
Human Security And Peace Prospects In Central Asia

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Introduction

Central Asia has always been a blend of cultures due to its massive migrations and the mixing of peoples coming from outside. In this context this mixture of people in many ways reflected both the best and the worst that each group had to offer. In the “Great Game” of the Nineteenth century influences from the North and the South played a part in shaping the region¹. This unique blend of peoples and cultures are not seen elsewhere in the world (Table 1). To manage this blend of people will always be difficult. So most of the time this blend poses the issues of conflict and insecurity. Be that it is, human security can be an approach to provide security to Central Asian countries.

However, in early 1990s, the fall of Berlin Wall (1989), demise of the soviet communism and ascendancy

of the neoliberal global regime, altered the international power structure from bipolar to multi-polar world order and this has resulted into the emergence of new security concerns like global terrorism, environmental issues, energy security, food security etc. In the new complicated situation the Central Asian Republics (CARs) have been goaded to rethink the very notion of security from different perspectives.

After disintegration of Soviet Union, the CARs followed the LPG (Liberalisation, Privatisation and Globalisation) pattern of state functioning. The experiments on an independent foreign policy were to protect and promote the national interest of the new born nations. In the cold war period the CARs were not free from the impact of ideology based superpower game. In the post cold war period the balance of power appears to have been replaced by

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balance of interest and the importance of cooperation to sustain stability and security. Earlier they were fully under the soviet security umbrella. However, now it is a great challenge before the CARs to prevent security threats within and coming from outside agents. In the post cold war period the major security concern of CARs emanates from cross border terrorism. All other traditional security concerns are overtaken by economic issues. The challenges posed by international terrorism, global economic meltdown and environmental degradation including climate change are also security concerns before the CARs.

The individual states of Central Asia, in a conventional frame of reference, are not capable enough to tackle the new security problems. A concerted effort on the part of both the state and the non state actors and construction of a strong net work among the general public will be able to face such threats. In this context, the Central Asia must strive to formulate its security policy in such a way leading to co-operation with its neighbours as well as with other nations. So, the need of the hour is to construct a comprehensive approach to different aspects of security threat and ponder about how to manage and resolve such issues like socio-economic, political, religious and

ethnic factors. This paper initiates a discussion on the notion of human security in Central Asian context and how human security is important among the CARs ensuring the security of the people.

Human Security

With the end of the cold-war the state centred notion of security changed in the individual centred notion of security, known as human security. In the classical formulation, security is about how state uses force to manage threat to its territorial integrity, its autonomy and its domestic political order primarily from other states. Some critiques of classical formulation of security opine that the protection and welfare of the individual citizen or human being is central to the concept of. The conception of security that is centred on the sanctity of the individual and ultimately the security of the entire planet may be called human security.

The Human Development Report maintains that human security means protecting vital freedoms of the individuals. It means protecting people from critical and pervasive threats and situations, building on their strengths and aspirations. It also means creating systems that give people the building blocks of survival, dignity and livelihood.

Human security connects different types of freedoms - freedom from want, freedom from fear and freedom to take action on one's own behalf².

In order to achieve this objective, it offers two general strategies viz; protection and empowerment. Protection shields people from dangers. It requires concerted effort to develop norms, processes and institutions that systematically address insecurities. Empowerment enables people to develop their potential to become full participants in decision-making. Protection and empowerment are mutually reinforcing, and both are required in most situations. Moreover, the pillars of the Human Security approach are three Ps, Protection, Promotion, and Prevention. Underlying the approach is its ethical and value base, for these actions depend upon the commitment, leadership and motivation of the public and their governments³. Human security complements state security, furthers human development and enhances human rights. It complements state security by being people-centred and addressing insecurities that have not been considered as state security threats. By looking at "downside risks", it broadens the human development focus beyond "growth with equity". Respecting human

rights are at the core of protecting human security.

Security Debate

The security debate has for too long focused on military threats towards the state and the "softer" issues such as environment, trade, transnational crime, human security, etc. have not been seen as potential security threats⁴. One important reason for this is that traditionally, security threats could, by definition, only be directed towards "the state and the state is and should be about security, with the emphasis on military and political security"⁵. Thus an issue or event would only be classified a security threat if the survival of the state as an entity was at risk⁶. In this context, Lippman claims that security is when "a nation is secure to the extent to which it is not in danger of having to sacrifice core values, if it wishes to avoid war, and is able to, if challenged, to maintain them by victory in such war"⁷. These old views of security have largely changed with the dynamics of the globalised world and strictly non-military issues have taken a prominent position in the discussions on security. However, in the early 1970s, economic security began to get academic attention, and quickly received political interest. Later, in the 1980s, environmental issues began to increase in salience,

at least academically⁸. Yet, the discussion on alternative security concepts did not gain real momentum until after the dissolution of the USSR and the end of the Cold War in 1991. Later, the focus shifted from hard military security to softer issues, and societal, political, environmental and economic security became more prominent. These changes in the perception of security have created a debate between the academics who wish to see a widened security definition and those wanting to keep it narrow⁹.

