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Security Dilemma in South Asian Context

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ABSTRACT

The paper through the lens of Security Dilemma, implores the international institutions in general and USA in concert with China in particular, to take the driving seat to forestall any eventuality of a nuclear catastrophe to take place in South Asian security architecture. The world is reminded that the Indian ploy of resorting to 'Bilateralism', has neither borne any dividends in the past 70 years in thwarting the Security Dilemma, nor is likely to resolve any thing at their own any time soon, before it is too late.

Key Words: Balance of Power, Nuclearization, Security Dilemma, USA, China

Introduction

Out of the many dilemmas confronting the Decision Makers in the world today, Security Dilemma in most ways is not only almost identical but similar in essence to it.(Booth, & Wheeler, 2008) As Security Dilemma deals with the "existential condition of uncertainty", which actually forms basis for any type of engagement in human relations, but unfortunately its rightful place has neither been acknowledged, despite some great scholarly works done by its earlier proponents, nor is appropriate understanding being accorded to it presently, which can lead to catastrophic results.Even to a common onlooker, when seeing from the prism of International Relations, the place which reflects the exact manifestation of the term Security Dilemma, South Asia's Indo-Pak rivalry would immediately spring to the mind. For there would be fewer instances in the history, where despite such striking similarities amongst the peoples of the land, both countries are found 'daggers drawn', since their inception. It has now been almost sixty eight years, that South Asia has been engulfed by mistrust and fear, which has led them to three wars (Schweers, 2008). Kashmir figures out as the root-cause of all wrong doings in the Indo-Pak Saga, and also the reason for repeated upping of ante all along the Line of Control (Stephens,1964). Sequel to the 1998 nuclearization, the tensions exasperated the arms race and made the whole region hostage to the ensuing strategic competition of dangerous proportions. However, South Asia, contrary to Europe of Cold War, instead of impeding, was found to be in fact facilitating the conventional mode of warfare, where the Kargil crises actually

brought the whole region towards a nuclear conflagration (Schweers, 2008). Later, in 2001 and 2008, both states were again at the brink of nuclear war with potentially devastating implications on international and regional security matrix(Dawn,2018).Therefore, in order to resolve this Security Dilemma from transiting into a nuclear conflagration, this paper aims to put across a way forward for sustainable peace in the region. To this end, the endeavor has been to first introduce the basic terminologies and concepts relating to Security Dilemma, and then by co-relating to the Sub Continent security matrix, map out a workable way forward for enduring peace and stability (Sylvest, 2008).

Theoretical Framework and Linkages

Notwithstanding what the Constructivists say about the effect of the Social Construct's dominance in shaping the environment in a particular region in general and the interplay of the conflicting identity of Indo-Pak formed by social practices of the elites ever since their independence in particular to the South Asian landscape, this paper steers itself from the precincts of the theory of Security Dilemma, as enunciated by Herz, Butterfield, Jervis and later crystallized by Booth and Wheeler(Jackson, & Sørensen, 2016). It also takes guidance from Waltz and Mearsheimer's Defensive and Offensive Realism to support its arguments for understanding the dilemma in South Asia then deploys the assumptions of International Mediation Theory for a way forward before it bursts into a nuclear catastrophe (Touval, & Zartman, Eds. 1985).Security Dilemma is prominently substantiated by many linkages with other doctrines, and theories of International Relation. Some salient ones are:-

Defensive Realism

According to Kenneth Waltz, Security Dilemma assumes the main mantle of Defensive Realism. To him, as the world being anarchic, states main concern remains its survival. In an effort to maximize its security, inevitably it ensues into a Security Dilemma (Lynn-Jones, 1995). His thesis of offensive defense elaborately explains the level of threat in the context of Security Dilemma (Walt, 1998). They often allude to America's defensive approach to their ultimate success in the WWI. They find that at times states can offset Security Dilemma.

Offensive Realism

Both defensive and offensive realism are two offshoots of structurealrealism. Both find anarchy, statismsurivalism and self-helping as their basic assumptions. Interestingly offensive realism differs on count of state being a proactive maximizer of power country. To defensive realisms as only a security maximizer. As per Mearsheimer, 66 states can never be certain about the offensive intentions of other, and the world is cursed to a constant power struggle between them

(Baylis & Smith, 2005). Alternatively, security can in some cases be balanced and is escapable, contends the defensive realist but are rebutted by the offensive realist on the ground that states will never let go a chance to offset others(Walt). To them Security Dilemma is inescapable, as untrusting states in an anarchic world would always opt for power maximizing.

