From State to Human Security in South Asia

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ABSTRACT

Almost a quarter of the world's population lives in South Asia. Despite the steady economic growth, the region is characterized by dense poverty and human poverty. State security cannot be achieved without human security and south Asia is facing grave security challenges due to the increasing extremism and terrorism activities. Terrorism, Sectarianism and suicide attacks are menace and main hindrance in progress and prosperity of this region. The comprehensive approach to security assumes that when people are protected, society is protected, and when society is protected, the state is protected as well. Since it is the person who needs protection, all parts of his activities, such as Social, political, economic, etc., are part of the comprehensive approach to security. The study analyzes the issue of human security and states that regional governments should focus on growing non-traditional security threats to promote the well-being and quality of life of people by investing resources in human development and application.

Keywords: *South Asia, Human security, challenges, Terrorism, Sectarianism, extremism.*

Introduction

South Asia is one of the most populous regions of the world that comprises almost a quarter of the world's total population. Despite achieving consistent rapid economic growth over the last several years and possessing huge potential for regional development and prosperity, the region is marked by severe political-economic-social-cultural inequalities. Countries in the region are categorized as low or low-middle income countries that produce almost 3 percent of the global gross domestic product. The general perception is that radical and financial policies of the governments in south Asia continue to dominantly draw on traditional state-centric security paradigm to channel bulk of their resources for state security while paying minimal attention to human development that contribute to the prevalence of dense poverty and deprivation in the region.(Javaid & Jathol, 2015)

In this article, the issue of security has been discussed by focusing on countries in South Asia, many of which, at their inception, actually had the constitutions that were closer to or modeled on the principles of UDHR unlike the constitutions of many established Western democracies. With provisions of fundamental human rights in their constitutions, it becomes particularly important to examine how the countries in the region are dealing with the question of security. Following up on the human rights provisions, security has been taken by examining two main security paradigms: state and human security. The question really focused on is

what kind of resources is being put in state security agenda vs. people security agenda.

Conceptual Framework of Human Security

The "accurate meaning of security is freedom from various internal and external threats and defined as the condition of being protected from or not exposed to danger; safety, freedom from care, anxiety or apprehension; feelings of safety or freedom from absence of danger" (The Oxford English Dictionary). Security is an absence of insecurity and threat. In Freedman's words "once anything that generates anxiety or threatens the quality of life in some respect becomes labeled a 'security problem' the field risks losing all focus" (Roberts 2005). Logically the "concept of security is essentially contested in nature due to its complexity and seamlessness, due to lack of factual objectivity, the concept has to be understood with help of broader approaches. It is a subjective problem that involves much realty depending on one's ontology" (Roberts 2005). "In the realist framework security is seen as derivative of power or mere synonym to for power" (Stone 2009). Though, generally communication by two conceptual schools of thoughts defines the "narrow" or comprehensive concept of Human Security. "The narrow conception of human security seeks to prioritize insecurities related to military and physical threats that endanger survival. The broader understanding of human security (that encompasses most definitions on human security) aims to include a far wider range of threats that also affect non-physical aspect like social, psychological, political and economic aspects of vulnerability" (Eldering 2010).

Traditional and Non-Traditional Security

"The term 'National Security' has been defined from many perspectives by many authors offering a variety of definitions but there is no consensus on its definition and the concept of national security is still conceptually ambiguous in some respects. Generally speaking, most nations like to secure generally three core values: 1) political independence; 2) sovereignty; and 3) territorial integrity. While there are plenty of definitions, a preferred contemporary version by John M. Collins who describes national security interests as: The only vital national security interest is survival of the state, with an acceptable degree of independence, territorial integrity, traditional life style, fundamental institutions, values, and honor intact" (Collins, 1973). National Security can be separated by two segments, internal as well as external: The internal security deals with the issues that arise from within the state and external security with the Global threats. "Traditionally military and political decisions are the key elements to ensure the national security but on the other hand we can also call military and non-military dimensions of national security as the integral part for the survival of a nation state".(Faruqui, 2003). "A balanced combination of these elements can best serve the security objectives of a state and secure it from internal and external threats". States can have more or less state security in the form of a combination of resources and political goals. Almost all "essentials of state competencies contribute to the promotion of state security, but of conventional armed force, and since 1945 nuclear weapons have been measured the most direct resources. "Peace advocacy often includes the mobilization of ordinary people at the grassroots level for putting pressure on governments and parliaments not to solve conflicts by the use of force. In the end, its declared goal of abandoning war as an instrument for

solving conflicts between states should be realized through international law, the establishment of the International Court of Justice, and the creation of an international authority entrusted with a monopoly on the use of offensive violence between states". (Karp, 1991).