The debate can, in simplified terms, be divided into military versus non-military sources of threat and state versus non-state actors¹⁰. The political economy and the political sector have however become more closely connected to the military sector and this politico-military focus has been widely used among "reformed" traditionalists. Despite a slight widening of the analytical focus, the state remains the basic referent object for traditionalists.

The diversification of the interests of the state, its actors and globalization process has increased the importance of non-military security threats. This has also increased the need for cooperation because new questions have been raised by new actors¹¹.

The newly emerging challenges and threats cannot be tackled by the traditional approaches based on the military-political sectors. Because this is not sufficient to explain softer threats and also make it difficult to develop appropriate solutions. Therefore, by including economic, environmental and societal developments the security concepts has been revised and broadened. Buzan et. al. offers the most interesting and operational definition, where a security issue is presented as posing an existential threat (which is anything that questions the recognition, legitimacy, or governing authority) to a designated referent object (which could be a state, but not necessarily)¹².

Scholars and policy makers gradually began to recognize that even successful examples of territorial security do not necessarily ensure the security of citizens within a state, a fact to which the examples of North Korea and Rwanda attest. With Robert McNamara,¹³ analysts also began to recognize environmental deg-radation¹⁴ and natural disasters such as epidemics, floods, earthquakes, and droughts as important threats to security as much as human-made military di-sasters.¹⁵ The collapse of the Soviet Union, the reduced threat of a major-power war, and the supposed peace dividend

unleashed a wider debate about whether to broaden the concepts of security further¹⁶.

The argument of human security in the security literature captured the view that the focus of security studies should shift from the state to the individual and should encompass military as well as non-military threats¹⁷.

Gary King and C.J.L Murray suggested that for parsimonious set of domains for measuring human security would be income, health, education, political freedom, and democracy¹⁸. Many other domains of well-being come in indirectly through these. In addition, any aspect of well-being that directly affects life expectancy, such as the environment or biodiversity, will to an extent be automatically included in our measure of human security without having to establish a separate domain or threshold¹⁹.

Central, Asia Republics (CARs): A Case Study

In Central Asia, non-traditional threats to security have risen to prominence. Although the security threats like environmental, water, economic threats have not received importance in comparison to the terrorist threat in Central Asian societies, it is one of the very

important factors in CARs in recent years. In this extent the lack of economic development has done more to create a base for militancy and terrorist recruitment than any other issue, as well as strengthening the position of illegal economic activity. Also, the water issue threatens to bring states to war and in extreme cases, deprive some regions in Central Asia from any chance of human sustainability. The tension is particularly high between upstream states (Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan) and downstream states (Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan and to certain extent Turkmenistan)²⁰.

The linkage between the existing security threats (soft and hard) in the region and the weak political and economic performance not only reinforces the negative development, it would in fact threaten the very fabric of the states. Many security threats thrive in weak states, such as organized crime and terrorism. Due to this reasoning, resources are focused on keeping the government in place rather than securing long-term security for the states, governments and the people.

However, the regional security environment of Central Asia would be more difficult in coming years. It is because a number of countries in this area experienced protests, border skirmishes, violence and militancy

since 1990s. Militancy in Central Asia is driven by complex motivations resulting from a combination of religious, political and social factors. The militancy in Kazakhstan appears to be largely encouraged by Islamist groups and actors, while violence in Tajikistan has been more socially or politically motivated. Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan have also seen instability to a more limited degree, but unrest in these countries could also rise further. The volatility of Central Asia can be also attributed to the rise of militant Islamism since 2010. On the other hand, the political, economic and social development dynamics of the region is ignored due to the activities of these narrow Islamic militants. The other important factor responsible of increasing militant threats in Central Asia would be withdrawal of U.S from Afghanistan in 2014. It would pose greater risk not only for the Central Asian region but also to the entire Eurasia. Other possible difficulties the Central Asian republics would face is the upcoming change of Central Asian leadership in several states.

Central Asian Militancy

Central Asia was an important region for Islamist militancy in the late 1990s and early 2000s. The region is predominantly Muslim, though like all religious practices, Islam was

suppressed during the Soviet era. Given the region's secularization under Soviet rule, many religious groups and figures either went underground or practiced openly to the extent that the Soviets would allow. These groups and individuals were concentrated in the Fergana Valley²¹, the demographic core of Central Asia that encompasses parts of Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan. Islamists were particularly prevalent in Uzbekistan, which is home to several important religious and cultural sites in areas such as Samarkand and Bukhara.