Offensive Defense Theory

Robert Jervis theory of offense defense aids in discerning Security Dilemma intensity by explaining following scenarios (Jervis, 1978):-

- ✓ When offense is advantageous in an ambiguous offensive defensive behavior, the Security Dilemma is at its most dangerous.
- ✓ When defense is advantageous in an ambiguous offensive defensive behavior, the Security Dilemma is intense but not dangerous. As state can increase its Security issues are existent but Security Dilemma is with intense. A war may ensure but at a later stage.
- ✓ When defense is advantageous in an obvious offensive defensive behavior. The environment are said to be safe and Security Dilemma is without any intensity. A state can afford to divert its military budget elsewhere.

The Spiral Model

According to Robert Jervis, there may be one of the two reasons for a state going out for a war in a pre-emptive war, if a state thinks that another state is about to attack it, goes for the first kill to either obstruct or prevent it from attaching her. While in the preventive war, a state attacks first to take advantage of a environments (Reiter,2003).

The Deterrence Model

Paul K Huth professes that states go on a war for being greedy, contrary to being fearful of each other in the spiral model. He spells out the following three types of deterrence(Huth,1999):-

- ✓ Direct deterrence, by preventing armed aggression against ones country.
- ✓ Extended Deterrence by preventing armed aggression against another country.
- ✓ Immediate Deterrence; by denying a short term attack.

In some cases Security Dilemma may lead to a "first strike" if a deterrence measure mislead as an offensive measure. According to Huth, deterrence is more likely to be effective if it is found to be credible(Huth,1999).

Understanding Security Dilemma

In International Relation, Spiral Model and Security Dilemma go synonymous and refer to an unwanted predicament, where one nation's efforts to improve its overall security, instead ends up in creating increased tensions all around. Security Dilemma as a term was first eluded to in 1951, by a German Scholar, John H Herz, where in the felt that it was either to kill or to perish(Herz,1951). Almost simultaneously, a British historian, Herbert Butterfield, referred to this situation as a "total predicament and irresolvable dilemma"(Butterfield, 1951). An oft repeated illustration of this problem is the start of First World War. It is often argued by the exponents of this viewpoint, that despite not wanting, the European powers of that time, found themselves at "each other's throats" due to the increased tensions over each other's alliances and grouping. They refer to German Schlieffen Plan, which originated due to Germans fears of a two front scenario which in fact hastened the mobilization of all involved parties(The Schlieffen Plan - History Learning Site, 2018). However, most cognitive and International Relations theorists felt that the failure of communication, actually led to the war, which could have been avoided through proper signaling and better communication.

Understanding Notional Definitions

The subject being a little difficult, varied and laced with a few philosophical assumptions, an effort has been made to simplify and enumerate some of the basic nuances and meanings of various terms in the initial part of the paper to facilitate better comprehension of the subsequent arguments given in the paper:-

Security Dilemma

In John Herz's words, the security dilemma is "A structural notion in which the self-help attempts of states to look after their security needs tend, regardless of intention, to lead to rising insecurity for others as each interprets its own measures as defensive and measures of others as potentially threatening" .For Butterfield, the other pioneer, the inability of one set of decision-makers to enter into the counter-fear of others was the "irreducible dilemma"(Butterfield,1951). However, according to Booth and Wheeler, at a strategic plane for the decision makers to choose from, Security Dilemma appears as a problem at two levels. The first level being an interpretation dilemma (motives, capabilities and intention) and the next being its derivative; the response Dilemma, where it has to be decided for a most rational response(Booth & Wheeler, 2008):-

- ✓ **First Level**

At this level, the decision makers have to give a take that if the developments (perceived military) are of offensive nature or defensive nature (change status quo or only enhance own security) amidst the irreducible uncertainty regarding the

actual intentions coupled with their motives and capabilities.

- ✓ **Second Level**

Its starting point established after determining the dilemma of interpretation. That is how to respond to the perceived interpretation. Should they only signal by worlds or by deeds or instead seek reassurances. However, if the response is based on wrong interpretation it may lead to a higher degree of hostility, when infact no one was wanting it. Such events eventually lead to a situation of heightened hostility, which is neither wanted nor usually referred to as a security paradox.

- ✓ **Security Paradox**

When two or more stakeholders inadvertently reduce overall security, while only trying to improve their own security and thus causing a state of mutual tension between them.

- ✓ **Irresolvable Uncertainty**

Uncertainty is an existential condition relating to all human relations. It is not a passing but a permanent phenomenon. More specifically in the realism of International Relations, it means that the decision makers and planners may never be fully sure about the future motives and intention of the other party. That is why it is called as irresolvable uncertainty and remains as the focal irritant in any ensuring dilemma (Booth and Wheeler,2008).

Security Dilemma Sensibility

Security dilemma sensibility is an actor's intention and capacity to perceive the motives behind, and to show responsiveness towards, the potential complexity of the military intentions of others. In particular, it refers to the ability to understand the role that fear might play in their attitudes and behavior, including, crucially, the role that one's own actions may play in provoking that fear (Booth & Wheeler,2008).

