States operating in anarchy according to Realism are driven by their national interest to survive. The best way to survive is to dominate the region thereby reducing the chances of being vulnerable. Geopolitics of a region offers vital incentives for the States to take advantage in their favor to boost their power which is a prerequisite as per realism to guarantee their security and survival. The present paper is aimed at analyzing India’s ambitions in South Asia within the current geopolitical scenario of region characterized by the struggle for survival among the three nuclear giants of region India, China and Pakistan through the Realist notion of survival.

**INTRODUCTION:**

Geopolitics plays a crucial role in defining a state’s foreign policy. Geopoliticians argue that the best way to survive is to dominate the region thereby reducing the chances of being vulnerable. Geopolitics of a region offers vital incentives for the States to take advantage in their favor to boost their power which is a prerequisite as per realism to guarantee their security and survival. The present paper is aimed at analyzing India’s ambitions in South Asia within the current geopolitical scenario of region characterized by the struggle for survival among the three nuclear giants of region India, China and Pakistan through the Realist notion of survival.

**India and Pakistan:** Historically chaotic, Pakistan and India’s relationship persists today as very unstable and cold. In the words of a former Indian high commissioner to Pakistan, G. Parthasarathy, promoting peace between India and Pakistan is like trying to treat two patients whose only disease is an allergy to each other (Tharoor, 2012). As India continues to advance its nuclear weapons arsenal and technology, Pakistan responds by building up its arms as well. The territorial disputes between the two and nuclear weapons testing toward the end of the twentieth century have been settled.

**India and China:** Due to their rise to acme in the global inter-state hierarchy, the bilateral relationship between China and India has desisted into vexed paradigm as they are being peppered with each other’s pregnant rise. At the structural level, India and China are two major powers in Asia with global aspirations and some noteworthy incompatible interests. As a result, some amount of friction is visible in their bilateral relationship. The geopolitical milieu of Asia makes it certain that it will be extremely difficult, if not impossible, for Hindi-Chini to be bhai bhai (brothers in the foreseeable future (Pant, 2016). The two sides are sheltered in a classic security dilemma, where any action taken is immediately interpreted by other as a threat to interests. China’s lack of support to India in the aftermath of Mumbai terror attacks in November 2008 and its attempts at blocking the approval of the US-India civilian nuclear energy co-operation pact at the Nuclear Supplier’s Group (NSG) has reinforced perceptions in India that China years of effort would do everything possible to prevent India’s emergence as a major regional and global player. Meanwhile, trouble is brewing on the issue of boundary and all those at resolving the problem has come under a cloud. The tensions over the boundary dispute between the two sides are escalating with China opening another front recently by raising objections over an area that was previously thought to have been settled.

In July 2015, India’s Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited China and in essence told Chinese President Xi Jinping that China must re-evaluate its stance on issues and recognize the great potential that a mutual partnership between India and China could bring about. However, despite Prime Minister Modi’s attempts to get China to recognize India as a growing power with great potential regionally and globally, President Xi did not mull over the suggestion with much seriousness, signifying that China does not consider India worth its time diplomatically or strategically. Additionally, in terms of Chinese political matters, China’s white paper on defense, where threats to China and military responses are delineated, did not even include India. This further shows that China does not consider India to be a real threat or even worth mentioning.

Indian analysts apprehend a Chinese policy of encirclement in Asia. This refers to China’s various investments in building up port facilities in the Indian Ocean, characterized by some strategists as a ‘string of pearls’ strategy to restrict India’s wings to fly. China’s thriving exports and search for international markets have also led it to develop substantial trading relationships with India’s neighbors. China’s penetration of India’s neighborhood presents a finely calibrated challenge to Indian foreign policy, seen by some as deriving from the following cal-
culus: Restricting India to the Asian subcontinent remains China's tactic. The task is to simultaneously downplay India’s sizable political and economic status and to create a situation that is acting secure in its ability to survive regionally and internationally due to its perceived dominance and regional superiority in military, economic, and diplomatic spheres. Gurmeet Kanwals, director of a Delhi-based military think tank, the Centre for Land Warfare Studies (CLAWS), argues that ‘China’s great power defensive policies are quite obviously designed to marginalize India in the long term and reduce India to the status of a sub-regional power by increasing Chinese influence and leverage in the South Asian region’ (Tharoor, 2012). India is reacting and trying to get China’s attention through diplomacy and a suggested mutual partnership in order to strengthen the status of India in the international community through association with China. While China seems to have the upper hand diplomatically, India still gains regional power as China’s increased military and maritime actions near India signal at least some interest in deterring conflict with India, validating to a degree India’s potential as a competitor and emerging global power. This also plays off the assumption within realism that all states possess military capacity to some degree but do not exactly know what their neighboring states’ intentions are. Because the nature of each state’s military capabilities are ultimately highly classified, China’s actions seem to be the proof of the present threat as well as the acknowledgement that India does have the capacity to emerge as a global power due to its strengthened economy and improvements in nuclear capability and policies.

