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I N S I D E

The Need to Build in New World Order

Professor Dr. Longin Pastusiak

Bangladesh-United States Relations: Security in the Bay of Bengal

Ataur Rahman

Human Security in South Asia: Vision 2025

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Contents

<i>Editor's Note</i>	v
The Need to Build in New World Order <i>Professor Dr. Longin Pastusiak</i>	1
Bangladesh-United States Relations: Security in the Bay of Bengal <i>Ataur Rahman</i>	6
Human Security in South Asia: Vision 2025 <i>ANM Muniruzzaman</i>	23
The Use of Torture in the War against Terror: A Critical Appraisal <i>Mohammad Jahirul Hoque</i>	56
Bangladesh-China Relationship at the Dawn of the Twenty-first Century <i>Noor Mohammad Sarker</i>	72

Editor's Note

This edition of the *Peace and Security Review* appears at a captivating moment in terms of international security dynamics. In the past few months, the world has seen a plethora of developments in international affairs. At the Middle Eastern front, for example, after a protracted phase of confrontation, Iran and the world powers are now on the path of a peaceful nuclear deal. Mohammad Morsi, the democratically elected President in Egypt in thousand years, has been brought under trial in his own country. In South Asia, *Aam Admi Party* (AAP) is emerging as a new force in Indian domestic politics with a bunch of promising outlooks, whereas, concurrently, India herself is in front of a diplomatic crisis with the United States of America on Devyani Khobragade issue. While looking at Southeast Asia, Thailand is going through a severe domestic political turmoil. Tensions been also observed between China and the regional American allies over East China row. All these events throughout the world and the subsequent trends of changes poised for a new international order, which, to some extent, have some significant impacts on Bangladesh as well. In this milieu, the current issue of *Peace and Security Review* focuses on the bilateral relations of Bangladesh with the United States of American and China, South Asia's vision on human security, and the use of torture in the War on Terror.

At the beginning of current issue, an address given by **Professor Dr. Longin Pastusiak** at "Understanding and Cooperation Dialogue" has been enclosed. In his address, Professor Pastusiak argues that the post-Cold War world have less international wars but have more domestic conflicts, more religious and ethnic conflicts. Various forms of cultural, political, economic and environmental troubles have been posing serious threats to the international security. In such a circumstance, a new world order is slowly beginning to emerge. The new order would no longer be effective to ensure worldwide peace and security unless it is accompanied by a harmonized international effort.

In the first article of the issue, **Professor Ataur Rahman** offers a gist on the role and interests of the United States in Bangladesh focusing especially on the security dimensions in the Bay of Bengal. He argues that America's relations with Bangladesh evolved for the past four decades in response to changing

global, regional and bilateral interests. Today, geopolitics in South Asia is undergoing some significant transformations as the United States and China compete for influence in the states of the region through cooperation as well as conflict. In fact, China's rise, often neglected as a factor in South Asia policy, is encouraging a more strategic U.S. approach as a part of its "rebalancing strategy". On the other hand, India's assertive role and capability requires a moderating role by the United States to protect the weaker states of the region. It is in this context, Professor Rahman's paper highlights how the United States has stepped up its security assistance to Bangladesh aiming to strengthen the latter's naval capability in the Bay of Bengal and providing overall security for safer trade.

In the second article, **Major General Muniruzzaman (Retd.)** describes the vision 2025 of human security in South Asia. He stresses that South Asia is one of the most vulnerable regions in the world. Non-traditional security challenges like looming food and water crises, lack of health security, high rate of poverty, climate refugees and so on are creating severe impacts on human security as well as both domestic and regional stability in the region. One of the most serious challenges for South Asia is climate change. The region is losing both land and agricultural areas due to severe impacts of climate change. South Asians are facing looming water crisis as well due to climate change. The people of South Asia also lack health security due to increasing level of poverty. However, South Asia has significant potentialities for broader cooperation and development in future. SAARC as an organization has a major role to play. SAARC should have a clear vision for future so that it can set a common stage of hopes and aspirations of the people of South Asia by combating all the threats to human security.

In the third article, **Mohammad Jahirul Hoque** stresses that, since the last decade, the US and its allies have been applying torture on persons suspicious of perpetrating terrorist activities who were detained in different prisons in pursuance of the policy of War against Terror. The 9/11 attacks compelled the US to take such type of comprehensive tactics against its enemies especially those who are involved with terrorist networks of al-Qaeda. Although the policy of War against Terror was taken during the Regan administration, the consequence of 9/11 attacks built a platform for Junior Bush administration to reincarnate the concept among its allies. The War against Terror of Bush Junior is criticised for using torture as a tool of interrogation on the detainees suspected as Islamic terrorists involved with al-Qaeda. Hence, the author argues that, there is a controversy whether torture is a useful technique to detect the conspiracies against the US and its allies, while it has already been established that torture is seriously detrimental to human rights and it did not bring a permanent solution to eradicate terrorism from the world.

In the final piece of writing, **Noor Mohammad Sarker** presents a comprehensive understanding on Bangladesh-China relationship at the dawn of the twenty-first century. He argues that the bilateral relationship between these two countries has its foothold right through the historical records of two thousand years. Ever since the establishment of the formal diplomatic relationship in October 1975, Bangladesh and China continued to be closer friends and development partners. Successful bilateral cooperation between them has been attained in a number of sectors, including politics, economy, military and culture. Over the years, they have also signed quite a lot of bilateral treaties, agreements, and memoranda of understandings on mutual economic engagement, cultural sharing, infrastructure development, educational exchange and military support. Mutual reciprocity based on shared interests has largely contributed to keep Bangladesh-China bilateral relations sustainable over time. In this milieu, the author elucidates the historical development of this bilateral relationship; goes through its various dimensions; identifies major challenges; and suggest a bunch of policy imperatives to foster this friendship.

In the essence, we are appreciative of the support lent to us by our international editorial board and are indebted to the authors who contributed to this issue. We are grateful to the reviewers, whose proficiency and hard work has clearly paid off, culminating in the accomplishment of this issue. We also thank our readers and subscribers who have provided us with valuable feedback at various times.

Indeed, we hope our readers will continue giving us their support and suggestions. We welcome lively responses on the articles presented in our journal as that can only be positive.

Major General ANM Muniruzzaman, ndc, psc (Retd.)
Editor

The Need to Build in New World Order

*Professor Dr. Longin Pastusiak**

On behalf of the Civil Association called "Polish House" I would like to express my deep appreciation for inviting me to attend this distinguished gathering devoted to "Understanding and Cooperation Dialogue".

I congratulate our host, The Chinese Association for International Understanding, for organizing this important conference on global cooperation and dialogue. Contemporary, post cold war world unfortunately is full of conflicts of both domestic and international character. That is why I praise The Chinese Association for International Understanding for its activities which contribute to peaceful and stable world

All of us we hoped that with the end of cold war we are entering new peaceful, cooperative and stable world. The cold war was a global war which was waged in every corner of the world and it affected every aspect of international relations. Unfortunately in the second decade of 21st century I do not feel I live in the fully stable and harmonious world.

In the post-Cold War world we have less international wars but we have more domestic conflicts, more religious and ethnic conflicts. On the other hand, it must be admitted that the end of cold war created also extraordinary opportunities for solving many problems resulting from the cold war rivalry. The feeling of "fear and hope" dominant during the cold war has been replaced by the feeling of "hope and fear."

Let me just mention a few of the challenges, sources of instability in contemporary world.

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Nationalism seems to be growing rather than waning. Instead of one “global village” we have multitudes global villages on our globe. They are familiar with one another and they demonstrate their mutual prejudices, thus increasing the risk of conflicts. Territorial claims keep reappearing in various places. Centrifugal tendencies are taking on a renewed importance in multi-ethnic and multi-religious states. The international trade in narcotics and terrorism are thriving; AIDS, SARS and possible other epidemics hitherto unknown to mankind are spreading.

The world is destabilized by growing number of ecological threats such as ozone layer destruction, greenhouse effect, acid rain, air and maritime pollution, forest depletion, agricultural land erosion, etc. The exhaustion of non-renewable raw materials intensifies the rivalry for access for those resources between their principal consumers.

There is a growing threat of the proliferation of nuclear weapons, of fissile materials falling into the wrong hands, and weapons of mass destruction becoming available not only to a larger number of countries but also to terrorist organizations. More and more countries are capable of launching missiles farther and farther away, on longer and longer distance.

State borders are becoming increasingly permeable, which in combination with instability or absence of economic prospects in poor countries gives an impetus to migration processes. They in turn are a source of fear, prejudices and ethnic conflicts in other countries. Various types of religious fundamentalism, fanaticism, dissention and bias are on the rise and are becoming the source of domestic and international conflict.

These conflict-generating occurrences are accompanied by growing contradictions in world economy and international trade. The gap between rich and poor countries is widening, protectionism is flourishing, debt is mounting, and economic dependencies are deepening. None of these factors contribute to political stability.

Conflict-generating occurrences and processes are taking place in an international environment that is marked with a growing diffusion of power between states and transfer of power from national to trans-national institutions and multinational corporations.

Dear friends,

It is possible that the diagnosis I have just presented is overly pessimistic. After all, both the international community and individual states are not idle and they try to counter those threats.

Thanks to the end of cold war we can say that we have new Europe, that we have new world, but unfortunately we still do not have new world order.

Today the term “new world order” has two basic meanings: First, it is an empirical description of the emerging world situation and secondly it is a normative vision of the possibility of shaping the international community after the end of cold war and creating peaceful and prosperous world.

An important role in the new global order should be played by the United Nations –reformed and adopted to the new world balance of power and to new challenges and threats. The new world order must be equipped with an effective instrument in the form of an international military force. That force must constitute a reliable deterrent to any potential aggressor who might think of using his army as a tool for pursuing political objectives.

The new world order also means a higher role for diplomacy and diplomatic techniques of international conflict resolution. It means shifting of emphasis from military to diplomatic methods. Arms reduction will continue to be an important component of the new world order agenda.

But I would like to stress that the new world order should not be the creation of one superpower regardless of how strong it is at a given moment in history. Under democratic principles that formally govern international relations, that task should be assumed by all players on the world political stage, even if it is obvious that the qualitative weight of individual states differs greatly.

World stability must be treated as a desired long-term goal. In a shorter period we must concentrate on constructing organizational mechanisms and tools meant to prevent aggressions.

If a global security system cannot be established, then we should aim at establishing regional security systems. At present we have only one effective Euro-Atlantic security system based on the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. But that system does not even cover all of Europe. Regions such as Asia, Africa and Latin America, which are less stable than Europe, have not established security structures. The establishment of regional security and cooperation systems seems to be a desirable and feasible midterm objective.

I have the impression that contemporary politicians are so busy with day-to-day affairs that they have forgotten about future generations. The ambitious task of formulating a new order for the future is awaiting a person, country or group of countries that it will be able to raise it in intellectual and political terms and give it an international dimension. The issue is live and urgent.

Some politicians in the past like Deng Xiaoping, George H.W. Bush senior, Mikhail Gorbachev spoke of the necessity to create new world order. But they never put on the table operational proposal how to create such world order.

The most concrete and comprehensive concept of new world order are products of Chinese thinking and Chinese-Russian diplomacy. Let me just mention for example the Russian-Chinese Joint Declaration on the Multipolar World and the Formation of a New International Order dated April 23rd 1997. Another document was Beijing Declaration adopted at the end of the Fifth Ministerial Conference of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) calling for an improvement of the international system and order. This document is dated July 20th, 2012.

But the most ambitious and the most detailed document concerning new world order is China-Russia Joint Statement on 21st Century World Order. This document was signed July 1st 2005 by President Hu Jintao and President Vladimir Putin.

In 12 elaborated points this document outlines basic principles on which the 21st century world order should be based. It should be based on universally recognized principles and norms of international law and "fair and regional world order".

It stresses the need to reform and strengthen the United Nations, improving its efficiency in dealing with new challenges and threats. The international issues should be solved through dialogue and consultations on the basis of multilateralism.

The Joint Statement of China and Russia says that "human rights are universal" and countries should "respect the human rights and basic freedoms enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights". "The histories and traditions of multi-ethnic countries must be respected"-stresses the China-Russia Joint Statement.

The diversity of cultures and civilizations in the world should become the basis for mutual enrichment rather than mutual conflict.

China and Russia clearly stated that establishment of security cooperation mechanism should take into account the interests of all parties and it should not be imposed by the most powerful ones.

I just mentioned only a few of the ideas presented in this China – Russia Joint Statement on 21st Century World Order. The document ends with an appeal in which the “two sides call on countries in the world to engage in extensive dialogue on the issue of the international order of the 21st century. To a great extent, the future of the world, the progress of mankind, and the ability to deal with challenges and threats depend on outcome of this dialogue.”

I only regret that this important document about building harmonious world was never subject of effective negotiations on international forum.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In the last two decades the world has changed faster and more profoundly than in the entire period from 1945 to 1989. Today we know that the old world order has broken down and is disappearing, and that a new world order is only beginning to emerge. But it is emerging very slowly, too slowly. Time will not work in favor of the new order if it is not accompanied by a harmonized international effort. Today it is not enough to think and to dream about a better, more predictable and more secure world. Today we must act. Act locally, but think globally.

Bangladesh-United States Relations: Security in the Bay of Bengal

*Ataur Rahman**

“Tomorrow the sun will rise on a deeper friendship between America and Bangladesh...I am proud of the kind of partnership we are forging”.

- President Bill Clinton on his visit to Bangladesh in March, 2000

Abstract

America's relations with Bangladesh evolved for the past four decades in response to changing global, regional and bilateral interests. Today, geopolitics in South Asia is undergoing some significant transformations as the United States and China compete for influence in the states of the region through cooperation as well as conflict. In fact, China's rise, often neglected as a factor in South Asia policy, is encouraging a more strategic U.S. approach as a part of its “rebalancing strategy”. On the other hand, India's assertive role and capability requires a moderating role by the United States to protect the weaker states of the region. It is in this context, this paper examines the role and interests of the United States in Bangladesh focusing especially on the security dimensions in the Bay of Bengal. It highlights how the United States has stepped up its security assistance to Bangladesh aiming to strengthen the latter's naval capability in the Bay of Bengal and providing overall security for safer trade.

Introduction

Twelve years after the US President's first visit to Bangladesh, his illustrious wife Secretary of State Hilary Clinton signed the Bangladesh-US Partnership Dialogue Agreement in 2012. This heralded a new beginning in bilateral relations between Bangladesh and the United States. The two countries affirmed their “dedication to deepening dialogue in security cooperation, including combating terrorism, violent extremism, and transnational crime,

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such as narcotics trafficking, piracy and trafficking in persons and arms.”¹ Despite rhetoric and inspirational words, the signing of the Agreements reflected U.S. renewed attraction in Bangladesh that is located at the northern extreme of the Bay of Bengal, part of Indian Ocean, in the evolving strategic dynamics between India and China. This attraction is accentuated by Bangladesh’s productive capacity, energy prospects, and regional connectivity and trade routes to China and India. Indeed, China’s rise, often neglected as a factor in US South Asia policy, has assumed new significance to U.S. security ‘rebalance strategy’ to Asia as a whole.² This strategy also envisions “Indo-Pacific Corridor” connecting India, Bangladesh and Myanmar to the major markets of Southeast Asia and beyond. Simultaneously, the rise of an assertive India requires a moderating role by the United States so that less powerful states of the region are able to safeguard their legitimate national interests, and remain stable.

It is in this context, this paper provides for a pragmatic policy framework and ‘forward-deployment’ diplomacy to ward off Bangladesh’s security threats arising especially from the Bay of Bengal. It examines why and how the United States has stepped up its security assistance –towards strengthening Bangladesh’s naval capability in the sea in terms of operations, defense requirements, and providing logistics and equipments as part of its broader re-engagement in the Asia Pacific region. The paper highlights how U.S. Pacific Command in particular works closely with Bangladesh Navy especially Coast Guard to expand and improve their maritime security capabilities, and act as a “strong partner” to enhance regional security, and “committed to improving counterterrorism capability”.

Changing Perceptions and Interests

To explain and analyze forty two years of Bangladesh-U.S. relations, two key concepts are used in this paper. These are: “asymmetry” and “complexity of relations”. An important implication of ‘asymmetry’ is the increased complexity of the game that is likely to induce dynamics that are absent in symmetric settings. In his famous book “*The Paradox of American Power*” Harvard Professor Joseph Nye ten years ago stated so aptly “... a nation never had so much power as wielded by the U.S., and yet at the same time a nation

¹ U.S. –Bangladesh Partnership Dialogue, Media Note, office of the Spoke person, Washington DC, May 5, 2012

² The ‘rebalance strategy’ widely known as “the pivot to Asia” aims at redeployment of U.S. military assets by expanding partnership and networks with countries of the Asia-Pacific region, including bases. For official position, Hillary Clinton, America’s Pacific Century, Foreign Policy, October 11, 2011

has never been so interdependent with the rest of the world”³. No doubt, the U.S. used to bstride the globe like a colossus –dominating business, commerce communications, and economy with military might second to none. But it is also agonizing to witness how this most powerful nation had to undergo enormous geopolitical changes and challenges over a decade. Americans today debate possible impact of interventions, withdrawals, and economic recovery. US power, its influence, its reach are now shaky, and perspectives on the application of US power are hotly contested⁴. Not surprisingly, therefore, the US follows the strategy of complexity of relations by crafting such terms as partnership, strategic partnership, or partnership dialogue etc. in a multi-centric power structure having ‘contested leadership’ engaged with ‘emerging powers’, like China, India and Japan in Asian context. In this type of complexity of relations, U.S. loses some freedom of action- but gains more by turning other countries into “predictable and cooperative partners” – critical to US future success.

It is unique that despite huge asymmetry in power and capability Bangladesh-U.S. relations exemplify a successful model of mutual cooperation. These relations evolved over the past years in response to changing regional and global events, as well as motivations and perception of state actors and people. Bangladesh’s interests and perceptions for expanding relations with US were shaped by some historical events, key security threats, political aspirations, and drive for economic growth. Historically, US secured a close identity in Bangladesh’s foreign policy since the days of Pakistan era. Hussein Shahid Suhrawardy, the great Bengali leader, fifth Prime Minister of Pakistan, was probably the staunchest advocate of friendship with the United States. Ironically, Bangladesh independence movement coincided with the timing of US’s historical opening up with China through Pakistan- a key US ally at that time. Despite Nixon administration’s “tilt” towards Pakistan, there was widespread sympathy and support from the American people and the US Congress for Bangladesh⁵.

After the liberation of Bangladesh in December 1971, the United States formally recognized the newly independent country in April 1972 and pledged

³ Joseph S. Nye, *The Paradox of American Power: Why the World’s Only Superpower Can’t Go It Alone* (Oxford University Press, 2002)

⁴ Christopher Nichols, *The Limits of American Power*, American Military and Diplomatic History Conference, May 7, 2013

⁵ Influential US lawmakers such as Ted Kennedy, Frank Church and William B. Saxbe were engaged in formulating US public opinion against the Nixon administration. There was significant opposition and dissent within the US government, especially the State Department, against administration policy.

US\$300 million in aid. After the 1975, changeover, successive governments of President Ziaur Rahman and Hussein Mohammad Ershad forged closed relations with the US. After the restoration of democracy in 1991, relations evolved from aid dependency to partnerships in trade and security. In the aftermath of 9/11, the relationship between the two countries became closer - US working with Bangladesh in combating Islamic extremism and terrorism and was providing hundreds of millions of dollars every year in economic assistance. The United States has also assisted Bangladesh during cyclone relief operations. US Marines actively joined Bangladeshi troops in providing relief to thousands of people who suffered as a result of the 1991 Bangladesh Cyclone and Cyclone Sidr in 2007. The people of Bangladesh by and large maintained a very favorable view of US with more than 53% percent approval rate⁶.

Conversely, US perception of Bangladesh has become increasingly positive and inspirational over the years transiting from a poor, developing, authoritarian, military-dominated 'fragile state' to a moderate, aspiring democracy with huge economic potential and strategic significance. As Wendy R. Sherman, US Under Secretary for Political Affairs in her recent visit to Dhaka has so aptly stated "The U.S.-Bangladesh Partnership Dialogue speaks volumes for how much we value our shared vision and how bright a future we see for our bilateral relations. This partnership is deeply rooted in our shared democratic values, our strong economic ties, our mutual security concerns, and our broad and deep people-to-people connections"⁷ The U.S. understands the potential of Bangladesh as the seventh largest populous Muslim majority country in the world; secondly, the U.S. sees the country emerging as the next "Tiger in Asia" provided it remains politically stable; and also the US values Bangladesh for its geo-political importance. Bangladesh is the bridgehead between South and Southeast Asia with a close border to China and a littoral state of Indian Ocean with two seaports of high potential at Mongla and Chittagong.

That the United States is attaching increasing importance to her relationship with Bangladesh has been illustrated by a flurry of visits by U.S. dignitaries to Dhaka in the 2012 and 2013. They included U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asian Affairs Robert O. Blake, Jr., Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs Wendy R. Sherman and Assistant Secretary of State for Political-Military Affairs Andrew J. Shapiro. All this was followed by the visit of the highest U.S. defense official, Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus, between

⁶ Pew Global Database/ Indicators (various years on selected countries)

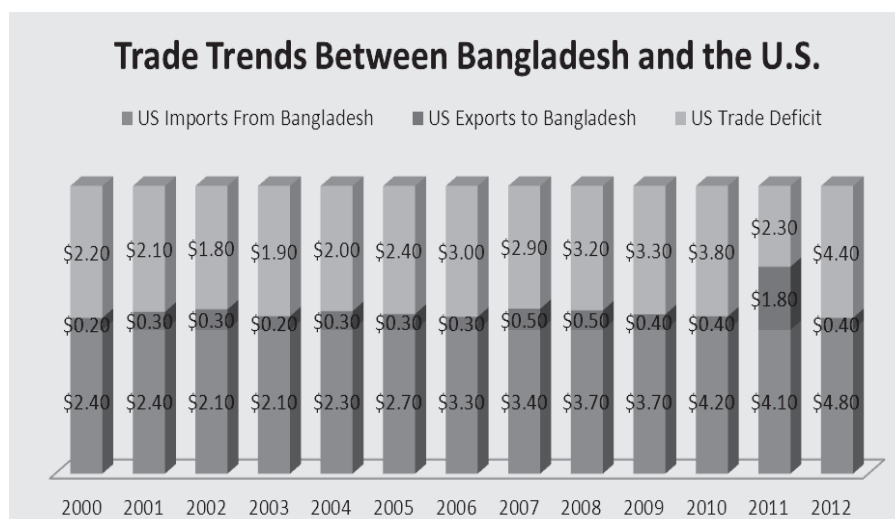
⁷ Wendy R. Sherman, U.S. Under Secretary for Political Affairs Wendy R Sherman, "A Partnership without boundaries: U.S.-Bangladesh Relations", Hotel Ruposhi Bangla, Dhaka, May 27, 2013

July 13 and 15. Cooperation between the navies of the two countries began with discussions at length. The series of inter-state contacts climaxed with the visit of U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton signing up to Bangladesh-US Partnership Dialogue Agreement. This dialogue transcended bilateralism and Bangladesh has been officially taken on in a U.S. South Asian security loop.⁸

Why US Matters

Trade and Investment

From economic point of view and as a development partner, the US plays a pivotal role. Today, the United States is one of the biggest trade partners of the country. The United States is also one of largest development partners, providing \$6 billion dollars since 1972. US bilateral trade now stands at 5.4 billion from 4.3 billion in 2010 and 4.8 billion in 2012. In the past three years the two-way bilateral trade grew 11 percent a year on the average with balance of trade in Bangladesh's favor.⁹ The USA is one of the largest export markets for Bangladesh consisting of basically five products i.e. knitwear, woven garments, home textiles, shrimp and fish, and headgear which account for 98 per cent.



⁸ U.S. Secretary of Navy Ray Mabus paid a 'silent' visit to Bangladesh to "deepen the bilateral security relationship" and establish a strategic presence in the Bay of Bengal

⁹ US Census Bureau, 2012 <http://www.census.gov/foreign-trade/statistics/product/enduse/imports/c5380.html> 10 U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 (data for 2010 are from January to August).

