

Need for a Paradigm Shift in Security: Adopting Human Security in Pakistan

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Abstract:

The paper aims at building up a case for adoption and diligent implementation of human security concept in Pakistan. The challenges confronting Pakistan underscore the incapacity of the traditional security concept to proffer a solution to them. Pakistan shows a disparate response to each of the challenges it is confronted with, hence there is a need to pursue a comprehensive security policy that incorporates the human security paradigm.

Keywords: Human Security, War on Terror, Economy, Development

Introduction

The evolving nature of threats to humanity demand a new approach to the concept of security. The concept of human security provides an alternative to the traditional state-centric security systems. The brainchild of Mehbub-ul-Haq, human security has drawn global attention as a comprehensive concept of security that spreads out vertically and horizontally to deal with the broad spectrum of threats overlooked by the narrow scope of traditional security. Human security has been embraced by many states and many global organizations as a guiding principle.

Presently, Pakistan is engrossed in a number of problems such as internal security, financial crunch, devastation caused by natural catastrophes, and energy crisis etc. The wide spectrum of threats confronting Pakistan demands the adoption of a comprehensive security concept. The traditional concept of security is unable to deal with these threats. On the contrary, it has adversely affected other dimensions of security through neglect of critical investment in health, education, physical infrastructure etc. The paper aims to address the inadequacy of the traditional security approach in Pakistan and suggests the adoption of the human security concept.

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The paper is divided into two parts. The first part discusses the concept of human security with reference to the traditional security thinking and explains its evolution and its human core elements. The second part examines the security approach hitherto practised by Pakistan and explains why it has run its course in face of the grave challenges. A shift towards human security paradigm is suggested detailing policy measures.

Traditional Security

Security in its simplest form means safety from harm or protection against something bad. It is one of the core needs of human beings. American psychologist, Abraham Maslow, placed safety next to the biological needs of human beings in his legendary “Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs Theory”.¹ After the fulfilment of physiological needs such as eating, drinking, sleeping etc. comes the need of safety and security. Such is the importance of security.

Security studies are a key area in the field of international relations. For long security has been defined narrowly, primarily in the context of national security focusing on military security alone. The Realist school of thought which regarded the state as the most important actor dominated the idea of security. States try to maximize their power. This power-seeking behaviour is rooted in anarchy, i.e., absence of international order and concern for security and protection of sovereignty. The threat to security came primarily from other states. This called for self-defence and the need to build up military power. Although, realists consider other forms of power also such as wealth and geopolitical position but military power is essential for security.² This interpretation of security led to the build-up of large standing armies and huge defence expenditure, particularly during the Cold War. The use of nuclear weapons was the foremost threat during the Cold War. Thus, security was deeply embedded in the realist paradigm as threat and use of force related to interstate conflict or war.

¹ The Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs Theory describes five levels of needs in hierarchical order. He asserts that as one level of human needs is fulfilled, there is a desire to fulfill the next level. Beginning with the physiological needs or biological needs, there are safety needs, and then social needs, next there are esteem needs and lastly needs for self-actualization. His theory has been commonly explained through a pyramid of needs with basic needs placed at the bottom. See “A Theory of Human Motivation”, ‘Classics in the History of Psychology’, <http://psychclassics.yorku.ca/Maslow/motivation.htm> (accessed October 1, 2013).

² Martin Griffiths and Terry O’Callaghan, “Security”, *International Relations The Key Concepts* (London: Routledge, 2002), 289-291.

Evolution of Human Security Concept

The debate on the concept of security started in 1983 when the Cold War was still raging. Richard Ullman contested the purely military concept of security by arguing that it falsifies the reality by causing states to focus solely on military threat at the cost of ignoring far more real and grave threats. This leads to militarization of international relations creating global insecurity.³ Joseph Nye and Sean Lynn-Jones noted in a conference at Harvard in 1987 that security studies have been dominated by US policy fads and ethnocentrism and needed good data for theoretical innovation.⁴ In 1989, Jessica Tuchman Mathews stressed on redefining security by incorporating resources, environmental and demographic issues.⁵ Stephen Waltz also called for including non-military issues such as poverty, environment and economics.

In the post-Cold War era the nature of conflict changed from interstate to intrastate due to the surfacing of ethnic identities and cultural differences. Over the years, interstate conflicts have decreased substantially with simultaneous upsurge in intrastate conflicts. There were two interstate conflicts in 1990 as compared to 45 intrastate conflicts. In 2003, the number of intrastate conflicts dropped to 25 while the interstate conflicts remained two in number. In 2009, intrastate conflicts rose to 29 in number while there were no interstate conflicts at all.⁶ Intrastate conflicts and civil wars made 95 per cent of all conflicts while civilian casualties account for 80 to 90 per cent in conflicts.⁷ Reduction in threat from external states gave a new direction to the security debate. While interstate conflicts remain a possibility, the conflict within states needed greater attention.

