

**DYNAMICS OF INDIA-BANGLADESH RELATIONS
SINCE 1991: BORDER SECURITY, CONNECTIVITY
AND INFRASTRUCTURE.**

**Thesis Submitted to Jadavpur University
for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy (Arts)**

**By
SIDDHARTHA NASKAR**

**Under The Supervision
of
PROF. BIJAYA KUMAR DAS**

**Department of International Relations
Faculty of arts
Jadavpur University
Kolkata – 700032
2023**

Certified that the thesis entitled

“Dynamics of India–Bangladesh relations since 1991: Border security, Connectivity and Infrastructure” submitted by me for the award of the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Arts at Jadavpur University is based upon my work carried out under the Supervision of Professor Bijaya Kumar Das And that neither this thesis nor any part of it has been submitted before for any degree or diploma anywhere/elsewhere.

BK Das

Countersigned by the supervisor:

PROFESSOR
Dept. of International Relations
Jadavpur University
Kolkata - 700 032

Date: 30.11.2023

Siddhartha Naskar

Candidate:

Date: 30/11/2023

DECLARATION

I, Siddhartha Naskar, do hereby declare that the Present Ph.D Dissertation entitled **“Dynamics of India–Bangladesh relations since 1991: Border security, Connectivity and Infrastructure”** is a bonafide work of mine and submitted by myself for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (Arts) in the Department of International Relations, Jadavpur University, Kolkata- 700032, W.B, India, under the supervision of Professor Bijaya Kumar Das, in the year 2023. This Dissertation has not been submitted partially or fully for such Degree or Diploma in any other academic institution till date.



Signature of the Scholar:

Place: Jadavpur University

Date: 30/11/2023

DEDICATED
TO MY
GRAND FATHER LATE SHRI SURENDRANATH KAYAL

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

In preparing this doctoral thesis, I have received valuable opinions, important suggestions, necessary guidance, counsel and motivation from a host of people, true friends and well wishers and I take this opportunity to express my whole-hearted gratitude to all of them. It gives me immense pleasure to express my deep gratitude to my Supervisor, philosopher, guide and mentor, Professor Bijaya Kumar Das, Professor of the Department of International Relations, Jadavpur University, Kolkata, for his generous and inspiring guidance, intellectual inputs, extensive co-operation, consistent and constant encouragement, insightful interventions because of which I did not lose my willingness to work at difficult stages of the thesis. His cooperation with me since my M.Phil days has been unprecedented and unforgettable. His continuous support, enthusiasm and personal guidance from the very early stage of this research as well as giving me extraordinary experience throughout the work. His desire to see students do well in life will always be a source of inspiration for me. His academic excellence combined with affectionate guidance has seen me through the years of my doctoral study. I am short of words to describe my Supervisor's sympathetic, supportive and friendly attitude.

I am thankful to my friends those who are directly or indirectly inspired me to complete the thesis successfully. In addition to this I am thankful to my colleagues of the present college to support me.

I would like to express my sincere thanks to Professor Ishani Naskar (Head of the Department of International Relations), for her valuable suggestions and help at various phases of this dissertational work. I have the honour to mention the help extended by senior Professors of the department whose precious intervention made me more serious and focused in preparing this work. I will also be thankful to those Professors whose kind attitude helped me in the completion of this work.

I express my heartfelt gratitude to all the Professors of I.R. department especially Prof. Anidyo joyti majumdar, Prof. Partha Pratim Basu, Prof. Shibhashis Chatterje, Dr. Iman Kalyan Lahiri, Prof. H.N. Toppo, Dr. Kakali Sengupta, Dr. Bhagwaban Behura, Dr. Arup Bhattecharya and last but not the least Prof. Omprakesh Mishra for their magnanimous academic support and delightful encouragement to gain more knowledge and fulfill my dream. What has come to me as inspirational strength was the interaction that I had with Dr. Bimal Pramanik, Vice President, Society for Model Gram Bikas Kendra and Former Director

of Centre for Research in Indo-Bangladesh Relation (CRIBR). Special thanks needs to be given to the departmental librarian Partha Pratim Bose and Dr. Nandini Dey (Ex Documentation Officer), Kankana Mam, and Tushar Da for their help in accessing books, journals, documents and other research materials.

I am thankful to the non-teaching staff of the Department of International Relations, Jadavpur University, for their timely assistance as well as friendly cooperation.

I sincerely express my deep sense of reverence and thankfulness to my parents. I extend my deepest thanks to my family, friends and well wishers who always remained a source of inspiration for me in undertaking and completion of this dissertation. I would like to express my profound gratitude to my wife for her warm support to my every choice. I refer her invaluable help, patience, sacrifice, and moral support at the moment of crisis.

A special note of thanks to my friend, philosopher and guide Dr. Anshuman Bhattacharya without whose relentless effort and meticulous correction in my personal problems, for boosting my morale and standing by me through thick and thin of this academic sojourn. He is truly the source of inspiration and without whose active involvement, the thesis could not have possibly seen the light of day.

I equally express gratefulness to The National Library, Moulana Abul Kalam Azad Institute of Asian Studies (MAKAIAS), Ramkrishna Mission Institute of Culture (Golpark), Bangladesh Deputy High Commission Library, Central Library of Jadavpur University and Tarak Nath Das Research Centre for supplying their necessary and rare books, journals, Newspapers, magazines, census reports, old documents etc.

Lastly, I extend my cordial gratitude to Dhar Brothers, Commercial Point, 79, Lenin Sarani, Kolkata-700013 for typing and binding this dissertation with patience and zeal.

Last but not the least my greatest regard to the Almighty for bestowing upon me the courage to complete this project successfully.

For all the omissions and errors in this work, none but myself will be responsible.



Signature of the scholar:

Place: Jadavpur University

Date: 30/11/2023

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AAPSU	=	ALL ARUNACHAL PRADESH STUDENTS UNION
AASU	=	ALL ASSAM STUDENTS' UNION
ACMP	=	AGREEMENT ON THE USE OF CHITTAGONG AND MONGLA PORTS
ACOS	=	ASSISTANT CHIEF OF STAFF
ADB	=	ASIAN DEVELOPMENT BANK
ADB	=	ASIAN DEVELOPMENT BANK
AGP	=	ASSAM GANA PARISHAD
AGSP	=	ASSAM GANA SANGRAM PARISHAD
AHP	=	ASIAN HIGHWAY NETWORK
AIML	=	ALL INDIA MUSLIM LEAGUE
AL	=	AWAMI LEAGUE
APTA	=	ASIA PACIFIC TRADE AGREEMENT
ASEAN	=	THE ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS
ASTC	=	ASSAM STATE TRANSPORT CORPORATION
ATTF	=	ALL TRIPURA TIGER FORCE
ATTF	=	THE ALL TRIPURA TIGER FORCE
BADP	=	BORDER AREA DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME
BADP	=	BORDER AREA DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME
BBIN	=	BANGLADESH, INDIA, BHUTAN, AND NEPAL
BCM	=	BILLION CUBIC METERS
BDR	=	BANGLADESH RIFLES
BDR	=	BANGLADESH RIFLES
BDSF	=	BODO SECURITY FORCE
BEXIMCO	=	BANGLADESH EXPORT IMPORT COMPANY
BG	=	BANGLADESH BORDER
BGB	=	BORDER GUARD BANGLADESH
BGMEA	=	GARMENT MANUFACTURE AND EXPORTERS ASSOCIATION
BGMEA	=	BANGLADESH GARMENT MANUFACTURE AND EXPORTERS ASSOCIATION
BGMEA	=	BANGLADESH GARMENTS MANUFACTURERS
BHEL	=	BHARAT HEAVY ELECTRICALS LIMITED
BIDA	=	BANGLADESH INVESTMENT DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

BIFPCL	=	BANGLADESH INDIA FRIENDSHIP POWER COMPANY
BIFT	=	BANGLADSH INSTITUTE OF FASHION TECHNOLOGY
BISS	=	BANGLADESH INSTITUTE OF INTERNATIONAL AND STRATEGIC STUDIES
BIMSTEC	=	BAY OF BENGAL INITIATIVE FOR MULTI-SECTORAL TECHNICAL AND ECONOMIC COOPERATION
BIS	=	BUREAU OF INDIAN STANDARDS
BJP	=	BHARATIYA JANATA PARTY
BLPA	=	BANGLADESH LAND PORT AUTHORITY
BNP	=	BANGLADESH NATIONALIST PARTY
BOP	=	BORDER-OUT POST
BOT	=	BUILD, OPERATE, AND TRANSFER
BPC	=	BASIC PRINCIPLE COMMITTEE
BPDB	=	BANGLADESH POWER DEVELOPMENT BOARD
BPO	=	BORDER OBSERVATION POSTS
BRTC	=	BANGLADESH ROAD TRANSPORT CORPORATION
BSCCL	=	BANGLADESH SUBMARINE CABLE COMPANY LIMITED
BSF	=	BORDER SECURITY FORCE
BSF	=	THE UNITE BORDER SECURITY FORCES
BSNL	=	BHARAT SANCHAR NIGAM LIMITED
BSTI	=	BANGLADESH STANDARDS AND TESTING INSTITUTION
BTRC	=	BANGLADESH TELECOMMUNICATION REGULATORY COMMISSION
BTB	=	INDIA AND BANGLADESH TELEVISION
BTB	=	BANGLADESH TELEVISION
BWITA	=	BANGLADESH INLAND WATER TRANSPORT AUTHORITY
CAA	=	THE CITIZENSHIP AMENDMENT ACT
CBMP	=	COORDINATED BORDER MANAGEMENT PLAN
CEP	=	CULTURAL EXCHANGE PROGRAMME
CEU	=	COASTAL ECONOMIC UNITS
CEUS	=	COASTAL EMPLOYMENT UNITS
CEZ	=	COASTAL ECONOMIC ZONES
CHT	=	CHITTAGONG HILL TRACTS
CIA	=	CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
CII	=	CONFEDERATION OF INDIAN INDUSTRIES

C-IN-C	=	COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF
CISF	=	CENTRAL INDUSTRIAL SECURITY FORCE
CM	=	CHIEF MINISTER
COIT	=	CRUDE OIL IMPORT TERMINAL AT PARADIP
COP	=	COMBINED OPPOSITION PARTY'
COS	=	CHIEF OF STAFF
CPI	=	COMMUNIST PARTY OF INDIA
CPIM	=	COMMUNIST PARTY OF INDIA MARXIST
CRIS	=	CENTRE FOR RAILWAY INFORMATION SYSTEMS
CRIS	=	THE CENTRE FOR RAILWAY INFORMATION SYSTEMS
CRPF	=	CENTRAL RESERVE POLICE FORCE
CSA	=	COASTAL SHIPPING AGREEMENT
CTAS	=	CLANDESTINE TRANSNATIONAL ACTORS
CTG	=	CARE TAKER GOVERNMENT
CUSEC	=	CUBIC FEET PER SECOND
DADF	=	DEPARTMENT OF ANIMAL HUSBANDRY AND DAIRY
DCGI	=	THE DRUG CONTROLLER GENERAL OF INDIA GRANTED
DCOS	=	DEPUTY CHIEF OF STAFF
DD	=	DOORDARSHAN
DG	=	DIRECTOR GENERAL
DGFI	=	DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF FIELD INTELLIGENCE'S
DPRS	=	DETAILED PROJECT REPORTS
DPRS	=	DETAILED PROJECT REPORTS
DTH	=	DIRECT TO HOME
DUCSU	=	DHAKA UNIVERSITY CENTRAL STUDENTS UNION
EBDO	=	ELECTION BODIES DISQUALIFICATION ORDER
ECNEC	=	EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE NATIONAL ECONOMIC COUNCIL
EPC	=	ENGINEERING, PROCUREMENT, AND CONSTRUCTION
EPSL	=	EAST PAKISTAN STUDENT'S LEAGUE
EPSU	=	EAST PAKISTAN STUDENT'S UNION
FDI	=	FOREIGN DIRECT INVESTMENT
FDI	=	INDIAN FOREIGN DIRECT INVESTMENT
FGD	=	FLUE GAS DESULFURIZATION

FICCI	=	FEDERATION OF INDIAN CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY
FMCG	=	FAST-MOVING CONSUMER GOODS
FOIS	=	FREIGHT OPERATIONS INFORMATION SYSTEM
FSRU	=	FLOATING STORAGE AND REGASIFICATION UNIT
FSRU	=	STORAGE AND REGASIFICATION UNIT
FY	=	FISCAL YEAR
GDP	=	GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT
GE	=	GENERAL ELECTRIC
GIIP	=	GAS INITIALLY IN PLACE
GOM	=	GROUP OF MINISTERS
GPS	=	GLOBAL POSITIONING SYSTEM
GRP	=	GLASS-REINFORCED PLASTIC
GRP	=	WITH A GLASS-REINFORCED PLASTIC
GSLV	=	GEOSYNCHRONOUS SATELLITE LAUNCH VEHICLE
HICDPS	=	HIGH IMPACT COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS
HNLC	=	HYNNIEWTREP NATIONAL LIBERATION COUNCIL
HRW	=	HUMAN RIGHT WATCH
HUJI	=	HARKAT-UL-JIHAD ISLAMI
I.C.P	=	IMMIGRATION CHECK POSTS
IA	=	IMPLEMENTATION AGREEMENT
IBB	=	INDIA-BANGLADESH BORDER
IBFPL	=	INDIA-BANGLADESH FRIENDSHIP PIPELINE
IBFPP	=	THE INDIA-BANGLADESH FRIENDSHIP PIPELINE PROJECT
ICBMS	=	INTER-CONTINENTAL BALLISTIC MISSILES
ICCR	=	INDIAN COUNCIL FOR CULTURAL RELATIONS
ICCR	=	INDIAN COUNCIL FOR CULTURAL RELATIONS
ICCR	=	THE INDIAN COUNCIL FOR CULTURAL RELATIONS
ICG	=	INTERNATIONAL CRISIS GROUP
ICMR	=	INDIAN COUNCIL OF MEDICAL RESEARCH
ICP	=	INTEGRATED CHECK POST
ICP	=	INTREGRATED CHEEK POST
ICT	=	INLAND CONTAINER TERMINAL
ICT	=	INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE

ICT	=	INTERNATIONAL CRIME TRIBUNAL
IDPS	=	INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS
IDRA	=	INSURANCE DEVELOPMENT AND REGULATORY AUTHORITY
IECC	=	INDIA ENDOWMENT FOR CLIMATE CHANGE
IFC	=	THE INDIAN FAKE CURRENCY
IGCC	=	INDIRA GANDHI CULTURAL CENTRE
IGRM	=	INTER-GOVERNMENTAL RAILWAY MEETING
IMDT	=	ILLEGAL MIGRANTS DETERMINATION BY TRIBUNAL
IMDT ACT	=	ILLEGAL MIGRANTS DETERMINATION BY TRIBUNAL ACT
INC	=	INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS
INS	=	INDIAN NAVY SHIP
IOC	=	INDIAN OIL CORPORATION
IOJ	=	ISLAMIC IKYO JOTE
IORA	=	INDIAN OCEAN RIM ASSOCIATION
IORA	=	INDIAN OCEAN RIM ASSOCIATION
IPRCL	=	INDIAN PORT RAIL & ROPEWAY CORPORATION LIMITED
IRCON	=	THE INDIAN RAILWAY CONSTRUCTION COMPANY
IRCON.	=	INDIAN RAILWAY CONSTRUCTION COMPANY
ISI	=	INTER-SERVICE-INTELLIGENCE
ISI	=	(PAKISTAN’S) INTER-SERVICES INTELLIGENCE
ISI	=	INTER SERVICE INTELLIGENCE
ISRO	=	INDIAN SPACE RESEARCH ORGANIZATION
ITBP	=	INDO TIBETAN BORDER POLICE
ITBP	=	INDO-TIBETAN BORDER SECURITY FORCE
ITEC	=	INDIAN TECHNICAL AND ECONOMIC COOPERATION
IVAC	=	INDIAN VISA APPLICATION CENTER
IVAC	=	INDIAN VISA APPLICATION CENTRE
IWAI	=	INLAND WATERWAYS AUTHORITY OF INDIA
IWT	=	INLAND WATER TRANSPORT
JCC	=	JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMISSION
JCE	=	JOINT COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS
JFP	=	JAMUNA FUTURE PARK
JGC	=	JOINT GROUP OF CUSTOMS
JMVP	=	JAL MARG VIKAS PROJECT

JP	=	JATIYO PARTY
JRC	=	JOINT RIVER COMMISSION
JRC	=	JOINT RIVERS COMMISSION
JSC	=	JOINT STEERING COMMITTEE
JSD	=	JATIYA SAMAJ TANTRIK DAL
JWG	=	JOINT WORKING GROUP
JWG	=	JOINT WORKING GROUP
KIA	=	THE KACHIN INDEPENDENT ARMY
KLO	=	KAMTAPUR LIBERATION ORGANIZATION
KPI	=	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
LAB	=	LAND BOUNDARY AGREEMENT
LBA	=	LAND BOUNDARY AGREEMENT
LCS	=	LAND CUSTOM STATIONS
LFA.	=	LIBERATION FRONT OF ASSAM
LHB	=	LINKE HOFMANN BUSCH
LIC	=	LIFE INSURANCE COOPERATION
LNG	=	LIQUEFIED NATURAL GAS
LOC	=	LINE OF CREDIT
LPA	=	LAND PORT AUTHORITY
LPAI	=	POWER LAND PORTS AUTHORITY OF INDIA
LPAI	=	LAND PORTS AUTHORITY OF INDIA
MDONER	=	THE MINISTER OF DEVELOPMENT OF THE NORTH EASTERN REGION
MEA	=	MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
MLA	=	MARTIAL LAW ADMINISTRATOR
MNF	=	THE MIZO NATIONAL FRONT
MOU	=	MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
MOU	=	THE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
MTF	=	INDIAN MOBILE TASK FORCE
MW	=	MEGA WATT
NAI	=	NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA
NAM	=	NON ALLIED MOVEMENT
NAP	=	NATIONAL AWAMI PARTY
NBR	=	NATIONAL BOARD OF REVENUE

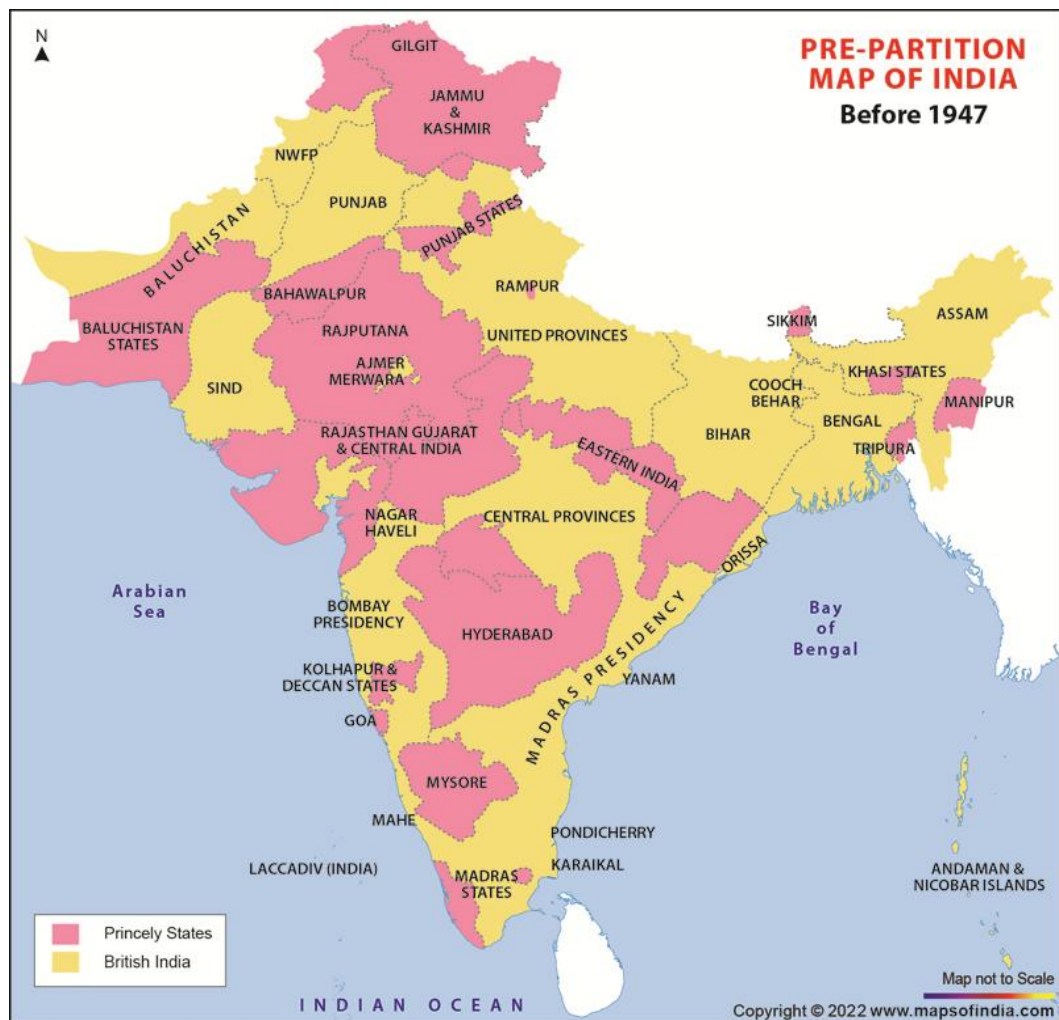
NCG	=	NON-PARTY CARETAKER GOVERNMENT
NCGC	=	NATIONAL CENTRE FOR GOOD GOVERNANCE
NCGG	=	THE NATIONAL CENTRE FOR GOOD GOVERNANCE
NDA	=	NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC ALLIANCE
NDAG	=	NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC ALLIANCE GOVERNMENT
NDF	=	NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC FRONT
NDFB	=	NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC FRONT OF BODOLAND
NDFB	=	THE NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC FRONT OF BODOLAND
NER	=	NORTH EASTERN REGION
NER	=	NORTH EAST REGION
NFR	=	THE NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAYS
NGMA	=	NATIONAL GALLERY OF MODERN ART
NGO	=	NON GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS
NHIDCL	=	NATIONAL HIGHWAYS AND INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION LIMITED
NIFT	=	NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF FASHION TECHNOLOGY
NIV	=	NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF VIROLOGY
NLFT	=	NATIONAL LIBERATION FRONT OF TRIPURA
NLFT	=	THE NATIONAL LIBERATION FRONT OF TRIPURA
NNC	=	NAGA NATIONAL COUNCIL
NPCIL	=	NUCLEAR POWER COOPERATION OF INDIA LIMITED
NPCIL	=	NUCLEAR COOPERATION OF INDIA LIMITED
NPP	=	NATIONAL PERSPECTIVE PLAN
NRB	=	NON-RESIDENT BANGLADESHIS
NRC	=	NATIONAL REGISTRATION OF CITIZENS
NREP	=	REFINERY EXPANSION PROJECT
NRL	=	NUMALIGARH REFINERY LIMITED
NSAC	=	NATIONAL SAGARMALA APEX COMMITTEE
NSCN	=	NATIONALIST SOCIALIST COUNCIL OF NAGALAND
NSG	=	NATIONAL SECURITY GUARD
NTBS	=	NON TRARIFF BARRIERS
NTPC	=	NATIONAL THERMAL POWER CORPORATION
NTPC	=	NATIONAL THERMAL POWER CORPORATION
NWDA	=	NATIONAL WATER DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

NWFP	=	NORTH WESTERN FRONT PROVINCE
NWM	=	NATIONAL WATER MISSION
NWS	=	NATIONAL WATERWAYS
OIC	=	ORGANIZATION OF THE ISLAMIC CONFERENCE
PAF	=	PAKISTAN AIR FORCE
PCA	=	PERMANENT COURT OF ARBITRATION
PCJSS	=	THE PARBATYA CHATTAGRAM JANA SAMHATI SAMITI
PIWTT	=	PROTOCOL ON INLAND WATER TRANSIT AND TRADE
PLF	=	PLANT LOAD FACTOR
PLICS	=	PORT-LINKED INDUSTRIAL CLUSTERS
PMBP	=	PADMA MULTIPURPOSE BRIDGE PROJECT
PMBP	=	THE PADMA MULTIPURPOSE BRIDGE PROJECT
PNCPL	=	PARADIP NUMALIGARH CRUDE OIL PIPELINE
PPA	=	POWER PURCHASE AGREEMENT
PPE	=	PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPEMENT
PPP	=	PAKISTAN PEOPLE’S PARTY
PPP	=	PUBLIC–PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP
PRGF	=	POVERTY REDUCTION GRANT FACILITY
PSCS	=	PRODUCTION SHARING CONTRACTS
PWD	=	PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT
RAW	=	RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS WING
RCC	=	REINFORCED CONCRETE CHIMNEY
RTF	=	REGIONAL TASK FORCE
SAARC	=	SAARC =SOUTH ASIAN ASSOCIATION FOR REGIONAL COOPERATION
SAARC	=	SOUTH ASIAN ASSOCIATION FOR REGIONAL COOPERATION
SAFTA	=	SOUTH ASIAN FREE TRADE AREA
SAGQ	=	SOUTH ASIAN GROWTH QUADRANGLE
SCA	=	STUDENTS’ COMMITTEE OF ACTION
SCI	=	SUPREME COURT OF INDIA
SDCL	=	SAGARMALA DEVELOPMENT COMPANY LIMITED
SDCL	=	THE SAGARMALA DEVELOPMENT COMPANY LIMITED
SDPS	=	SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS
SEZ	=	SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONES

SHWL	=	STANDARD HIGH-WATER LEVEL
SII	=	SERUM INSTITUTE OF INDIA
SIPC	=	THE SMART INDUSTRIAL PORT CITY
SJVA	=	SUPPLEMENTARY JOINT VENTURE AGREEMENT
SMP	=	SHYAMA PRASAD MUKERJEE PORT
SOP	=	STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE
SOPS	=	STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES
SPVS	=	SPECIAL PURPOSE VEHICLES
SSB	=	SASHASTRA SEEMA BAL
TAR	=	TRANS ASIAN RAIL
TCF	=	TRILLION CUBIC FEET
TICFA	=	TRADE AND INVESTMENT COOPERATION FORUM AGREEMENT
U.N.O	=	UNITED NATION ORGANIZATION
ULFA	=	THE UNITED LIBERATION FRONT OF ASSAM
UN	=	UNITED NATION
UN	=	UNITED NATIONS
UNDP	=	UNITED NATION DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME
UNESCO	=	UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC, AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION
UNHCR	=	UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES ()
UNICEF	=	UNITED NATIONS INTERNATIONAL CHILDREN'S EMERGENCY FUND.
UPA	=	UNITED PROGRESSIVE ALLIANCE
WB	=	WORLD BANK
WBSTC	=	WEST BENGAL SURFACE TRANSPORT CORPORATION ()
WBTC	=	THE WEST BENGAL TRANSPORT CORPORATION

LIST OF MAPS

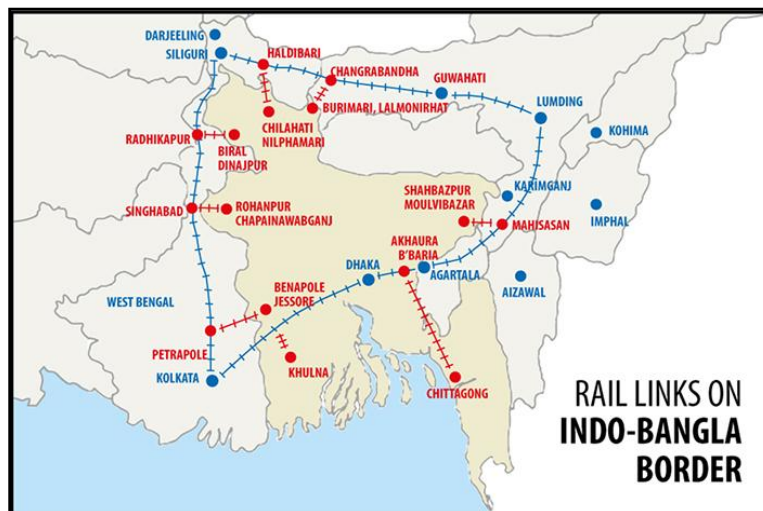
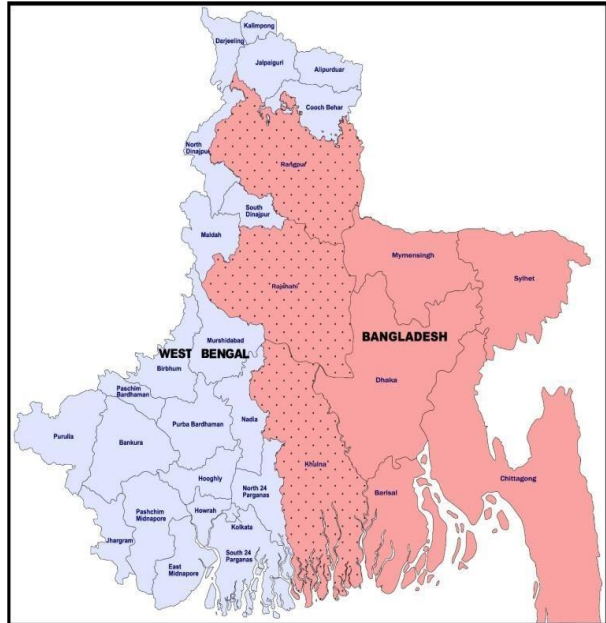
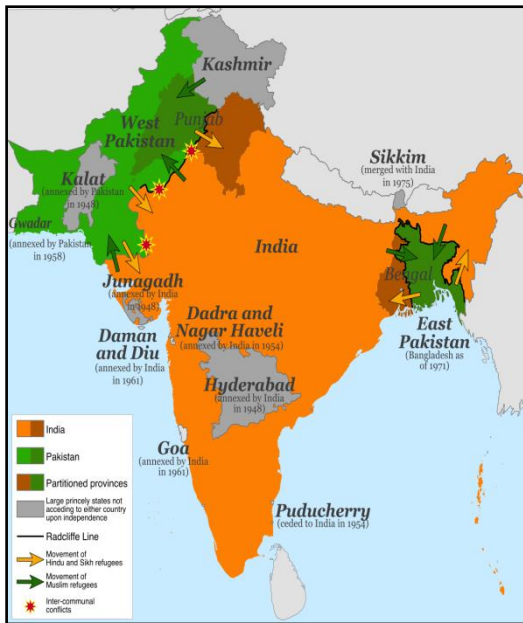


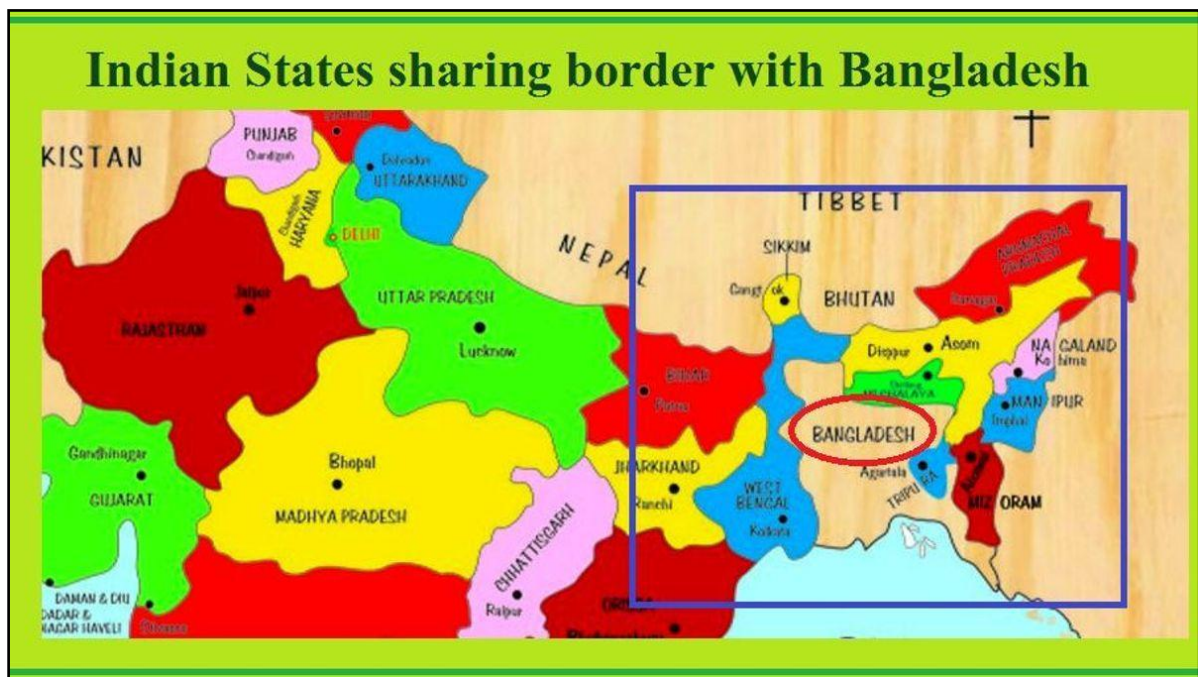


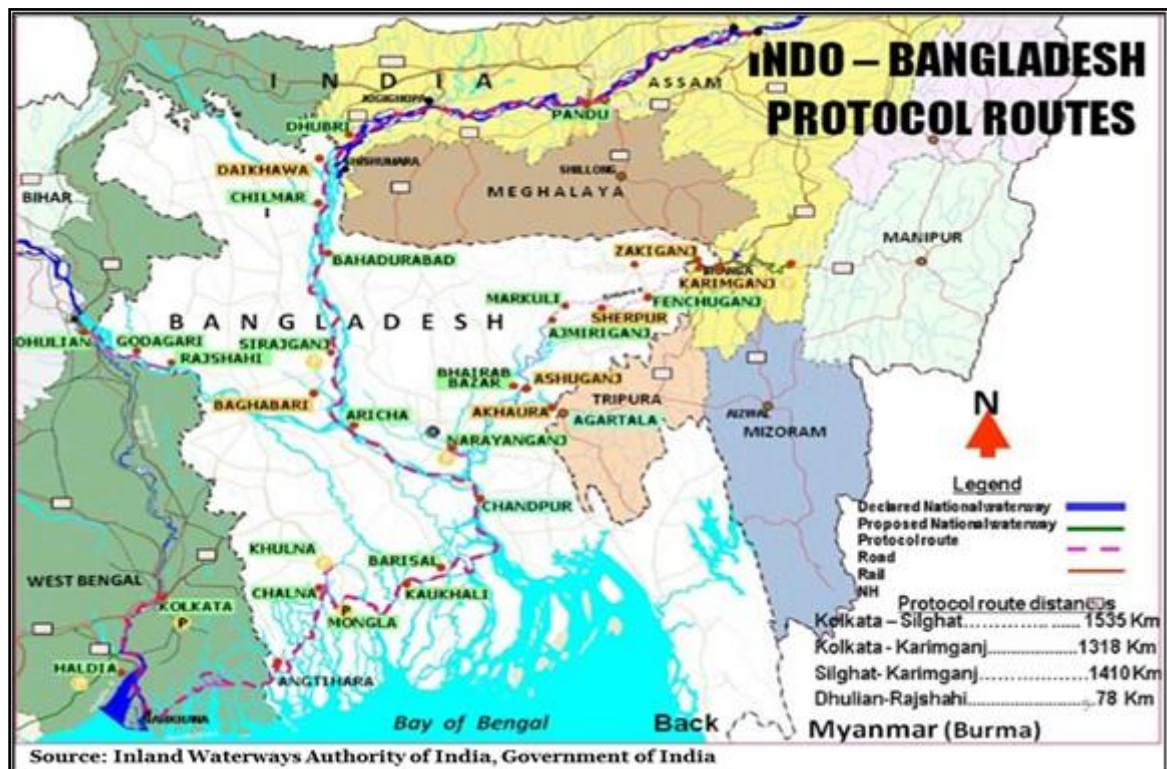
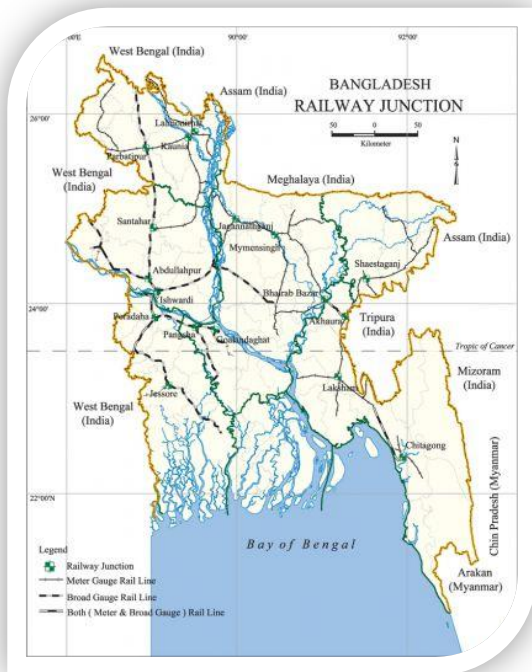


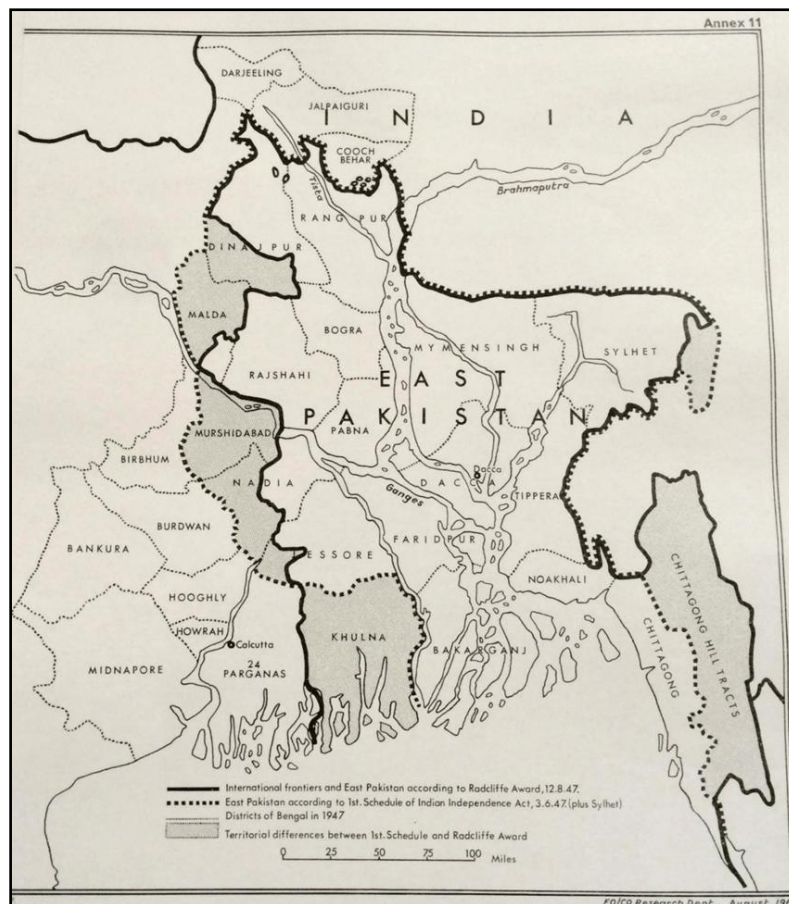
Bangladesh India border











CONTENTS

	PAGE NO.
REVIEW OF LITERATURE	1-40
INTRODUCTION	41-60
CHAPTER – I Historical background of the creation of Bangladesh. (1947-1971)	61-107
CHAPTER – II Evolution and development of India’s bilateral relations with Bangladesh. (1971-1990)	108-176
CHAPTER –III Issue of border security to Indo-Bangladesh relations.	177-245
CHAPTER –IV Issue of connectivity as a determinant of Indo-Bangladesh relations.	246-342
CHAPTER – V Issue of infrastructure in India’s relations with Bangladesh.	343-413
CONCLUSION	414-475
BIBLIOGRAPHY	476-510
WEBLIOGRAPHY	511-522

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

To accomplish the task of my proposed research, I have gone through the study of different literature keeping in mind different chapters as stipulated.

