# NON-TRADITIONAL SECURITY THREATS
# TO SOUTH ASIA

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## General

South Asia, the home to one fifth of humanity is endowed with abundant natural resources. However, like other developing world, it has so far failed to realize its full potential. In recent years, a significant economic growth has been witnessed in the region especially in India. Nevertheless, even this economic development remained unable to alleviate poverty, diseases, environmental hazards, and unemployment, mainly due to existence of both traditional as well as and non-traditional security threats, which consume major chunk of the limited regional resources. While the political stakes are very high in case of traditional security issues, non-traditional security problems can be resolved through cooperative efforts without encumbering the political and historical baggage.

The region needs paradigm shift to solve its multifaceted problems. Focus on non-traditional security challenges would be one way of preventing the region from further chaos and instability. In today's age of globalization, because of the ubiquitous traditional and non-traditional challenges, South Asia is considered as one of the most vulnerable region on the globe. Since the bulk of region's GDP is spent on defence budgets and other non-developmental expenditures, therefore, only a minuscule attention could be paid to meet the challenges of the non-traditional security threats to the region. There is an urgent need for the regional countries to evolve a cooperative framework wherein joint strategies could be worked out to resolve the non-traditional security threats.

In defining the non-traditional security, Chinese General Xiong laid down criterions, which says; these transcend national boundaries, hence transnational in character, go beyond the military sphere, have a sudden and unexpected appearance and more "frequently interwoven with traditional security threats".[1] The non-

traditional security threats include; environmental degradation, irregular migrations, infectious diseases, drug trafficking, terrorism and insurgencies, transnational crimes, water and power shortages and natural disasters. Together with many others implicit ones, these threats are dangerously threatening the human security in South Asia. As a corollary to these threats, over 35 percent[2] South Asian population suffers from abject poverty.

Inaction and lack of political will to address non-traditional security challenges indirectly exacerbates the traditional security threat to the region. Adding to it, the lack of trust between the two traditional rivals; India and Pakistan further creates an element of improbability in the regional stabilization. While the significance of the confidence building and maintenance of the prevalent level of deterrence to traditional security threats cannot be overemphasized, all South Asian states would have to shift their focus to address the non-traditional security threats to their viscous securities through a collective vow.

**Main Argument**

This paper aims to bring into sharp focus various types of non-traditional security threats, which are afflicting the South Asian region. An attempt has been made to examine why the regional security is inextricably linked to the real threats and is given a superficial treatment. However, the instability to regional security calculus will exacerbate if the South Asian states do not collectively address the issues related to human security caused by aforementioned non-traditional security threats. The central question of the paper is; how South Asian countries could be integrated to fight their common enemies, posing threat to its over 1.6 billion populace. With the hope that all countries of the region will recognize this common threat and embark upon joint efforts to address it to the benefit of all, an endeavour is being made to explore the common grounds for the cooperation and integration at the regional level while dealing with these non-traditional threats.

**Conceptual Understanding**

Re-conceptualisation of security has become necessary because of gradual but fundamental and long-term changes in the international system. Some of the prime factors that have necessitated a new thinking on the concept and scope of security studies are the demise of cold war that has led to global interdependent world; states are now more than ever dependent on international society and institutions.

Human security and development are the main non-traditional security challenges to South Asia. Except Sri Lanka and Maldives, the conflict prone region falls at the bottom quartile of the human development index. With respect to the human poverty index, South Asian countries are on the breadline once compared with rest of the world. This is the only region in the world, which spends less than 30 US dollars per capita on healthcare per year, which is even $2/3^{rd}$ of what Sub-Saharan Africa.[3] Based on purchasing power parity of 1 US dollar a day, over 35 percent people[4] of South Asia survive below the poverty line. This percentage would be doubled, if the universal criterion of US $2 a day is made as the basis for drawing the poverty line in South Asia. In that case, 80 percent Indians and 73.6 percent Pakistanis would fall in the category of poor.[5]

Against the backdrop of all these factors, the late $20^{th}$ century has seen a rise of non-traditional security issues (in particular human security). The genealogy of the idea can be related to if not traced back to the growing dissatisfaction with prevailing notions of development and security in the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s. Economics undoubtedly led the way with its critiques of the dominant models of economic development beginning in the 1960s. Beginning in the 1970s, the Club of Rome group produced a series of volumes on the "world problematique" which were premised on the idea that there is a complex of problems troubling men of all nations: the poverty. Degradation of the environment: alienation of youth: rejection of traditional values and inflations and other monetary and economic disruptions.[6] In the 1980's two other independent commissions contributed to the changing thinking on

development and security: the first was the Independent Commission on International Development Issues chaired by Willy Brandt, which, in 1980, issued the so-called "North –South report". This report not only raised traditional security issues like peace and war, but also issues like how to overcome world hunger, mass misery, and alarming disparities between the living conditions of rich and poor.[7]