The U.S. Ambassador in Bangladesh Dan Mozena has been consistently upbeat in his remarks about Bangladesh which is emerging as an economically vibrant country where business people have been innovative and imaginative in pushing the economic growth consistently above 6% through decades. Today, 60% of Bangladesh's economy is connected with the global economy. It is also a good market for US products as the number of middle class people with disposable incomes is rising. Bangladesh could be an integral part of the New Silk Road envisioned by the US that will connect Central Asia, Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, Nepal, Bhutan, Myanmar and China.¹⁰

Two major areas can be discerned in understanding US interests and policies towards Bangladesh: one may be called strategic and economic interests on 'hard issues' like security, trade and commerce, and the other political on 'soft issues' that includes human rights, governance especially corruption, political violence, religious extremism, and continuing conflict on modalities of democratic transition. As a partner in development and strategic ally, the above-mentioned destabilizing factors come seriously on the "rudder" of US foreign policy and security agencies and actors. The United States has been one of Bangladesh's largest foreign investors over the past five years. During that period, U.S. companies have invested a total of US\$522 million, representing about 13% of the country's total stock of foreign direct investment (FDI). However, the U.S. share of FDI in Bangladesh witnesses a declining trend since 2006.¹¹

US FDI Flows to Bangladesh (US\$ million)

Year	Total FDI in Bangladesh	US FDI Inflow	%Total FDI
2011	\$800.00	\$85.0	10.6%
2010	\$806.00	\$90.0	11.16%
2009	\$700.20	\$42.9	6.1%
2008	\$1,086.30	\$40.9	3.8%
2007	\$666.40	\$120.4	18.1%
2006	\$792.50	\$175.7	22.2%
2005	\$ 845.30	\$141.8	16.8%
Total	\$5696.70	\$696.7	12.22%

Source: Compiled from FDI Survey Report, Bangladesh Bank

¹⁰ Dan W. Mozena, "Bangladesh as the hub of New Silk Road" Interview, Dhaka Courier, August 31, 2012; Also, "The New Silk Road and Regional Economic Integration", Remarks by Robert O. Blake, Jr. Assistant Secretary of State, Bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs, Turkic American Convention, Washington, DC March 13, 2013;

¹¹ Bangladesh Bank, FDI Survey Report, various years

U.S. investments in Bangladesh have focused mainly on the energy and power sectors (79%), the financial sector (insurance, banks, and varied services), along with some in manufacturing. By far, the largest and most important U.S. investor in Bangladesh is Chevron, which has operated three gas fields—Bibiyana, Molvibazar, and Jalalabad—in the Sylhet region for a number of years. Chevron’s development of gas fields has increased steadily, and the company now supplies approximately 50% of Bangladesh gas¹². Another US company Conoco-Philips is also in the process of being engaged in gas exploration in the Bay. But bureaucratic inefficiency, lack of effective decision-making and overall political uncertainty inhibit desirable level of U.S. investment in Bangladesh.

U.S. economic/commercial relations have reached “a critical point” over workers’ rights and safety standards in factories. The USA suspended the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) facility to Bangladesh into the US market following series of accidents especially the Rana Plaza collapse that left at least 1,150 workers dead in June this year. Another issue which is not related to GSP is the US’s long time interest in signing a broad framework agreement for dealing with bilateral trade and investment. The United States was also urging Bangladesh governments in the past five years to conclude a Trade and Investment Cooperation Framework Agreement (TICFA) that it believed would create a sound structure for regular high-level economic dialogue and facilitate greater trade and investment opportunities. The myopic Awami League government is still vacillating and the Agreement is yet to be signed by the two parties.

Security Cooperation in the Bay

The dynamics of geo-politics drive partnerships in security and economics. No wonder, US-Bangladesh bilateral security cooperation is driven by the perceived convergence of geopolitical interests and economic benefits. The Bay of Bengal, the largest bay in the world forms the northeastern part of the Indian Ocean. It is bordered mostly by India and Sri Lanka to the west, Bangladesh to the north and Myanmar and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands to the east. The principal trade routes for large tankers en route from the Persian Gulf to the Strait of Malacca pass south of the Bay of Bengal.¹³

¹² Chevron Bangladesh, Highlights of Operation

¹³ Encyclopedia Britannica, Bay of Bengal



Bangladesh has a coastline of 220 nautical miles. Bangladesh shares maritime boundary with India and Myanmar in the Bay of Bengal. The maritime boundary disputes with Myanmar has been resolved by the International Tribunal for Law of the Sea (ITLOS) judgment on March 14, 2012 in which Bangladesh and Myanmar were awarded 111,631 and 171,832 square kilometers respectively. However, disputes with India remain unresolved. Bangladesh has consistently argued that India should give due consideration to the concave nature of its coast and rejected the equidistance approach. There were several rounds of talks between the two countries and attempts were also made through diplomatic channels. In 2009, Bangladesh approached the ITLOS for arbitration and the decision is expected in 2014

In 838,600 square mile area of the Bay, security threats of the littoral states including Bangladesh range from disputes over exclusive economic zones to terrorism, piracy, poaching, over-fishing, and trafficking of humans, arms, and narcotics. US security ties with Bangladesh get salience in this context. US realized that Bangladesh adjoined by the Bay in the Indian Ocean should not be totally under either the Indian sphere of influence or that of China. In fact, Washington also wants a stable Bangladesh, as any power vacuum in this 'fragile'¹⁴ state created by political and economic chaos resulting in upsetting the status quo is not in US interest. Therefore, US security assistance program

¹⁴ Bangladesh is in the list of 'fragile' states that "lack the ability to develop mutually constructive relations with society and often have a weak capacity to carry out basic governance functions", OECD, *Fragile States*: 2013

can have tremendous impact in supporting states like Bangladesh trying to build their security capacity. No doubt, in an interconnected world, terrorists, pirates, traffickers, and other transnational actors can exploit the weakness of states to cause mayhem and instability. Andrew J. Shapiro, US Assistant Secretary of State said this in very clear terms, "Our assistance is helping states like Bangladesh better control their borders and their coastlines...and better deal with natural disasters and transnational threats ...through our training initiatives and exchanges we are helping professionalize national military forces to ensure they can better protect their public, while respecting human rights".¹⁵

In fact, US maintain a positive perception of Bangladesh to become a key player in maintaining security in Bay of Bengal. As one strategic analyst points out, "While US relations with India "may not progress as quickly as desired and those with Pakistan and Afghanistan are "in tatters," the United States needs to forge deeper strategic relationship with the "marginal states, like Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Myanmar"¹⁶. "Such states," according to Doug Lieb in the Harvard International Review, "are often overlooked in a structural realist world view that privileges the study of larger countries."¹⁷ In broader perspective, therefore, three clear interests bind Bangladesh and the United States in the Bay: First, the Indian Ocean is the central highway for international commerce particularly between the oil-rich Gulf States and an economically dynamic East Asia, and it in this context, Bangladesh shares interest with the US and other littoral states for the safety and security of the sea-route. In fact Bangladesh's 90 percent goods pass through this route from its two ports: Chittagong and Mongla; Second, Bangladesh's urgency to have access, explore and harness hydro-carbon resources and marine fisheries within its rightful zone for national development; and Third, (iii) China-India strategic competition that has significant implications for Bangladesh's security and continued development

Connectivity, Energy and Economic Activity

While US interest to maintain the Indian Ocean as a secure highway for international commerce remains paramount in her global strategy, the harbors

¹⁵ Andrew J. Shapiro, US Assistant Secretary of Political-Military Affairs Andrew J. Shapiro who led the American delegation to Bangladesh in the first ever Security Dialogue between the two countries in Dhaka on April 19, 2012

¹⁶ Nilanthi Samaranayake, The Long Littoral Project: Bay of Bengal, CNA Analysis and Solutions, September, 2012

¹⁷ Doug Lieb, " The Limits of Neo-realism: marginal states and International Relations Theory, Harvard International Review, July 2005

on the eastern zone of the Ocean are fast transforming the economic geography of Asia. This has recently been pointed out by the Economist Magazine¹⁸ in a feature that highlighted how India was building a large new terminal beside the old harbor in Sittwe (Akyab) as a joint project between India and Myanmar. Taking advantage of the port's site at the mouth of the river Kaladan, which empties into the Bay of Bengal, India hopes to open its own landlocked and impoverished north-eastern states. But that is only one of many ambitious ventures underway along the eastern half of the Bay of Bengal. In fact, booming Asian economies have long since outgrown their ports. Sprawling Kolkata, for instance, the oldest colonial port on the Bay of Bengal, has been unable to take in bigger modern vessels for years. It lies 144 miles inland up the river Hooghly, which has gradually silted up. Local and national governments have approved the construction of a new deepwater port on Sagar island at the mouth of the Hooghly at a cost of 80 billion rupees (\$1.5 billion).¹⁹ Bangladesh's Chittagong, the biggest port on this side of the bay, faced with huge bottlenecks, started its modernization process with hopes of further growth on the site of a vast new deepwater container terminal to its south.



Myanmar's opening, however, overshadows the rest. Its new government, keen for foreign inflows to help rebuild the economy, has been approving projects that sat idle for years. Sittwe is one, but it looks small compared with the Dawei project on Myanmar's Tenasserim coast. This is a Thai-aided deepwater port that includes an industrial zone and highways to connect it

¹⁸ The Bay of Bengal: New bay dawning, , The Economist, April 27, 2013

¹⁹ The Economist, New Bay Dawning

with distant Bangkok, estimated to cost \$8.5 billion. The Chinese are exploring ways round their own Malacca-strait dilemma. They have been building new oil and gas pipelines across the whole of Myanmar starting from a new port-terminal at Kyaukphyu, near Sittwe. The lines run through Mandalay to Ruili on the border and beyond to Kunming, the capital of Yunnan province. In commercial terms, the trans-shipment terminals of Malaysia and Singapore could lose out. But Sukh Deo Muni of Singapore's Institute of South Asian Studies, reckons they "would not necessarily suffer, as the new connectivity will generate more economic activity".²⁰

China-India Rivalry

As for the strategic rivalry between China and India, there are divergent opinions. S.D. Muni argues that China's activities in the Bay of Bengal are purely "defensive". But Indians versed in the "string of pearls" theory, which sees Chinese-built ports encircling India, are not be much comforted. They argue that China's economic and security interests have resulted in a greater Chinese presence in the Indian Ocean region, much to the concern of India. China has cultivated economic relationships with littoral countries of the Bay through infrastructure projects such as port development, power plant construction, and railway and road building. Indian strategic planners worry that Chinese influence in these Indian Ocean outposts could turn them into military bases that would enable China to "encircle" India. However, a single-minded focus on these sites as likely nodes of Chinese influence does not capture the entire story, because the rationale behind these developments is more economic than strategic. Beijing is trying to connect its western provinces to the global economy by constructing lines of communication south to the Bay of Bengal. That said, there are strategic concerns at work as well.²¹

India is undertaking a major modernization of its navy with increasing bilateral and multilateral naval ties in the Bay of Bengal. Partly in response to China and partly as a power rising on the world stage, India has begun upgrading its tri-service Andaman and Nicobar (A&N) Command, allocating greater resources to the Eastern Naval Command (located along India's Bay of Bengal coast), and increasing navy-to-navy ties through forums such as the Indian Ocean Naval Symposium and the MILAN exercise.²² The strongest

²⁰ S.D. Muni, *India and the Security of Asia*, ISAS, National University of Singapore, 2012

²¹ Michael J. Green and Andrew Shearer, *Defining U.S. Indian Ocean Strategy*, *The Washington Quarterly*, Spring 2012

²² David Brewster, 'An Indian Sphere of Influence in the Indian Ocean?' *Security Challenges* 6, No. 3 (Spring 2010); Indian Ocean Naval Symposium, http://indiannavy.nic.in/ions/welcome_to_ions_website_new.htm

manifestation of Sino-Indian rivalry in the Bay of Bengal has been in Myanmar. This is due to the confluence of both countries' domestic and strategic interests in a neighbor that both Beijing and New Delhi want as a friend: a political friend as well as a neighbor that can provide them with access to the Bay of Bengal (from Yunnan province in China and from India's northeastern states). While strategic concerns still animate both China and India, both countries are actually pursuing the same objective—access through Myanmar so that their landlocked underdeveloped areas can develop economically. Finally, China has already established several footholds in the Indian Ocean region (the so-called “string of pearls” strategy) which India cannot roll back. While Chinese involvement in ports such as Sittwe in Myanmar and Hambantota in Sri Lanka do not seem to have for primary purpose an encirclement of India but rather ensuring China has the ability to secure its own energy supply lines, India feels evident discomfort with China's growing footprint so close to its shores, in its “backyard”.²³

U.S. Cooperating with Bangladesh Navy

The Bay is the life line for Bangladesh. It is important both for security as well commerce. As the naval arm of Bangladesh Armed Forces, Bangladesh Navy is entrusted to safeguard “the sovereignty over the internal waters & territorial sea, and sovereign rights over the Contiguous Zone, Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) and Continental Shelf of Bangladesh” While in reality, Bangladesh navy's role is mainly coastal patrolling, it is implementing an ambitious procurement and expansion program to ensure the security of Bangladesh's maritime boundary which includes the country's vast exclusive economic zone, deep sea oil, gas and mineral reserves, and vital shipping lanes in the Bay of Bengal. The Bangladesh Navy is undergoing major transformation since last decade. The government has approved a 10-year perspective plan and as part of this the navy is upgrading the existing fleet with capability to undertake emerging roles and maintain interoperability with friendly navies.²⁴

Defending Sea Routes

The current force structure of the Bangladesh Navy comprises a variety of frigates and corvettes, fast attack boats and patrol vessels, and logistic support vessels. It recently acquired two Castle-class offshore patrol vessels and a survey ship from the United Kingdom. Bangladesh has also contracted two

²³ Howard Chua-Eoan, “Beyond Pirates: On the High Seas, an Indian-China Rivalry,” *Time*, April 8, 2009,

²⁴ Interview with Bangladesh Navy Chief, 2012

053H2 frigates at a cost of Tk 6.44 billion from China.²⁵ The US has recently provided a Coast Guard cutter ship and 16 high speed boats to augment Bangladesh Navy and Coast Guard capability to protect the EEZ. The 'Jarvis' was the fourth in its class of High Endurance Cutters which is designed to provide better sea-keeping and higher sustained transit speeds, greater endurance and range, and the ability to launch and recover small boats, as well as support aviation facilities with a flight deck for helicopters and unmanned aerial vehicles. Since first receiving Foreign Military Financing or FMF in 2005, Bangladesh has focused on building patrol boat fleets for the Coast Guard—a project that supports maritime security and disaster relief and strengthens the government's presence in isolated areas. Bangladesh has been working through a military modernization plan, which includes looking to partners for affordable defense systems, especially to supply its Special Operations Forces and disaster relief equipment. "This modernization effort provides an opportunity for U.S. to expand its security cooperation, especially through "Excess Defense Articles Program",²⁶ which makes US equipment that is surplus to their requirements available to partners.

Working with US Pacific Command

US Pacific Fleet protects and defends the collective maritime interests of the United States and its allies as well as partners in the Asia-Pacific region. With allies and partners such as Bangladesh, US Pacific Fleet enhances stability, promotes maritime security and freedom of the seas, deters aggression and when necessary, fights. "I hope my presence here helps to reinforce to you the value that I place to our relationship, the importance of this vital region and our commitment to continuing to work with Bangladesh navy for maintaining security to support peace and prosperity," said US Fleet Commander. In fact, U.S. has realized that South Asia is critical for the movement of goods and services in the world economy. "My hope is that my Pacific Fleet in Bangladesh through exercising, training and education exchange will improve the ability to conduct operations together, share information and develop relationships to address shared security concerns." "Together we can build strong military security frameworks that benefit security and economy of all," he affirmed.²⁷

²⁵ Bangladesh Navy Official Websites; and " Navy eyes sub, new frigates, The Daily Star, June 24, 2009

²⁶ Defense articles and military equipment that are no longer needed by the U.S. armed forces are eligible for transfer to foreign countries under section 516 of the Foreign Assistance Act (FAA) of 1961

²⁷ The Pacific Fleet Commander of United States Admiral Cecil D Haney on his visit to Bangladesh, January 15, 2013 said the US Navy is "eying partnership, not treaties with its Bangladesh" as part of its rebalancing strategy in the Asia Pacific region.

US Ambassador Dan Mozena played a key role in this context when he clearly brought out the need for protection of Bangladesh sea-lines as the country becomes the second largest exporter of household textiles, and possessing energy resources falling under its maritime boundaries. US 7th Fleet commander Scott H Swift in his visit to Bangladesh in 2012 remarked: "We're more interested to assist Bangladesh Army and Navy to enhance their ability to protect its maritime resources from pirates, protect country from terrorist attack and co-operate during natural disasters".²⁸

Support to Disaster and Relief Operations

The Bangladesh Navy is a professional force and has provided invaluable support to the country at the time of natural disasters like floods and cyclones. It has been estimated that nearly 53 percent of the recorded world deaths due to cyclones occurred in Bangladesh. But the Navy's capability to respond to such disasters was limited. U.S. support in this respect was very helpful to expanding its ability to respond to disasters. In 2007, the US Navy deployed two warships, 20 helicopters, 3,500 marines, Army medical teams, and US Air Force C-130 aircraft for emergency relief support, medical and emergency evacuation.²⁹ The non-traditional security challenge of natural disasters and climate change in the Bay of Bengal is important for Bangladesh to address effectively as the entire Bay region is particularly vulnerable to sudden changes in the weather – including cyclones, flash floods, and landslides – as well as to long-term shifts in climate, leading to rising sea levels and Tsunami.

He added building of 130 cyclone shelters were going and 30 of them would be coastal crisis management centers. Two of those centers would be opened in March. "The centers would be prominently manned by Bangladesh Coast Guard. There will be facilities for land transportation, boat transportation and cyclone-proof communication capabilities."³⁰ Mozena further said the commander came to Bangladesh as 'part of our outreach campaign to further bolster and support the military-to-military engagement between the US and Bangladesh'. Admiral Haney said they were working with Bangladesh solely on 'partnership built upon years of working together.'³¹

²⁸ U.S. 7th Fleet Commander Scott H. Swift in his three-day visit to Bangladesh on April 7, 2013

²⁹ US PACOM press release <http://www.pacom.mil/news/news/2007-bangladesh-pr009p.shtml>

³⁰ Dan Mozena's Remarks during his visit on January 15, 2003

³¹ Dan Mozena's Remarks

Improving Coast Guard

Piracy and armed robbery in Bangladesh occur in the port area and mariners remain concerned about the security situation. This has forced global insurance companies to increase risk premiums for ships calling at ports in Bangladesh particularly at the port of Chittagong. It is important to note that Chittagong port is the most important maritime hub of Bangladesh and handles nearly 90 percent of its trade. At another level, the Bangladeshi fishermen have been victims of pirates who kidnap them for ransom. For instance, in August 2012, Bangladesh launched a joint air and naval operation against pirates in the Bay of Bengal in an effort to rescue 50 fishermen who had been kidnapped close to the Sundarbans, the world's largest mangrove forest where pirates have sanctuaries in the dense forest. According to the Bangladesh Navy, four ships, two helicopters from the Air Force and high-speed boats took part in the operations in the Sundarbans and its surrounding area.

Citing successes of Bangladesh and US maritime partnership, Mozena said the Coast Guard improved their capabilities to respond to robbery, which was why the incidence of robbery has declined 70 percent on Chittagong coast. The military to military partnership is especially strong and productive. "Working together, America and Bangladesh have strengthened Bangladesh's ability to secure its maritime borders from piracy, terrorism, trafficking of people, drugs, and arms ... Bangladesh can now better protect its fish and other resources in the Bay of Bengal.³² This partnership has helped Bangladesh create a Navy Seals like capacity, called SWADS that is most impressive. Thanks to the enhance capabilities of the Bangladesh Coast Guard and Navy, robberies of ships at anchorage in Chittagong have fallen by nearly 75% and insurance rates have dropped, too. Our engagement with the Bangladesh Navy and Coast Guard has included the transfer of dozens of high speed, high performance boats.³³ Illegal migration is rampant in Bangladesh waters due to a number of factors including the exodus of the 'stateless Rohingya' from Myanmar and the prevailing social-economic conditions in Bangladesh. The illegal migration is carried out by gangs and cartels who have established networks across the country. In October 2012, the Bangladesh Navy, Bangladesh Coast Guard and Border Guard of Bangladesh had prevented 3200 Rohingya people, who were trying to cross the border.³⁴

³² SWADS a Special Warfare Diving & Salvage Force of Bangladesh Navy capable of undertaking missions for anti-piracy, counterterrorism and other criminal activities in the sea organized along the lines of US Seals.

³³ Dan Mozena's Statement

³⁴ Vijay Sakhuja, "Bangladesh Navy: Building Multidimensional Capabilities" South Asia Defense and Strategic Review, February-March Issue, 2013

Conclusion: Looking Forward

Unmistakably, America is our friend and vital to our prosperity and security in the future. Bangladesh today is connected to outside world as never before. Ninety percent of the country's economy is linked globally, and our people spread across the world. At a time when the Asia-Pacific region is building a new security and economic architecture, Bangladesh foreign policy must adapt to new realities and build web of partnerships and engagements with nations that matter. But a nation can only globalize from its position of strength – the strength of its democratic institutions, quality of leadership, and creative potential of the people.³⁵ As Bangladesh moves forward, it therefore, needs to focus on the steps to be taken at home– improve democratic credential, overcome partisan divisions, ensure safety in work places, and strengthen governance. The nation's most potent asset is the human power that needs to be infused with character and skills on which will depend the success of our external engagements. It is in this context, Bangladesh has much to gain from her partnership with the United States.

Bangladesh and the United States have been friends since 1972. Today, the stakes are greater as they become new partners in a very critical time of change. A durable and robust US-Bangladesh relationship can only emerge from a clear understanding of economic, political and mutual security needs and interests. Bangladesh today stands at an important crossroads in its history. The United States must not only provide security assistance to Bangladesh to defend its borders and coastlines, she also has to support the country to fight corruption, help develop fair and open election processes for democratic transition, as well as deter the spread of religious or ethnic extremism by an inclusive process. In fact, the strategic engagement of the United States in Bangladesh must aim to enhance cooperation for stability, peace and development - not acting alone but in concert with other major powers reinforced by strategic trust, and reflected in concrete and constructive policies and actions.

³⁵ Susan J. Tolchin, *The Angry American – How Voter Rage is Changing the Nation* (1996, 2nd ed. 1998),

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Human Security in South Asia: Vision 2025

*ANM Muniruzzaman**

Abstract

South Asia is one of the most vulnerable regions in the world. Nontraditional security challenges like looming food and water crises, lack of health security, high rate of poverty, climate refugees and so on are creating severe impacts on human security as well as both domestic and regional stability in the region. One of the most serious challenges for South Asia is climate change. The region is losing both land and agricultural areas due to severe impacts of climate change. South Asians are facing looming water crisis as well due to climate change. The people of South Asia also lack health security due to increasing level of poverty. However, South Asia has significant potentialities for broader cooperation and development in future. SAARC as an organization has a major role to play. SAARC should have a clear vision for future so that it can set a common stage of hopes and aspirations of the people of South Asia by combating all the threats to human security.

Introduction

Water scarcity, lack of food security, energy crisis, population explosion, climate change, volatile economic growth, rich-poor gap, irregular urbanization etc are major features in South Asia. Especially, climate change is a major threat to South Asian countries and particularly in recent years. The poorest people of the region are at most risk due to climate change. A large portion of the low lying countries of South Asia can be submerged as a consequence of climate change and it may leave countless people as climate refugees. Specially, the coastal areas of the region are at risk of flooding from sea level rise, cyclones and other environmental hazards.¹ As a result, South

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¹ G. M. Mourtoza, "South Asia Faces Common Climate Threat", October 09, 2009, at <<http://www.climatemediapartnership.org/reporting/stories/south-asia-faces-common-climate-threat/>> (accessed September 22, 2013).

Asians are most vulnerable in the world due to the worst scenario of human security. In spite of these troubles, South Asia has significant potentialities for broader cooperation and development in future. As regional cooperation and regional integration are taking place in many parts of the developing world, South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) as a regional organization of South Asia may bring about some prospects through adherence of a comprehensive vision of human security in the region.

Conceptual Framework

Human Security

Since the 1990s, there has been a dramatic shift in the development of the security studies.² The human security approach stresses that all people should have the right to their most essential needs such as access to food, shelter, education, health care as well as earning their own livelihood.

According to the final report of the Commission on Human Security (CHS), human security means “Protecting fundamental freedoms that are the essence of life”.³

The 1994 UNDP Human Development Report refers to human security as:

Human security means, first, safety from such chronic threats as hunger, disease and repression. And second, it means protection from sudden and hurtful disruptions in the patterns of daily life whether in homes, in jobs or in communities.⁴

As human security suggests that all human beings have the right to freedom and right to basic human needs irrespective of race, color, religion and ethnicity; the notion is mostly applicable to ensure a country's food security, health security, water security and environmental security as well.

Water Security

Water security which falls under the concept of nontraditional security⁵ is defined as availability of required amount of water at the right time and right

² “Dominant Theories of Security”, at <<http://cyberschoolbus.un.org/dnp/sub1.asp?ipage=sectheories>> (accessed November 25, 2012).

