

DYNAMICS OF COMPETITION- COOPERATION IN INTERNATIONAL ANARCHIC SYSTEM AND NUCLEAR ESCALATION IN SOUTH ASIA

**Muhammad Nawaz Bhatti, Ashfaq Ahmed, Zulfiqar Hussain*

Abstract

The paper examines that competition and cooperation among states are considered the byproduct of cost and benefits, in pursuit of common and shared goals. Both superpowers USA and USSR reached a common understanding that the cherished goal can effectively be achieved by developing international institutions and an organized mechanism based on certain principles and effective policies to dissuade Nonnuclear Weapons States (NNWS) from developing Weapons of Mass Destructions (WMDs). It was a unique policy and unprecedented that both superpowers were applying the true teachings of realism. Both remained trapped in a state of arms race, suspicions, rivalry, and competition in all fields and were leading towards the most trumpeted security dilemma. On the other hand, both agreed to cooperate in the light of liberal institutionalism. Conflict and cooperation, at the same time, became a unique characteristic of this peculiar policy. It enabled the international community in some instances to completely halt nuclear proliferation by establishing Nuclear Weapons Free Zone (NWFZ), in other cases it slowed the pace but could not stop states from developing WMDs as is the case of South Asia –India and Pakistan. In few other cases cooperation succeeded in roll backing nuclear weapons programs e.g. the case of Central Asian Republics (CARs). The article analyzes how nuclear escalation ladder is one way to clarifying essential escalation dynamics and practical approach and how to control and properly stop military escalations so that it does not stimulate nuclear war and impending catastrophe in the South Asia.

Key Words: Competition, Cooperation, International System, Nuclear escalation, South Asia

Realists consider that the prevailing international system is anarchic, where unhindered cooperation would not be possible. In common parlance, states cooperate with one another. It would be in the fitness of things if we may define institution(s) and regime(s) to arrive at the choking point. It would be an appropriate attempt to probe and figure out, by applying international relations theories including “institutionalism,” “liberal institutionalism,” as well as “realism,” to determine that as to why institutions/regimes are to be developed? International Relations Theories help the reader to intellectually analyze and discuss the differences among these schools of thoughts and explore their effective elements for a logical analysis of the international regimes

** Associate Professor, Department of IR & Political Science, University of Sargodha.
Ph.D Scholar, Deptt. of International Relations, National Defence University, Islamabad
Ph.D Scholar, Deptt. of International Relations, National Defence University, Islamabad*

and institutions in the prevailing international system. These theories serve their actual purpose to select the relevant variables on the subject and to avoid the irrelevant and unnecessary material in this arena and to be arrived at the most needed consequences. Once this task is achieved the study would narrow down the sequence and to elaborate that how international community has been succeeded to evolve nonproliferation regime in current international scenario. Hans J. Morgenthau observes that political realism is just like politics, governed through the objective laws, which have deep roots in the nature of human beings. Before suggesting improvement in the society, it is imperative to look at the natures of these laws, where the society is operating. "The operation of these laws being impervious to our preferences, men will challenge them only at the risk of failure" (Morgenthau, 1991).

John Gerard Ruggie is a famous author to coin the phrase international regime. Ruggie defines international regime as "a set of mutual expectations, rules and regulations, plans, organizational energies and financial commitments which have been accepted by a group of states" (Ruggie, 1957). On the other hand, Stephen D. Krasner defines regimes as "sets of implicit or explicit principles, norms, rules, and decision-making procedures around which actors and expectations converge in a given area of international relations" (Krasner, 1983). He believes that principles are belief of fact, rectitude and caution. Moreover, norms are behavior standards to be defined in accordance with rights and obligations. Rules are specifically prescriptions as well as proscriptions for needed action. Decision-making is a procedural practice which is prevailing practice for making and implementing collectivism in choice.

On the aforementioned definitions this study points out that regimes are a belief system or a code which determines equal or unequal distribution of share for member states in a peaceful way. Regimes can be signed voluntarily either collectively or its membership can expand gradually in due course of time. It would be appropriate to mention that the term "international institution" (Martin) was first used in international literature, in post WWII era, to refer to the most unprecedented organs of United Nations. On the contrary, institutions have been defined by Douglass C. North and Robert P. Thomas as a set of regulations that

“determines the path for states to get involve in cooperation and simultaneously in competition with each other” (Thomas, 1970).