Ambiguous Symbolism

It is the inability to discern between defensive and offensive weapons. This is a subjective interpretation, where one has to decide of a gun being an offensive or a defensive weapon. However, in the realism of International Relations it assumes more complexity as this ambiguous symbolism mainly contributes to the irresolvable uncertainty.

Security Regime

Those rules, principles and norms that authorize states to be controlled in their conduct in the conviction that others will also respond. This concept indicates not only expectations and norms that ease cooperation, but something that is more than the ensuing of immediate self-interest (Jervis ,1982).

Security Community

It is a collection of people who are "integrated". By it we mean the achievement of "sense of community", resilient and widespread enough to guarantee prospects of "peaceable change" among its population. By *sense of community* we allude to collective problems those must be resolved by the progressions of "peaceful change".

Relevance of Security Dilemma

It was generally felt that the end of Cold War had also taken away the problem of Security Dilemma with it. But a closer look at the South Asian, Israeli and the Iranian cases reminds us that the Security Dilemma still remains relevant. According to Butterfield that Security Dilemma not only directly affects the main challenges but also permeates the 'very geometry' of the human struggle. The coming decade is likely to be convergence of great dangers until some collective actions are not taken in the fields of terrorism, climate effect, gap between the rich and the poor, energy resource competition and nuclear proliferation, are amongst a few challenges awaiting the approaching uncertain future. Some of the key areas of coming conflict could be:-

- ✓ First; the danger of a new cold war with China and Russia.
- ✓ Second; the danger of new arms race in South Asia and Middle East.
- ✓ Three; the danger of a world of many nuclear powers.
- ✓ Four; the danger of terrorism.

Security Dilemma in the Indo-Pakistan Context

As per Kenneth Waltz description about the anarchical nature of international politics and absence of a central authority for restoring equilibrium it seems that his century's old prophesying could not have been more pertinent for describing the prevailing state of the two South Asian arch rivals, India and Pakistan (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy,2018). There is no doubt that their issues in fact arise from that dilemma of interpretation; where both doubt each other's, intentions. Another scholar, John Herz, also eludes to that the absence of an organization unity which is causing the security dilemma (Herz, 1950). Since the decision and policy makers are unable to correctly invariably read the minds of the other party, leading to the condition of irreducible uncertainty. When you combine this uncertainty to a past violent history and the new found adventurism of the present mode government of India, you find the perfect recipe for the actual manifestation of the term Security Dilemma. Add to it the fear of a preventive nuclear attack, in the aftermath of the South Asian nuclearization of both India and Pakistan and further accentuated by the ambiguous symbolism of the weapons in an anarchical world in fact aggravates further the Interpretation Dilemma amongst the both states.

The Indo - Pakistan Contradictions

Having established the existence of the problem in the realm of interpretation between the two arch rivals the nonexistence of any formal protocols of assurance between them actually forecloses any chances of mitigation due to the prevalent mistrust in their relations. Besides, there are great chances that in concert the elements of suspicion and the resultant mutual fear in fact will ignite the 'dilemma of response' (Schweers, 2008). If the decision makers respond under the effects of misplaced trust, there are great chances of a third party meddling with hostile intent and if the response is under misplaced suspicion it raises the probability of an undesired military confrontation. Finally if the response follows their historical pathway, then it will be what Booth and Wheeler predicted about the Security Paradox (Booth & Wheeler,2008). Ever since the South Asian nuclearization in 1998, both sides find themselves security locked in the Security Paradox. Its historical linkages date back to 1974 ostensibly for prestige basis or perhaps to counter China, which in fact triggered a Pakistani response by starting their own nuclear program. However, India's nuclear tests of 1998 forced Pakistan to follow suit. Adoption of Defensive (Deterrence) paradigm led to a substantial decrease of their security (Bidwai, & Vanaik, 2000). Since then for many reasons such as coercions, Kargil / Mumbai episodes, terrorism, arms race and hegemonic intents are further intensifying this paradox.

