on its army base in URI Kashmir in which 19 Indian soldiers were killed. Pakistan denied allegations of any involvement in URI attack. According to Indian media, 19 Pakistani soldiers died in surgical strikes but Pakistani army denied the event and said it was not more than cross border firing at line of control in which two Pakistani soldiers were killed and 9 were injured (BBC, 2016)

Indian Government blamed Hafiz Saeed; co-founder of Lashkar-Taiba and Chief of Jama'at-ud-Da'wah (Islamic Organizations in Pakistan) for Mumbai attacks on November 26th 2008 killing 164 people and several injured (Post, 2019). Elias Davidsson; a German Jewish author wrote a book on the incident entitled: *The Betrayal of India: Revisiting the 26/11 Evidence*. The author revealed through documented proofs and facts that the whole incident of Mumbai attacks was planned by Indian Intelligence agency RAW and Israeli Intelligence agency Mossad along with the help of America to put external pressure on Pakistan. He further added that all the institutions of India such as government, parliament, bureaucracy, armed forces, Mumbai police, RAW, judiciary and media worked collectively to cover the truth behind this incident (McQueen, 2017).

In February 2019, a Kashmiri young man attacked buses in Pulwama Kashmir carrying CRFP personnel. According to the reports, almost 45 army men killed and many were severely injured. Indian government blamed Jaish-e-Muhammad and Pakistan for the attack and claimed that Jaish-e-Muhammad was the responsible of attack which Pakistan has denied. The attack on CRFP in Pulwama led to the most serious conflict escalation between the two countries in recent

years (Post, 2019). India breached Pakistan's sovereignty by entering in Pakistan's airspace on 26 February 2019 and dropping bombs in an empty area near LOC claiming it an attack on Jaish-e-Muhammad's training camp. Pakistan denied Indian claims and on 27 February 2019, Indian airplanes again entered in Pakistan's air space and this time Pakistan shoot down India's two fighter planes. International community asked both countries to de-escalate the conflict as both countries are nuclear powers. America, UK, France and Israel supported India's move but Pakistan's response was shocking for international community.

China supported Pakistan by saying that India should stop blaming Pakistan for Kashmir uprisings as Indian government itself responsible for the uprisings in Kashmir due to wrong handling (T. E. Times, 2019c). France with US and UK backing made a move to declare Masood Azhar a global terrorist under the United Nations sanctions regime but for the fourth time China blocked the move (T. E. Times, 2019a). USA and other member states of UNSC showed their concern that blocking the move to declare Masood Azhar as terrorist is not the right decision and not in favor of regional peace but according to China, it will not eliminate the root cause of the issue but will affect the regional security adversely (B. Today, 2019). On May 1st 2019, China lifted its objections over the move, UN added Masood Azhar to its of global terrorists (AlJazeera, 2019).

On August 5, 2019, India revoked Kashmir's constitutional status and violated its previous agreements by scrapping Article 370 and 35A. This article allows Kashmir to have its own administrative government and constitution capable of making decisions for all matters except foreign affairs, defense and communications. Abrogation of Article 370 and 35 A which allows the citizens of other places to buy land in Kashmir, secure government local jobs, scholarships and settle there permanently would change the demography of the region which is also against the UNSC resolutions over Kashmir and also Simla Accord which Pakistan and India signed in 1972 according to which India cannot take any decision regarding Kashmir unilaterally. After the abrogation of Article370 and 35 A, Indian Government put Kashmir under security lockdown and cut off the lanes of communication, Internet, mobile phones and land lines. Top Kashmiri politicians have been house arrested. The move has increased tensions between India and Pakistan. Pakistan has taken this matter to UNSC where permanent members of UNSC had urgent meeting over Kashmir on the request of Pakistan but has not issues any statement yet. Pakistan suspended its trade and diplomatic relations with India and India's high commission was sent back to India. While giving an official statement, Chinese foreign minister Wang Yi said China does not accept India's any unilateral action as Kashmir is an historical dispute and should be resolved according to UNSC resolutions (Shabbir, 2019) .