We can observe that before developing institutions, member states have to set rules of the game or engagement in order to cooperate with one another. Engagement rules bind member states morally as well as legally to refrain from cheating one another in international arena. On the contrary, theory of institutionalism holds distinct opinion as it is different than the liberalism. For instance “it highlights the conditions or prospective benefits states can acquire” (Martin, 1995). Once the particular assignment is completed it encourages government representing state to work in collaboration to develop institutions. Institutions are developed with a crystal clear aim to overcome the prevailing trust deficit scenario, establish communication linkages between states and tie them logically as well as legally. Institutionalism attaches great significance to institutions and the relevant periphery. Important features of the particular theory includes i) institutions can produce effective results if they are free from outside interferences and ii) they are prone to great power interferences. Both of these features ultimately affects outcome of the institutions in the prevailing international system.

Cooperation enables state to predetermine potential gains so that it becomes a win-win situation for parties involved. Failure of regime/institution's life is dependent on the behavior of member states. Life of regime is based on fulfillment of vital interests. It is quite possible that member parties may decide to cease the functioning of a particular regime after attaining the desired results on the basis of her national interests. One contrary's success may encourage member states to assign new task to the regime by further prolonging its life in the anarchic system.

Institution is defined as “persistent and connected sets of rules (formal and informal) that prescribe behavioral roles constrain activity, and shape expectations” (Keohane, 1989). Oran Young defines institutions as “recognized patterns of behavior or practice around which expectations converge” (Young, 1983). It is evident from the definitions that liberal institutionalist are convinced that cooperation is just possible among states. It may be mentioned that the liberal institutionalism has ignored insecurity and war as well as permanent features of international

system. Development of institutions is rather an easy task as compared to appropriate functioning and task accomplishment designated to the institutions. Through efficacious effectiveness of the institutions, their performance can be enhanced in the absence of chaos, hostility and insecurity in the prevailing international system. Ekaterina Stepanova mentions that in next two decades, quantitative parameters of organized collective violence to going to more stabilize or showing minor downward to upward trends but no radical change at all. However, security challenge would not diminish and their pattern will continue. More traditional challenges as such “major conventional inter -state regional wars, with large battle related death tolls, become less and less relevant, new violent security challenges will emerge and proliferate, and changing perceptions of security will have a growing impact on how and which issues are securitized” (Stepanova, 2012).

In post-Cold War era and particularly in post-9/11 era the world has seen an outgrowth of various terrorist organizations formed by the terrorists and the Islamic radicals as well as non-state actors. They had launched war against the West and Western values and uninterruptedly killed thousands of innocent people. On the flimsy grounds they had already caused enormous irreparable damages to Muslims particularly to the peaceful teachings of the Divine religion on the globe. The rise of radical Muslim terrorist organizations has raised alarms and even fearful nuclear terrorism in US and its allied states particularly belonging to the Western Europe cannot be ruled out. It is a negative aspect of feelings of discriminations, hostility and mistrust but it inflicted unbearable loss to the Muslim community vulnerably working in the West. Rise of non-state actors and unbridled terrorism and extremism in various part of the globe further necessitates the requisite cooperation between and among states, which is pre-requisite for peace and prosperity.

Due to the common interest states have to rely on one another and bound to accept the existence of other members in international hierarchy. States are rational actors: they understand the payable cost they will have to bear by maintaining policy of isolation as no state can cater her needs by relying on its own resources only. International cooperation is an essential part of international politics and relations among states. Liberalism describes the reasons of international cooperation and the efficacy of institutions in the global system. It

explains that cooperation among states in the presence of anarchy is possible through mushrooming of international actors as well as regimes. Liberal institutionalism accepts realists claim that international system is based on anarchy and its second argument is point of divergence from realism i.e. it distances itself from traditional realist notion that cooperation under anarchy is not possible.

Liberal institutionalism emphasis on institutions and challenged the long held realist notion that states are the primary actors in international system. However, Hans J. Morgenthau indicates that “the main signpost that helps political realism to find its way through the landscape of international politics is the concept of interest defined in terms of power” (Morgenthau, 1991). The aforementioned concept provides a linkage between reasoning of international politics and the relative facts needs to be understood. With this perspective, Barry Buzan and Gowher Rizvi underline that without help of the external resources it was quite difficult for Pakistan to maintain her successful rivalry in South Asia against hegemonic India. “Pakistan still exists, and it still avoids subordination to India” (Rizvi, 1986).