³ “Human Security in Theory and Practices, Application of the Human Security Concept and the United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security”, 2009, at <http://hdr.undp.org/en/media/HS_Handbook_2009.pdf> (accessed December 12, 2012).

⁴ See “Edward Newman, “Critical Human Security Studies”, *Review of International Studies* (36), 2010, at <[http://demo.sheruyasodha.com.np/uploads/Review_of_International_36_\[2010\]_77-94.pdf](http://demo.sheruyasodha.com.np/uploads/Review_of_International_36_[2010]_77-94.pdf)> (accessed April 05, 2012).

⁵ “Water Security & the Global Water Agenda”, 2013, at <http://www.unwater.org/downloads/watersecurity_analyticalbrief.pdf> (accessed October 07, 2013).

place for human and environmental use.⁶ It signifies the capacity of a population to safeguard sustainable access to adequate quantities of acceptable quality water for sustaining livelihoods, human well-being, and socio-economic development, for ensuring protection against water-borne pollution, and water-related disasters, as well as for preserving ecosystems in a climate of peace and political stability.⁷ Water scarcity induces competition for water between users, and even among countries and regions for sharing a common resource.⁸

The United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) defines water security:

Water security represents a unifying element supplying humanity with drinking water, hygiene and sanitation, food and fish, industrial resources, energy, transportation and natural amenities, all dependent upon maintaining ecosystem, health and productivity.⁹

Food Security

The concept of food security developed over time and many organizations have come up with definitions from various perspectives. Food security was first officially defined in 1974 by the World Food Summit (WFS). It defines:

Availability at all times of adequate world food supplies of basic foodstuffs to sustain a steady expansion of food consumption and to offset fluctuations in production and prices.¹⁰

In 1983, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) expanded its concept with the following definition:

Food Security ensures that all people at all times have both physical and economic access to the basic food that they need.¹¹

⁶ Maryam Mastoor, "Environmental Degradation: Focus on Water Scarcity", *Regional Studies*, Vol. XXVII, No. 1, at <http://www.academia.edu/850171/Water_Scarcity_in_South_Asia> (accessed October 23, 2013)

⁷ "Water Security and the Global Water Agenda: A UN Water Analytical Brief", *ESCAP*, 2013, at <http://www.unwater.org/downloads/watersecurity_analyticalbrief.pdf> (accessed October 16, 2013).

⁸ "Coping with Water Scarcity: Challenge of the Twenty-first Century", at <<http://www.fao.org/nr/water/docs/escarcity.pdf>> (accessed September 12, 2013).

⁹ "Defining Water Security", December 17, 2011, at <<http://watersecurity.wordpress.com/2011/12/17/defining-water-security/>> (accessed October 05, 2013).

¹⁰ See <<http://www.fao.org/docrep/005/y4671e/y4671e06.htm#TopOfPage>> (accessed December 09, 2012)

¹¹ Ibid

In 1996, the World Food Summit (WFS) adopted a more complex definition:

Food security, at the individual, household, national, regional and global levels is achieved when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life.¹²

The World Health Organization (WHO) introduces three pillars of food security like food availability, food access, and food use.

Health Security

The World Health Organization uses the concept of 'global health security'. There is no universally agreed definition of health security, although the concept is becoming accepted in public health literature and practice.¹³ The concept came into limelight during the 1990s and early 2000s. Along with threats from biological weapons, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) considered HIV/AIDS as a threat to international peace and security. Since then, the increasing threats of diseases directly connected public health with the concept of human security.¹⁴

The concepts of both human security and public health are deeply intertwined. Health security is one of the preconditions of human security.¹⁵ It means guarantee of a minimum protection from diseases and unhealthy lifestyles. Due to malnutrition and insufficient access to health services, clean water and other basic necessities, usually poor people are threatened from health insecurity.¹⁶

Environmental Security

There is no clear definition of environmental security. The United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) and the World Health Organization (WHO) have not clearly defined environmental security.¹⁷ North Atlantic Treaty

¹² Ibid.

¹³ "Health Security as a Public Health Concept: a Critical Analysis", June 18, 2008, at <<http://heapol.oxfordjournals.org/content/23/6/369.full>> (accessed October 15, 2013).

¹⁴ See <<http://www.globalhealthurope.org/index.php/resources/glossary/54-more-pages/97-more-on-human-security-and-health>> (accessed October 04, 2013).

¹⁵ See <http://www.paho.org/hq/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=7025&Itemid=> (accessed October 05, 2013).

¹⁶ "Health Security Law and Legal Definition", at <<http://definitions.uslegal.com/h/health-security/>> (accessed October 12, 2013).

¹⁷ "Environmental Security Study", at <<http://www.millennium-project.org/millennium/es-2def.htm>> (accessed October 14, 2013).

Organization (NATO) has addressed environmental security challenges caused by extreme weather conditions, depletion of natural resources, pollution and so on.¹⁸ For example, in April 2010, a NATO Science workshop in Moscow addressed environmental security and eco-terrorism.¹⁹

Environmental security means public safety from environmental dangers caused by natural or human acts, restoration of environment and natural resources. Threats to environmental security indicate degradation of both local and global ecosystems.²⁰ It also includes preventing or responding to environmentally caused conflicts, and protecting environment due to its inherent value.²¹

The Significance of Human Security in South Asia

Nontraditional security has been most important in the world instead of traditional concepts of security e.g. protection of national security from conflict and violence. Due to natural and environmental disasters caused by climate change, looming food and water crises, lack of health security, high rate of poverty and emergence of displaced persons, South Asia is now one of the most vulnerable regions in the world.²² All of these nontraditional security challenges are creating severe impacts on human security as well as both domestic and regional stability in the region.²³ These issues awakened South Asia's leaders to pay more attention on the seriousness of nontraditional security challenges.²⁴

The present scenario of human security in South Asia is raising alarming threats to regional security because, no South Asian country except Sri Lanka ranks in the top hundred countries in the United Nations Development

¹⁸ See <http://www.nato.int/cps/ar/natolive/topics_49216.htm> (accessed October 07, 2013).

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Environmental Security Study, *op.cit.*

²¹ See <<http://nesastrategist.wordpress.com/2013/04/22/what-is-environmental-security/>> (accessed October 12, 2013).

²² "What is Environmental Security?", at <http://www.envirosecurity.org/activities/What_is_Environmental_Security.pdf>(accessed October 05, 2013)

²³ "South Asia Regional Security 2025: From Idea to Reality?", *The National Bureau of Asian Research*, November 8, 2011, India, November 8, 2011, at <http://www.nbr.org/downloads/pdfs/PSA/SRS_Phase3_BriefingBook.pdf> (accessed October 07, 2013).

²⁴ Mahin Karim, "The Future of South Asian Security: Prospects for a Nontraditional Regional Security Architecture", *The National Bureau of Asian Research*, April 2013 at <http://www.nbr.org/downloads/pdfs/PSA/NTS_projectreport_April2013.pdf> (accessed October 07, 2013).

Program's (UNDP) Human Development Index.²⁵ The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has identified South Asia as the most susceptible region in the world due to climate change. However, the international community also recognizes Bangladesh as most vulnerable due to hydro-geological and socio-economic factors e.g. flat deltaic topography with low elevation, climate variability, high population density, poverty and so on.²⁶

Scenario of Human Security in South Asia

Lack of Water Security

South Asia is one of the most populous sub regions in Asia and the Pacific with relatively low agricultural water productivity due to low per capita water storage capacity and increased use of groundwater,²⁷ faster industrialization,²⁸ as well as overexploitation and pollution, poor management and so on.²⁹ One billion people in the region do not use improved sanitation facilities while facing daunting challenge to drinking water simultaneously.³⁰ According to new report of the United Nations, about half of the region's 1.5 billion people have lack access to pure water. The United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) also cites that the poorest people in the region have only access to less than 5 percent of the planet's freshwater resources.³¹ A new Asia Society Leadership Group also warns that decreased access to a safe, stable water supply in Asia will have a profound impact on security throughout the region.³²

²⁵ "Peace and Human Security in South Asia: Challenges and Solutions", May 23, 2013, at <<http://www.whiteband.org/en/news/irfan-mufti-peace-human-security-south-asia>> (accessed October 07, 2013).

²⁶ "Water Security: The Threat Bangladesh is facing", at <<http://ronyasia.blogspot.com/2011/04/water-security-threat-bangladesh-is.html>> (accessed October 13, 2013)

²⁷ "Asian Water Development Outlook 2013: Measuring Water Security in Asia and the Pacific", *Asia-Pacific Water Forum*, 2013, at <<http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/asian-water-development-outlook-2013.pdf>> (accessed October 05, 2013).

²⁸ *Mahbub ul Haq Human Development Center*, "Human Development in South Asia 2013", June 24, 2013, at <<http://www.mhhdc.org/reports/HDSA-2013.pdf>> (accessed October 22, 2013).

²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰ "One Billion in South Asia Lack Access to Potable Water", August 08, 2012, at <<http://www.nation.com.pk/pakistan-news-newspaper-daily-english-online/islamabad/08-Aug-2012/one-billion-in-s-asia-lack-access-to-potable-water>> (accessed: October 10, 2013).

³¹ "Hundreds of Millions in South Asia Face Growing Water Stress", *UN Report Warns*, at <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=29797&Cr=Water&Cr1=climate+change#.UIZEiyd_4wo>, February 06, 2009, (accessed October 10, 2013)

³² *Leadership Group on Water Security in Asia*, "Asia's Next Challenge: Securing the Region's Water Future", 2009, at <<http://asiasociety.org/policy/environment/water-and-food-security/asias-next-challenge-securing-regions-water-future>> (accessed September 17, 2013).

According to the Asian Development Bank (ADB) report, since 1950, per capita water availability in the region has decreased by 70 percent.³³

Map: Global Physical and Economic Water Scarcity



Source: World Water Assessment Program (WWAP), March 2012.³⁴

The map shows that most of the South Asian countries fall under either physical water scarcity or economic water scarcity. The Himalayan River Basins are affecting internal and cross-boundary development and security in the region.³⁵ In addition, due to diversion of rivers flow, hundreds of millions of South Asians are facing water stress. For example, major water and energy conflicts in South Asia exist between Indo-Pak, Indo-Bangladesh, and Indo-Nepal whereas minor water crises do exist between Indo-China, Pakistan and Afghanistan as well.³⁶

Climatic variability has been a source of water stress in India.³⁷ Even, Kashmir also lacks water despite having many rivers and few people.³⁸ India

³³ Nick Langton and Sagar Prasai, "Will Conflicts over Water Scarcity Shape South Asia's Future?", March 23, 2012, at <http://csis.org/files/publication/120323_WadhvaniChair_Issue_Perspective.pdf> (accessed September 22, 2013).

³⁴ See <<http://www.un.org/waterforlifedecade/scarcity.shtml>> (accessed October 10, 2013).

³⁵ Åshild Kolås, "Water Scarcity in Bangladesh and South Asia: Dynamics of Conflict and Cooperation", August 2011 - Dec 2012, at <<http://www.prio.no/Projects/Project/?x=969>> (accessed October 17, 2013).

³⁶ Zaheerul Hassan, "Way Forward to South Asian Water Crisis", *Journal of South Asian Studies*, Vol.01, 2013.

³⁷ *Report of Leadership Group on Water Security in Asia*, "Asia's Next Challenge: Securing the Region's Water Future", April 2009, at <<http://asiasociety.org/files/pdf/WaterSecurityReport.pdf>> (accessed October 04, 2013).

³⁸ "South Asia's Water: Unquenchable Thirst", November 19, 2011, at <<http://www.economist.com/node/21538687>> (accessed September 26, 2013)

is facing acute shortage in its groundwater resources that is hitting agricultural productivity of the country.³⁹ Environmental analysts say that at least 100,000 Indian villages are under severe water shortages.⁴⁰ Pakistan is already a water-strained country. In Pakistan, per capita water availability dropped from 5000 cubic meters per annum in 1951 to 1100 cubic meters per annum in 2006. With increasing population of 173 million in 2010, the per capita availability of fresh water was fallen closer to 1000 cubic meters that was declared as 'water scarce'. It is also warned that this figure may decrease almost 700 cubic meters per capita when the population figures are likely to cross 221 million by 2025.⁴¹ Every 35 to 40 years, Afghanistan suffers from droughts.⁴² Similarly, Bangladesh in particular is heavily dependant on water for human consumption, crop irrigation, transportation, and conservation of biodiversity. Several factors such as rapid population growth, gap between demand and supply, over exploitation, water pollution, random contamination of surface and ground water, absence of comprehensive water sharing with neighboring countries and mismanagement in preserving rain water have made the country highly vulnerable.⁴³ Nepal also faces severe water crisis due to urban sprawl.⁴⁴ The country also experiences severe impacts of climate change due to less rainfall during monsoon season as well as drought in winter season.⁴⁵

The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) in a report stated that over 26 cubic meters of groundwater had disappeared from aquifers in areas of Haryana, Punjab, Rajasthan and New Delhi between 2002 and 2008.⁴⁶

³⁹ Maryam Mastoor, "Environmental Degradation: Focus on Water Scarcity in South Asia", Vol. XXVII, Winter 2008-2009, No 1, at <http://www.academia.edu/850171/Water_Scarcity_in_South_Asia> (accessed October 05, 2013).

⁴⁰ "India on Brink of Water Crisis, World: South Asia", at <<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south-asia/185791.stm>> (accessed October 10, 2013).

⁴¹ Wilson John, "Water Security in South Asia: Issues and Policy Recommendations", *ORF Issue Brief*, February 2011, at <http://www.observerindia.com/cms/sites/orfonline/modules/issuebrief/attachments/water_1297246681981.pdf> (accessed September 26, 2013).

⁴² Ehsan Pasha, "The Water Crisis", January 2013, at <<http://www.saglobalaffairs.com/cover-stories/1365-the-water-crisis.html>> (accessed September 25, 2013).

⁴³ Åshild Kolås, August 2012, *op.cit.*

⁴⁴ Prasad Ramesh, "The Dead Rivers of Kathmandu", May 31, 2011, at <<https://www.chinadialogue.net/article/show/single/en/4321-The-dead-rivers-of-Kathmandu>> (accessed October 27, 2013)

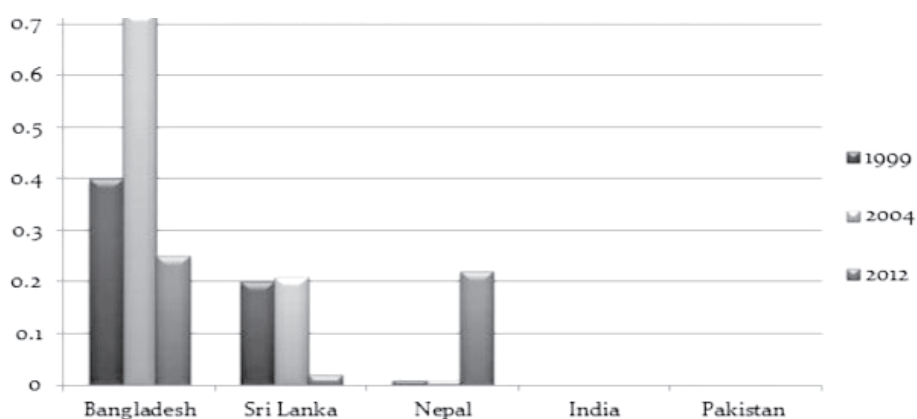
⁴⁵ "Nepal: Kathmandu Faces Worsening Water Crisis", September 24, 2009, at <<http://www.irinnews.org/report/86273/nepal-kathmandu-faces-worsening-water-crisis>> (accessed October 25, 2013).

⁴⁶ Wilson John, *op.cit.*

Lack of Food Security

The Asia-Pacific region has seen much success in this regard, whereas South Asia continues to face a grave scenario of food insecurity.⁴⁷ From 2004 to 2008, the rise of global commodity prices caused tremendous development challenges to South Asian countries. Between January 2003 and April 2008, South Asia suffered from cumulative income loss equivalent to some 9.6 percent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP). The surge in food prices created a tremendous adverse social impact in South Asia. Net food importing countries like Afghanistan, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh suffered most from due to high food price.⁴⁸

Figure: Rice Imports in Million Tons by Year



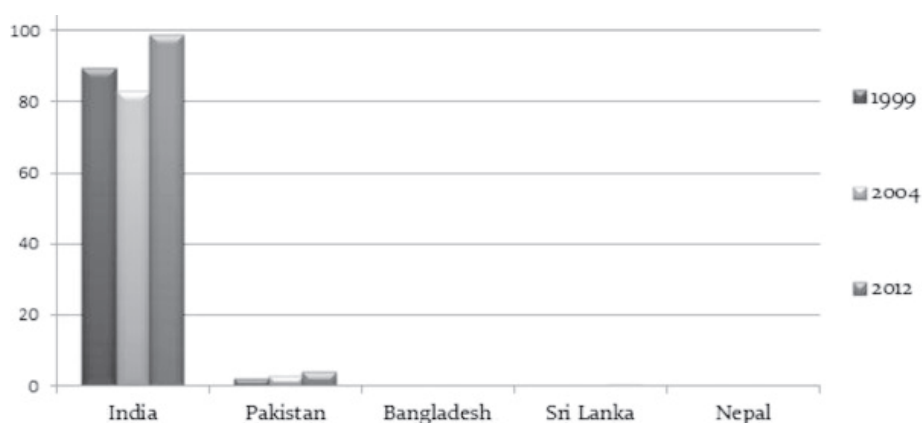
Source: <<http://www.agricultureandfoodsecurity.com/content/2/1/10>>

The table shows that except India and Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal and Sri Lanka are highly dependent on import from other countries and the biggest importers of rice in South Asia.

⁴⁷ Bangladesh - Striving for Food Security, October 2012, at <<http://www.saglobalaffairs.com/back-issues/1319-bangladesh-striving-for-food-security.html>> (accessed October 23, 2013).

⁴⁸ "Tracking Inflation in South Asia", *The Daily Star*, March 02, 2011.

Figure: Rice Exports in Million Tons by Year



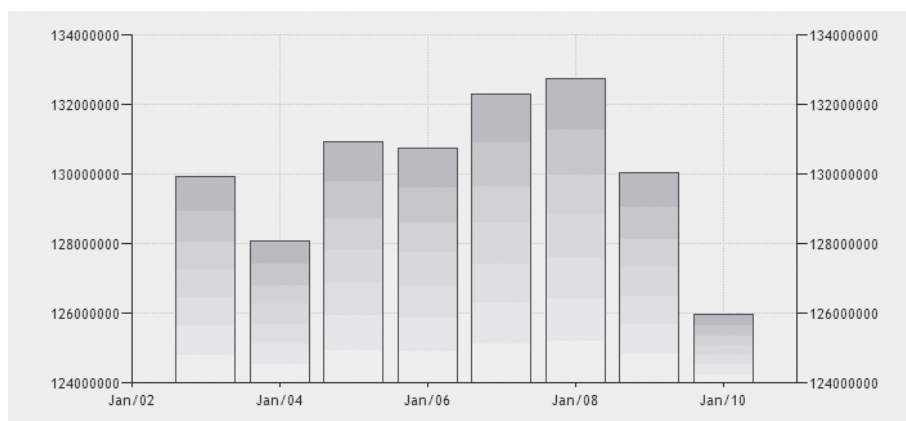
Source: <<http://www.agricultureandfoodsecurity.com/content/2/1/10>>

On the other hand, India is the major exporter of rice in South Asia in 2012. Pakistan is the only other exporting country but the volume is much lower compared to India. It also indicates that Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Nepal have no high record in rice export.

Bangladesh, Pakistan, and Nepal fall in net marketing position against large majority of households. Rural people in South Asia are net buyers of food due to more likely high food prices.⁴⁹ For example, about 80 percent and 70 percent of households in Bangladesh and Nepal are net buyers of rice, whereas 77 percent of households are net buyers of wheat in Pakistan. Food price inflation has severely increased poverty ratio that has particularly threatened the poorest of the poor.⁵⁰ Agricultural land areas are being declined in rapid scale in South Asia due to increasing level of urbanization.

⁴⁹ *The World Bank*, "Food Price Increases in South Asia: National Responses and Regional Dimension", 2010 at <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/SOUTHASIAEXT/Resources/223546-1269620455636/6907265-1287693474030/South_Asia_Regional_Food_Prices_Final.pdf> (accesses October 22, 2013)

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

Figure: Land under Cereal Production Hectares in South Asia

Source: "Land under Cereal Production in South Asia", 2010.⁵¹

Bangladesh is one of the most vulnerable countries due to continuous food shortage since 1990s. According to a report of Unnayan Onneshan, a Dhaka-based research group, if the present trend of population growth of two million people per year continues, Bangladesh will undoubtedly face far severe food shortages in the next few years reaching a critical level by 2050.⁵² It is estimated that flood destroys about 20 percent of Bangladesh's total agricultural output every year.⁵³ According to the Ministry of Agriculture, the country loses about 80,000 hectares of arable land due to droughts, salinity and floods.⁵⁴ The London-based Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) in its Global Food Security Index 2012 ranked Bangladesh as the least food secure country among the six South Asian countries. According to the index, Sri Lanka is the most food secure country in the region securing 62nd position in overall ranking with a score of 47.4 points on a scale of 100. The index placed Bangladesh at the 81st position with 34.6 points while India was ranked 66th with 45 points and Pakistan 75th with 38.5 points.⁵⁵

⁵¹ "Land under Cereal Production in South Asia", 2010 at <<http://www.tradingeconomics.com/south-asia/land-under-cereal-production-hectares-wb-data.html>> (accessed October 08, 2013).

⁵² See <<http://www.irinnews.org/Report/89920/BANGLADESH-Unemployment-food-prices-spur-growing-hunger>> (accessed 14 January, 2013).

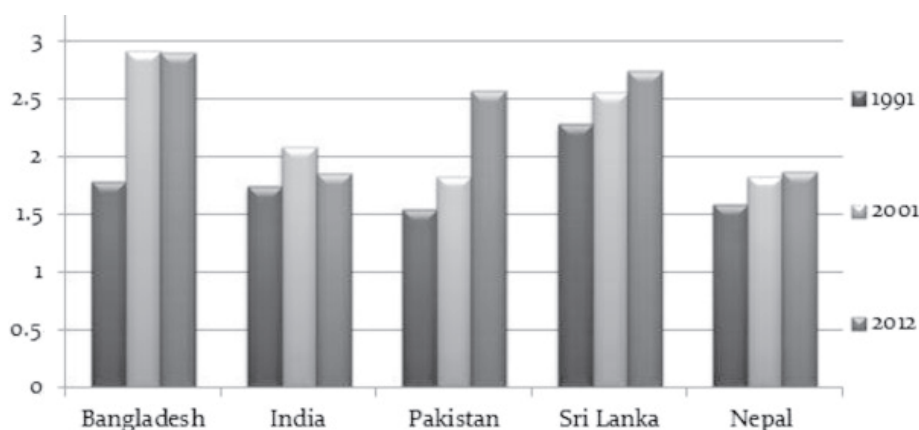
⁵³ Please visit <<http://www.scribd.com/doc/7118970/Agriculture-in-BD>> (accessed 24 December, 2012).

⁵⁴ See <<http://www.live-pr.com/en/bangladesh-agribusiness-report-q-r1049827715.htm>> (accessed 12 January, 2013).

⁵⁵ "Bangladesh Least Food Secure in South Asia: Global Food Security Under Threat: EIU", *The Daily Financial Express*, August 11 2012.

Pakistan is also facing severe food crisis. According to World Food Program (WFP), due to rise of food price at annual rate of 20 percent, large numbers of people in Pakistan run the risk of falling back into poverty. The World Bank listed Pakistan among 33 countries that put the country at risk. However, Sri Lanka is also at risk of starvation because of tightening food situation. Simultaneously, 44 percent of households in India are deficient in calorie intake.⁵⁶

Figure: Yield Production in South Asia (1991-2012)



Source: <<http://www.agricultureandfoodsecurity.com/content/2/1/10#B12>>

The table shows that Bangladesh has been the highest rice yielding nation since 1991 in South Asia. All the countries except India have shown an increasing yield since 2001 while Bangladesh has undergone a sharp decline.

Threat to Health Security

People in South Asia are at a higher risk of infectious diseases rather than from people in industrialized countries. The root causes are poverty, unhygienic living conditions, malnutrition, illiteracy, lack of clean water,⁵⁷ pollution, lack of sanitary facilities, and lack of awareness about health security. For example, only in the year 2000, over two thirds of the estimated 3.7 million children died in South Asia due to infections such as pneumonia, diarrhea, and measles.⁵⁸

⁵⁶ Syed Imran Sardar, "Food Insecurity: A View from South Asia", 2009, at <http://www.academia.edu/2333343/Food_Insecurity_A_View_from_South_Asia> (accessed October 22, 2013).

