

MILITARY AND POLITICAL LINKS WITH SUPER POWERS:  
THE EFFECTS ON LOCAL SECURITY IN SOUTH ASIA

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## INTRODUCTION

South Asia is geographically and culturally a distinct region composed of 7 states: India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Bhuttan and the Maldives. Most of these states owe their existence due to the process of decolonisation which began in this part of the world in 1947. South Asia is also known as the Indian subcontinent. India is the nucleus of the region. Rest of the states are connected with it by historical, geographical, ethnic, cultural and religious ties. These ties make South Asia, in the words of an Indian intellectual, S.K.Subrahmanyam a civilisational area.<sup>1</sup> From the point of view of national power, India is the largest in terms of its size and natural resources in the region which is followed by Pakistan. Like rest of the South Asian states, Pakistan also shares a long common border with India. A number of languages such as Sindhi, Punjabi and Kashmiri are spoken on the both sides of the border. People living in the border area are in many cases related to each other. India has a large Muslim population, whereas, Pakistan has a sizable number of Hindu citizens, especially in the Sindh province. These similarities provide a fertile ground for interfering in each other's internal affairs. This could be said about the other South Asian neighbours of India as well.

Besides these irritating similarities India and Pakistan have failed to solve their longstanding dispute over the future of the Kashmir valley. This dispute has led them to two wars in the past (1948-1965) and could lurch them into a third one at any time. Pakistan, al-

though much smaller in size than India, has never accepted the latter's Paramountcy in South Asia. Pakistan has been attempting to achieve parity with India atleast in military terms. This quest for parity on part of Pakistan and an attempt to maintain the status-quo in the region is yet another cause of hostility between India and Pakistan. Similarly, the opposing ideologies of India and Pakistan are perceived by both of them as a threat to each other's existence. For instance, secularism in Pakistan is perceived as a force behind secessionistic movements in the smaller provinces who challenge the ideology of Pakistan, the separate identity of Muslims from Hindus. By the same token the ideology of Pakistan, in India is perceived as a force behind the separatism in the Indian parts of Kashmir and the Punjab. For combination of these reasons India and Pakistan since their coming into existence are locked into inimical relationship with each other. To make itself more secure a state beefs up its defences and the other in reaction follows suit. Thus the security of India and Pakistan is interconnected and this interconnection of their securities create a security complex in the South Asian region.<sup>2</sup>

India and Pakistan for bolstering their security against each other have developed political and military relations with the extra-regional powers. Pakistan has developed relations with China, the oil rich Gulf states, and the United State of America. On its part India has strong bonds of relationship with the Soviet Union. Because of Indo-Pak animosity the extra-regional powers especially the two superpowers have penetrated in the security complex of South Asia. This article attempts to investigate the impact of the superpowers penetration on the security of India, Pakistan and the South Asian region as a whole.

## THE PENETRATION OF THE SUPERPOWERS IN SOUTH ASIA

The beginning of the Indo-Pakistani rivalry coincided with the onset of the cold war between the two superpowers, the United States and the Soviet Union. It was a world wide contest to outflank each other. To achieve this objective they were looking for allies and bases all over the world. The main theatre of Cold War was, undoubtedly Europe and the Far East. However, it was a global contest. Upto 1971, when its eastern wing seceded, Pakistan had a unique position in south Asia, Central Asia, the Middle East and the South East Asia. At the apex of the Cold War period, the American policy makers were attracted by Pakistan's geo-strategic position and wanted to use it as a forwarded base for the pursuit of the policy of the containment of communist Russia, and China.

The Pakistani rulers since its independence, were either Jagirdars, (feudals) or bureaucrats, or all time politicians, or the Generals. They found America, the successor of Britain, the overlaying power in South Asia, as their natural ally against India. In the 1950s Pakistan joined the Western military alliances in the Middle East and the South East Asia (Cento & Seato). Under the terms of the Treaty of Mutual Assistance of 1959, Pakistan started receiving generous American aid in the form of most sophisticated weapons of the day M-47 Tanks against the aging Indian Centurian and Sherman.<sup>3</sup> This supply of American weapons beefed up the Pakistani defences against the Indian numerical superiority. The Pakistani rulers wanted to pit America against India, but they failed in this attempt. However, due to political and military links with Pakistan, the United States gave a substantial amount of civilian and military aid to Pakistan and supported its stand on the Kashmir dispute for holding a ple-

biscrite there for deciding its future.