Books:

Ranabir Samaddar, *'The Marginal Nation Transborder Migration from Bangladesh to West Bengal'*, Sage Publications, New Delhi, 1999.

The book has highlighted some important aspects of the problem which confronted South Asia. The problem, as highlighted by Ranabir Samaddar, the author of the book, relates to border, migrants, and illegal immigrants. The author has portrayed the spectre of the hordes of people coming from Bangladesh, illegal immigrants that constantly making the problem of statecraft in South Asia. It has also pointed how transborder people movements in South Asia has afflicted the post colonial nation in this region. The author has shown the reasons for illegal migrations in India from Bangladesh. He has analyzed the characteristic of the state's attitude to migration from Bangladesh. The author has said that migrants, particularly illegal migrants, created number of problems like population hazards, environmental degradation, etc., in India for which a sense of discontent cropped up among the original inhabitants of India. He has vividly described all these points in this book. He traced the histories of migrations particularly in pre-partition time. From 1971-1982, about 38,000 populations migrated from Bangladesh to UK, between 1971-1990, 80,000 people migrated from same country to the Middle East. The remittances from the Middle East formed 63.09% of the total in the period of 1889 -1990. These migrations created a lot of problems like availability of food. Here, the author has cited a case study of 'A Hossain Mia of Today' who has been affected as a result of illegal migrations. Bangladesh has adopted a policy to 'vanish Hindu' from Bangladesh. It was undoubtedly a demoralized move. While analyzing these aspects of the problems, he vividly described certain features like depeasantization, victimization and intimidation which were active and played a vital role in the process of migration. Another pertinent issue was persecution of minority in Bangladesh which continued from 1946-1949. An estimate shows that 1,10,000 Hindu refugees entered in West Bengal, Assam and Tripura. Of these 35,000 were from urban middle class families, 55,000 from rural middle class families and the remaining people were workers and peasants. Besides, militarization of settlement of Muslim in Chattagram Hill Track and the consequent persecution of the tribal, large scale exodus of migrants were went on in the North East

India. All these aspects of the issues of migrations are vividly described by the author in this book.

Hiranmoy Karlekar, '*Bangladesh: The next Afghanistan*', Sage Publication, New Delhi, 2005

Hiranmoy Karlekar, the author of the book, emphasizes the fact that Bangladesh is by no means irrevocably set to become a country like Afghanistan under Taliban rule. Not only that, the author predicts that Bangladesh will become a centre for a global exporter of terrorism like Afghanistan. The book seeks to analyze why and how Bangladesh drifted toward fundamentalists Islam. Explaining this aspect of the impending problem that Bangladesh faces the author sets the perspective of this study. He elaborately explained the meaning of terrorism as given by different experts on terrorism. Bangladesh, a newly independent state in south Asia, an intolerant and socially reactionary stream in Islam, followed by ancient period, 760-750, 750-1258-all these issues were taken into account in this book. The author has vividly described the internal disturbance broke out for various issues like language, communalism etc. He gives a special emphasis on the assassination of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman by anti-Indian collaborators of Bangladesh and Islamization of Bangladesh which began when Major General Ziaur Rahman made himself president of Bangladesh. The most important question which centered on Bangladesh turmoil relates to an attack on a rally in the heart of Dhaka, the capital of Bangladesh. Thirteen grandees were fired on 21st August, 2004. This trouble caught the attention of the world. In fact, prior to 21st August, 2004 none apprehended such grenade attacks in Bangladesh. In this part of the study, the author while analyzing the various aspects of terrorist attack in Bangladesh makes a comparison with Afghanistan's terrorism in Bangladesh, cross-border terrorism in Indo-Bangladesh border, growing influx of refugees, unrest in Assam and the rise of ULFA, NDB, ATTF, NLFT, etc. Bangladesh witnessed a volatile political system where the principal two political parties BNP and Awami League conflicted with each-other since their birth. Since the party system in Bangladesh is not stable, it paved the way to raise terrorism and the growth of fundamentalist parties like Jammāt. The Jammāt and Islamic Oiko Jote have agendas that go beyond the normal goals of parliamentary democracy. The author has analyzed the objectives of the Jammāt and has shown how Taliban forces become active in Bangladesh. The Islamist party like Jammāt-i-Islami and terrorist organization in Bangladesh did not make any head way in the electoral politics of Bangladesh. The people of Bangladesh did not like them but the double standard political opportunism of the Bangladesh, the

principal two political parties BNP and Awami League, make the people annoyed for which Bangladesh were a number of president's rule and military take over in the governance of the country. Bangladesh had to undergo several amendments to make it in tune with changing pattern of government. But the justice system in Bangladesh was hampered for interference by the ruling party in the domain of judicial system. Chapter VIII, the last chapter of the book, dwells on the efforts of the Jammāt, IOJ and other fundamentalist Islamist organizations to use their participation in the BNP led Government to push their Islamist agenda. In fact, the creation of climate of fundamentalism is very important from the standpoint of these parties. Islamist fundamentalists who are organized under the banner of Jammāt, IOJ and other associated organization have been targeting Hindus, Buddhists and Christian and identified them as enemies of Bangladesh. These aspects of the challenges to Bangladesh's administration has been vividly described by the author in this chapter.

Sreeradha Dutta, “*Caretaking Democracy: Political Process in Bangladesh, 2006-2008*”, Institute of Defense Studies And Analysis, New Delhi, 2009.

In the book the author has given a general introduction about the Caretaker Government from 2006-2008 as well as brief history of the first Caretaker Government of 1991. In chapter II she has discussed very analytically the cause and nature of October crisis. Here, the political process has highlighted with the role of election commission, anti corruption commission, Judiciary system, Islamic groups, external powers and the theory of ‘minus two’ formula. Besides, the detail description of civil-military relations, power behind the throne, restoring law and order, dilemmas and restraints over the 9th Parliamentary election have also mentioned. Further, the author has discussed Bangladesh's relations with other countries especially next door neighbour India. Of course, some problematic issues like Teesta water sharing, Tipaimukh dam dispute, illegal migration, insurgency, fencing, cattle smuggling, drug trafficking, transit and security issues are also referred here.

Ali Riaz and C. Christine Fair(ed), ‘*Political Islam and Governance in Bangladesh*’ Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, London and New York, 2011.

‘Political Islam and Governance in Bangladesh’ is a remarkable edited book which depicts insight into for acquiring knowledge of Bangladesh internal politics. Chapter I, ‘Political culture in contemporary Bangladesh: histories, ruptures and contradictions’ by Dina Mahnaz Siddiqi has discussed the birth of Bangladesh, Bengali culture, Bengali traditional history and different contradictory issues like military rule, democratic transition, free and

fair election, role of first caretaker government, national identity crisis etc. Md. Shamsul Islam's 'political violence in Bangladesh' is equally importance because it has highlighted the historical background of violence from 1972-1991 as well as political violence in democratic Bangladesh (1991-2009). Here, he very nicely explained different kind of violence like set fire to places of worship, incidents of attacks on citizens, grenade attack on police station, snatching ballot papers and ballot boxes, casting fake votes and capturing polling stations, forcibly driving out the agents of opposition, forcefully snatching voter cards from the common people, fury country-wise general strike, blocked of rails, roads and waterways, throwing petrol bomb at trucks, buses and motorized rickshaws, boycott the election, uncontested win, set fire on Government buildings, unlawful destruction of private property, serial bomb blast etc. 'who are the Islamists?' by Ali Riaz and Kh. Ali Ar Raji, is a detail discussion of conceptual knowledge about Islamic ideology, Islamic origin, and the structure of different Islamists groups. Zayadul Ahsan and Pavitra Banavar's 'who are the militants?' is a precious writing where they discussed the activities of HUJI, JMB, and additional Islamic groups' connection to international terrorist groups, their leaderships, strength, trainings, financing and operational capabilities under the safe shelter to the national Government to avoid international pressure. 'Bangladeshi civil society and Islamist politics' by Elora Shahabuddin about secularism, Islamism, the role of civil society and NGO is a minute documents which help the students to gain more knowledge about the internal politics of Bangladesh. The author Ali Riaz has discussed the Islamic politics and Islamic education system, curriculum and content, success and failure of Madrassah education which help us to understand the real source of Islamic politics in Bangladesh. In fine, the authors have expressed their optimistic outlook that only the motivational songs and dramas, traditional history, scientific education will change the tone and tune of Bangladesh future politics.

Rekha Saha, '*India Bangladesh Relations*', Minerva Associates (publications) Pvt. Ltd., Kolkata, 2000.

The author precise but briefly discussed Mujibur Rahman's Era: Friendship on trial, Kheleda Zia Era: India Bangladesh Tensions, Hossen Mohammad Ershad Era: Old Tensions and New Problems and Conclusion. In the 1st chapter she tried to evaluate the trends and patterns in Indo- Bangladesh relations both chronologically and theoretically with the detail discussion of socio-cultural phases of the Liberation Movement. Next chapter she highlighted the cordial relationship between India and Bangladesh during Mujib Era and the land border

agreement of 1974, Indo- Bangladesh inland water transport pact, economic relations, cultural relations etc. In this context, the author elaborately discussed the aftermath of Mujib's brutal assassination, National Policy of Hossen Mohammad Ershad, the Farakka Barrage dispute, Mrs Indira Gandhi's negotiation for peace, the problem of maritime boundary, border problem and many other unsolved issues. 'Ershad Era: Old Tensions New Problems' is really praiseworthy because in this chapter she analytically pointed out many issues like Tin Bigha corridor issue, Teesta water agreement issue, economic cooperation, fencing problem, the chakma crisis, Islamization process of the Bangladesh society, internal political conflict of different political parties in Bangladesh, establishment of SAARC and its perspective etc. Ershad's latent intension to avoid India and the establishment of the SAARC to break India's hegemonic role in south Asian country and India's counter strategy to participate in SAARC at any cost are discussed here. In fine, her personal political thought and experience about Indian foreign policy, appendices, bibliography and index at the end of this book are really a source of knowledge to all advance students.

Rafiqul Islam, '*Bangladesh Liberation Movement*', The University Press Limited (UPL), Dhaka, 1987.

In this book the author Rafiqul Islam has given the contentious issue between the rights of a state territorial integrity and the rights of East Pakistani people for self determination. He has tried to discuss very analytically the necessity of constitutional law and the international law for maintaining the fundamental rights of East Pakistani people. Besides, he tried to depict death, destruction and human rights violation of 1971s liberation war in details. Next, he has explained the role of Mrs. Indira Gandhi and India's military and humanitarian assistance for the Liberation War of Bangladesh. In this context, he has mentioned the humanitarian role of India's bordering states-West Bengal, Tripura, Assam, Meghalaya and Negaland and the people of these states. In fine, the author has given his concluding observation about the atrocity of Pakistani military during the Liberation War and the miserable condition of Bangladeshi refugees abroad. This book is really a resource which helps the student to understand the background of Bangladesh Liberation War in details.

Kuldip Singh, '*India and Bangladesh*', Anmol Publication, Delhi, 1987.

In his book the author Kuldip Singh first highlighted the role of Awami League and the role of India for the emergence of Bangladesh as well as the long traditional, economic, social, political and cultural areas of the two countries. The assassination of Sheikh Mujibur

Rahman, different military rules in Bangladesh, Farakka barrage dispute, New Island controversy, refugees problem, border demarcation issue, water distribution and many others issues had been discussed here. In this context, he tried to find out the origin of Farakka barrage dispute in details. Besides, Indo-Bangladesh bilateral relations, Indira Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi regime with Bangladeshi military regime had been discussed with special emphasis on the sharing of Ganges water distribution treaty and in this regard, mentioned different kind of MOUs signed between the two countries. In the concluding chapter, the author expressed his optimistic approach and realistic observation about the future direction of Indo-Bangladesh friendly relations.

8. A.T.Rafiqur Rahman, ‘Bangladesh Election 2008 and Beyond: Reforming Institutions and Political Culture for a sustainable Democracy’,The University Press Limited(UPL),2008.

The author recommended some specific additional reformations for sustainable democracy in Bangladesh. While discussing the nature of democratic Government, he categorically mentioned three main areas- i) foundation of democracy, ii) good governance and iii) sustained economic development. About the foundation of democracy he suggested unanimously parliamentary boards, committees and sub-committees for maintaining the secular character of the country. About the good governance different autonomous commissions, establishment of dynamic ministries and about the sustained economic development, the good collaboration among civil society, N.G.O, state actors and non-state actors and international monetary organizations (IMF) were necessary. The book also dealt with the electoral reformation of Care Taker Government (CTG), pragmatic fresh proposal from civil society, reforming political culture, consensus proposal of several political parties about developmental issues and creative co-operation from the leading opposition leaders etc.

Bhuiyan Md. Monoar Kabir, ‘Politics and Development of the Jamaat-e-Islami Bangladesh, South Asian Publishers, New Delhi, 2006.

The author Bhuiyan Md. Monoar Kabir very elaborately discussed the foundation of Islamic movements in Bangladesh with special reference to Jamaat-e-Islami’s role in Bangladesh politics. Next chapter, he gave the detail discussion of Jamaat-e-Islami’s role in East Pakistan and its rehabilitation in independent Bangladesh under the Prime Minister of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. The organizational structure, socio, economic and political background of its leaders, its active participation of election with Bangladesh National Party

(BNP), its relationship with Islamic and non-Islamic organizations etc. have been discussed. At the end, the role of Jamaat-e-Islami during the period of Begum Khaleda Zia (1991-1996, 2001-2006) and Sheikh Hasina regime (1996-2001), rise of religious fundamentalists, bilateral sweet and sour relationship between India and Bangladesh were also mentioned by the author in this book.

Avik Sarkar, ‘*Bangla name desh*’ (ed.), Ananda Private Limited, Kolkata, 2006.

‘Bangla name desh’ is a remarkable book, edited by the author Avik Sarkar, which depicts the bone of contention about the Liberation war of Bangladesh. In his book, the author, Avik Sarkar, highlighted Mohammad Ali Jinnah’s religious ‘two nation theory’, East Pakistan’s Bengali language movement in 1951, 1954 provincial election, 1965 Indo-Pak war, military rule from 1958-1968 etc. In this context, Pakistan general election in 1970, Awami League’s emergence as the largest political party defeating Bhutto’s Pakistan Peoples Party, Awami League’s historic victory in 1970 election, Mujib’s friendly co-operation with the West Pakistani peoples’ representatives in framing the constitution, etc. were discussed by the author in details. Further, ‘Bangobondhu’ Sheikh Mujibur Rahman’s speech at the Racecourse Ground regarding the formation of central Government, his inspiring speech to the Bangladeshi people to turn every house into a fort of resistance for independence were clearly mentioned by him. In the next phase, he tried to highlight the Pakistan Army’s violent ‘Operation Searchlight’ to suppress the Bengali opposition on the night of 25TH March where genocide, gang rape, kidnap, sexual assault on women, brutal killings of opposition leaders, abduction, physical torture, and any sorts of human rights violation, etc. went on many parts of East Pakistan. In this context, he mentioned, the form of provisional government in Meherpur district in western Bangladesh with Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, who was in prison in Pakistan as President, Syed Nazrul Islam as Acting President, Tajuddin Ahmed as Prime Minister, and General Osmani as Commander-in-Chief, Bangladesh Forces. Besides, Bangladesh forces’ command was set up on 11th July, with Col. M. A. G. Osmani as commander-in-chief (C-in-C) with the status of Cabinet Minister, Lt. Col., Abdur Rabb as chief of Staff (COS), Group Captain A K Khandker as Deputy Chief of Staff (DCOS) and Major A. R Chowdhury as Assistant Chief of Staff (ACOS). The author attempted to highlight Indian leadership, military strategy, military training to guerrilla force and her grant recognition to the Government of Bangladesh at first, Yahya Khan’s hand over power to Indian forces after the surrender of the Pakistani forces in Dhaka, Mujib’s release from Pakistani jail on 8th January 1972, his return to Bangladesh on 10th January 1972 after a short

visit to London and New Delhi were clearly mentioned in this book in a phase wise manner. The author concluded by mentioning India's powerful leadership, active cooperation and humanitarian assistance in the liberation war of Bangladesh. The importance of his work has been significantly increased for its vivid presentation of events of liberation movements and its aftermath with attractive photographs.

Shamsul I Khan, S. Amimul Islam, M. Imdadul Haque., *'Political Culture, Political Parties and the Democratic Transition in Bangladesh'* The University Press Limited, Dhaka, 2008.

Bangladesh emerged as a sovereign nation state in 1971. Numerous studies were done on various aspects of dynamics of politics and democratic tradition in Bangladesh. The present study by the authors Shamsul I Khan, S. Amimul Islam, M. Imdadul Haque bears a special significance because it has attempted to portray the image of political parties of Bangladesh. These parties merged, fragmented and proliferated at will- all because of the political and fractional interest of individual leaders. As a result, they have failed to sustain consistence ideologies that are vital if political parties are emerged as a viable agent for a stable democracy. Divided in nine chapters the authors have attempted to unravel the Political Culture, Political Parties of Bangladesh whose ideologies are extremely weak. Political Party members are psychologically alienated as a consequence of structural atomism of society. At the outset, the authors described the methodological considerations of their study. They adopted interview method, sampling, data processing etc to show the issues of Political Parties in contesting elections. In fact, Bangladesh which got freedom from the chain of domination of Pakistan did not able to develop a competitive party system which in exorably linked with modern democracy. Most political parties in Bangladesh are a coalition of fraction. This condition perpetuates charismatic or personalized leadership which fail to create and sustain a rational decision making process in Bangladesh. The book under review presents the charismatic leadership of political parties reflected the unstable character of democracy in the country. This character of fragility spreads in democracy in Bangladesh. The authors begin these analytical frameworks from an analysis of ideological context of Bangladesh. Lastly, the authors have described the policies of Bangladesh National Party (BNP) and Awami League (AL) the two major political parties in Bangladesh and find out the roots of politics of criminalization and the rise of Islamic extremism in Bangladesh.

Md.Shahabul Haque, and Md. Bayezid Alam,, ‘*Bangladesher Jote Rajniti: 1954-2014*’, Abosar publication, Dhaka, 2014.

Coalition politics is important in a democracy particularly in a multi-party system which is prevalent in India and Bangladesh. Coalition politics originated in British era. Afterwards this political trend continued in Pakistan and Bangladesh. The objective of this coalition politics is to form Government with the agreed principles of governance among parties in coalitions. In this study, the authors Md.Shahabul Haque, and Md. Bayezid Alam attempted to describe the trends and patterns of coalition politics in Bangladesh from 1954-2014. In course of this study, the authors tried to highlight the entire political and constitutional system then present in Bangladesh. At the end, they highlighted the nature and objective of this coalition politics and their influences on the politics of Bangladesh.

Md. Moksuder Rahman (ed), ‘*Swadhin Bangladesher Ovyudoyer Itihas*’, Aleya Book Depot, Dhaka, 2015.

‘Swadhin Bangladesher Ovyudoyer Itihas’ is a remarkable edited book, written in the context of Bangladesh Liberation Movement. Divided the book into XII chapters the author Md. Moksuder Rahman who is a professor of political science at the Rajshai University, Bangladesh, wants to elaborately discuss the pre-historical background of Bangladesh from 1757-1971. The present edited study by the authors bears a special significance because it has attempted to portray the pre-British history of Bangladesh as well as genesis of Bangladesh liberation war. The author Dr. Mostafa Kamal Akand in chapter I, attempt to describe the pre-historic chronology of ancient Bangadesh-its location, ethnicity, administration, creed, language, religion etc. In chapter II, the author Md. Moksuder Rahman highlights the history of undivided Bengal from battle of Palasay to the creation of Peoples’ republic of Bangladesh in 1971. While discussing these historical events he categorically mentioned the Bango-Bhango of 1905, social and economic discrimination of British Government to Dacca, resentment and mass agitation against the annulment of Bango Bhango in 1911, 1935 Indian act, 1940 Lahore resolution, 1942 creeps Mission, 1942 Quit India movement, Simla conference in 1945, Mounbaten plan 1946 etc. The present study of chapter II, III by the author bears a special significance because these above mentioned events reflects the background of the creation of Peoples’ republic of Bangladesh in 1971. In this context, chapter III reflects social-economic-cultural- political discrimination of West Pakistan towards the East along with the underdevelopment of education, health, industry, agriculture and employment. The author Dr. Malukhur Rahman in chapter IV, and V

elaborately described the political trends of Pakistan from 1947-1952 by mentioning language movement, unlawful activities of Pakistani Muslim League avoiding East Pakistani leaders, role of Awami League, Youth League, Jammāt-e-Islami, Pakistan National Congress etc. In this context he highlighted the 1954 election, political activism of different political parties about this National election, preparation of Party Manifesto, election result, formation of Jukto Front, formation of Pakistan constitution procedure etc. Dr. Nawim Islam tried to highlight the entire political and constitutional system of the then military government, introduction of martial law and basic democracy etc. Next chapter, the author Dr. S.M. Aecrum Ullah elaborately discussed the trends and pattern of nationalism and self domination movement, Agartala conspiracy against Mujibur Rahman etc. In this context, he also mentioned 1969 mass movement, 11 points Programme, all party students' meeting, dimension of mass movement, 1970 election, operation search light, non cooperation movement of East Pakistani people etc. At the end, he discussed the success of Bangladesh liberation movement and the grateful contribution of India regarding this movement.

Nizam Ahmed, *'Non Party Caretaker Government in Bangladesh-Experience and Prospect'*, The University Press Limited, Dhaka, 2004.

Bangladesh witnessed a plethora of governments for its unstable political system. In fact, Bangladesh evolved a Non Party Caretaker Governmental system which is not to be found in most parliamentary democracy in the world. While analyzing the genesis of the Non Party Caretaker Government in Bangladesh, the author has attempted to set the legal framework of the Non Party Caretaker Government in Bangladesh. In fact, three elections have been held under the Non Party Caretaker Government; each election has been wildly acclaimed as free, fair and impartial. This book provides a critique of the policy and performance of the Non Party Caretaker Governments since the beginnings of 1990s. It explores a number of issues such as the scope and limit of the measure undertaken by the Non Party Caretaker Governments to ensure impartial election between different actors responsible for making the system of Non Party Caretaker Government's work and the potential of this Non Party Caretaker Government in promoting democratic consolidation in Bangladesh. This move refers to several reforms that are necessary to make election credible, democracy sustainable in Bangladesh.

Ghulam Murshid, ‘Muktijuddha O Tarpor : Ekti Nirdoliyo Itihas’, Prothoma Prokashan, Dhaka, 2013.

The war of Liberation movement in East Pakistan was originated 40 years ago. At the beginning, the author Ghulam Murshid described a history of this movement on the basis of a non political perspective. In this context, this study bears a special significance. While describing the history of Bengali people, their tradition and culture, the movements for partition of Bengal, the empowerment of Muslims, he portrayed the influence of Bengali language movement on the politics of Bangladesh. He discussed these issues particularly in the years 1950s and 1960s. In the last chapter the writer explained the dream and reality in Bangladesh politics and the fall of a star ‘Bangobondhu’ Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and the subsequent catastrophe which prevailed in Bangladesh.

Lt. Gen JFR Jacob, ‘Surrender At Dacca Birth of a nation’ Manohar publishers, New Delhi, 2015.

The campaign for the liberation of East Pakistan was short and swift. This war campaign spread over thirteen days and conducted in riverine terrain. At the beginning, the author Lt. Gen Jack Jacob who was chief of staff, Eastern Army during the operations for the liberation of Bangladesh tried to describe events leading to the creation of Bangladesh. In this context, he portrayed the beginning of war campaign with the Pakistan Army’s crackdown in East Pakistan on 26th March, 1971 to the outbreak of full-scale war following the Pakistani bombing of Indian airfields on 3rd December, 1971 and the subsequent military operations leading to the surrender of Pakistan Eastern Command. Divided the book in nineteen chapters the authors attempted to highlight an armed struggle against the Pakistani occupation forces following the killings of the night of 25th March, 1971. Following the incidents the Pakistani forces arrested Sheikh Mujib, who, through a wireless message, had called upon the people to resist the occupation forces. While describing the war campaign, strategy, preparatory moves and training of Mukti Bhani, Pakistani order of battle, progress of operation, surrender of Pakistani forces etc he mentioned the pressures of security council and pro-pakistani stance of China and U.S.A during cold war. In this context, he elaborately mentioned a first hand account of the negotiations and Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi’s writing letter to U.S.A President Richard Nixon, about the miserable and inhumane condition of millions of refugees on 15th December 1971. He also referred the role of Indian intelligent agency RAW’s help to organize, train and arm other insurgents in Bangladesh who support the liberation war. The author’s description of surrender of Pakistani forces to Indian army at Dhaka was really

momentous in the history of Indo-Bangladesh relations. At the end, he drew lessons from the political and military aspects of the campaign and highlighted the lack of clear directive both politically and militarily and the ad-hoc higher command set up for war. The lessons of 1971 liberation war have yet to be learnt.

Masihur Rahman, ‘Democracy in Crisis’, The University Press Limited, Dhaka, 2008.

In the sphere of politics ‘Democracy in Crisis’ is an important source book which dealt with uneasy mix of equal treatment of faith and privileged status of state religion. The author very nicely discussed the danger of constitutionalism and secularism by the constant attack of Jamaat-e-Islami on minority communities. Besides, he highlighted the structure, power and function of the major organs of the state with special emphasis of the rules of law. The author minutely discussed the role and activities of Jamaat-e-Islami as well as Syaid Abul Ala Mawdudi’s political thought and ideology, his quest for establishing Islamic state at any cost, politicizing Islam and Jamaat-e-Islami’s strategies for Islamic revolution in Bangladesh. At the end, the author elaborately mentioned the Bangladesh Nationalist Party’s (B.N.P) indulgence to religious extremism and its close link with Jamaat-e-Islami’s quest for Islamic state instead of secular democratic state.

B M Abbas A.T, ‘The Ganges Water Dispute’, (2nd edition) University Press Limited, Dhaka, 1984.

In his book the author B M Abbas has written the short history of high level talks between India and Bangladesh on the establishment of the Teesta barrage and sharing of the Teesta river water. During the 1950s, the then East Pakistani authorities intimated the Indian Government regarding the Teesta project. At the same time India asked the then East Pakistani authorities the detailed data of this project. During the 1960s, India intimated East Pakistani authorities about her plan for using the Teesta river water. The author further discussed that India at once protested against East Pakistan’s proposed plan to build a barrage in her territory after examining the detailed data offered by the Pakistani authorities to India in this regard. The Eastern part of Pakistan (later Bangladesh) achieved independence on 26th march 1971 with the help of Indian military might. He precise but briefly discussed Indo-Bangladesh bilateral relations which took a new turn on the issues of socio-political-economic development and for these purpose both the countries constituted a Joint River Commission(JRC) to solve the river water sharing dispute. According to the author, high level talks at secretarial and ministerial level constituted between India and Bangladesh on

the establishment of the Teesta barrage and sharing of the Teesta river water until 1983. The author concluded that the two countries arrived at an interim water sharing agreement according to which India was to get 39%, Bangladesh 36% and the remaining 25% was to be reserved for allocation later. Moreover, the location of the apportionment had not been specified in this ad-hoc water sharing agreement, which was very much important from Bangladesh point of view in getting the due amount of water for the proper development of her irrigation system.

Sumit Ganguly (ed), “Engaging the world Indian Foreign Policy Since 1947” (chapter IV), Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 2016.

The relations between India and Bangladesh have been passing through the period of mutual trust and deep mistrust since the emergence of Bangladesh as an independent nation state in 1971. Bangladesh, which got freedom in 1971 from the domination of Pakistan faced many problems, which the author tried to highlight in this book (chapter-IV). The author adopted the model, formulated by Kenneth Waltz in analyzing key driver of Indo-Bangladesh relations. The author’s mode of analysis is divided into different sections. The first section looks into the early days of relationship between these two countries. Then he chronicles the evolutions of bilateral ties between these two states when the author identified areas of convergences and divergences. He explains why relations between these two states gradually hardened over time. The second section concentrates on contemporary issues afflicting Indo-Bangladesh relations in the new millennium. In the third section the author has tried to discuss the three levels of analysis when he adopted in this study. He has tried to validate the case of the primacy of the level of domestic politics over the other two as possible explanation of shifts in this relationship. This section chronicles the India’s view of the relationship, exposing in its wake the underlying assumption of problems and consequences.

Bimal Pramanik, ‘Bangladesher Muktiyuddhe Bharater Bhumika’ Minoti Printers, Kolkata, 2010.

‘Bangladesher Muktiyuddhe Bharater Bhumika’ is a remarkable book which dealt with the unrevealed history of Bangladesh Liberation war in 1971. The author Bimal Pramanik tries to highlight in his book the genuine contribution of Indian political authorities, Indian people especially West Bengal, Tripura, Assam, Meghalaya people and their sacrifice, cooperation, assistance, empathy, feeling of fraternity etc. The present study by the author bears a special significance because it has attempted to portray the image of unwritten history

of Bangladesh liberation war. The author wants to explain the scene behind the scene where the contribution of the people of West Bengal and Tripura were largely ignored by some unknown reason. The author referred their immense and valuable role in the liberation war of Bangladesh who gave their best to fight against evil Pakistani forces and for this purpose the Bangalees intellectuals, journalists, artists, novelists, poets, teachers, students, doctors and social workers formed accordingly 'Bangladesh Muktisangram Sahayak Samiti to gather opinion of the world in favour of liberation war. In this context, the author portrays the contribution of Akashbani (Doorashan) and several Bengali Newspapers, especially for elaborate writing of Pranabesh Sen, Dilip Chakraborty and Debdulal Bandhayapadhyaya of Akashbani who gave true war commentary. An attempt of political and social background of the war was made by the author by sharing his personal experiences and particular emphasis has been given on the then West Bengal political situation under, Chief Minister Ajay Kumar Mukhewrjee of Bangla Congress and the leaders of the opposition for their needful humanitarian assistance and cooperation in times of need. Moreover, the author reminded us the contribution of 'Calcutta University Bangladesh Shayak Samiti', WBCUTA, National Council for Bangladesh, Bangladesh Liberation Council of Intelligentsia etc. The author has rightly pointed out that the contribution of Indian people to the helpless Bangladeshi people irrespective of caste, creed, and religion were not mentioned by a section of Bangladeshi intelligentsia for the sake of religion or some other reason.

Salam Azad, '*Contribution of India in the war of Liberation Of Bangladesh*', Ankur Prakashani, Dhaka, 2003.

Bangladesh got freedom from the chain of domination of Pakistan in 1971. The author attempted to highlight the seed of the liberation struggle, started germinating much earlier from the partition of Bengal in 1905. In this context, this study bears a special significance. The emergence of Bangladesh as an independent nation state in 1971 was primarily a product of internal political conflict between East and West Pakistan with the issue of National language, Urdu or Bengali, and the politico-economic domination of West Pakistan towards the East. In this context, he mentioned the transfer of power to the elected representatives of India and Pakistan political leaders on the basis of Jinnah's religious 'two nation-theory' under the framework of 'India Independence Act of 1947.' By mentioning this he said there were dreams of harvesting hopes and desires among the Bangladeshi people about the prosperity of their motherland. But very soon, East Bangalees were frustrated on the face of West Pakistani designs and conspires. In this perspective, the author tried to highlight the

nature of internal political conflict between East and West Pakistan and the Contribution of India in the war of Liberation of Bangladesh. Divided the whole book into ten chapters he wanted to portray the pre liberation movement, war of liberation, refugees in India, intervention by India, diplomacy of India, humanitarian assistance of India, surrender of Pakistani force at Dhaka etc. All the above mentioned chapters were supported and supplemented by some historical photographs along with a necessary annexure at the end of this book. The book under review, presents the list of Indians who sacrificed their lives for independence of Bangladesh in 1971 which are the authentic document for future research work.