"People rather than states denoted the obvious shift from traditional to non-traditional security measures. The traditional geopolitical security traits were prioritized during the Cold war era under the conventional view of security in the Westphalia state system. It considered the state as the sole actor and centered on state's security, preservation of its territorial integrity and political sovereignty against any military threats. Under traditional security ideas, the only real security concern is for a state to maintain its survival, power, and political influence against external threats from rival states" (Kim 2010). A major change has arisen in Westphalia's international affairs order, which has placed the separate at the center of state interests. Non-traditional fears have challenged to the traditional phenomenon of security; this includes hazards such as the environment, smog, terrorism, the mass population and catching diseases that threaten the safety of people. After the cold war, it became clear that the security of people cannot be protected by military capabilities. That's why it included the concept of human security. "Human security is a social phenomenon; it preaches freedom from fear and wants" (Tsai, 2009). Human security was first coined in 1982's Commission Report on Common Security. "In the Human Development Report 1994, an Asian scholar Mahbub-ul-Haq, initially advocated the broad idea of human security. The HDR formalizes and defines the concept, which equates security with people rather than territories, with development rather than arms, survival should not be threatened so freedom from wants and prioritized human dignity with no violence so 'freedom from fear. The notion reflected a new shift in international climate and dominance of human rights protection".(Human Development Report 1994).

"Human Security has four essential characteristics that justify its meanings: it is a universal phenomenon, its components are interdependent, it is the best ensured through prevention and lastly it is individual-centric. It emphasizes the protection of individuals from different social aspects as economy, food, health, environment, personal, community, and political oppression. The notion of the concept is to fight for the individual's rights rather the territorial interests: the emergence of this concept reflects the influence of values and norms on security studies, as opposed to the influence on national security" (Tsai 2009).

Theoretical Approaches for Human Security

The international political concern was initially based on the established theoretical approaches to realism and idealism. "The shift of the conceptual framework took place after the unpredictable end of the Cold War. At the heart of international relations, in addition to the material aspects, were the social aspects that led to the shift from national security preferences to the dominance of human security in industrialized countries. Human security: that demonstrates the power of ideas to shape how people shape their relationships globally and socially" (Kim, 2010). "The concept of human security brought all the social fields together, which was never included in International Relations and International Law as human rights, humanitarian affairs, human development and security" (Oberleitner 2005).

"Some Asian governments and analysts see human security as yet another attempt by the West to impose its liberal values and political institutions on non-Western societies. Others question the 'newness' of the concept, claiming that the emphasis of the human security idea on a broad range of non-military threats mirrors earlier, home-grown notions of 'comprehensive security' formulated by many regional government" (Acharya 2001).

The concept of human security is generally criticized for its normative approach. Some scientists have argued that this could be an ideological tool against the foreign policy of the state. This opens the door to external intervention against the national interests and sovereignty of the state. It is assumed that other national interests are convinced of a secret ethical concern. Mahbub ul Haq "proposed the idea of human security on the basis of new partnership between the North and the South based on human justice not charity; on an equitable market sharing not aid; on two way compacts not one way transfer; on mutual cooperation not unilateral conditionally or confrontation" (Tadjbakhsh 2009).

Nontraditional threats to national security

Soherwordi (2005) argues that problem arises when states invest too many resources on militarization for national security at the cost of human deprivation and misery. Several historical evidences suggest that just spending bulk of resources on military or border protection while undermining welfare of people could not protect national security. Moreover, the conventional security framework mainly draws upon protection against external threats or interstate conflicts (Gleditsch, 2002). According to scholars, if states do not effectively address the nontraditional threats to national security, "they could lead to future traditional threats or conflicts because investing resources on militarization cannot provide protection against growing non-traditional issues, for example, rapid depletion of natural resources, that are posing serious threats to human survival" (Chari & Gupta, 2003; Karim, 2013).

Economic growth might be very important to showcase rising economies, from the perspective of human security, development should be reflected in the quality of life of people. As Haq (1995) has identified that economic growth might not always be associated with human development because the former focuses only on the expansion of income or production (in aggregate) while the latter is concerned with human prosperity and expansion of human choices economic-social-cultural-political.

Food Security

Food security, as one of the main aspects of human security, was defined by the UNDP (1994) as, "food security means that all people at all times have both physical and economic access to basic food" (p. 27). Further elaborating the concept, the World Food Summit of 1996, organized at the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations Headquarters in Rome on November 13-17, declared that "Food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life" (FAO, 2008).

Health Security

According to the CHS (2003), "Health security is at the vital core of human security and illness, disability and avoidable death are 'critical pervasive threats' to human security. Health is defined here as not just the absence of disease, but as 'a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being". However, "despite the growing recognition of health security: the concept is used in different settings to refer to different things because still there is a lack of global consensus on the definition of health security" (Aldis, 2008). The World Health Organization (WHO) "uses the concept of public health security as the provision and maintenance of measures aimed at preserving and protecting the health of the population".