To counterbalance Pakistan's quest for military equality and to maintain the statusquo in South Asia, India under its first Prime Minister Pandit Nehru started cultivating relations with the Soviet Union. In 1955, Bulganin and Khrushchev, two top leaders of the Soviet Union, paid a joint visit to India, supported the Indian stand on Kashmir (as its inseparable part). The Soviet Union helped India in establishing its heavy industry. The Steel Mills at Bkulai and Bokaro,<sup>4</sup> were set with the Soviet assistance which paved the way for self-sufficiency in many other industrial sectors. The Soviet Union began to sell its weapons at a very low price which ultimately made India the fourth largest military machine in the world.<sup>5</sup> The Indo-Soviet relationship started by Nehru and Khrushchev was culminated in 1971, when the two states signed a treaty of friendship and co-operation which is a defacto military alliance between them, and under its terms they are supposed to support each other in case of an aggression by the Third Party, an apparent reference to Pakistan. Because of the political implications of this treaty India provided a sufficient degree of military and political support to the Bengali secessionists to defeat the Pakistani army during 1971 war.

The most interesting aspect of the superpower penetration in South Asia is their involvement in the pattern of local rivalry. Both the superpowers entered the region to use their local allies in a global contest. America wanted to use Pakistan against Communism. Pakistan did provide base facilities to the Americans but it did not send its troops in Korea nor lined up against China. On the contrary to a large extent Pakistan won the United State support against India. Similarly, India did little to break the

Soviet isolation in the world. India in its utterances condemned American imperialism which was according to its regional needs. On the contrary Soviet Union became a party against Pakistan in the India-Pakistan conflict. Both the superpowers, thus found themselves enmeshed in the quagmire of the South Asian regional rivalry.

#### THE EFFECT OF THE UNITED STATES MILITARY AND POLITICAL LINKS WITH PAKISTAN ON PAKISTAN'S SECURITY

##### A) DOMESTIC OR GOVERNMENTAL SECURITY

Unlike 'power' it is difficult to explain the concept of 'security' in international relations. In the words of Barry Buzan, 'Security is a relational phenomenon. It involves not only the capabilities, desires, and fears of individuals and states, but also the capabilities, desires and fears of individuals and states with which they interact'.<sup>6</sup> From this perspective, security is a multilayered phenomenon which covers not only the security of a state but its neighbours and the other interested powers in that particular region. The first and foremost layer of security is the security of a state or national security. This layer of security is again ramified into two aspects: national security and governmental security. National security means the security of state which is threatened by its rivals. The problem of the domestic security arises out of the vulnerability of a ruling regime to other political forces working in the same state. In case of many third world states, where national cohesion is wanting or the government lacks popular base and its legitimacy is questionable, the ruling party deliberately confuses, in Barry Buzan's words, 'Governmental security with national security'.<sup>7</sup> This sort of states are treated as weak states.<sup>8</sup> In this type of states, the coercion and foreign military backing is required for

the consolidation of power by the ruling regime. According to some observers, Pakistan like the Soviet Union is an imperial state disguised as a federation, where one ethnic group dominates the rest of the state and exploits the state resources for its own benefits and uses repressive measures for keeping its control intact.<sup>9</sup> In Soviet Union the dominant ethnic group is the Russians, in case of Pakistan the ruling elite mainly comes from the province of Punjab. The clash of interests between the Punjabi ruling elite and the rest of ethnic groups, Bengalis (before 1971), Sindhis, Baluchis, and Pathans over the issues of the governance of the state and utilization of resources is permanent feature of Pakistani politics. The Punjabi elite: the feudals, the bureaucrats and generals have used force as a means of state-building process. The non Punjabi rulers such as Liaquat Ali Khan, the first Prime Minister of Pakistan was an immigrant from India, Ayub Khan an ethnic Pathan was a serving general, and Zulfikar Ali Bhutto was an ethnic Sindhi. However, they also relied heavily on the armed forces for consolidation of their power. And as a quid pro quo, they yielded to the Punjabi pressures in running the affairs of the state.

In many third world countries, where democracy has not gained firm roots, the fragile regimes cultivate ties with foreign powers, especially with the United States which provides them with military and economic aid and confers legitimacy on their regimes. As a quid pro quo for aid the unpopular regimes serve the United States interests in their respective regions. And these linkages are used for the consolidation of governmental or domestic security by those regimes. By the same token Pakistani rulers started cultivating relationship with the United States since the inception of Pakistan.

The forging of the political and military links with the United States, coincided with the introduction of new political and administrative measures within Pakistan itself. Most conspicuous among them were merger of four provinces into a single administrative unit in West Pakistan called One Unit which came into being in 1955. And the other measure was the imposition of Martial Law in 1958. Both of these measures created a great deal of resentment in three smaller provinces in West Pakistan: Sindh, Baluchistan and North Western Frontier Province. In these smaller provinces, the One Unit was seen as a means of exploitation by the Punjabis. The One Unit in West Pakistan, deprived East Pakistan of its majority in the parliament by fixing parity between the two wings of the country. The Bengali resentment reached its peak in 1970, when despite their majority in parliament, instead of handing over power to them, General Yahya Khan, who arranged a secret trip of Henry Kissinger to Peking, used force against the Bengalis. Yahya's use of force was not condemned by China and the United States. It can be argued that Yahya Khan might have not used coercion against fellow Pakistanis if he had not been confident of the United States support to his military action, which ultimately resulted in the secession of East Pakistan and creation of Bangladesh.<sup>10</sup>