Religion began to be practiced more openly in CARs after 1990s, and extreme Islamist elements operating on the margins of society became free to come out openly. This created a space in which the Islamist environment grew stronger, however, the ability of the new Central Asian regimes to control and suppress Islamist movements grew weak. As a result, some Islamist groups began to call for a regional Caliphate governed by Sharia. Among these groups, the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan and Hizb al-Tahrir, drew inspiration from the Afghan mujahidin that had fought the Soviet Union from 1979 to 1989. They both advocated ousting Uzbek President Islam Karimov although these two groups differed in a fundamental way whereas the

Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan used violence to further its cause, Hizb al-Tahrir did not. Other groups, such as Akromiya, would later adopt the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan's use of violence while espousing Hizb al-Tahrir's ideology.

Karimov clamped down on these groups in the early to mid-1990s, but the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan gained refuge in Tajikistan, which was ravaged by civil war from 1992 to 1997. Because of the resultant power vacuum and its long, porous border with Afghanistan, Tajikistan became the primary base of operations for the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan. In the late 1990s and early 2000s, the group conducted attacks from Tajikistan throughout the Fergana Valley and into southern Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan.

The 2001 U.S. invasion of Afghanistan, a country that provided both material and ideological support to Islamist groups in Central Asia from the ultra-conservative Taliban regime, effectively curtailed jihadist activity and ambitions in Central Asia. With the help of the U.S. military, including U.S. special operations forces, the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan was largely driven out of Central Asia, finding refuge in the Afghanistan-Pakistan border area. Hizb al-Tahrir went underground.

Militant attacks in the region became more frequent in June 2010, when clashes between ethnic Kyrgyz and Uzbeks broke out in Kyrgyzstan's southern Fergana Valley provinces of Osh and Jalal-Abad. In this incident at least 100 people were reported killed, 1,000 wounded and tens of thousands of people left the country for neighbouring Uzbekistan²². As a result, Kyrgyz authorities conducted security sweeps through predominantly Uzbek neighbourhoods under the pretence of rooting out suspected militant Islamists. Thus, security sweeps targeting these areas and the resulting armed resistance to the sweeps do not necessarily fit neatly with the claims of religious extremism. Rather, militant activity could be related to the internal ethnic and political tensions between Kyrgyz and Uzbeks. Indeed, these tensions have surfaced periodically since the collapse of the Soviet Union.

A similar dynamic can be seen in Tajikistan. After the country's civil war, reconcilable Islamist militants, such as those of the Islamic Renaissance Party of Tajikistan, were incorporated into the government and security forces, while the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan and other jihadist elements were suppressed. Violence peaked in the early 2000s, after which Tajikistan experienced

nearly a decade of relative calm. However, a high-profile prison break in Dushanbe in August 2010 interrupted this calm. During the escape, about 24 prisoners deemed as former Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan members fled to the Rasht Valley in eastern Tajikistan. The jailbreak could have prompted or merely been a symptom of the resurfacing of the political power struggle among Tajik clans, a struggle that was commonplace during the early years of independence. In itself, the jailbreak does not signify jihadist resurgence. Like militancy in Kyrgyzstan, much of the militancy in Tajikistan probably is the result of political and ethnic rivalries, not religious extremism.

The 2011 militant attack in Kazakhstan has disproved the theory of Islamist militancy is not proliferating in the region. Given its geographic separation from the Fergana Valley and a comparatively less religious society, Kazakhstan did not experience Islamist militancy in the 1990s and 2000s. However, in 2011 Kazakhstan began seeing militant attacks for the first time in its modern history. That the attacks were conducted with different tactics all across the country, including Almaty, Atyrau and Taraz, is particularly irregular. The Kazakh government

blamed Islamist militants and religious propaganda reportedly circulating throughout the country. However, the timing of these attacks was curious because they came amid a growing political battle over the succession of the country's long-serving president, Nursultan Nazarbayev. It follows that these attacks could have been inspired less by Islamic radicalism, which has hardly been evident in Kazakhstan over the past 20 years, and more by the power struggle between various players seeking to position themselves for Nazarbayev's succession. Notably, a jihadist group called the Soldiers of the Caliphate claimed responsibility for some of the attacks, including the October 2011 bombings in Atyrau. The claim suggests that there is a genuine militant Islamist threat in Kazakhstan. However, the group was unknown until 2011, and there is little information on its members and leadership.

More recently, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan have seen fewer attacks and reports of militant activity. This suggests that their respective internal situations are relatively stable and that their governments are secure enough to not have to use Islamic radicalism to justify their security crackdowns. While this is probably true for Turkmenistan, the

situation is less clear in Uzbekistan, which has been more stable than its neighbours in the Fergana Valley. However, Uzbekistan witnessed an explosion on a rail line near the Tajik border in November 2011. The government labelled the incident a terrorist attack. Since the blast occurred in a remote area with relatively little strategic significance, many speculated that the Uzbek government conducted the attack to halt traffic and goods into Tajikistan, with which Tashkent has had several disputes.