The simultaneous process of globalization has much to do with development of human security. Globalization is not a new phenomenon but had speeded up in the 1990's due to three driving forces — economic liberalization, political liberalization and rapid spread of information and communication technologies. Liberal trade policies, reduced role of public

³ Steve Smith, "The increasing insecurity of security studies: Conceptualizing security in the last twenty years," *Contemporary Security Politics* 20 no. 3 (1999), 77.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 77,78.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 78.

⁶ "Intrastate Conflicts: Data, Trends and Drivers," International Relations and Security Network, <http://www.isn.ethz.ch/Digital-Library/Articles/Special-Feature/Detail/?lng=en&id=158597&tabid=1453496062&contextid774=158597&contextid775=158596> (accessed October 3, 2013).

⁷ See Human Security Report 2012, http://hsrgroup.org/docs/Publications/HSR2012/Figures/2012Report_Fig_7_1_GlobalNSConflictsBDs.pdf (accessed October 3, 2013).

sector in production and services due to conditions imposed by IMF and World Bank; hike in foreign direct investment — all led to opening of national markets and greater integration. The fall of the Soviet Union; opening up of China as well as Latin America and Africa; promotion of democracy including lifting up of ban on political parties, civil society organizations and censorship in 81 countries in the past two decades; and soaring of non-governmental organizations promoted political liberalization. The fast pace of technological development along with multiplication of communication technologies was the single most factor of rapid globalization. All these developments shrunk time and space. But some negative aspects had accompanied the positive outcomes of globalization. For instance, epidemic diseases can spread more quickly due to flow of people from one place to another. While the world became a global village, people's well being also became more closely integrated and interdependent on each other and the need to put up a unified response became more pronounced.

At the same time, new threats had also surfaced — climate change, food shortage, terrorism, human trafficking etc. Currently, there are 842 million starving people in the world, mostly in the developing regions.⁸ Nearly seven million children under the age of five die every year due to lack of basic medication, sanitary and drinking water facilities.⁹ The nature of threats such as global warming also question the ability of states to provide security against these threats and demand a global approach towards these issues. The traditional security concept failed to address the threats facing the individuals throughout the world.

The gap between realist security and security in real terms became evident and the concept of security was contested. In the post-Cold War era, there were expectations that security will be redefined and broadened to include new challenges.

The concept of human security was first introduced by Dr. Mehbub-ul-Haq, former Finance Minister of Pakistan and his team in 1994 in the *Human Development Report* of United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). It emphasized that ordinary human beings want security from “threat of disease, hunger, unemployment, crime, social conflict, political repression and environmental hazards”.¹⁰ UNDP sought to institutionalize

⁸ Hunger, World Food Programme, <http://www.wfp.org/hunger/stats> (accessed October 3, 2013).

⁹ World Health Organization, http://www.who.int/features/factfiles/global_burden/facts/en/index1.html (accessed October 3, 2013).

¹⁰ “New Dimensions of Security,” Human Development Report 1994, UNDP, http://hdr.undp.org/en/media/hdr_1994_en_chap2.pdf

the individual threats in the security discourse. The concept of human security was originally intended for the 1995 World Summit on Social Development. The objective was to divert efforts and funds towards economic and social issues. The concept is rooted in the development of international humanitarian law and the arrangements made immediately after World War II such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Geneva Conventions and the UN Charter.¹¹ Human security was finally endorsed by the Commission on Human Security (CHS) in its final report 'Human Security Now' in 2003.

The UNDP *Human Development Report* of 1994 focused on two aspects while defining human security: "safety from chronic threats such as hunger, disease and repression" and "protection from sudden and harmful disruptions in the patterns of daily life". The UN Commission on Human Security referred it as "protecting fundamental freedoms...protecting people from critical and pervasive threats and situations".¹² Human security has been defined in various ways: some have focused on "quality-of-life issues in general" while others have defined it as "protection of the vulnerable from rapid degradations in quality of life."¹³ In simple terms human security focuses on numerous types of security humans seek and threats they face in fulfilment of their basic needs.

The concept of human security is a great leap from the traditional concept. It has evolved from a narrowly-defined militaristic concept to an inclusive and broad-based one. National security was seen as "an end in itself" rather than "means to an end".¹⁴ The state is no longer the only concern of security analysts. In fact the focus of security has shifted from states to people. Human security refers to people as primary referent objects of security and not states. However, the state is not irrelevant but relevant in the context of state-society relationship. The human security concept is multidimensional, inclusive and holistic. The UNDP put forward seven different categories of human security: economic, food, health, environmental, personal, community and political. Its inclusive nature calls for extensive policy and academic scope. The convergence of various issues

(accessed October 3, 2013).