The imposition of One Unit and Martial Law created a great deal of resentment in the provinces of Baluchistan and Sindh. Baluchistan has a lot of importance in the United States policy of Containment of Soviet Union, because it is a buffer between Afghanistan and the Persian Gulf. In the Ayub Khan era new roads and cantonments were constructed in Baluchistan. A large number of ex-servicemen were also settled in Baluchistan. This construction of cantonments was resented by the Baluchis as a

measure of their colonisation by the Punjabis. During the Ayub era the Baluchis started an open insurgency in their area which was crushed by the armed forces. Similarly in 1972-73, Baluchis insisted on the expatriation of non Baluchis from their province. Bhutto under the advise of the Shah of Iran (who disliked democracy in Pakistani Baluchistan)<sup>11</sup> and generals, dismissed the elected government of Baluchistan. The Baluchi resentment was treated by the Bhutto government as an insurgency and brute force was used against the Baluchis. From this stage, the Punjabi elite started to eradicate the democratic process in the country by imposition of Martial Law of 1977. And the same group of generals sent Bhutto to the gallows, which was a great setback to democracy and national cohesion due to a long period of direct military rule from 1977-1985.

The Soviet Union occupation of Afghanistan in 1979, revitalised Pakistan's political and military links with the United States. Pakistan started receiving a huge amount of military and economic aid from the United States and political commitments for the preservation of its sovereignty from internal and external threats. These commitments were taken by the ruler of Pakistan late General Mohammad Zia-ul-Haque as an assurance from the United States of the continuation of his rule. Martial Law and General Zia were unpopular in the province of Sindh, because Sindhis considered Zia directly responsible for Bhutto's elimination through Supreme Court Verdict on the charge of abetment in a murder. In 1983 during the movement for restoration of democracy, the Sindhis rose against his rule. The Challenge to the military rule was interpreted by General Zia as a challenge to the national security of Pakistan and the Sindhis were dealt with an iron hand by the Pakistan army. The construction of cantonments and deployment of the armed forces in the interior

of Sindh is resented by the Sindhis and seen as the perpetuation of the Punjabi rule by other means even during the rule of a Sindhi Prime Minister Mrs. Benazir Bhutto.

Force has been used by the ruling elite, the Punjabis, as a means of state building process in Pakistan. This use of force is a direct result of the political support which they get from the United States. The use of force cannot prove to be an effective measure of nation building. The creation of Bangladesh is the most conspicuous proof of the counterproductivity of the use of force. Thus the political and military links of the Pakistani elite with the United States and the support which they are getting through these links may not be good for the future of Pakistani state.

#### *B) NATIONAL SECURITY OF PAKISTAN*

National security is another and more visible aspect of the security of a state. This type of security problem arises when physical or territorial base of a state is threatened by its neighbour or neighbours. Pakistan's national security has been conceivably threatened by India for a host of reasons discussed earlier. One of the reasons for the Pakistani rulers to cultivate political and military ties with the United States was to off-set the Indian preponderance in the region which threatened Pakistan's security. Although the United States has never provided a guarantee to Pakistan to protect against a threat from India, the weapons provided by America have become quite helpful to Pakistan for warding-off Indian threat to a large extent. For instance Pakistan's lack of strategic depth makes it vulnerable to the violation of its airspace easily by the Indian airforce. To meet this deficiency Pakistan under Ayub Khan and Zia obtained a modest airdefence system from the United States. The United States fighter

bombers F-16 have a good deal of deterrent capability against an Indian air superiority. Similarly the Indian navy may face a tough resistance from its Pakistani adversary in blocking the Karachi Port as it did in 1971 war. Pakistan has got United States Brook Frigates which can prove a reliable counterpoise to India. The Pakistani army is in a position to withstand an Indian attack for quite a few weeks till ceasefire is arranged between the two states, which can save Pakistan from being defeated in a combat. Thus one can argue that Pakistan's political and military links with the United State have enabled it to defend itself against a superior adversary in case of threat of war or in an actual war.

It appears to be still difficult to determine the real motives of the Soviet Union of invading Afghanistan in 1979. If the Western explanation, that such an invasion was the result of traditional Russian drive to warm waters, is taken for granted then America's political commitments to Pakistan under the mutual assistance agreement of 1959 for defending it against a communist invasion or infiltration not only checked the Russian advance but also bolstered Pakistan's national security which is the bulwark against Russian advance whether real or imagined.