Meanwhile, Uzbekistan is undergoing its own succession struggle, which could result in instability. Indeed, recently there have been reports of protests in the Fergana Valley province of Andijan, the site of a security crackdown in 2005 that killed hundreds. In this instance again, the government blamed the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan and Islamist militant elements. However, just as in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, this was more likely the result of power struggles within the country.

Withdrawal of U.S. from Afghanistan

As the dynamics and circumstances in most Central Asian countries suggest, it is in the

government's interest to refer to any militant activity as Islamist. Doing so suggests the activity of transnational rather than localized political elements and gives an excuse to crack down on those elements.

Of course, jihadist groups and elements exist in Central Asia, but most evidence suggests that the serious jihadist players have largely been eliminated, marginalized or pushed into the Afghanistan-Pakistan border. However, the U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan could provoke jihadist resurgence in the region. The future security vacuum supposed to be created by the departure of U.S. and International Security Assistance Force personnel could also destabilize Afghanistan as various internal forces compete to fill the void.

The violence and instability may spill over to Tajikistan due to Central Asia's proximity to Afghanistan and the porous and poorly guarded border between Afghanistan and Tajikistan. Particularly worrying to Central Asian regimes are the Islamist militants in the Afghanistan-Pakistan border area that have survived and become battle-hardened in their war against Western forces. However, there have been reports that Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan leader Abu Usman

Adil was killed on August 4, 2012 by a U.S. unmanned aerial vehicle strike in Pakistan, suggesting that the group may be struggling to survive even in Afghanistan-Pakistan area.

The degree to which Islamist militant elements may become active in Central Asia again will therefore depend on the U.S. withdrawal and the state of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan by that time. Until then, any developments on the militant front in the region need to be examined within the context of the internal power struggle and political dynamics of each country in addition to the Islamist angle. It is only in this context that the motivations behind militant actors and attacks in Central Asia can truly be determined and anticipated.

Other Security Factors

A number of other factors may undermine the stability of Central Asia in recent years, including protests over worsening economic conditions, labour disputes and conflicts, border attacks and growing tensions between countries in the region. Destabilization has become visible in most Central Asian countries in 2012. Although tensions in Central Asia are growing, most of the region experienced isolated incidents.

A lot of issues that Kazakhstan is currently facing % such as protests and economic grievances from energy workers % are not altogether new, however, they are happening in a new and tense environment of growing militancy²³. Even events that are not related to Islamist militants, like the protests in western Kazakhstan, have received calls for solidarity from Kazakh militant groups like Soldiers of the Caliphate. While these attacks and the effectiveness demonstrated by the militants are still relatively limited, they do make 2011 an unprecedented year in terms of security problems in the country and bring an unclear and dangerous situation in the country moving forward. Border guards have been attacked and sometimes killed in several border incidents. The largest such attack occurred near the Chinese border on May 30, 2012 when 14 border guards and a civilian forest ranger were killed and burned. Only one border guard survived; authorities accused him of the killings, but responsibility for the attack remains unclear. Similar incidents include a June 25, 2012 attack on a post near the Uzbek border and a July 12, 2012 attack on eight people in a house in Almaty.

In addition, protests that began in 2011 over low pay and poor conditions, including violent

demonstrations in the western oil city of Zhanaozen in December, 2011 continued in 2012. Most protests have been nonviolent, the government has acknowledged and pledged to address the grievances of striking workers. But the unrest has spread to other non-energy producing regions, as demonstrated by May 4, 2012 copper miner strike at the Annenskiy mine near Zhezkazgan in central Kazakhstan. Kazakh Secretary of State Mukhtar Kul-Mukhammed publicly acknowledged on July 23, 2012 that the number of labour disputes and conflicts in the country is growing.

Although protests are rarely reported in Uzbekistan, but on July 23, 2012 some 2,000 people protested in the city of Andijan to demand compensation for homes lost in 2011 to reconstruction projects. Andijan was the site of a harsh crackdown on thousands of protesters in 2005 resulting in Uzbekistan severing ties with the United States and European Union. Although the recent Andijan protest does not appear to be as significant or volatile as the 2005 unrest, but the risk was high.

In 2010, Kyrgyzstan experienced a revolution and months later large-scale ethnic violence in its southern provinces. The country has calmed down considerably since then, and

the political transition resulting from the revolution has been relatively smooth. Although protests regarding a broad range of issues have continued, the likelihood of protest-related violence is much lower in Kyrgyzstan than in other Central Asian countries. Still, some recent developments, including the border skirmishes with Uzbekistan, threaten stability in the country. Furthermore, there has been discussion in the Kyrgyz parliament about nationalizing the Canadian-run Kumtor gold mine. On June 27, 2012 lawmakers decided against nationalization, but the government would likely to seek a larger stake in the mine, potentially jeopardizing the country's already weak economy.