Mohammad Salim, ‘Bangladesh- Bharat Samparka’, Bangla Academy, Dhaka, June 2009.

‘Bangladesh-Bharat Samparka’ (1971-1981), written in Bengali, is a PhD research work undertaken by the author Mohammad Salim in the University of Dhaka. At the outset, the author said the perspective of the study of the relations between India and Bangladesh by developing a theoretical framework of this study. Divided in five chapters, this book is an exhaustive study on the different aspect of Indo-Bangladesh relations from 1971-1981. During this period of relationship India and Bangladesh organized a number of meetings relating to social, political and cultural to settle the issues which faced the two countries. But it is a matter of fact, that still some issues like Teesta river water distribution, land boundary, refugee problem etc. remained unsettled which has categorically stated in this in-depth study of ‘Bangladesh-Bharat Samparka’ (1971-1981).

K.R.Gupta,(ed) ‘Global Terrorism’ , Atlantic Publishers and Distributor, Delhi, 2004.

Terrorism has become a worldwide phenomenon during the last three decades. The world has witnessed an increasing number of terrorist attacks. There are now 15000 Jihadists all over the Islamic countries like Afghanistan. Kashmir, Albania, Chechnya (Russia), Xinjiang (China), Central Asia and elsewhere. The book under review, comprises nine chapters, written by eminent experts on terrorism, examines in details and depth a variety of subjects like nuclear, chemical, and biological terrorism, Islam and terrorism, military strategy adopted by the United State to counter terrorism, terrorism faced by India, role of Pakistan, Bangladesh and other countries in terrorism, major countries to counter terrorism etc. The fight against terrorism is based primarily on Article 51 of the U.N.O Charter which empower member states to use the rights of self defense against acts which threaten its existence.

Everyone knows the terrorist attack on World Trade Centre in U.S.A in 2002. India has been facing cross-border terrorism since long, much before bombing on World Trade Centre on 11th September 2001, Pakistan sponsored terrorist attack on Indian Parliament and Jammu and Kashmir Assembly. In fact there is irrefutable evidence which shows that terrorism is an integral part of Pakistan's state policy to counter Afghanistan, Jammu and Kashmir and the Talibanized part of Central Asia. After terrorist attack on World Trade Centre, U.S.A devised the technique to contain terrorism in the world but the world leaders, although agreed to United State's strategy to control terrorism, it could not be contained because some states like Pakistan who is the nerve centre of terrorism and has taken terrorism as a means of obtaining their goal. As a result, state sponsored terrorism has become a problem in the world. The book while highlighting all these aspects of terrorism, have portrayed how these obstacles could be removed.

Gary J. Bass, '*The Blood Telegram India's secret war in East Pakistan*', Random House Publishers India Private Limited, Haryana, India, 2013.

Archer Blood, the USA Consulate General in Dhaka, has vividly described the bloody massacre in Bangladesh in this book written by Gary J. Bass. The U.S.A Consulate General gave detailed account of the killings of Dhaka University. The American weaponry and other war machinery-supplied by Richard Nixon administration were used to kill Bangalees who are called rebellion by America. America never wanted the division of Pakistan and tried to protect the integrity of Pakistan at the cost of genocide that took place in Bangladesh during cold war. This book is about how the world great democracy-USA and India-faced up to one of the most tribble humanitarian crisis in 20th century. While Mrs.Indira Gandhi's Government professed its unwavering desire for peace, she almost immediately turn to aggressive option from the early days of Pakistani crackdown, Indian military covertly prepared for a full scale regular war against Pakistan. In fact, India did not tolerate the brutal killings of Bangalees in Bangladesh and tried to heart and soul to liberate Bangladesh from the oppression of Pakistan. The blood telegram, as the name of the book is significant. Archer Blood who posted at Dhaka sent Telegram about the cruel incidents happened in Bangladesh to Washington regularly. The Massacre at Dhaka University and the blood flowing on the street of Dhaka particularly on 25th March 1971, is a memorable events which the author Archer Blood has described in the chapter 'The Blood Telegram.' Divided in 19 chapters with an epilogue and exhausted notes and references, the book under review has elaborately explained the liberation movement and the role of Indian Government in this regard. In the

Epilogue the author has recorded the reactions of Pakistan, India, U.S.A as well as the dissenters after the liberation of Bangladesh.

Sreeradha Dutta, '*Bangladesh A Fragile Democracy*' Institute of Defense Studies And Analysis, New Delhi, 2004.

In this book the author Sreeradha Dutta, has highlighted the religion and culture of Bangladesh particularly after its genesis in 1971. She focuses upon the crisis of identity that prevailed in Bangladesh. The volatile nature of politics in Bangladesh and its independence from the domination of Pakistan has been vividly described in this book. Bangladesh witnessed multi-faced problems. Among these language is crucial. It was the language movement on 1952 which ascribed the cultural separateness of East Pakistan and Pakistani Urdu speaking Punjabi elite. Bangladesh faces the danger of extremism. Coupled with this islamization is a factor which linked with extremism lead to an imbligio from which Bangladesh could not be saved. The author candidly descried in the 1st chapter of the book. She has said islamisation of Bangladesh can be viewed as a natural phenomena rooted in its search for identity and its cultural moorings. In Bangladesh there has seen a lack of synergy between two elements of culture, namely language and religion. Following the military take over, the official identity question has been completely taken over by the religion factor undermining and it can be said, ignoring its story vibrant cultural mooring. Electoral politics dominates the pattern of volatility in Bangladesh particularly in regard to legitimization of a sound institutional system. Bangladesh witnessed political instability and experienced coalition politics and political opportunism. Electoral mechanism, election in 2001,electoral trends, Awami League versus BNP contest-all these aspects of Bangladesh politics have been vividly described in 3rd chapter of this book. Chapter IV has revealed the pattern of volatile nature of democratic system in Bangladesh with its problem. In fact, the author has tried to highlight that Bangladesh polity is dominated by changing national identities, growing Islamisation of the societies, personalized politics, weak institutional building, absent of political accountability, lack of responsible opposition and a worsening law and order situation leading to the take over of military in civic matter. While elaborately describing all these aspects the author has highlighted the problems of government and political irresponsibility in Bangladesh. In fact, there are two principal political parties of Bangladesh- Awami League and BNP. The clash between AL and BNP lead to CTG who in 1991 opted to relinquish power to an elected legacy but the sorry part of Bangladesh politics is that the dignity of Bangladesh parliament eroded and even judiciary in Bangladesh failed to function

in-depthly. As a result, domestic violence emerged as a major challenge to the Bangladesh Government. The minorities, the Hindu and Christian who are living in Bangladesh have been suffering a sense of insecurity since the communal tension prevails in Bangladesh and influx of Hindu and Christian refugees in India and Bangladesh who as per international report violated human rights and even the transit identified by the ruling party indulging atrocity in Bangladesh. The author highlights all these aspects and tried to unravel the problem of Chakma living in Chittagong Hill Track. The most important part of this book is the presentation of the author's views on the impediments to Indo-Bangladesh relations which relates to trade, border, the distribution of Ganges water, migration, insurgency and the presence of Al Quada activities in Bangladesh. The author has tried to face all these issues. She has said that since 2001 Jatio Sansad election, the Indo-Bangladesh relations deteriorated for two reasons namely-Taliban/Al Quada presence and anti-Hindu violence in Bangladesh. The author is of the view that some of these problems are not easily to solve which generate new sets of problem which can be called constraints that restrain the scope for greater cooperation between the two countries.

Articles

Anindya Jyoti Majumdar, 'Making Sense of India-Bangladesh Relations', *India Quarterly*, Volume-70, No-4, 2014, pp-327-340.

India and Bangladesh are interrelated geographically. Bangladesh is open described as India locked. That is to say, 90% of its international border is shared with India. In this paper the author Anindya Jyoti Majumdar highlights the geo-political aspects of India-Bangladesh relations. The author has highlighted some pertinent issues like distribution of Ganges water, construction of Farakka barrage, building of the controversial Tapaimukh dam, resentment against Bangladeshi migration in the entire North Eastern Region of India, Islamic terrorism prevailing in Bangladesh etc. which stand on the way of making good relations between India and Bangladesh. The author further thinks that identity is a factor which can be taken into consideration for determining the relations between the two countries. Bangladesh, which got freedom from the chain of Pakistan in 1971 witnessed a series of Governments and faced a volatile politics did not present a viable and stable political system. Hence, the relations between India and Bangladesh went through various troubles which could not be easily smooth over. In this context, the author vividly presented all these issues and tried to

highlight the crisis of Bangladeshi identity. The two major political parties, Awami League-a pro-India party and BNP-an anti India- is fallacious: their attitude towards India is governed by domestic compulsion and tactics to secure modicum of regional security. The author has suggested that Bangladesh would do well to establish links with the main political parties of India. Interaction that does not require rigid and formal positioning might establish multi-faced modes of possible co-operation at official level as well. In a way, people to people contact need to be focus more at the level of political and economic exchange even in the days of social media, civil societies and people's initiatives, the traditional lines of communication need to be rejuvenated.

Arunoday Bajpai, 'Dynamics of India-Bangladesh Relations', *World Focus*, Volume XXXIII, No.2, February 2012, pp.65-70.

In the article the author briefly discussed the long history of Bangladesh independent and the intimacy between Mrs.Indira Gandhi and Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. He mentioned both the countries agreed to respect their respective sovereignty and share common history, culture and heritage but after the brutal assassination of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the intimate relation of the two countries was interrupted by General Ziaur Rahman and later by General Hossen Mohommad Ershad. The author further pointed out Khaleda Zia's rule, her anti-Indian stance and political Islamisation, her pro-China foreign policy etc. The chaotic situation in 2008 election, rule of military backed Caretaker Government, landslide victory of Sheikh Hasina against Islamic alliance led by Khaleda Zia, the democratic atmosphere of Sheikh Hasina's government, positive bi-lateral relations between India and Bangladesh were also mentioned with equal importance. At the end, he repeatedly mentioned the dynamics of Indo-Bangladesh relations and different confidence building measures.

Partha Pratim Basu, "The Indo-Bangla 'Enclaves' and a Disinherited people", *Jadavpur Journal of International Relations*, Volume-15, No-1, June, 2011, pp-55-70.

In a contemporary world some 250 enclaves were to be found, located mainly in three areas: Western Europe, the Fringes of the former Soviet empire and South Asia, but great majority of the world's enclaves, however, were concentrated in a small segment of the Indo-Bangladesh border land where 106 Indian enclaves were surrounded by Bangladesh and 92 Bangladeshi enclaves were located in India. The tension between India and Bangladesh remained for long time over the issue of settlement of dispute relating to enclaves particularly Tin Bigha Corridor (which join Tin Bigha on Indian soil with Bangladeshi enclaves

Angerpota and Daghgram) in 1992. But the model envisaged did not solve the problem. With the return of Awami League Government led by Sheikh Hasina in Bangladesh in 2008 this issue became the central point of discussion between the two countries and a proposal for an amicable resolution of the issue became visible. In this backdrop, this article proposes to review the multiple dimensions of this issue- territorial, humanitarian, and political. The author concludes that while the moves a foot might address the question of precarious Indo-Bangladesh border, it might not automatically end the travails of the inhabitants of the enclaves even after their formal swap was completed.

Tridib Chakraborty, and Mohor Chakraborty, 'India and Bangladesh under UPA Phase II: Crests, Through and the Way Ahead', *World Focus, Volume-XXXIII, No-2, February, 2012, pp.3-9.*

The creation of Bangladesh in 1971 has become a key factor in the context of overall South Asian politics. The geographical position of Bangladesh is such that it has become a strategically important in the South East region. Bangladesh, is bordered by India (mainly North East and West), on all sides except for a small border with mymenmar to the South East and by the Bay of Bengal to the south. Moreover, the importance of Bangladesh was also viewed in terms of political and economic necessity from the prism of regionalism related mainly to SAARC.

Explaining this aspect of the importance of Bangladesh, the authors Prof. Tridib Chakraborty and Mohor Chakraborty in their article have attempted to highlight different facets of the relations between India and Bangladesh under U.P.A phase II. In the first phase of discussion the authors have described the momentous visit of Sheikh Hasina to India and the follow up incident relating to the development of India-Bangladesh relations. Here, the authors highlighted certain specific issues like Agreements between the two countries over the distribution of Teesta river water, demarcation of land boundary, Agreements on mutual legal assistance on criminal matter; Agreements on transfer of sentenced person; Agreements on combating into terrorism, organized crime and Illicit Drug Trafficking; Tin Bigha Corridor dispute; construction of the Tapaimukh dam in Manipur etc. The authors give a special emphasis on water discord linking to Teesta deal with overland transit particularly relating to the transit connecting rivers in the North East and Eastern India. All these issues are focused in a phased wise manner and its development in different ruling regimes of both the countries. A contentious issue which brought the ongoing better ties between India and Bangladesh on tenterhooks, along with the Teesta imbroglio is the Tapaimukh dam. This dam

is a proposed embankment dam on the river Barak in the Monipur state of India. In fact, this dam will produce 1,500 MW electricity and this proposed to be located 500 Meter downstream from the juncture of the Barak and Tuiver river. While the authors explained the pros and cons of the construction of the dam, ultimately the population of the Indian state of Monipur and Dhaka are concerned about the negative effect of the construction of this dam from different angles. In short, Sheikh Hasina's visit to India followed by Dr. Manmohan Singh's visit to Dhaka in September 2011 have improved the bilateral relations drastically. Although, the thorny issues as mentioned above were not totally solved but partial solution of the problems are under discussion. The importance of this visit by the two Prime Ministers made bilateral relations with a cooperative mindset. This is, no doubt, established an atmosphere of peace, vital for the entire South Asian Region in the context of the competitive global order.

Imtiaz Ahmed, 'Teesta, Tipaimukh and River Linking: Danger to Bangladesh-India Relations', *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 47, No. 16 (APRIL 21, 2012), pp. 51-53

Ever since the Awami League party came to power in 2009 when Bangladesh signed a historic treaty with India regarding the distribution of Teesta water. This article chronicles the various aspects of this treaty and its implication. Imtiaz Ahmed, who teaches at the department of International Relations at the University of Dhaka tried to reveal the potentials of conflict between India and Bangladesh over Teesta river water distribution. The author wrote this article in the particular context of India's Supreme Court's verdict directing the Government of India to implement the interlinking of rivers. He has pointed out that this verdict is contrary to international convention regarding interlinking of water dispute which has regional and international implication. In this regard, he has used the case of Teesta water distribution and 54 other rivers which Bangladesh shares with India.

Dr. Bimal Pramanik, 'Growing Indo-Bangladesh Relations', *World Focus Volume-XXXIII*, No-2, February, 2012, pp.60-64.

A new era began after freedom of Bangladesh from the chain of Pakistan. The bloody Liberation War evoked enthusiasm among pro-liberation people in the politico-cultural field. In fact, a wave of secular Bengali culture and politics both at the government and non-governmental initiative observed in Bangladesh during 1972-1975. But this period started declining after the assassination of first president and Prime Minister of Bangladesh Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. The author attempted to highlight this aspect of Bangladesh's politics. He

traces the background and development of India-Bangladesh relations, different MOUs signed between the two countries, Sheikh Hasina's visit to India followed by Dr. Manmohan Singh's visit to Dhaka. All these issues have been vividly described by the author in this article.

Rakesh Tiwary, 'Conflicts over International Waters', *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 41, No. 17 (Apr. 29 - May 5, 2006), pp. 1684-1692

Distribution of water among nations is a problem which afflicts each nation. From an international perspective, the author said that since water is very much important for survival of human life, every nation is increasingly concerned with this problem. From this point of view India and Pakistan, the two neighbouring countries are at loggerheads with each other over sharing of water particularly Ganges water. According to the author there are many drivers of international water conflict like sovereignty, international river basin, the level of economic development and technological capabilities of the basin state which are to be taken into account. Water scarcity is also a pertinent issue in the sphere of resource which usually determines the capabilities of basin state. Another factor which, the author thinks, is of paramount importance is climatic availability of water in real terms. It is well known that for the arid region, the issue of water sharing especially in dry season leads to conflict. The author pointed out another determinant which governs water dispute relates to depletion of a source (like an aquifer) because of basin diversion of sharing of water, redirection or other uses for other places, consumption, spatial distribution of population and water resources. The author wants to highlight other important factors which usually lead to international water conflict. Among them the most important is riparian structure and riparian organization. Here he would like to state that riparian structure refers to international river basin which is linked with to all the riparian states. These riparian states might have a complex network of environmental, economic, political and securities interdependency. In this process it creates the potentials for inter-state conflicts as well as the opportunities of co-operation.

Another factor which he highlighted in the context i.e., riparian organization (Nation state formation process, Ruling regimes, Water security etc), to be taken as continual inputs in the sphere of dynamism of international water conflicts. The author briefly portrayed Ganges water dispute, construction of a barrage at Farakka of Murshidabad district in West Bengal, various Indian government's programmes like hydroelectricity generation, industrial uses, navigation, waterway transportation, agriculture and irrigation, ground water decline, river linking project, flood control and riverbank erosion, increase water salinity etc.

Moreover, he thought that the solution of Ganges water dispute is required for its environmental and maritime securities. The author explained that the Farakka Barrage was built to divert the Ganges River water into the Hoogly River during the dry season, from January to June to flush out the accumulating silt and to increase navigability of Hoogly river for Kolkata port by excavating a feeder canal of 38 K.M long, 150 meters wide, and 6 meters deep. The author further explained the Ganges Water dispute between India and Pakistan into the phases like (phase-I): 1950-1971, (phase-II): 1971-1996: creation of Bangladesh to the signing the Ganges water treaty, change riparian organization and riparian structure,(phase-III): the latest position. During the discussion of the Ganges water treaty, the Farakka Barrage issue was highly publicized by the then government of Bangladesh through the government controlled media. In May, 1976, Bangladesh raised the Farakka barrage issue at the Istanbul Islamic foreign ministers' conference, at the Non Allied Movement (NAM) summit at Colombo in August, 1976. In fine,the author mentioned that Bangladesh accused India, for its poor economy, food scarcity and the slower process of National construction for the lack of river water.

Kazi Montu, "Farakka Dispute" *Economic and political weekly*, Volume 15, No.27,July 5,1980.

The differences between Bangladesh and India over the issue of sharing of Ganges water became complicated since the signing of five year Ganges water sharing Agreement on 5th November , 1977. In this article the main theme of discussion relates to the sharing of Ganges water at a time when Farakka Barrage was completed and the distribution of water between Bangladesh and India began at Farakka. Although the treaty did not work impartially for which Bangladesh had to suffer. The author is of the opinion that various rivers in Bangladesh were affected for India's uncompromising and rigorous stand over the distribution of water. Even the tripartite agreement among India, Nepal and Bangladesh did not materialize. The author has concluded that for the lack of firm stand on the part of Bangladesh Government the treaty of 1977 did not materialize.

Punam Pandey, “Bangladesh, India, and Fifteen Years of Peace-Future Direction of the Ganges Treaty”, *Asian Survey*, Vol.54, No.4, 2014, pp.651-673

In this article the author Punam Pandey elaborately portrayed the 1996 Ganges water treaty in different phases. He mentioned in details the various treaties held in 1975, 1977, Joint River Commission constituted by both the countries. He pointed out the emerging role of provinces in the Indian federation as well as the climate change and its impacts on the Ganges water treaty. The author further pointed out categorically the Indian River interlinking project and its impact on Bangladesh politics. In fine, he tried to find out the alternative way of solution. That is to say, the author expressed his concern about the fate of this treaty after its completion in 2026.

Asim Mukhopadhyay, “River of Contention”, *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol-15, No-17, April-26, 1980, pp-766-768.

The issue relating to the distribution of water between India and Bangladesh has become contentious since its beginning. In this article “River of Contention” the writer Asim Mukhopadhyay has tried to highlight these contentious issues. The author opines that, Bangladesh’s demand for water is excessive. Here, the author has pointed out that Bangladesh should make necessary measures to generate water from alternative sources. One such sources has mentioned by the author, is Paksey barrage on the Padma for the Padma-kabodak project. In this article, the author cited the views of irrigation experts to justify his point of view that Bangladesh’s demand for river water is somewhat exaggerated. In fact, there is enough water in the Ganges basin. It has been estimated that the Ganges basin contains 372 million acre feet water. The total annual requirement for irrigation in the basin area will be approximately 207MAF (India 150, Nepal 24, and Bangladesh 33). Enough water is therefore available in the Ganges basin itself which will not only cover the present shortage 9MAF at Farakka barrage but at the same time, be able to meet the future requirement of the country’s concerns. Explaining this aspect of water availability the author has said that the augmentation of river water some reservoirs in Nepal will be released to the Ganges through natural river channel. Indo-Bangladesh water distribution problem can be solved by envisaging right measure and for this the Government of India, Nepal and Bangladesh should sit together. Dhaka-Delhi blame game might be avoided regarding the distribution of river water. In fact, there are some techno-political ambiguities arrived before joint river commission’s meeting. The distribution of river water arises when both sides complicated the matter. Bangladesh has alleged that India has decided to build a barrage on

the river at Maharani in Tripura. Hence, disputes like this and similar other multiplexed which the author has realized that a realistic attitude towards the problem is the urgent need of the hour for the solution of the problem with an eye to the interest of both the countries.

Ramaswamy R Iyre, “The Fallacy of Augmentation: Demands on Ganga Waters.”, *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol-34, No-33, August-14-20, 1999, pp-2296-2297.

The main dispute between India and Bangladesh revolves round the requirement of Ganges water during the lean season. Ramaswamy R Iyre has highlighted on this aspect of the dispute in this article. The author traces the genesis of dispute as early year in 1974. His key point is how to develop the augmentation of Ganges water and what are fallacies of augmentation. The author has pointed out that augmentation can be broken down two propositions i) that there is shortage of water in the Ganges ii) this should be made good by an addition of water to the Ganges from summer. In this paper the author has explained the various aspect of the process of augmentation of Ganges river basin water. He has rightly pointed out that a river which runs through more than one country, the country's concern must reach an agreement regarding distribution and augmentation of water. Such a treaty was signed in 1996. Nothing concrete has so far been made in this regard. For this the author opines that India and Bangladesh should realized the problem and delineate the right way augmentation in the lean season flow of the Ganges and instead think of good water resources management.

Dipanjana Roy Chaudhury, ‘40 Years of Bangladesh independence: Threats against its identity continue’, *World Focus*, Volume-XXXIII, No-2, February, 2012, pp.71-74.

Bangladesh got independence forty years ago. During this long period Bangladesh has failed to develop an identity among the people of Bangladesh. The threats of this identity loom large in Bangladesh. The recent events of an aborted coup against Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is part of series of attempts by anti-liberation and extremist forces to target progressive forces. The author categorically highlighted this aspect of Bangladesh politics which witness a destabilizing tendency among the anti-liberation forces. But, despite all these attempts by the disintegrating forces Bangladesh has been largely successful in overcoming all these problems.

Dr. Aruna R mital, “Indo-Bangladesh water sharing issues”, *International Journal of Humanities and Science Research*, vol-2, issue 11, November 2016, pp-7-11.

In this article the author highlighted indo Bangladesh cordial relationship from historical perspective to socio-economic-cultural perspective. Here, the author very briefly and preciously discussed the Farakka Barrage dispute, Teesta water dispute. He tried to find out the possible solution of Teesta water dispute. In fine, the author concluded that political will and friendly discussion between the two countries at higher level would be the feasible approach of solution to the problem in question.

Dr. Satish Kumar, ‘India Bangladesh relations and problems of North East India’ *World Focus*, Volume-XXXIII, No-2 , February, 2012, pp.80-84.

India’s North East is a major agenda of India Bangladesh relations. Addressing the India Bangladesh Business meet organized jointly by the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), The Federation of Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce and Industry in association with the Government of Tripura Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina appealed to the Government of India to address the issue of bridging the trade deficit of the two countries. She said that connectivity between India and Bangladesh partly with the of North East states of India including Tripura would generate tremendous economic vibrancy leading to people’s empowerment and overall development of the region. The author further discussed this aspect of Indio-Bangladesh relations particularly with reference to North East states of India. Here, he has pointed out the strategic relevance of Bangladesh and India’s North East internal development and upsurges on either side of the border have a tendency to spillover effect into Bangladesh and India especially in the bordering states of West Bengal and North East. The author categorically discussed the future challenges of Bangladesh and India relations in North East states. In this regard he has pinpointed the China threats and Chinese attempts to lure Bangladesh in its own field. Various Chinese development programmes are knocking at the door of Bangladesh and the resultant affect has been that Bangladesh is having Chinese Tanks-6.5 large caliber artillery system; missile boats; 16 combat air craft etc. In fact, the distinctive differences between India and Chinese approach in Bangladesh, India is obsessed with its own gain in North Eastern development whereas China is willing to give more economic benefit to Bangladesh. Besides, the author has highlighted India’s domestic political compulsion, Hindu-Muslim riot, climate challenge, drugs mafia groups, insurgency between the two countries which are eating into the vary vital of the relations between the two countries.

Maryam Mastoor, “India-Bangladesh Relations: A New Phase Of Cooperation”, *Regional Studies, Volume-XXIX, No-3, Summer 2011, pp.42-65.*

In the article ‘India–Bangladesh Relations: A New Phase of Cooperation’ the author Maryam Mastoor elaborately discussed the common culture, economic and political history of the two countries. First aspect of the article deals with nature of bilateral relations with special reference to the Awami League Government. The second aspect deals with recent development under the Government of Sheikh Hasina and also emphasized ‘theory of realism.’ Emphasis has been given on both security-related concerns as well as compulsions of geographical dependency. At the end, he nicely elaborated India’s contribution to the Bangladesh Liberation War and India’s interest to secure her long eastern border from Pakistan.

Ahrar Ahmad, “Bangladesh in 2013-Year of Confusions, Confrontations, Concerns”, *Asian Studies, Volume-54, No-1, 2014, pp.190-198.*

The author Ahrar Ahmad highlighted Bangladesh’s economic performance in the year 2013. He mentioned despite the non-stop political unrest, weak investment, infrastructure inadequacies, corruption, poor governance, energy deficiencies and competition from other Asian countries Bangladesh’s economy growth rate was 7 percent approximately. The author analyzed the nature of 14-party coalition led by Sheikh Hasina versus 18-party alliance led by Khaleda Zia over the issue of abolition of Non Party Caretaker system, international crime tribunal for 1971 judgment.

Amita Rajaram Pradhan and Waghmare Vikas Meghraj, “water disputes on Ganges river between India And Bangladesh”, *Research Front, Volume-4, No-3, July-September 2016, pp-35-40.*

In this article the authors Amita Rajaram Pradhan and Waghmare Vikas Meghraj discussed the 1996 Ganges water sharing dispute between Bangladesh and India since the creation of Bangladesh. They emphasized the multi-use of water resources and the hydrological competition between or among countries in national and international level. The authors pointed out the major concern for regional stability and peace for this purpose. They further mentioned with equal importance the 1975 interim water agreement, 1977 water agreement for five years, several MOUs regarding Ganges water distribution, 1996 long term water agreement for 30 years and its major limitation. The authors pointed out that for the peaceful solution of this water dispute, the urgent need and friendly cooperation might be

needful from both sides from broader point of view. In fine, they apprehended that the Gangotri Glacier will be melting out in coming future making water dispute sharper between Bangladesh and India.

Mizanur Rahman Shelley, ‘Modi’s visit to Bangladesh and south asian perspective’, *South Asian Journal*, 14, Fall/2015, pp.13-25.

In this article the author highlighted Indian Prime Minister Mr. Narendra Modi’s maiden two- days weekend visit along with West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee to Bangladesh to fulfill unresolved agreements and cordial relation between two countries. The border fence dispute, Teesta and Fenni river water dispute, connectivity by road, rail and water, trade and investment, infrastructural development, petroleum pipelines and digital links and different kind of MOUs were mentioned with equal importance. The cordial international fraternities on the issue of social, political and economic matter were hinted at elaborately and Modi’s assurance of resolve the land boundary agreement were also emphasized in this article. Prime Minister Modi’s meeting with Sheikh Hasina and Khaleda Zia and their consensus for maintaining the secular identity of Bangladesh and fight against terrorism, joint declaration of the two Prime Ministers at Dhaka were also mentioned here. In fine, he referred that the Asia-Pacific region changed more than three decade ago but if India and Bangladesh move forward politically and economically they will be ‘big power’ for peace, prosperity and leadership in Asian Sub-continent.

Anand kumar, “Impact of West Bengal politics on Indo-Bangladesh relations”, *strategic analysis*, Vol. 37, No. 3, 2013, pp-338-352.

India-Bangladesh relations are logger heads for unsolved Ganges water distribution on realistic basis. The author has attempted to explain this aspect in this article. He argues that Teesta agreement regarding distribution of water could not be signed by Indian Prime Minister Dr. Monmohan Singh in September 2011 due to the objection given by West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee. Mrs. Banerjee is right in her point of view that signing of Teesta pact will jeopardize the interest of North Bengal. In this article, the author has highlighted the various aspects of determinants of foreign policy making. In the course of analysis of this aspect he has pointed out that sharing of river water has been a major determinant of foreign policy making between India and Bangladesh. A political consensus in West Bengal is needed to take a stand regarding the Teesta treaty but still now no such consensus has been arrived. Here, the author elaborately discussed the history of Teesta

barrage project by citing the views of different experts of both India and Bangladesh on this issue. Besides, Teesta dispute other dispute like land boundary, transit, connectivity etc are also there which has blocked the good relations between the two countries. In fact, Teesta water sharing, land boundary agreement and transit project to be complicated and could not be sorted out in a hurry. It appeared that there was no due diligence before proposing to sign this treaty. Allegation and counter allegation are going on regarding this issue. Hence, agreement of any sort between India and Bangladesh could be reached if bold but realistic approach from both sides are taken.

Abhimanyu Datta, ‘Barbed Wire BorderFencing: Exclusion and Displacement at the Indo-Bangladesh Borderland’ *India Quarterly Vol 74(1), 2018,p.p 42–60*

In this article the author highlighted cross-border illegal trade and anti-social activities as well as illegal immigration and its tremendous effect on country’s security. In order to stop cross-border illegal and anti-social activities as well as illegal immigration from Bangladesh, the Indian Government made the decision to fence the entire India-Bangladesh border that existed before the partition of India. He mentioned the Government of India had been working on a plan to build border fencing initiative in phase wise manner since 1986. He rightly mentioned the composite type of barbed wire border fencing. The newly created barbed wire border fencing took its place in lieu of the single wire border fencing that was constructed during the initial phase. For Indian families residing at the country’s territorial edge, the border fencing that runs along the international border between India and Bangladesh has evolved into a structural barrier for their livelihood. Families that are confined to the area that lies between the actual line of partition and the border fencing are forced to lead a restricted and deprived life within the limited land. The primary focus of the author is on how the Indian fenced-out families’ citizenship rights are violated by border fencing. The author also discussed how the Indian Government’s defensive border fencing policies are affecting citizen rights in the country’s border regions and subsequently causing displacement which is a serious issue for country’s economy and national interest.

Sanjay K. Bhardwaj, “India–Bangladesh BorderGovernance: Issues and Challenges” *International Studies, Vol-50, No-(1&2), 2016, pp-109–129*

In an effort to safeguard their sovereignty and territoriality, every Westphalian state has the rights to demarcate and defend its borders. On the other hand, priorities for border control from country to country vary greatly in modern time. Economic regulations and

deployment of military personnel have traditionally been central border management policy. All these aspects are rightly mentioned here. In this article, he referred prior to the problems of transnational migration, infiltration, terrorism, and insurgencies, many modern states are re-tooling and re-configuring their border regulatory system. The author has highlighted the complex geographical nature of the India–Bangladesh border. In this article, he categorically mentioned its regulation or management has always been vital for both the countries' security. Nevertheless, in the course of analysis of this aspect he has pointed out the new concept of globalization and the new definitions of security, which has given emphasis on human security, human rights, wellbeing of the people. All these new ideas have recently changed the conventional concept of border management.

In terms of implementation, the Government's top priorities have shifted to promoting border trade, market, joint ventures, and business-related infrastructure, which will improve Human Development Index and increase employability among border area people. In fine, he referred the crucial role of border highlighting country's national security strategy as it has close connections between internal security and the environment of regional security. This has tarnished the atmosphere and hindered the bilateral development and cordial relations between India and Bangladesh. The author has attempted to explain all these aspects in this article.

N. S. Jamwal “Border Management: Dilemma of Guarding the India-Bangladesh Border”, *Strategic Analysis*, Vol. 28, No.1, January-March 2004, pp-5-36

In this article the author highlighted India's International land boundary with Bangladesh that is 4096 kilometers long. The Indian states such as Assam 262 kilometers, Tripura 856 kilometers, Mizoram 318 kilometers, Meghalaya 443 kilometers, and West Bengal 2 217 kilometers share land boundary with neighbouring Bangladesh. The Indo-Bangladesh border, which was established following India's partition in 1947, sparked numerous inquiries regarding the boundary's interpretation and application. He emphasized the Jawaharlal Nehru-Firoz Khan Noon Accord of 1958 which was signed in an effort to settle the unresolved boundary disputes with Pakistan (East Pakistan). In this regard he referred some of the disputes were resolved in terms of the Nehru-Noon Accord but others disputes persisted long after Bangladesh was established in 1971. Bangladesh was established as a sovereign nation state with the help of Indian military support. The author makes suggestions for ways to improve border management. In fine he also mentioned a variety of

aspects of border management, including obstacles to border management and Bangladesh's internal political and security environment.

Jalal Alamgir and Bina D 'Costa, 'The 1971 Genocide: War Crimes and Political Crimes' *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol-46, No-13, March 26-April 1, 2011, pp-38-41

Everyone knows the 1971 genocide which happened in Bangladesh and those who responsible for this genocide. The authors Jalal Alamgir and Bina D 'Costa have tried to find out the war criminals and political crimes occurred in Bangladesh in 1971. Several authors in Bangladesh, who attempted to highlight various aspects of 1971 genocide in Bangladesh, did not forget the betrayers of Bangladesh's independent movements. The criminals who tried to sabotage Bangladesh liberation particularly the fundamentalists who tried to save Pakistan, the Razakars, and all Pakistani soldiers who raped approximately 200000 Bangalees women and forcefully impregnated 25000 women were identified and prosecuted. The authors have highlighted all these in this paper. The authors explain the convicted person case and tried to highlight the volume of punishment inflicted upon them. The Awami League leaders especially Mujibur Rahman and most of his family were brutally assassinated by dissatisfied fraction of Bangladesh army. The Awami League was ousted from power. The Generals who took over power revoked a constitutional ban on the use of religion for political purposes and permitted Jamat- e- Islami, a party, led by war collaborators, to re-inter the country's politics. While explaining all these aspects of Bangladesh genocide, the authors vividly described different aspects of war criminal trials and challenges.

Sajjan M Gohel, 'Bangladesh an Emerging Centre for Terrorism in Asia', *Perspective on Terrorism*, Vol-8, No-3, June 2014, pp.84-91.