The argument about the role of the united states in bolstering Pakistan's national security can go circular . It can be argued that Pakistan's revitalised military and political links with the united states after the soviet invasion of Afghanistan has exposed the former to a two - fronts threat, India and Russia. Whereas according to Aul-ta Inder singh pakistan has received no guarantees against either of these threats from the united states.<sup>12</sup> There is of course, an element of truth in this argument that America never provided any guarantees against India on

the contrary in the thick of 1965 war America imposed arms embargo on India and Pakistan which hit Pakistan more severely than India, because the sources of Indian weapons were more diversified than those of Pakistan, whose weapons were mainly from the United States. However, it should also be remembered that India's reputation, as a big neighbour, in dealing with its smaller neighbours is not good. India starved Nepal over their transit agreement because of latter's purchase of some anti-aircraft guns from China. The distribution of the Ganges water between India and Bangladesh still remains unresolved. India dropped its paratroops first and concluded Indo-Sri Lankan accord later in 1987. Bhutto's sovereignty, is a legal luxury. "Pakistan as a Pariah, according to Anuradha Gupta, cannot expect any treatment other than one of permanent hostility".<sup>13</sup> It appears that due to its size and military capabilities India intends to play the traditional Kutalian role of Chatrapati (the lord of Umbrella) or a preponderant power in South Asia in which the other states have to follow the Indian line on domestic and foreign affairs. Indian designs become further exposed from India's Doctrine of Regional Security (also called Indian Monroe Doctrine) which says:

India has no intention of intervention in internal conflicts of a South Asian country and it strongly opposes intervention by any country in South Asia in the internal affairs of any other. India will not tolerate external intervention in a conflict situation in any South Asian Country if the intervention has any implicit or explicit anti-Indian implications. No South Asian government must therefore ask for external military assistance with an Indian bias from any country.

If a South Asian Country genuinely needs external help to deal with a serious internal conflict situation or with an intolerable threat to a government legitimately established, it should ask help from a number of neighbouring countries including India. The exclusion of India from such a contingency will be considered to be an anti-Indian move on the part of the government concerned.<sup>14</sup>

An American writer and syndicate columnist Selig Harrison also supports and recommends to Washington that United States should be prepared to respect Indian version of the Monroe Doctrine.<sup>15</sup> It was under this doctrine that India sent its troops to Sri Lanka under the latter's request to suppress Tamil insurgency and later to Maldives to protect its legitimate government on its President's request from being overthrown. An American academic of Indian origin, Raju Thomas also advocates the case of the acceptance of the Indian preponderance by other smaller states for peace in South Asia.<sup>16</sup> Raju Thomas suggests the analogy of United States Canadian or United States Mexican relations as a model for peaceful relationships in South Asia. However, Raju Thomas himself accepts that due to the unresolved dispute with it, India's South Asian neighbours will not accept the Indian preponderance in the region.<sup>17</sup> The way to challenge the hegemony of a strong power is to forgo links with other powers, what Pakistan is really doing. Thus without military and political links with the United States Pakistan might have been as powerless as Bangladesh or other South Asian countries vis-a-vis India.

## THE EFFECT OF THE SOVIET POLITICAL AND MILITARY LINKS WITH INDIA ON THE INDIAN SECURITY

### A) DOMESTIC OR GOVERNMENTAL SECURITY

Unlike Pakistan and other Third World States, India since its independence evolved a stable political system. This relative political stability to a large extent reduces the room of maneuverability of foreign powers to interfere or influence Indian internal and external affairs. However, this is not to suggest that in contrast to Pakistan, India should be put into the pigeon hole of strong states as far as its internal cohesion is concerned. Indian Society is riven with religious, ethnic, Brahmi (caste) and class cleavages. It is a cacophony of cultures and languages where local and communal loyalties, generally ride higher than the national identities. If Pakistan is a Punjabi dominated state, then India appears to be a living manifestation of the Brahminical 'Hinduvita' or Hindu Raj. In this caste hierarchy either Brahmins or Rajputs from Northern Indian Hindi Belt rule over the country. In the last forty years there has been only one Prime Minister from the Non-Hindi speaking belt, Morarji Desai, from Maharashtra. This caste and class cleavage puts India in the middle of the spectrum of the national cohesion of states. The centrifugal tendencies are quite strong in the Indian states of Kashmir and the Punjab, which are again mainly a reaction to the policies of Hindinisation of India by the ruling elite.<sup>18</sup> In 1960 there was a strong protest against the imposition of Hindi as the official language of the country in the Southern states of Tamil Nadu, Kerala and West Bengal. In the South, India is seen divided on the Aryan (north) and Dravidian (south) lines where North rules the South.<sup>19</sup>