Taken together, the regional dynamics and recent incidents could continue to destabilize Central Asia. However, most of the incidents from the past year are disconnected and significant constraints, particularly Russia's involvement in the region, would prevent a major region-wide conflict. Recent hostilities in Tajikistan, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan have been related to domestic power struggles.

The Governance Issues

The functionalities of political and economic weaknesses have great impact on the development of the security situation in CARs and the

state's ability to act is shocking in some cases and serious in most. This internal weakness of most of the countries has influenced and enhanced the regional weakness that enables organized crime and extremism to grow on one hand and prevents effective multilateral cooperation to combat the problems on the other. The existence of threat of extremism, narcotic smuggling, and instability defines the quality and importance of governance in Central Asia.

Corruption and political co-optation by non-political actors are especially apparent in states that suffer from internal weakness. That's why Holsti had argued that: "the security between states in the Third world, among some of the former republics of the Soviet Union, and elsewhere has become increasingly dependent upon security within those states."²⁴

This indicates that the strong states do not view internal issues as primary security threats because the political institutions can supposedly deal sufficiently with any internal problem to an acceptable degree. The capacity of strong states to withstand internal security issues has not included threats that are soft and driven by non-traditional purposes such as economic profit or environmental degeneration.

The weakness of the Central Asia states have resulted in loose socio-political cohesion, internal challenges to the legitimacy of the government and endemic political instability. Even in some cases, internal military defiance of the state structure creates problems. Thus, these weak states are vulnerable to the internally generated threats. Thus, the primary objective of weak states is to consolidate their internal stability and political control, rather than focusing on threats coming from other states. Ayoob has argued at a general level that the "major concern % indeed % obsession" of elites of developing state "is with security at the level of both states structures and governing regimes"²⁵.

Weak states are therefore to a higher degree preoccupied with the possibility to stay in power²⁶, in an often undemocratic system, and are willing to go to great lengths to accomplish this. Even in Central Asia, strong action against domestic opposition or even perceived opposition is common. In these countries financial support and corruption is one of the means to stay in power and weak political leaders seek resources to hold on to their power. In 2005, the people behind the Kyrgyz revolution were financed by drug money²⁷. Sometimes this would put the regime in an inter-dependant

relationship with narcotics dealers that threaten their internal as well as international legitimacy. Subsequently such security threats can threaten the stability of the regime in power. Law enforcement agencies are rife with corruption to an extent that eases the flow of narcotics through the region. The overall lack of good governance in Central Asia creates preconditions for instability²⁸, social exclusion and conflict among different groups.

Social Exclusion

Social exclusion is also a leading cause of conflict and insecurity in Central Asian Countries. Excluded ethnic groups that suffer from multiple disadvantages may come together when they have unequal rights, are denied a voice in political processes and feel marginalized from the mainstream of their society. Peaceful mobilization may be the first step, such as marches, strikes and demonstrations. But if this has no effect, or if governments react violently to such protests, then groups are more likely to resort to violent conflict if they feel there is no alternative. Research over several decades has revealed that political and social forms of inequality are the most important factors in outbreaks of violence (particularly ethnic conflicts, revolutions and genocides). Social exclusion sometimes also

causes insecurity in the form of violence. Marmotova T. writes that 'as a prerequisite to reduce ethnic and religious tensions in the Central Asia the research suggests that, "the formation of system of legal guarantees of freedom of conscious and secular state." In this context, "improving security will contribute to the human rights, human security and neutrality with respect to the ideological content"²⁹. The experience of alienation of certain sections of society may lead to decrease in cohesion within society leading to increase in violence.

Illegal Trade

The international narcotics trade as a phenomenon is prevalent in all the states of the world today and states are affected by the consequences of narcotics regardless of the degree of political cohesion. But it can be argued that the production and transit of narcotics is more prevalent in weak states or regions, where there are fewer control mechanisms, and on the other hand the political elite is relatively easy to co-opt. Similarly, many of the new security threats as well as old, thrive in weak states and economies³⁰. This is because weak states tend to have much less resources and abilities to act on soft security threats such as the environmental challenges that are

often not even seen as a serious threat. But the CARs should take substantial action for soft threats and internal disturbances. Besides, the CARs have also failed to take into account economic deprivation, the abuse of narcotics, the corruption of the state apparatus, and that the level of criminality and health costs rise whilst productivity decreases. Thus, institutional building is very important to meet the internal security issues.

Overall, this makes weak states a fertile ground for more human security threats and their spread tends to be much faster in comparison to a state with a more stable political and economic environment. The Central Asian countries should concentrate on how to achieve the human security. This would be the key factor to reduce the security threats in this region and lead towards peace.

