

NATIONAL SECURITY AND WORLD ORDER IN THE POST-COVID-19 WORLD



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ABSTRACT

The Coronavirus has challenged the humanity in such a devastating manner that most countries have suffered from it in varying degrees in terms of human deaths and adverse impact on the economy and societal stability. These developments have necessitated the fourth major review of the concept of national security since the Second World War (1939-45).

The initial notion of national security focused on territorial or military security against external threats and internal challenges to peace, stability, and territorial integrity of a state.

The traditional concept of national security began to be reviewed in the early 1970s to address the non-military issues to reinforce national security. This second articulation of national security expanded its scope and shaped up as a well-recognized discourse on national security in the post-Soviet World. There was an increased emphasis on what was described as Comprehensive Security which added new domains to the notion of national security and included, among others, societal and human security, economic security, food security, security against terrorism and how to address dissident or separatist movements as well as the alienation of people from the political system.

Third major shift by the beginning of the 21st Century in the concept of national security accommodated inventions in Communication and Information Technologies. The opening up of Cyber space and digital technology has further expanded the scope of national security by opening up new opportunities as well as challenges and threats.

Now, we are experiencing a new and fourth shift in the ways and means of addressing the issues of National Security and survival. This paper examines the changing notion of national security with a focus on the challenges posed by Coronavirus (COVID-19) and how it has underlined the need of paying greater attention to human and societal welfare, especially the provision of health care facilities. It has also emphasized the need of greater international cooperation for coping with the negative ramifications of Coronavirus on the economy and societal stability and how it has increased unemployment, poverty, and underdevelopment in the developing countries. The paper also examines how Coronavirus has given new tools to the major powers to pursue their mutual competition.

Key Words: Coronavirus, COVID-19, Lockdown, Traditional and Comprehensive Security, Pakistan, China, USA, Russia, Iran.



The only test of a regime claiming sovereignty over a particular territory would be that it was sovereign in practice: that it could maintain an internal order and survive war

The concept of National Security has changed over time. It has become more inclusive of issues and problems and more encompassing, because security challenges have become multifaceted and complex. Traditionally, national security is described as the ability of a state to defend its territory, people, and core political and societal values against external military threats. The state endeavors to protect its sovereignty, territorial integrity and societal coherence against external and internal threats.

Traditional Notion of National Security

The underlying assumption of the traditional concept of security is that the major threats to the security and survival of the state arise from outside the territorial boundaries of the state. These threats are mainly, if not exclusively, military in nature and thus require a military response. Most threats to internal security like the dissident and separatist challenges and internal revolts also require a military solution in the ultimate analysis.

The state is viewed as sovereign when it can demonstrate the capacity to protect it and exercise it by demonstrating the freedom to make important external and internal policy decisions. "The only test of a regime claiming sovereignty over a particular

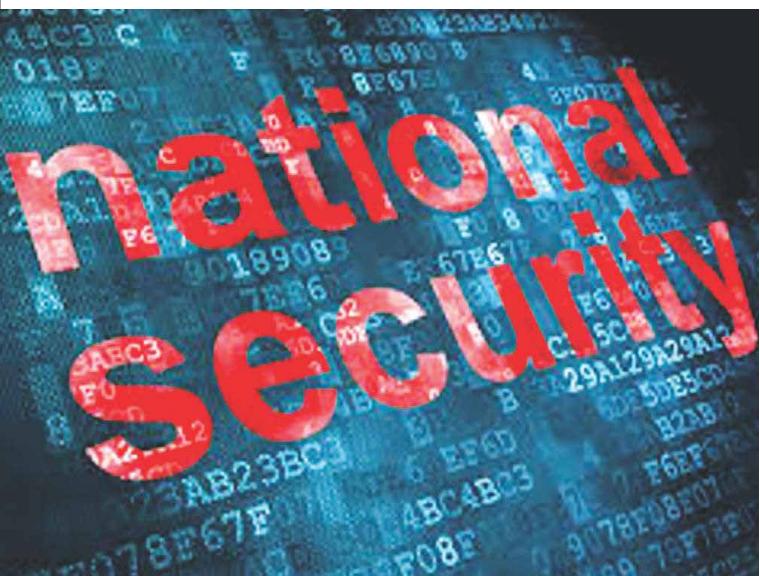
The comprehensive view of national security also focuses on issues beyond the strictly military domains. It is now fully recognized that many non-military elements are needed to create an effective and result-oriented military power

territory would be that it was sovereign in practice: that it could maintain an internal order and survive war."¹