These are the main weaknesses of the Indian polit-

ical system which open the way for foreign powers to interfere in the internal affairs of India. The pro-Moscow communist party of India (CPI) is quite strong in the Indian trade union movements and it has got a great deal of nuisance value in organising Bunds (strikes) and sittings and use of agitational tactics. Similarly the Communist Party Marxist (CPM) which is pro-China has ruled the states of Kerala and West Bengal for a long period. The CPI is recognised as a fraternal party of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) and enjoys the latter's full trust.<sup>20</sup> The Communist Party Marxist is otherwise critical of the northern based political parties including Congress I. But both factions of the Indian Communist Parties have supported Congress against its rivals on many important internal and external policy issues. The Congress I though not a Communist party in its orientation also enjoys the confidence of the CPSU. And probably by these links the CPI has supported the Congress I. When Mrs. Gandhi imposed emergency in India in 1975 and dealt with an iron fist with her opponents, the CPI was soft on Congress. The Gandhis received rousing welcome in Moscow in 1976, when the state of emergency was widely criticised abroad.<sup>21</sup>

The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979 was disapproved by the over welcoming majority of the international Communists. It was also criticised by the then Janata government in India. Its Secretary General Sikander Bakht declared it as a threat to the Indian security.<sup>22</sup> The Soviet Union has few friends in the world. The criticism of its Afghan policy by a government in a friendly state was difficult to tolerate. In contrast to the Janata government, the Congress I which was in opposition in India at the time of invasion, endorsed the Russian entry in Afghanistan. The Congress I after winning the mid-

term elections and formation of government gave instructions to the Indian ambassador at the United Nations to defend the Russian action vigorously.<sup>23</sup> The storming of the Golden Temple (Sikh holy shrine) by the Indian army in 1984 was criticised by most of the Indian political parties. But CPI was an exception, so was the Soviet Union. The Russians were the first power to condemn the assassination of Mrs. Gandhi by her Sikh body guards. And Mr. Gandhi's accession to power was also first of all approved by Moscow among the foreign powers. From 1986 to 1988 Mr. Gorbachev met Mr. Gandhi not less than 10 times.

The then minority government of National Front led by Mr. V.P. Singh, while in power, ironically enjoyed the support on the one hand of both the factions of Communist Party of the left and on the other ultra rightist Bhartiya Janata Party (B.J.P) led by L.K. Advani without joining the government. But when the Lok Dal the major component of the National Front split into two factions and Mr. Chander Shekher challenged the leadership of Mr. V.P. Singh on Babri mosque Ram Janam Bhoomy and Kashmir issue the former managed to win over the support of Congress I in Parliament to enable him to form the government at the centre. Consequently the National Front lost the support of both the communist parties and the BJP.

The communist party's support for National Front alongwith BJP appears to be contradictory given its past record of supporting Congress I. This also indicates CPI's greater freedom of action in respect of its decisions under the changed circumstances. This is conceivably due to two reasons; first due to upheaval in Russia itself, Moscow is not interested in playing significant role in the

Third World states. Secondly Mr. Gandhi ditched away from his mother's socialist policies. It is also note worthy that despite all its weaknesses the Congress I is probably only political party which has kept the cohesion of India intact. And this was made possible by Moscow's support of Congress I. Thus the Soviet influence in Indian internal politics is not as strong as the United States influence in Pakistan. However, the Soviet Union does enjoy a great deal of influence on the government and domestic security of India.

#### **B) INDIAN NATIONAL SECURITY**

The impact of political and military links with the Soviet Union is fairly more visible on Indian national security than on the governmental security of that country. India is one of the leading developing states in the world. It has strong steel industry which is supposed to be mother of the rest of the industries. India had few steel mills during pre-partition days but most of the steel mills were set up in the 1950s with the Soviet Co-operation. Soviet Union is the largest importer of the Indian goods ranging from garments to computers. Trade relationship is a part of an overall relationship with the Soviet Union.

India gets the best of Soviet weaponry at concessional rates. Because of its military links with the Soviet Union India is the fourth largest military machine in the world. Soviet Union not only sells weapons to India but it does give India license to produce these weapons itself and for this reason, India is the largest weapons producing state in the Third World. Some of the helicopters which may be used at high altitude are bought from open market by Pakistan, which provide logistic support to the latter's troops in the Siachin Glacier. The Soviet supply of arms is a counterpoise to the sophisticated and superior United

States weapons in the Pakistani armoury. For instance after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, Pakistan received advanced fighter planes F-16s from America. On its part, the Soviet Union provided India with the MIG 29s which are supposed to be as good as the F-16. The Harpoon missiles were matched by the induction of nuclear submarines Sindho Raj and Sindho Gosh leased to India by the Soviet Union.