Health security is closely intertwined with economic security and food security. Like the other aspects of human security, South Asia as a region fares poorly compared to other regions of the world in terms of protecting its people from health-related threats. Health has not been a priority issue for many governments in the region particularly in terms of resource allocation to establish better health care infrastructure to provide at least basic health facilities to the people and protect them from preventable diseases. This is evident from the data of the World Bank that in the following show the governments' spending on public health expenditure as % of GDP in 2013: Pakistan 1%, India 1.3%, Sri Lanka 1.4%, Afghanistan 1.7%, Nepal 2.6%, Bhutan 2.7%, Bangladesh 1.3%, Maldives 6.2%.Obviously with this meager allocation of resources to health sector—among lowest in the world—the people remain highly vulnerable to health-related threats.

Failing Global Justice and Human Security

The post-Cold War environment is one of the more and more open borders. Trade and investment flows, the growth of technology have given many people more freedom and prosperity. Despite these encouraging tendencies, many problems remain unresolved and some even get worse. There are specific political-military challenges: regions with chronic tensions and constant clashes and conflicts, failed states and civil wars, excessive militarization, terrorism and organized crime. Regional conflicts continue to foster instability, disrupt economic activity and reduce opportunities for those affected. In many parts of the world, bad governance, civil conflict, and easy access to small arms have weakened state and society structures. Corruption, abuse of power, weak institutions and lack of accountability affect states and contribute to regional insecurity. Conflicts not only destroy infrastructure, including social infrastructure, but also foster crime, inhibit investment and make normal economic activity impossible. "A number of countries and regions risk becoming caught in a downward spiral of conflict, insecurity and poverty. A renewal of ethnic conflicts could plunge many countries and regions into a state of anarchy. In addition, international terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction remain nowadays the single most important threat to peace and security among nations and worldwide. In a world of global threats, global markets and global media, our security and prosperity depend on an effective multilateral system. Justice mechanisms should contribute to the development of a stronger international society, well-functioning international institutions and a rule-based international order on the condition that it is part of coherent and comprehensive approach. But in reality, military

instruments, security policy, international cooperation, multilateral treaties, international and military tribunals, and NATO relations are issues that operate in isolation and have been separating the two sides of the Atlantic". (Den, 2008).

Terrorism

The right not to be tortured and treated cruelly, inhumane or degrading should not be prohibited, even though the international terrorism threat requires greater management and implementation of law inside and outside of state borders. "Security Council Resolution 1373" approved only nearly two weeks after 9/11, was one of the most comprehensive All Member States had to make every effort to stop the support and financing of terrorist actions.The Security Council has also established a special committee called the Counter-Terrorism Committee, which oversees the implementation of all agreements currently introduced in national legislation by most Member States. Resolution 1566, adopted in October 2004, further strengthened the role of the Security Council by strengthening international sanctions and administering a wide range of individuals, groups and organizations involved in terrorist activities (Den, 2008).

An Approach of Nation-Building and State-Building

The state itself has a major responsibility for the safety of its citizens. Moreover, the state is committed to international human rights treaties and addresses these issues of human security. However, national security conflicts with human security if the administration protects its own security at the expense of people's safety. In this case, citizens are seen as a threat to the security of the regime and have to prove their loyalty over and over again. If that fails, human safety is at risk. As a bottom-up approach, human security focuses on creating a national security structure that represents and protects the fundamental rights of citizens. State's failure in providing human assistance to people suffering from serious danger due to internal war, insurgency, repression, and state's breakdown. These states argue that this is a national issue that is considered by domestic security experts. From the point of view of the Eastphalian, therefore, human security should not be a reason for foreign interference in the internal affairs of a state. This proves that the Asian approach rests on the same foundations of the Westphalian sovereign state. Asians do not offer much too human security, believing that power and principles in international relations are not two sides of the same coin. "In Palestine, where state-building and nation-building are in process, human security can be adopted as an agenda for promoting citizenship. An agenda to promote nation-building: a campaign initiated by equal citizens, who no longer accept the role of subjects and thereby of victims of social, economic and political discrimination; and to promote state-building: a campaign for a democratic, transparent security system, accountable to an elected parliament, monitored by civil society, and based on the idea of citizens' participation in the security structures, such as community policing. Indeed, in conflict areas there is a great opportunity to build and rebuild official security structures that fit with a human security approach". (Nunn, 1993)

Conclusion

The study addressed the issue of human security and state security in South Asia. Despite increasing global change in the security paradigm, South Asian countries continue to have overwhelming confidence in traditional security rather than in

people-centered security. Although the region has achieved sustained economic growth, it has not been able to improve the lives of a significant number of people and remains one of the most deprived regions in the world with major inequalities. South Asia is not really concerned with the lack of resources to promote human well-being, but rather with the inequality and preference of governments to channel the most resources that are considered important to the country. Make effective use of available human resources. As the threat to human security crosses geographic boundaries, governments in the region must work together to improve people's daily lives. However, regional cooperation such as SAARC cannot function effectively without the real political commitment of governments and lead to significant results. For this reason, the governments of the region have the responsibility to focus on human development and invest resources in human security to meet the basic needs of people and protect their dignity, which is anchored in the constitutions of many states in the region is.

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