Human Security Approach

It is a fact that the security perceptions of the nations underwent a drastic change in the post cold war era. Economic security appears to be the foremost concern of all nations and the economic cooperation got intensified. Though the conventional security perception has not been abandoned outright it has lost much

of its significance. The emergence of new forms of threat from the transnational terrorist groups added new dimensions to the security of nations. The operations of these groups demonstrated that traditional approach to security is redundant. No nation, howsoever, powerful, can single handed tackle the threats posed by them. This again demands multilateralism in international relations to meet the challenges posed by transnational non state actors.

The process of globalization and the free flow of financial capital across the world is an attempt to link every nook and corner of the world into the logic of the global capitalism which has brought together all nations on a common platform. If anything happens in any corner of the world it will affect the entire system. So the security of a nation is dependent on the security of all. The globalization process has not only brought the nations together at the global platform but also strengthened regional cooperation efforts.

The growth and development of non-state actors in international relations is a new phenomenon. In the changed situation, national and global civil society got prominence. The interaction among people as a result of information revolution

further strengthened the bonds of universal brotherhood and understanding among people about the basic problems before them. A better understanding among the people about the basic problems transcending the artificial boundaries would further weaken the role of state as a player in international relations. Today the strength of a nation appears to be not solely based on the possession of destructive weapons but on many

other non-traditional factors including the strength of its economy, democratic institutions and the security that they are providing to their people. In this parlance the human security is gaining significance in international relations in the post cold war period.

Kofi Annan has defined human security as it encompasses human rights, good governance, access to education and health care and

Table 1
The Population and Ethnic Composition in Central Asia

Ethnic Groups (Absolute numbers)	Available Data in Different Census	Percentage
Kazakh	10888713	19.97
Russian	7742866	14.20
Uzbeks	19165302	35.14
Ukrainians	785402	1.44
Tajiks	5080222	9.32
Kyrgyz	3893562	7.14
Tatar	290154	0.53
Turks	136148	0.25
Uygurs	273256	0.50
Germans	187896	0.34
Dungans	110353	0.20
Karakalpaks	50000	0.09
Other	5933616	10.88
Total Population	54537490	100.00

Source: National Census for each state: Kazakhstan 2009 census; Kyrgyzstan 2009 census; Tajikistan 2000 census; Turkmenistan 1995 census; Uzbekistan 1996 census data from Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), The World fact book, USA; Karakalpaks population data from CIA The World fact book for the year 2010.

ensuring that each individual has opportunities and choices to fulfill his or her potential. Every step in this direction is also a step towards reducing poverty, achieving economic growth and preventing conflict. Freedom from want, freedom from fear, and the freedom of future generations to inherit a healthy natural environment — these are the interrelated building blocks of human - and therefore national - security³¹.

After disintegration of Soviet Union the nature of war changed mostly from inter-state to intra-state in CARs. The sources of insecurity became largely internal, with ethnic (Table-1), religious and political groups fighting over contested rights and resources with retaliation. The newly independent CARs, on the other hand, were short of effective tools to deal with this insecurity.

Globalization Factor

It is important to recognize as to how globalization has added complication and potency to internal conflicts and terrorism. While creating wealth, opportunities for work, and a better life for many, it has often impacted adversely on vulnerable strata of society in different spheres like education, health economic and on political grounds. The extraordinary

growth in the diffusion of information technology, the advancement in transportation and communication and the free flow of financial capital, have accelerated the movement of people and contacts among them. The distinction between desirable, lawful and safe movement of people and dangerous, illegal and criminal movement has become unfathomable. In this rapidly globalizing world, those who have felt marginalized, deprived or angered by what they perceive as injustices caused by poverty and inequity, have now found new ways of grouping themselves together. The network of al-Qaida, that resorted to international terrorist attacks against the United States reflects the new threatening linkages in the globalized world.

In the post independence period the rate of inequalities rose in most of the Central Asian states and today, poverty rates in these countries are among the highest in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS)³². Therefore, to seek solution of this problem, it is important to look more and more directly to the security of the people rather than relying solely on the state to provide security in Central Asia. By focusing on the people who are the very victims of today's security threats, it seems that we can come

closer in identifying their protection needs. Also, by examining the people with their diverging interests and relations with each other, we can uncover the political, economic and social factors that promote or hinder their security. If we are looking at the existing organizational mandates and mechanisms, we can find that they draw heavily on state security assumptions, but surprisingly few means exist to protect people and confront their problems.

Central Asia faces many issues that are considered to be part of human security - e.g. political security, community security related mostly to ethnic composition (Table-1) of the states, environmental security, food security, health security, personal security and economic security.

During Soviet period, the Central Asia region experienced a high development of literacy levels and modernization in the whole spectrum of social needs, which places the region above the average of developing countries.³³ But since 1991 the situation has deteriorated, because of transition and new states could not pick up the development process that they had achieved in soviet period. Besides that the transition had a negative effect at the societal level which is clearly visible in most of the statistics³⁴.