¹¹ Nikolas Tzifakis, "Problematizing human security: a general/contextual conceptual approach," *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies* 11, no. 4 (2011), 354.

¹² Natalie Florea et al., "Human Security" in *Critical Approaches to Security: An Introduction to Theories and Methods* (London: Routledge, 2013), 25.

¹³ Matt McDonald, "Human Security and the Construction of Security," *Global Security* 16 no. 3 (2010), 279.

¹⁴ Nikolas Tzifakis, "Problematizing human security: a general/contextual conceptual approach," *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies* 11 no. 4 (2011), 358.

demands an interdisciplinary approach, for instance between peace studies and development studies etc. Human security is a universal concept. There are certain threats that are common to all such as drugs, human trafficking, and pollution etc. Amongst these, certain threats do not concern territorial boundaries of nation-states and cannot be tackled by a state on its own. Human security has a normative and moral predisposition and therefore is prescriptive in nature rather than being a descriptive one.¹⁵

Human security did not remain confined to theoretical debate but has been successfully adopted by various states in their domestic agendas and some others have employed it in their foreign policies agendas too. The objective was to adopt an integrated approach towards threats affecting the nationals of the state as well as nationals of aid-recipient countries. Japan launched a human security-driven foreign policy agenda in 1998. It comprised of issues like environmental degradation, violation of human rights, transnational organized crime, illicit drugs, refugees, poverty, anti-personal landmines, and infectious diseases. Japan's Foreign Ministry set up a Commission on Human Security (CHS) and created the largest fund in UN. Canada has also adopted a human security foreign policy agenda but it only focuses on threats to human rights and safety. Canada has successfully promoted human security through the establishment of International Criminal Court in 2002 and launching of International Convention to Ban Landmines in 1998. In collaboration with Norway, Canada set up a Human Security Network (HSN) of states and non-governmental organizations. Formed in 1998, it currently comprises of Austria, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, Ireland, Jordan, Mali, Netherlands, Norway, Slovenia, Switzerland and Thailand. HSN promotes sustainable human development, rule of law, human rights, democratic governance and structure. The European Union (EU) has incorporated this concept in its European Security Strategy (ESS) and the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP).

Various international organizations such as Oxfam and World Watch Institute have also employed the concept of human security in pursuit of their respective agendas.¹⁶

Proponents of human security advocate that it is an interrelated concept. An improvement in economic, personal and political security will reduce internal threats. For instance, rising food prices, youth unemployment as well as lack of freedom of expression led to uprisings in the Arab World in 2011. The threats are diverse but at the same time they are interrelated. How these threats affect the ordinary individuals is a

¹⁵ Matt McDonald, "Human Security and the Construction of Security," 278.

¹⁶ Natalie Florea et al., "Human Security" in *Critical Approaches to Security: An Introduction to Theories and Methods*, 27.

concern of human security. Des Gasper compares human security to a Russian doll due to its all-encompassing nature that incorporates concepts like human development, peace etc.¹⁷

Central Components of Human Security

In order to have a full grasp of the concept, core elements of human security as put forth by Dr. Mehbub-ul-Haq are briefly discussed below:

Economic Security

Economic security means assured basic income for maintenance of standard of living for the time being and in the near future. It requires access to employment and resources to generate income. It ensures freedom to avail opportunities to develop themselves. Natural disasters and conflict also contribute towards economic downturns apart from economic crisis.

Extreme poverty is a concern to all as it can lead towards political disorder. Unemployment gives way to feeling of exclusion and failure. Terrorism can find suitable grounds among the poverty-stricken and miserable people. If the livelihoods of people are severely compromised, they eat less or starve, they cannot afford clothing or healthcare, hence human security is endangered. Others cannot afford safe living conditions even if they have a job. As many as 1.2 billion of world population suffers from severe income poverty and live on less than \$1 per day, two-third of them are located in Asia and a quarter in Africa. Another 1.6 billion survive on less than \$2 a day.¹⁸

Food Security

Food security means availability of sufficient, safe and nutritious food for all in order to have a healthy and active life. "Food security is a situation that exists when all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life".¹⁹ It means protection from famine and chronic malnutrition. Food security is ensured under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights Article 25(1): "everyone has the

¹⁷ Des Gasper, "Securing Humanity: Situating 'Human Security' as Concept and Discourse," *Journal of Human Development* 6 no. 2 (2005), 222.

¹⁸ Commission on Human Security, "Human Security Now," <http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/91BAEEDBA50C6907C1256D19006A9353-chs-security-may03.pdf> (accessed October 5, 2013).