As the state is haunted by war or a near war situation and internal upsurge challenging the primacy of the state, it endeavors focus on military technology and weaponry, and quality of human-power as well as training and professionalism in the military. Today, national security is articulated in an all-encompassing and comprehensive manner. The scope of national security has expanded in two respects. First, with modernization of military technology and the increased lethality of weaponry, war and military conflicts have become what is described as full military spectrum. Conventional military security continues to remain important for national security. "At the end of the day, security demands military power sufficient to dissuade or defeat an attack".² The multi-nation military operations led by the United States in Kuwait-Iraq (1991), Afghanistan (2001 onwards), Iraq (2003 onwards) and the use of conventional military power mainly by European states and local armed groups to dislodge Colonel Qaddafi's regime in Libya (2011) continue to underline the need of military power and acquisition of modern military technologies.

Second, the comprehensive view of national security also focuses on issues beyond the strictly military domains. It is now fully recognized that many non-military elements are needed to create an effective and result-oriented military power. Therefore, the reference to non-military sources of military power is recognized even by those who view external military threats and internal subversion as the major threat to national independence, sovereignty, and autonomous functioning in the international system.

Though war is seen as a poor policy option by many analysts. However, they do not rule out the possibilities of wars "other than between the two super-powers and their allies."³ These definitions tend to downplay non-military and societal components of national security, including social and economic factors. These factors have become more important in the states that manifest an "uncomfortable marriage of state and nation."⁴





Expansion of the Scope of National Security

The gradual expansion of the scope of national security both in military and non-military terms began in the 1970s when it was viewed more as a multi-dimensional phenomenon, covering many new security challenges encountered by the developing countries; most of these were non-military, internal and societal and related to issues of human development and welfare. These were not totally new ideas because, in the days of conventional security paradigm, many security experts also talked of issues of internal peace and stability, welfare of people and national resilience that included both the state system and the dynamics of societal affairs.

The notion of comprehensive security with an emphasis on societal or human security did not reject the relevance of military or territorial security. The advocates of societal and human security were of the view that the concept of territorial security was too narrow to cover the challenges and threats the states face. In addition to external security challenges the state faces a host of internal threats to peace, stability, and internal coherence. This could be described as updating and expanding the scope of traditional concept of security with equal, if not greater, emphasis, on non-military and societal aspects of security. These trends became more pronounced in the post-Cold War era, especially after the disintegration of the Soviet Union in December 1991.

Several factors contributed to the increased emphasis on Comprehensive Security and Societal and Human Security that are beyond the scope of this article. However, these factors are being mentioned here very briefly: Liberal-Left intellectual tradition that emphasized human welfare, peace, and advocated an anti-arms race and anti-nuclear weapons discourse. The policies of Japan and some ASEAN countries in the 1970s focused on conflict resolution and non-military threats to societies, and socio-economic reconstruction; the role of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) on issues like New International Economic Order, North-South and South-South dialogues and the notion of the Third World and its problems; the United Nations

Propaganda in favor or against, image projection at the global level and the use of soft power of culture, art, literature, architecture, historical monuments and record and human creativity are new instruments of diplomacy



Development Program and its emphasis on Human Development since 1990, and the articulation of Human Development Index (1994); UN General Assembly Special Sessions on Disarmament and Development (1976, 1982); Willy Brandt Report on "North-South: A Program on International Development Issues" (1980); Olaf Palme Commission Report on "Common Security" (1982); the United Nations Millennium Goals (2000-2015); The UN Sustainable Development Goals (2015-2030); and the Post-Cold War emphasis on human rights, democracy and human security and welfare against the backdrop of the collapse of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, the breakup of Yugoslavia and humanitarian crises in African states, i.e. Somalis, Rwanda and Southern Sudan in the 1990s. National Security began to be described as not merely in military-strategic terms but also in terms of political and diplomatic, socio-economic, poverty and underdevelopment, internal strife and dissidence movements, food, energy, and ecology.