Liberal institutionalism attaches peculiar importance to non-state actors yet another point of difference between liberalism and realism. This challenge stems from neoliberal belief that hegemonic state develops institutions to implement its policy by other means including threat or actual imposition of sanctions or application of other coercive means against rival state or group of states. Liberal institutionalism presents an alternative view of international cooperation by narrating that search for common goals bridges the gap among states, brings them closer to one another and binds them in a formidable working relationship in attaining political, economic and military goals. Working relationship among states enables them to stop worrying about relative gains made by the other states, because states achieve their interests without going into a war. Institutions can help states to bring end of suspicions, trust deficit and sideline history of troublesome past.

Liberal institutionalism asserts that institutions provide essential platform to states enables them to create conducive environment in the globe. Liberal view is a categorical challenge to Morgenthau’s view that “states compete with one another due to scarce resources” (Waltz, 1988). Notwithstanding, this notion could not fully address the long held belief

and concerns that states cheat after entering into regimes in international affairs. Liberal institutionalist need to address long held is concerned that states may deceive. Fear of cheating stems in various quarters because states are represented by humans and they are selfish and states are index of human minds.

In order to deal with these concerns liberal institutionalists should have devised an inbuilt mechanism in institutions/regimes to ensure that member states will not be allowed to cheat each other. The potential cheating state will be made to realize that cheating is counterproductive as a heavy price will have to be paid as a penalty by the cheating party. In the absence of world authority and the resulting anarchy, it would be difficult to weed out or bring down cheating. Member states can put diplomatic pressure and ask the ambassadors of the member states to leave states, impose economic embargos, or even travel ban to punish cheating state.

Another weakness of liberal institutionalism is that it does not address the possibility of war among states. Possibility of war stems for two reasons i) reaction of cheating state(s) to penalty imposed on it and ii) international anarchy which provides enormous opportunity to states. Liberal institutionalist ignores possibility of war because war has become an unaffordable social activity owing to advancement in weaponry systems and technology. However, it highlights the following points: (i) Liberals are ignoring wars, the outdated weapons of states and third world states' reliance on advance countries in terms of procurement of arms and ammunition; (ii) Liberal institutionalist has focused the advance countries of the West rather than discussing the general phenomenon.

A formidable challenge to classical and neo-realists claim is that international system is anarchic and states procure arms to ensure self-sufficiency, sovereignty and preserve physical existence. Kenneth Waltz, founder of neo-realism believes that "states are rational actors therefore states do not get holding of excessive military power because excessive military strength will invite attack" (Waltz, 1988). Militarily weak position allows offensive states to wage wars against the weak states. In both conditions states have to pay the price. Liberal institutionalism particularly challenges the neo-realist notion of Kenneth Waltz,

defensive realist scholar, that cooperation is less likely because of the anarchic structure of the global system in the world at doldrums.

Waltz accepts existence of non-state actors in international system but does not attach any importance to them. Anarchy is a dominant theme in literature on realism because from realists' perspective it fosters competition and leads states towards crisis and further complicates relations among states. It discourages states from signing or entering into agreements with other members of international system because such agreements increase a state's dependency on other states. The realist school of thoughts asserts that "states do not cooperate because of fear of relatively higher gains that other states can achieve through cooperation" (Grieco, 1988). Once states enter into regimes they have to pay the price and make compromises in terms of distribution of power/resources and to lesser extent on their sovereignty as well.

Dominant theme of anarchy gives birth to psychological issues and generates feelings of insecurity and distrust among states. The opponent or the potential cheater after signing the agreement may ignore the legally binding agreement or set aside morality and, cheat if cheating suits. States cannot neglect the possibility of cheating after signing and becoming members of various regimes because "no human order is proof against violence" (Waltz, 1979). The notion of neo-realism, explained by Waltz, stops states from entering into cooperation with other states because states attempt to enhance their control over "what they do not have in satisfactory capacity" (Waltz, 1979). It provides details of the dangerous behavior of states. Simultaneously it implants vigilance in the minds of statesmen and demands from them to deploy safeguards against the threatening futuristic designs of other states. The problem lies with the structure of the system which is based on self help due to its anarchic nature it requires individual states to keep their personal rather than international interest supreme. Self interest and help system thus stops states from cooperating with one another.

