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IS A NUCLEAR / MISSILES ARMS RACE IN SOUTH ASIA INEVITABLE

Ever since the division of the sub-continent, Indo-Pakistan relations have remained strained and are based on mutual distrust and animosity. India, out of her hegemonic designs in the region and Pakistan due to her sheer security compulsions are developing and piling up nuclear and conventional arms. India possesses world's 4th largest military system which apparently looks beyond her needs. Both the countries have had two major wars and a number of armed conflicts and had been on the brink of war on many occasions since their inception. More recently, the political motives of the leadership on both the sides have played a vicious role in further deepening the existing contentious issues. As a result, thereof both the countries have pursued an alarming nuclear/ missile race. It is pertinent to mention that Pakistan's response has always been reactionary in nature. More than anything else the arms race has had telling effects on economic growth in both the countries. Both the countries have to divert a heavy capital every year on acquisitions and development of defense related equipment. The worst hit areas are the poor people in both the countries besides low foreign investment and depleting trade industry. The prevalent geo-strategic environment dictate that the leadership on both side has to take cognizance of the situation and must initiate measures to wrest the nuclear and arms race in the sub-continent. The focus of this paper is to measure the possibility of a nuclear war between the two neighbors and its implications for the region.



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Nawab Sher & Dr. Mamnoon Ahmed Khan

INTRODUCTION

The end of World War II resulted in a complex global phenomenon. Relations between Soviet Union and its war allies, primarily USA, Britain and France, failed to the point of war without the incident of actual warfare. At global level the arms race started immediately after World War II, first by USA to catch up with USSR in conventional arms and then by USSR in response to USA nuclear weapons. The Two vast military alliances NATO and Warsaw Pact emerged as a result. Subsequently the Cold War enmity ultimately pull USA and USSR into local clashes in almost every quarter of the world. As a side effect, it also resulted in an extreme rivalry between the two Super Powers to compile advanced military weapons. For the next 45 years, both remained engaged in manifesting their superiority in the nuclear and arms arsenals. Through this mad race, both the power players created a state of deterrence which also helped to avoid initiation of a third global conflict. The clash of interests between USA and USSR and their influence in various regions led to arms buildup in certain areas. These localized nature of conflicts, mostly between the two arch rivals, inspired localized arms races round the globe (Powaski, 2017).

The case of India and Pakistan is one such case in South Asia though their rivalry is indigenous and not the result of USA and USSR clash of interests. "In the cotemporary environment, when the world is free from super powers cold war, South Asia is still suffering from the pains of regional cold war albeit a heightened arms race that is going ahead between the two main countries of the region". The phenomenon amongst India and Pakistan is not new. It has been there since 1947 when both turned out to be free states after partition. They are longstanding adversaries henceforth some sort of arms builds ups, arms rivalry or arms race was dependably there. In the last around six years, the arms race in South Asia has increased further speed as both India and Pakistan conducted their nuclear explosions (Leah, 2017). They are occupied in testing an assortment of missiles and getting new weapons for the most aggression from different countries. In this way "a tit for tat arms race amongst India and Pakistan and superfluous a series of activity response and growth are being seen in South Asia". People across the borders have



lived under continuous clouds of impaired security. The incessant state of fear is attributed to many historical, territorial and ideological differences and reasons. All these differences have given birth to a never ending Arms Race between the two South Asian rivals which is leading them towards socio-economic regression. India justifies two pronged threat as a prelude to its nuclear/ arms buildup i.e. China and Pakistan, in addition to her aspirations to project herself as a global power. “India wants to be seen as a major power peer of China, Russia and USA, not to mention Britain and France “.India is seeking to establish its international posture as a nuclear power and to enhance its prestige on the global stage”. Pakistan on the other hand considers it a legitimate right to respond to the enhanced threat(Sharma, 2017).

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE AND CONTEMPORARY SECURITY ENVIRONS IN SOUTH ASIA

Indian hostility towards Pakistan since 1947 has influenced the formation of Pakistan’s foreign and defense policies. This hostility has manifested in numerous ways though, all engineered towards the obsession of weakening Pakistan. The history of arms race in the sub-continent also stems back to 1947. The roots of the race can be traced back to denial of legitimate share of arms and ammunition to Pakistan at the time of independence and illegitimate annexation of Kashmir in 1947/ 48, the main issue that bedevils Indo-Pakistan relations even now. Some of the major events influencing the initiation of an arms race purely from historical perspective are summarized in the ensuing paras(Cox, 2017).