Life expectancy and death rates in table illustrates well this decline of living standards since independence. The number of lives at birth in all Central Asian countries is below average of total

Table-2
Number of lives births in 1000

Country	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010
Kazakhstan	370	289	243	292	332
Kyrgyzstan	136	122	109	114	129
Tajikistan	204	202	190	185	192
Turkmenistan	127	117	106	107	109
Uzbekistan	712	662	573	555	579
Total Average of 180 countries	756.5	740.6	730.2	735.6	747.8

Source: Calculated from World Bank data base January, 2012.

deaths in world (Table-2). If we consider the year 2010, the worst affected is Turkmenistan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan where lives at birth per thousand are below 200, where as the world average are 748 lives per thousand.

The spread of communicable diseases or the high rate of child mortality³⁵ attests to the insufficient availability of health facilities. It is a combined result of limited state finances and poor educational levels of the general public. The deterioration of educational systems decreases public participation in state

affairs, leading to new social problems and exclusion. Therefore, education must be considered a vital part of human security in Central Asia.

During the soviet period the education system was good and the people of former CARs had opportunity to study. The education was financed by Soviet Union³⁶, but now the after independence the lower rung of people are deprived to get education. Each nation started to build and develop its own educational system depending mostly on its economic situation. The whole region has

Table -3
Country Global Hunger index scores by Rank, 2001
GHI and 2012 GHI of CARs among 79 countries
(Excluding Kazakhstan)

Rank	Countries	Percentage of hunger		
		1996	2001	2012
9	Kyrgyz Republic	9.0	9.0	5.8
11	Turkmenistan	10.0	8.9	6.9
11	Uzbekistan	9.0	10.8	6.9
41	Tajikistan	24.1	24.6	15.8
Country with 2012 GHI Scores less than 5				
	Kazakhstan	<5	5.4	<5

Source: Global Hunger index 2012, International Food Policy Research Institute, Washington DC, October 2012.

seen a decline of budget in education from 4 percent GDP 1998 to 3.2 percent in 2009³⁷.

The situation of human security can be evaluated by the Global Hunger Index (GHI) in CARs (Table-3). According to Global Hunger index 2012 Tajikistan has 15.8 percent hunger, which is the highest in Central Asia, whereas Kazakhstan is not coming under the GHI ranks.

Cooperation Among the Republics

Drawing insights from the post cold war global scenario is pertinent to study the possibilities and prospects for further cooperation in the thrust areas to counter global terrorism, drug trafficking, trafficking of women and children etc among CARs. A single state cannot tackle the human security problems in Central Asia. It requires cooperation and coordination of CARs and different regional and international organisations of the world.

The cooperation regarding regional security among the Central Asian states are somehow lacking. It is because the national interest is primarily responsible and due to the existence of substantial distrust among the Central Asian States³⁸. This failure is particularly apparent

when the potential soft security threats are to a high degree transnational in character and beyond their individual reach. Tajikistan is among the worst affected states in this regard. Alongside this, the Ferghana valley is a region where the trans-national aspect is apparent and increasingly problematic.

Therefore, the Central Asian human security can be determined by the cooperation of both the people of the region and their interactions with their neighbours and the rest of the world.

Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO)

The SCO has taken a number of far reaching measures to combat different forms of soft and hard security threats, whereas the results are not that much satisfactory. This is mainly due to lack of the willingness and ability to act on the part of the members of SCO.

The SIPRI's (Stockholm International Peace Research Institute) analysis of SCO identifies four major security objectives, avoiding in containing armed conflict, development of military cooperation in order to increase the stability through alliances and peace missions, the promotion of security and democracy and good governance

and combating non-traditional threats³⁹. In order to tackle these threats SCO has adopted the policy of shift from territorial divisions to collaborative efforts against transnational threats. The transnational threats include drug trafficking, human smuggling, organized crime, etc. Afghanistan war and rise in Islamic fundamentalism. The most affected area being Fergana Valley, now divided between Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. The Central Asian militaries and other security organizations have performed poorly in tackling these threats. The two major powers in the organization have neglected these issues for various reasons⁴⁰. SIPRI evaluation for decade's progress of SCO notes its failure to achieve any considerable progress in the third objective of security and good governance.

In central Asian countries there are very few effective institutions where the law enforcement institutions are working properly. Human security can be preserved where social, educational, and health institutions are well established and take up the problems immediately. It is very difficult to manage security threats in these countries due to lack of effective institutions and widespread corruption. The threats that are not considered important to the survival

of the government, such as environmental protection or widespread health programs are excluded from the list of security threats need to be handled.

Due to the fact that the states are weak and have very little impact on the security situation, there are huge domestic security problems. This is especially evident in the areas outside of the major cities that the central government has lost control of, or lost interest in, especially if minorities or opposition controls the area⁴¹. These areas should be taken care of in targeted programmes.