In this article, the author, Sajjan M Gohel, examines the political development that has taken place in Bangladesh in 2013. He explores how these have led to the rise of religious militancy in Bangladesh. Bangladesh has become a central place of militancy engineered by Al-Qaida and its affiliates to plot mass causality attack in Bangladesh. In fact, all these acts of violence by the Islamic militant groups were possible because Jamat-e-Islami of Bangladesh, the largest religious political party, helped in all these acts of terrorism. The Jammat- e - Islami under the banner of Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) tried to eliminate all those people who did not support their religious fanaticisms. While analyzing all these points, the author vividly tried to delineate the volatile politics of Bangladesh for which the act of terrorism spread in the soil of Bangladesh. The author has said that the Islamic Charta Sibir, a

student wing of Jamat-e-Islami of Bangladesh, entered in the politics of terrorism in Bangladesh and they contributed to the Jamat-e-Islami for its functioning. The Jamat-e-Islami has a murky relationship with militant outfits in Bangladesh who attempted to jeopardize the political stability of Bangladesh several times. The growth of the Jamat-e-Islami in the domestic political process in Bangladesh has also provided an atmosphere for the rapid growth of extra parliamentary militancy. For this, Bangladesh had witnessed a wave of violent radicalization during the period of 1999 -2005. In fact, the deterioration of Bangladesh's democracy and political stability could create additional space within which Islamic militants increasingly operate not only in the domestic terrorist activity but create a space for preparing international plot as well.

Rajen Harshe, 'Cross-Border Terrorism: Road-Block to Peace Initiative', *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol-38, No-35, August 30-September-5, 2003, pp.3621-3625

In south Asia, the conflict between India and Pakistan has led to breed Cross-Border Terrorism which has greatly hampered the peace initiative between the two countries. In fact, terrorism has become a worldwide phenomenon. Pakistan is a terrorist-ridden state since its inception. Here, the links between top military personnel, bureaucrats and political leaders, on the one hand, and terrorist and drugs barons on the other hand, have been legitimized under the banner of Islam and Jihad. The author Rajen Harshe, in this paper, has highlighted on these various aspects of terrorism. While defining terrorism, he traces the origin and the growth of terrorism in Pakistan. The advent of drug economy in Pakistan spread and impact of narco-terrorism are also focused in this paper. The author has identified how terrorism has been institutionalized under the shed of Islam and Jihad in Pakistan. Particular emphasis has been given on the state of Pakistan under the regime of General Parvez Musharaff and the key question which confronted India and Pakistan's relation, relates to Kashmir where the terrorist activities are rampart under the banner of Al-Qaida and its affiliates in Pakistan as well as in Kashmir.

Smruti S. Pattanaik, 'Ascendency of the Religious Right in Bangladesh Politics: A Study of Jamaat Islami', *Strategic Analysis*, Vol. 33, No. 2, March 2009, pp.273-286.

Jamaat-e-Islami, a religious based organization came to the sphere of changing political dynamics in Bangladesh. The author Smruti S. Pattanaik in this illuminating and highly in-depth study of the ascendency of the Jamaat-e-Islami to power in Bangladesh, a country which was born on the basis of secularism. This article focuses on Jamaat-e-Islami,

the largest Islamic political party with the potential to save the future of religious politics in Bangladesh. The author, further, highlighted the rise of Jamaat-e-Islami which is momentous for various reasons. The author explains all these reason in details. He has pointed out the base of organizational strengths, recruitments, strategy, and political manifesto of Jamaat-e-Islami. He has focused Jamaat-e-Islami's links with other Islamic organizations as well as their support base in Bangladesh. The author has explained the implications of Jamaat-e-Islami's presence and its political future. He has pointed out that the implication of Jamaat-e-Islami's rise to power in Bangladesh can be explained from five perspectives- i) Jamaat-e-Islami's rise to power has shaped the Muslim identity and Islamic consciousness. ii) the religious political party in the process of their political participation have indirectly reduced the state to become more Islamic. During Ziaur Rahman's period other than constitutional change, he took step towards future islamisation.iii)1971 liberation movement and Jamaat-e-Islami's role in it is the single most important factor that has shaped Jamaat-e-Islami's political future. iv) the contest between the peasants, pretty bourgeois in the rural areas and the educated elite from urban areas has opened led to the former preferring religious political parties as a medium to mark their presence. The rise of Jamaat-e-Islami can be attributed to the modernist's elite who have been vacillating in their approach and the opportunist to the core. This group has not only popularized political Islam but is anti-India, anti-Hindu and thereby contributing to the Jammāt's political philosophy. iv)The rise of Jamaat-e-Islami could have serious implication for India. The organization's mouth-piece, 'The Daily Sangram' propagates rapid anti-Indianism, published in Bengali, it is posted near the Mosque and it delivered free of cost to various offices and University's department. Therefore, it is the most accessible News Papers in Bangladesh. The political witnessed of the Awami League and the BNP, ideological bankruptcy and their failure to provide an alternative, create a space for Jamaat-e-Islami. Moreover, since religion was a predominant factor in Bangladesh, provided an opportunity for the Islamists in general, and Jamaat-e-Islami in particular who provided a relative incorrupt party with an elected leadership structure. The author has highlighted all these pertinent points in explaining the rise of religious rights in Bangladesh which the author thinks, needs to be seen in the context of global resurgence of radical Islam.

Sangit Kumar Ragi, ‘Infiltrations of Illegal Migrants and Electoral Politics in Assam’,
Indian journal of public administration, Vol.LXII. NO. July -September, 2016

Infiltration from Bangladesh is a major issue which leads to ethnic conflict into the state of Assam. In fact, the influx of migrations from Bangladesh and the adjoining states create a problem particularly along the border areas of Assam where these migrants people concentrated, has changed the ethnic-religious landscape of the region. Moreover, the migrant people formed a large part of people in Assam who enlisted their name in the electoral roll of the state. These significant lists in several parliamentary assemblies of Assam, is a major factor in the electoral politics of the state. The political parties, state level as well as national level could not ignore this fact. While analyzing these aspects of infiltration of illegal migrations in Assam and their impact in the electoral politics of the state, the author focuses on the pattern of political game played by political parties to win over this section of people to gain power in the state. In fact, the BJP, who is now in power in Assam by taking advantage of the migrant issue could not be able to overcome this problem. In fact, the issue of detection and deportation of the illegal immigrants from Bangladesh still remain unsettled. The author, in detail, explains this aspect of the problem in this paper. Both the state Government and central Government and other agencies are well aware of the infiltration. Even 10 million illegal immigrants from Bangladesh are staying in India of whom 3 Million from Assam alone. A report shows that immediately after formation of government of Monmohan Sing at the centre about 12053950 illegal Bangladeshi immigrants are staying in seventeen states of India. The author has stated in General S K Sina’s report of 1998, on Assam Accord, regarding the issue of infiltration of Bangladesh in Assam. In fact, infiltration of Bangladeshi people in Assam created a socio-economic-cultural- political problem in Assam which could not be smoothed over. The fact is that in fighting among the political parties over this issue and non seriousness to the core infiltration issue are the major problems. The Bharatio Janata Party (B.J.P) benefited from the dilemma of the migrants which resulted into split of Muslim vote in community dominated constituency. All these aspects of the infiltrations of illegal migrants on Assam are succinctly described in this paper.

Bimal Pramanik, “Indo-Bangladesh border scenario and our national security”,
Dialogue, July-September, Volume-9, No-1, 2007.

Bimal Pramanik, the author of this article has given a vivid picture about Indo-Bangladesh border in the changed scenario. The author has given field level data in analyzing Indo-Bangladesh border situation. In fact, Bangladesh which got freedom in March 1971 has

a legacy of the past. That is to say the ceaseless increase of population through infiltration and other means which took a new situation in the demographic profile of Bangladesh. In this article Bimal Pramanik has pertinently pointed out that socio-political disturbance in the bordering states of India and Bangladesh created a problem which can be destabilize the entire Eastern and North Eastern region of India. While analyzing this aspect the author has rightly pointed out that India bashing and pro India Islamic orientation spread over entire Bangladesh. On the other hand, secessionist tendencies and instability in India with the support from the above forces created a security problem particularly in the management of border areas. In addition to this, illegal trade, border violation etc. are rampant and has gone to unmanageable proportion. All these are the subject of inquiry of the author.

Effective border management is the cornerstone of national security. Effective border management in the absence of security frontiers, the states become vulnerable to illegal and undesirable transborder activities and all these illegal activities have adversely affected state sovereignty and consequently give rise to problems of internal security. Hence the author has suggested some measures like- border region should be regarded as a special zone, land record in the border region should be updated, introduction of border guards and minimize of smuggling and criminal activities, campaign to be taken among the people of border region highlighting the menace of cross border insurgency, intensive patrolling and effective diplomatic initiative to encourage liberal democratic forces in Bangladesh.

Dr. M Rahmatullah, “Regional Connectivity: Opportunities for Bangladesh to be a Transport Hub”, *Journal of Bangladesh Institute of Planners, Volume-2, December, 2009, pp-13-19.*

Regional Connectivity is a key factor which is important from the point of view of an integrated transport system but the irony of fact is that Bangladesh do not belong to this type of integrated transport system because it inherits its system from British. Moreover, it got fractured or isolated as a result of partition and the creation of two states –India and Pakistan. Since Bangladesh is land locked or semi isolated Regional transport Connectivity in South Asia, it is very difficult to develop and integrated transport system in Bangladesh. Dr. M Rahmatullah, the author of this paper, analyzes this aspect of regional transport Connectivity opportunities in Bangladesh. He has pointed out the impacts of poor regional transport Connectivity which resulted in losing of many fronts like-Nepal and Bhutan in dealing with the trade. He has vividly described the impact in the areas of South Asia and urged upon the need for connectivity within a regional framework. In the second part of this paper the author

focused on transit, transshipment and security issues in Bangladesh. He has rightly said that this issue is very much sensitive in Bangladesh. Here the author has mentioned the terms 'transit' and 'corridor' and distinguished between the two when he said that the corridor approach would not be appropriate for Bangladesh. The author examines the issue of transit and or transshipment needs in the context of infrastructure capacity in Bangladesh in the sphere of road, rail ways, waterways and sea and river port. It is a fact that, the road network in Bangladesh is relatively less developed compare to India. He has mentioned the routes of both bilateral (India and Bangladesh) in this part of this paper. He used maps to analyze this aspect of transport system in Bangladesh.

Broadly speaking, it can be said the author has revealed the strategies-how to make further progress in the regional transport connectivity. He has given some valuable suggestion-mobilization of political support, facilitation measures at the land port, rail heads at the border, transport integration and involvement of the people are required. Lastly the author's recommendations, mentioned in this paper for further progress in the area of regional co-operation in transport for both the countries are relevant. Once considerable investment in this sector is ensured in Bangladesh would initially earn annually around US\$5 million, with considerable multiplier effects in the economy.

Anushree Bhattacharyya and Debashis Chakraborty, "India's cross border infrastructure initiative in South and South East Asia", *The International Spectator*, 46:2, pp-109-125, 2011.

The 21st century witnesses a prime power transition in the global order. Asia can be taken as a prime example. Here, two global powers India and China aspiring for expanding their hegemony and for this reason both of them have taken South and South East Asia as a fertile ground for expansion of their influences. The authors Anushree Bhattacharyya and Debashis Chakraborty in the perspective of this paper have tried to analyze this aspect of the problem. This paper attempts to analyze the recent cross border infrastructural initiative undertaken by India in the neighbouring South and South East Asian countries. They make a comparative analysis with the Chinese initiative in this regard. This article explores the implication of these policies in augmenting trade linkage and political clout. In fact, the authors base their analysis as follows- connectivity development in ASEAN and SAARC is briefly stated while focusing on the India's and China's infrastructural initiative in South and South East Asia. On the basis of this the authors have drawn some substantive conclusion.

The author have rightly pointed out China has opened major strategic moves in South and South East Asia in order to expand its power, position and influence in those region to accommodate its long term interest. In fact, it is pertinent to point out that China's strategic deal with this region was possible because of its cross border connectivity drive. China has gained significantly by its connectivity initiative on both the economic and strategic front. It has already emerged as South East Asia countrie's major trade partner. The authors have rightly mentioned that India's infrastructural diplomacy is likely to continue in the immediate neighbourhood but India is much behind china so far as infrastructural connectivity is concerned. Suppose that India's involvement in developing infrastructure initiative in Nepal and Mynermar is much after china. In fact, china's aggressive trade policy is likely to be felt in both South and South East Asian countries. Hence, the authors have concluded that cross border connectivity diplomacy will continue to hold a special position in India's future foreign policy considerations. While, this policy is likely to play an instrumental role in the long term in balancing china's presence in South and South East Asia because of India's problems of under development and limited resources at hand.

Sanjay Bhardwaj, "India-Bangladesh Land Boundary Agreement: Ramifications for India's security", *CLAWS Journal*, Winter, 2015, pp.93-110.

Traditional notion of border management originates from the idea of security threats and ethno-cultural conflicts. Many countries of the world given emphasis upon deployment of police and military forces to safeguard border. Sanjay Bhardwaj, at the outset of the paper, portrays this concern of the borders which are military defense and economic regulation. But, policing the border is the prime concern of the state.

The author has given a conceptual framework for understanding of the borders. He has states that the relevance of military and economic border has declined significantly. Besides, he has traced the historical background of the India-Bangladesh border.

After the independence of Bangladesh in 1971, the Land Boundary Agreement (LBA) of 1974 between Indira Gandhi and Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was signed to absolve the border problem but the problem remain unsolved. In 2000 both India and Bangladesh agreed to form a joint boundary working groups (JBWG) to resolve the dispute of two enclaves of Dhagram and Angorapota. While the author highlighted all these issues in this paper and tried to point out the dispute arisen out of demarcation of boundaries of enclaves. The author Sanjay Bhardwaj, categorically mentioned Article III of the border agreement of 2011 and

highlighted the dispute regarding of possession in the state of W.B, Assam, Tripura, Meghalaya, Nagaland-and pinpointed the areas of conflict between the two countries over the issue.While analysing the nature of border dispute the author has stated that the increasing regional security threats and the transitional terrorism, insurgency nexus compelled the Indian state to re-strategy its border management technique.

Border areas are confronted with many problems like cross border terrorism, trafficking, illegal trade, illegal migration etc. All these issues have a great concern to both the countries particularly the illegal migrants who are displaced person. He also highlighted this aspect of the border dispute in this paper.

In fact, migration and national securities have become intertwined at this age of globalization. The author Sanjay Bhardwaj has rightly said that granting a special work permit in some places may be an effective way to control migration which causes conflict. Another solution, he has suggested holding meeting of JBWG on a regular basis will definitely lessen the border tension between the two countries. However, the author has pertinently mentioned the LBA of 2015 which can be taken as a base of solution wherein Indian government has made some non reciprocal consensus. The recent development particularly New Delhi-Dhaka talks through video conferencing over border management is undoubtly a milestone and a comprehensive integrated development policy so far as solution of India-Bangladesh land boundary dispute is concerned.

G. Padmaja, “India-Bangladesh Coastal shipping: opportunities and challenges”, *Natiolnal Maritime Foundation*, 2016.

Coastal shipping is a venture initiated by Bangladesh on 26th March 2016 and it was launched by both the countries on the basis of an agreement. In fact, commencement of coastal shipping between India and Bangladesh is not an isolated issue. It is a part of longer blueprint of bilateral co-operation. In this paper G.Padmaja has attempted to examine the positive development- which has facilitated Coastal shipping. The author has identified the areas for cooperation under the maritime agenda. He also unravels the opportunities and challenges in Coastal shipping.

The NDA Government has taken some positive steps to strengthen the relations between India and Bangladesh. As a part of this venture and following the UPA’s progremmes of developing India -Bangladesh relations earlier, the Prime Minister Modi when visited Bangladesh, made 22 agreements. As a part of these agreements Coastal

shipping is included wherein India and Bangladesh concluded several agreements on maritime sphere. All these events are discussed in this article.

Sreeradha Dutta, “India and Bangladesh: The Road Towards Common Peace and Prosperity”, *strategis analysis, Volume-34, No-3, 2010, pp-343-349.*

India-Bangladesh relations took a new turn when Awami League came to power in Bangladesh. The bilateral relations got a further boost when Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina visited India on January 10, 2010. This was a four day visit which made the relations between the two countries a new chapter. The authoress of this paper has highlighted the reason for a break through in this relations. She has said that since the internal politics in Bangladesh was not stable, the bilateral friendship did not transcend political party line in Bangladesh. Hence, the discordant domestic politics in Bangladesh branded India as an enemy country and as a result, during the BNP coalition tenure from 2001-2006 the bilateral ties were at low ebb. The authoress of this paper has candidly described this aspect of the problem here. With the assumption of power Sheikh Hasina took several drastic steps to fight against terrorism in Bangladesh. During the rule of Pakistani military junta Bangladesh (East Pakistan) faced several brutal attacks from extremists as well as insurgency from Pakistan. The Authoress tried to highlight this aspect of Bangladesh unrest and unstable political situation. The Indian terrorists took shelter in Bangladesh and launched their terrorist activities staying in the soil of Bangladesh. This bid of the terrorist was sternly dealt with Hasina government who arrived at the following Agreements when she visited India

1. Agreements on mutual legal assistance on criminal matter.
2. Agreements on the transfer of sentenced person.
3. Agreements on combating in terrorism.

The authoress vividly described the various aspects of these agreements. She has also highlighted two issues-trade, investment and energy and connectivity between the two countries. In fact, for two decades Bangladesh's export to India increased by 480% from US\$62 million in 2000-2002, US\$290 million in 2006-2007. India has given various opportunities to Bangladesh, it offered RS 4050400 crore as to Bangladesh as credit while describing the various offers given to Bangladesh. In fine, the authoress has attempted to highlight the connectivity issue and demarcation issue in this paper.

Md. Mashiur Rahman and Khandaker Rasel Hasan, “Potential Multimodal transport in Bangladesh and relative obstacles”, *Journal of traffic and transportation engineering*, 3, 2015, pp-241-246.

In this paper Md. Mashiur Rahman and Khandaker Rasel Hasan attempted to highlight the Multimodal transport system in Bangladesh. Multimodal transport means carriage of goods by at least two different modes under a single contract covering the door to door movement. While highlighting Multimodal transportation system of Bangladesh, the authors have said that approximately 92% export and import at Chittagong port is handled by this port. This port is well connected by road, rail, and inland water ways to the capital of Dhaka. The authors vividly described this aspect of Multimodal transport connectivity of Chittagong port.

On an average container handling is increasing annually at a rate of 13% in the Chittagong port and the Chittagong port has taken necessary measure to cope with the increase. Mongla port has also taken steps to increase the container building. Being a riverine country, Bangladesh has better connectivity to the main sea port at Chittagong and Mongla port. The study has tried to state the obstacle and bottlenecks in the sphere of Multimodal transportation system in Bangladesh. Theoretically lack of adequate infrastructures and policies is the main obstacle in the implementation of Multi-modalism. In the era of globalization, Multimodal transport system is essential to achieve competitive advantage in the manufacturing of goods. The authors have rightly pointed out that cost reduction in transport is vital for least develop countries and for this the urgent need is to introduce Multimodal transport system to reduce intermediaries from the transport processes.

INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

India and Bangladesh have entered into a new phase in their bilateral relations with a pragmatic and practical approach based on sovereignty, equality, trust, share values of secularism and reciprocal understanding for the mutual benefit and welfare of their peoples in the South Asian region. Bangladesh had the bitter experience of about a quarter-century of union with Pakistan. Before the creation of Bangladesh, the province of undivided Bengal came to be divided into two halves in 36 years from the revocation of its first partition (1905) in the year 1947 along the same geographical position mainly on communal consideration of Mohammad Ali Jinnah's 'two nation theory.' After the partition from United India in 1947, the geographical boundary of Pakistan was illogically framed by Sir Cyril Radcliffe—East wing was separated from West wing by one thousand miles of Indian territory. The partition of India in 1947 divided the Eastern territory between India and erstwhile East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) without considering the ground realities and people's socio-politico-economic-cultural needs. The ethnic, linguistic and cultural differences between the two wings were compounded by social discrimination, economic exploitation and political domination of the West Pakistani ruling elites towards the East, which impregnated Bengali nationalism on the issue of Bengali language and ultimately, led to the break-up of Pakistan in 1971.

India-Bangladesh relations tracked down their beginning with the birth of Bangladesh as an independent nation state in South Asia. The Bangladesh Liberation War was a revolution and armed conflict between East and West Pakistan over the issue of Bengali language, Bengali nationalism, and self-determination of East Pakistan in response to West Pakistan's social discrimination, economic exploitation and political domination. All the grievances against those indifference and negligence of West Pakistan towards the East enhanced to foster anti-Pakistani feelings which led to the triumph of Bengali nationalism over Islamic nationalism. The Bangalees use Bengali language as a weapon to fight for regional autonomy against West Pakistan's socio-politico-cultural and linguistic domination. The Bangladesh Liberation Movement was spontaneous, secular in spirit and based on democratic principles. After the 1970 Pakistani election, when the East Pakistani Awami League party won 167 of 169 seats from East Pakistan and achieved an absolute majority in the 313-seat lower house of the 'Majlis-e-Shoora', the Bangladesh Liberation Movement began. Sheik Mujibur Rahman, the well known charismatic leader of East Pakistan introduced the 'Six point Programme' to the Pakistani President, Agha Mohammad Yahaya Khan, claimed the rights to form the government but the President wouldn't give the prevalence of Pakistan to Sheik Mujibur

Rahman to form the government, fearing the loss of Punjab political domination and imposed military rule all over the Pakistan. Accordingly after several days of strikes and non-cooperation from the East Pakistani people, Pakistani military initiated crackdown on Dhaka on 25th March, 1971 to gain control of East Pakistan's largest city Dacca. On the night of 25–26th March, 1971, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was secretly taken to West Pakistan for trial. 'Operation Searchlight'¹, a perilous attempt to kill the top Awami League leaders and Bangalee intellectual elites of East Pakistan, was the next stern action taken by the military rulers. General Tikka Khan, known as the 'Butcher of Baluchistan,' came to be known as the 'Butcher of Bengal' because of the widespread atrocities and inhumane brutality he committed. During liberation war Jammāt-e-Islami had formed various killer armies namely Al Badr, Al Shams and Razakars who worked hand in hand with the Pakistani army to slaughter the freedom fighters.² As a result of their ethnic genocide, mass killing, and gang rape, peaceful night of East Pakistan became a time of wailing, crying, and burning. Jammāt-e-Islami and its various killer armies in active collaboration with Pakistan's military junta had killed three million Bangalees people, ganged raped women, destroyed thousand of inhabitants and forced 10 million helpless people to leave their homes.³ Around 10 million people fled East Pakistan and took shelter in neighbouring Indian states namely West Bengal, Tripura, Assam, Meghalaya, and elsewhere as a result of the Pakistani army's widespread genocide of the Bengali population, particularly the minority Hindu population in East Pakistan. In order to provide humanitarian assistance for helpless refugees with safe shelter in India, the East Pakistan-India border was opened by the Indian government. Along the border, the governments of West Bengal, Bihar, Assam, Meghalaya, and Tripura set up relief camps for helpless refugees. India's already overburdened economy was made even more difficult to manage by the resulting swarm of helpless East Pakistani refugees. Mrs. Indira Gandhi, the then Prime Minister of India, completely in favour of the Bangladesh liberation war and the Indian soldiers were utilized to battle against Pakistani forces. Additionally, the main Bangladeshi guerrilla group known as 'the Mukti Bahini' also received full support from the Indian government.

¹ **Operation Searchlight** was a planned ruthless and brutal military operation carried out by the Pakistani army General, Agha Muhammad Yahia Khan, to curb the Bengali nationalist movement in the erstwhile East Pakistan on 25th March 1971. The purpose of the operation was to arrest or kill the distinguished Awami League leaders, students and Bengali intellectuals to disarm the Bengali personnel of military, Para military and police force to capture armory, radio station and telephone exchange.

² Muntassir Mamun, "**Bangladesher Rajniti**" Ananya Publication, Dhaka, 1999.

³ Ibid.

On 27th March, 1971, Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi declared her government's complete support for the East Pakistani people's struggle for independence. The Indian government made numerous appeals to the international community for political solution of the East Pakistani people's spontaneous struggle for independence but received no response. She had come to the conclusion that going to war against Pakistan was more cost-effective than taking in millions of refugees. Indian intelligence officers and exiled East Pakistani army officers began immediately using Indian refugee camps to recruit and train Mukti Bahini guerrillas for the Eastern Front. Mrs. Indira Gandhi initiated a full-scale invasion and ordered the immediate mobilization of Indian troops for this purpose. On the eastern front, India's primary goal was to capture Dacca, while on the western front; it wanted to stop Pakistan from entering Indian territory.

Under the leadership of Commander-in-Chief General Mohammad Ataul Ghani Osmany, the Bangladesh Force, which included Mukti Bahini, Mujib Bahini, and Gono Bahini (Guerilla Force), was established to resist Pakistani military attack. India helped to organize, train and arm these freedom fighters. Consequently, the Mukti Bahini succeeded in harassing Pakistani military in East Pakistan, thus creating conditions conducive for a full-scale Indian military intervention in early December, 1971. When the Pakistani Air Force launched a preemptive strike on eleven airfields in northwestern India, including Punjab, Kashmir, and Agra, which was 300 miles (480 kilometers) from the border, on 3rd December, 1971, India became directly involved in the Bangladesh Liberation War.⁴ Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi stated in a radio address to the nation on 3rd December that the air strike of Pakistan was a 'declaration of war' against India. That night, the Indian Air Force responded with its first air strikes against Pakistan. The Pakistani strike was seen by India as an open act of unprovoked aggression. This marked the official start of the Indo-Pak War of 1971. As a response to the attack, both India and Pakistan formally acknowledged the 'existence of a state of war between the two countries', even though neither government had formally issued a declaration of war against each other.⁵

The Mitro Bahini (Allied forces) was formed when the Indian Army and the Mukti Bahini joined forces on the eastern front. The strategy used this time was a quick, three-pronged assault of nine infantry divisions with attached armoured units and close air support

⁴Garry Jonathan Bass, "**The Blood Telegram: India's secret war in East Pakistan**", Random Houser Group Limited, U.K, 2013, pp- 268-269.

⁵Garry Jonathan Bass,.,op.cit.pp-270-274.

that quickly converged on Dhaka, the capital of East Pakistan. This was in contrast to the strategy used in the 1965 Indo-Pak war, which emphasized set-piece battles and slow advances. The Indian invasion of East Pakistan was led by Lieutenant General Jagjit Singh Aurora, who was in charge of the 8th, 23rd, and 57th divisions. The Indian Air Force quickly destroyed the small air force in East Pakistan and shut down the Dhaka airfield as these forces attacked Pakistani formations. In the meantime, East Pakistan was effectively blocked by the Indian Navy. Under Vice Admiral S.N. Kohli's command, the Indian Navy successfully attacked Karachi's port in 'Operation Trident' in the western front on 4–5th December, sinking the Pakistani destroyer PNS Khyber and the minesweeper PNS Muhafiz with missile boats. Pakistan lost a lot of commercial ships, reserve fuel and the Pakistan Navy was unable to continue participating in the conflict. On the night of 8–9th December, Indian missile boats launched 'Operation Python', in which they attacked the Karachi port, further destroying reserve fuel tanks and sinking three Pakistani merchant ships.

During the war the Indian campaign used 'blitzkrieg' tactics, bypassing opposition and taking advantage of weaknesses in the enemy's positions, and won quickly. With insurmountable losses, the Pakistani military gave up in less than two weeks. The Pakistani forces in East Pakistan gave up on 16th December, 1971. In this war India defeated Pakistan with the help of Soviet Russia. On 16th December, 1971, the Eastern Command of the Pakistani Armed Forces signed the Instrument of Surrender in Dhaka, marking the liberation of the infant nation of Bangladesh. This effectively ended the East Pakistani people's spontaneous armed struggle for independence.

The Pakistani Instrument of Surrender was a written agreement between India, Pakistan, and the Provisional Government of Bangladesh. It allowed for the capitulation of 93,000 Pakistani troops from the Armed Forces Eastern Command on 16th December, 1971. This brought an end to the Bangladesh Liberation War and the Indo-Pak War of 1971, which resulted in the formal establishment of the People's Republic of Bangladesh in the South Asian region that was once East Pakistan from 14th August, 1947.⁶ Since the end of World War II, it was the largest surrender in terms of number of personnel during cold world. India was also the first country who recognized Bangladesh as an independent nation state immediately after its independence. The day 16th December was celebrated as 'Victory Day or

⁶Lt. Gen JFR Jacob, '**Surrender At Dacca Birth of a nation**' Manohar publishers, New Delhi, 2015.,pp-138-148.

Bijoy Dibosh' to commemorate the defeat of Pakistani armed forces and 26th March was celebrated as 'Independence Day' in Bangladesh.

The relations between India and Bangladesh have witnessed their share of positive and difficult phases since its inception. There have been both good and bad times between India and Bangladesh in their relationship since 1971. Traditionally the Awami League government has had close link with New Delhi. India-Bangladesh relations have suffered cyclic phases of highs and lows, largely reflecting the changing governments both in Dhaka and New Delhi. Nevertheless, it has remained friendly during the regime of 'Bangobondhu' Sheikh Mujibur Rahman for numerous years. The first phase of bilateral relations between the two countries started from 1972-1975 which relate to the pattern of government in Bangladesh. At the outset, the introduction of socialist, liberal, secular and parliamentary form of government in Bangladesh, led by country's founding father Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, made the Indo-Bangladesh relations healthy, robust and amicable. Mujib's term in office rightly described as the 'honeymoon years' between India and Bangladesh. During the regime of 'Bangobondhu' Sheikh Mujib-ur Rahman India and Bangladesh tried to resolve each and every contentious issue amicably and accordingly signed 'Indo-Bangladesh Friendship Treaty' in 1972. Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the architect of Bangladesh and the head of the state, was in power till he was assassinated in 1975 by a group of junior military officers and subsequently martial law was declared. Then the politics of Bangladesh became instable and parliamentary democracy was disappeared from mainstream Bangladesh politics. After the assassination of 'Bangobondhu' Sheikh Mujib-ur Rahman, the new president, Khondakar Moshtaq Ahmad, proclaimed in his radio address, that the country he now headed was the "Islamic Republic of Bangladesh." Eventually he was removed in the countercoups in the volatile situation.⁷ The religious extremism and dictatorship began to dominate the Bangladesh politics. The military dispensation in Bangladesh brought vast changes in its foreign policy in order to fulfill national interest as well as to come out of Indian domination. This shift in Bangladesh's foreign policy equally led to a paradigm shift in India-Bangladesh relations. During that time Bangladesh diverts its foreign policy towards western countries especially anti-liberation countries because of her diplomatic and economic

⁷Arshi Saleem Hasmi, 'Bangladesh ban on religion based politics: reviving the secular character of the constitution', **Regional Studies**, Volume XXIX, No 2, Spring 2011, pp-80.

support.⁸In fact, the phase from 1975-1990 had changed the future directions and discourse of the bilateral dynamics between the two countries. The relations between the two countries was greatly damaged by the military rulers. During this phase Bangladesh's original constitution was re-constituted, with some of its most important principles like socialist, liberal and secular character were dropped, and its new structure was re-framed along religious lines to gain legitimacy both inside and outside the country. Since then there was a gradual process of Islamisation in Bangladesh for establishing the law of Allah and principles of Quran and Shariat-as a weapon for capturing power to satisfy thirst for power. As a result, the triumph of Bengali nationalism over Islamic nationalism that led to the birth of a new nation in 1971 proved short lived and once again Islamic nationalism re-developed in Bangladesh soil during the tenure of different military Governments. This diversion of Bangladesh from secularization to Islamisation was an alarming threat to India in her dynamics journey of bilateral relations with Bangladesh.

India-Bangladesh relations remained somewhat strained during subsequent years of military rule as well as civilian rule under different governments led by General Ziaur Rahman of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) from 1975-1981, Hussain Mohammad Ershad from 1983-1990 and again from 1991-1996 and 2001-2006 by Begum Khaleda Zia. During the period of 1991-2006, except Sheikh Hasina's regime from 1996-2001 the relations between India and Bangladesh were neither cordial nor cooperative. A latent fear prevails upon the majority people of Bangladesh by Bangladeshi media that an all encompassing Indian hegemony and bossing mentality over the South Asia remained. Even the bloody coup and execution of 'Bangabandhu' Sheikh Mujibur Rahman were attempted to justify on the grounds that Bangladesh would have accepted Sikkim's fate, Dhaka would have functioned as a satellite state of India, and the Mujib government would have sold out Bangladesh's interests to India.⁹At that time Islam evolved as the new symbol of Bangladeshi national identity. The anti-Indian sentiments that prevailed from the regime of General Zia-Ur Rahman led to the gradual decaying of the relations between the two countries. The assassination of General Zia-Ur Rahman on 30th May, 1981, the military rule of Hussein Mohammad Ershad began on 24th March, 1982. Under the tremendous pressure of Bangladeshi people and the joint leadership of all political parties the restoration of

⁸Shahnawaz A Mantoo, "India Bangladesh Relations 1975-1990", **Journal of South Asian Studies**, Volume-3, No- 3, 2015,p-331

⁹Chakma Bhumitra, "South Asia's Realist Fascination and the Alternatives," **Contemporary Security Policy**", Volume. 30, No. 3, 2009, p- 404.

parliamentary democracy came in 1991. In 1991 free, fair and impartial Parliamentary election was organized by Non-Party caretaker Government (NCG), headed by Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed. Khaleda Zia, widow of General Zia-ur Rahman, came out victorious with a thumping majority and became the first women Prime Minister in the history of Bangladesh defeating her arch rival Sheikh Hasina, the leader of Awami League party.

India's relations with Bangladesh warmed up when the Awami League, under the leadership of Sheikh Hasina came to power first in June 1996.¹⁰ After winning the Jatio Sansad elections in 1996, Sheikh Hasina initiated all the necessary steps to restore true parliamentary democracy in Bangladesh and made the constitution with the principles of secularity, liberty, equality and justice. She made all actions of her government accountable and transparent to the people for the country's sake. During her first tenure from 1996-2001, the improvement of ties between New Delhi and Dhaka was reciprocated by the then non-Congress leader Inder Kumar Gujral through his doctrine of enhancing ties with the South Asian neighbours.¹¹ I.K Gujral propounded a policy towards the South Asian neighbours, popularly known as 'Gujral Doctrine.'¹² This policy was not new and was somewhat similar to the 'good neighbour lines policy' pursued by the former Foreign Minister of India, Shri Atal Behari Vajpayee, during the regime of Morarji Desai's Janata government in the 1970s¹³ and Bangladesh was greatly benefited by the 'Gujral doctrine.' Most of the South Asian countries due to the existence of a democratic government in Bangladesh under the leadership of Sheikh Mujib's daughter Sheikh Hasina, expressed great relief during that time. During her tenure two important agreements the '30-year Water Sharing Agreement of the Ganges' in December 1996 with the august presence of Sheikh Hasina and H.D Deve Gowda in New Delhi¹⁴ and the 'Peace Accord' signed in December 1997 with the Chakma tribal dissidents of the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT), brought New Delhi and Dhaka closer to each other. The first agreement offered a new formula for the sharing of Ganges waters in the dry season at Farakka.¹⁵ Both the countries also extended co-operation on issues, related to flood

¹⁰ Dutta, V.P., '**India's foreign policy in a changing world**', Vikash Publishing House, New Delhi, 1999.

¹¹ Aiyar, Vidyasagar 'Bangladesh' in Banerjee, Dipankar (ed.) '**Comprehensive and Co-operative Security in South Asia**', Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies, New Delhi, pp.88-119.