The second commission of the 1980s the Independent Commission on Disarmament and security issues (chaired by Olof Palme) authored the famous "common security" report, which also drew attention to alternative ways of thinking about peace & security. It acknowledged that common security requires that people live in dignity and peace, that they have enough to eat and are able to find work and live in a world without poverty and destitution. [8] In 1991 Stockholm initiative on *Global Security and Governance* issued a call for "common responsibility in the 1990s which referred to" challenges to security other than political rivalry and armaments" and to a wider concept of security, which deals also with threats that stem from failures in development, environmental degradation, excessive population growth and movement, lack of progress towards democracy.

The renowned economist and the former Pakistani finance minister, Dr. Mahbub ul Haq (late), had ranked human security at a higher pedestal than the territorial, national, or regional security. Being one of its pioneers, Dr. Haq presented the concept of human security in UN Development Programme in 1994. He was of the view that; though the migration of the poor may be blocked cogently, but the tragic consequences of their poverty would travel without a passport.[9]

The Canadians also gave a people centric view of security in 1996 when their foreign minister Lloyd Anworthy in an address to the 51st UN General Assembly first broached the idea of human security on behalf of his government. By focusing on people and highlighting non-traditional security, the UNDP has certainly made an important contribution to post Cold War thinking.

Richard H Shultz describes NTS as complex, involving a myriad of threats (internal, regional and transnational), wherein a large number of actors are involved (governmental & non-governmental), where violence is generated not only by conventional physical force, but also by economic, environmental and social forces.[10]

Roberts Mac Namara argues," It is increasingly being realized that it is poverty, not the lack of military hardware that is responsible for insecurity across the southern half of the planet".[11] To prove this statement one can see in countries like Rwanda, Liberia, and Somalia & Zaire, wherein environmental threats and poverty were the major cause of civil war and infightings hampering the traditional security parameters. According to Barry Buzan, a security analyst, there are three-pronged debates/ approaches to security studies in the post cold war era. First school of thought is the Traditionalist who retains the military focus of security. Second school of thought is the widener, who extends the range of security issues to include threats other than military ones. Third school of thought is the Critical security studies who have a questioning attitude to the whole framework in which security is conceptualized[12].

**Dynamics of Non-traditional Threats**

Apart from its benefits, the globalisation has created a fright whereby, "a threat to one is a threat to all",[13] an argument echoed by a high-level panel at the UN that studied the nature of hazards to global security.[14] Indeed the concept of security has transcended the traditional geographical borders of state(s) and the military force can no more be considered the only measure to ward off threat to the securities of nations.[15] This transition in the concept of security is a product of globalization. The non-traditional security threats are non-military in nature and transnational in scope[16].These are indeed neither domestic nor purely interstate, rather appear at a very short notice, cause colossal losses and transmitted rapidly due to globalization and communication revolution.[17]

The non-traditional security threats like natural calamities and the non-state human actions, cannot be restrained within the geopolitical boundaries and hence affect governments, people, societies and institutions alike within or across the geographical boundaries of a state. As globally agreed, these threats are three-dimensional in nature: first; purely related to the natural disasters like hurricanes, floods and droughts, earthquakes, tidal waves, volcano eruptions and avalanches. Likewise, it also includes; outbursts of communicable diseases like; HIV/ AIDS, tuberculosis, SARS, swine flu, etc. The second dimension includes the semi natural threats that affect the essential resources and economic conditions of the nation states like water shortages, scarcity of energy resources, poverty and unemployment, etc. The third category however is purely manmade and appears in the forms of; terrorism, deforestation, transnational crimes, insurgencies, trafficking in illegal drugs, weapons and migrants, etc. Natural disasters and manmade security crises can potentially lead to mass migrations and displacements.

Indeed, the non-traditional security threats have inextricably linked the fates of even those states that are not geographically contiguous to each other. These threats can affect their sovereignty and territorial integrity as well as the safety of their respective societies.[18] Non-traditional threats range from a portion of a state to the region and ultimately engulf the global security. Since no state alone can handle the multiple non-traditional threats by itself, therefore, in the contemporary world, every nation state requires regional and global cooperation to make itself secure. These threats are eventually causing dangers to the human security and development in the region.[19]

The sub-Himalayan South Asian region, one of the most densely populated geographical region of the world that is marred by both traditional and non-traditional security threats.[20] Otherwise, the regional politics is careworn by the frequent divergences and political instabilities, mainly caused by the nuclear rivals; the India and Pakistan. Three major wars between India and Pakistan and natural disasters have resulted in to big loss of life and have increased impoverishment. War and conflict have marginalised the

potential of SAARC since its inception in 1985 and there perished over 130,000 people due to natural disasters since the beginning of the new millennium and less than 30,000 people in all major wars and minor clashes between India and Pakistan.