Other than Kashmir, both countries accuse each other for supporting separatists and militants to create unrest in their respective countries. India accuses Pakistan for supporting Khalistan separatist movement in Indian Punjab. Indian government also accuses Pakistan intelligence agencies for supporting Kashmiris in their freedom movement and backing Masood Azhar and Hafiz Saeed for creating unrest in the country. At the same time, Pakistan alleges India for training terrorists and providing them financial and weaponry assistance to create instability and unrest in Pakistan. In 2016, during his speech on Independence Day, Indian Prime Minister openly expressed his support for Baloch nationalists

(India, 2016). In March 2016, Pakistan's law enforcement agencies arrested one Indian spy named Kulbhushan Jhadav while entering into Pakistan at Pak-Iran border. Later on, he confessed that he is a serving Indian naval officer and his objective was to create instability and unrest in Baluchistan and Karachi (Dawn, 2016). In December 2010, Ahmed Shuja Pasha; former Director General Military Operations Pakistan presented a report to the member of National Assembly. According to the report, Baloch separatists are getting funding from Russia, UAE and India to create insurgency in the province. (P. Today, 2015).

South Asian countries are deprived countries and facing serious challenges. Both Pakistan and India are facing severe challenges such as poverty, underdevelopment, illiteracy, unemployment etc and there is a dire need to solve their bilateral disputes especially the Kashmir issue with peaceful means. India has ignored UNSC resolutions on Kashmir issue and Indian armed forces are violating human rights in Kashmir. India-Pakistan water Dispute is also associated with Kashmir issue as India has violated the agreements under Indus-Water Treaty (IWT) by building large number of dams which has affected the flow of water to Pakistan. Legal battle regarding violation of Indus-Water Treaty between India and Pakistan at many international forums also proves that there is lack of trust between these countries.

In 1998, Pakistan successfully conducted nuclear tests and emerged as a seventh nuclear state in the world. Since Pakistan and India both became nuclear states, the nuclear dimension has become important and prominent in the discussion of South Asian security. According to many security experts in Pakistan, India is the major destabilizing factor in South Asia and all the major powers like US, France, UK and Israel are supporting India which became a major security concern for Pakistan. U.S is supporting India in arms and nuclear build ups and supports its aspirations to attain a permanent membership at UNSC as well as NSG. In this situation, prospects of regional security are not much favorable and the chances of escalation of tensions are very high.

Pakistan-Afghanistan Relations

After India, Pakistan shares second largest border estimated at 2430 kilometers (1510 miles) with Afghanistan. Pakistan's western provinces Baluchistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and tribal areas share border with Afghanistan's Southern and North Eastern provinces of Konar, Nuristan, Khost, Nangrahar, Paktia, Paktika, Zabul, Kandahar, Helmand, Nimruz, and Badakhshan. Pak-Afghan border was an open border due to which there were frequent movements between the two countries. One reason for these massive movements was the landscape of the area which makes it difficult for the security forces to monitor; secondly people on both sides of the border belong to the same ethnic group. Torkham, between Peshawar and Jalalabad and in Spinboldak between Kandahar and Quetta were main border crossings between Pakistan and Afghanistan. After 9/11, due to massive attacks on Pakistan from Afghan territory, Pakistan's army decided fencing Pak-Afghan border to restrict the terrorists. According to the sources, project will be completed by the end of 2019 (Tribune, 2018).

Undoubtedly, Pakistan-Afghanistan relations are very critical as any new development that takes place in Afghanistan can affect Pakistan's internal security

and stability directly. Afghanistan has been facing severe inter and intra- state conflicts for last thirty five years. The problems Pakistan is facing due to instability in Afghanistan includes cross border movements of terrorists, settlement of Afghan refugees, drug and human trafficking, smuggling of arms and other goods. The frequent cross border movements of militants to create unrest in both countries was the main cause of trust deficit between the two states. Due to lack of trust, both countries could not develop a firm counter terrorism strategy and a framework to resolve other problems related to Pak-Afghan border security.

Afghanistan's weak power structure, unpredictable political future, cross border suicide attacks, India's increasing role under the umbrella of American forces were the major factors which affected Pakistan-Afghanistan relations in the post 9/11 period. Due to the safe havens for militants in both countries, militants became stronger and it increased their vulnerability (Masood, 2016). US killed Mullah Mansoor in a drone strike in Noshki and it badly affected Pakistan's honest efforts in the Quadrilateral Contact Group (QCG) in attempt to find an amicable solution for Afghan conflict.