¹⁹ Nick Vink, "Food Security and African Agriculture," *South African Journal of International Affairs* 19, no. 2 (2012), 158.

right to standard of living adequate for health and well being of himself and his family including food, clothing and housing.”²⁰ Food security is closely associated to environmental protection and trade policies, i.e., other aspects of human security.

Health Security

Ensuring health security means providing access to basic health care, and prevention of spread of infectious diseases. Health does not mean absence of disease or illness but a “state of complete physical, mental and social well-being”.²¹ Health is critical to human security as illness, disability are threats to human security. Eruption of infectious disease on a widespread scale can affect the entire society. Good health is instrumental for social stability. A major cause of death in poor countries is infectious and parasitic diseases. In developed and developing countries, poor segments of the society are more vulnerable to health security as their access to health services is limited.

Environmental Security

Environment is closely related to human security. Environment has an overall impact on human well-being, productivity and even survival hence safeguarding environment enhances the well-being and livelihoods of people.²² Environmental degradation can act as a catalyst for insecurity; for instance resource scarcity can lead to political and social instability, migration, tensions on border, violence and even armed conflict.²³ Environmental issues can have a number of effects. Scarcity of water can result in dehydration-related deaths, reduced food productivity, leading to decline in livelihood opportunities. A rise in sea level is bound to affect the population of those countries that are living in low-lying river deltas. Deforestation can also prove disastrous. Forests regulate the flow of water, prevent soil erosion and habitat of biological species. Deforestation resulted

²⁰ R. T. Gahukar, “Food Security in India: The Challenge of Food Production and Distribution,” *Journal of Agriculture and Food Information* 12 no. 3-4 (2011), 270.

²¹ Commission on Human Security, “Human Security Now.”

²² Environmental Security, *The Greenwood Encyclopedia of International Relations* 1, A-E (Westport: Greenwood Publishing, 2002), 502.

²³ Emma Foster., “Green Security” in *Critical Approaches to Security An introduction to theories and methods* (London: Routledge, 2013), 40.

in flooding in China in 1998 that killed 3000 people and incurred a loss of \$20 billion.²⁴

Environment change can have “multi-impact, multi-subject, multi-scale, and multi-temporal effects.”²⁵ Environment can have wide range of impact — on economic growth to political stability, as the people are interconnected to nature and their livelihood depends upon them. Potential affectees could include individuals, families, communities and certain identity groups such as women, children, and ethnicities. Adverse effects could be widespread.

Personal Security

To put it simply, personal security means physical security. Threats to physical security are various: from state as illegal use of force; from other states in wars; threat from other groups in ethnic conflict; from individuals in crime or street violence; threats directed against women as rape or domestic violence; against children as child abuse; and threat to self through drugs or suicide.²⁶ Personal security is at a greater risk today in many societies due to terrorist threat, violence and crime. Women in all societies are the most insecure subjects.

Community Security

To many people security is identified with security of their social group; it could be a basic unit like a family or could be a community, or a political, racial or ethnic group. Association with a group may be accentuated by the support and protection that is offered to individuals.²⁷ Ethnic tensions and conflicts have seen a steady rise across the world. Ethnic tensions give rise to competition over limited access to resources or opportunities, a phenomenon called relative deprivation by Tedd Robert Gurr.

Emma Hutchison explains that emotions are a decisive factor in determining the organization of communities, their collective beliefs, political behaviour, view of the world and threat and security perception.

²⁴ Nick Vink, “Food Security and African Agriculture,” *South African Journal of International Affairs* 19 no. 2 (2012), 158.

²⁵ Sanjeev Khagram et al., “From the environment and Human Security to Sustainable Security and Development,” *Journal of Human Development: A Multi-Disciplinary Journal for People-Centered Development* 4 no. 2 (2003), 294.

²⁶ UNDP, “Human Development Report 1994,” http://hdr.undp.org/en/media/hdr_1994_en_chap2.pdf (accessed October 3, 2013).

²⁷ *Ibid.*

Emotions are not characteristically individual but are private and public at the same time, structured in social and cultural environments. They have a history and a future. It is significant to conceptualize social and pervasive emotions in society as it forms the basis of community and identity.²⁸ Trauma is an intense emotion and is experienced during war, terrorism, or political violence. And in case of the latter, it is pervasive throughout the community. As a consequence, communities develop adversarial perceptions of others that give way to conflict and violence.

Political Security

At the core of human security lies the concept of political security i.e., the society guarantees basic human rights and assures freedom of expression. In other words people are free to take part in political process. Although with the third wave of democratization, the world has made much progress towards democracy as the number of democracies has increased manifold, yet human rights violations, state repression, control and ban on information and dissent continue throughout the world especially in third world countries.