States cooperate and form alliances against foreign military threats to safeguard their "territorial boundaries and their masses living within its boundaries" (Mansbach, 2006). Changing dynamics of international system in global arena forced neo-realist scholars to introduce slight changes in their most boasted teachings. Thus neo-realist school of thought has been divided into defensive and offensive realist

schools. For instance, John J. Mearsheimer an offensive realist scholar claims that “states cooperate with one another and form international institutions” (Mearsheimer, 1994/95). There are three necessary features of this cooperation. Firstly, dominant/hegemonic states develop and provide policy guidelines and if necessary introduce changes in already set course of these concurrent institutions. Secondly states ability to influence policies of institutions determines their ranking in international arena. Thirdly these institutions enabled dominant powers to pursue their goals in anarchic global system. Hegemonic approach is thus one of the reasons which elaborate why states sign regimes and enter into cooperation.

Hegemonic approach underlines the duration of regimes. For instance a regime, an outcome of entertaining hegemonic power interest will function till the time it serves and protects hegemon’s national interest. During the cold war common interest of both superpowers was to halt nuclear proliferation. Despite ideological, military and political rivalries, governments of both superpowers agreed to cooperate in pursuit of common interest, to halt nuclear proliferation, which was in their national interests.

Cooperation in Arms Control: USA and Soviet Union successfully negotiated bilaterally the nuclear arms reduction accords, which have ultimately proved a stumbling block for the cold war era on the globe. USA and Soviet Union successfully signed the multilateral agreements, which ultimately reduced the level of conventional weaponry from Europe and extended new form of transparency in the world affairs. The novel measures taken by both superpowers of the time ultimately had set aside the shadows of unlimited nuclear warfare from the divided world. Both countries extended helping hand in advancing international treaties and several other threat reduction agreements and remedial measures relating to stored nuclear warheads as well as fissile materials and large arsenals of biological and chemical warheads. Various threat reduction and arms control remedial measures especially relating to the Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) were considered as chief contributor towards security and stability in the global world. Such measures attained strong military backing from the respective countries as an integral part for their contribution towards essential predictability, having superb value in Confidence Building Measures (CBMs) and defense

planning of the national security. Theoretically balance of power approach remained valid for South Asia. There are three independent variables,

Indo-Pakistani power rivalry, involvement of the major powers in the politics of South Asia, as well as the interaction of small powers in the subcontinent in the context of the other two variables...Two main considerations are: first, competition among major powers for support bases among South Asian states in the context of their own global rivalries; second, competition among South Asian states themselves for political diplomatic economic or military support from the major powers, which would redress imbalances and inequalities perceived to exist in their mutual interstate relations.(Kodikara, 1983)

In the perspective of East-West upheavals, some of them even unprecedented and unparalleled, it is quite queer that arms control measures are so severely being resisted in South Asia, an important region, where conventional war remained in vogue but two new nuclear powers emerged at the end of cold war arena. Nuclear escalations in the region highlights the additional risks of nuclear weaponry to stability and security of national development and make an effective case absolutely for arms reduction and never explain as to why arms control having so little appeal in the South Asian region. Some explanation for little appeal of arms reduction and arms control may still be constructive and may help to create new ideas as how to make effective appeal for most needed arms control in the novel circumstances of the global world. Chinese presence has more relevance in South Asia for the smaller states. "The smaller states of the region would also appear to have been less influence in their behavior by the Indo-Pakistani conflict than by the Sino-Indian war of 1962 and its aftermath" (Kodikara, 1983).

An essential factor indicates that in Asia, Pakistan, China and India contain important asymmetries of military capabilities as well as relative security. Cold War experiments suggest that negotiated arms control and arm reduction is more effective when opponents have approximate parity at the starting point. Then they can understand gains for their most needed security, reduction in defense expenditures and reducing uncertainty about their deterrence on bilateral and reciprocal basis. Redressing fundamental asymmetries relating to main differences

in geography, size and resources may not be essentially practical but improving relative security would be the most needed priority for the negotiating countries. In such relationship, opponent can have free hand to reduce mutual dangers of uncertainty and efficacy of the requisite deterrence. Main objective of the deterrence is to persuade against exercising great threat by the rival power or the opponent. Threat reduction tools can be used to reduce both in perception and the likelihood that threat would definitely be exercised and opponent deterrence is hereby bound to be failed. Outside allies and partners may be able to extend constructive support to regional opponents in the same spirit.