The Soviet Union is among those states which endorse the Indian stand on Kashmir, that it is its integral part. Because of lack of flexibility on the part of India to settle the longstanding Kashmir dispute through political means, Pakistan has quite often been tempted with the idea of military option. Before sending its troops or irregulars into the Kashmir valley Pakistan has always given support to the anti-Indian local Kashmiri militants. And this sort of support has flared up into an Indo-Pakistani War. During War the Indian stand on Kashmir, as earlier mentioned has been supported by Soviet Union. The 1948 war was fought without any foreign support. Pakistan fought 1965 war with the United States weapons. In 1971 war Pakistan did not exploit Indian weakness in Kashmir due to the Indo-Soviet treaty of friendship. On the other hand the Russian supply of arms and political support to India played a significant role in Pakistan's defeat at the hands of the Bengali secessionists and the Indian army in East Pakistan.

After the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, Pakistan under late General Zia-ul-Haque was able to receive a fresh supply of modern United States arms in large quantities. With the collaboration of Mr. Nawaz Sharif, the then Chief Minister of Pakistani Punjab, and presently Prime Minister of Pakistan and Sardar Abdul Qayoom Khan, the President of Pakistani part of Kashmir, an alleg-

edly sizable amount of Pakistani weapons found their way in the Indian administered part of Kashmir which reportedly helped the Kashmiri militants to launch their armed struggle against India for their independence. But so far Pakistan has not sent its troops to Kashmir in support of the militants. This may be due to the Indo-Soviet treaty. Thus, this treaty is a check on Pakistani adventurism in Kashmir.

The Soviet political and military support of India is an antidote to what Indians call, Pakistan, China, United States axis.<sup>24</sup> During the India - Pakistan war of 1965 China deployed its forces on the Sino-Indian border and threatened India to cross the Macmohan line which deterred India from exploiting Pakistan's weakness in its Eastern wing. But during the 1971 war China remained silent, although like America it never condemned Pakistan's military action against the Bengalis. One of the reasons for China's lack of active support to Pakistan was the reaction to the Indo Soviet treaty, under which Russia was supposed to help India against China. Thus one can argue that the Soviet Union's political and military links with India has helped the latter in maintaining status quo in South Asia.

#### THE EFFECT OF THE SUPERPOWER POLITICAL AND MILITARY LINKS ON SOUTH ASIAN SECURITY

In the beginning of this article it was discussed that security is a relational and multidimensional phenomenon which connects the fate of inimical neighbours together. In the previous section the implications for the governmental and national security of India and Pakistan arising out of their military and political links with the superpowers were discussed. In this section, the implica-

tions for the regional security or the local security complex of South Asian Security Complex arising out of these links will be discussed.

Hedley Bull uses the term 'superpowers' as synonymous for the term 'Great Powers'.<sup>25</sup> According to him the great powers play a significant role in the maintenance of international order. In the regional conflicts, according to Bull, the greatpowers on the one hand increase the tension by supplying weapons to their allies, on the other, the greatpowers restrain the behaviour of their allies and thus help in avoidance of crisis and the limitation of War.<sup>26</sup> This dichotomy of superpower role is also visible in the South Asian local security complex. One can find that the superpowers, on the one hand intensify local tensions by supplying arms to their respective allies, on the other hand, the superpowers exercise restraint on them to de-escalate tension and limit the damage of war between their local allies.

During the Indo-Pakistan war of 1965, the United States imposed arms embargo on the belligerents, not for the purpose of exposing Pakistan to Indian superiority as widely believed in Pakistan, but to scale down the ferocity of the war and bring the belligerents to a negotiating table. The American proved to be correct in their perceptions that such an embargo would compel the belligerents to accept an earlier ceasefire. Under the auspices of the Soviet Union Pakistan and India signed the Tashkent Declaration for ending the state of war, which was to be endorsed and hailed by the United States.<sup>27</sup> Thus, by imposition of embargo and mediation between the combatants proved to be the acts of crisis management by the Superpowers in South Asia.

After the fall of Dhakka in 1971, under the American pressures the Soviet Union persuaded India to announce a unilateral ceasefire. In case of continuation of hostilities, the rest of Pakistan (West Pakistan) might have been completely over run by India, and the bipolar character of the South Asian security complex altered into a unipolar one. This change might have also affected the super regional or near security complexes in west and north west, i.e. Gulf Complex and the Sino Soviet Complex. If India had absorbed Pakistani Baluchistan, then it would have common border with Afghanistan, a traditional buffer between South and Central Asia. In that case India might have allowed Russian free access to the Indian ocean. The prevention of the traditional Russian drive to the warm waters is one of the main policy objectives of the United States in South and South West Asia. Just to avoid that possibility, the Americans might have further beefed up the defensive/offensive capabilities of Imperial Iran which then was the policeman of the region. The American support to Imperial Iran and the Russian backing of India in a competition for influence in the Persian Gulf and the Indian ocean might have increased tensions between the superpowers and over shadowed detente between them. Thus, to avoid that possibility the two superpowers agreed after the 1971 war to preserve the bipolar character of the South Asian security complex by restraining Indian from further disintegrating Pakistan.