⁵⁷ "Burden of Infectious Diseases in South Asia", April 01, 2004 at <<http://www.bmj.com/content/328/7443/811>> (accessed September 26, 2013).

⁵⁸ Wilson John, "Water Security in South Asia: Issues and Policy Recommendations", ORF Issue Brief, February 2011, at <http://www.observerindia.com/cms/sites/orfonline/modules/issuebrief/attachments/water_1297246681981.pdf> (accessed September 26, 2013)

According to the report of the World Bank of 2009, South Asia has both highest percentage and largest number of undernourished children in the world. Malnutrition affects 43 percent to 46 percent of young children in India, Bangladesh and Nepal.⁵⁹ The number of malnourished people in the region as a whole rose from 283 million in 1990 to 314 million in 2005. Over 20 percent of children less than five years of age are underweight in most of the South Asian countries. Compared to 29 percent of global population, about 74 percent of South Asian population has no access to improved sanitation facilities.⁶⁰

Table: Poor Health Situation in South Asia

Indicators	Bangladesh	Bhutan	India	Maldives	Nepal	Pakistan	Sri Lanka
Population (thousands), 2009, under 5	16463	70	126114	27	3505	24121	1784
Percent of Infants with Low Birth Weight, 2005-2009	22	9	28	22	21	32	17
Percent of Under-fives (2003 - 2009) Suffering from Underweight, moderate and severe	41	14	43	26	39	31	21
Percent of Under-fives (2003 -2009) Suffering from: Wasting, moderate and severe	17	3	20	13	13	14	15
Percent of Under-fives (2003 -2009) Suffering from: Stunting, moderate and severe	43	48	48	32	49	42	17
Percent of Population using Improved Drinking-water Sources 2008	80	92	88	91	88	90	90
Percent of Population using Improved Sanitation Facilities 2008	53	65	31	98	31	45	91
Total Adult Literacy Rate (percent), 2005-2008	55	53	63	98	58	54	97

Source: <<http://www.mse.ac.in/pub/WORKING%20PAPER%2075.pdf>>

⁵⁹ Harald D. Frederiksen, "The World Water Crisis and International Security", at <<http://www.mepc.org/journal/middle-east-policy-archives/world-water-crisis-and-international-security>> (accessed October 22, 2013).

⁶⁰ Vibhuti Hate and Seth Gannon, "Public Health in South Asia", *Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS)*, at <http://csis.org/files/publication/100715_Hate_PublicHealth_SouthAsia_Web.pdf> (accessed October 05, 2013).

The table shows that all of the South Asian countries are in vulnerable situation from the percentage of malnutrition, underweight, low birth weight. The rate of improved sanitary facilities, adult literacy, and access to pure water is also very low.

Table: Under-nourished Population in South Asia
(in millions, and as proportion of total population in brackets)

Countries	1991	1996	2000	2007
Bangladesh	44.4 (38 percent)	54.2 (41 percent)	42.3 (30 percent)	41.4 (26 percent)
India	177 (20 percent)	167.1 (17 percent)	208.0 (20 percent)	224.6 (19 percent)
Maldives	0.0485 (9 percent)	0,0495 (9 percent)	0.05052 (8 percent)	0.0515 (10 percent)
Nepal	4.2 (21 percent)	4.4 (20 percent)	4.6 (18 percent)	4.7 (17 percent)
Pakistan	29.5 (25 percent)	28.6 (20 percent)	36.3 (24 percent)	42.8(25 percent)
Sri Lanka	4.8 (28 percent)	4.5 (25 percent)	3.9 (20 percent)	3.9 (20 percent)

Source: <<http://www.mse.ac.in/pub/WORKING%20PAPER%2075.pdf>>

Undernourishment is also widespread in the region because approximately 600 million South Asians live on less than US\$1.25 a day. For example, nearly 21 percent of the population is undernourished whereas more than 41 percent of children are underweight and 8 percent die before reaching the age of 5.⁶¹ Some studies also indicate that South Asia is the home of nearly two-thirds of world's malnourished children. Besides, more than 56 percent of the world's low-birth weight babies are born in South Asia.⁶² Among other South Asian countries, Bangladesh is also vulnerable because nearly half of Bangladesh's children are underweight.⁶³

Another major challenge of health security in South Asia is HIV/AIDS. The National AIDS Control Organization (NACO) estimates that nearly 2.3 million HIV positive adults live in India, the highest estimate for any country. On the other hand, though Pakistan's adult prevalence rate is 0.1 percent, the rate is

⁶¹ P. K. Joshi, "Greening Agriculture in South Asia", May 10, 2012, at <<http://www.ifpri.org/blog/greening-agriculture-south-asia>> (accessed October 04, 2013).

⁶² SAARC Human Resource Development Centre (SHRDC), "Food Security Situation in South Asia: Problems and Prospects", October 2012 at <<http://www.shrdc.org/doc/training/2012/Food%20security%20%282-7%20October,%202012%29/Food%20Security%20%28October%202-7,%202012%29.pdf>> (accessed October 09, 2013).

⁶³ Bangladesh - Striving for Food Security, op.cit.

increasing.⁶⁴ Moreover, about 36 percent of the population of Sindh and Punjab was exposed to high arsenic levels in Pakistan.⁶⁵

Poverty in South Asia

South Asia remains the region with largest numbers of extreme poverty.⁶⁶ Nearly 40 percent of the world's poor earning less than a dollar a day live in the region. South Asia is home to 22 percent of the world's population generating only less than 2 percent of global income.⁶⁷ South Asia is also the home of 23 percent of humanity, amongst them 31.7 percent are living in abject poverty.⁶⁸

According to the latest survey, percentage of poverty rate is very high in most of the South Asian countries respectively 44 percent in Bangladesh, 36 in Afghanistan, 31 percent in Nepal, 27 percent in India, 23 percent in Bhutan, 22 percent in Pakistan, and 15 percent in Sri Lanka.⁶⁹ A report titled 'Food Price Increases in South Asia: National Responses and Regional Dimensions' states that due to high food price, thousands of South Asian fall into poverty line and remain starvation.⁷⁰ If food prices continue to rise without a matching increase in incomes of people, it is estimated that approximately 100 million people could be pushed back into poverty.⁷¹ Though economic growth has reduced poverty rate in South Asia, its total number of poor people has increased. The number of poor people living on less than \$1.25 a day increased from 549

⁶⁴ Vibhuti Hate and Seth Gannon, "Public Health in South Asia", Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), at <http://csis.org/files/publication/100715_Hate_PublicHealth_SouthAsia_Web.pdf> (accessed October 05, 2013).

⁶⁵ Wilson John, op.cit.

⁶⁶ Ashish Shukla, "Human Security with Special Reference to Food Security in South Asia", 2011, at <http://www.academia.edu/3067414/Human_Security_with_Special_Reference_to_Food_Security_in_South_Asia> (accessed October 07, 2013).

⁶⁷ Dinakar Peri, "Understanding Human Security and Climate Change in South Asia- A Review", May 11, 2013, at <<http://strategicstudyindia.blogspot.com/2013/05/understanding-human-security-and.htm>> (accessed October 07, 2013).

⁶⁸ Dhananjay Tripathi, "Human Security in South Asia: Challenges and Solution", January 12, 2008, at <<http://www.newstrackindia.com/newsdetails/3693>> (accessed October 07, 2013).

⁶⁹ C.S.C Sekhar and Yogesh Bhatt, "Food Security in South Asia: Prospects for Regional Integration", November 2012, at <http://unctad.org/en/PublicationsLibrary/ecidc2013misc1_bp6.pdf> (accessed October 07, 2013)

⁷⁰ "Food security in South Asia Worsening", at <<http://www.thehimalayantimes.com/fullTodays.php?headline=Food+security+in+South+Asia+worsening&NewsID=353257>> (accessed October 10, 2013).

⁷¹ Farooq Sobhan, "Nontraditional Security Challenges in South Asia", at <<http://www.nbr.org/publications/element.aspx?id=511#.UkPTpyeNZkg>> (accessed September 26, 2013).

million in 1981 to 595 million in 2005. Only in India, the number of poor people increased from 420 million in 1981 to 455 million in 2005.⁷² In addition, India's 44 percent people lives below the international US\$1 per day poverty line. Best estimates suggest that about one-third of poor population in South Asia is chronically poor between 135 and 190 million people, of whom from 110 million to 160 million are Indians. However, Bangladesh and Pakistan are also the majority of the remainder.⁷³

Threat to Environmental Security

South Asia, the world's most vulnerable regions due to widespread environmental stress is probably more exposed to natural hazards.⁷⁴ From 1970 to 2000, the region recorded 15 out of 40 major disasters in the world. Natural disasters have severely damaged natural resources and caused human casualties in the region. For example, during the 2004 Tsunami, the rehabilitation cost was estimated to US\$ 3 billion. The overall cost of the October 2005 earthquake made cost at approximately US\$ 5.2 billion. Besides, disasters killed nearly half a million people in South Asia over the last 25 years.⁷⁵ Over 60,000 people were killed by Tsunami in India, Sri Lanka and Maldives.⁷⁶ The earthquake of October 2005 killed at least 73,000 people and severely injured or disabled another 70,000 and rendered 2.8 million homeless in northern parts of Pakistan.⁷⁷ The natural disasters in Pakistan in July 2010 had blown out almost one fifth of Pakistan's total land area, directly affected close to 20 million people and also made cost up to \$43 billion.⁷⁸ Floods in South Asia are also very common. Almost 20 million people stranded or displaced across the region by massive flooding.⁷⁹

⁷² Ejaz Ghani (ed.), *Poor Half Billion: What is Holding Back Lagging Regions in South Asia?*, October 28, 2010, New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2010.

⁷³ "Understanding Chronic Poverty in South Asia", at <http://www.chronicpoverty.org/uploads/publication_files/CPR1_chap7.pdf> (accessed September 26, 2013).

⁷⁴ "Security in South Asia: India's Emerging Role, Security in South Asia: India's Emerging Role", December 2005 - December 2013, at <<http://www.prio.no/Projects/Project/?x=790>> (accessed September 26, 2013).

⁷⁵ Farooq Sobhan, *op.cit.*

⁷⁶ Syed Rifaat Hussain, "Non-Traditional Security (NTS) Challenges in South Asia", at <<http://www.google.com.bd/url?sa=t&rcct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=5&ved=0CEcQFjAE&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.rsis-ntsasia.org%2Fresources%2Fpublications%2Fpolicy-briefs%2Finauguralmeeting%2Frcss.doc&ei=tStxUtiMNsi5rgfip4GoBw&usq=AFQjCNGqsWkS3xhsAnItlbNxVDZosNDWrw&bvm=bv.55617003,d.bmk>> (accessed October 22, 2013).

⁷⁷ Syed Rifaat Hussain, *op.cit.*

⁷⁸ Ehsan Pasha, *op.cit.*

⁷⁹ "Tragedy in the Himalays and Ganges-Brahmaputra Plain -Flood, Drought, Earthquake and Cyclone", at <<http://www.sos-arsenic.net/english/development/waterlogging.html>> (accessed September 28, 2013).

Map: Climate Change Vulnerability Index 2011

Source: David Braun, 2010 ⁸⁰

⁸⁰ David Braun, Bangladesh, India Most Threatened by Climate Change, Risk Study Finds", October 20, 2010, at <http://newswatch.nationalgeographic.com/2010/10/20/bangladesh_india_at_risk_from_climate_change/> (accessed October 23, 2013).

The map shows most of the South Asian countries like Bangladesh, India, and Afghanistan fall under extreme risk of climate change. According to calculations by the British global risks analysis company Maplecroft, “Bangladesh and India are the two countries most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change over the next 30 years”.⁸¹

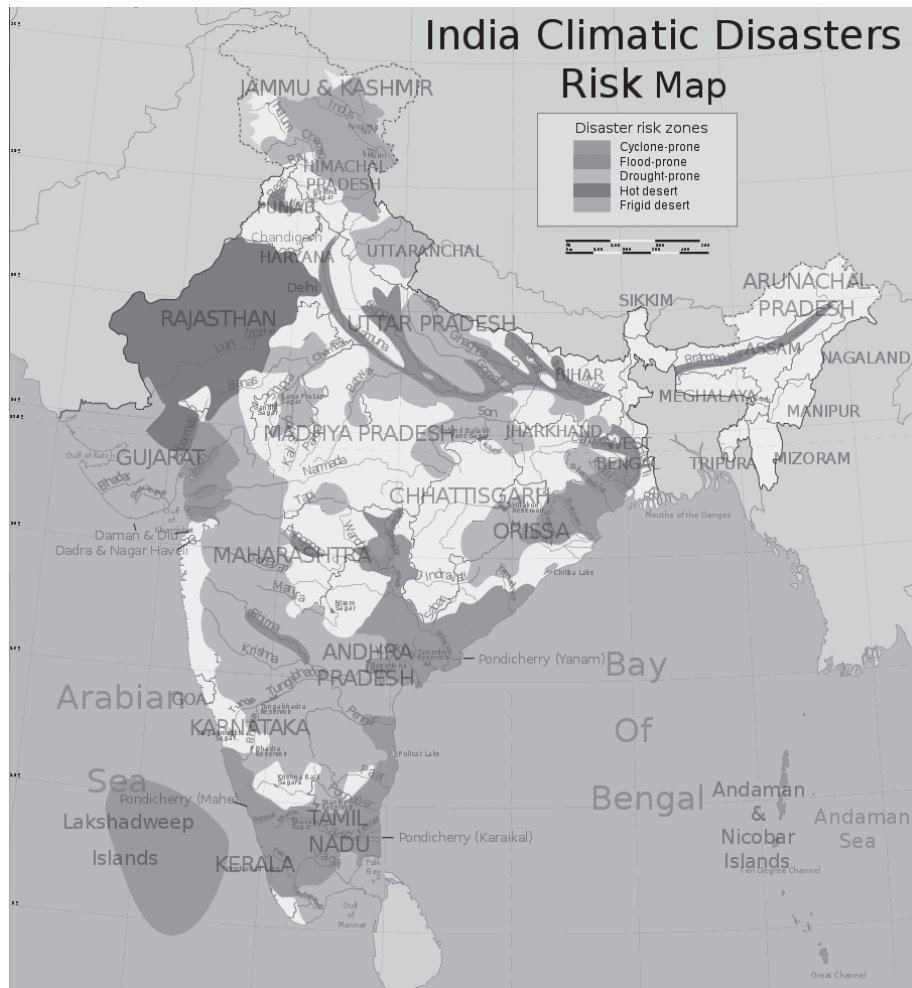
Bangladesh is also one of the most vulnerable countries for natural disasters. According to the Disaster Management Bureau of Bangladesh, every year about 500,000 people are displaced only by riverbank erosion.⁸² The Associated Press cited some 2.3 million people were affected by Aila in 2007 and many of them stranded in flooded villages. Home to roughly 25,000 residents, the coastal island Nijhum Dwip was completely submerged.⁸³ The ‘World Risk Report of 2012 also ranked Bangladesh as the top 5th risk-prone country among 173 nations for severe exposure to natural hazards such as tropical cyclone, storm, flooding, and tidal surge etc. Recent studies also demonstrate that if adaptive measures are not taken very soon, the number of vulnerable people will raise 110 percent with current population growth by 2050.⁸⁴

⁸¹ “David Braun, 2010, *op.cit.*

⁸² “To Be or Not to Be a Climate Change Refugee, that is the Question”, December 31, 2011, at <<http://igitur-archive.library.uu.nl/student-theses/2012-0503-200420/Final%20MA%20thes is%20CS%26HR.pdf>> (accessed October 24, 2013).

⁸³ Tragedy in the Himalays and Ganges-Brahmaputra Plain -Flood, Drought, Earthquake and Cyclone, *op.cit.*

⁸⁴ Choyon Kumar Saha, “An Upshot of Cyclone Aila”, *The Daily Star*, May 22, 2013.

Map: India Climatic Disasters Risk Map

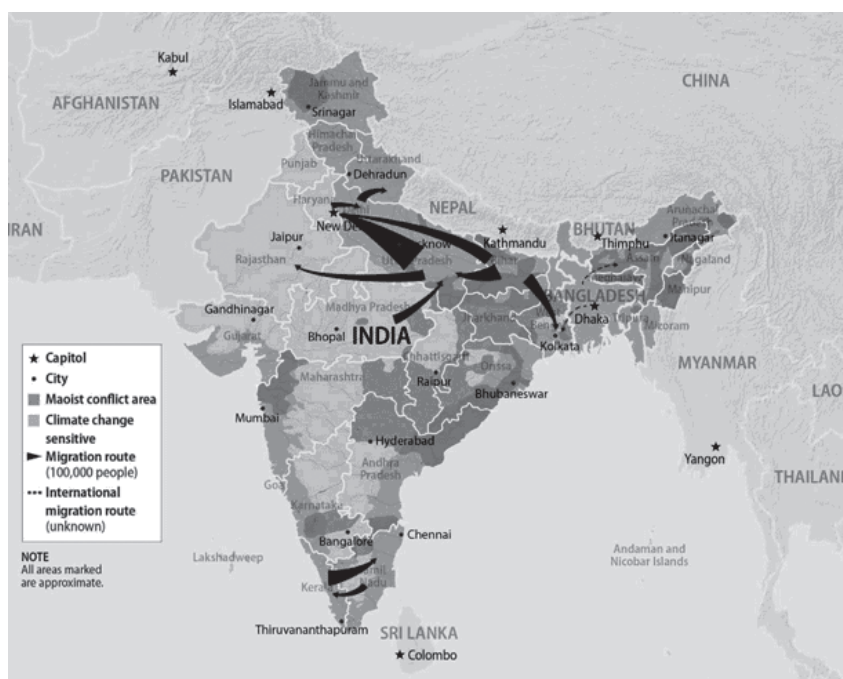
Source: <https://www.google.com.bd/?gws_rd=cr&ei=jFCEUvurNceUrgfIoYHYDg#q=Map%3A+India+Climatic+Disasters+Risk+Map>

India is one of the most disaster-prone countries in the world. Around 1.2 billion people live in vulnerable areas to natural hazards such as floods, cyclones, droughts and earthquakes. Around 76 percent of its coastline is prone to cyclones and tsunamis, while 59 percent of the country is vulnerable to earthquakes, 10 percent to floods and river erosion and 68 percent to droughts.⁸⁵

⁸⁵ "India Must Stop Viewing Disasters as Acts of God – Report", August 29, 2013, at <<http://in.reuters.com/article/2013/08/29/india-natural-disaster-idINDEE97S0C420130829>> (accessed October 22, 2013).

One of the most severe threats of human security due to climate change is trigger environmental migration in the region.⁸⁶ The environmental scientists warn that by 2070, millions of people could become homeless in the Asia-Pacific region due to rising sea levels, whereas Bangladesh, India, Vietnam, China and Pacific islands are at most risk.⁸⁷ The Inter-government Panel on Climate Change Convention (IPCCC) has predicted that 1 meter rise in sea level may submerge around 17 percent-20 percent of the total land mass of Bangladesh, creating 25 million to 30 million climate refugees.⁸⁸ The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) also mentions that rise in sea levels would have devastating consequences in low-lying areas of South, Southeast, and East Asia rendering millions of people homeless in Bangladesh, India, and China.⁸⁹

Map: Climate Change Sensitive Migration Routes



Source: <https://www.google.com.bd/?gws_rd=cr&ei=jFCEUvurNceUrgfIoYHYDg#q=climate+induced+migration+routes+in+south+asia>

⁸⁶ Tragedy in the Himalays and Ganges-Brahmaputra Plain -Flood, Drought, Earthquake and Cyclone, *op.cit.*

⁸⁷ See <<http://www.commondreams.org/headlines06/1009-06.htm>> (accessed October 23, 2013).

⁸⁸ "Climate Change and Bangladesh: A Perspective on Where are We", December 14, 2007 <<http://archive.thedailystar.net/newDesign/news-details.php?nid=15364>> (accessed October 23, 2013).

⁸⁹ Mahin Karim, April 2013, *op.cit.*

'Blue Alert, Climate Migrants in South Asia', a new Greenpeace report warns that global temperature increase between 4-5°C will drive mass migration in India, Pakistan and Bangladesh.⁹⁰ It also estimates that more than 120 million people in India and Bangladesh will be homeless due to climate change. It is also a matter of concern that 22 million Bangladeshis could be displaced by 2050. The island nation of the Maldives, off the west coast of India is at high risk of environmental refugees.⁹¹

Vision of South Asia regarding Human Security

Vision for Water Security

Improving Water Security

South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) may endeavor to improve water security throughout the region by 2025. Conservation of technologies, comprehensive integrated watershed management through addressing longstanding water-related problems including flood havoc, desertification and flash flood may mitigate water crisis.⁹² SAARC also needs to adopt conflict resolution mechanisms in order to address both intra and trans-boundary water issues. It also should be the vision of SAARC to include disaster-warning systems and international coordination in response to water-related disasters.⁹³ Well-maintained watersheds and clean water bodies, rivers, lakes, and ponds may also be involved in SAARC's vision of water security. SAARC may also take effective initiatives for water storage, productivity and conservation for the future generation.

Preservation of Water and Global Water Partnership

Major SAARC initiative for water security by 2025 may include water preservation. South Asian countries may take strict environmental laws like command and control for controlling water pollution.⁹⁴ SAARC may also

⁹⁰ "Unchecked Climate Change = 125 Million Refugees in South Asia", March 28, 2008, at <<http://www.greenpeace.org/international/en/news/features/climate-change-refugees-india-280308/>> (accessed October 07, 2013).

⁹¹ "Concerns over Climate Refugees in South Asia", April 22, 2009, at <<http://www.climaticoanalysis.org/post/concerns-over-%E2%80%98climate-refugees%E2%80%99-in-south-asia/>> (accessed October 03, 2013).

⁹² "Integrated Management a Must to Address Water Problems in South Asia", *The Daily Star*, July 10, 2010.

⁹³ "Asia's Nest Challenge: Securing the Region's Water Future", at <<http://asiasociety.org/policy/environment/water-and-food-security/asias-next-challenge-securing-regions-water-future>> (accessed September 17, 2013).

⁹⁴ See <<http://www.iodonline.com/Articles/WATER%20SECURITY%20AND%20ENVIRONMENTAL%20SUSTAINABILITY.pdf>> (accessed October 23, 2013).

search for global water partnership for ensuring a water secure world as well as for supporting sustainable development and management of water resources at all levels.⁹⁵ It may need to manage ground and surface water resources. In order to make it effective, SAARC also needs to develop a collaborative work plan and seek financial support to set it in motion.

Regional Cooperation for Enhanced Water Security in South Asia

One of the primary goals of SAARC ought to be identifying local solutions in order to use ground water, rain water and surface water judiciously. SAARC needs greater international interactions as well.⁹⁶ SAARC may also set a vision of sustainable use of water in order to achieve the goal of an environment conducive to balanced social and economic development.⁹⁷ SAARC may also take effective mechanisms by 2025 through regional cooperation on nontraditional security issues specially for resolving South Asia's long-standing water disputes.⁹⁸

Trans-boundary Water Management

One of the major features of SAARC' vision would be institutional framework for trans-boundary water management and for river basin management. Through the implementation of integrated water strategy and integrated water resource management process, SAARC can ascertain its vision of trans-boundary water management project.⁹⁹ Following trans-boundary water disputes in South Asia as well as considering miseries of the people due to both droughts and floods, the governments of all South Asian countries may address collective solution of acute shortage of energy and water.

⁹⁵ *Global Water Partnership*, "Groundwater Resources and Irrigated Agriculture", at <http://www.gwp.org/Global/The%20Challenge/Resource%20material/Perspectives%20Paper_Groundwater_web.pdf> (accessed September 29, 2013).

⁹⁶ Anna Nath, "An Offering of Clean Water for Healthy Living", *One World South Asia*, Mar 20, 2010 at <http://southasia.oneworld.net/archive/weekend/an-offering-of-clean-water-for-healthy-living/?searchterm=rohini#.UoJGrSfy41k> (accessed November 09, 2013).

⁹⁷ *Sri Lanka National Water Partnership*, "Water Vision 2025: Sri Lanka", 2000 at <<http://publications.iwmi.org/pdf/H025883.pdf>> (accessed November 08, 2013).

⁹⁸ "Nontraditional Regional Security Architecture for South Asia", *The National Bureau of Asian Research*, at <<http://www.nbr.org/research/initiative.aspx?id=39#.UoNTsSfy7IU>> (accessed November 06, 2013).

⁹⁹ Brenda Bateman and Racquel Rancier (eds), "Case Studies in Integrated Water Resources Management: From Local Stewardship to National Vision", *American Water Resources Association*, November 2012, at <<http://www.awra.org/committees/AWRA-Case-Studies-IWRM.pdf>> (accessed November 03, 2013).