It is hard to discern one component of human security from the other; they are overlapping and intricately intermingled with each other. One aspect of human security is bound to have a domino effect on other dimensions of security. Hence, the need for adopting a human security approach as a whole.

Security Orientation of Pakistan

A predominant interpretation of national security in developing countries suggests physical security from external threats relying mostly on military elements. Pakistan also sought security on almost similar lines. Pakistan's security orientation cannot be understood in isolation from the historical perspective and geopolitical context. It is built up heavily on the existential threat from India.

After independence, Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah did not want a continuation of the bitter legacy of Partition and hoped to build peaceful and cooperative relations with both India and Britain but Indian animosity and obduracy on issues like Kashmir had a profound influence on the security perception and the defence and foreign policies of Pakistan. Pakistan's sense of insecurity due to huge disparity with India in terms of

²⁸ Emma Hutchison, "Affective communities as security communities," *Critical Studies on Security* 1, no. 1 (2013), 127-129.

size and resources made it look for external support which was found in US-sponsored military pacts and alliances.

The 1965 war with India and East Pakistan's separation in 1971 with the military support of India deepened the security perception of policy-makers and set the long course of mutual hostility. The Indian nuclear explosion in 1974 provided an impetus to Pakistan to acquire nuclear capability. The decision to develop a nuclear bomb was taken reportedly one month after East Pakistan's separation.²⁹ In 1998, Pakistan conducted five nuclear explosions in response to Indian nuclear tests. The objective was to acquire deterrence against India which has served its purpose despite a limited war in Kargil and military stand-off of 2002.

To cut a long story short, Pakistan's security concerns have primarily emanated from India. However, seeking security against India has affected economic development and progress. Dr. Maleeha Lodhi notes that in quest for security against India, Pakistan made a trade-off, i.e., it chose hard power over human security and neglected development and spending on education, health and public services.³⁰

Yet Pakistan has all along broached prospects of peace with India. A composite dialogue process proposed in 1997 was vigorously pursued after 2003. The peace process has been susceptible to untoward events that have derailed it on a regular basis. The longest suspension came in the wake of Mumbai attacks in 2008. Although the peace process has not brought about any meaningful achievement, yet there is a strong desire to pursue it.

All major political parties have expressed their desire to pursue peace dialogue with India. This is partly due to problems that are mostly associated with spillover effects of the war in Afghanistan. However, there is unanimity on Kashmir as a core issue.³¹ All political parties also favour trade with India and some progress was also witnessed during 2012. The military also favours good relations with India.

The Internal security situation has worsened to an extent that the army has declared internal security challenges as the biggest threat to Pakistan's sovereignty. Terrorist acts carried out by militant organizations in the country fall under the ambit of internal security hazards. This has been made part of the Green Book published by Pakistan Army every year. It is the first time ever that the most serious threat has come from a source

²⁹ Shahid M. Amin, *Pakistan's Foreign Policy A Reappraisal* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 78.

³⁰ Maleeha Lodhi, "Beyond the Crisis State," in *Pakistan Beyond the Crisis State* (Karachi: Oxford, 2011), 51.

³¹ Shahid Amin et al., "Party Positions on Foreign Policy," *Pakistan Horizon* 66, no. 3 (July 2013), 18.

other than India. The turning point in Pakistan's security orientation has just come around.

Need for Adopting Human Security in Pakistan

An array of threats has challenged the state and society that have proven to be beyond the scope of traditional security. Analysis of current state of affairs highlights the need for adopting the more inclusive approach of human security concept in Pakistan.

Internal Security

Beginning in 2001, the 'War on Terror' in Afghanistan has slowly and gradually seeped into Pakistan and tarnished its security fabric. Over the course of last 13 years, the threat has moved from the border areas to the entire length and breadth of Pakistan. The human loss has been huge in terrorism incidents. Since the outbreak of the Afghan War, Pakistan has lost 49,000 lives, including civilians and military personnel.³² More than half of these casualties were suffered after 2008. The material costs are simply incalculable; one estimate puts the economic costs incurred by Pakistan at about \$100 billion.³³ Pakistan's involvement in the Afghan War that began with extension of support to the Mujahideen who were fighting the Soviet occupation was unavoidable. Pakistan had genuine fears emanating from the Soviet Union's role in East Pakistan crisis. The involvement in Afghanistan was aimed at containing the Soviet threat. However, this could not have come without a price for Pakistan. The social and security costs could only be guessed. Deserted by the US, following Soviet Union's break up, Pakistan had to bear the burden of three million Afghan refugees. The spread of narcotics and weapons and growth of militancy and violence that ensued has since been uncontrollable.