**Human Development Profile of South Asia**.

A brief data of human development in South Asia is given below. [21]

| Countries | HDI Ranking | Life Expectancy at Birth (years) | Adult literacy rate (% age 15 and above) | GDP per Capita (PPP US$) | Human Development Index (HDI) Value |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Maldives | 100 | 66.5 | 97.2 | 5,261 | 0.741 |
| Sri Lanka | 99 | 71.9 | 91.1 | 4,595 | 0.743 |
| Afghanistan | - | 46.0 | 28.1 | 250 | - |
| India | 128 | 63.4 | 64.8 | 3,452 | 0.691 |
| Pakistan | 136 | 62.9 | 48.7 | 2,370 | 0.551 |
| Nepal | 142 | 61.5 | 48.6 | 1,550 | 0.534 |
| Bhutan | 133 | 62.8 | 47 | 1,969 | 0.579 |
| Bangladesh | 140 | 62.6 | 41.1 | 2,053 | 0.547 |

These estimates have been taken from the Statesman's Year Book-2009 that contains figures of year-2008. However, there is a further slide in the Human Development Indexes (HDI) of almost all South Asian countries during 2009. As per new HDI, ranking India is at 134, Pakistan-141 and Bangladesh at 146.[22] Norway is number one at the global HDI chart and U.S at number 13. Indeed, the HDI endows with a combined measure of three dimensions of human development: the life expectancy (healthy living); adult literacy rate (educational standard) and purchasing power parity measured by the income level[23].

**Non-Traditional Threats Tearing the Inner Fabric of the Region**

As per the global seismic record, South Asia is positioned among the world's most vulnerable seismic prone regions with regard to the natural as well as manmade disasters[24]. In its recent history, the region has sustained 15 out of the 40 major disasters in the world between 1970 and 2000.[25] The region has undergone extensive geological and tectonic process in history. Over fifty-four percent area of India alone is vulnerable to the earthquakes. Tracing the previous history of the earthquakes in South Asia; in 1905, Kangra, a city of Indian state of Himachal Pradesh was shattered by the worst earthquake of 7.9 magnitudes at Richter scale, killing 20,000 people. In 1935, an earthquake of 7.6 magnitudes with the resultant death of 35000 people jolted Quetta.[26] A similar earthquake hit Indian city of Gujrat in 2001, killing 11500 people. In 1945, 2000 people died once an earthquake of 7.9 magnitudes hit the areas of Makran coast in Pakistan.[27]

On December 26, 2004, the Indian Ocean Tsunami caused over 40,000 deaths in India, Sri Lanka, and Maldives alone. Overall, the tsunami caused over 230,000 deaths in eleven countries, major being the Indonesia,[28] and inundating vast coastal areas. In October 2005, a devastating earthquake with the magnitude was of 8.6 on the Richter scale killed over 73000 people and injured cum disabled approximately 100,000 people in northern Pakistan. Besides, it left over 2.8 million people homeless. Over $3 billion were expended on the rehabilitation of the Tsunami victims in Sri Lanka, India, and Maldives. However, the rehabilitation of the 2005 earthquake victims is still in progress. As an estimate, over $7 billion would be required for completion of this gigantic task. As per estimates in the last 25 years natural disasters have killed nearly half a million people in South Asia besides inflicting colossal financial damages worth US$ 59,000 million.[29]

Prior to 2005, there existed no worthwhile mechanism in almost all South Asian countries to deal with the post-disastrous phenomenon like rescue and relief. Following the December- 2004 Tsunami and October 2005 Earthquake, South Asian countries started implementing the strategies for disaster mitigation and risk

reduction. India and Pakistan established their respective National Disaster Management Authorities (NDMA). Indeed, the very first step towards concerted and coordinated regional action on disaster risk reduction ought to be a clear understanding of the depth and extent of hazards, vulnerabilities and likely losses due to disasters. The system will strive for key improvements in disaster preparedness and response with regard to the three R's concept: Rescue, Relief and Rehabilitation.[30] However, still there is a need for an all round paradigm shift to proactive measures in the approach to disaster mitigation.[31] There is a pressing need for a disaster preparedness and management system at the level of South Asia, which would promote regional cooperation to ensure security from natural disasters.