Recently, Trump Administration and its western allies realized that by ignoring Pakistan, they will not find an amicable solution for this long armed conflict as the situation in Afghanistan has deteriorated with every passing day despite the presence of American and NATO forces and Taliban are as strong as they were before. Pakistan is now playing a significant role as a facilitator between Afghan Taliban and United States of America to stabilize this war- torn state. US Special envoy for Afghanistan reconciliation, Zalmay Khalilzad and Taliban are negotiating on the issue with the help of Pakistan (T. J. Times, 2019).

It is fact that the good relations between the two states will help in countering terrorism and extremism. It will not only in favor of both countries but also for the whole South Asia. As both countries share cultural and religious affinities, they can enhance cooperation in socio-cultural and politico-economic spheres. Till 2015, Afghanistan was doing the maximum trade with Pakistan and Afghanistan was the second largest market for Pakistan's exports. Afghanistan's current situation is not in favor of Pakistan and regional imperatives such as receiving economic benefits compelling Pakistan to establish friendly and close relations with Afghanistan because Afghanistan is a gateway to resource-rich Central Asian countries and to Afghanistan, Pakistan is a way to get an access to Arabian Sea because Afghanistan is a landlocked country (Chandio, 2014). In this context, China-Pakistan Economic Corridor will be equally advantageous for the entire region.

Intra-Regional and Global Security Complexes

In the Cold war era, Pakistan joined US bloc and at the same time, it established close relations with China. As Pakistan and India were rivals, India joined USSR bloc and received massive military assistance from Soviet Union but in 1980's there was suspension of military aid from Soviets for a brief time of period. During 1990s Soviet Union restored the transfer of military technology to enhance India's military capabilities but as Pakistan initiated its nuclear and missile program, its relations with America fell to the lowest point. (Jones, 2004)

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After 9/11 attacks, America and Pakistan came closer once again as Pakistan became a front line state in US led war on terror in Afghanistan. However, Pakistan was apprehensive over growing Indo-US strategic partnership. US increased its interest in developing close strategic ties with India as India aspired to become a regional power (Javaid & Fatima, 2012). It affected Pakistan's relations with US as Pakistan believed that the US's transfer of technology to India would increase instability and marginalizes its role in South Asia. However, after 9/11, Pakistan and China have consolidated their strategic relations and at the same time, India and China also strengthened their bilateral relationship through negotiations over border dispute, economic cooperation and signing various MOUs to minimize hostility between the two countries (Jones, 2004).

The US defense support to India helped it to have an upper hand in defense capabilities over Pakistan which actually disturbed conventional balance of power in the region. However, in the past, along with supporting India, United States has also acknowledged Pakistan's sacrifices and efforts in fighting against terrorism in order to balance its relations with both countries. U.S relations with any of the countries actually depend on its agenda and national interests in the region. Presently, Indo-US strategic partnership is growing and there are great chances of strong collaboration between the two countries in different areas of their strategic interests in future (Jones, 2004).

Needless to say that Post 9/11 period has been witnessing re-alignments and re-adjustments in bilateral and multilateral partnerships among global powers and between major powers and developing states as well. In the context of South Asia; India has developed close partnerships with most of major powers especially with the US, Japan and Australia, resulting in expansion of Pakistan's strategic partnership with China. These developments are complicating regional security scenario of South Asia as USA is supporting India in its conventional and nuclear arms buildup which is compelling Pakistan to enhance its own capabilities.

India's Hegemonic Designs

The main aim of any country is to achieve hegemonic status and expand its influence over its neighboring states and beyond creates instability and insecurity in any respective region. In South Asia, India enjoys a dominant status due to its large area, second largest population of the world, growing economy and strong military and it creates insecurity among other small countries of the region. India's aggressive policies to control the region are intensifying this insecurity. India's attempts to achieve its objective are certainly not in favor of regional peace and creating threats to South Asian security (Hanif, 2010).