¹² For more information see <http://www.theindianeconomy.com/new/the-gujral.doctrine> accessed on 30.03.2016

¹³ Jha, Nalini Kant (ed.) '**Indian Foreign Policy in a Changing World**', South Asian Publishers, New Delhi, 2000, p.188.

¹⁴ Bindral, S.S. 'Farakka Barrage Agreement: A Review in Dirender Grover (ed.) **Encyclopedia of SAARC Nations**, Volume.4, No.2, New Delhi, Deep and Deep Publications, pp.580-596.

¹⁵ Ibid

warning and preparedness. During this time, in order to strengthen the trade relation between the two countries, the Government of India extended a Rs.200 crore credit line valid for 3 years to help Dhaka to buy transport equipments and capital goods from India.¹⁶In return, Hasina Government, exhibited political solidarity in countering anti-India campaigns of Islamic fundamentalist groups in Bangladesh.

The phase 2001-2006 witnessed hardening of positions of both sides in resolving differences. The Khaleda Zia Government (the Four Party Alliance-BNP, Jamaat-e-Islami, Bangladesh Jatio Party, Islami Oikya Jote), led by the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), largely ignored Indian security concerns, border infiltration, cross border terrorism, border clash and sheltered Pakistani Inter Service Intelligence (ISI) based insurgent groups like National Democratic Front of Bodoland, National Liberation Front of Tripura, People's Liberation Army of Manipur, United Liberation Front of Assam, Kamtapur Liberation Organisation, Garo National Army, Mizo National Front, Kuki National Army, Muslim United Liberation Tigers of Assam, National Socialist Council of Nagaland etc. in North Eastern Region of India to spread terror in the country. Nevertheless, during Khaleda Zia's coalition Government (BNP+three Party Alliance) the demand of self-determination by these separatists and insurgent groups with the support of external actors such as ISI of Pakistan, Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh, Ansarullah Bangla Team (close links with the Afghan Taliban), Harkat-ul-Jehad-al-Islami Bangladesh, Jagrata Muslim Janata Bangladesh (JMJB) (close links with Al-Qaeda), Hizb-ut-Tahrir in Bangladesh had consolidated and expanded their institutional transnational networks with the help of Khaleda Zia government's active support in the past decades.¹⁷The Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) pursued an anti-Indian policy during General Ziaur Rahman's tenure and it continued after his wife Begum Khaleda Zia was reinstalled in state power as Prime Minister. During Khaleda Zia's second tenure Indo-Bangladesh relations were not good because Bangladeshi soil was used as anti-Indian and terrorist activities. Besides, China's 'encirclement policy', 'strategic defense closeness' with Bangladesh, extreme Islamic fundamentalism and Khaleda Zia's friendly relation with China and Pakistan were a matter of concern for Indian government. There were so many anti-Indian groups in Bangladesh who did not eager to build and maintain cordial relations with India. The worst period in Indo-Bangladesh relations was witnessed during the BNP-BJI

¹⁶**The Times of India**, Kolkata, 14th September, 1999.

¹⁷ BIPSS. Transnational security: Threats to Bangladesh, BIPSS Issue Brief, **Bangladesh Institute of Peace and Security Studies**, Dhaka, 8th June. 2010, www.bipss.org.bd Accessed on 30.07.2022.

regime (Bangladesh Nationalist Party and Bangladesh Jamaat-e-islami) led four party alliance rules from 2001-2006. This was the period which saw a sharp rise of Islamic fundamentalism and cross border terrorism, persecution of minorities, hosting of insurgent groups like the National Democratic Front of Bodoland, National Liberation Front of Tripura, People's Liberation Army of Manipur, United Liberation Front of Assam (U.L.F.A), Kamtapur Liberation Organisation (K.L.O), Garo National Army, Mizo National Front, Kuki National Army, Muslim United Liberation Tigers of Assam, National Socialist Council of Nagaland and others insurgents groups.¹⁸ On the other hand, BNP adopted a policy of friendship with Islamabad as a counterpoise to Delhi's bossing and hegemonic mentality in South Asian region. In Bangladesh, the ruling BNP, had pursued an anti-India foreign policy breaking the tradition that was introduced by Awami League's rule from the beginning of parliamentary era by Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in 1972. This ideological transformation brought by Bangladeshi leaders proved a very decisive as far as the future of India-Bangladesh relations was concerned. This transformation changed the future course of Bangladesh politics. As a result, South Asian politics began to naturally change, particularly as China and Pakistan were a matter of concern for India. Bangladesh served as a 'corridor' in the South Asian region and is geo-strategically very significant to India for difficult terrains of North Eastern region, limited connectivity of Narrow Siliguri Corridor. It is also strategically important to India in case of war with China.

However, the Fakhruddin Ahmed-led Caretaker Government¹⁹(CTG) of 2007-2008 restored normalcy to India-Bangladesh relations. Of course, under the military backed Caretaker Government (2006-2008) Indo-Bangladesh relations improved considerably. While no major bilateral problem was resolved, there was an overall improvement in the atmosphere in sharp contrast to relations that existed during the previous Bangladesh Nationalist Party Government. Since the bilateral relations during 2001-2006 reached its nadir, there were very little expectations on either side when the Caretaker Government took over in 2007. Under the Caretaker Government, bilateral relations were considerable different and marked by regular and periodic high-level contacts. During that time India's approach to Bangladesh was one of the understanding and accommodation. This was duly reciprocated by the Caretaker Government which contributed to a growing synergy between the two

¹⁸ Pramanik, Bimal 'Growing Indo-Bangladesh Relations', **World Focus**, Volume. XXXIII, No.2, February, 2012, p.64.

¹⁹ C.T.G is a temporary ad hoc government that performs some governmental duties and functions in Bangladesh until a regular government is elected by the people.

neighbours. Certain incremental steps were taken that contributed to creating a conducive atmosphere for future engagement with each other.²⁰ The Caretaker Government declared that developing friendly relations with India was its top priority. It also pledged not to allow its soil to be used for anti-India activity.²¹ A month after installation of the Caretaker Government in Dhaka on 19th February, 2007 then External Affairs Minister Mr. Pranab Mukherjee visited Bangladesh to invite Bangladesh for the 14th SAARC Summit in New Delhi and to confirm India's support to the military backed Caretaker Government headed by Fakhruddin Ahmed. In April 2007, Fakhruddin Ahmed represented Bangladesh at the 14th SAARC Summit where he met Indian Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh for beginning a new chapter with India. India's foreign secretary Mr. Shiv Shankar Menon visited Dhaka twice in June 2007 and again in 2008 with a view to establish peaceful stability, democratic secularity and prosperity of Bangladesh for India's national interest.

Under Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and the Awami League government, bilateral relations between the two countries had significantly improved. After the unicameral Jatiya Sangshad (Parliament) election in 2008, Sheikh Hasina came to power in second time and adopted not only a pragmatic foreign policy but she also established a new era of friendship, cooperation and stability with India to be a model neighbour and economic partner for the sake of country's over all development. She had shown considerable courage and conviction to free its soil from anti-Indian activities to make India's confidence intact in future. Like her father Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, Sheikh Hasina introduced secularism and adopted an Indo-centric foreign policy towards India which provided an impetus to sluggish New Delhi-Dhaka relationship. However, within a short span of time, the Hasina Government faced a severe revolt by the Bangladesh Rifles (BDR), which shook the foundations of the newly sworn-in Awami League Government. For a couple of days, the very survival of the Sheikh Hasina Government was at stake. Consecutively, in February 2009 and January 2012 two coup attempts, planned by fanatic army personnel under the patronage of Pakistani ISI to oust Hasina government were occurred but it was foiled by the Bangladeshi army with the help of Indian government and intelligentsia. It was at this crucial juncture where India quietly, unobtrusively, put its weight behind the fledgling Hasina regime and helped the new government to tide over the crisis. In less than a year after that quiet assistance and support

²⁰Datta, Sreeradha, '**Caretaker Democracy Political Process in Bangladesh, 2006-2008**', Institute of Defence studies and analysis, New Delhi, August 2009, p.86.

²¹Bhattacharjee, Joyeeta. 'Changing Dynamic of Bangladesh Politics and India's Internal Security', **Dialogue**, Volume. 10, No. 2, October-December, 2008.

from India, Dhaka reciprocated in kind by initiating a crackdown on top leaders of the Indian insurgent group, the United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA) based in Bangladesh. The quick handover of top ULEA leaders, Arabinda Rajkhowa, Raju Baruah, Chitran Hazarika and Sasha Choudhury, as well as two important Pakistani Lashkar-e-Taiba operatives to India in December 2009 marked a new beginning of a better understanding and space for mutual security cooperation.²² During this period, it appears that the dynamics of the India-Bangladesh relations and development revolved round some major thorny issues like sharing of Teesta water, demarcation of 6.5 km boundary, bilateral and regional security, United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA) activities, NAGA factions, HUJI activities, illegal immigrants, Chakma refugees, fake Indian currency, cross border terrorism, cattle smuggling, women and drug trafficking, export-import, trade and commerce, etc. India's diplomatic support in the volatile politics of Bangladesh's unfair parliamentary election in 2014 (largely criticized by Western countries for detaining house arrest of the opposition leaders) was very crucial in the context of maintaining democratic order, world peace, economic growth and human rights development as well as South Asian regional politics especially SAARC countries. Not only that, India wanted to sustain Bangladesh's traditional, democratic and secular character for its own interest in order to fight against global terrorism, ISI activities and Pakistan based fanatic religious fundamentalism. Since 1996-2001 and January 2009-till date under Sheikh Hasina's Prime Ministership economic and diplomatic cooperation, including border security, connectivity and infrastructure as well as cooperation in critical areas like enclave issues, counter terrorism, illegal migration, cattle smuggling, border fencing, border clash etc. have all improved as a result of the strengthening of bilateral relations.

Indian 13th Prime Minister (2004-2014) Dr. Manmohan Singh's visit to Dhaka last September, 2011 was not just marked another Indo-Bangladesh Summit held in the neighbouring country. Dr. Singh was the first Indian head of government to lead a high-powered delegation since 1972 a similar visit was undertaken by Mrs. Indira Gandhi for signing the historic Indo-Bangladesh treaty of peace and friendship.²³ Dr. Singh's visit was

²²Staff Reporter 'ULFA chief handed over to India', **The Telegraph**, Kolkata, 14th January, 2010.

²³'Indo-Bangladesh Friendship Treaty' was a treaty that was signed on 19 March 1972. It was also known as Indira-Mujib treaty. The twelve Article incorporated in the treaty. Some of the Article are – the present treaty is signed for a term of 25 years, and shall be renewed by mutual agreement (Article-xi). Any differences interpreting any Article of the treaty shall be settled on a bilateral basis by peaceful means in spirit of mutual respect and understanding. (Article-xii). Both the parties shall promote relations in the fields of arts, literature, education, culture, sports and health.. (Article-vii).

crucial in geo-strategic, economic as well as political terms for both countries suffered the same concerns for a long period of time. Both the Prime Ministers had almost identical ideology and vision which helped them reach a consensus on the issues of exchanging long awaited enclaves of adverse possession or opening a new route through Bangladesh, India, Bhutan and Nepal (BBIN) to quickly link a pact allowing trucks and cars to travel seamlessly through these countries.²⁴

The timing of Dr. Singh's visit, at a time when Bangladesh's perception of India is changing fast, is equally significant. A belief has been growing among common Bangladeshis that their homeland stands to lose more from Begum Zia and her Jamaat's brand of blind anti-Indianism. Continuing with such a negative strategy would lead neither the present opposition nor Bangladesh anywhere. Fifteen years of BNP rule marked by strident anti-India posturing, bear ample testimony to this. Even the coups staged for the installation of an anti-India military junta did produce the desired result. That Bangladesh's perception of India had changed in a big way became apparent in the last parliamentary election when the BNP-Jamaat's joint tirade against India evoked such a negative response that Sheikh Hasina's Awami League-led coalition posed a landslide victory.²⁵ The average Bangladeshis think that the days of blind anti-Indianism are over. The Bangladeshi perception that Indian Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh has to address, rightly and adequately, is that close ties with India will have beneficial spin-offs. For instance, the five agreements that Sheikh Hasina and Dr. Singh signed in Delhi in 2011 evoked so much hope in the country's business community and a large section of the intelligentsia began to believe that India held the key to shared prosperity and well being. Dr. Singh's visit also gave a shape of the idea of turning India's eastern and northern region, along with neighbouring Bangladesh, Nepal and Bhutan, into a regional economic and connectivity hub, with Dhaka as the pivot.²⁶

Dr. Singh's visit was historic as one of the agreements signed by the Prime Minister of both countries will do away with a Particular baggage of Partition-the Radcliffe award that led to the division of Bengal. The enclave and adverse possession issues could not be

The contrasting parties condemn colonialism and racialism of all forms, and reaffirm their determination to strive for their final and complete elimination. (Article-ii).

²⁴ Chakravarty, Pinak Ranjan, 'Bangladesh-India Ties: Pragmatic Transformation' **Indian Foreign Affairs Journal**, Volume. 10. No. 3. July-September, 2015, p.214.

²⁵ Pramanik, Bimal 'Growing Indo-Bangladesh Relations', **World Focus**, Volume. XXXIII, No.2, February, 2012, p.62.

²⁶ Ibid

resolved so far because of the arbitrariness of the award. The '1974 Indira-Mujib Boundary agreement' had sought to resolve the issue, but without success. Dr. Manmohan Singh-Sheikh Hasina meeting finally dealt with this post-partition hangover.

The frame work agreement on cooperation for development was signed by the two Prime Ministers, for enhancing mutually beneficial bilateral cooperation in a wide range of areas. These include promotion of trade, investment and economic cooperation, connectivity, water resources, management of natural disasters, power generation, transmission and distribution of electricity from renewable or other sources, promotion of scientific, educational and cultural cooperation, people to people exchanges, environmental protection and responding to challenges of climate change through adaptation, sub-regional cooperation in the power sector, water resources management, physical connectivity, environment and sustainable development and enhancing cooperation in border security. These agreements may be amended by mutual consent in order to enhance, deepen and widen the scope of cooperation, including regional/ sub-regional expansion. These agreements would enable the two countries to realize their shared destiny and common vision through the optimum utilization of opportunities for mutual benefit.²⁷

Remarkable change occurred in New Delhi with the results of Indian parliamentary election of 16th Lok Sabha were declared in May 2014. In the parliamentary election National Democratic Alliance (NDA) defeated United Progressive Alliance (UPA) led by Dr. Manmohan Sing (2004-2014). Under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi India immediately sent external affair minister, Smt.Sushma Swaraj, to Bangladesh with a view to improve the long term friendly relations with its immediate neighbour. In June 2014, she again visited Bangladesh to conclude various agreements to boost bilateral ties. On 7th May, 2015 the Indian Parliament, in the presence of Bangladeshi diplomats, unanimously passed the Land Boundary Agreement (LAB) or Chhitmohal Agreement done following the 100th Indian constitutional amendment. It resolved 68 years old border disputes related to chhitmohal thus ended the long standing dispute of man made political boundaries of British era. This bill was pending for ratification since the 1974 Mujib-Indira accords. There were 51 Bangladeshi enclaves in Indian Territory and around 111 Indian enclaves inside Bangladesh. In 1974, the two countries signed a 'Land Boundary Agreement' (LAB) to demarcate the border and prevent border conflicts. According to the agreement, these enclaves were to be

²⁷ Ibid.

exchanged except for Berubari, Angarpota and Dahagram. This agreement was a remarkable moment in the history of India-Bangladesh bilateral relations. Modi's two day maiden weekend visit to Bangladesh along with Chief Minister of West Bengal Mamata Banerjee in June 2015 created a new era of cordial relationship by removing the thorny issues. Though the challenges of Teesta and Fenny water sharing remain unsolved during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit, Bangladesh apparently decided to put the water sharing issue aside and go ahead with other major bilateral developments to strengthen bilateral relations.

Bangladesh has become a significant partner to India in regional politics and development over the past twenty years, and the two countries are now frequently referred to as 'model neighbours' among south Asian countries. The geographic conditions, economic interactions, energy supplies, trade links, ethno-cultural proximity and historical linkages provide a plethora of opportunities for close, cordial and co-operative relations between the two countries. Sufficient opportunities and incentives exist for developing relations beneficial to both the countries. Historic links, economic interactions, different mode of transport connectivity and geo-strategic interests make India and Bangladesh vital to each other. A stronger connectivity not only strengthens the intra-and inter-regional trade and commerce but also generates higher income and prosperity. This is true for Indo-Bangladesh relations. Transport is the backbone of economic activities and social developments. Large-scale connectivity increases in production and trade. Connectivity of each mode of transport – roads, railways, maritime, shipping and aviation – has its own physical and operational characteristics which require different considerations.²⁸ One of the most vital forms of physical connectivity among different geographical locations is connectivity through roads and railways. This is true for Indo-Bangladesh bilateral relations when East Pakistan was a part of undivided India. When Bangladesh got freedom from united Pakistan in 1971 under the military patronage of India road networks and railways connectivity constitute an essential means of communication for the purpose of trade and commerce and people to people welfare between the two countries. Over the issues of connectivity, both the governments are undertaking various steps to restore the pre-1965 rail links and other connectivity links that existed between India and East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) before partition of India.

²⁸“India-Bangladesh Connectivity: Possibilities and Challenges,”Part 1, **Observer Research Foundation(ORF)**,P-19.<https://www.orfonline.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/IndiaBangladesh.pdf>, accessed on 10.06.2022.

When the two countries came closer they developed their country's policy to more interact with each-other for development and partnerships. Development and partnerships between different countries could be economic, political, social and cultural. India and Bangladesh both are the developing third world countries in south Asia. India and Bangladesh have shared common history, language, religion, culture, heritage etc. from time immemorial. India surrounds Bangladesh, 78.86 percent of its border lying with India. India is sharing its border with Bangladesh (4096.7 km), but the longest border is with the small country of Bangladesh, which is around 5 percent of the size of India. With the length of 4096.7 km long border the India–Bangladesh border (IBB) is the fifth longest border in the world.²⁹ In the 21st century with the advancement of globalization and liberalization if the two countries start and build developments and partnerships between each-other they become stronger in different sphere. India is quickly becoming an important regional and international state actor in the 21st century. In the era of globalization, Multimodal transport system is essential to achieve competitive advantage in the manufacturing of goods. Nevertheless, it continues to face a number of internal and external security issues from neighbouring countries particularly Indo-Pak border and Indo-Bangladesh border. These issues include illegal migration, cattle smuggling, transborder terrorism, illegal movement of insurgent groups, drug and women trafficking which are serious threats to the security of the country.

India's foreign policy regarding Bangladesh has evolved in relation with its domestic politics and national security especially for its North Eastern Region (NER). Due to its central geographic location in the South Asian region, India shares its borders with most of the South Asian countries namely Bangladesh (4096.7 km), Pakistan (3323 km), China (3488 km), Nepal (1751 km), Bhutan (699 km), Myanmar (1643 km) and Afghanistan (106 km). India has 15,106.7 km long land border and the coastline of 7516.6 km, including the island territories.³⁰ Out of seven neighbouring countries, India is surrounded and sharing international border which includes both land, maritime and river borders.³¹ India shares its 4096.7 km borderland with Bangladesh. India's North-Eastern Region (NER) also comprising of eight provinces namely – Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram,

²⁹ Murayama, M., "Border, migration and sub-regional cooperation in Eastern South Asia." **Economic and Political Weekly**, 41(14), 2006, pp- 1351–1359.

³⁰ Swati Verma and Yathika Agarwal, 'Border Area Prosperity through Improved Connectivity: the Case of Northeast India' **CUTS International**, March, 2022.

³¹ Ministry of Home Affairs. (2016). **Annual Report, 2015–2016**. Government of India. [http://mha.nic.in/sites/upload_files/mha/files/AR\(E\)1516.pdf](http://mha.nic.in/sites/upload_files/mha/files/AR(E)1516.pdf), Accessed on 30.07.2022

Nagaland, Tripura, and Sikkim alone shares an international border of 5,182 kms (about 99 percent of its total geographical boundary) with several neighbouring countries like 1,395 kms with Tibet Autonomous Region, China in the North, 1,640 kms with Myanmar in the East, 1,596 kms with Bangladesh in the South-West, 97 kms with Nepal in the West, and 455 kms with Bhutan in the North-West.³² This makes India's North-Eastern Region (NER), a key geo-strategic location for the Indian sub-continent. The region is permeated with difficult terrains, limited connectivity, inaccessible areas, and border disruptions. One of the major hindrances is the narrow 'Siliguri Corridor' popularly known as Chicken's Neck, a strategic geo-economic corridor connecting North-Eastern Region (NER) to India and Bangladesh through road. Due to their close proximity, the two countries have taken significant steps in the overall security and economic development of the other. As a result, both countries reached new milestones by resolving their boundary issue with the delimitation of their maritime boundary in 2014³³ and by signing the Land Boundary Agreement (LBA) in 2015.³⁴

The nature of India-Bangladesh bilateral relations highlights the successes in the spheres of border security, connectivity, and infrastructural development as well as the challenges that the two countries have faced since 1991 after the restoration of parliamentary democracy in Bangladesh. Regarding border security India is very sensitive to its neighbour. Following the Kargil conflict between India and Pakistan in 1999 under the Prime Minister of late Shri Atal Bihari Bajpayee, the border management issue was brought to the fore and a report was provided by the Kargil Review Committee. In response, the Indian government established a 'Task Force' on Border Management in April 2000 under Madhav Godbole's leadership. Under his leadership a Group of Ministers (GoM) formed to examine the national security system as a whole and the recommendations of the Kargil Review Committee specifically consider measures for border management. The goal of the Task Force in particular, was to consider the recommendations of the Kargil Review Committee and in this regard formulate specific proposals for the Group of Ministers' (GoM) consideration. In its report, the Group of Ministers (GoM) observed that the country's borders cannot be effectively managed because of certain inherent problems. First, most of the borders are

³² Swati Verma and Yathika Agarwal, 'Border Area Prosperity through Improved Connectivity: the Case of Northeast India' **CUTS International**, March, 2022.

³³ Haroon Habib, "Bangladesh wins maritime dispute with India", **The Hindu**, 9th July, 2014. Available at: <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/bangladesh-wins-maritime-dispute-with-india/article6191797.ece>, Accessed on 20th August 2022.

³⁴ Pratima Ranjan Bose, "India Bangladesh sign historic land boundary agreement", **The Hindu Business Line**, 6th June, 2015. Available at : <https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/india-bangladesh-sign-historic-land-boundary-agreement/article7289332.ece#>, Accessed on 20th August 2022.

either disputed or not clearly demarcated. Many are artificial boundaries that do not run along a natural barrier, which makes them extremely porous. This gives rise to multiple problems like illegal migration, cattle smuggling, drugs trafficking, and trans-border movement of insurgents etc. In addition, the multiplicity of forces employed to guard the same border, their repeated withdrawal from the borders on other duties, the lack of adequate infrastructures along the border, and so on deter from efficient guarding of the border. To address all these problems, the Group of Ministers (GoM) broadly recommended that concerted efforts be made to settle border disputes and demarcate the limits at the earliest opportunity. It also recommended that a 'Department of Border Management' be created under the Ministry of Home Affairs, which would focus on border issues. Border security management has mainly two major objectives – firstly, to facilitate the movement of legitimate goods and people across the border between two sovereign countries. Secondly to ensure the security of the country by restricting entry of illegal goods and those individuals who might disturb the peace across the border. For this purpose India deployed different securities agencies like-border guarding forces, customs, immigration and local police. Border management approaches may vary from one country to another. It can be open or closed according to the nature of the relationship. The border management policies of a country are mainly determined by the nature of bilateral cordial relationship. Despite divergent approaches, security is a pivotal issue of border management all over the world.

Recently, the two Prime Ministers Narendra Modi and Sheikh Hasina jointly inaugurated the newly restored railway link between Chilahati (Bangladesh) and Haldibari (India) on 17th December 2020. To enhance people to people contacts, the frequency of two passenger trains, i.e., Maitree Express (rail) and Bandhan Express (rail) were increased from 4 days a week to 5 days a week and from one day a week to two days a week respectively from February 2020. Both the countries also started using side-door container and parcel trains to maintain uninterrupted supply chains during the ongoing covid-19 pandemic situation. During the visit of Prime Ministers Sheikh Hasina to New Delhi in October 2019, both the governments decided to commence Dhaka-Siliguri-Gangtok-Dhaka and Dhaka-Siliguri-Darjeeling-Dhaka bus service to enhance people to people contacts and the rail run of Dhaka-Siliguri-Gangtok-Dhaka was also held in December 2019. Feni Bridge (Maitree Setu in Bangladesh) connecting land custom stations (LCS) Subroom (Tripura) and land custom stations (LCS) Ramgarh (Bangladesh) has been jointly inaugurated on virtual platform by both the Prime Ministers in 2021.

Regarding infrastructure India–Bangladesh bilateral relation and the scale of cooperation is equally wide and touches every aspect—be it digital infrastructure, disaster management, education of students and other aspects of human resource development, training and capacity building, defence cooperation, rail infrastructure, border hatt infrastructure, pipe line project, space technology, nuclear cooperation etc. Infrastructure is the prime factor which determines the connectivity between the two countries. It is the first development parameter of the two countries. In fact, Infrastructure determines the spheres of development. Hence Infrastructure connotes the connectivity more fruitful. The settlement of the boundary dispute in 2014, the ratification of the Land Boundary Agreement (LBA) and the successful exchange of enclaves in 2015 have been major developments in the India-Bangladesh relationship in recent years. In pursuance of these agreements the two countries have begun to cooperate in the sectors like rail, bus, bridge, space and nuclear technology, IT, shipping, electronics, energy, tourism and the civil nuclear programme. Infrastructure is the services and facilities that a country, city, or other area's economy, households, and businesses require to function. Infrastructure is the collection of facilities and systems that serve that area. Till March 2022 India had funded 68 High Impact Community Development Projects (HICDPs) in Bangladesh such as construction of student hostels, academic buildings, skill development and training institutes, cultural centres, and orphanages etc.³⁵ At the invitation of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Prime Minister of People's Republic of Bangladesh Sheikh Hasina attended the Leaders of SAARC Countries' video conference on 15th March, 2020, to share assessments of the current situation pertaining to this pandemic, consider best practices, and identify cooperative steps to minimize and mitigate the spread of the disease. In order to assist Bangladesh and develop infrastructure in its fight against the covid-19 pandemic, the Indian government has provided it with three tranches of medical assistance as part of bilateral cooperation for the welfare and collective prosperity of their peoples.

Under this perspective of the dimensions of bilateral relations between India and Bangladesh the proposed research intend to involve with the study of numerous literatures in the form of governments documents, treaties, agreements annual reports, books, articles from different journal, interviews of some prominent personalities and local people to reach out the objectives of the research. The proposed research address the following research objectives

³⁵ **CLAWS Journal I** Volume. 15, No. 1. Summer, 2022.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To study the impact of rising Islamic fundamentalism as a security challenges in Indo-Bangladesh bilateral relationship.
- To study as to how the sharing of water shapes the nature and interest of bilateral relationship.
- To examine the root of insurgency in north eastern region of india as well as its impact on Indo-Bangladesh relations?
- To analyze evolution and development of political, economic, military, technological cooperation between the two countries
- To highlight the relationships based on cultural connectivity.
- To analyze the effect of infrastructure in India's relation with Bangladesh.
- To scrutinize the people to people connectivity over the Indo-Bangladesh relationship
- To focus on the geo-strategic location of Bangladesh and its implications for Delhi-Dhaka relationship
- To study Indo-Bangladesh relations over the issue of illegal immigration.
- To analyze India's economic assistance to Bangladesh in difference phases.

Methodology

In the study, both primary and secondary source materials are used. The study has attempted to analyze and show how different factors combine in particular way to deal with various aspects of India-Bangladesh bilateral relations. The study will be based on textual reading of primary sources on the subject. The study will also highlight the effect of India-Bangladesh bilateral relations (1991-2023) not only at the regional level, but also in the outside world. The following research methodology has been implied for the proposed research.

The methodology applied to the proposed research has been based on historical, comparative, analytical and survey methods. Application of historical method is necessary as it helps the researcher to approach the past socio-political-cultural and economic dimensions of the two countries. As the historical method is descriptive in nature, it would help in describing different dimensions of past events. The use of comparative method is essential

because it helps in comparing institutional and political development of the two countries in a comparative fashion. Analytical method is useful to have an analytical narrative of the development of the relationship between the two countries. Use of tools of survey method is useful to have more a democratic and participatory research on different aspects of their relations. Further, an attempt has been made to approach both primary and secondary source of collection of data and information. To make this research work imperative, I have adopted interview method where cross examination of different political leaders, intellectuals, government officials and other stake holders of both India and Bangladesh have been made. For this purpose, questionnaire both open ended and close ended has been made after preliminary visit of the concerned states. The data collected on the basis of interview have been analyzed in details.

Research questions

- What are the major impediments in the development of consensus regarding the issues of border security?
- How far Infrastructural development has enhanced dynamics of India-Bangladesh bilateral relation ?
- Under what circumstances both the countries are engaged for solving the problem of terrorism ?
- What are the major irritants in the way of solving the teesta water crisis ?
- What will be the future perspectives of ‘Indo-Bangladesh Ganges water treaty?’
- How far the present political regime in India has involved with the issues of illegal immigration with Bangladesh?
- How far the rail, road air and water connectivity shape the future direction of Indo-Bangladesh relation?
- What is the impact of the ongoing process of Islamisation of Bangladesh on her bilateral relations with India?

CHAPTER – I

Historical background of the creation of Bangladesh. (1947-1971)

CHAPTER ONE

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE CREATION OF BANGLADESH (1947-1971)

The emergence of Bangladesh in the border region of South Asia on 16th December 1971 was the culmination of the struggle of Bengali nationalism to establish a separate identity of its own to secure the rights and identity of Bangalees. The All-India-Muslim-League's 'Lahore Resolution'³⁶ of March 1940, commonly known as the 'Pakistan Resolution' under the leadership of 'Quid-i-Azam' Mohammad Ali Jinnah, was undoubtedly the most important political event that changed the course of Indian history and left deep marks on the world history.³⁷ The passing of the Lahore Resolution in 1940 was an apogee of Muslim's demand and a landmark in the history of the Indian subcontinent. This resolution stated that the areas in which the Muslim were numerically in a majority as in the North Western and Eastern Zones of India namely Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Baluchistan, Punjab, Kashmir, should be grouped to constitute 'Independent Islamic Pakistan' in which constituent units would be autonomous and sovereign.³⁸ The Muslim League's goal since its inception in December 1906 at Dacca by Nawab Salimullah, was to protect and advance Muslim's socio-economic-cultural identity, rights and interests under the British Government in socio-political and constitutional context. From time immemorial Muslim philosophy regarding life and religious beliefs were significantly different compared to that of Hindus. The Hindu symbols and myths adopted by the Indian National Congress under the pressure of its revivalist leadership created suspicion and deep fear in the minds of the Muslims. The ideas of the Hindu revivalists namely Sri Ramakrishna Paramhansa, Swami Vivekananda, Swami Dayanada Saraswati were linked with the ideas of rationalism and the National Congress.³⁹ Balgangadhar Tilak and Bipin Chandra Paul amalgamated Indian National Congress with this Hindu revivalist trend to increase nationalism against the British rule. Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay's 'Ananda Math' and Rabindra Nath Tagore's 'Kahini' were interpreted by the Muslims as direct attack against the Muslim community and

³⁶ASM Shamsul Arefin, **"Bangladesh Documents 1971, Part 1"**, Bangladesh Research and Publications, Dhaka, Bangladesh, 2009, p-3

³⁷<https://historypak.com/lahore-resolution-1940/>, accessed on 12.07.2018.

³⁸ Dev, Milton Kumar and Samad Md. Abdus, **'History Of Bangladesh 1905-2005'** Bishwabidyalaya Prokasoni, Dhaka, Bangladesh, 2014, p-146.

³⁹ Madhavi Yasin, **emergence of Nationalism, Congress and separatism**, Roy publication, New Delhi, 1976.

certain comments in Ananda Math were also considered derogatory. Between 1870-1900 Muslim elite published newspapers like Mohammadi Amar, Mussalmani Bandhu, Islam Pracharak, Kohinoor etc. These parallel writings represented tangential growth of Hindu and Muslim nationalism in India.⁴⁰ The Hindu bias in literature, history, the projection of India as the mother of Goddess made the Muslims allergic to Indian nationalism. Besides, Gandhiji's Ramrajya, Satyagraha was taken by the Muslims as the symbol of Hinduism.⁴¹ The Muslims were also quite allergic to the Indian National Anthems like 'Banga Amar' and 'Bande Mataram'.⁴² Muslim leaders were worried that in a Hindu majority democratic state Muslims would have to struggle for protecting their rights and interests. The Hindus symbols like cow, saffron flag, sadhus, yogis, temples and the concept of Gomata (cow goddess) and their attempt to prevent the muslim practice of cow slaughter, the playing of conch by the Hindu in front of mosque and the religious procession during the idol immersion created suspicion and fear in the minds of muslims in undivided India. Muslims religious slogan 'Allah-u-Akbar' and Hindu religious slogan 'Bande Mataram' made differences between the two communities.⁴³ Pandit Lekh Ram, a famous leader of crusade condemned all forms of Islam particularly the naturalist Mohammadis (Sayed Ahmed Khan's Aligarh Movement) and demanded that the Muslims should either be expelled from India or converted to aryanism.⁴⁴ Initially, after the annulment of the partition of British Bengal in 1911, the Muslim League (party) demanded separate electorate on the basis of 1909 Indian Council Act, commonly known as 'Morley-Minto reform'⁴⁵ for the Muslims so that they could elect their representatives. Muslim prominent leaders under the leadership of Aga Khan met the then Governor-General of British India, Lord Minto in Simla for separate electorates for Muslims and reservation of seats according to the Muslim population.⁴⁶ In March 1913 at

⁴⁰ Amiya Sen, '**Hindu Revivalism in Bengal, 1972-1905: Some Essays in Interpretation**', Oxford University press, Delhi, 1993.

⁴¹ Raghu Rai (ed) "**The Punjab Story**", cited in Pradip Kumar Lahiri, 1991.

⁴² In the book **The Genesis of Pakistan** the author V.V.Nagarkar, mentioned the speeches "Ali Iman said, when I find the most advanced province of India put forward the sectarian cry of Bande Mataram as national cry, my heart is filled with despair and disappointment and the suspicion that under the cloak of Nationalism, Hindu Nationalism as preached in India becomes a conviction."

⁴³ Pradip Kumar Lahiri, '**The Bengal Muslim Thought 1847**', 1991.

⁴⁴ K.W.Jones, "**Arya Dharma**", Indian Reprint, New Delhi, 1976.

⁴⁵ In October 1906, a group of Muslim leader led by Aga Khan, met Lord Minto, the then viceroy of India and Morley, the then secretary of state of India. They demanded separate electorates for the Muslims to select their representatives according to the Indian Council Act in 1909.

⁴⁶ Subodh Kumar Mukhopadhyay, '**Adhunik bharat: 1818-1964-britishraj theke purna swaraj**', Mitram, Kolkata, 2009, p-515.