The Empathy and Sensibility

It goes without saying that the present security structure of Indo- Pakistan cannot go very far without having to seriously come to table to resolve the Kashmir impasse, which has all the ingredients to end up in an unwanted catastrophe of epic proportions. Booth and Wheeler's general recipe for understanding overall conflicts consisting of three logics perhaps be decipher and resolve the looming disasters (Booth & Wheeler,2008). The first being the fatalist logic, which is a realistic appraisal of the situation, under the effect of unresolvable uncertainty. The writers do not foresee any chances of mitigation and instead forecast a possible nuclear escalation. The next approach of mitigation logic acknowledges the existence of irreducible uncertainly but feels the society can ensure a temporal relief from the prevailing predicaments. The transcended logic emphasizes a utopian new world order, in order to escape the perils of the past. To the authors, the first step towards lowering the tensions and reconciling the Indo Pak scenario seems the mitigating logic supported by the Security Dilemma Sensibility, which actually refers to an actor's ability to understand others intentions and then show proper response to it in mitigating the fear factor. Alternatively it means entering the counter fear and building mutual trust through proper signaling and SCBMS.The Vajpayee led Lahore Summit and Declaration in 1999 was a step towards the Security Dilemma sensibility (Lahore summit 1999, 2018). Another important step in the same direction was the 'Non-deployed and non-

weaponization; agreement which greatly cased out the fear factor. But unfortunately, there is also long list of events and happenings, where the sensibility factor has been barely implemented. If the Booth and Wheeler mitigation logic is allowed to unfold properly in Indo Pak scenario, Pakistan should abandon any idea of militarily solving the core issue of Kashmir. On the Indian side, they will have to leave the mantra of 'Kashmir Bharat Ka Atoot Ang Hey' (that Jammu and Kashmir is an integral part of the Union of India) and also stop terrorism and destabilizing Pakistan, as evident from the recent tirades of Ajit Davol and Parrikar on the full glance of media(Insight et al., 2018). It is felt, when both countries would act for a longer period on the sensibility logic, the tensions are likely to go away substantially. However, in order to sustain this effort, they both should desist from the usual blame game as a sequel to the Mumbai attacks of 2008 and the more recent firing on LOC in 2014(Naqqash, 2018).

The Proposed Way Forward for Sustainable Peace

There are different options considered for the possible way forward. For instance, a German Scholar, Philipp Schweer thinks that the key to get out of this paradox lies only in bilateral talks between India and Pakistan. He cites the quadruple effect of USA and China, in concert with India and Pakistan, coming in the way of allowing an international sponsored deal.A paper of Jinnah Institute also advocates another attempt of bilateral talk to resolve the issues(Policy Brief – India Pakistan Relations: The Way Forward, 2018). They think that both Indians and Pakistanis in general do not harbor hostile attitude or negative dispositions but it is only a handful individuals with hawkish intent are holding the whole process hostage. To them a cooperative attitude would mature lobbies of cordiality and peace and it will not be possible without the willingness of the elite. Following area, have been identified for working on:-

- ✓ **Societal interaction**: The regular interaction amongst parliamentarians, NGOs and media will not only strengthen societal linkages but also generate goodwill.
- ✓ **Academic Research and Exchanges:** Students and professors should benefit from each other by more frequent interaction.
- ✓ **Return of Prisoners:** There is a need to make a comprehensive mechanism as it is a big humanitarian issue and will go a long way in generating societal goodwill.
- ✓ **Trade and Economic Relations**: The emphasis should be on services and goods movement as it is for the good of common people. Besides, it likely to increase interdependence amongst both the states.
- ✓ **Countering Terrorism**: This problem is not only linked with Pakistan but India too has home grown problems. The blame game may serve domestic audience but only exacerbates the existing dilemma.

- ✓ **The Water Issue**: Both India and Pakistan should resolve the issue at Indus Water Commission, rather going to international bodies. This is a serious issue which if not resolved will create serious problem.
- ✓ **The Kashmir Issue**: Unless the two countries adopt a mechanism which is not only acceptable to both governments and the people of Kashmir, this issue has the potentials to offset all efforts for sustainable peace.

Additionally, there is yet another take, and that is of two Indians scholars given at the Atlantic Council Dr. D Jaishankar and Dr. A Pande (Koblentz, 2014). Gave a mix response, while Dr. Jaishankar lays all the blame on Pakistan for this predicament, Dr. A Pande thinks that there is not only a scope for enhancing bilateral relations but US also certainly has a place in it. The author however, feels that as generally perceived, things will have to be resolved by sitting together and despite 68 years of talking nothing has thus far materialized. It appears that bilateralism is nothing short of a ploy adopted by India for not talking, when they find it convenient. Each time, one would find that it was India, which stopped bilateralism. If we want to avert a catastrophe from happening, international institutions, United States and China must take the leading role.

Conclusion

The endeavor to write this paper has been two fold. Firstly, it was to introduce in general the very concept of the term Security Dilemma, its supposedly foundational place in the security landscape along with its continued relevance and secondly, to drive home awareness about the impending predicament, if allowed to be played to the politics of expediency, as being done in the Indo-Pak scenario.There is a very definite need for a third party mediation to diffuse the simmering situation, for the present mode of 'bilateralism' is only taking it towards the disaster; slowly and painfully for the people of South Asia in general and India and Pakistan in particular.

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