Access to Safe Drinking Water

The member countries of SAARC would be committed to provide sustainable access to safe drinking water by 2025.¹⁰⁰ High quality of water, supply of rural water, efficient use of water, and availability of safe water may ensure access to pure drinking water in vulnerable regions. SAARC needs to manage water at local level, have conjunctive use of water, and integrate the use of both ground and surface water as well.¹⁰¹ Both governmental and non-governmental organizations in South Asia may play effective role in raising awareness among the people about improved sanitation and safety environment that could also bring about huge possibilities of universal access to safe drinking water in the region.¹⁰²

Joint Watershed and Sustainable Water Management

It is the vision of SAARC to ensure well-maintained watersheds and clean water bodies, rivers, lakes, and ponds throughout the region within 2025.¹⁰³ SAARC also aims to include water in security policy planning. It is the vision of SAARC to ensure water management and develop integrated water management capacities. South Asian countries must actively pursue the possibility of setting up a framework for joint watershed management. SAARC could also set up a regional centre for water management with representatives from each country. The centre could facilitate studies and dialogue on the joint mechanism and help draft the agenda and make other necessary modalities. SAARC's vision of water security may include joint monitoring mechanism on water. It may also involve both government and non-government sectors in order to help educate people as well as encourage policy makers. There is a possibility of institutional framework for trans-boundary water and river basin management. It may also include a regional platform on integrated flood and drought management.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰⁰ *International Monetary Fund*, "Bangladesh: Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper", October 2012, at <<http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/scr/2012/cr12293.pdf>> (accessed November 05, 2013).

¹⁰¹ Anna Nath, Mar 20, 2010, *op.cit.*

¹⁰² See <<http://www.undp.org/content/dam/bangladesh/docs/MDG/MDG%20Report%202012.pdf>> (accessed November 09, 2013).

¹⁰³ *Water Vision 2025: Sri Lanka*, 2000, *op.cit.*

¹⁰⁴ <<http://www.gwp.org/Global/About%20GWP/Publications/Colombo%20Synthesis%20Report%20Climate%20Change%20Food%20and%20Water%20Security%20in%20South%20Asia,%20final.pdf>> (accessed October 12, 2013).

Equitable Regional Water Sharing

SAARC may envision a South Asian region by 2025 in which each person would get the access to hygienic and safe water and sanitation as well. The self-reliance on food would be the centre of planning and action.¹⁰⁵ To achieve equitable sharing of water, SAARC must initiate regional cooperation for enhanced water security in South Asia. SAARC can also ensure equitable water distribution through resolution of trans-boundary river conflicts and creating trust among South Asian nations. SAARC needs equitable share of water resources for minimizing the impacts of spatial and temporal variations.¹⁰⁶

Vision for Food Security

Intra-regional Food Trade

The vision of SAARC is to enhance intra-regional trade for enhancing food trade in the region. Simultaneously, South Asian nations may need to promote efficient food markets through physical and infrastructural development. It may pay more attention on South Asian transit arrangements for facilitating intra-regional trade, including trade in agriculture and food products. It may also need to develop regional value chains in the agro-industry to exploit South Asian countries' individual comparative advantages for mutual benefit.¹⁰⁷

Long Term Planning for Balanced Food

The vision about SAARC for 2025 may recognize sustainable food security as a crucial element of its long-term strategic framework. The operational plan for sustainable food security in South Asia would address barriers of achieving the goal of food security by focusing on three areas of influence such as productivity, connectivity, and resilience.¹⁰⁸ SAARC may use improved seeds such as higher-yielding, salt-tolerant, drought-tolerant, flood-tolerant and incorporating sustainability into agricultural policies.¹⁰⁹ In order to protect food

¹⁰⁵ *Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council*, "Vision 21: A Shared Vision for Hygiene, Sanitation and Water Supply and A Framework for Action", at <<http://www.unwater.org/downloads/vision21.pdf>> (accessed October 23, 2013).

¹⁰⁶ *Water Vision 2025: Sri Lanka*, 2000, *op.cit.*

¹⁰⁷ See <<http://www.sawtee.org/featured-events/regional-consultation-on-trade-climate-change-and-food-security-in-south-asia.html>> (accessed September 27, 2013).

¹⁰⁸ "Operational Plan for Sustainable Food Security in Asia and the Pacific", December 2009, at <<http://www.adb.org/documents/operational-plan-sustainable-food-security-asia-and-pacific>> (accessed October 04, 2013).

¹⁰⁹ "Southern Asia Food Security Paradox", May 2012, at <http://thesecondgreenrevolution.blogspot.com/2012/05/southern-asia-food-security->paradox.html#.Uljb8id_4wo> (accessed October 12, 2013).

from severe impacts of climate change and warn member states of the region, SAARC may establish sub-regional grain insecurity early warning system. SAARC may also move towards the framework of establishing South Asia grain security system.

SAARC Food Security Reserve

SAARC food security reserve may constitute an important component of the visions 2025 of South Asian countries. It may include emergency food reserve, humanitarian food aid, sufficient supply of food in vulnerable areas, reduction of food prices, balanced food security, alternative food storage and so on. SAARC may also formulate particular scheme and framework for food storage that may be guided by emergency monitoring and information system. In addition, regional reserve and national stock agencies should achieve some level of organizational capacity for effective response to food security crises. Moreover, laws, policies, and regulations should be harmonized across member countries to facilitate food security and quick and orderly transfer of rice stocks.¹¹⁰

Sustainable Agriculture and Hunger Free South Asia

The vision of SAARC is to continue collective development process.¹¹¹ SAARC may move towards consequential strategy in order to achieve stable growth and sustainable agricultural output through long-term investment in agricultural sectors of the region. Sustainable agriculture would bring about huge opportunities towards hunger free South Asia because it would likely produce high quality, safe and healthy food. It would also be environment-friendly because sustainable agriculture mitigates the risks of climate change. Agro-forestry systems combined with trees, shrubs, crops and livestock production may also be fruitful for sustainable agricultural production. It may help build hunger free South Asia through providing multiple agronomic and ecological benefits throughout the region.¹¹²

¹¹⁰ Roehlano M. Briones, "Regional Cooperation for Food Security: The Case of Emergency Rice Reserves in the ASEAN Plus Three", *Asian Development Bank Sustainable Development Working Paper Series*, November 2011, at <<http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/adb-wp18-regional-cooperation-food-security.pdf>> (accessed November 08, 2013).

¹¹¹ Anna Nath, March 20, 2010, *op.cit.*

¹¹² *European Commission*, "Sustainable Agriculture for the Future We Want", at <http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/events/2012/rio-side-event/brochure_en.pdf> (accessed November 04, 2013).

Stable Food Price and Self-sufficiency in Food

In order to ensure self-sufficiency in food, SAARC may formulate pre-established mechanisms for pricing, releasing, transportation, border crossing and distribution of food grain. SAARC may bring together researchers and practitioners as well as facilitate dialogues on key issues of food security in the region.¹¹³ It may need food safety protocol for testing the safety of genetically modified food.¹¹⁴ Under the strategy of 'Hunger Free South Asia', SAARC may ensure minimum 2,122 k. cal of food for all poor people and standard nutritional food to at least 85 percent of the population by 2021. South Asian governments would pay more attention to the agricultural products in order to keep food price stable and affordable for the poor. It can include other key long-term policy issues e.g. stock management, input-output pricing, safety nets, and regional cooperation etc.¹¹⁵

Regional Food Distribution System

Inclusion of regional food distribution system supported by regional transport system like 'Asian Highway Network' and 'Trans-Asian Railway' may constitute an important segment of SAARC vision. SAARC needs to ensure that people, even isolated and alienated parts of the region have access to food grains. SAARC may also initiate agriculture-related social services in order to provide technology, information, and transportation facilities across the region. The vision of food distribution may not only connect producers, such as farmers and fishermen to consumers, but also allocate food accordingly. As a result, foods need to be transported to a central location and then distributed to outer cities and villages.¹¹⁶ Along with this, South Asian countries may launch emergency food distribution system throughout the region.

¹¹³ Krishna Prasad, "Regional Approach to Food Security in South Asia: SAARC Food Bank", at <<http://www.sawtee.org/presentations/SessionThree20Dec2012.pdf>> (accessed October 07, 2013)

¹¹⁴ Amitava Mukherjee, "Food Insecurity: A Growing Threat in Asia", 2008, at <<http://www.unapcaem.org/publication/FoodInsecurityInAsia.pdf>> (accessed October 22, 2013).

¹¹⁵ Sadiq Ahmed, "Managing Food Price Inflation in South Asia: An Agenda for Reforms", *Policy Research Institute*, December 21, 2011 at <http://www.pri-bd.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=268:managing-food-price-inflation-in-south-asia-an-agenda-for-reforms&catid=46:global-economy&Itemid=60> (accessed October 12, 2013).

¹¹⁶ See <<http://12.000.scripts.mit.edu/mission2014/problems/inadequate-food-distribution-systems>> (accessed October 23, 2013).

Vision for Health Security

Elimination of Contagious Diseases

In order to ensure health security, South Asian countries need to largely focus on reducing the threat of underlying causes of mortality risk such as HIV and AIDS, malaria, tuberculosis and anemia etc. Launching SAARC regional strategy with a particular focus on HIV/AIDS would substantiate SAARC vision. South Asian governments may also develop different schemes like access to health service, insurance, housing schemes, social maternity benefits in order to reduce the rate of health risk. It may build guidelines on addressing malnutrition and manufacturing regional framework for providing adequate health care to all children, girls and boys throughout South Asia.¹¹⁷

Women Development Activities

The vision of SAARC is to provide communities with a wide range of information and services in order to support women's development activities. These programs include sexually transmitted diseases, HIV and AIDS, counseling, community-based awareness rising in order to change attitudes and increase family education. It also aims to improve living conditions for vulnerable people in all ages.¹¹⁸ South Asian countries need to improve coverage of services as well.¹¹⁹

Reduction of Maternal Mortality Rate

SAARC's vision may aim to reduce maternal mortality rate by two-thirds by 2015¹²⁰ as women are intensely vulnerable to the effects of costs incurred during child birth.¹²¹ It may target reducing maternal, newborn and child death in South Asian region. It may setup National Commissions on Macroeconomics

¹¹⁷ <http://www.google.com.bd/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=10&ved=0CGkQFjAJ&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.unesco.org%2Fnew%2Ffileadmin%2FMULTIME DIA%2FHQ%2FSHS%2Fpdf%2FWorkshop-Social-Inclusion_SAARC.pdf&ei=-5ZwUpSU KceFrQf63oGgDA&usg=AFQjCNHuB6eJNFXGd0DZaoMIEtWfPpD8HA&bvm=bv.55617003,d.bmk>

¹¹⁸ <<http://www.helpage.org/who-we-are/our-affiliates/affiliates-in-south-asia/>> (accessed October 07, 2013)

¹¹⁹ M Mathai, "To Ensure Maternal Mortality is Reduced, Quality of Care Needs to be Monitored and Improved alongside Increasing Skilled Delivery Coverage Rates", July 21, 2011 at <<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1471-0528.2011.03104.x/pdf>> (accessed October 12, 2013).

¹²⁰ <<http://www.givewell.org/files/Cause1-2/+UNICEF/Lancet%20Maternal%20Mortality%205.pdf>> (accessed October 24, 2013)

¹²¹ Ibid.

and Health for Resource Mobilization with a view to reducing the vulnerability.¹²² SAARC has also the aspiration of reducing malnutrition and mortality rates, raising education and literacy as well as awareness among rural people.¹²³

Reduction of Malnutrition

In order to reduce malnutrition, SAARC might build a framework for care and protection to the children. It may also focus on participation of children in disasters because the vulnerability of children is exacerbated during disasters, and children have suffered disproportionately in almost every disaster-torn area in the region.¹²⁴ The long-term vision of the multi-sector nutrition plan over the next years is to accelerate the reduction of maternal and child under-nutrition,¹²⁵ and to reduce prevalent rates of chronic malnutrition.¹²⁶

Clean and Healthy South Asia

One of the major visions of SAARC could be ensuring clean and healthy South Asia. SAARC needs to achieve ecological sanitation throughout the region.¹²⁷ In order to fulfill the vision, SAARC needs to ensure access to adequate sanitation and sewerage facilities for promoting personal and environmental health.¹²⁸ Members of SAARC countries may adopt common regional development program by 2025 for building clean and healthy South Asia. SAARC may adopt various mechanisms for clean and healthy environment in the region.

Professional Exchange of Doctors and Trans-boundary Health Care Services

The relaxation of immigration policy would help the South Asians towards the movement of people within the region. It could be helpful to provide trans-

¹²² <http://saarc-sec.org/areaofcooperation/detail.php?activity_id=11> (accessed October 05, 2013).

¹²³ <<http://www.actrav.itcilo.org/actrav-english/telearn/global/ilo/blokit/saarcd.htm>> (October 05, 2013)

¹²⁴ See <<http://saarc-sdmc.nic.in/pdf/Publications/SAARC%20Framework.PDF>> (accessed October 21, 2013).

¹²⁵ See <http://scalingupnutrition.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/Nepal_MSNP_2013-2017.pdf> (accessed October 05, 2013).

¹²⁶ "Multi-sector Nutrition Plan: For Accelerating the Reduction of Maternal and Child Under-nutrition in Nepal", September 2012, at <http://scalingupnutrition.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/Nepal_MSNP_2013-2017.pdf> (accessed October 02, 2013).

¹²⁷ Anna Nath, March 20, 2010, *op.cit.*

¹²⁸ Water Vision 2025: Sri Lanka", 2000, *op.cit.*

boundary health care services, exchange of efficient doctors as well as boost mutual understandings, hopes and aspirations among nations. However, the opening of bus routes, interaction among doctors, academicians, and researcher would not only enhance trans-boundary health services but also contribute to an easing of tensions among neighboring countries.¹²⁹ Moreover, SAARC may also sign a Memorandum of Understandings (MOUs) with World Health Organization (WHO) in order to promote the level of health service throughout the region.¹³⁰

Vision for Environmental Security

Climate Action Plan

SAARC's vision of 2025 may include the formation of climate action plan with common but differentiated responsibilities. SAARC may expand the mandates of Comprehensive National Climate Change Strategy in order to address vulnerable threats of climate change as well as to overcome those threats. SAARC's nations should articulate common position on climate change.¹³¹ The future climate action plan may include some thematic areas of climate change e.g. climate change mitigation, technology transfer, financing and investment mechanism, education, training and awareness, monitoring, assessment and management of impact and risks due to climate change throughout the region.¹³² However, in order to implement the action plan, SAARC may also instigate clean development management, exchange of information on disaster preparedness, exchange of meteorological data, monitoring the impacts of climate change, supporting international negotiation process and sensitizing media in this issue.¹³³

Legal Frameworks for the Protection of Climate Refugees

SAARC has the aspiration of formulating legal frameworks in order to protect climate refugees. It may need to enhance the capacity of all governments in the region in order to cope with climate-related displacements or increased

¹²⁹ Brenda Bateman and Racquel Rancier (eds), 2012, *op.cit*, p.204.

¹³⁰ See <<http://saarc-sec.org/2013/06/28/news/SAARC-and-GIZ-sign-a-Memorandum-of-Understanding/121/>> (accessed November 07, 2013).

¹³¹ See <http://www.saarcchamber.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=400:saarc-cci-conference-on-climate-change-and-energy-cooperation-in-south-asia&catid=3:main-news-articles&Itemid=911> (accessed October 06, 2013).

¹³² Haroon Habib, "SAARC Action Plan on Climate Change", July 5, 2008, The Hindu, at <<http://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-international/saarc-action-plan-on-climate-change/article1447194.ece>> (accessed November 08, 2013).

¹³³ *Ibid.*

number of climate refugees. SAARC may also share the responsibility of climate refugees among the nations.¹³⁴ The focus would be on equitable burden sharing of the challenges of climate-induced migrants.¹³⁵ South Asian countries may take some legal regional initiatives on refugee protection. Regarding this, it may also promote regional refugee law, regional human rights law, as well as develop public law in the region. SAARC may also focus on making clear definition of climate refugees as well as supporting them with adequate protection.

Sustainable Development Strategy

SAARC aims for Sustainable Development Strategy of South Asia (SDS SA) in order to identify common trans-boundary goals of South Asian states as well as to achieve sustainable development mainly in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal, Maldives, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka. It may also target some major goals such as eliminating poverty, creating national security, conserving natural resources, protecting tropical forests, and strengthening institutional system.¹³⁶ SAARC may have also some road maps for ensuring bio-security, bio safety, and bio-diversity in the region.¹³⁷ SAARC's sustainable development strategy may also include afforestation programs and natural reintegration measures as well.¹³⁸ In this regard, South Asian countries may ratify several notable environmental treaties as part of their mandates that would be maintained as countries' obligations.¹³⁹

Disaster Risk Reduction

SAARC needs to put priority on disaster management.¹⁴⁰ Within 2025, the members of SAARC would largely be committed to address threats of climate

¹³⁴ *Climate Brief, "Regional Views"*, at <http://www.lead.org.pk/attachments/climate_briefs/climate_brief_04.pdf> (accessed October 09, 2013).

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*

¹³⁶ See <<http://www.rrcap.ait.asia/nsds/uploadedfiles/file/sa/reference/SSDS%20SA.pdf>> (accessed October 26, 2013).

¹³⁷ *South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation, "Fifth Meeting of SAARC Technical Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development"*, 5 – 6 August, 2009, at <http://saarc-sec.org/uploads/document/SAARC%20Agriculture%20Vision%202020_20100420040327.doc> (accessed November 03, 2013).

¹³⁸ "Sustainable Agriculture for the Future We Want", *op.cit.*

¹³⁹ Saleem H. Ali, "Ecological Cooperation in South Asia: The Way Forward", *New American Foundation*, January 2013, at <http://www.newamerica.net/sites/newamerica.net/files/policydocs/Ali_EcologicalCooperation_NAF_0.pdf> (accessed November 05, 2013).

¹⁴⁰ Zaglul A Chowdhury, *SAARC and its People: A Study on State of South Asian Cooperation*, Dhaka, News Network Publication, August 2005, p.56.

change and reduce risk of disasters despite facing severe challenges.¹⁴¹ SAARC may build a framework of regional cooperation and integration for reducing the threats of disasters as well as initiate Climate Change Adaptation Program in South Asia. It may also develop institutional infrastructures for making proper agendas and building networks with other regional organizations.¹⁴² South Asian governments would also take several initiatives to promote programs for advocacy and awareness of climate change and to inculcate habits towards a low-carbon society, including incorporation of science-based educational material in educational curricula.¹⁴³

SAARC Climate Change Fund

SAARC may develop comprehensive climate change fund involving all the nations, both government and private sectors, civil society stakeholders to garner broad-based support at the local, national, regional and global levels and help member states in meeting urgent adaptation and capacity building needs as well. SAARC may also set up climate innovation centers in South Asia with a view to developing sustainable energy technologies based on indigenous resource endowments.¹⁴⁴ SAARC can also expand network with other regional organizations in order to raise climate fund.¹⁴⁵ It would call the leaders of SAARC to contribute in climate change trust fund with a proper guideline of environmental protection and good governance.¹⁴⁶

Vision for Poverty Reduction

Independent South Asian Commission for Poverty Alleviation

SAARC countries should come to an agreement to put poverty at the center and adopt pro-poor strategies for the Independent South Asian Commission

¹⁴¹ See <http://saarc-sec.org/uploads/document/Common%20SAARC%20position%20for%20COP16_20110123094124.pdf> (accessed November 09, 2013).

¹⁴² Rattan Lal, Mannava V.K. Sivakumar, S.M.A. Faiz, Mustafizur Rahman, Khandakar R. Islam (eds.), *Climate Change and Food Security in South Asia*, New York.

¹⁴³ Haroon Habib, 2008, *op.cit.*

¹⁴⁴ "India Announces SAARC Climate Change Fund", April 28, 2010, *The Hindu*, at <<http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/india-announces-saarc-climate-change-fund/article413918.ece>> (accessed November 04, 2013).

¹⁴⁵ "Strategizing Climate Change for Bhutan: National Environment Commission Royal Government of Bhutan", January 2009, at <<http://www.rrcap.ait.asia/nsds/uploadedfiles/file/bhutan.pdf>> (accessed October 09, 2013).

¹⁴⁶ *Asian Development Bank*, "Climate Change in South Asia: Strong Responses for Building a Sustainable Future", at <<http://www.geasiapacifico.org/documents/Climate%20Change%20in%20South%20Asia.pdf>> (accessed October 03, 2013)

on Poverty Alleviation (ISACPA) as SAARC lacks clear profile of the poor in South Asia. SAARC's regional poverty eradication strategies should be able to facilitate access to basic services, including social protection and safety nets. A Plan of Action should be able to define objectives, targets, and operational mechanisms in order to alleviate poverty and promote agricultural development, and ensure food security.¹⁴⁷ The plan would also focus on poverty reduction in South Asia through productive employment.¹⁴⁸

Strengthening Livelihoods

SAARC intends for strengthening the livelihoods of poor home-based workers through raising awareness and capacity building, providing intensive training and gaining a fair share of mainstream market. SAARC's vision may also include improving access to livelihood assets and reducing vulnerability of poor rural people. It may also identify policy options for improving access to livelihood assets through both changed rights and entitlements and improved capabilities to access existing rights.¹⁴⁹

Comprehensive Mechanism for Poverty Eradication

The vision of SAARC ought to stress on alleviation of poverty through improving the welfare of the people and quality of life.¹⁵⁰ In order to bring about comprehensive development in South Asia, SAARC may set a goal of increasing both transport and people to people connectivity within the region by 2025. There is likely to trigger a range of cross-border infrastructural projects, including highways, gas pipelines, electricity grids, inter-port linkages etc to mobilize the process beyond the region.¹⁵¹ As there are huge economic prospects in the region, SAARC could make a platform of opportunity in the region in order to expand trans-boundary business sectors as well as roar economic sectors.¹⁵² As a part of poverty eradication, SAARC may take effective mechanisms for ensuring social and gender equity through empowerment and capacity building. SAARC also needs to recognize basic human rights for making the process successful.

¹⁴⁷ <http://www.landcoalition.org/sites/default/files/publication/972/SAARC_0309.pdf>

¹⁴⁸ <<http://southasiaforum.in/download/PovertyAlleviation.pdf>> (accessed October 08, 2013).

¹⁴⁹ <<http://r4d.dfid.gov.uk/Project/2449/Default.aspx>> (accessed October 08, 2013).

¹⁵⁰ Saman Kelegama, "What has been the Role of SAARC in Ameliorating Poverty in the Region", at <http://www.cpd.org.bd/saesiv/documents/Papers_session_wise/Plenary%20II/Saman%20Kelegama.pdf> (accessed November 05, 2013).

¹⁵¹ Dipankar Banerjee and N.Manoharan (eds), *SAARC towards Greater Connectivity*, New Delhi, July 2008, P.217

¹⁵² Dipankar Banerjee and N.Manoharan (eds), *SAARC towards Greater Connectivity*, New Delhi, July 2008, P.214.

South Asian Development Fund

SAARC may consider raising development fund and poverty alleviation fund for the poor people in the region. South Asian countries may initiate concessional financing for the poorest member countries of the region. It may also design poverty alleviation fund project for the eradication of poverty and empowerment of rural and urban poor. SAARC could also launch integrated approach of building institution, providing micro-credit loans, granting small scale infrastructure projects etc. Purview of poverty alleviation fund could also include rebuilding lives, fostering resilience and restoring assets for the poor.¹⁵³

Conclusion

Human security in Bangladesh has become a challenging issue even in the age of globalization. As the reasonably high population growth continues, all the South Asian governments should be more concerned about the current challenges of human security in the region. SAARC as an organization has a major role to play. SAARC needs to have a particular vision for the future so that it can set a common stage of hopes and aspirations of the people of South Asia by helping to combat all the threats of human security through this. It is expected that SAARC's policy documents are formulated that focus on poverty alleviation, improving agricultural production, and attaining food security in the region. By building nontraditional regional security architecture, SAARC can promote human security in the region. The European Union could be a model to emulate for the future vision of SAARC. The South Asians must address the issues of poverty, peace and, environmental degradation of the region, which afflict them most, smartly and efficiently in the ever changing dynamics of economic, security and climatic challenges.

¹⁵³ See <<http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/COUNTRIES/SOUTHASIAEXT/0,,contentMDK:21609794-menuPK:158937~pagePK:2865106-piPK:2865128-theSitePK:223547,00.html>> (accessed November 06, 2013).