Lucknow session the Muslim League passed a resolution for protecting the interests of Indian Muslims and self government for India. The Lucknow Pact of 1916 was very important in the political history of British India because ‘the Congress Party’ and ‘the Muslim League’ for the first time agreed to work together on the basis of Morley-Minto’s separate electorates for Muslims and non-Muslims.⁴⁷ But, in 1928, at the all party conference, Motilal Nehru’s report rejected the separate electorate system for the minorities on the ground of Hindu-Muslim political co-operation, Mohammad Ali Jinnah’s suggestions of one-third seats should be reserved for the Muslim in central legislature and 11 point programme had also been rejected by the Congress.⁴⁸ The Muslim League’s Bombay session in 1936, authorized Jinnah to appoint and preside over a new central parliamentary board representing the Muslim of India for their socio-politico-economic and constitutional development. On 8th-11th June, 1936, this board consisting of 54 prominent Muslim leaders like Mohammad Iqbal, Liaquat Ali Khan, Huseyn Sahyeed Suhrawardy, M.A.H. Ispahni and Abdur Rahman Siddique who attended this meeting representing Bengal province to launch the Muslim League party in Bengal. In British Bengal, the two Muslim political parties namely ‘United Muslim party’ led by Nawab Habibullah, Khawaja Nazimuddin, Khawaja Shabuddin, Huseyn Sahyeed Suhrawardy and the ‘Krishak Proja Samity’ led by Abdul Kasem Mohammad Fazlul Haque were preparing for provincial election under ‘the Government of India Act 1935.’⁴⁹ The rivalries between the two political parties for the domination of provincial politics divided the Muslim communities in the Bengal provincial election. To resolve the difference between the two parties, M.A.H. Ispahni, one of the important leaders of Muslim League, invited Mohammad Ali Jinnah to visit Bengal to revitalize the Muslim-League and bring the various Muslim parties under one umbrella.⁵⁰ After a great deal of persuasion and bargaining the All-India-Muslim League’s parliamentary board was set up to select candidate for the coming Bengal provincial election in 1936. Abdul Kasem Mohammad Fazlul Haque strongly refused to merge his political party, the Krishak Proja Samity, with the Board. In September, a few months before the provincial election in Bengal, Jinnah removed Fazlul Haque from the Muslim League’s parliamentary Board. The 1936-1937 election was a very important event for the Bengali

⁴⁷ Sumit Sarkar, A Bengali Translation of ‘**Modern India: 1885-19047**’, K.P. Bagchi and Company, Kolkata, 2013, P-127.

⁴⁸ Salahuddin Ahmed, “**Bangladesh Past and Present**”, A.P.H. Publishing Corporation, New Delhi, 2004, p-76.

⁴⁹ For more information about the Government of India Act 1935 see Gopal krishna Pahari, ‘**Adhunik Bharat Charcha: 1757-1964**’, Kalimata Pustakalaya, Kolkata, 2012, p-454.

⁵⁰ Ibid, p-92.

Muslim because for the first time, it was held on the basis of the separate electorate. In this election the Muslim League emerged as the second largest party securing 39 seats in Bengal province, Krishak Proja party won 36 seats and independent Muslim candidate won 43 seats. Fazlul Haque had defeated Khawaja Nazimuddin, one of the influential leaders of All-India-Muslim-League in Patuakhali Constituency but did not get absolute majority to form the government. Accordingly he had to seek the necessary cooperation and support from the Muslim League and other parties to form a coalition government. Khawaja Nazimuddin joined the Fazlul Haque ministry and became the president of the Bengal Provincial Muslim League with Huseyn Sahyeed Suhrawardy as secretary. The Krishak Proja party was dissolved and Fazlul Haque became one of the influential and powerful all India-Muslim League leaders. The Muslim league had rejected the federation scheme in its 34th session at Bombay in 1936. The Patna session of the Muslim league in December 1938 gave an alternative proposal with a view to safeguarding the interests of the whole Muslim communities in India. In March 1939, the Muslim league working committee appointed a review committee, under the leadership of Mohammad Ali Jinnah to examine various schemes like constitutional development, provincial autonomy, reservation of seat etc. In 1938-1939 a number of schemes, envisaging a partition of India or re-organizing of the provinces into separate zones of Hindu and Muslim majorities under a loose federation, were put forward by Muslim academics and political leaders of Punjab and Sindh. Among the schemes for the division of India, Dr. sayed Zafarul Hassan and Dr. Afzal Qadri drafted 'the Lahore Resolution.' According to the schemes, India was to be divided into three independent sovereign states- i) the predominantly Muslim state of North West India ii) Bengal and Assam iii) a Hindu state-comprising the rest of India. At the same time, Nawab Sir Muhammad Shah Nawaz Khan, president of the Punjab Provincial League, proposed the division of India into five countries, each embracing contiguous Muslim and Hindu majority areas, but linked in a confederation. The name Pakistan signifies the areas of Punjab, the north western frontier province (Afghan province), Kashmir, Sindh, and Baluchistan. In his famous pamphlet, "Now or Never," Choudhury Rahamat Ali wrote, "These provinces should have separate Federation of their own. There can be no peace and tranquility in the land if we, the Muslims, are duped into a Hindu-dominated Federation where we cannot be the master of our own destiny and captains of our souls."⁵¹ The word 'P-A-K-I-S-TAN' meaning that part of India where the Muslim communities are majority, was coined as follows P for

⁵¹ K.K. Aziz (ed.), '**complete works of Rahmat Ali**', volume.1,p-4.

Punjab, A for the North Western Frontier Province and the areas around it, which are not the part of British India and commonly known as Afghanistan; K for Kashmir; S for Sindh and Tan for Baluchistan. Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan, one of the members of the League Committee, envisaged an all India federation of regional federation of seven zones. Sir Abdulla Haroon proposed a division of India into two separate federations. In this way the League Committee had completed its examination of the various proposals and the working committee decided to propose a separate homeland for Muslim in the forth coming session of the All India Muslim League in March 1940.⁵² The Muslim League began to think about discarding the federal model in 1938, when the Sind Provincial Muslim League and the All India Muslim League needed to review its position on constitutional issues in view of the experience of the Muslims under the Congress Government in some provinces from 1937-1939. Mohammad Ali Jinnah, on general session of the All India Muslim League, in Lahore, in 1940, stated that “There are, in India, two nations who both must share the government of their common motherland.”⁵³ It was actually the brainchild of prominent Muslim scholars Sir Syed Ahmed Khan. He directly identified two separate communities, i.e. Hindu and Muslim in India and urged the Muslim communities not to join Indian National Congress. This change of strategy of Muslim League was caused by the political experience of the Muslim elite in their interaction with the Congress and the British Government. The league berated the Congress (party) as a Hindu party, no difference from the Hindu Mahasabha.⁵⁴ Although the name ‘Pakistan’ had been first proposed by Choudhary Rahmat Ali in his Pakistan Declaration in 1933, Mohammad Ali Jinnah and other Muslim League leaders had kept affirm on their belief in Hindu-Muslim unity. Mohammad Allama Iqbal, the famous Urdu poet and philosopher, in his famous Allahabad session address in December 1930 made it clear that Islam has its own social, religious, cultural and economic system and in order to implement it, a separate political entity was required. The political consciousness of the Muslim population under the influence of western educationists and the bitter experience with National Congress they desire to establish their rights and identities. But Mohammad Ali Jinnah had been a strong vocal for the ‘unity of India’ then. Though he was convinced by late 1930s but being a shrewd political realist he was not ready to announce the new plan until he

⁵² Hasan Zaheer, ‘**The Separation of East Pakistan the Rise and Realization of Bengali Muslim Nationalism**’, University Press Limited, Dhaka, Bangladesh, 1994, p-65

⁵³ Rahman Md. Moksuder (ed), ‘**Swadhin Bangladesher Ovyudoyer Itihas**’, Aleya Book Depot, Dhaka, Bangladesh, 2015, p-51.

⁵⁴ S. Settar and Indira Baptista Gupta (ed), ‘**Pangs of Partition: the Parting of Ways**’, (volume-1) Manohar Publishers and Distributors, New Delhi, 2002, p-192.

was confident that the vast majority of the Muslims behind him. Overwhelming support from the Muslim masses for his call to celebrate ‘Day of Deliverance’ on 22nd December, 1939, was actually a vote of confidence given by the Muslim Community under the leadership of Mohammad Ali Jinnah. By 1940, Jinnah started speaking of the religious ‘Two Nation Theory’ for ‘Sovereign Islamic Independent State’ but nowhere mentioned the name of Pakistan.⁵⁵ At the Lahore session, held on 23rd March 1940, the resolution proposed by A.K. Fazlul Haque, the then Prime Minister of undivided British Bengal.⁵⁶ The position of Prime Ministership of British Bengal was abolished upon the partition of Bengal in 1947. With the passage of this resolution, Jinnah tactfully changed the demand from ‘separate electorates’ to a ‘separate independent nation state.’ This Lahore resolution rejected the idea of a ‘United India’ and the creation of an ‘independent Islamic state’ was set as their (Muslim League) ultimate goal. It gave new energy and courage to the Muslims’ majority region especially (Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Baluchistan, Punjab) who gathered around Jinnah from the platform of the Muslim League to struggle for their political and economic freedom.⁵⁷ The idea of Muslim homeland remained ambiguous.⁵⁸ In September 1941 Fazlul Haque was forced to resign from the Muslim League on the question of membership of the national defense council, set up by the then Viceroy of India. In a defiant letter of his resignation, he clearly stated that “I will never allow the interest of the 33 million Muslims of Bengal to be put under the domination of any outside authority, however eminent it may be.” Towards the end of 1943, Abdul Hasim Bhasani became the secretary of the Bengal provincial Muslim League. He was a secular Bengali nationalist, who enjoyed the support of students and was greatly influenced by communist ideology and organizational technique. He wanted to free the Muslim middle classes from the domination of reactionary elements like Nawab family, elite class, western intellectual class etc. They (elite class Muslims) fostered a separate culture from the low caste Muslims and middle class Muslims. The Ashraf class patronized Arabic, Persian, Urdu culture. The Ashrafs (elite class) however maintained some relations with low caste Muslims or middle class Muslims for the sake of preserving the unity on the basis of Islam.⁵⁹ In 1943, Fazlul Haque’s coalition government with Hindu Mahasabha led by Shyama

⁵⁵ Shekher Bandhayapadhyaya, ‘**Palasi Theka Partition: Adhunik Bharater Itihas**’, Orient Blackswan private Limited, Kolkata, 2013. (Translated by Krishendu Roy), p-403.

⁵⁶ Shekher Bandhayapadhyaya, op.cit, p-522.

⁵⁷ Rahman Md. Moksuder(ed), op.cit, p-157.

⁵⁸ WILLEM VAN SCHENDEL ‘**A History Of Bangladesh**’ Cambridge university press, New Delhi, 2009, p-89.

⁵⁹ Pradip kumar lahiri, op.cit.

Prasad Mukherjee was dismissed by the then Governor and accordingly Khawaja Nazimuddin became the Prime Minister of British Bengal but due to the internal political conflict of provincial Muslim league, he was defeated in the Assembly in March 1945.⁶⁰ The general election held in November 1945 for central assembly and in March 1946 for the Bengal Assembly. In the election Muslim League bagged all the Muslim seats in central and 439 seats out of 494 Muslim seats in province. But he was distrusted by the central Muslim League leadership and in spite of being the chief executive of the biggest Muslim majority province, Bengal, he was not included in the Working Committee of the All India Muslim League. In April 1946, the Muslim League called a Convention of all the newly elected league legislators in Delhi. Bengal was represented by Huseyn Sahyeeed Surwordhy and Abdul Hamid Bhasani for Assam. The subject committee of the convention discussed the draft resolution which defined the inclusion of Eastern North Zone and North Western Zone in the independent state of Islamic Pakistan. Abdul Hamid Bhasani strongly objected to the proposed draft on the ground that it amounted to an amendment of the 'Lahore Resolution' of 1940. Here, lies the seed of the future sovereign state of today's Bangladesh. He argued for a separate independent state in the Eastern North Zone. He was ruled out of order and on 9th April the convention unanimously passed the 'Pakistan resolution' on the basis of Islamic ideology and Urdu language, as the symbol of unity. In this meeting the word 'states' in the Lahore Resolution of March 1940 was amended into 'state.' Thus a single Muslim federal state was designed.⁶¹ On 7-9th April, 1946 in Delhi, the All India Muslim League demanded 'Pakistan' as a sovereign nation state and claimed North-East Assam, Bengal province, North-West Punjab, North West Frontier Province, Sindh and Baluchistan.⁶² The last session of the Council of the All India Muslim League (AIML) in united India, was held in Delhi on 9-10th June 1947, to endorse the Lord Mountbatten plan for the partition of British India. Abdul Hamid Bhasani opposed the partition of Bengal and called the 'Pakistan Resolution' as a betrayal of 'Lahore Resolution.' Lord Mountbatten plan, the third within twelve months (Cabinet Mission Plan of June 1946, Attlee Declaration of February 1947, Mountbatten plan of June 1947) had received the assent of the leadership of the major political organizations in India and in Britain. In India, the main political leaders had declared their acceptance of the proposal, though with heavy apprehensions. The next logical step, initiated by the dynamic

⁶⁰Shekher Bandhayapadhya, op.cit, p-523.

⁶¹ M. Rafiqueel Islam, "**International Legal Implication, The Bangladesh Liberation Movement**", University Press Limited, Dhaka, Bangladesh, 1987, p-9.

⁶²Shekher Bandhayapadhya, op.cit, p-526.

leadership of Lord MountBatten, was taken quickly and the Indian Independence Act 1947 duly introduced in the British parliament on 4th July, received the Royal Assent on 18th July, 1947. As the partition of Bengal became a real possibility within the context of Indian Independence Act, the Muslim Bengali leaders were divided into two groups-diversionists and unionists. Prominent Bengali leaders Akram Khan, Hamidul Haq Choudhury, and Narul Amin were diversionists and Suharwardy and Abdul Hasim group wanted to keep a united independent Bengal. Khawaja Nazimuddin remained undecided and supported diversionists group and unionists group according to the political situation at various times. In February 1947, Abdul Hasim secretly discussed with Sarat Chandra Bose, a veteran congress leader and brother of eminent national leader Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, for the united sovereign Bengal. On 26th April, Suharwardy met Lord Mount Batten, the then viceroy of united India and told him that he was confident that he could manage Bengal to remain as a complete independent entity. In this way a general agreement was reached for a 'united Bengal' between Suhrawardhy, Abdul Hasim, Fazlur Rahman and Abdul Malek on the league side and Sarat Chandra Bose and two congress leader on the other side. This unanimous agreement was subject to the approval of the high command of the two parties. On 21st may Suharwardhy sent the draft agreement to Liaquat Ali Khan to obtain the approval of the Mohammad Ali Jinnah before the final announcement of the 3rd June Mount Batten plan. Though Jinnah was in favour of it but Gandhi, Nehru, Patel and Hindus and Bengali intelligentsial business groups were all opposed to the idea of undivided Bengal and nothing came of it. Hence, the 'Indian Independence Act 1947' was the implementation of 3rd June plan and under this Act, India and Pakistan were to emerge as two independent dominions and the constituent assembly of each dominion was to have unlimited power to frame and adopt any constitution and to repeal any act of the British Parliament, including the Indian Independence Act of 1947,⁶³ if it so desired. On 20th June 1947, the member of Bengal legislative met in two sections, representing the Muslim majority and Hindu majority areas of the provinces, to decide on the partition of Bengal.⁶⁴ The Muslim majority section decided against partition and Hindu majority section voted in favour of partition by 58 to 21 votes, thus ensuring the partition of Bengal. The Mount Batten plan of 3rd June 1947, accepted by Muslim League and the Congress Party. Regarding this partition, Sylhet, a district of Assam,

⁶³ For more information see Shekher Bandhayapadhya, '**Palasi Theka Partition: Adhunik Bharater Itihas**', Orient Blackswan private Limited, Kolkata, 2013. (Translated by Krishendu Roy) pp-176-177.

⁶⁴ Partha Chatterjee, the second partition of Bengal, chapter 2, published in Ranabir Samaddar, (edited book), '**Reflections on Partition in the East**' CALCUTTA REASEARCH GROUP, VIKAS PUBLISHING HOUSE PVT LTD, New Delhi, 1997, pp-35-56.

the members of Bengal legislative Assembly voted in favour of amalgamation of Sylhet to East Wing of Pakistan. Accordingly in a referendum held on 6th July, Sylhet district of Assam decided to join East Bengal of Pakistan.⁶⁵ On the other hand, Kolkata, a district of West Bengal included in India.

Under the Indian Independence Act 1947, India was divided into two parts-India and Pakistan. Predominantly Hindu majority West Bengal became a province of India, and Predominantly Muslim majority East Bengal (now Bangladesh) became an East Province of Pakistan. As per the plan, on 20th June, 1947, the members of the Bengal Legislature Assembly cast three separate votes on the proposal to the second partition of Bengal. Thus, it was decided that the new state Pakistan would comprise the Muslim majority districts of Bengal and Punjab, the districts of Sylhet and the whole of the North Western Frontier Province (NWFP, Sind and Baluchistan).⁶⁶

The dream of creating a separate Muslim state came into existence when the partition of the Indian sub-continent finally happened during 1947. The partition of India officially took place during 14th August and 15th August, 1947. With the partition of India, United Bengal was divided into two separate entities. As a result West Bengal belongs to India and East Bengal (today's Bangladesh) belongs to Pakistan. The Partition of Bengal in 1947 was the most recent phenomenon that brought a significant readjustment to the political geography of Bengal. The province of Bengal came to be divided into two halves in 36 years from the revocation of its first partition (Bango-Bhango of 1905) in the year 1947 along the same geographical position mainly on communal consideration. The first Partition of Bengal of 1905 (Bango-Bhango) was seen as an act of colonial arrogance and blamed on the 'divide and rule' policy of British which continued till the final day of British dominancy in India. The second Partition of Bengal in 1947 also bears the colonial testimony of the British's 'divide and rule' policy supporting the very stance of the Indian National Congress.⁶⁷ It was actually the outcome of Mohammad Ali Jinnah's religious 'Two Nation Theory.' The second Partition of Bengal in 1947 after Bango-Bhango in 1905, left behind a legacy of violence which continued to this day. It led to the migration of millions of people. Muslims left India for new state Pakistan and Hindus left Pakistan for India. Massive communal violence, loss

⁶⁵ Salahuddin Ahmed, "**Bangladesh Past and Present**", A.P.H. Publishing Corporation, New Delhi, 2004, p-104.

⁶⁶ S. Settar and Indira Baptista Gupta (ed), op.cit, p-133.

⁶⁷ Dev Milton Kumar and Samad Md. Abdus, op.cit., p.p-176-178.

of millions of lives, homelessness; abandoning everything took place during the process of territorial adjustment. On 24th June Mohammad Ali Jinnah nominated justice Mohammed Akram of Kolkata High Court and justice S.A. Rahman of Punjab High Court from Pakistan side and from Indian side Jawaharlal Nehru nominated justice C.C Biswas and justice Bijan Kumar Mukherjee on 5th June regarding the boundary demarcation. The chairman of this commission was Sir Cyril Radcliffe who was appointed to demarcate the boundary on the basis of ascertaining the contiguous majority areas of Muslims and non-Muslims. According to the commission East Bengal will include the whole of Dhaka and Chittagong Division (Noakhali, Tippera), particularly the whole of the Jessore, Rajshahi, Khulna and Sylhet district and some part of Presidency Division. East Bengal, being a Muslim majority area was incorporated in Pakistan as East Pakistan. Religious affinity was given priority over geographical distance and cultural and linguistic differences. On the other hand, West Bengal will include Kolkata, the whole of Burdwan Division, the Murshidabad divisions, Nadia, Dinajpur and some part of Presidency Division.⁶⁸ A large number of population both from the East Bengal and West Bengal transfer immediately after this partition. East Bengal was renamed East Pakistan, and later became the independent nation of Bangladesh after the Bangladesh Liberation War in 1971.

First constituent Assembly of Pakistan over the issue of Bengali Language

The constituent Assembly of Pakistan was in session from 23rd February, 1948. It was proposed that the members would have to speak either in Urdu or in English at the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan. Dhirendranath Dutta, a member of the constituent Assembly of Pakistan brought a motion in the Assembly Session, demanding Bengali as one of the state languages of the country. Properly opposing the motion, the then Prime Minister of Pakistan Liaquat Ali Khan, brought a vague allegation that the members were trying to create misunderstanding between the different parts of Pakistan. The then Prime Minister of Pakistan, Liaquat Ali Khan and Chief Minister of East Bengal (East Pakistan) Khwaja Nazimuddin strongly opposed Dhirendranath Dutta's language proposal and declared that the Assembly should discharge such an amendment bill and said that 'Only Urdu' should be made the state language of Pakistan. The West Pakistani languages such as Punjabi of Punjab, Sindhi of Sind, Baluchi of Baluchistan, Pashtu of North Western Frontier Province-were written in Urdu or Arabic script. On the other hand, Bangla (Bengali language) was the mother

⁶⁸ Salahuddin Ahmed, op.cit., p.107.

tongue of East Pakistani Bangalees. Bengali scripts were totally different from Arabic Script for many reasons.⁶⁹To oppose ‘Only Urdu policy’, the student of Dhaka University, Medical colleges and Engineering colleges and various schools of East Pakistan, boycotted their classes on 26thFebruary,1948 and brought out processions and slogans in favour of Bangla Bhasa (language). Tamaddun Majlish called for a meeting on 2nd March, 1948 for an organized movement against the decision of the constituent Assembly of Pakistan. On that day, ‘Rashtro Bhasa Sangram Parishad’ was established at Fazlul Haque Hall of Dhaka University to organized same ideological people with Samsul Alam as its convener.⁷⁰On the morning of 11th March, the students were present at Topkhana and Abdul Ghani Road for picketing in front of the Secretariat and Chief Minister’s house. While picketing was going on there, arguments between the police and Shamsul Huq, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, Oli Ahad, Shawkat Ali, Kazi Golam Mahbub were going on, they were arrested and taken to Wazis Ghat police station for cross examination. After long interrogation they were sent for detention in the Dhaka Central Jail.⁷¹ After that a meeting was held on the Dhaka University Premises against police atrocities, arrests and anti-Bangla Bhasa conspiracy. Mohammad Toaha was severely injured while trying to snatch away a rifle from a policeman and had to be admitted to hospital. Strikes (horotal) were observed from 12th-15thMarch, 1948 all over East Bengal. During that time, Pakistani Government banned some leading Newspapers like ‘Amrita Bazar Patrika’, ‘Ananda Bazar Patrika’, ‘The Jugantar’, ‘The Ittehad’, ‘Dainik Swadhinata’ etc. The political leaders of West Pakistan always showed malice and arrogant attitude towards Bengali language, culture, literature, beliefs and ethnic Bangalees because they thought that they (Bangalees) are inferior to them in all respects of creed, culture language and race. The West Pakistani political leaders had no idea about Bengali Language, culture, literature, art and creed of Banglaeas. Firoz Khan Noon, former Prime Minister of Pakistan called Bangalees ‘semi-Muslims.’⁷²

The Eight Point Agreement

The East Bengal Legislative Assembly was to meet for the first time on 15th March, 1948, in Dacca, following Pakistan’s creation. On the morning of the session, a large number

⁶⁹Murshid, Ghulam, ‘**Muktijuddha O Tarpur: Ekti Nirdoliyo Itihas**’, Prothoma Prokashan, Dhaka, Bangladesh,2013, p-13.

⁷⁰ Rahman Md. Moksuder(ed), ‘**Swadhin Bangladesher Ovyudoyer Itihas**’, Aleya Book Depot, Dhaka, Bangladesh, 2015, p-114.

⁷¹ Dev Milton Kumar and Samad Md.Abdus.,op.cit., p-197.

⁷² Avik Sarkar, ‘**Bangla Name Desh**’ A.B.P. Private Limited, Kolkata, 2006, p-12.

of students gathered in front of Burdwan House, which at present the Bangla Academy which is situated in Chief Minister Nazimuddin's official residence, to register their opposition to the action taken by the police three days earlier, on 11th March, 1948. Because of this, Chief Minister Nazimuddin was forced to re-consider his claim that this was an act inspired by Hinduism. On 15th March, 1948, before the Legislative Assembly session began, he agreed to meet the delegations of Rashtrabasha Sangram Parishad. Prof. Abul Kashem, Mohammad Toaha, Kamruddin Ahmed, Syed Nazrul Islam, Naimuddin Ahmed, and Abdur Rahman Chowdhury were all members of this delegation. Under such circumstance of the language movement, Khwaja Nazimuddin, the then chief minister of East Bengal (from 1947-1955 its official name was East Bengal), signed an agreement with students' leaders which was popularly known as 'The Eight Point agreement.'⁷³ In an effort to ease tensions in the province, Khawaja Nazimuddin signed an 'Eight-Point Agreement' that included the release of all demonstrators who had been imprisoned. He also said that the provincial assembly would vote to make Bengali language the official language and medium of instruction at all levels of education when it meets in three or four weeks. He also agreed that the regional assembly would recommend to the Pakistan National Assembly that Bangla be given the same status as Urdu, including the use of it for central government recruitment and examination. Muslim scholars and leaders logically believed that Urdu, only spoken by 7 percent should be the lingua franca because it had gained a reputation as the cultural symbol of sub-continental Muslims. However the people of East Bengal regarded 'Urdu' as the language of the elite, not the commoners in the Eastern Province (now Bangladesh) who made up 56 percent of the Pakistan's population where Bangla or Bengali language was the mother tongue of Bangalees.⁷⁴ In light of civic unrest, the then Governor-General-Of-Pakistan Muhammad Ali Jinnah arrived in Dhaka in 1948. On 21st March, at a civic reception at Racecourse Ground, he claimed that the language issue was designed by a 'Fifth Column'⁷⁵ to divide Pakistani Muslims. Jinnah further declared that 'Urdu and only Urdu' embodied the spirit of Muslim nations and would remain as the state language, labeling those who disagreed with his views as 'Enemies of Pakistan.' Later on, Jinnah called a meeting of a state

⁷³ For more information see Dev Milton Kumar and Samad Md. Abdus. 'History of Bangladesh, 1905-2005' Bishwabidyalaya Prokasoni, Dhaka, Bangladesh, 2014, pp-197-198.

⁷⁴ <http://www.londoni.co/index.php/history-of-bangladesh?id=5>, accessed on 12.02.2018.

⁷⁵ Fifth Column is any group of people who undermine a large group from within, usually in favour of an enemy group or nation. Its activities can be overt or clandestine. Clandestine Fifth Column activities can involve acts of sabotage, disinformation or espionage executed within defense lines by secret sympathizers with an external force.

language committee of action and overruled the contract that was signed by Khwaja Nazimuddin with the student leaders. Before Jinnah left Dhaka on 28th March, he delivered a speech on radio reasserting his 'Urdu-only policy.'⁷⁶ After the sudden death of Governor-General-Of-Pakistan Mohammad Ali Jinnah on 11th September 1948, the language movement had been a bit dejected. After his sudden death when next Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan visited Dhaka once again the students raised their demands of Bengali language as national language of Pakistan to him. On 27th November, 1948, Ghulam Azam, the general secretary of Dhaka University Students' Union on behalf of the union, gave a memorandum to the then Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan at the Dhaka University asking that 'Bangla' be the national language for Pakistan. Shortly thereafter, the East Bengal Language Committee was formed by the East Bengal Government to prepare a report on the language controversy. The committee completed its report on 6th December, 1950 but it was not published until 1958.⁷⁷

By the beginning of 1952, the language movement took a serious turn. Within couple of years since the birth of Pakistan on 14th August, 1947, the people of East Bengal lost their confidence over Pakistan and started losing faith in Muslim League as well. With the emergence of new party, the Awami Muslim League, the language movement got a new momentum in 1952. Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan was assassinated at Rawalpindi on 16th October, 1951. After his assassination the then Chief Minister of East Bengal (East Pakistan) Khwaja Nazimuddin was appointed as the second Prime Minister of Pakistan. He came to Dhaka by the end of January 1952 and spoke at a public meeting at the Palton Maidan on 27th January. He announced that the people of East Bengal would decide what the language of the province would be but the state (National) language of Pakistan would be Urdu. Prime Minister Khwaja Nazimuddin's speech gave negative reaction among the Bengali students who responded with the slogan 'Rashtrabhasa Bangla chai.' Against Prime Minister Khwaja Nazimuddin's speech the representative of various political and cultural organizations held a meeting on 31st January chaired by Moulana Bhasani and All Party Central Language Action committee was formed with Kazi Golam Mahboob as its convener. Mohammad Ali Jinnah's Dhaka declaration in early 1948 that Urdu was to be the only national language in Pakistan and next the reaffirmation of Urdu by the country's second Prime Minister Khwaja Nazimuddin who himself a Bangalee, in February 1952 resulted in language riots, police

⁷⁶WILLEM VAN SCHENDEL 'A History Of Bangladesh' Cambridge university press, New Delhi, 2009, pp-111-115.

⁷⁷WILLEM VAN SCHENDEL, op.cit, pp-111-115.

shootings, deaths etc.⁷⁸The University National Language Committee decided to call a strike on 4th February 1952. After the strikes in all education institutions students came in processions and gathered at Dhaka University campus for making a new committee. The committee also decided to call haratals (strikes) and organize demonstrations and processions on 21st February 1952, throughout of East Bengal (East Pakistan). All meetings, processions and assemblies of more than five persons were banned for fifteen days under provisions of the East Bengal special power ordinance.⁷⁹ While the meeting was going on across the city, the District Magistrate (D.M) of Dhaka had imposed section 144 banning meetings, processions, strikes etc. The students were determined to violate section 144 and held a student meeting on 21st February on the Dhaka University premises closely located to the Medical college Hospital.⁸⁰ When the meeting started the vice-chancellor (V.C) as well as a few renowned professors came to the spot and requested the students not to violate the ban on assembly. Under the leadership of Gazi-ul-Haque and Abdul Matin thousands of students (most of whom were only school girls) from different schools and colleges of Dhaka assembled on the University campus while Pakistani armed police waited outside the gate on 21st February. When the students began slogan “Rashtrabhasa Bangla chai” and started throwing brickbats, the armed police retaliated with tear gas. Unable to control the agitated students and common people a huge number of armed police fired upon the crowd of students near the Assembly hall.⁸¹ This incident resulted in language movement, deaths and the creation of the first martyrs for a language movement. These language protests not only assert the Bengali language need for cultural identity, but also expressed a fear that lack of fluency in a foreign tongue would be inhibit the entry of Bengali into the administrative services.⁸²

Foundation of Awami Muslim League

Awami Muslim League, founded in Dacca on 23rd June 1949, was the oldest and influential political organization to voice against the authoritarian attitude of the central Pakistani government to repress the legitimate interests of the people of East Bengal. The leaders who led Pakistan to be partitioned from India from the beginning and had been most

⁷⁸Richard Sisson and Leo E. Rose, ‘**WAR AND SECESSION PAKISTAN, INDIA AND THE CREATION OF BANGLADESH**’, Vistaar Publications, New Delhi, 1990, P-9.

⁷⁹Maniruzzaman Talukdar, ‘**The Bangladesh revolution and its aftermath**’, Bangladesh Books, Dhaka, Bangladesh, 1980, chapter- 4.

⁸⁰Murshid, Ghulam, op.cit., p-37.

⁸¹ Rahman, Md. Moksuder (ed), op.cit., p.117

⁸²Richard Sisson and Leo E. Rose, op.cit, p-10

devoted for the Muslim League were not given due respect and position neither in the party nor in the ministry. Some of the most charismatic leaders of Bengal such as A.K.Fazlul Haque, H.A. Suhrawardy and Abul Hashim were excluded from Pakistani Constituent Assembly and democracy was not followed in the formation of various committees. Liaquat Ali Khan, the first Prime Minister of Pakistan from 1947-1951, marked H.A. Suhrawardy as an agent of India to separate Pakistan. The dignified and popular leaders of East Bengal (East Pakistan) were arrested because of their non-communal characteristics and outspoken attitude. In such situation, the progressive students formed East Pakistan Muslim Students' League and Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, a student of Dhaka University became its Secretary. The formation of East Pakistan Muslim Students' League paved the way of a single platform for all the Bangalees of East Bengal. Since 1947 an anti-governmental feelings over the issue of language controversy was already manifested and cultural and political gap were developed between East Bengal and the Western half of Pakistan through resistance movement. The Chief Minister of East Bengal, the vice president of the legislative Assembly and many representatives of Muslim League strongly opposed the language proposal of Dhirendranath Dutta. The economic depression of East Bengal created strong apathy among the people of East Bengal from 1947-1952. Under such circumstance the formation of new political party was needed to protect civil and political rights of Bangalees. Awami Muslim League became the arch rival of ruling Muslim League and strongly opposed the 'Only Urdu' policy of Pakistan government. It was founded by H.A. Suhrawardy, Moulana Abdul Hamid Khan Bhasani and Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.⁸³ At its birth Awami Muslim League adopted a '42-point programme' with special demand of 'recognition of Bangla and provincial autonomy' of East Bengal.

Bengali language movement of East Bengal

Bangladesh had the bitter experience of about a quarter-century of union with Pakistan. After the partition from united India, the geographical boundary of Pakistan was illogically framed – East wing was separated from West wing by one thousand miles of Indian Territory. The partition of India in 1947 divided the Eastern territory between India and erstwhile East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) without considering the ground realities and people's socio-economic-cultural needs. The province of undivided Bengal came to be divided into two halves in 36 years from the revocation of its first partition (1905) in the year

⁸³ Dev, Milton Kumar and Samad, Md. Abdus. op.cit, p-209.

1947 along the same geographical position mainly on communal consideration. The ethnic, linguistic and cultural differences between the two wings were compounded by social discrimination, economic exploitation and political domination of the West Pakistani ruling elites, which impregnated Bengali nationalism on the issue of Bengali language and ultimately, led to the break-up of Pakistan in 1971. The first issue on which East Bengali sentiments were trampled underfoot was that of language.⁸⁴ The language controversy started even before the creation of Pakistan. Before Pakistan was created on 14th August, 1947, demand was made to make 'Bangla' (Bengali language) as the state language of the East Bengal (from 1947 -1955 its official name was East Bengal).⁸⁵ In 1955, Pakistan's 3rd Prime Minister Mohammad Ali Bogra implemented the 'One Unit' scheme which merged the four Western provinces into a single unit called West Pakistan while East Bengal was renamed as East Pakistan. The Pakistan educational conference of November 1947 proposed Urdu as the national language, a suggestion that was opposed by representative from East Bengal.⁸⁶ Since the formation of Pakistan from Indian sub-continent on 14th August, 1947, the West Pakistan branded the East Bengal as inferior, because it considered the Muslims subordinate due to their social and cultural affiliation with the Hindu population. Introduction of Urdu language was part of a mission of purification from Hindu influences. This social, cultural and lingual affinity with Hindus, were powerful, rich and dominating in Eastern wing of Pakistan since the pre-partition of the subcontinent. During the partition influential Hindus of Eastern wing of Pakistan, were considered as one of the major ethnic groups present in East Bengal. Historically, people from different religions-Hindu, Muslim, Christian, Buddhist, Jain, Parsic, Sikh had always co-existed peacefully in the Eastern Wing. India and Eastern Wing of Pakistan (now Bangladesh) have very close socio-cultural, linguistic and racial affinities which evolve from a common historical colonial legacy, country's freedom struggle and geographical proximity. They were naturally adopting practices and custom from one another, while tolerating everyone's traditions and beliefs. Even today, Muslim communities celebrate different programmes that hold a Hindu foundation and have barely no roots to Islam. The West-Pakistan government was critical about this intimacy between the Muslim and the Hindu population in the Eastern Wing. Even though the Muslims of the East Bengal

⁸⁴MAHAMMED AYOUB, ANIRUDHA GUPTA, RAHMATULLAH KHAN, G P DESPANDE, R NARAYANAN, AND SISIR GUPTA, **BANGLADESH A STRUGGLE FOR NATIONHOOD**, vikash publication, Delhi, 1971, p.-25.