Second factor falls in the perception that arms control is a special tool that recurrently reduces the international status of a country. It is known case of Indian stance on Non Proliferation Treaty (NPT) which India considered as discriminatory and unequal with the rising Chinese strength. On the contrary, India is reluctant to participate in bilateral treaties that could lessen her international status. Beijing may have also similar reservations for her own status. However, Pakistan remained more conducive and receptive to arms control and arms reduction as compared to her bitter rival India on bilateral basis. Pakistan takes this opportunity as a mechanism for equalizing her position viz. India bilaterally and does not consider it as reduction in her international status rather a foundation stone in peaceful existence and development in the region. China is not beyond the strategic calculation of Pakistan and this fact is transparent from the proposal of bringing China on board regarding Iran-Pakistan gas pipeline with or without India. Pakistan seeks assistance in nuclear realm from China to overcome its energy problems.

Third factor is repugnance to the processes that may jeopardize the process of growth and development. China, India and Pakistan started progression in post-World War-II arena from the lower position in Science and Technology than Europe, USSR and the western world. Rising powers are now making significant progression in reducing technological deficiencies and general backwardness. They are not interested to be engaged in prolonged negotiations as they fear that their progress and growth might be compromised and hampered.

Fourth factor is a perspective that nuclear risks may be handled successfully and these risks have been reduced to lower level with passage of time through fruitful learning, observations and through historical experiences. This background is more in vogue in India as well as in China than in Pakistan. The perspective of strategic arms race between USSR and USA and their compulsions for arms reduction and arms control is a model which is being avoided by the South Asians. Although this model seems complacent and unrealistic for those countries which still remained in the era of cold war, yet it may have merits for rising countries such as the case of India and China to avoid undue risks and their own excesses. Looking for acceptable solutions for threat reduction and arms control is the need of the hour in view of upcoming challenges and opportunities and dynamics of changing circumstances to avoid any untoward catastrophic development.

NUCLEAR ESCALATION IN SOUTH ASIA

It would be not out of place to be mentioned that Pakistan-India relationship is highly competitive and militarily crises oriented. Incremental advances made in the nuclear stability, sometimes unilaterally and somehow bilaterally. No doubt Pakistan has worked hard and developed dynamic nuclear command and control system as India could not be so successful in effective command and control system though she claims for it. There are three specific areas, meaningful for treaties, which have become possible through bilateral initiatives by both countries. One agreement is related to sanctity from attack to nuclear installation located on both sides of the borders with periodical exchange of relevant data. Second agreement is to notify the other side regarding impending missile tests. Third agreement is concerned with regulation of military aircraft close to border areas with no fly zone on both sides. The hotline agreement is also quite attractive but used more for public consumption and public relations with little effective mechanism of actual utilization for military purposes.

Remarkable progress has been noted in the Track II diplomacy, where both Pakistan and India have been seriously pondering upon eliminating or at least restricting the use of nuclear capable short range missiles/warheads. It would be quite useful step towards nuclear deterrence stability but it would be more appropriate to actually define and come for real execution. It would enhance fruition of Track II

dialogue, which is being used for deep understanding and encouragement as well as restraint in official dictum. More valuable talks would be military to military contacts as existed between Pakistan and China but unfortunately such contacts are not available with India. Essential impediments between Pakistan and India are not insurmountable rather cooperation is quite possible if India does not show unbridled hegemonic behavior.

Preliminary analysis suggests that nuclear and military escalation between Pakistan and India and on the other hand between China and India has been taking place among the three geographical contiguous nuclear states of Asia. It would be appropriate to assess the virtual realities being evolved through their intersecting relationship among three nuclear armed powers of Asia. For examining the deterrence properties as well as stability dynamics and absolute risks for initiating armed conflict or escalation conflict to the higher level may have essential impacts upon the security of whole region.