According to the partition plan, Pakistan was to receive a handsome share of arms and ammunition. However, Pakistan was denied major part of its share. “The Army sub-committee had unanimously recommended as early as the third week in August 1947, that the ordnance stores must be distributed in the quantity of 36 to Pakistan as against 64 to India, a proportion based on the communal percentage of the army”. “The category of the stores received was significant. The distribution of tanks, weapons, expert and transport vehicles and their replacement was never gotten. India relinquishes just things of a general sort; including a lot of perishable ones. Various packing cases were observed to be brimming with bricks. “Against a share of 60,000 tons of ammunition of all types including explosives, Pakistan received nil”.Moreover, almost all the defense related industrial infrastructure was located in the areas which became part of India. Pakistan, thus, had to look for its immediate needs(Ramsey, 2017).



Great Britain at that time became the major supplier of arms and ammunition to Pakistan. Pakistan was thus, accused of piling up arms and initiating the arms race in the sub-continent. Furthermore, the illegal accession of Kashmir, a Muslim majority area, by the Hindu ruler at the time of partition caused serious security concerns in Pakistan. The Muslims of Jammu and Kashmir rose up against this injustice. The induction of Indian army in Kashmir in October 1947, further raised security alarms in Pakistan. Pakistan army however, entered the war in early 1948 and about a one-third of Kashmir was liberated. Since that day, live duel of firing of almost all the calibers take place all along the Line of Control quite frequently. This confrontation posed an early threat to Pakistan's security and also contributed significantly to the arms race subsequently (Navlakha).

THE ERA OF ALLIANCES. It has been proved historically that Pakistan's decision to join western military pacts (CENTO and SEATO) was primarily motivated by the Indian threat to its security though some analysts link it to the wrong diplomatic choice of the then Pakistani leadership. This helped in an inflow of military wherewithal from the west mainly from USA but also enticed a hostile attitude from Soviet Union. Consequently, Soviet Union backed India both diplomatically as well as militarily with much greater consistency than USA did for Pakistan. This competitive approach also resulted in a long drawn arms race in South Asia (Jedinák, 2017).

AFTERMATH OF INDO-CHINESE 1962 WAR. Major shift in Indian security policies realized after Indian humiliating defeat in 1962 Indo-China war. "Indian security policy focus shifted from a Pakistan/ Pakistan USA alliance to China and possibility of a quasi-alliance between China and Pakistan". In the meantime, Pakistan also established friendship with China. The principal foundations of Pak-China relationship were based on a common enemy, unreliability of USA alliance and growing Indo-USSR nexus which resulted from worsening Sino-Soviet relations in early 1960s. As a result of all these happenings in South Asia, USA parted way from Pakistan and came rushing with massive military and economic aid to India in the same period. India, a beneficiary of military aid from Soviet Union as well as from the West, exploited the situation to its full advantage. Following Chinese nuclear tests in 1964, India also accelerated its nuclear development program (Müller, 2017).

INDO-PAK WARS OF 1965-1971. West including USA imposed sanctions on Pakistan and India as a result of 1965 war. China assisted Pakistan and fulfilled her military demands to a



great extent. India was able to convince Soviet Union of her future role in the South Asia and received substantial military support. India concluded a “Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation with Soviet Union” just before 1971 Indo-Pak War. Under this treaty,” Military sales formed a core element of Indo-Soviet interaction. Its terms called for joint talks in the event of considerable military threat to either party. It is estimated that about 70% of Indian arms imports came from Soviet Union during that period”. It also provided India with limited engineering facilities to initiate indigenous manufacturing of arms within the country. Following the surrender of Pakistani forces in 1971, Western World inclined towards India and opined that India had emerged as a leading power in South Asia. Consequently, India benefited from Soviet Union as well as the West militarily(Rekha, 2017).

INDIAN NUCLEAR EXPLOSION-1974. Indian nuclear explosion in 1974 confronted Pakistan with serious security challenges to its survival as a sovereign state. Pakistan, which had undergone the trauma of dismemberment in the recent past, was left with no choice except to undertake and develop its own nuclear potential. As a result, Pakistan started concentrating more on the development of nuclear facilities, thus seeds of nuclear arms race were sown in the Sub-continent(Hansi, 2017).