Pakistan's decision to join the 'War on Terror' in 2001 further exacerbated the situation. Pakistan, once again, extended all possible assistance to the US-led coalition in Afghanistan despite the unpopularity of the decision at home. US failure in Afghanistan on almost every front — security, state-building, and governance — gave birth to what is called the Af-Pak policy which extended the fight inside Pakistan's borders in the shape of hot pursuit and surge in drone strikes. Pakistan and the US became estranged and mutual distrust grew. The drone strikes are widely perceived as a blow to national sovereignty. It goes without saying that Pakistan has

³² *Express Tribune* (Islamabad), March 27, 2013.

³³ *News* (Islamabad), June 3, 2013.

suffered tremendously, and has borne more casualties than all NATO countries combined.

The Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), an umbrella terrorist organization, emerged to punish the Pakistan state for supporting the US in Afghanistan and undertaking military operations in Tribal Areas of Pakistan. These militants have launched terrorist acts throughout the country against not only military and security agencies but also civilians and in urban areas. The TTP aims to enforce Shariah in FATA and adjoining areas and wants to fill the vacuum created by failure of the traditional administrative structure there. Pakistan is deeply engrossed in the fight against terrorism, exerting military effort to fight militancy and extremism. However, there is much more to this quandary than military means. Pakistan has to address the social, economic and political issues that give way to extremism and terrorism.

Natural Catastrophes

Pakistan was jolted by a 7.6 magnitude earthquake in 2005. An area of nearly 30,000 km comprising Azad Kashmir, Khyber Pakhtoonkhwa and the federal capital was affected bringing widespread destruction: loss of 73,000 lives in addition to land, livelihood and infrastructure including houses, medical facilities, telecommunications, power lines and educational institutes etc.³⁴ The local, provincial and federal institutions were caught off guard as they had no means to cope with disaster management highlighting lack of preparation and incapacity of the institutions to deal with any natural catastrophe.

In 2010, the usual monsoon rains brought history's unprecedented floods. Torrential rainfall in the north and northwest part of the country caused flash floods that moved southwards worsened by additional rains. Nearly twenty million people were displaced and 2000 people died; 50,000 square kilometres of land was flooded;³⁵ with loss of infrastructure, standing crops, livestock, fisheries and an accumulative economic loss of \$10 billion.³⁶ For the next two years in a row and again in 2014, Pakistan had floods though not at such a large scale but large enough to affect nine million people. A recent report by Asian Development Bank puts the

³⁴ Salma Malik, "Disaster Management and 2005 Earthquake," in *Regional Environment Issues: Water and Disaster Management* (Kathmandu: Modern Printing Press, 2012), 117.

³⁵ Robert Looney, "Economic impact of the floods in Pakistan," *Contemporary South Asia* 20 no. 2 (2012), 225.

³⁶ "Still no flood policy," *Dawn*, October 15, 2013.

economic loss incurred by Pakistan from 1950 to 2010 at \$20 billion.³⁷ The loss of life, internal displacement and huge economic cost calls for preventive measures. The flood water cannot only be stored for irrigation, domestic and industrial uses but also for energy generation. Pakistan's water needs are growing due to the fast growing population while water is becoming scarce. This makes the utilization of flood water all the more important. The floods have become a regular occurrence retarding national economic growth annually. Robert Looney takes note of direct and indirect costs of floods highlighting the inter-linkages among various components of human security.³⁸ Floods resulted in displacement of the people, caused spread of diseases, destroyed infrastructure, devastated agriculture and manufacturing output that in turn proved disastrous for the economy and further caused inflation and unemployment.

On the other hand, Pakistan is becoming a water-scarce country as the demand for water is mounting due to population growth, urbanization, industrialization, and agricultural production. Moreover two-thirds of the total land area is semi-arid or arid. Droughts could further endanger Pakistan's water security. While water management is dependent on climatic change, water scarcity can have a huge impact on food security. Despite the establishment of Ministry of Food Security and Research, Pakistan does not have any policy at either federal or provincial level to deal with issues of irrigation water. On either extreme, be it floods or drought, "Pakistan's water management is at a critical watershed"³⁹ and direly needs both 'hardware' and 'software' mechanisms.

Economic Crunch

Pakistan's economy has remained mired in one financial crisis after another with intermittent and short-lived periods of a substantially high economic growth rate. Pakistan's foremost challenge comes from a narrow domestic revenue base. Tax reforms have never been undertaken wholeheartedly by the governments and when undertaken have been poorly enforced. There exists a large undocumented economy in the country beyond the tax net. The failure to raise domestic resources along with low saving rates, has made governments run into deficit (both in national expenditure and on external account) since the 1980's. This has been addressed by taking the easy recourse to printing of more money and foreign assistance. Foreign assistance coupled with remittances from overseas Pakistanis has given a

³⁷ *Dawn*, (Islamabad), October 13, 2013.