The Use of Torture in the War against Terror: A Critical Appraisal

*Mohammad Jahirul Hoque**

Abstract

The use of torture as a tool of interrogation is not new to detect the conspiracy for taking preventive action and identify the real criminal for giving punishment. This practice is very common for undemocratic regimes. But when an old and powerful democratic and civilised state was accused of using torture on a particular type of detainees, it raised a serious question to the commitment of such a state towards respect for human rights. Since the last decade, the US and its allies have been applying torture on persons suspicious of perpetrating terrorist activities who were detained in different prisons in pursuance of the policy of War against Terror. The 9/11 attacks compelled the US to take such type of comprehensive tactics against its enemies especially those who are involved with terrorist networks of al-Qaeda. Although the policy of War Against Terror was taken during the Regan administration, the consequence of 9/11 attacks built a platform for Junior Bush administration to reincarnate the concept among its allies. The War against Terror of Bush Junior is criticised for using torture as a tool of interrogation on the detainees suspected as Islamic terrorists involved with al-Qaeda. There is a controversy whether torture is a useful technique to detect the conspiracies against the US and its allies. However, it has already been established that torture is seriously detrimental to human rights and it did not bring a permanent solution to eradicate terrorism from the world.

Introduction

In 1980s the United States (US) president Regan declared that the centrepiece of the US foreign policy is the War against Terror (Chomsky, 2009). Then it was followed by President Bush Junior as military, political, legal and ideological

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combat against the terrorists as the aftermath of 9/11 attacks.¹ Thus it is not a recent security innovation for the US. Following the 9/11 attacks, secret prisons, renditions, and torture are become an undeclared part of the War against Terror. After 9/11 attacks thousands of suspicious person terrorists are detained in different prisons which are operated by the US security forces. The active partner of the US led War Against Terror are Canada, Italy, and the United Kingdom and all of them involve with using torture on the detainees who are kept as convicts of the 9/11 attacks.

Literature Review

Mostly uses torture techniques are hooding, noise bombardment, food deprivation, sleep deprivation, and forced standing at the wall (Conroy, 2002). Pilch (2006) tried to explore whether new standards have indeed developed within the US on torture and rendition as an aftermath of 9/11 attacks, and whether new developments are reasonable in light of terrorist threats come from non state actors like al-Qaeda. He argued that definitions of torture in international conventions, laws, and common understanding have been subjected to reinterpretation and allegation of rendition has been levelled against the US. However any kind of torture is illegal and unethical. Harbury (2005) mentioned that the use of torture and humiliation by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) led moral and legal questions as well as it may bring further security threat for the US. Because the publicities of the horrific forms of tortures fuel the terrorists to hold a growing number of deadly suicide attacks against the states that are involved with such tortures. Haritos-Fatouros (2003) is a supporter of torture as he found the benefits of it after a comparison of cost and benefit of torture. He claimed that the prime goal of torture is to detect the information relating to deadly conspiracies against the state and peace from the detainees, and thousands of lives could be saved by getting the information in prior to the occurrence. Therefore torture is permissible. In contrast, Alan Dershowitz mentioned that “the noble end of saving innocent lives justifies the ignoble means of employing torture” (The New York Daily

¹ 9/11 refers September 11 according to the American dating conventions. In 11 September 2001 a series of four coordinated terrorist attacks were launched by the al-Qaeda upon the World Trade Centre in New York City and Pentagon in Washington DC. Osama bin Laden, the group leader of al-Qaeda claimed the responsibility of these attacks in 2004 although he denied his involvement with this brutality at first. The attacks resulted in the deaths of 2,996 including 19 hijackers and 246 passengers who boarded on the four aircrafts, more than 6000 injuries, and serious economic losses. The occurrences lasted for less than two hours from 8:46 am to 10:28 am of US local time but this short period of time changed the entire global world order. These attacks are notably known as 9/11 attacks in the history. Details at: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/September_11_attacks [Accessed on 06 December 2013].

News, 06 October 2002). Santucci (2008) argued that torture is not an effective tool in asymmetric warfare. He described a paradoxical nature of torture can help to gain bits of information which may helpful to prevent terrorist attacks but it holds strategic consequences for those nations who practice it. Cohen (2005) also explained the current growing disutility of state torture policy as a form of threat against the threats to the respective state. The use of torture on the detainees may motivate terrorists and fuel them to take the revenge that makes them more extremists who are initially moderate and more sympathetic (Rauf and Rev, 2007). For instance, Taliban and Al-Qaeda became more ferocious after publishing the pictures of tortures of Abu Ghriab and other torture cells. In addition, the practice of torture undermines the respect of rule of law both within the United States and internationally (Davia, 2008).

Torture: An Overview

What is Torture?

The US Senate states that torture is an act of specifically intended to inflict severe physical or mental pain or suffering where that mental pain or suffering refers to prolonged mental harm caused by (Kutz, 2006):

- the intentional infliction or threatened infliction of severe physical pain or suffering;
- the administration or application, or threatened administration or application, of mind altering substances or other procedures calculated to disrupt profoundly the senses or the personality;
- the threat of imminent death; or
- the threat that another person will imminently be subjected to death, severe physical pain or suffering, or the administration or application of mind altering substances or other procedures calculated to disrupt profoundly the senses or personality.

The UN Convention Against Torture defined torture as "...any act by which severe pain or suffering, whether physical or mental, is intentionally inflicted on a person for such purposes as obtaining from him, or a third person, information or a confession, punishing him for an act he or a third person has committed or is suspicious person of having committed, or intimidating or coercing him or a third person, or for any reason based on discrimination of any kind, when such pain or suffering is inflicted by or at the instigation of or with the consent or acquiescence of a public official or other person acting in an official capacity. It does not include pain or suffering arising only from, inherent in, or incidental to, lawful sanctions" (UN, 1984).

The World Medical Association-WMA (1975) defined torture as “the deliberate systematic or wanton infliction of physical or mental suffering by one or more persons acting alone or on the orders of any authority, to force another person to yield information, to make a confession, or for any other reason.”

According to Williams (2006) torture is “a deliberate use of pain, humiliation, or extreme mental distress against persons who pose no immediate physical threat.”

From above definitions it can be said that torture refers applying of any kind of inhuman treatment on suspicious person for the purpose of detecting information relating to conspiracies or to give punishment or to make a confession.

Torture Categories and its Dimensions

There are two categories of torture (Shue, 2004): interrogational and punitive. Interrogational torture is used for the purpose of extracting information while punitive torture is used to punish or persuade. Torment is used to recover information in interrogational torture to prevent a large number of innocent deaths or national survival. For this it is known as preventive torture. All forms of the tortures are illegal accordance with international law and humanitarian perspective (Gross, 2004). There is no international charter, treaty, law, convention, constitution, and custom in the world which approves torture.

Following dimensions of torture are seen in different international law and conventions:

- It is cruel, inhuman and degrade;
- It is immoral;
- It is an international crime itself;
- The prohibition of torture is absolute; and
- It cannot be suspended even in times of emergency.

Despite the above mentioned questions are raised due to the use of torture on the suspicious detainees but almost all states in the world use it in their territory more or less. When the liberal democratic countries involve with such activities of using torture against ‘specific’ detainees due to the suspension of their involvement with al-Qaeda and Islamic terrorist network in the name of War against Terror then the policy and commitment of such countries becomes questionable. In the one hand these countries struggle to establish human rights in their territories as well as in the entire world, on the other hand, the same countries also involve with using torture on their detainees to get the

information relating to future terrorist plan. The controversial position of these states tends to the debate over the use of torture to detect the conspiracy against their state and entire humanity. It further questions the motive of the War against Terror policy of the US.

Torture Background

Torture is as old as law and it was used in Ancient Rome and Medieval Europe, France, Algeria and Northern Ireland, and now still over 100 countries (Saul, 2005). Torture has been used against prisoners of war, suspicious person insurgents, and political prisoners since hundreds of years. In the late twentieth century many western democratic states tackled terror through extraordinary methods in interrogating terrorist suspicious person. In addition, torture is used by different security services in different regimes throughout the world. Thus torture is not only used in the War Against Terror by the US and its allies for first time but also over the twentieth century most of the states sanctioned the use of torture against civilians for suspicious person of terrorism (Harrison, 2001). Few examples of the uses of torture by different countries in different decades are mentioned below (Evans and Morgan, 1998):

- 1930s: Soviet Union used torture against Stalin's Great Terror;
- 1940s: Germany used torture against resistors to its territorial expansion;
- 1950s: France used torture in Algeria interrogating FLN suspicious person;
- 1950s: Britain used torture against Greek nationalist in Cyprus;
- 1970s: Britain used torture to interrogating IRA suspicious person;
- 1980s: Turkey used torture against Kurdish nationalist; and
- 1980s: Israel used torture to interrogating Palestinians suspicious person of 'hostile terrorist activity.'

Indeed many states have been used torture on the suspicious person and rivals as routine practice since the early days of the conquest of national territory (Chomsky, 2009). In the 1970s and 1980s the US and a number of European countries began to identify a specific form of violence against them called terrorism. In that situation they have been practicing to inflict severe pain to force suspicious person to detect their involvement in such terrorist activities. The 9/11 attacks induced Bush to apply 'torture lite' on the detainees in different prisons operated by the US security forces (Head, 2010). The US has been using 'non-lethal weapons' on its detainees for crowd control and often in conjunction with lethal force during war for many years (Wright, 2002). It should not be decent to accuse the US only. Prisoners are tortured and ill-treated in 130 countries where 70 countries are indicted for widespread and persistent human rights violation (Wright, 2003).

Many western countries involve with producing, marketing, and exporting torture instruments throughout the world (Wright, 2003). Western countries have the largest share of companies of electroshock weapons which are widely used as instruments of torture in the different states. For example, the US has the largest number electroshock equipment companies amounting 81, Western European countries have 41, and Eastern-Central European countries have 23 companies (Wright, 2003). In contrast, 56 electroshock equipment companies are in Asia Pacific countries, 11 in Africa, 10 in Middle East, and 8 companies in Latin American countries (Wright, 2003). This figure of electroshock equipment companies show that to what extent the western countries are involved with the proliferation of torture instruments worldwide although they are in the top position in terms of practicing democracy and human rights. If the practices of torture are considered as illegal and immoral in the light of humanitarian law then the business of torture instruments should be considered as illegal and immoral from the same ground. It is a mockery of the Western countries with human civilisation because those countries push other countries to ensure human rights and democracy they are now not only accused for practicing torture on their detainees but also involved with torture instruments trading. Therefore it can be said that the US torture practices, torture training and torture instruments business are not the consequences of the 9/11 attacks. In essence, the US supply of repression and torture technology has been documented since 1960s. A former policy researcher of Amnesty International Michael McClintock (1992) argued that 'counterterrorism' is too often another name for torture and other terms are 'psychological warfare', 'counterinsurgency', 'unconventional warfare,' and 'low intensity conflict', etc. From his point of view, the US special warfare has always been cast in an anti-Communist mode.

The War against Terror and Evidence of Torture

There is no published evidence that the Washington ordered or condoned the torture its prisoners (Pfiffner, 2005). On 22 June 2004 then President Bush stated that "let me make very clear the position of my government and our country. We do not condone torture. I have never ordered torture. I will never order torture. The values of this country are such that torture is not a part of our soul and our being" (Jaffer and Singh, 2007). This sanitised human paradigm was subsequently challenged when the media published photographs of abusing the detainees by the US soldiers at Abu Ghraib. The media further published the following torture treatments of the US security force on the detainees at Abu Ghraib prison (Taguba, 2004):

- Breaking chemical lights and pouring the phosphoric liquid on detainees;
- Pouring cold water on naked detainees;
- Beating detainees with a broom handle and a chair; and
- Sodomizing a detainee with chemical light and perhaps a broom stick.

After the publication of photographs of above mentioned tortures, Washington assured the world that the abuse and torture was an isolated incident, however, those perpetrators are involved with such activities would be held accountable. President Bush and his colleagues decided to set the conditions under which prisoners would be tortured and abused, as revealed first in the photographs taken in 2003 at Abu Ghraib prison (Fay, 2004; Jones, 2005:991-1018; Schlesinger, 2004; Taguba, 2004).

In 2003 the International Committee of Red Cross (ICRC) visited fourteen US detention sites where they found that the US and coalition forces abuse and torture the detainees (Lewis, 2004). The ICRC also reported that following torture techniques are used in these detention sites (Red Cross, 2004):

- Brutality against protected persons upon capture and initial custody;
- Sometimes causing death or serious injury;
- Absence of notification of arrest;
- Physical or psychological coercion during interrogation;
- Prolonged solitary confinement in cells devoid of daylight;
- Excessive and disproportionate use of force.
- Hooding to disorient and interfere with breathing;
- Handcuffing with flexi-cuffs that injured wrists;
- Beatings with hard objects;
- Threats against family members;
- Pressing the face into the ground with boots;
- Solitary confinement without cloths and interfere with breathing;
- Handcuffing with the flexi-cuffs that injured wrists;
- Beatings with hard objects;
- Threats against family members;
- Pressing the face into the ground with boots;
- Solitary confinement without cloths; and
- Acts of humiliation.

The New York Times (12 January 2005) also listed the following tortures of the US and its coalition forces are used on the detainees in their detention camps:

- Urinating on detainees;
- Jumping on detainee's leg with such force that it could not thereafter heal properly;
- Continuing by pounding detainee's wounded leg with collapsible metal baton;
- Pouring phosphoric acid on detainees;
- Sodomization of detainees with a baton; and
- Tying ropes to the detainee's legs or penises and dragging them across the floor.

These torture techniques are mainly used to make sensory deprivation during interrogation the suspicious person and it causes disorientation, isolation, and dread. Almost all of the above mentioned techniques of torture are officially banned in the world. For instance, the practice of 'hooding' was officially banned since 1972 but it was discovered to have been applied in 2003 and 2004 on Iraqi prisoners who were held by American troops. An Iraqi civilian named Baha Mousa died in British custody after being hooded and beaten (Townsend, 2004). In case of extraordinary rendition by the US suspicious person are usually hooded, apparently as part of 'standard operating procedures' (Drogin, 2009). The photograph of Khalid Sheikh Mohammed can be put as a vibrant example to prove it.

The War against Terror, Torture and Enforced Disappearances

The US policy of War against Terror is highly criticised due to enforced disappearance of the detainees in last few years. Enforced disappearances are happened when "individuals are deprived of their liberty by state agents and the state fails to provide information about their fate or whereabouts; through these actions, detainees are placed outside the protection of law" (Chrgj, 2005). Disappearances include the following practices (Lendman, 2008):

- Individuals (often unidentified) held in secret the US-run or controlled 'black sites;'
- Individuals in foreign-based sites under the US control or direction;
- Individuals 'extraordinary renditioned' to 'black' or other sites; and
- Individuals held in conflict areas and not properly registered and/or identified, i.e. as CIA 'ghost prisoners' on US military facilities like at Bagram in Afghanistan.

The motives of enforced disappearances might be linked with the intention to hide the evidence of torture.

The War against Terror, Torture and Black Site as Secret Prison

Black site is a secret prison which is mainly operated by the CIA in the outside of the US territory and legal jurisdiction to detain alleged unlawful enemy combatants in its War against Terror. The Washington Post claimed the existence of the black sites in November 2005 (Dana, 2005). After that President Bush acknowledged the existence of the black sites during his speech on 6 September 2006 (BBC, 7 September 2006). The European Parliament also stated that the CIA operated 1,245 flights to and from of Poland and Romania. It is the supporting evidence of the existence of secret detention centres in these two countries. Some secret prisons are situated in the US allied Middle East and Asian countries such as Afghanistan, Morocco, Libya, and Egypt. At least 14 European countries are accused to their involvement with 'unlawful interstate transfer' and secret flights of detainees. These countries are: Britain, Germany, Italy, Sweden, Isle of Man, Bosnia, Macedonia, Turkey, Spain, Cyprus, Ireland, Greece, Portugal, Romania, Poland (BBC, 7 June 2006). The detainees are sent to these secret sites for the purpose of applying enhanced interrogation techniques on them to detect the conspiracies. All secret prisons have instruments which cause severe pain and suffering to the detainees. Applying of water boarding, stress positions, hypothermia, hooding and dogs to interrogate the suspicious person are common in the all secret prisons of the US and allied forces. Secret prisons are mainly built to conceal the operation of torture on the detainees from the media, human rights groups and public.

But two paradigms, extralegal and legal, in dealing with terrorist activity in 'covert interrogation centres' are referred to the CIA. The ghost detainees are extralegal prisoners whose identity has not been revealed. For this they deprived of any Habeas Corpus rights. The CIA claimed that they should not be accused for extralegal activities for two reasons: all prisons are situated in the outside of the US territory, and legal process is only required within the legal jurisdiction of the US. Italy defended in the same manner to the response of the criticisms for the activities of kidnapping of the suspicious person in its territory. In addition, the allegation of the existence of rendition, kidnap, and secret prisons put pressure on the governments across the Europe as it violates the European Convention on Human Rights. The European Union (EU) Justice and Home Affairs warned that if any EU member state is found with a guilty of participating in the CIA's alleged conduct would lose its voting rights (Crane, 2005). European human rights groups, civil societies, political leaders, and academics are insisting their respective governments to be confirmed that their governments and any officials of their states were/are not involved in secret US rendition plots, secret prisons, and torture cells.

These extralegal and extrajudicial practices of the US in the name of War against Terror have revealed strong anti-American sentiments. The opposition and human rights groups in some European countries, for example, Italy and German have demanded the explanation behind the kidnap of suspicious person, extraordinary rendition, and secret flights on their territories. As a result it became more cumbersome for these countries to cooperate not only with the policy of War against Terror but also in any future counterterrorism programmes of the US.

The revelation of abusing the prisoners has increased concern among lawmakers, foreign governments, NGOs, and human rights activists about the 'opaque' CIA system. Even this secret detention and torture system has been increasingly debated within the CIA where considerable concern lingers about its legality, morality and practicality. From my point of view the CIA sends the detainees in the secret prisons in the outside of the US inland due to apply torture and ill treatment on them as it is illegal for the US government in its inland. Even these secret prisons and use of torture on the detainees are illegal under the laws of host countries.

The Parliaments of Canada, Italy, Netherlands, France, and Sweden have started inquiries into alleged CIA operations that secretly captured their citizens or legal residents and transferred them to its prisons for interrogation through applying inhuman tortures (Priest, 2005). Amnesty International emphasised that the CIA has crossed the 'red lines' of democracy, rule of law, and ethos of freedom and liberty due to applying torture and secret detention policies of the War against Terror.

Torture versus International Conventions and Laws

130 countries including the US signed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which mentions "No one should be subject to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment" (Article 5). Furthermore, the US Army Manual prohibits "the use of force, mental torture, threats, insults or exposure to unpleasant and inhuman treatment of any kind." The US signed the four Geneva Conventions which strictly prohibit any kind of physical or psychological coercion and torture or inhuman treatment on prisoners of war. The US Congress also passed the War Crimes Act in 1996 to ban all war crimes based on Geneva Conventions.

But surprisingly the US does not agree to consider the War against Terror as 'war' according to all signed conventions and treaties. The US argument is that the War against Terror is not a conventional war against a nation or state; it is a war against all terrors and terrorist groups around the world. For this

Geneva Conventions and other international laws on torture and war crime do not apply to the detainees whom captured from several places under the War against Terror.

Amnesty International stated that the 'so-called' War against Terror has led to violation of fundamental rights, highlighted by the increasing use and acceptance of torture and other cruel, inhuman, and degrading treatment. It has already launched 12 points programme for the prevention of torture. The International Court of Justice (ICJ) deplored the decision of the US Justice Department to explain the legal architects of the US torture policy in terms of professional misconduct in 22 February 2010. In addition, Human Rights Watch (HRW) emphasised on a full investigation into detention facility and the prosecution of those found guilty of misconduct with detainees. Director for HRW Brad Adams argued that the War against Terror cannot be won by restoring to illegal detentions and torture. He further added that it is the time for the US to decide whether it will continue to be complicit in criminal activity in its War against Terrorism, or whether the rule of law will prevail (Adams, 2005).

Torture and State Secrecy

The United Nations (UN) and the Council of Europe criticised the US and the UK for undermining democracy and making the world more dangerous place in the name of War against Terror. Both organisations emphasised that the prosecution of the War against Terror and use of torture and degrading treatment on detainees in Guantanamo Bay, Iraq and Afghanistan has become a serious threat and risk to the rule of law and human rights since the fall of Nazi Germany (Mackay, 2005). Both states maintain secrecy about tortures and inhuman treatment on the detainees. The case of Binyam Mohamed² is a vibrant example in this regard. Then UK Foreign Secretary David Miliband refused to release details of how the UK knew about Mohamed's treatment and claimed that it would discourage the US from sharing intelligence in the future. Judges

² Benyam Mohammed is an Ethiopian national and asylum in United Kingdom, who was arrested in Pakistan as infiltrator and transported first to Morocco under the US illegal extraordinary rendition programme prison between 2004 and 2009 without charges. Mohamed has since said that the evidence against him was obtained using torture and denied any confession (BBC, 2008). The US released him and dropped its charges against him. After his arrival in the UK on 23 February 2009, he filed suit against the government for collusion by MI5 and MI6 in his torture by the US. The UK court of appeal ruled that Mohamed had been subjected to "cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment by the United States authorities" (The Telegraph, 2010) and he had been awarded him 1 million pound compensation in settlement in 2011. Details can be found at: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Binyam_Mohamed#cite_ref-4 [Accessed 08 December 2013].

on both states have had enough of governments hiding behind national security 'secrets' to shield themselves from their many trespasses in the War against Terror. Both states claimed that exposing state crimes jeopardises the state's ability to protect its citizens from terrorist attacks (The Guardian, 11 February 2010). But it should consider that "torture is a crime; it is not a state secret" (Harwood, 2010).

The US and its cronies did not acknowledge their involvement with torture until the photographs of tortures at the Abu Ghriab prison was published. With the pressure of subsequent criticisms of human rights groups and media compelled the US to acknowledge their involvement with tortures practices and abuses prisoners. The US claimed that the use of torture against the detainees is absolutely individual acts of a number of lower level soldiers. Jaffer and Singh (2007) denied the US claim and they argued that senior officials are involved to endorse the torture and abuse the prisoners. Indeed a number of senior officials are involved with the torture and they have become a part of torture policy through their following involvements:

- sometimes by tolerating it;
- sometimes by encouraging it; and
- sometimes by expressly authorising it.

Jaffer and Singh (2007) show that torture and abuse the prisoners is not only happened at Abu Ghraib but also it was practiced in the different prisons and torture cells of Iraq, Afghanistan, and Guantanamo Bay.

The Rationality behind Torture in the War against Terror

There are some examples which show that torture can bring positive outcome for the wellbeing of the greater community as a whole although torture is an absolute moral evil which violates fundamental human rights. In 1995 the Philippines government saved thousands of lives from deaths horribly through applying torture on a suspicious person named Abdul Hakim Murad. The government revealed a murderous conspiracy of hijacking the US passenger jets and crash them into the Pacific Ocean.

Italian Prime Minister Berlusconi claimed that the halo of a higher civilisation, there is plenty of experience from which to assess the utility of torture as an instrument of counter terrorism (Harrison, 2001).

Although torture is inescapably a moral issue and it represents a fundamental disregard for human dignity and moral agency, 47 percent of the US people believe that torture is acceptable in at least some circumstances (Davia, 2008). Those are the supporters of torture even if only in exceptional

and extreme situations, they often rely on the hypothetical 'ticking-bomb.' There are three arguments to defend torture in the US War against Terror:

- Innocent lives are saved through the use of torture on the suspicious detainees to detect the information of conspiracies.
- Other terrorists in the outside of the prisons or who are not caught by the security forces would be frightened to see the torment of the terrorists that keeps away them from the terrorist activities and conspiracies of terrorisms.
- "Torture is a defensive action similar to fighting a war against a nation that poses an imminent threat" (Davia, 2008).

Therefore Bush argued that when the captured were taken into these secret centres of the CIA the suspicious detainees provided information which helped the US from the following assaults (The White House, 2006). The US argued in the favour of torture in secret prisons due to the following reasons (The White House, 2006):

- to protect the American people;
- to break up a cell of South Asian terrorists operatives that had been groomed for attacks inside the US;
- to disrupt an Al-Qaeda operation to develop anthrax for terrorist attacks;
- to stop a planned strike on a US Marine camp on Djibouti;
- to prevent a planned attack on the US Consulate in Karachi; and
- to foil a plot to hijack passenger planes and to fly them into Heathrow Airport and London's Canary Wharf.

Indeed the War Against Terror is an asymmetric war and "any nation involved in an asymmetric struggle would do well to engage the enemy at the strategic level of war, employing all the instruments of power, rather than rest its hopes of victory on the piecemeal and questionable bits of information torture may provide" Santucci (2008).