The availability of cyber space and digital technology has made it possible to penetrate the hard shell of the state from outside through modern communication and information technology without physically crossing the territorial boundaries of the state. Propaganda in favor or against, image projection at the global level and the use of soft power of culture, art, literature, architecture, historical monuments and record and human creativity are new instruments of diplomacy. The issues of transnational terrorism, organized crime, internal wars and external intervention, use of non-state entities as proxies, and refugees and human migrations from strife-ridden territories.

Cyber space is a platform that can be used to pursue national interest, but it could also be used by



extremists, terrorists groups, dissidents and separatists elements to advance their ideological and political agendas and recruit volunteers for their causes. Cyber space is also used for offensive activities against a target state or organization. In addition to gathering information and intelligence, Cyber space is used for propaganda and attacks on military and communication networks. Cyber Crimes include disruption of computer system, breaking of computer codes, hacking of websites, stealing data, blackmailing of individuals and groups and transmission of hate-material with the objective of causing social upheaval. However, the communication and information technologies can be used for positive purposes and for addressing the societal problems and for active interaction between the people and the government.

Coronavirus and State Security

The international community received the news of spread of the Coronavirus in the Wuhan region of China by early December 2019. It produced COVID-19, causing deaths of some people in Wuhan. Nobody thought that it would soon become a global pandemic that would not only affect domestic social and economic conditions in many states but also have implications for inter-state relations and global politics.

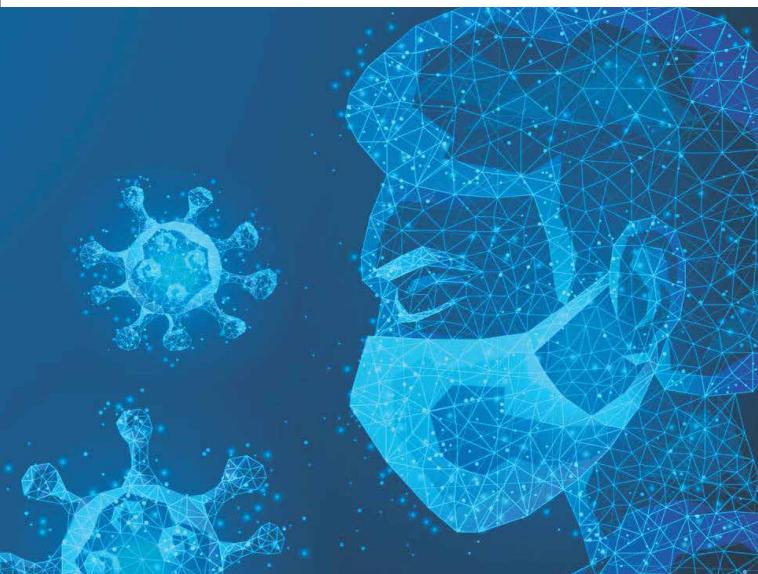
COVID-19 has hit most states and societies in the first quarter of 2020 in such a devastating and widespread manner that it created new challenges for each state's domestic context and foreign policy. It also had implications for the interaction among the major world powers. The experience of dealing with COVID-19 is expected to influence the internal socio-economic policies of the states and their interaction with other states in the future.

By mid-May, Pakistan moved to a strategy of 'smart lockdown', isolating the areas that produced Coronavirus-affected people rather than closing-down all activities all over the country

We can talk about the losses to the economies of different countries by the spread of the Coronavirus. However, it is not yet possible to explain why one country was hit harder than its neighbor or what factors kept the impact of the pandemic to the minimum in some countries. Most questions about the source of its origin and how it travelled from one country to another remain unanswered, although some analysts have given speculative answers to these questions.

Pakistan began to work on the issues relating to Coronavirus in the second week of February 2020. On receiving news about Coronavirus related deaths in Iran, the Balochistan government imposed emergency in all Balochistan districts bordering Iran and, on February 23, Pakistan closed all the five entry points-Taftan, Gwadar, Turbat, Panjgur and Washuk-on the Pakistan-Iran border. The first two cases of Coronavirus were reported from Karachi on February 26, who had returned from Iran a couple of days earlier. The government of Pakistan decided to screen all Pakistanis returning from Iran via Taftan entry point, which was kept partly open to accommodate Pakistanis returning from Iran. They were put in quarantine in Taftan. However, given the inadequacies in health and living facilities in the border town, the quarantine arrangements were deficient in most respects. These people were later shifted to places closer to their home districts.