³⁸ Robert Looney, "Economic impact of the floods in Pakistan," 227.

³⁹ Claudia Ringler and Arif Anwar, "Water for Food Security: Challenges for Pakistan," *Water International* 38 no. 5 (2013), 505.

boost to Pakistan's economy and under the army rule of Gen. Zia and Gen. Musharraf, Pakistan has been able to achieve a growth rate of 6-7 per cent annually.

However, this growth rate has short lived as it was not backed up by structural changes in the economy. Money has always failed to find its way into productive sectors of the economy such as investment in physical infrastructure and developing an export base. Moreover, economic growth has been busted by huge internal and external debt payments. The economy has been overburdened with the weight of inefficient public sector enterprises (PSEs). These inept PSEs have to be subsidized with huge amounts out of the national exchequer. All in all the ever-weakening economy is unable to cope up with mounting pressures of the rapidly multiplying population and its exponentially growing needs.

With an average growth rate of three per cent in the past five years, the economy is just trying to hold its head above water. There is a consensus that Pakistan's economy is in poor shape; so much so that some economists believe that "economy has never been in such a bad shape as it is today".⁴⁰ Currently, Pakistan faces numerous challenges such as fiscal deficit, trade deficit and current account deficit. Economic activity has been hampered by poor security situation, corruption, acute energy crisis, and inept leadership. In the region too, Pakistan is doing poorly. Poor economic performance has accentuated the financial difficulties of the common people with high inflation and unemployment, and food insecurity. The level of food insecurity has risen alarmingly. As many as half the people of Pakistan, 51 per cent, are food insecure. Food insecurity stood at 22 per cent in 2007.⁴¹ The reason is not unavailability of food but economic constraints of the people. The increasing prices of food and reduced purchasing power of the people has contributed to food insecurity.

Energy Crisis

Economic growth cannot take place without reliable, affordable and continuous energy supply. Poor planning and investment in energy sector and power generation have kicked off the energy crisis in Pakistan that could have been avoided had the shortages that had appeared earlier on been taken as the proverbial shot in the arm. The problem is now multidimensional involving choices among resources, huge investment, appropriate technologies, paying circular debts, and the daily increase in needs that must be met urgently. The shortage of natural gas is also

⁴⁰ Dr. Ashfaque H Khan, '2008 versus 2013,' *News* (Islamabad), January 8, 2013.

⁴¹ Mohammed Omair Saqib, 'Increasing food insecurity,' *Dawn Economic and Business Review* (Islamabad), April 1- 7, 2013.

becoming acute and its reserves are depleting fast unable to meet the growing demand in commercial and non-commercial sectors. Electricity power interruption is more a matter of misgovernance — poor management and operational lacunae. Some observers quote statistics to suggest Pakistan generates enough electricity to meet its peak demand.

The energy crisis has hit the economy badly. Shortage of electricity and natural gas roughly result in loss of 5-6 per cent of GDP per year, i.e., Rs. 1.2 trillion.⁴² High power prices and energy shortages has resulted in either closure or flight of investment and industrial units out of the country. Apart from hampering economic activity, power outages of up to eighteen hours daily has made the lives of people miserable. It is hard for them to continue with their day to day life in a smooth manner.

Public Perception of Security

Public perception of these threats is important in analysing the priority given to each threat. Public opinion polls provide an insight into what the public thinks. So what is it against which Pakistani public seeks security? What are their biggest problems? Gilani Research Foundation and Gallup Pakistan have surveyed public opinion and found that:

A significant portion of people i.e., 40 per cent of the population thinks that internal threats are more serious for the nation.⁴³ Some of the failures they point out in the 65 years of history are: corruption, electricity shortages, inflation, unemployment, poverty, economic backwardness, terrorism, separation of East Pakistan and bad politicians and political instability.

People are self-critical on a number of issues in Pakistan. On top of the list is corruption as 17 per cent public detests it; followed closely by terrorism at 13 per cent. Inflation is disliked by 8 per cent of the population; whereas unemployment, load shedding and politics are cause of concern for 7 per cent population each.⁴⁴

Their conception of security has changed as they seek security from diversified threats such as religious extremism; drugs and alcohol; unjust taxation; energy crisis; violence against women; child abuse in schools; and hunger. As many as seven per cent of the people are often hungry which is

⁴² Prof Khurshid Ahmed et al., “Agenda before the Nation 2013 and Beyond,” *Policy Perspectives* 10 no. 1 (2013), 33.