RUSSIAN OCCUPATION OF AFGHANISTAN. The Indo-Pakistan arms race further accentuated after Soviet occupation of Afghanistan. India went into a large arms deal with Soviet Union in 1979. In response, Pakistan which had gained the status of a front line state finalized a similar arms deal with USA. The conventional edge which India had acquired over the past 15 years was to some extent neutralized with an inflow of high tech military hardware and force multipliers from USA. Another development of the era was that, for the first time in Pakistan’s history, Pakistan was confronted with a two front security threat. A further development of the time was Indian establishment of Integrated Guided Missiles Development Program (IGMDP) in 1983 under which she imagined an ambitious plan to take up instantaneously the design and production of five missiles within 10 years. It also aimed at developing the much needed delivery means for nuclear devices(Hilali, 2017).

The Post-Cold War Era. After the dismemberment of Soviet Union, USA's interests in Pakistan gradually waned and Pakistan came under severe sanctions. She was denied of military hardware even for which it had already paid. On the other hand, India gained much desired status



of a western ally. This left lasting impressions on Pakistan's security concerns. The grim situation compelled Pakistan to boost her indigenous defense production and go for self-reliance. Renewal of Russo- Indian 1971 Treaty in early 1990s further ignited the arms race in South Asia(Craig, 2017).

Indian Nuclear Explosions in 1998. Pakistan was once again confronted with a serious threat to its sovereignty towards the end of 20th century. On May 11 and 13, 1998, India conducted five nuclear tests and officially announced that India had become a nuclear power. The most interesting situation however erupted "on 15 May 1998 when BJP leadership started threatening Pakistan on the basis of enhanced nuclear capability and also called upon Pakistan to vacate Azad Kashmir or face an Indian onslaught". Notwithstanding Indian leadership rhetoric, Pakistan out of sheer compulsion of manifesting its nuclear capabilities, conducted nuclear tests on May 28 and 30 1998. This quid pro quo response from Pakistan established a nuclear deterrence in South Asia. The following years have seen a heightened acceleration in the nuclear and missile programs of both the countries. Doctor Shireen M Mazari thinks that, "The nuclear and missiles development in South Asia are increasing at more prominent speed as opposed to backing off, and India and Pakistan seem to be in danger of being snared into an exorbitant strategic arms race with renewed vigor after 1998 explosions"(Prasad, 2017).

CONTEMPORARY SECURITY ENVIRONMENT IN SOUTH ASIA

South Asia has been subjected to tensions between states as far back as it gained independence from British colonial rule in the late 1940s / mid-1950s. The two strong countries went covertly nuclear in 1998. In 1999, preceding his visit to the region, President Clinton called South Asia the 'most dangerous place in the world'. The administration of nuclear capability in confrontation condition, a disrupted arms race and the general issue of non-proliferation constitute the strongest security challenges for the region, after the clash over Kashmir(Prasad, 2017).

USA AND SOUTH ASIA. USA is, at present the sole Super Power and committed to prolong the duration of uni-polarity and American global primacy. American's continued military presence in Gulf in general and in Iraq and Afghanistan in particular affords her a staging area

for immediate action if considered necessary anywhere in South Asia. USA considers “China as a strategic competitor. Therefore, USA’s policies towards China are likely to be that of containment and comprehensive engagement”. The newly acquired long-term INDO-US alignment is also being viewed as an effort to prop up India as a probable counterweight against China. Moreover, this will also have some bearing on Indian notion of being projected as a power to reckon with in Asia. India has also contracted for import of military equipment from USA which remains a source of concern for Pakistan(Shah, 2017).

India. A nuclear India deems itself as a natural ally of USA due to projected Chinese status as a potential Super Power. Taking advantage of global drive against terrorism, Indian strategy in the recent past as well as in the future would be to present itself as a victim of so called Islamic terrorism. In the years ahead, India is likely to aim at increasing belligerence towards Pakistan without resolving Kashmir dispute. Indian ongoing testing of missiles and acquisition of nuclear weapons is of particular concern to Pakistan. Top of all, the BJP is particularly dedicated to Hindu domination in South Asia and the subjugation of Muslims as an entity in India and the region around her. At the moment India is likely to continue benefiting militarily from her long-standing relations with Russia(Joshi, 2017).