**Major Human Security Challenges to the Region**

**Migrations and Displacements.** As a common phenomenon, migration and displacements of the people have always taken place in the history of humankind. Following the Europe, Asia stood second with 49.7 million migrants in 20th century.[32] Within Asia, South Asia alone has a record of 35 - 40 million[33] permanent migrations, mostly taken place as result of partition of subcontinent in 1947. Bulk of the migration was motivated by ethno-religious or the ideological factors. Within South Asia, the mass migrations took place between India and Pakistan, including Bangladesh; as the former part of Pakistan. Nepal and Sri Lanka had also undergone migration in those initial days of independence.

In its subsequent history, over ten million people have migrated from one country to another within South Asia. As per world migration record, out of the top ten countries of mass migration, three are located in the contemporary South Asia. These include; Afghanistan 4.1 million migrants, Bangladesh 4.1 million migrants and Sri Lanka with 1.5 million migrants.[34] Migrations from Afghanistan have taken place mainly because of the Russian invasion from 1979 to 1989 and internal instability thereafter till-date. Whereas, the migrations from Sri Lanka and Bangladesh have

been caused by economic factors or compelled by environmental degradation and natural disasters.

In the same region, Pakistan and India are hosting a huge population of the migrants, ranked as the tenth, and sixth respectively in the world ranking of migrant hosting countries.[35] Pakistan is mainly affording the Afghan refugees where 2.5 millions are still holding on in the country from the initial 3.5 million took refuge in 1980s.[36] Besides, Pakistan is also accommodating over 1.5 million Kashmiri refugees, migrated from Indian Occupied Kashmir during the period from 1948 to 1990s. The country is paying a heavy price in terms of economic cost and internal demographic problems created because of the migrants over the years.

In the near past, the country has tackled with the issues of internally displaced people (IDPs). Over two million people from Swat, Malakand, South Waziristan and surrounding areas were displaced either because of the brutalities of militants or else as a safeguard measures, prior to the military operations against the militants. Their relief, temporary settlement at new locations, and finally resettlement to their native towns was a gigantic task, undertaken by the Government of Pakistan successfully. This process caused heavy economic losses, endangered physical security of the people and numerous damages to the houses, properties and other belongings of the IDPs.

Migration in India has mainly taken place on the economic basis.[37] There is reciprocity of economic interests in India; the migrants contribute in terms of their labour and expertise in the Indian economy and in turn, benefitted too. In practical terms, India is gaining from these migrants. They had neither created any domestic instability for India nor made demographic changes in the Indian population. On the contrary, migrants in Pakistan have been a great threat for the internal stability and have caused demographic changes and economic losses; the country is likely to suffer even in the days to come. Sri Lanka is facing a similar scenario. Another series of invisible threats is the; human trafficking, sexual exploitation, organized crime, violent abuse and economic

exploitation. "Human trafficking not only adversely affects individuals but can also undermine respect for whole groups".[38]

   **Environmental Threats**.    "Environmental threats do not respect national boundaries, and no single state or group of states can successfully cope with the environmental threats"[39]. Indeed, there always have been ruthless threats to the human survival from the environmental dilapidations. In the historical perspective, it was the environmentally created declining birth rate originated from the use of lead in water pipes, which ultimately led to the fall of the great Roman Empire[40]. In the medieval Europe, the dearth of sanitation gave way to the rapid spread of diseases like Cholera. In the contemporary world, Swine Flu, has sensationally spread worldwide and has so far caused death of 6300 people. Avian influenza and SARS have spread borderless to engulf the humanity from all over.[41]

   At the global level, so far only six countries (New Zealand and five North European countries) could achieve over 85% results in meeting the environmental goals like; availability of clean air and water, environmental health, biodiversity and sustainable energy[42]. The South Asian giant India; having the third highest growth rate in Asia, after China and Japan, is ranked at 118th in meeting the environmental goals as determined through an index developed by Yale University's Centre for Environmental Law and Policy[43]. Other South Asians are   placed even at lower pedestal than India.

   The rapid increase in the South Asian population is yet another threat to the region. Three South Asian countries namely; India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh constitute the world fastest growing populations. Otherwise, world population has increased from one billion in 1804 to six billion in 1999 and likely to touch the figure of nine billion in 2050. South Asia alone houses 1.6 billion populations,[44] which is highest in the world once compared with the other regions of the same size.

   This population expansion in the South Asia has seriously threatened to overwhelm the economic development and diminution in the standard of living. Over population is causing depletion in the

available resources, which in turn increase the poverty in the region. Linked with the population is the rapid urbanization in the South Asian region. India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh are extremely pretentious over this rapidly changing social trend, which has quickly expanded the size of cities. Flooding of the rural population towards cities has created urban nightmares, overtaxing of existing facilities and dense concentration of poverty.[45]

The swelling population warrants proportionate increase in the food requirements, which demand for intensive farming. The process in turn causes soil erosion, salinity, deforestation, and desertification. According to World Food and Agricultural Organization, 53000 square miles of tropical forests were damaged in the decade of 1980s and from 2000 to 2005, an area equal to that of Sierra Leone has been deforested annually at the global level.[46] The worst deforestation in South Asia took place by creating sandbars in the Bay of Bengal by silt runoff from the Himalayas. The local Bengali population, dwelling over these islands is more frequently troubled during annual cyclones.[47] Pakistan is also rapidly losing its forests through illegitimate cuttings and burning of forests. Deforestation also results into the loss of the biodiversity.