In March, the state hospitals in various cities of Pakistan faced a shortage of testing kits, medical gowns, masks, ventilators, and isolation arrangements. These deficiencies were taken care of by April as Pakistan received the above-mentioned material from China and some other friendly countries. China also sent medical teams to Pakistan to help in its fight against Coronavirus. Pakistan also paid attention to producing some of these items locally. Some of these locally produced items like masks began to be exported to other countries in August; hospital facilities, especially isolation arrangements were increased to cope with the demand. Initially, Pakistan enforced lockdown of some areas which was turned into a nationwide lockdown on March 25, by imposing a strict ban on all commercial and business activities and closing down of educational institutions, hotels and





The laws of social distancing and lockdown were applied on all in all countries affected by COVID-19. However, these laws had more negative impact on the poor sections of population than on the wealthy and well-to-do classes

restaurants and all kinds of social and cultural activities. Industrial activity was also restrained or made subject to officially prescribed precautionary measures. However, by mid-May, Pakistan moved to a strategy of 'smart lockdown', isolating the areas that produced Coronavirus-affected people rather than closing-down all activities all over the country. Hotels and restaurants, cultural and entertainment activities remained banned. All people under smart lockdown or not were directed to cut back on social activities, stay home, and strictly observe the precautionary measures of wearing masks, social distancing in public places and the use of hand sanitizer. The medical community, especially the organizations of doctors, demanded a full and total lockdown of the country, in total disregard of socio-economic consequences of such a strict lockdown. The federal government and all those dealing with humanitarian issues did not favor the doctors' viewpoint. The Sindh and Balochistan provincial governments pursued a strict lockdown for a longer period. However, these governments also realized by the beginning of June that a carefully managed and focused lockdown was a pragmatic and manageable option.

The issues relating to human welfare and secure and stable life of citizens are no less important than external military challenges

The federal government created a specialized administrative system for management of the Coronavirus related issues and provision of necessary support to hospitals and other medical facilities created for this purpose. It worked in collaboration with provincial governments and the provincial level health facilities. It also took care of obtaining necessary equipment and material from abroad for fighting the COVID-19. The medical equipment, special dress for doctors and support staff and other goods obtained from abroad were supplied to hospitals and medical centers by Army transport.

The markets and shopping areas were opened-up gradually after mid-May under strict conditions of

wearing of masks and maintaining social distance. The market and business activities increased near the Eid-ul-Fitar (May 24) as the people came out in large number for Eid shopping; large number of shoppers and shopkeepers did not observe the required precautionary measures. The government directions were often violated. Consequently, there was a surge of COVID-19 patients after the Eid. However, this surge proved short-lived. No such surge recurred when people came out for shopping for Eid-ul-Qurban (August 1). Another period of concern was the first ten days of the Islamic month of Muharram (August 21-30). Both the events did not cause a sudden rise in Coronavirus patients. The trend of decline of COVID-19 witnessed in August was sustained subsequently. This set the stage for gradual opening of educational institutions in September and other economic activities. However, the government has not reduced its emphasis on adherence to precautionary measures and avoidance of big gatherings.

What are the implications of these developments on national security, internal affairs of a state and global politics?

Security Implications of COVID-19

Covid-19 can be viewed as a national security issue in the context of expanded or comprehensive security. It has negative implications for domestic socio-economic order in the states affected by this virus. It has also become an issue of concern at the global level and has figured in the relations among the major powers. An important lesson of the COVID-19 related developments is that an epidemic, if not managed effectively, can cause health crisis which threatens internal order and stability in a state. If more and more people get sick and deaths increase rapidly, it is bound to cause anxiety and concern in the society.



Sudden lockdown in India with total disregard to migrant workers



The experience of Pakistan and several developing countries shows that even if a law is applied equally to all, it impacts differently on different strata of society

The societal groups start blaming the government for not paying adequate attention to health care of the ordinary people. This causes alienation in the society which can manifest in agitation and protest that could prove destabilizing.

The expanded notion of national security or comprehensive security that underlines the need of paying attention to non-military sources of conflict, war and insecurity becomes relevant here. The issues relating to human welfare and secure and stable life of citizens are no less important than external military challenges.