Pakistan. Pakistan has inherited Indian animosity right from the day of inception. Kashmir still remains a contentious and core issue besides a horde of other bilateral issues with India. It is an established fact that Pakistan can never match India in terms of conventional means due to Indian size and economy in addition to technical support provided by USA and more lately Israel. Pakistan per force has to rely on nuclear and missile capabilities. In the recent past, Pakistan had to respond viably to heightened escalation on its eastern borders, besides suffering from increased Indian sponsored inland terrorist activities. By its U-turn on Afghanistan policy and joining hands with global drive against terrorism, Pakistan has at the moment, once again acquired the status of a front line state though temporarily. This has helped Pakistan to acquire some military and economic aid in the shape of re-scheduling of loans and lifting of ban from military equipment. However, Pakistan is likely to face bellicose posture from India in future,



though more recently there have been some openings between the two states. China is likely to maintain status quo in her policies towards Pakistan(Oguadinma, 2016).

FACTORS SPURRING MISSILE/ ARMS RACE IN SOUTH ASIA

Territorially, India is the 7th largest country on the political map of the contemporary world. She therefore, envisions a dominant role and status at global as well as the regional level. Today, India desires to have a balance of power with China and USA and claims the area from straits of Hormuz to the Straits of Malacca. To a majority of Indian scholars, regional power status is imperative for Indian national security. Indians have all the desires to recreate Akhand Bharat. A critical analysis of Indian past record, political aims and strategies indicate that her future aspirations would be based on following: -

- (a) Attainment and recognition of major power status by attempting to secure permanent seat in UN Security Council.
- (b) Capability of making independent decisions in her own national interests without any restraints imposed by external powers.
- (c) Domination of Indian Ocean.
- (d) Complete subjugation of neighboring states.

Some observers (even Indian based) prophesy nuclear explosions and recent missile race as a mean of power projection. Mr. Sidharth Mishra, an Indian defense expert writes, “if you want to be highly regarded and recognized by the worldwide societies as a constrain to figure with, a more noteworthy consideration regarding the Armed Forces turns into a basic pre-essential”. Indian quest to achieve the status of dominating power in South Asia in particular and at global level in general has haunted Indian leadership to equip her armed forces with the most modern



weaponry including nuclear armament which has been a contributory factor for ongoing nuclear and missile race between the two countries(Rej, 2017).

MANAGEMENT OF NUCLEAR / MISSILES CAPABILITIES

One of the key problems in the sub-continent nuclear and arms race identifies with the management of the nuclear capacity of the two nations. The real danger is that deployment of ballistic missiles with nuclear warheads alongside strategy can make prevention incapable and can additionally make both these countries unsteady politically and economically. None or low presence of fundamental frameworks of command, control, communications, and intelligence is another reason for stress in the South Asian arms race. These countries don't have the satellites mandatory to observe the deployment of ballistic missiles with nuclear warheads or the sophisticated early warning frameworks to distinguish dispatches in the real time. They additionally can't decide if aircraft entering air space are conveying nuclear weapons or something else. Closeness is another issue. For instance, given the three-to-ten-minute missiles and aircraft flight times amongst India and Pakistan, there is zero chance to accumulate continuous data about potential preparations to launch nuclear warheads. It is believed that on one side, these vulnerabilities may make discouragement more viable as neither one of the sides may trust it could utilize atomic weapons to awesome military impactbut more importantly the dynamics of second strike capability may necessitate more and more development in nuclear and missile facilities in order to match each other(Karrlsson-Willis et al., 2017).

GENSIS OF NUCLEAR/ MISSILE PROGRAMS IN THE SUB-CONTINENT AND EXISTING STOCKPILES

India. India's nuclear program dates as back as its independence, 1947. India's nuclear program was initiated in 1947 by Dr. Homi Bhabha (Chairman of Atomic Energy Commission) and



India's first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru. Jawahar Lal Nehru in a speech in Bombay said "I hope Indian scientists will use atomic force for constructive purposes". They did not. Doctor Homi Bhabha fulfilled Nehru's dream but could not restrict his newly acquired technology to peaceful uses only. By mid-1950s, India built Asia's first atomic research reactor *Apsara*, and set in motion a broad based nuclear program. China's first nuclear test, barely two years after its forces inflicted a crushing defeat on India, sharply heightened Indian lust for acquisitions of nuclear know-how. India exploded its first nuclear bomb in the Rajasthan desert in May 1974, shaking 1968-designed NPT regime to its very foundation. This became the harbinger of nuclear weapons race in the Subcontinent. It is also reported with fair degree of accuracy that Ms. Gandhi again "considered testing a nuclear device in 1981 but could not do so due to early discovery of test preparations by the international community". India's efforts to weaponize the nuclear option were completed under Prime Minister V.P. Singh, who gave strong support for the program. Prime Minister Vajpayee, then, ran the crucial last lap in the long relay race to make India an overt nuclear weapon power in 1998. According to Doctor Vinay Kumar Malhotra, a distinguished Indian defense analyst, following factors were apparently responsible for India's decision to test its nuclear weapons in 1998: -