Like other developing countries of the world, "slash and burn technique",[48] is being used to create additional farmland by clearing forests in the South Asia. The process emits carbon dioxide, methane, and nitrous oxide into the atmosphere. Emission of these gases heavily contributes towards greenhouse effects. Just for the clarity, the greenhouse effect is indeed the "rise in temperature that the earth experiences because certain gases in the atmosphere trap energy from the sun".[49] Apart from this, the nitrous oxide also contributes in the destruction of the ozone layer, which protects all living beings from the dangerous ultraviolet rays of the sun.

**Submergence Hazards in South Asia**. Apart from the land-based countries of the region, the global warming and climate change is seriously affecting the island countries. In South Asia, Maldives is one such example, whose land area is only about 300 square kilometres, as compared to 100,000 square kilometres vast sea area.[50] Over 80 percent of the country's land area is just less

than one meter (3.3 feet) above the mean sea level. As forecasted by environmental experts, owing to the global warming, there is a gradual increase in the sea level and by the end of the century, this increase would reach to 18 centimetres[51] that may submerge Maldives' 193 inhabited islands along with its 999 untenanted coral islands scattered off the southern tip of India. Under these trepidations, the Maldivian President has already launched a global campaign for the purchase of new homeland for his people and as a mark of protest organized an underwater cabinet meeting in the open sea in October 2009.

UN Climate Conference held from December 1-12, 2008 at Poznan,[52] expressed its concern over the future of Maldives.[53] Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, and some islands of India are also facing similar environmental threats in the longer run. Unfortunately, no meaningful consensus could be achieved on the issues of environmental threats even during the recently concluded, UN Climate Change Conference held at Copenhagen from 7-18 December -2009. With major industrial powers remaining as obstacles, a "10 billion-dollars-a-year, three-year programme", has been launched for the financial assistance of developing countries in areas like; drought, floods, and to develop clean energy.[54]

**The Rising Water Scarcity**. Gradual diminishing of fresh water is very vital non-traditional security threat. As per the global statistics, only 3 percent fresh water is available for the human consumption. The remaining 97 percent is either seawater or otherwise unfit for the human use. Out of the available fresh water, 70 percent is utilized for agriculture, 20 percent for industry and human beings are utilizing the remaining 10 percent only.[55] There is an acute shortage of the fresh water in the South Asia. In India alone, 700 million people[56] lack clean drinking water. This shortage also causes death of roughly 2.1 million children[57] annually at the age of less than five years in India.

The main source of South Asian water is the Tibetan Plateau, housing world's fifth largest fresh water resources amounting to 5000 cubic km.[58] Together with South Asia; this plateau provides water to Southeast Asian countries, constituting 47 percent of the

world's population.[59]  Like other regions of the world, the lakes and rivers of South Asia are also drying up or else being polluted rapidly. Since China is planning to divert the Tibetan water to its north and northeastern provinces, therefore, South Asia is likely to face more water scarcity than ever before. Otherwise, the Ganges River in India and Indus River in Pakistan have hardly left with enough water for dropping into the seas, which seriously affects the surrounding agricultural land. Moreover, the Dal Lake in Indian Occupied Kashmir and Manchar Lake in Pakistan are facing water shortages and assimilation of salt particles respectively.[60]

According to an estimate by 2030, requirement of food grains would increase by 67% in all developing countries[61] particularly in the South Asia. To meet this requirement of additional grains, there would be a need of adequate fresh water, which is running short of the regional requirements.  By 2025, all the countries of the region less Bangladesh would face severe water shortages.[62]  Pakistan will be facing a short fall of 102 billion cubic meter of water per year, whereas Bangladesh would have 1133 billion cubic meters of fresh water per year as excess.  Other South Asian countries would be facing corresponding shortages of water by 2025. [63]