The alteration in the character of the South Asian local security complex after 1971 war might have also affected the Sino Soviet security complex. If Pakistan had been disintegrated and replaced by India then the North East Frontier of India would have been joined by the Northern frontier. In other words, in case of absorption of West Pakistan after 1971 war into India, the latter might have emerged as an over arching power in South

Asia, and the Pak-China border might have been transformed into the long Sino Indian border where tension already persisted between them. Having border with India and Russia, China might have felt herself completely encircled. And to break that encirclement on the one hand, it might have developed military links with India and on the other it might have developed military links with the West. In the words of Fred Halliday 'Nixons' Peking visit of 1972 led to the establishment of the Peking-Washington alliance.<sup>28</sup> This alliance might have further consolidated if during the earlier year Pakistan had been disintegrated and India emerged as the dominant power in South Asia. The Sino-United States links certainly had affected detente. Thus to preserve detente, America and Russia 1971 war agreed to persuade India not to alter the security complex of the bipolar character of South Asian Security Complex. The two superpowers are the co-sponsors of the NPT (Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty) of 1968, which forbids the spread of nuclear weapons in the world. Despite their political and military links with Pakistan and India, America and Russia, disapprove the clandestine nuclear programmes of their respective South Asian allies. At the time of giving aid to Pakistan, the United States President is supposed to certify every year under the Symington and Pressler amendment, that Pakistan does not possess a nuclear device. This is a political and economic pressure on Pakistan for not going nuclear. It may be another story if by exploiting American interests in the Afghan conflict, Pakistan gets away with the waiver under the Pressler amendment. However, gone are the days when Pakistan by exploiting the Afghan issue used to get the congressional waiver and consequently President's Certification under Pressler amendment. However, this year America appears to be sticking to its Congressional provisions regarding prevention of nuclear proliferation in South

Asia. United States economic and military aid to Pakistan stands suspended since October 1, 1990 as United States President has not provided necessary certificate to the Congress as required under Pressler amendment. There is a growing feeling in America that, 'Afghanistan problem is somewhat over now, the USA should apply non proliferation laws strictly in Pakistan's case.<sup>29</sup> Whatever American attitude, there are reports that, Pakistan is voluntarily placing one of its research reactors under IAEA safe-guards. Despite claims to the contrary, the timing of the safeguards decision is being perceived by some as a first step in compromising the nuclear issue in order to pander to America's 'bully-boy tactics.<sup>30</sup> The so called 'Indian peaceful explosion' of 1974 was condemned by America. India faces embargo on the items specific for making the nuclear device. Russia on its part condemns the Pakistani nuclear programme in strong terms and warns about its implications on the security environment around South Asia. According to the Indian scholars there are unpublished differences between India and the Soviet Union over the former's nuclear programme.<sup>31</sup> Russia, as the co-sponsor of the NPT would certainly disapprove India's weapons oriented programme, despite her strong political and military links with India. Thus, there is an agreement between the two superpowers to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons to South Asia. They feel that in case of such proliferation the South Asian Security Complex might be affected. Non nuclear Iran out of fear of a nuclear India may develop more closer political relations with nuclear Pakistan or develop its own weapons as a deterrent against Indo-Iraqi nuclear programme and the South Asian politics may spillover into the Gulf Security Complex. Therefore, to keep the South Asian local security intact, the Superpowers are trying to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons to this region.

To manage the local crisis, the superpowers have mediated between India and Pakistan for the settlement of their disputes. In 1962, alongwith Britain, America persuaded India and Pakistan to open a dialogue which they did start and continued till the Sino Indian tension was defused and India once again hardened its position over Kashmir. In 1966, few months after the 1965 war, the Soviet Union mediated between India and Pakistan and brought about normalisation of their relations under Tashkent declaration. At the time of writing this article the situation in the Indian part of Kashmir is getting worse because of the armed clashes between the Indian security forces and the Kashmiri separatists. This state of affairs in the light of past experience could be a prelude to the third Indo-Pakistani war over the Kashmir dispute. To avoid the crisis and manage the peace United States sent a high level delegation under its special envoy and Deputy National Security Advisor Robert Gates, to India and Pakistan for defusing tension between them. This high level mission had materialised through the joint efforts of the superpowers to de-escalate tension between the two South Asian adversaries.<sup>32</sup> This common superpower effort to ease the tension in South Asia conforms to their wider role of crisis management in the international society in areas where international security is threatened.

Thus, one can argue that the superpowers on the one hand, have increased tension in South Asia by supplying arms to their local allies, on the other hand, they have restrained their allies from going frequently to wars. Therefore, the two superpowers have helped to preserve the very bipolar and inimical character of South Asian Security Complex.