The COVID-19 Pandemic has exposed inequities in the global system. Most developing countries do not have the state-run healthcare system to cope with the Coronavirus patients. The scarcity of resources, skewed planning and misplaced priorities have caused serious deficiencies in the systems of healthcare, education and civic facilities. The human and economic losses caused by the pandemic underlined the need of international cooperation for making these services available to the ordinary people.

The experience of Pakistan and several developing countries shows that even if a law is applied equally to all, it impacts differently on different strata of society. The laws of social distancing and lockdown were applied all in all countries affected by COVID-19. However, these laws had more negative impact on the poor sections of population than on the wealthy and well-to-do classes. The affluent classes had enough economic resources at their disposal to maintain them even when their jobs and business activities were suspended due to the outbreak of the Coronavirus. The

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poorest sections of population lost their jobs or sources of earning because of closure of business and commercial activity. The daily wage earners were most adversely affected because they used to get paid for the work at the end of every working day. Daily wage earners and temporary labor could not get work and thus did not have money to sustain their families. They faced an extremely unfavorable and uncertain situation which caused resentment in the lower strata of the society.

The imperatives of internal peace and stability demand that the government takes care of the disadvantaged section of population. Pakistan's federal government offered some relaxation in lockdown rules within three weeks of the initial lockdown to allow some business activity so that some people start earning their living. The federal government also distributed financial relief to the poor section of population through its social welfare programme "Ahsas", every poor family was given Rs. 12000 as financial support under the "Ahsas" Programme. By the third week of July, religious groups and provincial governments also provided some financial support to the jobless people. This was a major relief to the poor people or those who lost their jobs because of the lockdown. Many business groups in travel business, hotels and restaurants, sports and entertainment laid off their employees because they could not afford to pay salaries beyond one or two months when their business was suspended. The 'Ahsas' programme provided financial relief to 10.3 million families.⁵ Humanitarian support in the form of free distribution of cooked meals, free medicine and food rations were distributed by nongovernment voluntary organizations, individual philanthropists, and some religious groups and parties.

The State Bank of Pakistan reduced its interest rate from 12.5 percent in February to seven percent in a graduated manner in March-July. It also relaxed foreign exchange rules and kept interest as low as five to six percent for medical and especially Coronavirus related goods. It also allowed the banks to give special low interest loans to be returned over a relatively long period of time for payment of salaries of the employees.



PM visits Ehsas Emergency Cash Disbursement Centre



The Coronavirus has shaken the primacy of powerful military and economic powers in global politics. It has shown that states like China, the US, and many European states are vulnerable despite their political clout and military and economic power. These major states experienced helplessness when the Virus hit them hard

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Global Politics and COVID-19

The international community has experienced epidemics and natural disasters in the past. However, the impact of COVID-19 has surpassed the impacts of earlier natural calamities. The post-COVID-19 global system is expected to raise new issues and rearticulate old issues in the new context. The notions of globalization, free economy and trade have suffered a major setback after the outbreak of the ongoing pandemic.

The Coronavirus has shaken the primacy of powerful military and economic powers in global politics. It has shown that states like China, the US, and many European states are vulnerable despite their political clout and military and economic power. These major states experienced helplessness when the virus hit them hard. This shows that global politics can no longer ignore natural calamities of global dimension. Natural disasters can cause havoc to different communities within a state as well as impact the relations among the state.

The negative impact of the virus is not only on those who are directly affected by it but others who continue to stay healthy. Business and commercial activities have been either adversely affected or these got completely stopped. It has not only undermined

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state economies, but individual economies have also suffered. Unemployment and poverty have increased in the weaker sections of population in the developed western countries in the first four months of the outbreak of the pandemic.

When we examine the socio-economic impact of the Coronavirus in the developing countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America, the situation is alarming. The economies of most of these states have shrunk and some of these countries experienced minus or near minus growth. India's economy suffered from 23.9 percent decline in April-June 2020.⁶ The long closures of business, commercial and industrial activity, increased unemployment and poverty in most of these countries. The countries like Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, Thailand, Philippines, and others that supplied labour to the states of the Gulf region and



other Arab countries suffered from another type of financial losses. As the new construction projects were suspended and business and commercial activities were stopped in these countries, the earnings of foreign labor were lost or reduced to the minimum; they were unable to send money back home to their families which not only caused financial crisis for these families but also the foreign exchange earnings of these states were reduced because they were receiving less amount as remittances from their citizens living and working abroad.⁷ The suspension of inter-state travel and stoppage of trade had a negative fall out on the economies of all countries, especially the states that were known as the major tourism places.