Contrary to other regions of Asia and Europe, there have been poor water management in South Asia. India, the major country of the region has been unjustly manipulating the regional water. Bangladesh, Nepal, and Pakistan are the main victims of Indian water burglary.[64] Being upper riparian country, it has frequently violated the 1960 Indus Basin Water Treaty, which clearly lays down the water distribution formula between India and Pakistan. Over the years, India has constructed a number of dams aimed at; either the illegal diversion or storage of the water of the Pakistani rivers.[65] It has also impelled Afghan Government to construct Kama Hydroelectric Project, using 0.5MAF of Pakistan water on Kabul River[66] by providing all out financial and technical assistance in the construction of the project.  As a pursuance of its water manipulation, it is predicted that by 2015, all the rivers leading to Pakistan would be left with less than 50% water as compared to the current quantity of water.[67]

In case of Bangladesh, another lower riparian country, India is violating the Ganges Water Sharing Treaty (GWST) and is not allowing the exact share of the former from the waters of Ganges and Brahmaputra rivers. Contrary to Pakistan and Bangladesh, Nepal, the only Hindu state in the world, is an upper riparian country. In spite of having a formal agreement between India and Nepal through the "Treaty of Mahakali", concluded in February 1996, India is not permitting Nepal to establish hydroelectric projects to meet its basic energy needs. Presently, Nepal is utilizing only 1 percent of its available potential of 83000 megawatts hydroelectric power potential.

**Meeting the Energy Needs**. In the South Asian environment, energy has an intimate linkage with the water. Hydroelectric power project have proved the most cheap and feasible energy resources. Water storage through dams serves multiple purposes like management of water for irrigation as well as production of electricity. Indian water manipulation has badly affected this particular aspect. Nepal having one of the largest hydroelectric potential is able to utilize only 1 percent of it and electricity is available to its only 40 percent population.[68] In Bangladesh, less than 30 percent [69] people have the electricity available to them. India too is facing power shortages up to 15000 to 20000 megawatts[70]. Pakistan is passing through the worst energy crises of its history with power shortages ranges from 1500 to 2500 MW.

To meet the energy shortages, natural gas, thermal energy resources, and nuclear energy means are being made use of by the South Asian countries. The recent Indo-US and Indo-Russian nuclear deals may be sustaining the growing energy needs of India, but other regional countries would continue suffering the energy shortages for a long time. Owing to its geo-politics, Pakistan has the potential to become the energy hub for the regional countries including China. Oil and gas from Central Asia and Middle East to India and other South Asian countries and China can be transported through the Pakistani soil, which would enhance regional integration.

**Small Arms and Light Weapons**.   At the global level, the proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) has become nuisance. SALW include; pistols/ revolver, hunter rifles, Machine guns, rocket launchers and other light weapons that can be carried by one or two personnel. According to an estimate, over 639 million[71] SALW are in circulation in the world, which means one SALW for every 10 people on earth. 8 million SALW are manufactured each year mainly by; US, Russia and China. According to one estimate, 500,000 people[72] become victim of SALW each year. The trade volume of small arms is $ 4-5 billion per year and civilians purchase 80% of these.

There is a growing use of SALW in South Asia too. All internal conflicts in South Asia; eight in India, two in Pakistan, two in Afghanistan and one each in Bhutan, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh have been fought through SALW. In South Asia, there are over 75 million firearms, out of which 63 million are held by civilian population[73]. India has 40 million; Pakistan has 20 million, and three million in Nepal and Sri Lanka[74]. Indeed such weapons are the, "slow weapons of mass destruction."[75] There exist a linkage between illegal SALW and underdevelopment, which further promotes transnational crimes and terrorism. Former Indian Premier Indra Ghandi, Former Pakistani Premier Benazir Bhutto, Bangladeshi President Sheikh Mujibur Rehman and many others key persons in South Asia were killed by SALW.

In South Asia, Afghanistan can be taken as a case study. In the post-Soviet withdrawal scenario, a disarmament programme was launched in 1989, which focused only on weaponry, and thus the ex-combatants did not feel integrated into society, providing the basis for transnational terrorist training camps. More than a decade later, the US has also started supplying Northern Alliance troops with SALW[76] before launching attack on Taliban Administration in October 2001 and even thereafter.

**HIV /AIDS Pandemic**.       Until the end of 20th century, HIV/AIDS was regarded as a health issues. It was only after January 10, 2000, that United Nations Security Council[77] convened the first ever meeting in which HIV/ AIDS was declared as the threat to the

international peace and security and a form of non-traditional security threat. As per global estimates, there lived 39.4 million[78] people with HIV /AIDS in the world in 2004. Out of these 37.2 million are adults (15-49 years age bracket) and 2.2 million children are of less than 15 years of age. It is expected that by the end of 2010, the number of the AID/ HIV affected people would rise to 45 million worldwide. So far, 25 million people have died of HIV/AIDS. In 2004 alone, there died 3.1 million people, which mean that as on average almost "three times as many persons continue to die from AIDS related illness every day, than died during the terrorist attack on September 11, 2001.[79]