⁸⁵WILLEM VAN SCHENDEL 'A History Of Bangladesh' Cambridge university press, New Delhi, 2009, p-96.

⁸⁶WILLEM VAN SCHENDEL, op.cit, p-109.

supported the 1947 partition, they were not willing to give up their own culture, tradition, beliefs, language, food habit for the sake of becoming a Pakistani as envisioned by the elite of West-Pakistan. The West-Pakistan government remained insensitive to the cultural and lingual sentiments of the East Bengal people. As a result there was internal political conflict between East and West wing of Pakistan with the issue of national language, Urdu or Bengali, and the socio-politico-economic-cultural domination of West Pakistan towards the East. During the constructive phase of Pakistan, the ruling elites' attempt to introduce Arabic script and Persian words in the Bengali language was the reflection of West Pakistani's linguistic-cultural hegemony.⁸⁷ The Pakistan government's perilous attempt to impose Urdu-a language of only 7 percent of the Pakistani population – as the only national language of the country was first opposed and later resisted during the bloody language movement of the Bangalees in 1952 in East Bengal, which sparked the beginning of a nationalist movement.⁸⁸

The selection of a Pakistani national language became a contentious issue since the onset of its genesis. The language issue became the focal point of this conflict because imposing Urdu was part of a mission to Islamize East Bengal. The West-Pakistan government did not pay any heed to the language that predominated in East-Bengal, namely Bengali language. Dr. Ziauddin Ahmed, a former vice-chancellor of the Aligarh Muslim University of India had suggested that 'Only Urdu' should be the state language of the future state of Pakistan. At the same time, Dr. Md. Shahidullah, a noted Bengali linguist from Dacca University, deprecated and denounced this heinous attempt of West Pakistani leaders in strong terms and opposed the suggestion and put forth arguments in favour of 'Bangla'(Bengali language) as the future national language of Pakistan. He remarked that there was no reason why Bengali language should not be accepted as the future language once English was discarded as a foreign language.⁸⁹

The number of Bengali speakers were higher in comparison with the number of Urdu speakers. Urdu was the language of the elite, used only by 7 percent of Pakistanis especially in West Pakistan. In contrast, Bengali language was spoken by 56 percent people in Eastern Wing. The West-Pakistani leaders did not consider this important factor while choosing an official language. While arguing that Bengali can still remain a primary language for

⁸⁷ Anisuzzaman, M. 'The Identity Question and Politics', in R. Jahan (ed.) **Bangladesh Promise and Performance**, The University Press Ltd, Dhaka, Bangladesh, 2002, pp- 45–56.

⁸⁸ Ahmed, M. 'South Asia: Crisis of Development', The University Press Ltd, Dhaka, Bangladesh, 2002, p-134.

⁸⁹ Dev Milton Kumar and Samad Md. Abdus, op.cit., p-188.

everyday use of the people in the Eastern Province, Mohammed Ali Jinnah, the founding father of Pakistan and the first Governor General, declared on the 24th of March 1948 during a conference in Dhaka University that Urdu language will become the State language of Pakistan.⁹⁰ This declaration triggered a great outrage among the people of the East Bengal that became to be known as the Bengali Language Movement (Bhasa Andalan). Denying Bengali its status of a State language of Pakistan and its intended extinction were unacceptable to the Bengali people. They realized that their mother tongue 'Bengali' would not survive the aggression of the West-Pakistani government if this decision was not protested. At that time, the abolition of the Bengali language was already felt by means of how it was being corrupted. The West-Pakistani elites administered modifications of the language by replacing Sanskrit (the basis of the language) words with Urdu words. Working-class altogether with the elite of East Bengal took several initiatives to ensure the acknowledgement of Bengali as an official State language of Pakistan along with Urdu and English. The most prominent one was the demonstration on the 21st of February 1952. The procession sought to express defiance against the order under section 144 of the Criminal Procedure Code of Pakistan. This order issued on the 20th of February, prohibited any kind of demonstration or protest aimed at altering the State language. Throughout the Pakistani military regimes students at schools, colleges and universities often played a decisive role in turning political grievance into popular resistance and forcing the Pakistani government to change its policies. There was a growing sense of deprivation and disappointment in East Bengal and a feeling was spreading that a new form of colonial rule had replaced British imperialism.⁹¹ Thousands of boys and girls from schools and colleges all over Dhaka assembled on the campus of Dhaka University together with university students. As soon as they passed the campus gates armed policemen beat them heavily. The students retaliated by throwing bricks, upon which the police used tear gas and then fired into the crowd. Many were injured and five people, including a nine year old boy, were killed. Over the next few days more demonstrations, killings and arrests occurred.⁹² Numerous political activists, leaders brought out a procession in front of the Provincial Assembly appealing for the rights of Bengali language to be accepted as an official language. The language movement was both a political as well as the cultural movement of East Bengal advocating the recognition of the

⁹⁰WILLEM VAN SCHENDEL, *op.cit*, p-111

⁹¹WILLEM VAN SCHENDEL, *op.cit*, p-113.

⁹² *Ibid*.

Bengali language as an official language of the then domination of Pakistan in order to allow its use in Government affairs, the continuation of its use as a medium of education, its use in media, currency and stamps and to maintain its writing in the Bengali script.⁹³

Since then the 21st of February is celebrated in Bangladesh as Language Martyr Day. A memorial was erected on the spot where the first killings had taken place. The 21st February became an important national holiday in Bangladesh. In 1999, following the proposal by the Bangladesh Government, UNESCO proclaimed 21st February as the 'International Mother Language Day' in recognition of the sacrifices rendered by Bangalees.⁹⁴

Formation of Jukto Front: 1954 Election

After the partition of India and the achievement of Pakistan on 14th August, 1947 the Provincial Assemblies election was supposed to be held in 1951. But the Pakistani Government was reluctant to declare the Provincial Assembly election schedule in East Bengal whereas in Punjab and North West Frontier Province the election was held in due time. In Sind the election was held in 1953 for the excessive pressure of the people. In the Eastern part of Pakistan, Awami Muslim League and the Krishak Sramik Party came forward to fulfill the demands of people of East Bengal. After the long hesitation, Pakistani Government declared that the East Bengal Provincial Assembly election will be held on 8th March 1954.⁹⁵ All political parties of East Bengal formed the 'United Front', which prevailed in Pakistan's first provincial general election for the East Bengal Legislative Assembly. In East Bengal 'The United Front' was a coalition of various political parties consisted of the Awami Muslim League, the Krishak Sramik Party, Nizam-e-Islam, Ganatantri Dal. The coalition of various political parties was led by three major Bangalees democratic and charismatic leaders H.A. Suhraward, Abul Kasem Fazlul Haque and Moulana Abdul Hamid Khan Bhasani. On the other hand, 'Chatra League' and 'Chatra Union' jointly formed 'Ganatantric Jukto Front' to defeat the 'Nikhil Purbo Pakistan Muslim Chatra League.' Accordingly S.A. Bari Ati and Julmot Ali Khan became vice president and general secretary respectively. The Awami Muslim League, the Krishak Praja Party, the Ganatantri Dal

⁹³ ASM Shamsul Arefin, op.cit,p-51

⁹⁴ MAHAMMED AYOUB, ANIRUDHA GUPTA, RAHMATULLAH KHAN, G P DESPANDE, R NARAYANAN, AND SISIR GUPTA, op.cit, p.p-,25-48.

⁹⁵ Haque, Md. Shahabul and Alam, Md. Bayezid. 'Bangladesher Jote Rajniti: 1954-2014', Abosar publication, Dhaka, Bangladesh, 2014, p-35.

(Democratic Party), and Nizam-e-Islam formed the coalition. A. K. Fazlul Haque, Huseyn Shaheed Suhrawardy, and Maulana Bhashani were the three major Bengali populist leaders who headed the coalition. The Muslim League suffered a devastating defeat in this general election. In the Nandail Constituency of the Mymensingh district, veteran student leader Khaleque Nawaz Khan defeated the current Prime Minister of East Bengal, Mohammad Nurul Amin, and created history. Because of Nurul Amin's crushing defeat to a young Turk from United Front who was 27 years old, the Muslim League was effectively out of the political landscape of East Bengal at that time. United Front winning by a wide margin and securing 223 seats out of 309 seats in the assembly. With 143 seats, the Awami League won the majority of the vote. After the United Front won, A. K. Fazlul Haque of the Krishak Praja Party became the Chief Minister of East Bengal. Popular Bengali leaders entered the Pakistani federal government as a result of the election, with Hussain Shaheed Suhrawardy and Abul Mansur Ahmed became important federal ministers. Young leaders like Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, Yusuf Ali Chowdhury, and Khaleque Nawaz Khan rose to prominence in the provincial government. East Bengal's United Front demanded greater provincial autonomy. It approved a landmark order for the Bangla Academy to be established in Dhaka. However, Governor-General Ghulam Muhammad dismissed the newly elected government within a few months due to allegations that A. K. Fazlul Huq had attempted secession. The dismissal of the United Front was a pivotal event in escalating East Bengal's dissatisfaction with the Pakistani union and prompted Maulana Bhashani to explicitly call for independence. This concept of Jukto Front among the students opened the eye of political leaders in East Bengal.⁹⁶ The concept of 'Jukto Front' (United Front) among the students was the driving force of United Front in next Provincial Assembly election in 1954. In the 1954 elections, the symbol of the United Front was 'boat,' a typical transport of East Bengal. The famous '21-Point-Programme' took important role in this election.

1954 General Election

The elections of 1954 won by an alliance known as the 'United Front.' Its political style has dominated politics in the Bengal delta such as fiery speeches delivered at enormous public rallies, organizing protest marches and general strikes and issuing political manifestos. The United Front's election manifesto consisted of 21 points Programme. Among of them are language issue, East Bengal autonomy, citizenship rights and economic

⁹⁶ Ibid. p-36.

emancipation from the West Pakistan.⁹⁷ All these issues were very popular among the rural East Bengal electorate. It won 223 seats out of 237 Muslim seats, Governor Choudhury Khaliquzzaman invited Krishak Sramik Party leader A.K Fazlul Haque to form the government on 25th March 1954. Chief Minister Fazlul Haque formed his full cabinet with Abul Mansur Ahmed, Ataur Rahman Khan, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, and Abdul Latif Biswas. The election propelled popular Bengali leaders into the Pakistani federal government, with leaders such as H. S. Suhrawardy and Abul Mansur Ahmed became key federal ministers. In the provincial government, young leaders 36 years old party organizer Sheikh Mujib-ur Rahman, Syed Shamsul Haque and Yusuf Ali Chowdhury rose to prominence in the political sphere of East Bengal.⁹⁸

But, by the next four years from the elections of 1954, the democratic Government of East Bengal had been changed three times for several minor issues and also Central Government of Pakistan for five times. On the issue of riot, central Government of Pakistan undemocratically dismissed Fazlul Haque's United Front ministry and imposed direct governor's rule and appointed Iskandar Mirza as Governor in Dhaka.⁹⁹ Even East Bengal was under the direct Governor's rule for two years which eventually made it an internal colony of Pakistan that had been continued till 1971.

The need of Constitution to be framed by the elected representatives of the people was all the more necessary for the free citizens of a sovereign country. In this regard for framing a Constitution for Pakistan, a Constituent Assembly was first set up in 1947. According to the provision of the Indian Independence Act 1947, two constituent Assembly were established where Muhammad Ali Jinnah was elected President of the constituent Assembly of Pakistan. Under this Act of 1947 the first constituent Assembly was entrusted with two separate functions. To make constitution for the country, to set a Federal Legislative Assembly or Parliament until that Constitution came into effect.

Framing Constituent Assembly for Pakistan

The first Constituent Assembly consisting of 69 members, among of them 44 were from East Pakistan, 25 from West Pakistan. To carry out the responsibility of constitution making, the Constituent Assembly set up several committees and sub-committees. Under the

⁹⁷WILLEM VAN SCHENDEL, op.cit, p-116.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹WILLEM VAN SCHENDEL, op. cit, p-117.

Indian Independence Act 1947, the 24 members Basic Principle Committee (BPC) was one of the most important from them for framing a Constitution for Pakistan, where Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan was the convener of the Basic Principle Committee. The Basic Principle Committee (BPC) was set up as an advisory Committee consisting of well versed Islamic Scholars. This advisory Committee submitted an interim report on 1st September 1950, which conceived of a Parliamentary system with a bicameral legislative Assembly i.e., House of the Units (upper house) and House of the people (lower house) but did not mentioned the number of seats in the Houses. ‘Urdu’ was recommended as the only state language. On the ground of strong criticism from different sphere Basic Principle Committee (BPC) submitted its second draft report on 22nd December 1952 and recommended that the Parliament would consist of two Houses; the House of Units, consist of 120 members, of whom 60 were to be elected from East Bengal (East Pakistan) and 60 from the West Pakistan. House of the people, consist of 400 members, 200 members were directly elected from the East Pakistan and the West Pakistan respectively.

The report proposed that to elect the head of the state and in case of a conflict between the two Houses, a simple majority in a joint sitting of the both Houses would decide the controversial issue. The second draft report of the Basic Principle Committee (BPC) thus highlighted the principle of parity between East and West Pakistan. On the issue of Bengali domination, Punjab Province opposed the proposal of second draft report and this report was forced to postpone for an indefinite period. Khwaja Nazimuddin’s cabinet was dismissed on 16th April 1953 and next Prime Minister Chaudhury Muhammad Ali was successful in bringing about the arrangements of distribution of seats. He gave a new formula that central legislature would be bicameral with equal powers for both Houses where the House of Units (Upper House) was to consist of 50 seats, of which 10 members would be from East Bengal and 40 members from the West Pakistan and the House of the people (Lower House) was to have 300 seats of which 165 would be for East Bengal. Prime Minister Chaudhury Muhammad Ali’s formula of seats sharing was adopted by the Constituent Assembly on 21st September 1954. Of course, the final report was sent to a drafting committee of constitutional experts to make the final draft of the Pakistan constitution. But just before the completion of its work, the Constituent Assembly was dissolved by the Governor General Ghulam Muhammad on 24th October 1954. In this way, the Constituent Assembly had failed to frame a constitution for Pakistan.¹⁰⁰ After the general election of 1954, the then Governor General

¹⁰⁰Dev, Milton Kumar and Samad, Md.Abdus, op.cit., pp-228-230.

Ghulam Muhammad declared national emergency and by dint of his powers called a Constituent Convention for second Constituent Assembly with 60 members of whom 30 were from East Pakistan. The second Constituent Assembly enacted the first Constitution of Pakistan in 1956. The Constituent Assembly adopted the Constitution on 29th February 1956 and it was enforced on 23rd March 1956. The Constitution of Pakistan contained 234 articles, 13 parts, and 6 schedules proclaiming Pakistan to be an Islamic Republic country. The Governor General was replaced by a president, who was to be elected by the electoral college of Pakistan composed of members of the National Assembly and Provincial Assembly.

The role of military Government (Iskandar Mirza and Ayub Khan)

The role of military Government in nation building process of Pakistan became controversial for many reasons and people's attitude towards the role of military in this process had been changed with the passage of time. In 1958, Pakistani military stepped into power and took direct control of the country. Iskandar Mirza became acting Governor General of Pakistan and few months later he became Governor-General on the sudden death of Ghulam Mohammad. A bolt from the blue to democracy in Pakistan came from Iskandar Mirza who completely abrogated the Constitution of Pakistan in 1958 and imposed Martial Law all over the country. At the same time, Ayub Khan was brought up by him. On 7th October 1958, Iskandar Mirza completely abrogated the constitution of 1956 before it came into effect and general election supposed to be held. He declared Martial Law in the country appointed highly ambitious Ayub Khan as Chief Martial Law Administrator (C.M.L.A). The arrest of 500 politicians, cultural men and artists on 12th October 1958 including Moulana Abdul Hamid Khan Bhasani, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, Abul Monsur Ahmed along with some top Bengali officials, was actually a power struggle between President Iskandar Mirza and Chief Martial Law Administrator Ayub Khan as a means of reducing the importance of the political leaders. President Iskandar Mirza wanted to secure his post till death but on the other hand, highly ambitious Ayub Khan tried to dethrone him to become the President of Pakistan. When Iskandar Mirza saw that his power was slipping out of his hand, he tried his best to retain power through other wings of Armed forces, Navy, and Air force but within a short time he was knocked out by chief Martial Law Administrator and Iskandar Mirza was banished to England. Most East Pakistani Bangalees considered him as autocratic, imperialist and violent leader.¹⁰¹ Finally, on 27th October 1958, Iskandar Mirza

¹⁰¹WILLEM VAN SCHENDEL, op. cit, p-120.

fulfilled his long cherished desire and was sworn in as the president of Pakistan. During his tenure political persecution, economic exploitation, military emasculation, international isolation, and cultural degradation were very high and the people of East Pakistan suffered a lot of misfortune. The Martial law of Ayub Khan hastened the process towards independence of East Pakistan.

1962 constitutional development and 1962 presidential Election

On 23rd March, 1962, a new constitution was promulgated which provided for indirectly elected National and Provincial Assemblies with limited legislative powers. On 8th June 1962, it came into effect with the withdrawal of Martial Law after 44 months. On 27th April 1962, the death of 'Sher-e-Bangla' A K Fazlul Huque who was the true inspiration and political source of Bangalee people for many decades, created a serious vacuum in the political sphere of East Pakistan and Huseyn Shaheed Suhrawardy came forward to fill the political vacuum. He kept him engaged seriously in campaigning against Ayub Khan's military dictatorship and the introduction of undemocratic constitution of 1962. For the restoration of democracy, he tried to organize different political parties of East Pakistan and tried to form National Democratic Front (N.D.F) on 4th October, 1962.¹⁰² For this he was put into prison for six months and there were a deadlock situation both in East and West Pakistan. As a result, the authorities of Dhaka University announced its closure until 31st May. In 1963, president Ayub Khan launched his political party 'the Convention Muslim League' and declared that not below the rank of a Lieutenant General would be the minister of defense for the next twenty years. The people of East Pakistan looked upon the entire system of election, economic affairs and Ayub Khan's 'new deal' to the Bangalees with great suspicion. Ayub Khan was nominated by the Convention Muslim League for the next presidential election of 1964. On the issue of presidential election of 1964, all political parties of East Pakistan sheltered under one umbrella with Khwaja Nazimuddin as the convener on 21st July 1964. 'The combined opposition party' (C.O.P) was formed by the Awami Muslim League, Muslim League (Council), NI, JI, National Awami Party (N.A.P) and others. The combined opposition party' (C.O.P) nominated Quaid-I-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah's sister Fatima Jinnah as its presidential candidate against Ayub Khan.¹⁰³ In the presidential election of 1964, Ayub Khan won by 3 to 1 margin over Fatima Jinnah. On January 1965, Ayub Khan was elected as the President for the second term from 23rd March 1965. Before that, no sooner had

¹⁰² Haque, Md. Shahabul and Alam, Md. Bayezid, op.cit., p-46.

¹⁰³ Ibid. p-47.

the president Ayub Khan promulgated the constitution of 1962 than East Pakistani students, political leaders, artists, intellectuals, peasants, workers and common people attacked the official buildings and burnt official documents. A hostile crowd of Dhaka University students burned copies of the Pakistani constitution and forced the law minister, Muhammad Ibrahim, to resign from Ayub Khan's cabinet just after the promulgation of the constitution. In protest, the students of Dhaka University went on strikes for an indefinite period on the basis of their '3-Point demands' which included the repeal of the new constitution, the establishment of democracy in Pakistan, and the release of all political prisoners including Huseyn Shaheed Suhrawardy and Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. Meanwhile, the government announced that on 28th April 1962, the National Assembly election under this new constitution would be held. The students stood against this announcement of Ayub Khan's Government. The leaders of the progressive political parties of East Pakistan who had been arrested under the Election Bodies Disqualification Order (E.B.D.O) decided to boycott the election and launch a mass movement to restore democracy in Pakistan. After heavy mass movement and students' protest, Ayub Khan withdrew Martial Law. The authorities of Dhaka University announced its closure for an indefinite period for the protest of arrest of its students. The students' movement entered a more militant phase on 26th December, 1968 when Dhaka University was reopened. In early December 1968, two leading student organizations, the East Pakistan Students' League (E.P.S.L) and the East Pakistan Students' Union (E.P.S.U) formed the All Party Students' Committee of Action with Tofael Ahmed, the firebrand vice president of the Dhaka University Central Students Union (D.U.C.S.U) as chairman. Under his experienced leadership Students' Committee of Action (S.C.A) drew up an '11-Point Programme'¹⁰⁴ and launched a vigorous movement to uplift Ayub Khan's autocratic regime.

India-Pakistan war of 1965

The seventeen-day Indo-Pak war of 1965 over Kashmir proved that East Pakistan was defenseless and the Pakistani forces were deployed only for the defense of West Pakistan. The foreign minister of Ayub's cabinet Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, backed by Commander-in-Chief General Musa, thought that they could settle the Kashmir issue with force and tried to rise Pakistani national feelings among Bangalees to divert the attention of East Pakistani people to Indo-Pak war. But the Pakistani troops failed to reach Kashmir by crossing an Indian bulge. Under the pressure of world communities like UK, USSR and USA and other Muslim

¹⁰⁴ For more information see Dev, Milton Kumar and Samad, Md.Abdus. op.cit, p.p-244-248.

countries Pakistan made 'Tashkent Agreement' with the then Prime Minister of India Lal Bahadur Shastri on 10th January, 1966. In this war Bengali military personnel contributed outstanding performance and Pakistan Government published this news in order to retain the national integrity of Pakistan. The people of East Pakistan felt that their lives, safety and interest were at risk for a political solution of the disputed territory Kashmir, actually not a part of Pakistan. At a press conference, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman stated; "time has come for making East Pakistan Self Sufficient in all respects." On 12th February 1966, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman launched his 'Six-Point Programme' for full regional autonomy in East Pakistan for the Bangalee's rights to live which Mujib called 'our demand for survival.' The so-called 'Agartala conspiracy case' had been concocted for the purpose of destroying the prestige of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman as a rising political leader. The political elite of Ayub regime, instead of handling the popular political programme of Awami League politically, took malice action and branded 'Six-Point Programme' of Awami League as 'secessionist' and accused Sheikh Mujibur Rahman as a master mind of 'political clash' in Pakistan.¹⁰⁵ The seventeen-day Indo-Pak war of 1965 over Kashmir very sharply brought home the truth to the people of East Pakistan that they were utterly defenseless in times of crisis since almost the entire defence machinery was oriented towards the West Pakistan.¹⁰⁶

'Six-Point Programme'

Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the leader of the Awami League, made the announcement of the six-point movement in Lahore in 1966. Pakistan's reestablishment of democracy and greater provincial autonomy were the goals of the movement. During the Agartala Conspiracy Case, Rahman was charged with treason for starting the six-point movement. He was freed during the East Pakistan uprising of 1969, which toppled Ayub Khan as president. The six historical points are as follows:

The Constitution should establish a true Federation of Pakistan based on the Lahore Resolution and a parliamentary form of government with the Legislature directly elected to rule over the executive. Only two issues should be handled by the government: The remaining subjects—defense, foreign policy, and everything else—should belong to the federal states. It is necessary to introduce two distinct, but freely convertible, currencies for the two wings; or, if this is impractical, the entire nation ought to have a single currency; however, effective

¹⁰⁵ Ibid, p.p-251-255.

¹⁰⁶ MAHAMMED AYOUB, ANIRUDHA GUPTA, RAHMATULLAH KHAN, G P DESPANDE, R NARAYANAN, AND SISIR GUPTA, op.cit, p-25.

constitutional provisions ought to be enacted to prevent the transfer of capital from East to West Pakistan. Additionally, East Pakistan ought to have its own banking reserve and adopt its own fiscal and monetary policy. The federal units should have control over taxation and revenue collection, and the center would have no such authority. To cover its expenses, the federation would be entitled to a portion of state taxes. The two wings' earnings in foreign currency ought to go into two separate accounts; The federal government's requirements for foreign exchange should be met equally by the two wings or in a ratio to be determined; The constitution should grant the units (the authority) to establish trade ties with other countries, and indigenous goods ought to be able to move freely between the two wings-East and West Pakistan. A separate military or paramilitary force should be established in East Pakistan, and the Navy's headquarters should be located there.

Agartala Conspiracy Case

The Agartala Conspiracy Case (Agartala Shoojontro Mamla) was a sedition case brought by the Government of Pakistan in 1968 against East Pakistan Awami League leader Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and 34 other individuals. The case was filed at the beginning of 1968 and accused Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and others of conspiring with India to undermine Pakistan's stability and to start an armed revolution against West Pakistan to break the Eastern wing from united Pakistan. This case is officially referred to as State versus Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and Others, because the main conspiracy was alleged to have taken shelter in the Indian city of Agartala, which is located in the state of Tripura. As most of the accused were military personnel, Pakistan Government decided to try them in a court of martial. However, this was overturned in favour of a civil trial to bring politicians to justice ahead of the 1970 general elections and to make the trials more transparent. As a result, only 35 were found guilty. The accused were transferred to the secure borders of the Dhaka Cantonment from the Dhaka Central Jail. The penal codes were changed so that the accused could be prosecuted, and the trial started on 19th June, 1968, under a special tribunal. The hearings were held in a locked court room in the Dhaka Cantonment. The charge sheet, which consisted of one hundred paragraphs, was presented to the tribunal along with 227 witnesses and seven approvers. The tribunal was led by three judges; the chair, Justice S.A Rahman, was a non-Bengali; M.R Khan and Maksum-ul-Hakim, the other members, were Bangalees. Attorney General T.H Khan and former Foreign Minister Manzur Quader represented the government. Members of the public viewed the case as a 'conspiracy of the Pakistan Government' against the political autonomy movement of East Pakistan, especially since the

Government was keen to prove that Sheikh Mujib was an Indian agent and a separatist. Later the approvers appeared in the witness box and testified that they provided false evidence under the coercion of the Pakistan State.

By November 1968, Pakistan's mood had undergone a radical transformation. While the revolt started in West Pakistan it soon spread to the East Pakistan where anti-Ayub feelings were reinforced by the step motherly treatment meted out to East Pakistan by the successive Pakistani regimes since independence.¹⁰⁷ Jayanta kumar ray's advice given in 1968 that "East Pakistanis should perhaps prefer to wait for a resurgence of democratic ambitions in West Pakistan which may help them in sweeping off the barriers to the realization of their legitimate aspirations,"¹⁰⁸ turned out to be prophetic. The movement which was so long student dominated and centered mainly in Dhaka began to involve other groups and spread to small towns and rural areas. 'The student-worker-peasant alliance' and several distinguished political personalities paralyzed the whole administration and opposed the President in the upcoming 1970 National election. Nurul Amin, the leader of the opposition in the National Assembly warned that repression must stop and criticized the Pakistani government of perpetuating the rule of bullets and bayonets and also added that the country widespread unrest was the result of accumulated frustration of the East Pakistani citizen for free, fair and neutral election on the basis of universal adult franchise. In both East and West wings, political parties hostile to the President and declared that they would boycott the 1970 general elections unless direct voting was ordered, civil rights were restored, political prisoners were released. The mass revolt reached its peak on 15th February when the military fired at some accused of the 'Agartala conspiracy Case' inside the Dhaka Cantonment. On 18th February the army opened fire on a students' demonstration at Rajshahi and killed Dr. Shamsuzzoha, teacher in the University of Rajshahi. Anti-military and anti-West Pakistani feelings were observed in the open air of East Pakistan. People organized a large-scale movement and demanded the immediate withdrawal of the case and the release of all political prisoners. The Government's decision stated that the case would end on 6th February, 1969. However, the government was forced to postpone the date because of the massive uprising that took place in 1969. On the morning of 15th February, 1969, a Pakistani havildar fatally shot Sergeant Zahurul Haq at the door of his jail cell. A raged mob then set fire to the State

¹⁰⁷MAHAMMED AYOUB, ANIRUDHA GUPTA, RAHMATULLAH KHAN, G P DESPANDE, R NARAYANAN, AND SISIR GUPTA, op.cit, p-29.

¹⁰⁸Jayanta Kumar Ray, "Democracy and Nationalism on trial: a study of East Pakistan," Indian institute of advanced study, Simla, 1968, p-379.

Guest House and other government buildings, where the chief lawyer for the government and the chair of the tribunal lived. Meanwhile, on 21st February 1969, when the student of East Pakistan were observing the ‘Martyr Day’ president Ayub Khan announced his historic decision not to contest the coming presidential election and the ‘Agartala conspiracy Case’ was withdrawn and all the accused persons including Sheikh Mujibur Rahman were released unconditionally. On 22nd February 1969, Tafil Ahmed, Vice President of Dhaka University Central Students Union (D.U.C.S.U), conferred the endearing title of ‘Bangabandhu’ upon Sheikh Mujibur Rahman at the Ramna Race Course ground. In his speech, Mujib described the so called ‘Agartala conspiracy Case’ as the ‘Islamabad conspiracy’ and also declared that it was hatched by Islamabad to suppress the civil and political rights of East Pakistani people and Awami League’s demand of regional full autonomy. At the end of February, president Ayub Khan, finally met with all the leaders of the Democratic Action Committee (D.A.C). He gave consent to the oppositions’ demand for free, fair and impartial election on the basis of universal adult franchise and return to the parliamentary democratic system in the country. On the other hand, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto began to accuse Ayub Khan of bringing Pakistan to the brink of disaster and demanded his resignation immediately.¹⁰⁹ It became quite difficult for General Ayub Khan to face so much opposition from politicians as well as urban middle class i.e., Students, lawyers, teachers, doctors, peasants, labourers from all walks of life. He ultimately decided to resign in March 1969. President Ayub Khan had appointed Mirza Narul Huda as Governor of East Pakistan, Yusuf Harun as Governor of West Pakistan and he handed over power to the Commander-in-Chief of the Pakistan Army, General Agha Muhammad Yahya Khan on 25th March 1969.¹¹⁰ However it was the great mass upheaval in East Pakistan and uncompromising stand of regional autonomy issue that created the ground for the fall of president Ayub Khan. In his last radio address to the Nation on 25th March 1969, he said, “I cannot preside over the destruction of my country.”¹¹¹ Ayub Khan was the first native four-star General and also the self-appointed second Pakistani President and only Field Marshal of Pakistan Army till his resignation. When Ayub Khan was forced to step down in March 1969, the commander-in-chief of Pakistan army, General Yahya Khan, took his place.¹¹²

¹⁰⁹ Dev, Milton Kumar and Samad, Md. Abdus. op.cit, pp-260-262.

¹¹⁰ WILLEM VAN SCHENDEL, op.cit, pp-124-125.

¹¹¹ [http:// Historypak.com/democratic-action-committee/](http://Historypak.com/democratic-action-committee/), accessed on 04.03.2022

¹¹² WILLEM VAN SCHENDEL, op.cit, pp-123.

1970 general election in Pakistan and Awami League's landslide victory

The Pakistani general election was held on 7th December, 1970. It was the first ever truly general election held with complete freedom and on the basis of universal adult franchise in Pakistan. The general election of 1970 was considered one of the fairest and cleanest elections in the history of Pakistan. In this election, Awami League Party received a huge percentage of the popular vote in East Pakistan and emerged as the largest party defeating Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's Pakistan Peoples Party (P.P.P).¹¹³

The Awami League's failure to win any seats in the West Pakistan was used by the leftists and democratic socialists led by Zulfikar Ali Bhutto who argued that Sheikh Mujibur Rahman had received "no mandate or support from West Pakistan" (ignoring the fact that he himself did not win any seat in East Pakistan).¹¹⁴ After Awami League's historic landslide victory in 1970s election, people of East Pakistan were confident to form government. On 3rd January 1971, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman reaffirmed that the future constitution of Pakistan would be made on the ground of the "six-point" and 'eleven-point' Programmes. Mujib also expected friendly co-operation of the West Pakistani peoples' representative in making the constitution. On 12th January 1971, president, Agha Muhammad Yahya Khan, came to Dhaka to discuss the form of government. He felicitated Mujib on his historic election victory. Both the president Agha Muhammad Yahya Khan and Sheikh Mujibur Rahman described their talks as satisfactory on the eve of his (Yahya) departure from Dhaka on 14th January 1971, the president expressed his view that Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was going to be the future Prime Minister of the country. The Pakistan Peoples Party's (P.P.P) chairman Zulfikar Ali Bhutto demanded a share in the central government. Yahya's visit to Dhaka on 12th January and his discussion with Sheikh Mujib-Ur Rahman was followed by similar visit made by him to Sind and his discussion with Pakistan Peoples Party's (P.P.P) chairman on 17th January. After this discussion, Bhutto flew to Dhaka and had several meetings with the top level political leaders for three days. The meetings between Mujib and Bhutto ended on 29th January without any final agreement.

Islamabad conspiracy

Meanwhile, on 30th January 1971, an Indian plane (Ganga) was hijacked by two Kashmiris and this incident had an important effect on the political scenario of Pakistan. On

¹¹³ WILLEM VAN SCHENDEL, op.cit, pp-124-125.

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

30th January 1971 an Indian Airlines flight from Srinagar to Jammu and Kashmir was hijacked by two Kashmiris, forced to land in Lahore and later blown up by the hijackers after the passengers and crew had been allowed to disembark and return to India. The Pakistani Government and press lauded the brave Kashmiri 'freedom fighters' for their daring act of resistance to the illegal Government in Srinagar, the Indian Government and press denounced the 'dastardly crime' committed by 'criminals.'¹¹⁵ Zulfikar Ali Bhutto supported the cause of the hijacker while Mujib-Ur Rahman only condemned the incident in bitter words. On 4th March Indian Government led by Mrs. Indira Gandhi retaliated by prohibiting all flights of Pakistani over Indian sky which put the Pakistani Government into a lot of trouble both in economically and politically.¹¹⁶ On 9th February 1971, the leaders of Awami League (A.L) in a press conference in Dhaka regretted the unnecessary delay in convening the National Assembly and said it seemed another Islamabad conspiracy to deprive the East Pakistani people of their own government. Following this, on 13th February 1971, President Agha Muhammad Yahya Khan announced that the National Assembly would meet in Dhaka on 3rd March 1971. On 15th February 1971, Bhutto declared to boycott the National Assembly, held in Dhaka on 3rd March. In fact, Bhutto expressed his opinion that the future constitution of Pakistan based on 'six-point' and 'eleven-point' programmes could not provide a viable future for the country. On 16th February 1971, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was declared unanimously the leader of the Awami League Parliamentary Party in the National Assembly. On 21st February, President Agha Muhammad Yahya Khan dissolved his cabinet in view of the political crisis over the issue of Prime Minister and constitution making process. Thus, the political situation became very gloomy by the end of February and this complex political scenario ignited the Liberation War of Bangladesh in 1971.¹¹⁷

Demand for full autonomy of East Pakistan

The background of Liberation War reached a climax when in 1970 the Awami League, the largest East Pakistani political party, led by Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, won a landslide victory in the National Assembly election winning 167 of the 169 seats allotted for East Pakistan, and a majority of the 313 total seats in the National Assembly. This gave the Awami League the constitutional rights to form a national government. However, the leader of Pakistan People's Party (P.P.P), Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, refused to allow Mujib-ur Rahman to

¹¹⁵ **Pakistan Times**, 3rd February, 1971.

¹¹⁶ Richard Sisson and Leo E. Rose, op.cit, pp-136.