A World Health Organization (WHO) report released in the last week of August reported that the people in almost 90 percent countries could not get "essential health services" because of the outbreak of



the Coronavirus. As the hospitals were so busy dealing with COVID-19 patients they could not offer routine health care services and critical medical support like screening of cancer and treatment of HIV patients. Some medical procedures for the patients were postponed, causing concern among the patients. In Pakistan, the state hospitals closed "outdoor patient care" service for few weeks. This service was restarted as the people protested. The lockdown also forced the doctors engaged in private medical practice to close-down their clinics that used to provide basic health care services to people.

These problems emphasized the need of international cooperation with and support to the countries facing socio-economic crises due to the pandemic. In addition to medical support, these countries require financial support for coping with the difficulties in their economies and to cope with the growing number of unemployed people. Antonio Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations, is right to remark that the COVID-19 "laid bare severe and systemic inequalities both within and between countries and communities. More broadly, it has underscored the world's fragilities, not just in the face of another health emergency, but in our faltering response to climate crisis, lawlessness in cyberspace, and the risk of nuclear proliferation. People everywhere are losing trust in political establishments and institutions".⁸ In another statement, Antonio Guterres, said that COVID-19 posed "the highest risk to the health of the most vulnerable, and its social and economic impact is concentrated on those who are least able to cope. Unless we act now, 100 million more people could be pushed into extreme poverty and we could see famines of historical proportions".⁹

Territorial boundaries do not protect a state from COVID-19. Helping the developing countries to fight COVID-19 serves the economic interests of the developed economies because the developing countries are "buyers of exports [of the developed economies], sources of raw material and destinations for investment" from the developed world. "Getting the virus under control in these countries is key to developed economies, moving forward on the difficult path to recovery".¹⁰

The major international financial institutions have come forward to provide financial assistance, new

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loans and rescheduling of debt. Pakistan and several other countries got new loans to cope with the economic pressures caused by COVID-19. The World bank, Asian Development Bank and China's Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) has provided new loans to Pakistan. The G-20 Countries have provided debt relief to Pakistan and some other countries. China and Saudi Arabia have offered debt relief to Pakistan. The United Kingdom has provided economic support to Pakistan to fight COVID-19. It also supplied some medical equipment. The US gave 300 ventilators to Pakistan in July.

The economies of large number of countries continue to suffer from the negative impact of COVID-19. This threat is expected to haunt these countries up to the end of the first quarter of 2021. Therefore, the UN, the World Bank, and other international financial institutions as well as regional cooperation organizations must work on a comprehensive plan for economic revival of the COVID-19 affected countries. If sufficient attention is not given to economic decline of the Coronavirus-affected countries, their economic and political conditions would deteriorate, accentuating internal strife, violence, and separatism in these countries. These troubles can easily spillover to the neighboring countries, causing instability and disorder in the region and beyond.

The Coronavirus has caused a serious jolt to the much-boasted feature of current international relations, that is, globalization. Modern Communication and Information technologies and increased travel facilities transformed the post-Cold War world into what was described as a global village. The success of a state-economy was measured in terms of its linkages in the context of Western liberal economic thinking that highlighted free trade, investment,



greater freedom to the private sector and the least involvement of the state in economic affairs. It called for an easy movement of ideas, people, goods, and services across the state boundaries. Such a state of economic affairs created space for non-governmental organizations for socio-economic development within a state and across the territorial boundaries of the states. These trends of neo-economic liberalism and globalization were first challenged by global terrorism that forced many countries in 2001 onwards to apply strict checks on the movement of people and ideas from certain specified countries.

In 2020, the Coronavirus has hit all the continents of the world in a more overwhelming manner than terrorism. Most countries enforced a strict lockdown, suspended air travel and imposed quarantine rules for people travelling to other countries or returning from abroad. All this exposed the non-enduring nature of globalization and Western liberal economics. These restrictions are expected to be eased in 2021, but the fear of re-emergence of COVID-19 would keep a check on free movement of people, goods and services across the territorial boundaries of states. Similarly, it will be several years before tourism and free trade and movement of people becomes a routine international practice.