- (a) The step-by-step acquisition of the capability to manufacture nuclear weapons. India wanted to consolidate and testify her achievements in the nuclear field.

- (b) BJP led coalition came to power merely two months before the tests. In its election manifesto, it clearly proclaimed that if the BJP elected as the next government, it would re-examine India's nuclear policy and strategic defense. In the wake of framing coalition government, it needed to demonstrate that it could take some bold decisions which the earlier governments couldn't take.

- (c) Indian decision to demonstrate nuclear capability was also influenced by coming closer of September 1999 at the point when the CTBT comes into force. Indian policy makers were encouraged to compute on now or never a decision. It would empower India to join the treaty as an atomic power.

(d) Fourth factor was the insufficiency of security assurance from friendly nuclear states with the time of the Soviet security assurance giving an interval(Bhatia, 2017).

Major Features of Indian Nuclear Doctrine. Indian nuclear doctrine, presented in August 1999, envisages that “India would pursue a doctrine of credible minimum nuclear deterrence based on minimum but credible guarantees. It also spells out no first use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear states”. Indian political leadership “wants to achieve massive nuclear war fighting capabilities based on aircraft, ships and mobile land-based missiles”. “Command and Control of the nuclear forces will rest with the civilian authorities, with the button in the hands of the Prime Minister”. Indian nuclear doctrine does not specify the number of weapons required to have desirable deterrence. Also maintaining and improving the conventional capabilities to a very high state of preparedness forms part of Indian nuclear doctrine(Jeong, 2017).

Pakistan. Pakistan’s nuclear program may be described as a program based on a policy of response and reaction. Pakistan started its peaceful nuclear program in 1965. The real seeds of Pakistan’s nuclear program were however, sown in 1976, almost around two years after India detonated its first nuclear device. The government set up an Engineering Research Laboratory under the country leading scientist Dr. Abdul Qadeer Khan. He played an essential role in putting Pakistan on the world nuclear map in only six years. In 1984, Dr. Khan made it open that Pakistan had succeeded in producing enriched Uranium. In March 1985, the late General Zia-ul-Haq confirmed that they have enriched Uranium up to five percent. As far back as India carried out five nuclear tests on May 11 and 13, 1998, Pakistan had to perforce consider a matching response in kind. It effectively detonated five nuclear devices on May 28, the country first atomic tests, trailed by one more on May 30. "Extensively these tests secured three fundamental areas of nuclear weaponization, low-yield weapons, high yield fission weapons and heightened fission weapons". Abdul Qadeer Khan declared "that every one of the tests was of fission devices. He, in any case, included that Pakistan had the capacity for testing a thermonuclear device also”(Banerjee, 2017).



Pakistan's Nuclear Policy. Pakistan's nuclear policy emphasizes more reliance on strategic weapons. Pakistan has always opposed the idea of nuclear massing particularly in South Asia. As early as 1974, Pakistan moved a resolution in UNO General Assembly calling for a Nuclear Weapon Free Zone in South Asia. Improvement/ development in Pakistan's nuclear and conventional capabilities have always been reactionary to Indian exploits. Pakistan has stated officially on a number of occasions that Pakistan never wanted to involve herself in a nuclear race with India but would take adequate safeguards against her sovereignty. Pakistan has already announced that it has against the arms race in the region. Keeping in sight the Indian existing nuclear/ missile cache, Pakistan necessitate a sufficient size of nuclear weapons arsenal, which can endure against a surprise pre-emptive nuclear attack, and preserve the trustworthiness of Pakistan's nuclear deterrence(Hebblethwaite, 2013).