In May 1998, India acquired a nuclear state status by conducting successful nuclear tests. This development was certainly a disturbing factor for other regional states especially Pakistan. In response to these five nuclear tests, Pakistan conducted six nuclear tests at the same time to maintain balance of power, nuclear deterrence and to guarantee its own security against India's conventional and nuclear capabilities. After India's proactive Cold Start's strategy, Pakistan's military establishment decided to improve its nuclear doctrine and force posture with major developments at technological end such as induction of low yield ballistic missiles, cruise missiles, Multiple Independently Targetable Re-

entry Vehicles etc (Abdullah, 2018). China is cooperating with Pakistan to reduce its vulnerability to India (Abdullah, 2018) which is a great concern not just for India but also USA as Pakistan's dependence on USA for sophisticated defense supplies is reducing due to China's defense cooperation.

Presently, India is enhancing its defense capabilities by purchasing sophisticated defense supplies not only from its old ally Russia but also from USA, France and other western countries. India is quite successful in balancing its relations with its old strategic partner Russia and USA. India signed S-400 missile defense system deal with Russia worth US$ 5.43 billion (Times, October 5, 2018). It was very important strategic move by India which has multiple dimensions.

Firstly it shows that India will not abandon its oldest strategic partner Russia because of US pressure and not afraid of sanctions from USA under Countering America's Adversaries through Sanctions Act (CAATSA). As India believes that acquiring S-400 anti-aircraft defense System will help them to keep balance against China as previously China signed S-400 deal with Russia as well. US supported India's stance by stating that CAATSA is not for destructing defense capabilities of our allies. (Times, October 5, 2018) It also shows that India is successfully influencing America's policies towards South Asia and has leverage over US.

Secondly Russia was trying to maintain a good relationship with Pakistan after India's tilt towards United States; it created a fear in India that Russia can drift towards Pakistan and establish a strategic Partnership. To counter this threat, India has engaged Russia through a successful S-400 deal as India knows that Russia is cash starved country and defense technology is the major exportable commodity that Russia owns. By engaging Russia successfully, India has restricted Pakistan's political potential. In 2018, India conducted test of its supersonic interceptor missile with 5,000 km range (Times, July 14, 2018). According to Pakistani officials, India's such moves are disturbing balance of power in the region and of course, it compels Pakistan to continue upgrading its defense capabilities (Times, July 12, 2018). According to security experts, India's hegemonic plans are against Pakistan and as well as china centric. Former Indian Army Chief Bipin Rawat said that Indian army is ready and capable to fight two front wars against Pakistan and China.

The natural inequalities between India and other South Asian states have created different policy aims. In order to deal with India and its hegemonic attitude, the South Asian countries have adopted different approaches such as multilateral diplomacy and alliances with external powers but India is determined to achieve its objective to expand its influence and achieve hegemonic status. Kishore Dash explained this situation by stating that India's grand strategy splits India's relations with other states in the following three categories:

i.   Immediate Neighbors: Countries which share borders with India. India wants to dominate these states and does not want to accept interference from external powers.

ii.   Extended Neighborhood: Other countries in South Asia region and littoral states of Indian Ocean where India is challenging other powers for its dominance and protection of its own interests.

iii.   Global circle: India is trying to attain a major power status at global level to influence global affairs and politics. (Dash, 2008)

To respect sovereignty and freedom of other countries by all the regional countries is the foremost step towards regional peace and security. However, India's non-cooperative attitude towards other regional states and hegemonic attitude is not helping to promote peace and security in the region as smaller states cannot ensure stability until and unless India will not change its attitude (Z. Khan, 2005). India's hegemonic attitude, discrimination against other small South Asian states and its policies for attaining great power status pose serious security threats to South Asia. Since 9/11, South Asia has been witnessing the process of Realignment as the hegemonic attitude of India forced most of the South Asian states to align themselves with China.

Conclusion

South Asian states are facing multi-dimensional traditional as well as non-traditional security threats which are inter-linked and have an aptitude to affect world security environment. Extra-regional powers such as USA, China, Russia and other western powers are also involved in the regional affairs for promoting and saving their own strategic interests. This sort of global engagement further complicates the security scenario of South Asia. For the regional peace and security, it is very important to resolve conflicts between India and Pakistan. An amicable solution on peace Afghan conflict and promote trade among regional states are equally important to stabilize the region.

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