The COVID-19 pandemic has added new dimensions to the competition between the United States and China for political influence at the global level. Though the US and China maintain active economic and trade relations, they distrust each other as they compete for expanding their influence in Asia-Pacific and other regions. The US wants to get more trade concession so as to balance China-US trade, tighten technology transfers to China and work with Australia, Japan and South Korea to contain Chinese influence in South China Sea area and Asia Pacific region. The US is also building India to challenge China on the Sino-Indian border.¹¹ Whereas many analysts describe the 21st Century as the China Century, the US wants to neutralize its drive for leadership in Asia and Africa; The US is not only opposed to its Belt and Road Initiative and China-Pakistan Economic Corridor but also raises the issues of human rights when it comes to China's new security laws for Hong Kong and the rights of Uighur Muslims of Xinjiang region. It is in the context of this rivalry that the US and China closed each other's consulates in Houston and Chengdu in July.¹²

The Coronavirus has hit the developed and the developing countries all over the world. It has exposed inequities in each society as well as in the international system

The COVID-19 pandemic has reminded us that there is a need of adopting a comprehensive and all-embracing approach to national security

The US viewed the spread of the Coronavirus as an opportunity to build diplomatic pressure on China for unleashing the Coronavirus from Wuhan on the rest of the world. US President, Donald Trump labelled the virus as the China Virus or the Wuhan virus.¹³ He used the phrase of the China Virus in his speech at the Republican Party Convention in August, China rejected this allegation. President Donald Trump wanted the WHO to accept his formulation regarding the origins of the Coronavirus. As the WHO did not agree with Donald Trump's formulation for origins of the Coronavirus, President Trump criticized the WHO Director General and initiated the process of US withdrawal from WHO in July.¹⁴ The issue of origins of the Coronavirus is expected to stay alive in the confrontation between China and the US. However, the US is not expected to get much support on its narrative about the origins of the Coronavirus.

Another dimension of competition among different states pertains to invention of Coronavirus vaccine. Important work on preparation of vaccine is being undertaken in China, Russia, the United States, and the United Kingdom. The US administration claimed that Russian agents had attempted to steal the research on vaccine in the US and the UK.¹⁵ A charge denied by Russia. The Russian government claimed in August that its scientists had invented a medicine for the Coronavirus patients, and that its tests in Russia were successful. However, this vaccine has not so far been acknowledged by WHO and healthcare related global organizations. The country that invents Coronavirus vaccine will get major diplomatic credit. The US and other Western countries would like to keep this credit with them.

Concluding Observations

The COVID-19 pandemic has reminded us that there is a need of adopting a comprehensive and all-embracing approach to national security. It is a conventional security plus approach that not only updates conventional security measures by inducting modern technology but also takes into account non-military threats to national security. The states can collapse or face an acute internal crisis due to natural and human-made calamities. Internal peace, political coherence and stability of a state can be threatened by several internal developments which can easily be



exploited by external adversaries. National security is impacted by internal politico-economic and social conditions, governance and political management. An epidemic, floods, cyclones and famines can undermine a state and society. Similarly, internal strife caused by ethnic, religious, regional, tribal conflict and poor governance along with failed political management can cause internal disharmony and chaos. There is a need to pay serious attention promoting human and societal security.

The Coronavirus has hit the developed and the developing countries all over the world. It has exposed inequities in each society as well as in the international system. If international peace and stability are to be guaranteed in the future, there is a need to work towards mitigating these inequities. This calls for a global level effort to help the COVID-19 affected countries to cope with the issues of healthcare unemployment, poverty and underdevelopment caused by the pandemic. Though the developed and industrialized countries have also been adversely affected by Coronavirus, the developing states of Asia, Africa and Latin America have suffered most because they did not have the capacity to cope with such pandemic. The issues of improving the socio-economic conditions of these countries will figure prominently in world politics in the future. International and regional organizations will be expected to help these states. The neglect of these issues would cause instability and political turmoil in many countries that could spill over to other states. The power politics among the major global players like the United States, China, Russia and the European Union will also be influenced by their perception of how to deal with the aftermath of COVID-19. While helping other countries each of these major states would assign priority to its regional and global agenda, how to counter the diplomatic and military pressures generated by the adversary power and how the post-COVID-19 situation can be manipulated to its advantage.

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