INEVITABILITY OF NUCLEAR/ MISSILE RACE AND ITS IMPLICATIONS

Even at the beginning of 21st Century, Pakistan's national security still remains dominated by the threat from India whose political and intellectual elite never accepted the two-nation theory on the basis of which Pakistan was created. Since independence, Pakistan had to maintain a level of military deterrence adequate to counter India's hostile policies and hegemonic ambitions. Illegal annexation of Kashmir, denial of resources at the time of independence and clash of ideologies were the contributory factors to Indo-Pakistan marred relations right from the outset. A conflict took place in Kashmir immediately succeeding the transfer of power. Two armed aggressions followed suit within a span of 25 years; the end of which saw Indian sponsored creation of Bangladesh. Over and above, Indian and Pakistani troops have remained in a state of eye ball to eye ball contact along Line of Control in Kashmir since 1948. More recently, the concept of limited war unleashed its horrors in Kargil. So, in brief, Pakistan has always remained under a dense shadow of confrontation. George K-Tanhan of USA the RAND Corporation, who has specialized in the subcontinent, has also come to the conclusion that "most Indian strategists consider Pakistan's presence as rupturing the unity of the sub-continent and thus intimidating its security". The above scenario does not promise any reduction of the arms race in the region of south Asia. It is important to note that the reasons of the Indo-Pakistan arms race do not resemble



the similar conflicts that parallel those between the Western and Communist bloc countries during the cold war. But they are based on religious enmity, territorial claims and other political differences between the two countries. These causes and core issues still remain unresolved. Considering Pakistan's potential in nuclear technology and means of delivery vis-à-vis those of India, it becomes apparent that Pakistan has no choice but to continue with its missile development program in order to maintain a viable deterrence.

With the BJP at the helm of affairs, there is also a great aspiration in India to make herself as the great power in the region of South Asia in the comparison with china, perhaps of equal status to China. She has therefore ventured for rapid growth in defense related capabilities. This is likely to speed up the military acceleration whereby weapons that are possible today become important tomorrow. The ongoing arms race between Pakistan and India is also attributed to the theory of essential equivalence which means that if an essential equivalence in conventional capabilities do not prevail between the two countries, Pakistan would have no choice but to maintain a credible deterrence in nuclear/ missile wherewithal. This situation visibly gives rise to the phenomenon that either Pakistan must possess a viable balance in terms of nuclear/ missiles means with India or be at Indian mercy. It is therefore safe to conclude that the race between the two rivals is bound to continue as deterrence is always dynamic but not static(Liska, White, Holley, & Oglesby, 2017).

CONFLICT RESOLUTION THROUGH MUTUAL TRUST AND CONFIDENCE BUILDING MEASURES (CBMs).

South Asia is a home to 1.2 Billion people of the world where about 25% of the total population live below poverty line. As could be established from the historical perspective, it is always India which initiated the first step towards nuclear arms and Pakistan followed suit as a reaction due to threat to her sovereignty. The changing geo-strategic environment in South Asia demand that there is a dire need for a comprehensive settlement on all issues that influence the relations between India and Pakistan. There is a requirement in both the countries to educate the general public about the emerging realities and their responsibility to drift away from the traditional animosity. The leadership of both India and



Pakistan must understand that contradictory issues between the two countries can be resolved only by themselves. This would necessitate the removal of irritants between the two and creation of secure environment and relations based on mutual trust and confidence.

Role of CBMs. The absence of mutual trust has been identified as the basic cause of tension in Indo-Pakistan relations. Both the countries must understand that all the irritants which exist between them are their created problems and must be addressed by them and nobody else. Both must create the conditions favorable for a lasting peace in the region. “However, the viable route for defusing tension and initiating the normalization process between India and Pakistan both the countries should adopt the process of confidence building measures in good faith”. Both the countries have been able to avert wars on many occasions in the past with the help of CBMs. It is however relevant to point out here that most of the previous CBMs have been military related. In the changing geo-strategic milieu, there is a need to show more openness and initiate military as well as non-military measures. Pakistan has always displayed adequate accommodation and strived for resolving the contentious issues through mutual dialogue. Even in the recent past, there have been a number of offers by Pakistan to settle the issues on bilateral basis. Major initiatives taken by Pakistan towards this end include a combined Indo-Pakistan statement relinquishing the procurement or production of nuclear weapons in 1978, a proposal to institute mutual inspections by India and Pakistan of each other’s nuclear facilities in 1979, simultaneous adherence to the NPT by India and Pakistan in 1979, simultaneous acceptance of full-scope IAEA safeguards in 1979, bilateral or regional nuclear test ban treaty in 1987 and a South Asia Zero-Missile Zone in 1994. Pakistan must continue with such like good will gestures. There is a need to have more regular and sustained visits of parliamentarians, media persons, thinkers and strategists between the two countries(Duta, 2017).