This deadly disease is not limited to its epicentre, Sub-Saharan Africa, rather has spread all around the globe. As per UNAID, the World Bank estimates, there live 3-3.5 million people with this deadly disease in South Asia. Ever since the detection of the first case of the HIV/AIDS in 1980s, in South Asian region, until 2007, the country wise detail of infected people in South Asia is: India; 2.45-3 million people, Pakistan; 80,000 and Nepal; 75,000, Bangladesh; 11,000, Afghanistan; 1000, Bhutan 500 people.[80] "South Asia today is home to the second highest number of people living with HIV/AIDS, with approximately 13 per cent of the world total. The epidemic poses the greatest threat to India, which is home to 97 per cent of South Asia's HIV/AIDS infected population. According to another estimate, India had 5.1 million people with HIV/AID in 2005 and this strength would increase three times by 2010.[81]

The pandemic is not restricted to an individual affected by HIV/AIDS virus but it spread on to its family and subsequently will have a plethora of wider economic, political, demographic, and social implications[82] requiring deliberation and careful handling. The economic aspect linked with such scourge is that those affected by it would not be able to earn for themselves or for their families. Apart from this, there would be less or selective economic activities in areas affected by HIV/AIDS. Socially, the people living with the syndrome get a stigma and subsequently are isolated, which is worse than the ailment even. In quantitative terms HIV/AIDS  is amongst

the first five causes of the deaths, as it kills three million people each year; a ratio, ten times more than the armed conflicts.[83]

**The Way Forward**

Non-traditional security threats do not respect borders; hence, it is difficult to find their solutions at national level. Rather countering these threats demands synergistic international or at least regional efforts. Within South Asia, there is a need for comprehensive responses at political, economic, and social level, all to be coordinated at the platform of SAARC. Owing to the perpetual trust deficit among the South Asian states, the foremost requirement would be to restore the trust in order to bring harmony of thought processes among the regional stakeholders. Overcoming this nightmare would enable us to embark upon the resolution track of the non-traditional security threats in South Asia as a cohesive force.

**Prospects for a Collective Regional Response**

An empirical and temporal assessment of non-traditional threats to the safety and security of South Asians shows that its 1.6 billion people are more vulnerable to hazards of migration, displacement, human security, environmental degradation, natural calamities, water scarcity, energy deficiency, HIV/AIDS, and small arms proliferation. Unlike the traditional sources, the non-traditional security threats present a bigger challenge as well as opportunity to South Asia. These threats are common in nature, beyond the management capacity of an individual state and can be tackled jointly. Hence, if the states work together at SAARC forum and make it more effective and powerful; the effects of traditional security threats will be largely mitigated. Except water issues, there appears no worthwhile variance among the South Asian nations for a regional approach to solve the non-traditional security threats. Water too is becoming a compulsion for every state to be resolved justly, while taking into considerations the requirements of each country. The following recommendations proffer the way forward.

**Collective Pledge to Resolve Environmental Issues**

Since no country can 'wall itself off from threats to the environment', therefore the problems linked with the environment always bring collective dilemmas or goods for every country in the world in various ways from state to state. Moreover; these issues have their political, economic, health, ecological and even military dimensions, hence cannot be dealt in isolation. Instead, there are interstate qualms and grumbles. For example, an issue or doing serving interest of one country may become a nuisance or cause harm to another country. Analyzing the global warming, the borderless issue has become a great threat for countries like Maldives, which may submerge under sea by the end of $21^{st}$ century. Nevertheless, the industrial countries like India are not restraining from this global remorse; on the plea that, industrialization is must for its economic development and provide job opportunities to the unemployed masses, a collective benefit of humanity. Similarly, developing countries desire that developed countries should make efforts to reduce the effects of greenhouse gases, which is not acceptable to industrial world.

The recommended recipe is that, through a collective wisdom, the limits of industrial growth should be clearly defined for each country especially the major industrial world. In order to reduce the effects of the climate change, measures like increase in the growth of forests and vegetation in the affected areas could be accorded a top priority. Moreover, the passive measures like reduction in the use of fossil fuels by shifting over to the renewable means of energy, which is comparatively clean and less hazardous to the environment and human health.

**Disaster Management Strategy**

The phenomenon of the natural disaster is a reality, but it is beyond the control of human beings to unerringly forecast as to when and where a natural disaster is going to come about. However, what is in the hands of human beings is to prepare and arrange for dealing with the dangers, which natural disasters bring about. This

uphill task has to be undertaken at the level of individuals, community, and the governments.