⁴³ Gallup Pakistan, “Ten Questions on Pakistan at 65,” <http://www.gallup.com.pk/link/PakistanAt65.pdf> (accessed October 7, 2013)

⁴⁴ Gallup Pakistan, “Things you hate about Pakistan,” [http://www.gallup.com.pk/Polls/Oct%2014,%202013%20\(PR\).pdf](http://www.gallup.com.pk/Polls/Oct%2014,%202013%20(PR).pdf) (accessed Oct 22, 2013)

much higher than the global average of 3 per cent. The people are aware of global realities and economic integration. They do not seek security in purely militaristic terms as 47 per cent of the people want to be part of global economic activity.⁴⁵

Transition towards Human Security

The above is not an exhaustive account of the challenges confronting Pakistan but just a birds eye view of the most pressing challenges. These problems — internal insecurity, economic crisis, energy shortages and havoc played by natural catastrophes – have mutually reinforced each other thus adding up to the complexity of the situation. It is difficult to delineate one problem from the other and even more difficult to address one cause without addressing the other. As depicted above, the ripples created by floods have been felt in other spheres too and will continue for a long time. The interactive effect of these threats has been devastating for Pakistan. It has given way to despair at the national level and criticism at international level. However, not much is lost.

Human security provides a holistic solution. It broadens the concept of security and incorporates the physical security of the individuals as well as security against various threats. Security cannot be achieved only by military means. The social, economic, cultural, military and political subsystems are all part of a larger system that is closely interconnected. Human security is an integrative agenda that tackles various facets of threats and strengthens traditional security as well. It is seen that militancy and extremism cannot be eliminated through hard power alone as it thrives among people with grievances who have been denied their basic rights and needs. A large reservoir of dissatisfied people is a potential pool of militancy. By addressing the root causes and grievances, militancy or terrorism can be eliminated. Hence, human security complements traditional security, not contradicts it.

The interactive agenda of human security helps fix problems at the same time and deals with security in its entirety. For instance, no progress in economic security can be made unless there is huge investment in education that will develop the workforce or human resources critical for transforming the economy into higher productivity sectors. Apart from developing a workforce, education will produce an informed and vigilant citizenry that can promote political security, promote tolerance that is so critical for dealing with intolerance, extremism and violence.

⁴⁵ Gallup Pakistan
[http://www.gallup.com.pk/Polls/Sep%2013,%202013%20\(PR\).pdf](http://www.gallup.com.pk/Polls/Sep%2013,%202013%20(PR).pdf)
(accessed Oct 10, 2013)

It is ironic that human security, a concept pioneered by Dr. Mehbub-ul-Haq, a Pakistani, could not find resonance in his own homeland. Pakistan is lagging behind in several aspects of human security and has to travel a long way to make a successful transition towards it. There are many obstacles that stand in the path and any practical policy has to take these into account. The foremost is the sole emphasis placed on traditional security. A reorientation of the concept and a complete overhaul of the grand policy goals is the need of the hour. Human security should be welcomed open heartedly by the academicians and policy makers alike. There is a need to promote the concept in educational institutions and through the media.

Moreover, efforts towards promoting human security can not materialize overnight and have to be sustained over a long period of time in order to make any significant progress. Sustainability of policies necessitates political stability. Pakistan lacks in this domain too. In this regard, the silver lining on the sky is the completion of full term by the elected government in Pakistan in 2013 and transition from one elected government to another.

Then again the onus does not lie on the government alone but on all the actors that are part of the governance process. Common people have a huge role to play. Community efforts can resolve a number of issues. Religious institutions and scholars can also pitch in by promoting tolerance and accepting diversity and thereby promoting personal and community security. Improved governance — rule of law, provision of justice and a mature democratic process — can work wonders and is bound to bring a positive change in all aspects of human security. Economic performance should not be judged by indicators such as GDP growth but by number of people living below the poverty line or by the minimum wages. Sound economic policies that rely on making the best use of available resources are needed.

Conclusion

Pakistan's traditional security approach needs to incorporate non-traditional security challenges. These include terrorism, extremism, natural disasters, economic hardships, power outages, and resultant social discontent to name a few. Changing times and emergent challenges call for a paradigmatic shift in the security concept and national approach. It is evident by broad spectrum of challenges facing Pakistan that are inextricably linked to each other and are mutually reinforcing. It is hard to dissect the cause of one crisis without taking the other into consideration.

People are also increasingly seeking security not against external threats but from inflation, unemployment, terrorism and a lot more. No concept of security can be as broad and as inclusive as human security. The number of items on the human security agenda seems a little too large at times though wholesome. Human security can provide the much needed direction to the country that is currently in short supply. It can address the woes of governance in a far-reaching manner. Human security will not only fix the fundamentals of governance but will also set national goals and priorities that focus on the well-being of the common people. The whirlpool of crisis Pakistan currently finds itself in has been set into motion by a number of problems that have persevered for a long time. Human security has the capacity to deal with them in a comprehensive manner. External security will come on its own if the house is in order. ■