## CONCLUSION

The local security complex in South Asia which is bipolar in its character and seemingly durable in its nature, is a creation of an inimical relationship between India and Pakistan, the most powerful states in the region. Due to their animosity a sense of insecurity prevails between them and to overcome it, India and Pakistan have developed political and military relationship with the superpowers. These links have facilitated the superpowers to penetrate in the South Asian security complex. However, this penetration has not altered the very nature of the South Asian local security complex but rather reinforced it.

A question arises here if the two superpowers had not penetrated in South Asian Complex, what would have been the pattern of local security? There appears to be two answers to this question.

First, the superpowers have a great deal of influence on both internal and external affairs of India and Pakistan, especially the latter. Without military and political links with the United States, the Punjabi dominated Pakistani ruling elite would have been less enthusiastic in supporting the cause of the Kashmiris, the main irritant between the two states. The Pakistani leadership would have been more accommodative with Indians if it had not forged links with the United States. In that case India and Pakistan might have either agreed to a partition of Kashmir officially among themselves or made it an independent neutralised state in the foothills of the Himalayas. If the major irritant has been removed then the inimical relationship might have been changed into amicable one, and the security complex, which is a creation of hostility would have disappeared. However, due to the links with

Americans, the Pakistani rulers have kept the Kashmir dispute alive and it preserves the South Asian Security Complex.

Second, if the superpowers had not entered South Asia, the Indo-Pakistan rivalry would not have intensified and Pakistan would have not challenged the Indian regional preponderance without United States connections. According to Organski under the conditions of preponderance the weaker state does not attack, while the stronger does not accept.<sup>33</sup> This Organski model of preponderance prescribed between India and Pakistan corresponds to the Hindu Ideal of 'Chatrapati' in which every weak state has to accept protection of the strong Mahabharat, by surrendering its sovereignty to it. It is not only Raju Thomas who advocates the preponderance as a precondition for peace in South Asia but more philosophical Gopal Krishna does the same. He regrets that India participates in power game due to Pakistan's links with America.<sup>34</sup> If Pakistan had not practiced the policy of the balance of power then India would have been the only power in the region that would have led to the disintegration of the security complex. But Pakistan does not heed to the advice of India. Thus, the security complex remains intact in South Asia. This brings us back to the conclusion that the security complex is not created by the superpowers but they just reinforce it by supporting their allies. Security complex is just preserved by the superpowers. One more example will make this proposition more clear.

The durability and independent character of the Security Complex in South Asia would remain possibly unaffected by the change in the pattern of Global politics i.e. the end of the cold war. It was generally believed during the cold war period that the regional tensions swim

and sink with the turns and twists in the nature of the relationship between the two superpowers at a given time. This assumption was partially correct. By taking sides in the local conflicts the superpowers do influence the nature of regional politics. In the Arab Israeli conflict the Israelis are backed by America whereas the Arabs are supported by Russia. In Southern Africa white apartheid regime is supported by the West, whereas, the black majority is backed by the Russians. In South Asia Pakistan is armed mainly by America and Russia supplies weapons to India. By this pattern the problems of Latin America and Black Africa are receding. Thus, the end of cold war would be a catalyst for the de-escalation of tension in South Asia.

This explanation appears to be inept in understanding the pattern of security in South Asia. The Indo-Pakistan rivalry predates the superpower entry into South Asia. At the time of writing when the cold war has been declared dead by two superpowers, like the Arab-Israeli conflict, the Indo-Pakistan hostility has reached its very high pitch and may escalate into a new war over their longstanding Kashmir dispute. And the superpowers despite their joint efforts may not be able to prevent a new war. In the post cold war era Russia and America would continue to sell arms to India and Pakistan for commercial reasons, let alone for the political ones. It is also worth mentioning that the two superpowers are the main but not exclusive suppliers of arms to India and Pakistan. They get weapons from Britain, France, Switzerland, Sweden and other states. These weapons are sufficient to keep their hostility going on for long. Thus, the end of cold war would not herald a new phase of normality in the Indo-Pak relationship. However, this enmity may change by three factors: a change in Pakistan's domestic politics; reduction of the power of the Punjabi elite; a peaceful settlement of the Kashmir dispute; the defeat of Pakistan in a

war with India, which would allow the latter to establish its regional hegemony. These changes would come from within the region not without. The South Asian security complex would remain unaffected by the end of cold war.

In the final analysis the superpower penetration has undoubtedly escalate tension in the region but not created it in South Asia. And the political and military links of the South Asian states with the superpowers have just reinforced the pattern of local security in the region.'

#### NOTES

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6. Barry Buzan, Regional Security, op.cit., Note No.2, p.1

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8. Ibid

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10. For the nature of the leadership in Pakistan and its influence on the foreign policy making process, see Gowher Rizvi, 'Pakistan: The domestic dimensions of security', in Barry Buzan & Gowher Rizvi eds, South Asian Insecurity, op.cit., Note No.1; and Rounaque Jahan, Pakistan: Failure in National Integration, especially Ch:8, London, Columbia University Press, 1972

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