CONCLUSION

South Asia is a very unique region, where the past is permitted to toss the present into turmoil. As indicated by Raj Mohan Gandhi," we can in fact picture South Asia as a substantial ground containing various outside dangers where old scenes are by and large ceaselessly re-instituted, not, unfortunately, to gain from the past, but rather so as to vindicate it". India and Pakistan are



the two noteworthy on-screen actors in South Asia. The contours of relations amid India and Pakistan have remained conflict ridden since their independence. Mutual fears and suspicions have impeded the process of peace between the two countries. The implacable bitter past has permanent impressions on the memories of the people on both sides and a change from the policy of confrontation to cooperation is not easy. Nevertheless, the prospects of rapprochement do exist provided there is a mutual desire and a determined will to resolve all the issues.

As per Indian Prime Minister Mr. Vajpai's famous notion, "We can change our friends but are incapable of changing next door neighbors". Pakistan has to live with all the security concerns emanating from across its eastern borders. Both the countries must understand that irritants between them can be resolved only by themselves and no foreign power could help in this regard. Major irritants between the two countries are primarily the product of divergence in perceptions and policies. It is therefore imperative for either country to understand the other's view point with an open mind.

The world-wide emphasis on geo-economic realities dictates a dire need to institute some viable CBMs to break the ice. The CBMs would set the stage for dealing with more serious and involved issues such as minimum nuclear deterrence, working for a missile free regime in South Asia and partial/ complete test ban on nuclear weapons. Both the countries may also like to check deployment of their troops along the borders. The achieved stage can then create the atmosphere for the resolution of intricate problems like Kashmir and working out comprehensive measures like 'No War Pact/ Non-aggression Pact. It is a hard fact that leadership from both the countries would have to learn the lessons from the history of cold war and would have to work for a conflict free and economically and politically stable South Asia.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The research study corroborates the inevitability of the nuclear/ missile race in South Asia under the present situation. The study also highlights that it is extremely important for both the countries to initiate the steps to reduce the race as well as the tension if not eliminate it. Following recommendations are proffered in this regard: -



- (a) Pakistan must use the good offices of SAARC to promote peace and tranquility in South Asia. There is a requirement to enhance the role of SAARC and make it an effective body. It must not be made hostage to the aspirations of a single country.
- (b) Kashmir remains the core issue between the two countries and has been a major cause of arms race since the division of the sub-continent. Pakistan should muster international support particularly from within the South Asia and the 'Five Haves' club to persuade India to seek an early solution to the issue. Though, according to Dr. Shireen M Mazari, there is a little hope that the arms race would end even after the settlement of Kashmir issue.
- (c) There is a requirement to show more openness and allow exchange of official and private delegations, holding of seminars, frequent tours and other such like activities on bilateral basis to know each other more deeply. This would change the perceptions of people about each other and help build the confidence.
- (d) Periodic meetings of head of the states and ministers/ parliamentarians from both sides should be conducted at regular intervals to discuss the matters of conflict in a more serious manner.
- (e) Further nuclearization / weaponization of South Asia may be checked by instituting 'Free Missile Regimes' low/ no military zone along the borders, avoidance of concentration of troops near the critical border areas and reviving already existing CBMs.
- (f) Pakistan must work out minimum but credible deterrence level and should not blindly pursue Indian nuclear and missile acquisitions. This would help save the heavy defensespending's.
- (g) There is a requirement to educate and enhance the comprehension of the general masses on the outcome and cost of nuclear race and the effects of living under the nuclear



shadows. The issues must be debated on the electronic media; rather it would be better to involve analysts from both sides to discuss the issues more openly.

(h) Both the countries may like to halt the existing differences unresolved their settlement through quiet discourse and discussions. Concur upon a charter to lessen mutual problems and leave their nearsightedness and animosity. Both should join hand to eliminate poverty, lack of education and political numbness from the sub-continent. Presumably, chances of such a positive projection are remote. However, one ought not to overlook that a couple of years before 1990-91, chances of a finish of the Cold War between the USSR and the USA were additionally extremely remote.



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