The juncture of Regional Politics: China, Pakistan, and India

The intersection of regional politics and diplomatic relations between India, China, and Pakistan is relevant on two levels: the so called ‘all weather friendship’ of China and Pakistan through the renewed China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) that is somewhat founded upon problems with India (Small, 2015) and the increasing nuclear tension among all three states as a regional competition to survive and hold power. Realism is a useful tool for interpreting this and understanding it as a function of India’s emergence as a key global power due to its nuclear doctrine and growing economy. China and Pakistan have an interesting diplomatic relationship based upon the mutual antagonsim towards India. China and Pakistan militarily and militarily and economically cooperate with USA and other similar allies. Thus as per realism India is well on its way to becoming a superpower, India towards maximizing its power relative to China and Pakistan by aligning its nuclear arsenal. Furthermore the geopolitical matrix of China Pakistan pushes India towards expanding its nuclear power, and globally competitive, increasing military size and capabilities, improving and building up nuclear weapons capabilities.

The regional competition led to a Cold War-like arms race in the region, and shows India’s resolve to maximize power relative to its competing states. For India, this means that diplomacy is where it has the potential to jump ahead and gain a slight advantage over China and Pakistan. With the right diplomatic relations and alliances, India could create powerful connections to aid it both in its regional struggles with China and Pakistan separately and as one allied unit, as well as its desire to emerge as a key global state in international affairs. For a state in India’s position in which geopolitics play such a large role, it is crucial to find ways through other alliances or partnerships to alleviate the struggle of having both neighboring states either passively or actively working against it, as with Pakistan and China’s relationships and actions toward India.

India’s growing clout in the international community and the fast changing regional geopolitical matrix has press New Delhi to further cement its relationship with Washington and other Western nations.

CONCLUSION:
The geopolitical situations were India currently is works under the competitive umbrella of survival which has led to a unique regional arms race. Certainly all the three actors are involved; India’s economy places it apart from Pakistan and brings it closer to China’s level of prestige and position in the international community. Geopolitically, diplomatic relations with China help Pakistan pose a credible enough threat to India. Through the lens of realism due to its growing economy, India is increasing defense spending by allocating more resources to build its military capabilities, and specifically its nuclear capabilities. The recent development and addition to nuclear capability pushes India into the upper echelon of nuclear capabilities, as only five other nations (the U.S., the U.K., France, Russia, and China) are members of the so-called “Nuclear Triad,” or nuclear weapons capable of being launched from sea, land, and air (Trayne, 2016). This aids India’s journey to dominate the South Asian region, especially when taken in consideration along with its nuclear doctrine, which pushes the importance of being able to defend itself as well as responsibly handle its nuclear capabilities. In 2005, the U.S. and India entered into a nuclear agreement that further solidified global power recognition of India as a nuclear power, since it stipulated terms for India to continue to possess nuclear weapons and gave India access to U.S. nuclear technologies (Mistry, 2014). However, as of December 2015, Western analysts found that India is in the process of building a nuclear city in Challakere in the southern state of Karnataka and that will add to India’s “secure might” (Zakaria, 2015). By utilizing its financial improvements India is able to continue to follow the steps that existing global powers paved-building a strong economy that is globally competitive, increasing military size and capabilities, improving and building up nuclear weapons capabilities.

NOTES AND REFERENCES:
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