China's border conflict with India in October, 1962 has shown the flimsy defense policy of New Delhi and then Indian conventional policy has included two essential fronts for preparatory requirements simultaneously with Islamabad as well as Beijing. On the contrary, Pakistan considers India historically her arch rival and major threat for her stability in South Asia and always making preparation for showdown with New Delhi. Now-a-days Taliban insurgency and instability in Afghanistan as well as unbridled spreading of terrorism and extremism have posed grave threat for the internal security of the state and Pakistan first time has reckoned with two fronts war contingencies though it is located at different level and different scale.

The purpose of the analysis is to judge the persistent intensity of continuous competition and recurrent military imbroglio especial in problem oriented and disturbed relationship between Pakistan and India. Nuclear deterrence can accomplish and even elevate the essential risks of outbreak of a war as well as has potential for nuclear escalation in the region. Possible crises can retard even diplomatic and political measures in restraining the normalization of security oriented relationship and even to devise technological and military competition as well as arms racing. Social and economic development may take place through the technical escalation and further deepening of catastrophic damage from any war

that may erupt at any future date. The competitive intensity can be exploited by the extremists' organization and sub-national groups through available means of conventional warfare, subverting conventional military mechanism through application of unpredictable pressures upon the planners as well as public bodies through deeply embedded hostilities. Barry Buzan focused on South Asia and expresses that "two countries (India and Pakistan) were born locked into a complicated rivalry that defined the central security problem for each of them. They easily overawed the smaller states which were geographically entangled within their sphere, and so fell naturally into a power rivalry with each other" (Buzan, 1986).

For South Asia, demography and geography, conventional military and nuclear forces structure as well as operational defense postures are a key factor that determines the basic thresholds and rungs on nuclear escalation paradigm. Pervaiz Iqbal Cheema highlights that "in terms of security requirements, Pakistan is likely to continue with its current policy of maintaining the minimum credible deterrence. Given its increasing energy needs, it is likely that Pakistan would wish to establish a greater number of nuclear power plants" (Cheema, 2009).

Elements of Nuclear Escalation: India and Pakistan are two chief players of South Asia, where nuclear escalation has been taking place since a few decades. The essential elements include:

1.Territorial Boundaries: Pakistan and India are facing each other across the common bordering areas that is stretched to 1350 miles as well as the line of control (LOC) – also called cease fire line in Jammu and Kashmir further enhanced to 460 miles. So militaries on both sides of the borders are dealing with the vast areas of 1800 miles. Indian disputed boundaries with Pakistan are also intersecting with Indian disputed boundaries of Ladakh with PRC. The disputed bordering areas between New Delhi and Beijing are largely defined since British era and is called McMahon Line, now called Line of Actual Control (LAC) running through Himalayas from Kashmir –Ladakh southeast for 2100 miles interrupted by Nepal as well as Bhutan. India considers that security of Bhutan and Nepal is her own primary concern as even these countries have common border with China. China disputed the legality of McMahon Line and has already taken Aksai Chin in Ladakh – adjoining to area of Kashmir and Tibet. Subsequently India integrated the state of

Arunachal Pradesh. China-India brief showdown in October-November, 1962 occurred in the northeastern region, where Indian forces were defeated and uprooted by Chinese blitz. Mathew Joseph highlights that Pakistan has been looking for parity with India in all fronts. With single point agenda looking for parity, Pakistan has built armed forces beyond its capability. "The over-stretching economy towards building a national security state severely impaired human resource development in Pakistan," (2009).

2. The Mountains: Pakistan and India with opposing defense structures and escalation ladders indicate potential showdown in mountainous and hilly tracks of Kashmir, on plains as well as at sea. Escalatory rungs would not be the same in the mountainous areas, or plain or at sea. Different ladder would be applicable in each surrounding although it would be linked if conflict starts in one area and then connected to another area. Energy security has attained unparalleled significance as an essential constituent of national power. South Asian countries including Pakistan are ranked lower for the energy security. Pakistan energy demand is continuously increasing. "The demand is expected to grow by about 8 percent resulting in total demand of nearly 36000 MW by 2015 and 114,000 MW by about 2030" (Kumar, 2010). Hence Pakistan needs prolific defence and security policy for invincible defence of her territory. One difference for localized conflict in the Himalaya sector for Pakistan and India is that nuclear threat or nuclear use especially in the mountainous and hilly tracks is highly improbable for two major reasons. Firstly, the valley area is inhibited as people may migrate as per their political support. Secondly, military targets of high value prone to nuclear attacks would be nonexistent or scarce. Offensive ground operation in the hilly tracks is quite difficult and slow moving as equipment is channelized through terrain hills and accessibility to heavy weapons is severely restrained.