Conclusion

All arguments in the favour of torture are controversial to all established rules, laws and conventions. Even the use of torture contradicts with the laws and constitution of individual states that are involved with such immoral practices. Authoritarian regimes and uncivilised states can practice such types of immoral and brutal activities on the detainees in the name of detecting information on the conspiracies against the state, humanity, peace, and stability. But it is a matter of disgrace that a civilised, democratic, and welfare state which has promises to establish human rights and peaceful society throughout

the world can involve with inhuman and degrading activities like torture on the suspicious person to reveal information on conspiracy in the name of War Against Terror. The policy of War Against Terror can bring positives changes in the world order in terms of establishing peace and stability, preventing all forms of terrorist activities including Islamic terrorism, and assuring human rights of all people disregarding caste, colour, notational identity, and religion not only in the US and Europe but also around the world, however, the use of torture on the detainees who are imprisoned as suspicious person of involving terrorism will spawn the criticism not only against the use of torture but also against the overall policy of the War Against Terror.

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Bangladesh-China Relationship at the Dawn of the Twenty-first Century

*Noor Mohammad Sarker**

Abstract

Bangladesh-China bilateral relationship has its foothold right through the historical records of two thousand years. Ever since the establishment of the formal diplomatic relationship in October 1975, Bangladesh and China continued to be closer friends and development partners. Their relationship is often termed as 'trusted friendship' or 'all weather friendship'. Successful bilateral cooperation between Bangladesh and China has been attained in a number of sectors, including politics, economy, military and culture. Over the years, they have signed quite a lot of bilateral treaties, agreements, and memoranda of understandings on mutual economic engagement, cultural sharing, infrastructure development, educational exchange and military support. Mutual reciprocity based on shared interests has largely contributed to keep Bangladesh-China bilateral relations sustainable over time. In this milieu, the objective of the present study is to offer a comprehensive approach to Bangladesh-China bilateral relations at the dawn of the twenty-first century. It elucidates the historical development of this bilateral relationship; goes through its various dimensions; identifies major challenges; and suggest a bunch of policy imperatives to foster this friendship.

Opening Statement

Bangladesh, a junior entrant in the community of nations, sought to establish her identity in the international world, not merely as Muslim country, but as a nation wedded to peace and nonalignment seeking to develop her relations

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with others on the basis of equality and friendship.¹ But the path towards the international arena was, however, not a smooth one for her. Establishing relationship with China can be a premier example.

In the context of having friendly relationship with Pakistan as well as continued hostilities with India, China opposed to the emergence of Bangladesh as an independent state during the Liberation War of 1971. Even in the aftermath of the Liberation War, China frequently exercised its veto power at the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) while Bangladesh went for the United Nations' (UN) membership. It was only after the 1974 Bangladesh-Pakistan-India Trilateral Treaty that China finally took out its resistance to UN recognition of Bangladesh. In the context of post-August 1975 scenario, China eventually recognized Bangladesh as an independent state.²

However, the contemporary depiction of Bangladesh-China relations has far been stronger than the earlier periods. Ever since establishing the bilateral diplomatic relations, the Bangladesh-China friendship has come a long way, and, despite the radical changes that have occurred during this period in the domestic politics of both the countries as well as in international arena, the cooperation between them has endured and intensified. Successful bilateral cooperation has been attained in a number of sectors, including politics, economy, military and culture.³ Over the time, China has proved to be a time-tested and reliable partner of Bangladesh.

This manuscript attempts to provide a comprehensive understanding on the Bangladesh-China bilateral relationship at the dawn of the twenty-first century. With a brief overview on the historical development, it also focuses on the recent developments in Sino-Bangladesh relations and their significance for both countries. In addition, the study identifies some major impediments throughout this bilateral relationship in the contemporary era. Subsequently, it provides a bunch of important guidelines on the part of Bangladesh as well as of China to improve their bilateral relationship based on the present-day needs, and, to this extent, draws the concluding remarks.

Backdrop of Bangladesh-China Relationship

Before 1971

China is Bangladesh's near neighbor. China's border is 100 kilometers (approximately 60 miles) from Bangladesh in the north over the Himalayas.

¹ Harun ur Rashid, *Foreign Relations of Bangladesh*, Varanasi, India: Rishi Publications, 2001.

² G.W. Chowdhury, *The Last Days of United Pakistan*, Dhaka: University Press Limited, 1998.

³ Khaled Iqbal Chowdhury, "Bangladesh-China Relations: A Summit Preview," *BIPSS Special Report*, Dhaka, 2010.

The historical attachments between the ancient territory of China and Bengal can be traced back to two thousand years ago. A number of factors, including the trade relationship through the southern Silk route, exchange between these ancient cultures, and their knowledge and technologies have historically fostered the relationship. The glimpse of that relationship can be found, in fact, from the historical records left, mostly, by travelers, such as Fa Hien in early fifth century and Hue en Tsang in seventh century from China, and Atish Dipankar in eleventh century from Bangladesh. Historians have also recorded that Sultan Gias Uddin Azam Shah of Bengal had sent some rich tributes to the then Emperor of China. Even some historians consider that the name of the Chittagong Sea-port of Bangladesh has derived from Chinese "Xi Da Gang" (The Great Sea-port in the West), which was contrived by the Chinese Admiral Zheng He at the peak of Ming Dynasty rule. Historically, both of these countries share the common Asian values. However, the bilateral relationship between these countries was not merely focused before 1971.⁴

1971-1975

China supported Pakistan instead of Bangladesh during the Liberation War in 1971.⁵ Although China saw the crisis as a Cold War conspiracy of Indo-Soviet alliance to dismember the pro-United States 'Pakistan', there is a view that China never opposed the rights and demands of the neglected people of East Bengal.⁶ Therefore, China advised Pakistan to seek a political solution to the crisis. But, the bottom line was that China's role during the freedom struggle in 1971 disappointed the people of Bangladesh. However, in order to improve bilateral relations, before giving the formal recognition, China supported the admission of Bangladesh's membership in the UN in June 1974 at the meeting of UNSC.⁷ China's such kind of opening relations with Bangladesh initiated a positive indication of bilateral relations between the two countries. Following this, China finally recognized Bangladesh, nearly four years after its independence, on August 31, 1975.⁸ That recognition did not come out until

⁴ Zhang Xianyi, "History and Legend of Sino-Bangla Contacts," *The News Today*, September 28, 2010; see also, Md. Shahadat Hossain, "Sino-Bangladesh Relations: Friendship Unbounded," *The Independent*, October 22, 2010.

⁵ Harun ur Rashid, *Bangladesh Foreign Policy: Realities, Priorities and Challenges*, Dhaka: Academic Press and Publishers Library (APPL), 2010; see also, supra note 1; Ibne Golam Samad, "Bishwa Rajneetite Chin (China in World Politics)," *The Daily Naya Diganta*, December 27, 2010.

⁶ Supra note 2.

⁷ Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury, "Bangladesh-China: An Emerging Equation in Asian Diplomatic Calculations," *ISAS Working Paper*, No. 105, Singapore, 2010.

⁸ Harun ur Rashid, 2010, in supra note 5; see also, supra note 1.

the assassination of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the founding President of Bangladesh, on August 15, 1975. Ultimately, China started opening her diplomatic missions in Bangladesh on October 4, 1975.⁹

From the beginning of their bilateral relationship, Bangladesh needed China as a counter-weight to India while China desired that Bangladesh will not become a satellite of India.¹⁰ Therefore, the ascent of the bilateral relationship was dramatic and, in that way, China entered into a big way as a development partner in Bangladesh. Eventually, the ties deepened and the past was forgotten. Afterward, Bangladesh's bilateral relationship with China has been guided by the key principles of her foreign policy, which encompass the protection of her own sovereignty, the preservation of her territorial integrity, the development of regional as well as international relations, and, thereby, ensuring international cooperation to advance domestic socio-political, economic and cultural growth.¹¹

1975-1982

After the establishment of formal diplomatic channel in 1975, the bilateral relationship between Bangladesh and China has become one of the key concerns of all the successive governments of Bangladesh. The leaders of the government of Bangladesh, disregarding their political strands, regularly visited China and met with top Chinese leaders to strengthen the bilateral relations in every possible arena.¹²

For instance, the former President of Bangladesh, Ziaur Rahman, made the first high-level official visit from Bangladesh to China in January, 1977. In March 1978, the then Chinese Vice President Li Xiannian was also invited to visit Bangladesh. It was the first ever official visit by any Chinese leadership to Bangladesh. During his visit, two countries signed an agreement of cooperation in economy, science and technology. Later on, President Ziaur Rahman once again visited China in August 1980. During that visit, both parties signed two agreements on bilateral loans and aviation transportation.¹³

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ *Ibid*; see also, Ashley J. Tellis and Sean Mirski, *Crux of Asia: China, India and the Emerging Global Order*, Washington D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2013.

¹¹ See, *Embassy of the People's Republic of Bangladesh to China*, "Political Relations," at: <http://web68788.vhost056.cn/em/gxgx.asp>, accessed October 3, 2013; also visit: http://web68788.vhost056.cn/bengaltest/list.php?t_rid=82&lang=en, accessed October 7, 2013.

¹² Harun ur Rashid, "35th anniversary of Bangladesh-China diplomatic ties," *The Daily Star*, October 20, 2010.

¹³ *Supra* note 1.

1982-1990

Following the assassination of the President Ziaur Rahman in 1980, the subsequent army chief Lt. Col. Hussain Mohammad Ershad came into Presidency. During his tenure, President Ershad visited China numerous times between 1982 and 1990, i.e. in November 1982, July 1985, July 1987, November 1988 and June 1990. During his meetings with Chinese leaders, President Ershad frequently expressed the potentiality of Bangladesh-China relations, which is based on mutual trust and comparable interests.¹⁴ On the other hand, the Chinese Premiers stressed that the bilateral relationship was that of common understanding and reciprocal support. Indeed, China repeatedly appreciated Bangladesh's stand on remaining to 'One-China' policy¹⁵ and having no official relationship with Taiwan.¹⁶ Both the countries sequentially signed numerous bilateral agreements on science and technology, and the formulation of meeting-procedures between the officials of the two Foreign Ministries.

In March 1986, during the visit of Chinese Vice President Li Xiannian, both sides reaffirmed their determination to continue Bangladesh-China friendship and to expand mutual collaboration for propping up Bangladesh-China relations to an advanced level. Furthermore, in November 1989, Chinese Premier Li Peng paid an official goodwill visit to Bangladesh. During this visit, both parties signed two agreements on trade and mutual exemption of visas.¹⁷

1990-1996

In June 1991, the then Bangladeshi Prime Minister Khaleda Zia paid a friendly visit to China. During the bilateral talks with Chinese leadership, Khaleda Zia expressed special gratitude to her Chinese counterparts for providing emergency support at the time when Bangladesh severely suffered from hurricane in 1991. The Chinese leadership also reaffirmed that it would consistently be a China's policy to develop friendly relationship with Bangladesh, which would not be affected by any detrimental factors generated either from international affairs or by the domestic circumstances of Bangladesh. Following these improvements, in 1994, the then Chinese Foreign Minister paid a visit to Bangladesh to advance mutual relationship.¹⁸

¹⁴ Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the People's Republic of China, "China and Bangladesh", August 25, 2003, at: <http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/topics/wzlcflyeng/lbjmjl/t15842.htm>, accessed November 23, 2013.

¹⁵ The 'One-China' policy refers to the policy or view that there is only one state called 'China', despite the existence of two governments that claim to be 'China.'

¹⁶ Supra note 8.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ Supra note 1 & 14.

1996-2001

In September 1996, the then Bangladeshi Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina visited China. In fact, it was her first visit to any foreign country after assuming the Prime Minister's Office. She expressed thanks to China for its multidimensional support to Bangladesh and showed her keenness to learn successful practices from China to develop the national economic condition. During her visit, two countries also signed a number of agreements, including the 'Agreement on Encouraging and Protecting Investment,' the 'Agreement for the Avoidance of Double Taxation,' and the 'Agreement of the Prevention of Tax Evasion.'¹⁹

During April 1999, Li Peng, the then Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress of China, paid an official goodwill visit to Bangladesh. During his bilateral conversation with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, the Prime Minister expressed heartfelt thanks to the Chinese government for its generous and continuous support to Bangladesh. In September 2000, at the Millenium Summit, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina attended the breakfast meeting invited by the then Chinese President Jiang Zemin.²⁰ On October 4, 2000, Bangladesh celebrated the 25th anniversary of China-Bangladesh bilateral relationship with the debut of a commemorative postal stamp (Image 1). The Chinese ambassador expressed pleasure for Bangladesh's consistent support. Moreover, during this period, China provided economic assistance of an amount of 1.8 billion Yuan (US\$217 million) to Bangladesh.²¹

Image 1: Bangladesh-China Friendship Postal Stamp (2000)



Source: www.bdstamps.com

¹⁹ Tarique Niazi, "China's March on South Asia," *Asia Media Archives*, April 26, 2005, at: <http://www.asiamedia.ucla.edu/article.asp?parentid=23468>, accessed October 17, 2013.

²⁰ Xiao Wang, "Neighborly relationship bonds China, Bangladesh," *China Daily*, March 26, 2008.

²¹ Anand Kumar, "Changing Dynamics of Sino-Bangladesh Relations," *South Asia Analysis Group*, Paper No. 1345, India, April 21, 2005.

2001-2006

In 2002, the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) led four-party coalition government in Bangladesh adopted a 'Look East' policy²² to maximize economic and strategic achievements that could emerge from closer relations with East Asian countries, especially China.²³ Chinese Premier Zhu Rongji visited Bangladesh in January 2002 and held bilateral conversation with the then Prime Minister Khaleda Zia, where both the parties reiterated to further strengthen the Bangladesh-China friendship and cooperation, including special highlights on bilateral economic cooperation and trade. The two sides signed several agreements, including:

1. Agreement on Economic and Technical Cooperation.
2. Certificate of Handover of the Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Center.
3. Executive Program of the Cultural Agreement for a period from 2001 to 2003.

Furthermore, in December 2002, Prime Minister Khaleda Zia paid a goodwill visit to China. During her visit, the two countries again signed several agreements, including 'Exchange of Letters Regarding the Loan Used for the Project of Bangladesh-China Friendship International Conference Center to Be Converted to Grant,' 'Agreement on Economic and Technical Cooperation,' and two more.²⁴ During her visit to China in 2004, Khaleda Zia had reaffirmed Bangladesh's stand over 'One-China' policy.²⁵

In May of 2004, Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia met Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao when she attended the Global Poverty Alleviation Conference in Shanghai. In April, 2005, the Chinese Prime Minister Wen Jiabao had also made an official visit to Bangladesh and both countries declared 2005 as the 'Bangladesh-China Friendship Year'.²⁶ After the summit meeting between Prime Minister Khaleda Zia and Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao nine accords were signed, including five agreements, two memoranda of understanding (MoUs), a contract and an exchange of letters. Overall, Jibao expressed that China and

²² Policy of giving special focus on international relations of Bangladesh with East Asian countries.

²³ Harun ur Rashid, "Bangladesh's Look East Policy," *The Daily Star*, February 19, 2006.

²⁴ *Supra* note 14.

²⁵ *The Daily Star*, "Dhaka reaffirms one China policy," May 27, 2004.

²⁶ Ruksana Kibria, "Strategic implications of Bangladesh-China relations," *They Daily Star*, February 19, 2006.

Bangladesh were committed to establishing a comprehensive and cooperative partnership of long term friendship, equality, and mutual benefits.²⁷

2006-2008

When Cyclone Sidr hit Bangladesh in 2007, China donated US\$1 million for relief and reconstruction in cyclone-hit areas. Former Chief Adviser to the Caretaker Government of Bangladesh Dr. Fakhruddin Ahmed paid an official working visit to China from 15-18 September 2008.²⁸

2008-2013

Bangladesh and China both celebrated 2010 as the 35th anniversary of their bilateral friendship. During Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's visit to China on March 18-21, 2010, Bangladesh showed a keen attempt to improve bilateral relationship with the country with a view to ensuring China's contribution for the construction of a deep sea-port, implementation of Kunming Initiative and so on.²⁹ During this visit, Bangladesh also signed three accords with China,³⁰ these are:

1. Economic and Technical Cooperation Agreement.
2. Framework Agreement on Shahjalal Fertiliser Factory.
3. Agreement on the 7th Bangladesh-China Friendship Bridge.

During this period, China's investment to Bangladesh amounted around US\$200 million. Moreover, China has rapidly been moving faster to be the largest trading partner of Bangladesh in the Asian region. In addition, China has freed Bangladesh from bilateral debts of worth more than 600 million Chinese yen in 2011.³¹ In Fiscal Year (FY) 2012-13, Bangladesh's import from China amounted around US\$6500 million, whereas the country's export to China calculated around US\$460 million (See: Table 1).

²⁷ *People's Daily*, "China, Bangladesh hail bilateral relationship: Joint Communiqué," April 9, 2005; Haroon Habib, "Bangladesh, China sign nine agreements," *The Hindu*, April 9, 2005.

²⁸ Md. Shahadat Hossain, 2010, in supra note 4.

²⁹ M. Jashim Uddin and Mahbubur Rashid Bhuiyan, "Sino-Bangladesh Relations: An Appraisal," *BISS Journal*, Vol. 32, No. 1, January 2011, pp. 1-24.

³⁰ Ruksana Kibria, "Bangladesh-China bilateral relations (Final part)," *The Daily Sun*, October 5, 2011.

³¹ Mohammad Amjad Hossain, "Foreign relations of Bangladesh under Awami League government," *The Daily Sun*, October 13, 2013.

Dimensions of Bangladesh-China Relationship

Political Dimension

On October 4, 1975 official diplomatic relationship was established between Bangladesh and China.³² After more than three and half decades, it has evolved into not only a diplomatic connection but also a grand realm of reciprocity. Bangladesh changed its foreign policy outlooks focusing on China, dramatically, after the historic change of the Government of Bangladesh on August 15, 1975.³³ Bangladesh had as much as necessary circumstances for moving back from its sphere of friendship with India and directing it to China. Bangladesh became deeply frustrated with India's posture in the post Liberation War context, especially on the water-related issues and the land-boundary delimitation. Even the founding leader of Bangladesh, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, was agitated by a number of tactless policies of India and, consequently, was focusing on China for leverage in dealing with India.³⁴ So, gradually, Bangladesh attempted to strengthen its strategic relations with China. Ultimately, the mutual collaboration on several issues, including economic, military, cultural, educational, science and technological, has helped to construct outstanding political and diplomatic ties between these two countries.³⁵

After the assassination of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, President Ziaur Rahman attempted to promote a sustainable friendly relationship with China. For the first time, as a Bangladeshi supreme leader, he visited China twice during 1977 and 1980, and also invited the Chinese leaders to visit Bangladesh.³⁶ Following these, the visit of the Chinese Vice-Premier Li Shien Nien accompanied by the Foreign Minister Huang Hua to Bangladesh in March 1978 was marked as a significant development in the bilateral diplomatic relationship between two countries.³⁷ Since then, the friendly bilateral political relationship between the two countries has been operating decisively. During his visit to Dhaka in 2010, former Chinese Vice President Xi Jinping admitted that, Bangladesh-China

³² Supra note 1 & 12; Harun ur Rashid, "36th Anniversary of Sino-Bangladesh ties," *The Daily Star*, October 19, 2011.

³³ K. M. Rehan Salahuddin, "China-Bangladesh bilateral relation: Friendship with mutual cooperation," *China.org.cn*, October 8, 2010, at: http://www.china.org.cn/opinion/2010-10/08/content_21078441.htm, accessed October 19, 2013.

³⁴ M. Serajul Islam, "Four Decades of Bangladesh Foreign Policy," *The Daily Sun*, March 26, 2011.

³⁵ Supra note 21.

³⁶ Mohammad Amjad Hossain, "Foreign Policy under Ziaur Rahman," *The Daily Star*, May 31, 2008; see also, supra note 1.

³⁷ Subhash Kapila, "Bangladesh-China Defense Cooperation Agreement's Strategic Implications: An Analysis," *South Asia Analysis Group*, Paper No. 582, India, January 14, 2003.

relations would always remain healthy and well, no matter how the domestic and international situation would change.³⁸ Hence, apart from the own political strand, supreme leaders of Bangladesh have repeatedly visited China, met with their Chinese counterparts, and signed a plethora of treaties and agreements to foster bilateral friendship.³⁹ Both the countries share mostly analogous opinions on various international and regional issues and carry out close coordination with each other in the international sphere.⁴⁰

Economic Dimension

After the recognition in August 1975, China came forward with economic assistance that was very much needed at that time for rebuilding a war-torn country like Bangladesh. In this milieu, China became the major driving factor in Bangladesh's foreign policy.⁴¹ Since 1975, bilateral economic and trade cooperation between China and Bangladesh have significantly developed with the continuing growth in cooperation fields.⁴² Table 1 and Figure 1 present the numerical analyses of Bangladesh's trade with China starting from FY 2000-01 to FY 2012-13.

Table 1: Trade Volume of Bangladesh with China (in million \$US)

Fiscal Years	Export to China	Import from China	Trade Ratio	Trade Gap with China	Amount of Total Trade
2000-2001	11.67	708.94	1: 60.75	697.27	720.61
2001-2002	18.92	657.78	1: 34.77	638.86	676.70
2002-2003	19.50	779.50	1: 41.79	760	799
2003-2004	45.65	1132.72	1: 24.81	1087.07	1178.37
2004-2005	56.07	1643.77	1: 28.58	1587.70	1699.84
2005-2006	64.35	2078.99	1: 32.31	2014.64	2143.34
2006-2007	92.97	2572.62	1: 27.67	2479.65	2665.59
2007-2008	106.95	3136.70	1: 29.33	3029.75	3243.65
2008-2009	97.06	3451.47	1: 35.56	3354.41	3548.53
2009-2010	178.63	3819.28	1: 21.38	3640.65	3997.91
2010-2011	319.66	5912.55	1: 18.49	5592.89	6232.21
2011-2012	401.94	6433.21	1:16	6031.27	6835.15
2012-2013	458.12	6324	1:13.8	5865.88	6782.12

Source: Bangladesh Bank (2013).

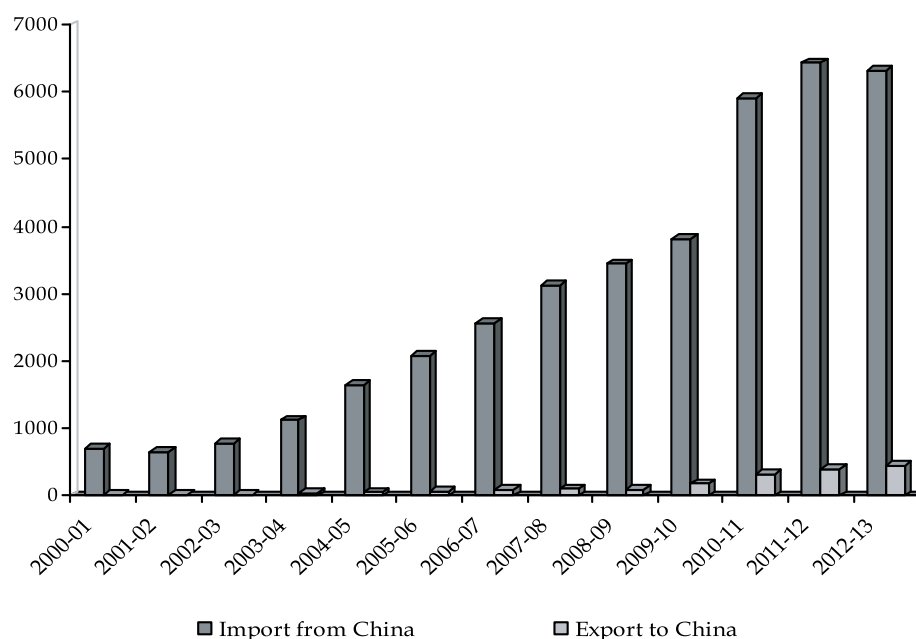
³⁸ *Xinhua*, June 19, 2010.

³⁹ *Supra* note 1.

⁴⁰ *Supra* note 11.

⁴¹ *Supra* note 34.

⁴² *Supra* note 11.

Figure 1: Bangladesh's Trade with China (in million US\$)

Source: Bangladesh Bank (2013).

However, while looking at the highlighted segments of Bangladesh-China bilateral trade, in 2003 alone, total trade volume amounted US\$1.368 billion with an increase of 12.45% from 2002.⁴³ Besides, bilateral trade between these two countries was arrived at US\$3 billion in 2005 from US\$100 million in 2002.⁴⁴ As of 2009, the volume of trade between the countries stood at about US\$4.5 billion.⁴⁵ Even, China overtook India as the largest trading partner of Bangladesh.⁴⁶ Table 2 shows the amount of China's and India's trade with Bangladesh from 2000 to 2010.

⁴³ Supra note 14 & 19.