Introduction of modern education in rural areas of CARs and especially in Fergana Valley can be helpful in reducing Islamic fundamentalism and militancy. In CARs, there is concentration of trade and investment in capital in major cities, whereas many of the regional cities are left outside of the economic and social development. It may create locational division, tension and radicalisation in political life. Much of the radicalization we see today has its roots in the failure of the regional governments to act and provide security for an individual's economic and social development.

This is also true when it comes to health and educational institutions

that are in bad shape in rural and semi urban areas and causes real security challenges for the population at large. Social and economic deprivation has increased the dissatisfaction with the state and its institutions with major upheavals as a result. Much of the problem lies in the growing unemployment; weak government sponsored health care, social welfare at large, as well as a lack of belief in the future. If this failure of institutions continues it will create the situation where the entire Central Asia will be separated not only from the West but also from India, China and Russia and other neighbouring countries.

In CARs, short-term stability has been achieved through the suppression of dissent. However, the long-term consequences of this suppression may, in fact, lead to greater instability, as those in opposition to the current regimes are forced to more radical measures to try and bring themselves into power⁴². Thus emphasis on human security can be an initiation for long term stability in the region.

The promotion of the institutions of civil society can reduce crime and corruption which was part of the Soviet system, but the current regimes have brought it to new heights⁴³. The crimes were kept under control by the more efficient Soviet security apparatus.

The governments of Central Asian countries, at least should meet the needs of their people, set the checks and balances against waste and inefficiency, or the ability to change the governments thorough peaceful means because of their failures, otherwise the potential for social upheaval would be high. All of the regimes have, to a greater or lesser degree, shown their inability to meet the even basic needs of their people. This can be seen in the deteriorating economic conditions in most of the CARs⁴⁴, failure of healthcare systems, problems with resource allocation (especially water), food distribution and chronic environmental problems⁴⁵. While some of these issues have their origins in Soviet times, none have improved, and almost all have worse end since independence. If these trends continue, it will lead to social breakdown and acute domestic security problems in the region.

The most notable of these has been the call by Kazakhstan's President Nazerbaev for a Central Asian Union⁴⁶ which not only would deal with threats coming from neighbours, but it might facilitate the resolution of issues like water distribution, facilitating trade by lowering or removing internal tariffs and it may reduce other barriers and human security threats.

Globalization has complicated and added potency to internal conflict and terrorism. While creating wealth and better opportunities for many people, it has often negatively influenced the vulnerable members of society. The diffusion of information technology, the advancement in transportation and communication, and the free flow of financial capital, have all accelerated the movement of people. However, those who have been marginalized or deprived by poverty and inequity have up to now found it difficult to even voice their protest, except with extreme acts of terror like suicide bombings^{47/47}

Where many ethnic and regional conflicts have a confessional component, inter-religious dialogue and the movement towards the global culture of peace becomes the most effective way to deal with the root causes of terrorism and violence and enhance human security.

Conclusion

On the domestic front the CARs face many challenges including poverty, illiteracy social and economic inequality, civil war, regional imbalances, development of democratic institutions and development based displacement etc. The CARs' quest for security has incorporated the traditional concept

of national security as well as the new dimension of security viz., human security. CARs have already understood to initiate the process to give equal importance to security of the state as well as security of the people. They also understood the fact that in the cold war period, there was requirement of more and more weapons. However, though the competition continues in the post cold war period also in Eurasian countries, it has lost its vigour. This appears to be the reason for the shift in focus from military security to human security. The plea for a human security approach is also a post cold war and post soviet development. The positive as well as negative impacts of globalization process have accelerated the momentum for human security approach. On the positive side globalization helped the growth of civil society organization at the national levels. These organizations make democratic system more participatory and people friendly. With regard to the negative impact of globalization process, the withdrawal of state from welfare activities further worsened the position of poor and marginalized sections in the society. Therefore, the CARs must understand the reality of managing diverse societies to secure people from greater threats. People-to-people dialogue and preventive

diplomacy would be effective instruments for conflict resolution and peace building.

To achieve peace and development in Central Asian countries, increasing capacity of individual, individual freedom and democratic values and quality of economic growth like good governance, growth in health and education, environmental protection and general economic progress is needed. That means human security is inevitable in Central Asian countries for individual security and future development. In a nutshell, keeping individual security intact in CARs means saving the national interest of all Central Asian countries.

If the geopolitical location like Central Asia is affected by any type of disturbance that will subsequently affect the neighbouring countries. Therefore it is the prudential responsibility of the countries adjacent to Central Asia to take interest in the security of this region. Perhaps this would be in the longer interest of the Russia, China, India, Turkey and Iran to see stability in Central Asia. As we see in SCO, the big powers are concentrating on their short term interests, but to see the bigger goal of peace and stability not only in Central Asia but also in entire Eurasia it is the need to ensure the stability in Central Asia. Thus the approach of human security is an option to keep peace and tranquillity in Central Asia. ■

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