Defensive operation with infrastructure prepared has especial advantage in the mountainous areas. In short, nuclear weapons in case of India and Pakistan are not quite beneficial in the issue of Kashmir. Carlyle A. Thayer expresses that rise of China and India mean rise in maritime domain especially Sea Lines of Communication (SLOC) that "traverse the northern Indian Ocean and South China Sea. Since the 1990s, India has pursued a "look east" policy designed to promote

economic linkage. As a result the boundaries between South and Southeast Asia are becoming blurred” (Thayer, 2011).

3. Sub-conventional Rungs: Reciprocal ladders have common feature in each geographical surroundings. India and Pakistan have basically sub-conventional warfare which is a transparent fact even if Pakistan’s operations have become more successful. Beneath each conventional threshold, each state may consider to have sub-conventional rungs remaining available, if they are not active, they are equally applicable in mountains, in plains or even at sea. Indian conventional superiority in all three areas means it has far less attraction to activate sub-conventional methods or for some specific reasons, it may escape essential rungs on the ladder but necessary means are quite existent. It is the sub-conventional realm that is driving mostly nuclear risks in Indo-Pakistan rivalry. However, it is also a fact that India and Pakistan are not engaged in directly sub-conventional warfare against one another. Zulfiqar Khan observes that the actual possession of nuclear weapons, therefore, seems unlikely “to diminish Pakistan’s support for Kashmiri freedom fighters or India’s determination to hold onto the Kashmir valley. However, nuclear deterrence could keep India and Pakistan from escalating a conflict into all out war” (Hilali, 2011).

4. The Plains: Out of three geographical surroundings between Pakistan and India, an escalating ladder is leading towards the plains, even if the showdown might be started in the mountains. Geography and demography of plains along with bordering areas on both sides of Pakistan and India have quite important features that are differentiating Punjab from the areas further located in the South. 1948 and 1965 armored battles were fought in the plains of Punjab. Punjab had especially strategic importance because borders location is near the narrowed landline of Indian access to disputed territory of Kashmir. Moreover, Punjab considers as culturally rich and political heartland of Pakistan. Punjab sector is densely populated and relatively compact, stretching just 200 miles from foothill of Kashmir to Punjab state bordering with Rajasthan on Indian side and just below where Sutlej River is bending more sharply and quickly westward towards the city of Bahawalpur and Indus inside Pakistan. Punjab has been heavily defended by the armed forces of Pakistan. Today collateral damage needs much to be avoided than the wars of 1948 and 1965. Ashok Kapur mentions that

“rise of China-India-Pakistan triangle as well as a significant shift in Chinese and Pakistani thinking from a policy of seeking a knockout blow to a policy of wearing India down. Conversely India joined the strategic fray by a process of military modernization that increased the cost of China and Pakistan of a policy to wear it down” (Kapur, 2001).

5. Strategic Depth: For Pakistan, the issue of strategic depth is very significant even for the military and strategic planners, particularly in the scenario of constant uncertainty in Afghanistan, edge of Indian conventional modern war machine and international hostile scenario in the region. This perspective prompts Pakistan for economic and military cordial relationship with USA as to how to deal with the rising Pashtun insurgencies in Afghanistan and even within Pakistan’s own territory of tribal belt and essential key is in most warranted stabilization in Afghanistan. Pakistan’s military establishment has been following strategy, which has now become more conducive for USA as well as Afghanistan.