⁴⁴ Reazul Karim, "China keen to boost ties with South Asian countries," *The Daily Star*, July 7, 2008.

⁴⁵ Urvashi Aneja, "China-Bangladesh Relations: An Emerging Strategic Partnership?" *IPCS Special Report*, India: Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies (IPCS), 2006.

⁴⁶ Sreeradha Datta, "Bangladesh's Relations with China and India: A Comparative Study," *Strategic Analysis*, Vol. 32, Issue 5, September 2008.

Table 2: China's and India's Trade with Bangladesh (in million US\$)

Year	China's Exports	India's Exports	China's Imports	India's Imports
2000	900	640	19	79
2001	955	776	17	89
2002	1066	1063	32	64
2003	1335	1026	33	56
2004	1906	1653	57	72
2005	2403	1613	79	69
2006	3090	1720	99	104
2007	3350	1668	114	224
2008	4556	2064	132	233
2009	4441	3243	141	330
2010	6789	2177	269	234

Source: The World Integrated Trade Solution (WITS), World Bank (2011).

So far, China has also replaced India as Bangladesh's biggest import destination. In 2005, for example, while Bangladesh's imports from China mounted to US\$495.5 million during the FY 2005-2006, imports from India amounted to US\$416.6 million. In contrast, during the FY 2005-2006, Bangladesh's import from India amounted to US\$1.9 billion while its import from China amounted to US\$1.52 billion.⁴⁷

China's major imports from Bangladesh are frozen foods, cotton textiles, fish, tea, chemical products, lather, raw jute, knitwear, etc. Conversely, major exports include textiles, machinery and electronic products, cement, fertilizer, tire, maize, organic chemicals, coffee, spices, organic foods, silk fabrics, etc.⁴⁸ Under the auspices of the Asia-Pacific Free Trade Agreement (AFTA), China removed tariff barriers to 84 types of import commodities from Bangladesh and has been working to reduce tariffs over the trade of jute and textiles, which are Bangladesh's chief domestic products.⁴⁹ Moreover, in 2010, China offered duty-free access to some 5,000 Bangladeshi products as a "goodwill gesture" in order to enhance economic ties between the two countries. The products include medicinal materials, leather, timber, textile, readymade garments and poultry products.⁵⁰

⁴⁷ Supra note 21.

⁴⁸ Bangladesh Bank, 2013.

⁴⁹ *The Economic Times*, "China grants over USD 10 mn aid to Bangladesh," July 23, 2007.

⁵⁰ *Weekly BLITZ*, "Sino-Bangladesh relations," June 17, 2010, at: <http://www.weeklyblitz.net/796/sino-bangladesh-relations>, accessed October 17, 2013.

On the other hand, by 2009, China's direct investment in Bangladesh had reached US\$88 million, much higher than in the previous two years. There are about 186 Chinese enterprises with a registered capital of US\$320 million in Bangladesh.⁵¹ Table 3 demonstrates China's outward Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) stock in Bangladesh from 2004 to 2010.

Table 3: China's Outward FDI Stock in Bangladesh (in million US\$)

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Total	44777.26	57205.62	75025.55	117910.50	183970.71	245755.38	317210.59
Bangladesh	8.66	32.96	39.66	43.30	48.14	60.30	67.58

Source: Ministry of Commerce, People's Republic of China (2011).

In terms of infrastructural development, China has already built six bridges in Bangladesh. For instance, the 4.8 km Mukhterpur Bridge over the *Dhaleswari* River, built by China Road and Bridge Corporation, was inaugurated as the 6th Bangladesh-China Friendship Bridge on February 18, 2008.⁵² All the bridges have contributed to the acceleration of socio-economic growth of the country, besides facilitating the movement of people and goods across the country.⁵³ Therefore, along with these six bridges, agreement was also signed with China for the construction of the 7th Bangladesh-China Friendship Bridge (Kazirtack Bridge) over the *Arial Khan* River in January 2012.⁵⁴ In addition, two countries attained preliminary official dialogues about the construction of the 8th Bangladesh-China Friendship Bridge (The Second Padma Bridge) over the *Padma* River in 2010.⁵⁵

Furthermore, China built the largest convention centre of Bangladesh, Bangabandhu International Convention Centre, at Dhaka as a token of 'gift' to the country from Chinese people.⁵⁶ China facilitated several construction projects in Bangladesh, including the construction of Boropukuria power plant and a nuclear power plan as well. In this regard, former Chinese Ambassador

⁵¹ Supra note 30.

⁵² See, *Bangladesh Bridge Authority*, "6th Bangladesh China Friendship Bridge (Mukhterpur Bridge)," at: <http://www.bba.gov.bd/6th-bangladesh-china-friendship-bridge-mukhterpur-bridge/>, accessed January 8, 2014.

⁵³ *Ibid.*

⁵⁴ *Xinhua*, "Bangladesh, China sign deal for 7th friendship bridge," January 4, 2012.

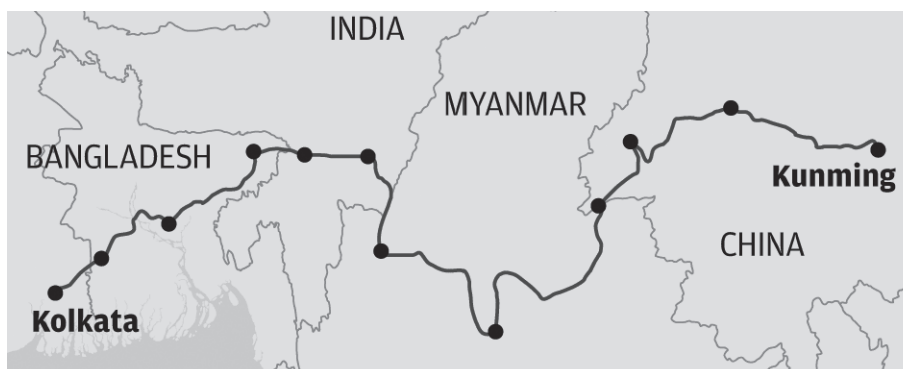
⁵⁵ *The Daily Star*, "PM reaches Beijing," March 18, 2010.

⁵⁶ Supra note 29.

Zheng Qing Dian remarked, “China and Bangladesh signed agreement on peaceful use of nuclear power in 2005, which clears the way for our civil nuclear cooperation.”⁵⁷

In April 2005, during the visit of Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao to Bangladesh, two sides agreed to establish direct air and road linkages between the two countries to further advance bilateral trade and investment. In this milieu, the direct flights between the capitals of the two countries have been started functioning since May 2005. The two sides also expressed consent over reviving the direct road connection through using the ancient Southern Silk route between Chinese city of Kunming and the Bangladeshi port city of Chittagong (See, Map 1).⁵⁸

Map 1: Southern Silk Road



Source: https://www.scmp.com/sites/default/files/2013/10/23/bcim-rally_2310.jpg

In this milieu, during her visit to China in March 2010, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina emphasized over China’s contribution to the construction of a deep seaport in Chittagong, facilitating Chittagong-Kunming road connection through Myanmar as well.⁵⁹

Defense and Military Dimension

Since the establishment of diplomatic relations, China and Bangladesh has had close cooperation in military field. Under the regime of President Ziaur

⁵⁷ *The Financial Express*, “China offers to help build nuclear power plant,” February 16, 2009.

⁵⁸ Supra note 11.

⁵⁹ *Gulf Times*, “China agrees to help in port expansion,” March 22, 2010; *The Daily Star*, “China keen on road, rail links,” August 30, 2010; see also, *The Financial Express*, “Dipu Moni for quick execution for Kunming Initiatives,” November 22, 2010.

Rahman, Bangladesh and China came very close in strategic cooperation.⁶⁰ The leaders of the two armed forces have exchanged visits frequently, which have contributed to the continuous development of friendship and cooperation between the two armed forces. So far, Bangladesh has entered into a long-term defense agreement with China.⁶¹ The main areas of cooperation in this sector have been the supply of armaments, military hardware and special equipment. The parties would cooperate in safeguarding, technical servicing and modernization of the above. There had also been cooperation in licensing the production of military hardware, training of technical personnel and exchange of relevant intelligence and data.⁶²

China has been a major supplier of defense materials to Bangladesh. The Bangladesh Army has been equipped with Chinese tanks, its navy has Chinese frigates and missile boats and the Bangladesh Air Force flies Chinese fighter jets, such as 16 F-7 BG fighter planes. In 2002, China and Bangladesh signed a "Defense Cooperation Agreement" which covers military training and defense production. It was the first such agreement signed by Bangladesh with any country.⁶³

However, China donated police equipment to Bangladesh as a part of the cooperative exertion between the Ministry of Home Affairs of Bangladesh and the Ministry of Public Security of China in 2006.⁶⁴ During Bangladesh Minister of State for Home Affairs' visit to China, both countries agreed to strengthen bilateral law enforcement cooperation.⁶⁵ In addition, China and Bangladesh have been considering an advanced mutual collaboration for the additional accompaniment of their individual contributions to UN Peacekeeping Missions.⁶⁶

Science and Technological Dimension

In March 1978, Bangladesh and China signed the 'Agreement of Cooperation on Science and Technology.' It was renewed in 1990. In between 1979 and 1991, the two countries held five meetings about bilateral cooperation on science and technology. In this regard, achievements had been attained in the following days about the bilateral cooperation on flood control and regulation of rivers.

⁶⁰ Supra note 34.

⁶¹ Supra note 1.

⁶² Nazmul Ashraf, "Dhaka-Beijing deal no threat to India," *Gulf News*, December 29, 2002.

⁶³ Supra note 3 & 45.

⁶⁴ *People's Daily*, "China donates police equipment to Bangladesh," March 23, 2006.

⁶⁵ *Xinhua*, "China-Bangladesh agree to deepen law-enforcement," April 25, 2006.

⁶⁶ Supra note 11.

In fact, officials and experts from the water conservancy departments of the two countries exchanged frequent visits and signed an MOU about the technological support on water conservancy, which included dike arrangement and sectional design for the *Brahmaputra* River, regulating the River's watercourses and undertaking joint research on the issue.⁶⁷

Besides, to make the flood forecasting system in Bangladesh more effective, China has been providing hydrological data from the upstream of its *Yarlungzangbo* River. In this milieu, Bangladesh remains as a stakeholder in the 'Small Multi-mission Satellite' being developed by China National Space Administration. Two countries also agreed to cooperate in developing nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, especially to meet up the rising demand for power in Bangladesh.⁶⁸

Educational and Cultural Dimension

Two countries have always been maintaining an excellent range of cooperation in the areas of education and culture. Since 1976, Bangladesh and China started student-exchange program. In 2001, for example, 58 Bangladeshi students were pursuing their studies in China.⁶⁹ In 1986, the then Bangladesh government allocated funds to construct the first experimental primary school in Beijing. The school was named 'Sino-Bangladesh Friendship School'. Later, the Chinese Government has also increased scholarship quota for Bangladeshi students from 50 to 80 on an annual basis.⁷⁰

In November 1979, Bangladesh and China signed an agreement of cooperation on culture. Following the signing of the agreement, bilateral exchanges and cooperation in the areas of culture and sports have been constantly strengthened over time. A group of cultural representatives from Bangladesh visited China in 1997. Within a year, there were 18 bilateral visits in total between the two countries, comprised of 97 personnel. During 1998, China Hangzhou Youth Acrobatic Troupe visited Bangladesh. Afterward, the two countries again exchanged 7 visits, including 47 personnel.⁷¹

⁶⁷ Supra note 14; see also, *Economic and Commerce Counselor's Office Of the Embassy of the People's Republic of China in the People's Republic of Bangladesh*, "Cooperation in Science and Technology," at: <http://bd2.mofcom.gov.cn/sys/print.shtml?/bilateralcooperation/inbrief/200705/20070504675608>, accessed January 6, 2014.

⁶⁸ Supra note 11.

⁶⁹ CNN, "China assures Bangladesh of friendship," January 12, 2002, at: http://articles.cnn.com/2002-01-12/world/china.bangladesh_1_bangladesh-capital-dhaka-chinese-premier-zhu-rongji?_s=PM:asiapcf, accessed October 5, 2013.

⁷⁰ Supra note 28.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*

While experiencing the different cultural features, the two countries have also witnessed the development of bilateral cooperation in tourism sector over the years. For instance, in 2005, Bangladesh was awarded the Approved Destination Status (ADS) for Chinese tourists. Following this, the two countries signed an MOU to facilitate the 'Group Visits' by Chinese tourists to Bangladesh. Moreover, the number of Bangladeshi tourists visiting China has also increased significantly following the inauguration of direct flights between Dhaka and Beijing.

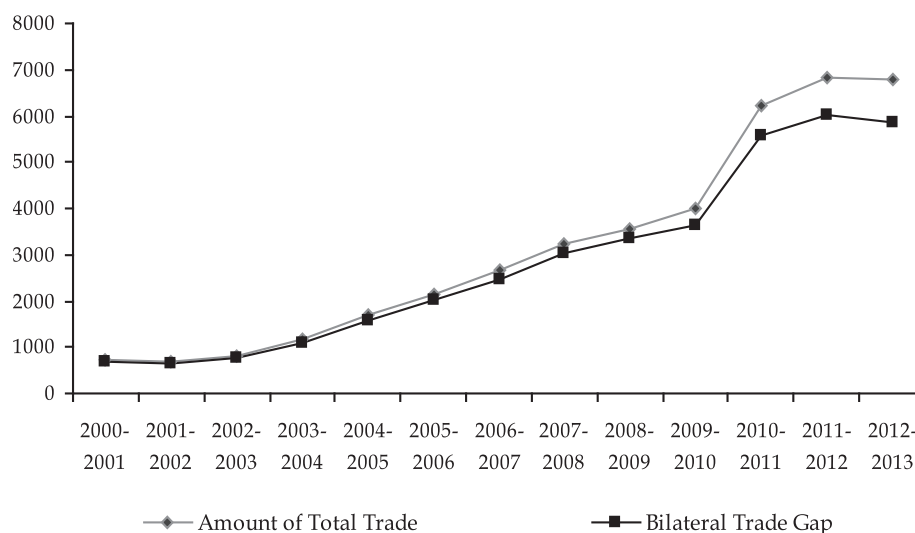
On the other hand, efforts have also been made by the Chinese government to draw attention to Bangladesh as a popular destination among the Chinese tourists. In addition, the national tourism organization of Bangladesh and the private sector tour service providers have been establishing business contacts with their Chinese counterparts. Over the years, they have also been actively participating in different tourism and travel fairs, being held in China.⁷² Therefore, cooperation in tourism sector also significantly contributing to the economy of both the countries.

Major Challenges of Bilateral Relationship

Massive Trade Gap

One of the key challenges facing Bangladesh-China bilateral relationship is the existing high volume of trade gap between these countries. Since the very beginning of bilateral trade relationship, Bangladesh has long been suffering from huge trade deficits with China. For example, in the FY 2012-13, the trade gap between these countries was estimated US\$5865.88 million against the total bilateral trade of US\$6782.12 million (See, Table 1, Figure 1& 2).

⁷² *The Financial Express*, "Deepening Sino-Bangladesh relations," June 17, 2010.

Figure 2: Trade Gap between Bangladesh and China (in million US\$)

Source: Bangladesh Bank (2013)

Thus, in spite of healthy bilateral economic ties, trade surplus, so far, has gone to the favour of China. In this regard, former Additional Foreign Secretary of Bangladesh, M. Khairuzzaman, once remarked, “We have nothing to sell to the Chinese.....We could sell a great deal more to the Indians if they allowed us.”

However, a number of initiatives have already been made, largely by China, to reduce this trade gap. For instance, under the Bangkok Agreement of 1975, China provides free access to 84 Bangladeshi products to the Chinese territory. To reduce the gap, China had also agreed to make joint ventures in trade and commerce; to import Bangladeshi products in large quantities under official policies; to encourage Chinese investment in Bangladesh; and so on under the Asia Pacific Trade Agreement (APTA) of 2005, a renamed version of Bangkok Agreement.⁷³ Despite all of these initiatives, the ratio of trade gap between China and Bangladesh estimated as 1:13.8 in FY 2012-13.

India Factor

One of the foremost challenges to this bilateral relationship at the dawn of the twenty-first century is to overcome the decades-long Bangladesh-India-China trilateral complexities. IPCS Research Officer, Urvashi Aneja, has defined such complexities in her words,

⁷³ Amena Mohsin, “Bangladesh-India Relations: Limitations and Options in an Evolving Relationship,” in Emajuddin Ahmed and Abul Kalam (eds), *Bangladesh, South Asia and World*, Dhaka: Academic Publishers, 1992, pp. 67-68.

Bangladesh... shares three of its borders with India and none with China, thereby limiting Bangladesh's ability to distance itself from India. China too has its own limitations, as it would not want to sabotage improving relations with India by over emphasizing its relationship with Bangladesh.⁷⁴

Historically, given the Sino-Indian strategic rivalry since 1962,⁷⁵ India remained skeptic about Bangladesh-China bilateral relationship for a number of factors, such as:

1. Since 1975, Bangladesh and China maintained a closer political, economic, military and cultural relationship. Over the years, they have signed a number of bilateral treaties, agreements, and MoUs on mutual economic engagement, cultural sharing, infrastructure development, educational exchange and, most importantly, on military assistance. All these developments led India to become agnostic about China's influence over Bangladesh.
2. India has long been concerned about the safety of Siliguri corridor (See, Map 2), which is around 200 km long and 40 km wide. The corridor is frequently referred to as 'chicken neck' for India, as it functions as single link between the North-east India and the rest of the country by rail, road and airways.⁷⁶

Map 2: Siliguri Corridor



Source: www.vikasputtur.wordpress.com

⁷⁴ Supra note 45.

⁷⁵ Zhao Huanxin, "China, India forging Strategic Partnership," *China Daily*, April 12, 2005.

⁷⁶ Reetika Sharma, Ramvir Gorla, and Vivek Mishra, *India and the Dynamics of World Politics*, India: Dorling Kindersley, 2011.

The corridor borders with Bangladesh on the one side and China on the other. Hence, Bangladesh-China bilateral ties constantly keep India concerned about any possible threat to the corridor.

3. China has long been a major source of arms import for Bangladesh, such as tanks, missiles, fighter aircrafts, frigates, etc. Growing military cooperation between these countries made India suspicious about any possible military threat jointly from Bangladesh and China over North-east of India. Hence, to overcome any potential crisis, India ensured its military presence at the area by deploying a large portion of Indian Army and Air Force, equipped with the sophisticated arsenal, including tanks, missiles, MiG-21, MiG-27, Su-30 and so on.⁷⁷
4. India is also concerned about the rising Chinese interest over the Chittagong seaport. China has long been showing its interest for investing here in order to facilitate a deep seaport. India perceives this matter as an integral part of China's 'String of Pearls' strategy (See, Map 3). The strategy refers to the network of some deep sea ports in selected offshore countries of the Indian and the Pacific Oceans having access to China. China is keen to invest for developing these seaports with a declaratory posture of securing its sea lanes of communication (SLOCs) throughout the Indian and the Pacific Ocean Rims.⁷⁸

Map 3: String of Pearls



Source: <http://abhijit-suryawanshi.blogspot.com/2012/02/string-of-pearls.html>

⁷⁷ Vijay Sakhua, "China-Bangladesh Relations and Potential for Regional Tensions," *China Brief*, Vol. 9, Issue 15, July 23, 2009.

⁷⁸ See, *The Washington Times*, "China builds up strategic sea lanes," January 17, 2005; see also, Chris Devonshire-Ellis, "China's String of Pearls Strategy," *China Briefing*, March 18, 2009.

However, India perceives that, despite economic interests, China tends to facilitate its naval presence in the Ocean as an attempt to encircle India under this strategy.⁷⁹

Policy Recommendations

In the light of aforementioned discussions, a bunch of key policy imperatives are to be suggested both for Bangladesh and China in order to further strengthen their bilateral relationship.

From Bangladesh's side, the following steps are necessary to be taken:

- Bangladesh faces a huge trade gap with China. Therefore, in order to reduce trade imbalance, the Government of Bangladesh needs to take initiatives for direct communication with the Chinese business community to expand its export volume to China and remove its structural problems as the Chinese market is quite diversified and competitive.⁸⁰
- Bangladesh may focus on the energy sector within this bilateral relationship. Increasing domestic pressure on electricity and gas in the development sectors of Bangladesh can be controlled by providing more investments and facilitating technological know how on this area. In that case, Chinese experience and expertise may facilitate a large contribution. Bangladesh may stipulate the Chinese assistance to build a nuclear power-plant in order to meet the current energy crisis.
- Bangladesh may seek Chinese cooperation on renewable energy resources, like biogas, bio-fuel, and solar energy.
- Bangladesh needs to improve its political attachment with China. Therefore, Bangladesh may look into a strategic partnership agreement with China to tackle security threats that could compromise Bangladesh's interests. Bangladesh also requires following the role of China to bring political stability in Asia.
- Bangladesh may persuade to make sure the Chinese investment in the country's deep sea port. Bangladesh may also seek the enhancement of capacity of Mongla and Chittagong ports with Chinese cooperation.
- Bangladesh may request for Chinese technological assistance in the area of navigability of rivers of Bangladesh, as China has the substantial expertise in that area.

⁷⁹ Supra note 62.

⁸⁰ See, Remarks by Rehman Sobhan at "Round-table Discussion on Bangladesh-China Dialogue," Dhaka: BISS Auditorium, March 14, 2010.

- Bangladesh may continue military cooperation with China in military supply, technology transfer, training on supplied arms and equipment and also training of the armed forces officers in China's military institutions.
- Bangladesh may invite the Chinese to build the Kunming-Chittagong direct road through Myanmar to access Chittagong port for economic and strategic reasons.
- Bangladesh may invite the Chinese to build the Kunming-Chittagong direct road through Myanmar to access Chittagong port for economic and strategic reasons.
- Bangladesh may diversify its export baskets and remove its structural problems in order to get more access to the Chinese market which was very diversified and competitive.
- Sharing of cultures through people-to-people connectivity between the two countries is necessary to improve ties between the two countries.

On the other hand, China may also take the following initiatives to fortify decades-long Bangladesh-China bilateral friendship:

- In order to reduce the trade gap between countries, Chinese government may initiate extensive bilateral talks.
- China may invest in Bangladesh's manufacturing sectors in which Bangladesh is no longer its competitor.
- China may take initiatives to ensure the security of Bangladesh through providing military and technological assistance, so that, regional stability in South Asia may ensure the mutual benefits both for China and Bangladesh.
- China may invest further in the energy sectors of Bangladesh, since the investment is scarce in those sectors and China has the financial and technological capacity to improve the energy security of Bangladesh.
- China may facilitate the cultural cooperation with Bangladesh through contributing in people-to-people contact programs.
- China can provide assistance to construct the backward linkage for the garments sectors of Bangladesh.

Given that India is an integral factor of Bangladesh-China relationship, there may also be a platform to discuss and resolve all the trilateral complexities among these countries. In this regard, as economic and military

giants of the Asian continent, China and India need to overcome their strategic competition and emerge as strategic partners in Asia.⁸¹

Ending Observations

In the essence, mutual reciprocity based on shared interests has contributed greatly to keep the Bangladesh-China bilateral relations sustainable and to strengthen over time. So far, the defining factors of this bilateral relationship, as frequently identified by both of these countries, are the followings:

- “The small state dilemma does not prevail in the case of Bangladesh as China refrains from showing any kind of high-handedness in her dealing with the former.
- The bilateral relations have been forged without any ideological or regional basis.
- Bangladesh extends unequivocal support to any issue affecting the interests of the developing and least developed countries, and China has also remained committed to this issue.
- China’s enunciation of the Five Principles of Peaceful Co-existence as well as her commitment to create a harmonious society on the basis of a just and fair international political and economic order has always been endorsed by Bangladesh.
- Both governments are keen to advance their international relations with a view to ensuring a better life for their respective citizens in the face of the challenges of globalization.”⁸²

In order to attain benefits from the bilateral relationship, there are a plenty of lessons that Bangladesh need to learn from China. The most important among these are discipline, unity and willingness of development. With dissimilar political models Bangladesh may not go for implementation of similar policies of development, rather may proceed step by step pragmatically based on its prevailing socio-economic condition. Hence, it is not only about support, aid or loans, rather it is all about the development with time and the growth with cooperation.⁸³ The present study demonstrates that Bangladesh-China bilateral relations will grow and the comprehensive partnership of cooperation between these two countries will get deeper over the time.

⁸¹ See, Ashfaqur Rahman, “Rising together: India, China and Bangladesh,” *The Daily Star*, March 28, 2011.

⁸² Supra note 11.

⁸³ See, Syed Munir Khasru, “Our relations with China: Unexplored potential,” *The Daily Star*, June 2, 2009.

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