At the level of the governments, an early warning system has to be emplaced and made effective in the environs of all those locations which are likely to be engulfed by the natural disasters like; earthquakes-prone areas and the coastal areas vulnerable to hurricanes. The people of these areas must have comprehensive information about the evacuation routes and safe locations for the subsequent stay until the danger is over. In order to bring perfection, the locals of threat prone areas may rehearse these precautionary measures. For an efficient handling, there is a need that people of all these areas should be forewarned through a campaign as what should be the modus operandi for initial handling of the situation, until the national and regional efforts are mobilized and could reach them. There would be a requirement of the training of local volunteers who on occurrence of the disaster could provide immediate assistance like; rescue and first aid, psychotherapy and food supply etc. These volunteers later on could be incorporated into damage assessment and rehabilitation activities. Indeed, these are the risk reduction strategies, meant to minimize the damage through psychological preparation of the people.

In this regards, establishment of a South Asian disaster management body on the lines of National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), already functional in India and Pakistan, would go a long way in disaster mitigation by ensuring; rescue, relief and rehabilitation phases of the disasters. As a lesson from the earthquake of October 2005, Tsunami of December–2004 and Hurricane Katrina of 2005, the areas where there are dangers of the earthquakes, people should be educated to make houses that can sustain the high scale earthquakes. Similarly, all levees and dams in the hurricane and flood prone areas should have strength enough to sustain the violent water currents.

**Need for a Joint Commission to Deal with the Water Challenges**

Indeed, the "food security is non-negotiable" and it is linked with the availability of adequate quantity of fresh water. Irrespective

of its size and military power, no country would like to give up its rights over the water, as survival of its people depends upon this essential commodity. Since water security is more rapidly pushing the region towards a potential armed conflict, therefore for a stability and peace in South Asia, there is a need for the establishment of a "joint commission", as regional forum for the resolution of regional water related issues. Being the upper riparian country, China should also be included in the commission. The forum should be able to redress the water concerns of all the stakeholders while taking the existing treaties and agreements into consideration. Resolution of the regional energy crises linked with the water (hydroelectricity) could also be resolved under the same forum.

**Integrated Efforts to Eradicate HIV/AIDS**

Apart from the global drive against the HIV/AIDS, there is a requirement to gear up the regional efforts at the level of South Asia to address this humanitarian catastrophe by allocating more resources and enforcing strict precautionary measures. Rather isolating people living with such like syndromes, integrate them into the society through provision of cheaper drugs and worthwhile employments through a process of social mobilization. Since HIV/AIDS is becoming an important non-traditional security threat and is spreading rapidly to the countries having less of it, therefore its further transmission could be subdued through a well-orchestrated campaign, created to bring awareness among the masses against this malady.

**Dealing with Human Security and Migrations**

Human security is all encompassing, the physical security, as well as the provision of the basic human needs by a state to its people. An unhindered availability of the necessities would strengthen the relationship between governments and its subjects. Being at the lower plinth of HDI, the South Asians are seriously endangered from this form of the non-traditional security threat. At the regional level, human development and security can be ensured through; diminution of interstate conflicts, warranting the policy of

non-interference in each other's affairs, reducing defence expenditures, establishment of joint projects in the field of education, health and poverty eradication.

Since migrations and displacements are a continuing process, therefore, to minimize its effects, South Asian countries need to establish a centre under the umbrella of SAARC to regulate the migrants including internally displaced ones, and their speedy return to the parent states and areas, upon restoration of stability. Establishment of South Asian fund, financed by regional countries and international community for the migrants and displaced people would go a long way in lessening their snags.

**National Responses**

Apart from the regional approach, there is a dire need of a state level solution of the issues related to small arms and light weapons through domestic legislation. This can be accomplished by imposing strict restrictions on their unauthorized use or even possession. Since pollution is badly damaging the environment besides creating health hazards to everyone in the region therefore, industries and automobiles violating the rules in this respect should be ceased to function until become free of risks. Other contributory factors should be trounced through plantation and enhancing the greenery. In connection with the human trafficking and its connected crimes, there is a need to create a sense of awareness during the movements within and across the borders.

**Conclusion**

In today's highly globalized world, where a threat to one is taken as a threat to all, every state requires international or at least regional cooperation to make itself secure. South Asia is witnessing the emergence of a multi-threat environment where traditional security challenges are no longer a stream of single point threats. Rather, the region has become a raging river of new challenges, often-indistinct signals that require fast and smart analysis, rapid and robust action plans, and well-orchestrated, cross-boundary responses.

The prevalent non-traditional security threats looming over the regional horizon are posing great danger to the human security in South Asia. In over 90 percent cases, South Asia faces a similar threat gamut; therefore call for a comparable, harmonized, sincere, and dedicated mode to counter them. Espousing of an integrated and unanimous strategy at the regional level would diminish the traditional differences and collides, rampant in South Asia since the end of colonial rule.

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