Punjab population is located on the eastern side of the Indus River or in the province of Punjab, which is in south hardly 200 miles westward, as the bird flies, from the Indian border of Amritsar. KPK entry to Afghanistan is just 100 miles further to northwesterly angle. To the south, Pakistan’s green belt is located narrowing down of lines of communication opposite to Kishangarh in Rajasthan running close to 40 miles from the bordering areas. Kanti Bajpai underscores that Pakistan relationship with India consumed a lot of energies. “However its relations with the US and China, allies at various times in its history are almost as demanding, if not more so” (Bajpai, 2009). Pakistan relations with both these great powers in the wake of 11 September, 2001 would be more conducive. Richard J. Ellings elaborates that interestingly, India has adopted vibrant dual strategy as India is “reaching out to China to reap the benefits of trade and diplomatic engagement while hedging and balancing China by striking strategic partnership with Japan and US, deepening ties with Western Europe and Southeast Asia and keeping up ties with Russia” (Ellings, 2011).

With such an enormous issue of geography, Pakistan has been looking for strategic depth in Afghanistan with friendly and stable relationship. It is possible with minimal influence of New Delhi on Kabul. Pakistan remained Indian centric and established all weather

friendship with China since 1960s and welcomed PRC in arms procurement, nuclear energy, telecommunication, road and infrastructural projects. In recent years, Pakistan interdependence on China has enormously been increased. In 2015, China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) has opened new gigantic vista of opportunity between two neighboring countries where Chinese investment of \$46 billion has been promised in Pakistan's various sectors especially in energy and infrastructural developments. Thus chances for cordial relationship between Pakistan and India are little and Pakistan's nuclear threshold has escalation ladder with India. Ashok Kapur sees "continuation of competitive interactions among the three members of the South Asian strategic triangle. Competitive co-existence is the likely pattern of relations among the three players because even as China has emerged as a major player in the global economy, its geo-political weight is hemmed in by strategic presence of India in China's volatile Southern zone," (Kapur, 2001).

CONCLUSION

Nuclear escalation ladder is one of the essential ways to judge the necessary dynamics of unhindered nuclear escalation and to motivate the practical theory to effectively control the military escalation so it may not stimulate the nuclear warfare and impending annihilation and catastrophe. This approach indicates that the risk of waging limited conventional war or even sub-conventional war between two neighboring countries of the South Asia (India and Pakistan) is not enhancing nuclear deterrent stability in the region and policy maker must think on some other alternative to accomplish the ends. In common parlance, under the nuclear overhang, the most appropriate reply is to give up conventional and sub-conventional means and methods and a positive course of action on both sides of border is the need of hours. Transformation of Pakistan from ideological state to territorial state can be significant prerequisite for her metamorphosis. Pakistan needs to develop a viable polity devoid of militarism and jingoism. Mathew Joseph highlights that "a reinterpretation of the ideology of Pakistan will allow a redefinition of the project of nation building being pursue at the moment" (2009). Pakistani and Indian ladders underline the special characteristics of asymmetry in geography, unequal conventional military balance and conventional equilibrium is becoming bad to worse over the passage of

time and insurgency is compelling for shifting of resources to less important side. Pakistan has been relying on her strategic forces to combat the Indian possible launching of all out conventional war. But Pakistan would prefer to rely upon its compact conventional forces to deter conventional attack or aggression rather to fight a defensively against shallow and sharp attack by the bitter enemy. The ladder suggests conventional escalation with sharp warning rather ringing a bell as to how much nuclear rungs are closer if those conventional measures might fail. Zulfiqar Khan emphasizes that it is quite significant to note that “Pakistan has plainly adopted a policy of nuclear first use to counter Indian conventional aggression and refused New Delhi’s proposal for a joint no first use making it clear that it is unacceptable to Islamabad” (2011). On the other hand, India versus China ladder depicts dynamic of escalation on the land warfare where engagement would be slowly tightening and leading towards maritime showdown if escalation between China and India intensifies. If any asymmetry on the land existes, it would be more favorable to China over India, particularly at the nuclear stage. However, conventional balance between the two countries is more equal though geographical advantage to Chinese side from the Tibetan plateau through mountainous hilly tracks as the Indian side has to organize its campaign from the foothills as well as from the naked plains. This escalation guides for mountainous warfare between the two rising powers, if any mishap occurred and remained uncontrolled through warranted vibrant diplomacy. It showed much nuclear threshold on both sides of Himalayas between China and India than Pakistan has against her arch rival India in the plains. It enhanced the possibility and complexity of short range nuclear missile into action in the South Asian region. Thus both Pakistan and India have to adopt most vibrant policies and close contacts to avoid any mishap bringing unbridled extermination and upheaval in most important South Asia.

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