¹¹⁷ Dev, Milton Kumar and Samad, Md. Abdus .op.cit., p.p-275-278.

become the future Prime Minister of Pakistan. Instead, he proposed a new formula regarding the post of Prime Ministership and accordingly mentioned two Prime Ministers formula in two wings. Bhutto also refused to accept Mujib's 'Six-Point programme' regarding the constitution making process which would result in full autonomy for East Pakistan. On 3rd March, 1971, the two leaders of the two wings along with the President, General Yahya Khan, met in Dhaka to decide the future Prime Ministership of the country. After several meetings and talks, there were no results about the post of Prime Ministership. After a meeting of the Awami League parliamentary party at the 'Hotel Purbani' in Dhaka, Mujib told the waiting press that he was prepared to make any sacrifice necessary for the emancipation of his people. He alleged that the postponement was yet another manifestation of a conspiracy against the Awami League and the people of Bengal on the part of vested economic and bureaucratic interests in the west.¹¹⁸ As a result, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman called for a nationwide strike (haratal) for the restoration of peaceful and stable democracy. The haratal was to affect all government offices, the courts, semi governmental and autonomous corporations, the airlines, railways, public and private transport, communications services and mills, factories and all other industrial and commercial establishments.¹¹⁹ Mujib also announced that a mass rally would be held at the Ramna Racecourse on 7th March. General Tikka Khan was flown in to Dhaka to become Governor of East Bengal to make a military solution of the unrest situation. East-Pakistani judges, including Justice Siddique, refused to swear him in as a Governor of East Pakistan.. On 7th March, 1971, 'Bangobondhu' Sheikh Mujibur Rahman delivered an inspiring speech at the Racecourse Ground where he mentioned that the haratal be conducted as a 'peaceful satyagraha' and declared that every one living in Bangladesh regardless of language or place of origin was a Bengali whose life and property were to be honoured and protected.¹²⁰ He and other notable speakers appealed for communal harmony between Hindu and Muslim and between Bengali and non Bengali. Since the postponement people had been killed and injured by the police and army as well as in vengeance taken by Bengalis against non Bengalis.¹²¹ Mujib made a further 'four-point' condition to consider the National Assembly Meeting on 25th March and urged his people to

¹¹⁸Richard Sisson and Leo E. Rose, op.cit, p-92.

¹¹⁹**The People**, 3rd March, 1971.

¹²⁰Richard Sisson and Leo E. Rose, op.cit, p-93.

¹²¹**Dawn**, 4th March, 1971

turn every house into a fort of resistance. He concluded his speech by saying, “The struggle this time is for our freedom. The struggle this time is for our independence.”¹²²

‘Operation Searchlight’ by Pakistani Army

The 25th March, 1971 was remembered as the ‘black day’ in East Pakistan (now Bangladesh). The 25th March, 1971 was a fateful day for the delta.¹²³ As Pakistan dictator furtively took his last plane out of Dhaka, he left instructions for a full-blown army attack on East Pakistan citizens. It was a punitive operation to eliminate Bengali Nationalism and reassert West Pakistani’s dominance over East Pakistan.¹²⁴ On the night of 25th March, Pakistan Army began a violent effort to suppress the Bengali opposition. General Yahya Khan put it like this in his radio broadcast from West Pakistan, ‘it is the duty of the Pakistan armed forces to ensure the integrity, solidarity and security of Pakistan. I have ordered them to do their duty and full restore the authority of government..... I appeal to my countrymen to appreciate the gravity of the situation for which the blame rests entirely on the anti Pakistan and secessionist elements.’¹²⁵ On 26th March he addressed his ‘fellow countrymen’ to explain and justify the military takeover of East Pakistan. His audience the ‘fellow countrymen’ were west Pakistani, East Pakistanis were not encompassed.¹²⁶ As Yahya was to note in his 26th March speech, the Awami League had insulted Pakistan’s flag and defiled the photograph of Mohammad Ali Jinnah, the father of nation, murders had been committed in the name of movement, and the armed forces located in East Pakistan had been subjected to taunts and insults of all kinds.¹²⁷ In East Pakistan (now Bangladesh), and elsewhere, the Pakistani military actions were referred to as genocide. Before carrying out these acts, all foreign journalists were systematically deported from East Pakistan (now Bangladesh). Bengali members of military services were disarmed. The operation was called ‘Operation Searchlight’ led by Pakistani Army General Tikka Khan and was carefully devised by several top-ranked army generals to crush Bengali intellectuals.

¹²²WILLEM VAN SCHENDEL, Op.cit, pp-160-162.

¹²³Salam Azad, “**Contribution of India in the War of Liberation of Bangladesh**”, Ankur prakashni, Bangladesh, Dhaka, 2003, p.152

¹²⁴WILLEM VAN SCHENDEL, Op.cit, p-161.

¹²⁵**Pakistan Times**, 27th March, 1971.

¹²⁶Richard Sisson and Leo E. Rose, op.cit, p-p-154

¹²⁷Richard Sisson and Leo E. Rose, op.cit, p- 155.

Although the violence focused on the provincial capital, Dhaka, the process of ethnic elimination, human rights violation and gang rape were also carried out all around East Pakistan (Bangladesh). Residential halls of University of Dhaka were particularly targeted. The only Hindu residential hall-the Jagannath Hall-was destroyed by the Pakistani armed forces, and an estimated 600-700 of its residents were murdered. Hindu areas all over East Pakistan (Bangladesh) suffered particularly heavy blows. By midnight, Dhaka was literally burning; especially the Hindu dominated eastern part of the city.

Declaration of independence Bangladesh over Radio

On 26th March, the nation waged an armed struggle against the Pakistani occupation forces following the killings at the night of 25th March. The Pakistani forces arrested Sheikh Mujib, who, through a wireless message, had called upon the people to resist the occupation forces. Mujib was arrested on the night of March 25-26, 1971 at about 1:30 A.M. which means effectively on 26th March, 1971. On the same day M. A. Hannan, an Awami League leader from Chittagong, was said to have made the first announcement of the declaration of independence over radio. Sheikh Mujibur Rahman signed an official declaration on 25th March; 1971. Major Ziaur Rahman broadcast another announcement of the declaration of independence on behalf of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. 26th March, 1971 is hence considered the official Independence Day and accordingly the name Bangladesh was in effect henceforth. Certain sources, especially of Indian and Pakistani origin, continued to use the name 'East Pakistan' until the following 16th December, 1971.

As political events gathered momentum, the stage was set for a clash between the Pakistan Army and the insurgents. Though smaller guerrilla style paramilitary bands started emerging, the Mukti Bahini (freedom fighters) emerged increasingly visible. Headed by Colonel Muhammad Ataul Gani Osmani, a retired Pakistan Army officer, this band was raised as Mujib's action arm and security force before assuming the character of a conventional guerrilla force. After the declaration of Independence, the Pakistan military sought to quell them, but increasing numbers of Bengali soldiers defected to the underground 'Bangladesh army.' These Bengali units slowly merged into the Mukti Bahini and bolstered their weaponry. They then jointly launched operations against the Pakistan Army's killing process. This setback prompted the Pakistan Army to induct Razakars, a paramilitary force, from the local populace to bolster their numbers. These people were essentially viewed as traitors and with suspicion by local Bengalis, as a vast majority of these were recruited were Bihari Muslims who had settled during the time of partition of India in 1947. This helped

Pakistan stem the tide somewhat as the monsoon approached in the months of June and July.¹²⁸

Undeterred by this setback, Mukti Bahini regrouped as they gained in strength and capability. Aided by the Indian Government as well as West Bengal Government, they were equipped and trained to counter the Pakistani Army. As there was no action during the monsoon, it was seen by the Pakistani military brass as a weakening of the Bangladesh cause. However it was merely the lull before the storm. After sensing the enormity of the issue, the army was beefed up as the troop strength was increased to more than 80,000. This caused a rise in tensions across the border as India realized the gravity of the war situation. The Indian military were preparing for the eventual onslaught with the aid of the separatists and waited for the end of the monsoon season to enable easy passage. The Indians aimed to bypass the villages and towns and instead concentrate on the cities and the highways which ultimately would lead to the capture of Dhaka.

At first, resistance was spontaneous and disorganized, and was not expected to be prolonged. However, when the Pakistani Army cracked down upon the population, resistance grew. The Mukti Bahini became increasingly active. The Pakistani military sought to quell them, but increasing numbers of Bengali soldiers defected to this underground 'Bangladesh army.' These Bengali units slowly merged into the Mukti Bahini and bolstered their weaponry with supplies from India. Pakistan responded by airlifting in two infantry divisions and reorganizing their forces. They also raised paramilitary forces of Razakars, Al-Badars and Al-Shams (who were mostly members of the Muslim League, Jamat-e-Islami and other Islamist extremist groups), as well as other Bengalis who opposed independence, and Bihari Muslims who had settled during the time of partition.

Formation of provisional government

During the Liberation War Tajuddin Ahmad, the General Secretary of the Awami League, and Amir-ul Islam escaped Dhaka and crossed the Indian border on 30th March 1971. At the border outpost, Golok Majumdar, the regional head of the Indian Border Security force (B.S.F), received them. After that Tajuddin Ahmad met with India's Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi on 4th April, 1971. At their second meeting the following day, Mrs. Gandhi informed him that Sheikh Mujib had been arrested and transported to Pakistan, though

¹²⁸MAHAMMED AYOUB, ANIRUDHA GUPTA, RAHMATULLAH KHAN, G P DESPANDE, R NARAYANAN, AND SISIR GUPTA, op.cit, pp-60-66.

Pakistan had not yet made this officially. Regarding the question of Bangladesh Provisional Government by Mrs. Gandhi, he responded, having consulted with Amir-ul Islam the day before, that a Provisional Government had been formed with Sheikh Mujibur Rahman as its president and the senior Awami League leaders who had attended the Mujib-Yahya talks as cabinet members. Except for Sheikh Mujib, the other members' whereabouts were unknown, but Tajuddin declared himself as Prime Minister. That meeting resulted in the adoption of two crucial resolutions: 1) India allowed the Bangladesh Government to operate within Indian territory and opened its borders to Bangladeshi helpless refugees, saving millions of lives in the days to come when Pakistani aggression reached outside of major cities. 2) The Indian Government also promised to support the Bangladeshi Liberation War by any means possible.¹²⁹

As a result, a portion of the Awami League leadership gathered in Kolkata while Tajuddin was in Delhi. On 8th April Tajuddin met these groups of leaders, including A H M Qamaruzzaman, and informed them of the Delhi meeting's outcomes, including the formation of Provisional Government. The youth leader Sheikh Mani rejected the idea of the cabinet. Instead, he suggested forming 'Revolutionary Council' that would only be responsible for armed resistance. Amir-ul Islam explained that the revolutionary council was insufficient and that a legal government was needed. Tajuddin, Amir-ul Islam, Sheikh Mani, and others boarded an old Dakota plane borrowed from the Indian government on 10th April, 1971 and set off in search of other cabinet members scattered around the borders. Flying at low altitudes, the plane stopped at various airstrips at the borders, most of which were built by the British Army during the Second World War. After picking up cabinet members Muhammad Mansur Ali, Abdul Mannan, and Syed Nazrul Islam from different places, the Provisional Government of Bangladesh was established at Mujibnagar. The oath taking ceremony took place on 17th April 1971, at a village along the India-Bangladesh border called Baidyanathata, in Kushtia district (currently Meherpur district), on Bangladeshi soil. Professor Yusuf Ali read the proclamation of independence, which was drafted by Amir-ul Islam. After the oath ceremony, Mujibnagar was quickly abandoned because people were afraid of a Pakistani raid. The government stayed in exile in Kolkata for the rest of the war, briefly living at a house on Ballyganj Circular Road and then at 8 Theatre Road¹³⁰. On this day of 17th April 1971, a provisional government was formed in Meherpur district in western

¹²⁹Islam, Amir-UI, '**History of Bangladesh War of Independence, documents**', Vol-15, Ministry of Information, Government of Peoples' Republic of Bangladesh, Dhaka, 1985, pp-51-110.

¹³⁰Islam, Amir-UI, op.cit, pp-70-90.

Bangladesh bordering India with Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, who was in prison in Pakistan, as President, Syed Nazrul Islam as Acting President, Tajuddin Ahmed as Prime Minister, and General Osmani as Commander-in-Chief, Bangladesh Forces to liberate Bangladesh from united Pakistan.

Formation of Mukti Bahini

On 7th March, 1971, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman issued a call to the people of East Pakistan to prepare themselves for an all-out struggle. Later that evening, resistance demonstrations began, and the military began a full-scale retaliation with Operation Searchlight, which continued through May 1971. A formal military leadership of the resistance was created in April 1971 under the Provisional Government of Bangladesh. General M. A. G. Osmani and eleven sector commanders led the military council. The Bangladesh Armed Forces were established on 4th April, 1971. The Mukti Bahini also included civilian Gonobahini (Peoples' Force) in addition to regular units like the East Bengal Regiment and the East Pakistan Rifles. The Z Force, led by Major Ziaur Rahman, the K Force, led by Major Khaled Mosharraf, and the S Force, led by Major K M Shafiullah, were the most well-known divisions of the Mukti Bahini. During war times the Mujib Bahini, Kader Bahini, and Hemayet Bahini were militia units formed by Awami League student leaders. The Mukti Bahini gained control of a significant portion of the Bengali countryside through guerrilla warfare. It included the nascent Bangladesh Air Force and Bangladesh Navy, and it carried out successful 'ambush and sabotage' campaigns.¹³¹ During the 1971 Indo-Pakistani War, the Mukti Bahini joined the Bangladesh-India Allied Forces and played a crucial role in securing Pakistan's surrender and the liberation of Dacca and other cities.¹³² Bangladesh forces command was set up on 11th July, with Colonel. M. A. G. Osmani as commander-in-chief (C-in-C) with the status of Cabinet Minister, Lieutenant Colonel., Abdur Rabb as chief of Staff (C.O.S), Group Captain A K Khandker as Deputy Chief of Staff (D.C.O.S) and Major A R Chowdhury as Assistant Chief of Staff (A.C.O.S). General Osmani had differences of opinion with the Indian leadership regarding the role of the Mukti Bahini in the conflict. Indian leadership initially envisioned Bengali forces to be trained into a small elite guerrilla force of 8,000 members, led by the surviving East Bengal Regiment soldiers operating in small cells around Bangladesh to facilitate the eventual Indian

¹³¹Jamal Ahmed Abdulla, 'Mukti Bahini and the Liberation War of Bangladesh, A Review of Conflicting views', **Asian Affairs, centre for development Research**, Bangladesh, volume-30.(4),2008.

¹³²Tripathi, Salil, **'The Bangladesh War And its Unquiet Legacy'**, Yale University Press, 2016, p-146.

intervention, but with the Bangladesh government in exile, General Osmani favoured a different strategy.¹³³

Bangladesh was divided into eleven Sectors in July, each with a commander chosen from defected officers of the Pakistani army who joined the Mukti Bahini to conduct guerrilla operations and train fighters. Most of their training camps were situated near the border area and were operated with assistance from India. The 10th Sector was directly placed under the Commander in Chief (C-in-C) General M. A. G. Osmani and included the Naval Commandos and Commander in Chief (C-in-C's) special force. Three brigades (11 Battalions) were raised for conventional warfare; a large guerrilla force was trained by Indian force.

Operation Jackpot

After the Pakistan Army drove the East Pakistani Bengali resistance across the Indian border at the conclusion of 'Operation Searchlight', the Indian Army implemented a supply and training operation for the Mukti Bahini on 15th May, 1971, with the aim of sending an ever-increasing number of trained fighters to attack Pakistani forces and sabotage military and economic assets to demoralize the Pakistani soldiers and disrupt their supply network. The three operations that the Bengali Mukti Bahini carried out against the Pakistan Federation was "Operation Jackpot."¹³⁴

On the night of 15th August, 1971, the Mukti Bahini Naval Commandos launched several sabotage operations in the cities of Chittagong, Chandpur, Mongla, and the Narayanganj District against the operating combined forces of Pakistan Soldiers, Pakistan Marines and Pakistan Navy Seal Teams.. Economic and military targets in Dacca were attacked. The major success story was 'Operation Jackpot', in which naval commandos mined and blew up berthed ships in Chittagong, Mongla, Narayanganj and Chandpur on the same day. Between 21st November and 16th December, 1971, Bangladeshi forces in his operational area fought Pakistani forces in Sylhet, Comilla, and Chittagong as part of an overall campaign led by General Sagat Singh, commander of the Indian Army IV Corps under Eastern Command. Three brigades (eight infantry battalions and three artillery batteries) were put into action between July and September. During June and July, Mukti Bahini had regrouped across the border with the help of Indian military through 'Operation Jackpot' and began sending 2000–5000 guerrillas across the border for various reasons like

¹³³ Ibid.

¹³⁴ General Aurora's (the chief of the Indian Eastern Command in 1971) interview, published in the Weekly Bichitra, 13th December, 1991, p. 31.

lack of proper training, supply shortage, lack of a proper support network inside Bangladesh. They also attacked Border Observation Posts (BPO) in Mymensingh, Comilla and Sylhet, but the results were mixed. Pakistani authorities concluded that they had successfully contained the Monsoon Offensive, which proved a near-accurate observation.¹³⁵

Role of Indian Prime Minister Mrs.Indira Gandhi

The Pakistani military followed a systematic campaign of indiscriminate slaughter.¹³⁶ This military operation commonly known as ‘operation searchlight’¹³⁷, destroyed the last hope of keeping the unity of Pakistan. General Yahya Khan prevented the leader of the largest political party, the Awami League, to form the federal Government in 1970 National parliamentary election with the apprehension of the loss of Punjab political domination. The Pakistani military regime, under the orders of the then Pakistani General Tikka Khan, took stern military action for almost a week to gain control of East Pakistan’s largest city Dacca. There were latent fear and merciless violence like genocide, gang rape, kidnap, sexual assault on women, brutal killings of opposition leaders, abduction, physical torture, and any sorts of human rights violation by Jamat-e-Islami and its collaborators-Rajakars, Al Badr, Al Sham and regular army during the Liberation War. The covert military operation named ‘Operation Searchlight,’ undertaken by the then Pakistani Army General, Agha Muhammad Yahia Khan, and was carefully devised by several top-ranked Pakistani Army Generals to crush Bangalees’ spontaneous revolt. As a result, unprecedented terror and human rights violation in the Eastern part of Pakistan prevailed. From the outset of the brutal atrocities of the Pakistan army, Bengali leaders and the Bengali resistance forces crossed the Indian border followed by millions of innocent homeless Bengali people. An exodus of helpless refugees began to flow into India’s North Eastern States of Assam, Tripura, West Bengal, Meghalaya and Nagaland. It created problems of rehabilitation and law and order in India. India granted refugee flow of the East Bengal people to India for humanitarian ground. Mrs. Indira Gandhi, the then charismatic Prime Minister and daughter of Indian first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, decided to intervene militarily on the humanitarian ground to provide food, shelter and rehabilitation. In this regard she expressed her views in Loksabha

¹³⁵ Lt. Gen JFR Jacob, ‘**Surrender At Dacca Birth of a nation**’ Manohar publishers, New Delhi, 2015.

¹³⁶ Chowdhury, G.W, ‘**The Last Days of United Pakistan**’, Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 1974.

¹³⁷ **Operation Searchlight** was a planned ruthless and brutal military operation carried out by the Pakistani army General, Agha Muhammad Yahia Khan, to curb the Bengali nationalist movement in the erstwhile East Pakistan on 25th march 1971. The purpose of the operation was to arrest or kill the distinguished Awami League leaders, students and Bengali intellectuals to disarm the Bengali personnel of military, Para military and police force to capture armory, radio station and telephone exchange.

on 27th March 1971: “It is not merely a suppression of a movement but it is meeting an unarmed people with tanks. We are fully alive to the situation and we shall keep constantly in touch with what is happening and what we need to do. We must not take merely theoretical view. At the same time we have to follow proper international norms.”¹³⁸ In the aftermath of the refugee exodus, the Indian parliament also took a resolution on East Bengal which called upon the governments and people of the world to take urgent and constructive steps to make an end of the organized heinous genocide in East Bengal.¹³⁹ New Delhi’s strategic policy toward East Pakistani political refugees took a noble form in early April 1971 and the Indian government permitted the establishment of Awami League headquarters on Indian soil.

With the continuous influx of refugees, India appealed to the international community for relief assistance. The Prime Minister of India, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, made a hurricane tour in the world particularly in the countries like Belgium, Austria, West Germany, England, U.S.S.R, U.S.A, France, etc. and tried to impress them about the heinous genocide and human rights violation carried out by the Pakistani military junta and their collaborators Jamat-e-Islami, Rajakar, Al Badr, Al Sham etc. in East Pakistan. The U.S.S.R immediately responded to this genocide issue and supported India’s firm stand during cold war period. The refugee problem was so serious a burden on the Indian Government and the Provincial Government of West Bengal, Tripura that it was impossible to provide minimal necessities for the vast number of helpless refugees without international aid and assistance. Replying to a question in the Rajya Sabha on 15th June 1971, Mrs. Indira Gandhi predicted, ‘we will have to go through hell to meet this situation.’ Against this backdrop, the Indian Government called upon the international community to see the ground reality of the freedom struggle and to create pressure on Pakistan for a political settlement.¹⁴⁰ Initially, India adopted a cautious policy of limited help and also ruled out the possibilities of direct military intervention as the East Pakistan (Bangladesh) Government in exile was preparing for such an action. India Still, like the superpowers U.S.A, U.S.S.R, France, U.K. apparently appeared to have favoured the continuation of a United Pakistan.¹⁴¹ Indian intervention was limited to propaganda and diplomatic activities mainly in support of the Awami League leadership. India encountered

¹³⁸ **Bangladesh Documents, Volume. 1**, Publication Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, New Delhi, p. 669.

¹³⁹ Gandhi, I. **‘India and Bangladesh: Selected Speeches and Statements’**, New Delhi: Orient Longman, 1972, p.p-130-145.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.

¹⁴¹ Hasan S. and A.R. Khan, **‘Bangladesh Floods: The Political Debate’**, in M.G. Kabir and S. Hasan (eds) **‘Issues and Challenges Facing Bangladesh Foreign Policy’**, Dhaka: Bangladesh Society for International Studies, 1989.

the Pakistani propaganda that the freedom struggle in East Pakistan was Indian engineered and the Pakistan army was engaged in fighting with the 'Indian infiltrators.' Indian's strategy was to establish a interim Awami League Government in Dhaka. Such a Government under the auspices of the Western powers was beneficial to India and would reduce Chinese influence in the region during cold war. India started to have its total involvement with the Bangladesh Liberation War in June–July 1971 when the recruitment of the Mukti Bahini (freedom fighters) was intensified and India started giving them training and providing them with arms and ammunitions to fight against the strong regular army of Pakistan.¹⁴² Some Indian officials were concerned with international reaction, particularly from several Islamic states with whom India had important close ties. From the security perspective, some officials argued that Indian interests were better served by an East Pakistan that was virtually captive to India than they would be by an independent Islamic state that would be the second largest in the subcontinent.¹⁴³ The decision-making elites of India could not completely ignore the dissenting views on the East Pakistan issue but they assessed all suggestions and criticisms quietly and considered the Indian long-range national interests. The Indian Government eventually took a decision in favour of military intervention. India rendered aid and assistance to Bangladesh's war of independence in two ways: (1) arming and training of the guerrilla force known as the Mukti Bahini and; (2) invasion of East Pakistan by the Indian Army.¹⁴⁴ The Indian Government's two-tier strategic policy explicitly made it clear that India's real intention behind the active support to the Bangladesh struggle was not only to support the just cause of the Bangalees but also to weaken its arch rival Pakistan's basis of 'two-nation theory,' which indoctrinated the religious nationalism and created Pakistan in 1947. After the separation of East Pakistan from united Pakistan in 1971, she asserted, 'We have avenged a thousand years history and thrown the 'two-nation theory' into the Indian Ocean.'¹⁴⁵ India and Pakistan fought two wars (1948 and 1965) since independence. The East Pakistan Crisis of 1971, therefore, brought a golden opportunity to separate its arch enemy. Indian military intervention on behalf of the Bangladeshi freedom fighters was indeed motivated by this resolve. The presence of 10 million East Pakistani homeless Banglee

¹⁴² General Aurora's (the chief of the Indian Eastern Command in 1971) interview, published in the Weekly Bichitra, 13th December, 1991, p.31.

¹⁴³ Sisson, R. and L.E. Rose, op.cit, pp-213-220.

¹⁴⁴ Mukharjee, D.K. 'India and Bangladesh', in L.M. Singhvi (ed.) **Bangladesh: Background and Perspectives**. Institute of Constitutional and Parliamentary, New Delhi, 1971, p-110.

¹⁴⁵ **India: The Speeches and Reminiscences of Indira Gandhi (1975)**. London: Hodder & Stoughton, 2001, p. 35. (Quoted, Hussain, Ishtiaq, Bangladesh-India Relations: Issues and Problems. **Asian Survey**, Volume 21, No-2, 1981, p-59, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2643997>, accessed on 12.08.2022.).

refugees on Indian soil and the establishment of an exile Bangladesh Government in Calcutta merely provided the necessary justification for its action.¹⁴⁶ Apart from material support, India also undertook serious diplomatic efforts and tried to sway world opinion in favour of the Bangladesh Liberation War. Besides, Mrs. Gandhi played a very crucial role in saving the life of Mujib: President Yahya Khan was going to arrange a secret military trial to hang him (Mujib), and Prime Minister Mrs. Gandhi sent a message to the Heads of Pakistani Government requesting them to exert their influence over president Yahya Khan from May 1971 so that the life of Mujib could be saved.¹⁴⁷

During the crisis of spontaneous armed struggle India unleashed a campaign throughout the world directed at persuading other governments to create pressure on Pakistan to revise its policy in East Pakistan by suspending their foreign economic and military aids to Pakistan.¹⁴⁸ At this time, Indian leaders worked relentlessly to build up world opinion against Pakistan's atrocities and human rights violation and thereby isolated Pakistan diplomatically.¹⁴⁹ By the months of September and October 1971, Indo-Pak border tension was gradually rising high and India and Pakistan made repeated allegations against each other for violating their border.

In light of this predicament, the United Nations (U.N) Secretary General U Thant, in a letter of 20th October 1971 to the Heads of States of both India and Pakistan, offered the use of his good offices in the potentially dangerous situation between the two rival countries.¹⁵⁰ President Auga Mohambad Yahya Khan welcomed U Thant's offer but Mrs. Indira Gandhi emphasized the Indian view that only a political settlement in East Pakistan could solve the problem.¹⁵¹ Aside from this, Sino-American détente through the mediation of Pakistan prompted the Soviet Union to sign the defense pact of 8th August 1971, which promised Soviet military assistance to India in case of any attack or threat by a third party. It provided India with greater strength in crisis. When Mrs Gandhi visited Moscow in September 1971, Moscow approved Indian military intervention if necessary. Although the Soviet Union wanted the negotiated settlement of the problem with Pakistan, Mrs Gandhi did

¹⁴⁶Ghosh, P.S. '**Cooperation and Conflict in South Asia**', The University Press Ltd, Dhaka, Bangladesh, 1989.

¹⁴⁷Gandhi, I. op.cit, pp-136-140.

¹⁴⁸ Gandhi, I. op.cit, p-138.

¹⁴⁹ Rizvi, G. '**The Rivalry between India and Pakistan**', in B. Buzan and G. Rizvi (eds) **South Asian Insecurity and the Great Powers**, MacMillan Press, London, 1986, pp. 91-126.

¹⁵⁰Garry Jonathan Bass, "**The Blood Telegram: India's secret war in East Pakistan**", Random Houser Group Limited, U.K, 2013, pp- 282-284.

¹⁵¹Gandhi, I. op.cit, pp-138-142.

successfully convince the Soviet authority and got the approval for the invasion of East Pakistan by the Indian army.¹⁵² As part of India's broadly-based international campaign Mrs. Gandhi visited Washington in early November 1971 against the backdrop of latent and manifest U.S support to Pakistan. In Washington, President Richard Nixon offered Mrs. Gandhi several proposals.¹⁵³ First, he assured her that the U.S.A would take full financial responsibility to support the 10 lakh helpless refugees. Second, he referred to Yahya's agreement to unilaterally withdraw Pakistani forces from the East Pakistan– Indian frontier with only the understanding that India would respond in some way in the near future, but Mrs. Gandhi was unresponsive to the proposal. At that point, India was unwilling to give Pakistan any chance to gain control over East Pakistan. Indian Government had decided to destroy Pakistan by force before Mrs Gandhi came to Washington and that the discussion there had been an exercise in futility.¹⁵⁴

India under the leadership of Mrs. Indira Gandhi also sent its diplomatic mission to the Muslim World to explain that the East Pakistani political crisis was not another Indo-Pak dispute but rather a conflict between two hostile Muslim communities in same country (i.e. East and West Pakistan). This was an effort to diminish support for Pakistan among the Islamic states, and India was partially successful.¹⁵⁵ Finally abandoning the devices of political and diplomatic settlements, India started a war with Pakistan for the third time on 3rd December 1971.

Mrs. Indira Gandhi wrote a letter to the U.S President Richard Nixon, about the miserable condition of millions of homeless refugees on 15th December 1971. Hostile relations in the past between India and Pakistan added to India's decision to intervene in Pakistan's crisis. Resultantly, the Indian Government decided to support the creation of a separate state for ethnic Bangalees by supporting the Mukti Bahini. For this, Research and Analysis Wing (RAW), helped to organize, train and arm these insurgents. Consequently, the Mukti Bahini succeeded in harassing Pakistani military in East Pakistan, thus creating conditions conducive for a full-scale Indian military intervention in early December. Thus, wary of the growing involvement of India the Pakistan Air Force (PAF) launched a pre-emptive air strike on Indian Air Force bases on 3rd December 1971.¹⁵⁶ The attack was

¹⁵²Budhraj, V. 'Moscow and the Birth of Bangladesh', *Asian Survey*, 13(5):1973, pp- 482–495.

¹⁵³Chowdhury, G.W. '**The Last Days of United Pakistan**'. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1974.

¹⁵⁴ Sisson, R. and L.E. Rose, op.cit, pp-253-264.

¹⁵⁵Sisson, R. and L.E. Rose, op.cit, pp-213-220.

¹⁵⁶Garry Jonathan Bass, "**The Blood Telegram: India's secret war in East Pakistan**", op.cit, pp- 268-269.

modeled on the Israeli Air Force's 'Operation Focus' during the Six-Day War, and intended to neutralize the Indian Air Force planes on the ground. The strike was seen by India as an open act of unprovoked aggression. This marked the official start of the Indo-Pak War. As a response to the attack, both India and Pakistan formally acknowledged the "existence of a state of war between the two countries", even though neither Government had formally issued a declaration of war.¹⁵⁷

SURRENDER AT DACCA

The Pakistani Instrument of Surrender was a written agreement between India, Pakistan, and the Provisional Government of Bangladesh. It allowed for the capitulation of 93,000 West Pakistani troops from the Armed Forces Eastern Command on 16th December, 1971. This brought an end to the Bangladesh Liberation War and the Indo-Pak War of 1971, which resulted in the formal establishment of the People's Republic of Bangladesh in the south Asian region that was once part of Pakistan from 14th August, 1947.¹⁵⁸ Finally, Bangladesh achieved independence on 26th March 1971 (16th December 1971 marked as Bijay Dibwas but Independence marked on 26th March 1971) through protracted mass agitation and a war of liberation which claimed millions of lives, but with a great dream for the future. Since the end of World War II, it was the largest surrender in terms of number of personnel during cold world period.

In Bangladesh, the occasion is marked by a national holiday which was also known as 'Victory Day or Bijay Dibwas.' On 16th December, 1971, the surrender ceremony took place at the Ramna Race Course in Dacca, East Pakistan (now Bangladesh). A. A. K. Niazi of the Pakistan Armed force officially gave up to Jagjit Singh Aurora, an Indian Armed force official and joint commandant of the Bangladesh Powers. The Provisional Government of Bangladesh was represented at the ceremony by Deputy Chief of Staff A. K. Khandker of the Bangladesh Forces.

A.A.K. Niazi of the Pakistan Armed force, Mohammad Shariff, a member of the Pakistan Navy, and Patrick Desmond Callaghan, a member of the Pakistan Air Force, were present at the surrender ceremony from the Pakistani Eastern Command and signed the agreement. Indian IV Corps Commander Sagat Singh; Indian Eastern Air Command Commander Hari Chand Dewan and Chief of Staff of the Indian Eastern Command, Major

¹⁵⁷Garry Jonathan Bass, op.cit, pp-270-274.

¹⁵⁸Lt. Gen JFR Jacob, op.cit, pp-138-148.

General Jacob Farj Rafael Jacob¹⁵⁹ were present there as eye witness of the agreement on Indian side.¹⁶⁰

The PAKISTAN Eastern Command agree to surrender all PAKISTAN Armed Forces in BANGLA DESH to Lieutenant-General JAGJIT SINGH AURORA, General Officer Commanding in Chief of the Indian and BANGLA DESH forces in the Eastern Theatre. This surrender includes all PAKISTAN land, air and naval forces as also all para-military forces and civil armed forces. These forces will lay down their arms and surrender at the places where they are currently located to the nearest regular troops under the command of Lieutenant-General JAGJIT SINGH AURORA.

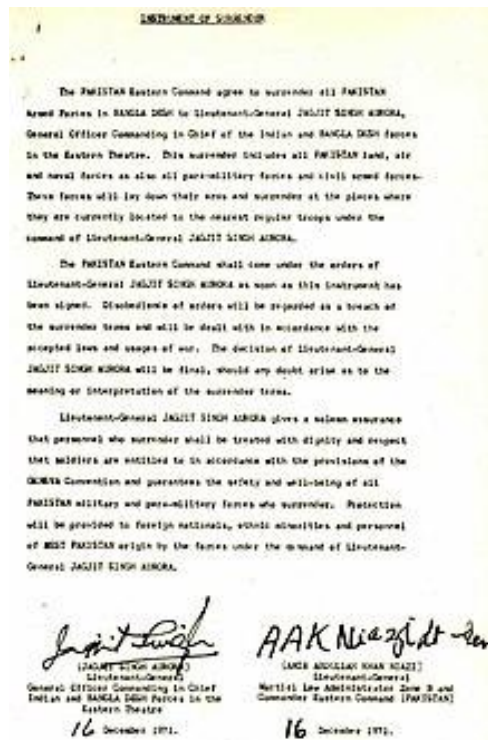
The PAKISTAN Eastern Command shall come under the orders of Lieutenant-General JAGJIT SINGH AURORA as soon as this instrument has been signed. Disobedience of orders will be regarded as a breach of the surrender terms and will be dealt with in accordance with the accepted laws and usages of war. The decision of Lieutenant-General JAGJIT SINGH AURORA will be final, should any doubt arise as to the meaning or interpretation of the surrender terms.

Lieutenant-General JAGJIT SINGH AURORA gives a solemn assurance that personnel who surrender shall be treated with dignity and respect that soldiers are entitled to in accordance with the provisions of the GENEVA Convention and guarantees the safety and well-being of all PAKISTAN military and para-military forces who surrender. Protection will be provided to foreign nationals, ethnic minorities and personnel of WEST PAKISTAN origin by the forces under the command of Lieutenant-General JAGJIT SINGH AURORA.

<signed>	<signed>
<p>(JAGJIT SINGH AURORA) Lieutenant-General General Officer Commanding in Chief Indian and BANGLA DESH Forces in the Eastern Theatre 16 December 1971</p>	<p>(AMIR ABDULLAH KHAN NIAZI) Lieutenant-General Martial Law Administrator Zone B and Commander Eastern Command (PAKISTAN) 16 December 1971</p>

¹⁵⁹General Jacob Farj Rafael Jacob was born in Calcutta and commissioned into the Indian Artillery in June 1942. He saw active service with his regiment during Second World War in the Middle East, Burma and later in Sumatra. He graduated from the Gunnery Staff Course in the U.K and later did the Advanced Artillery and Missile course from Fort Still in USA. During his 37 years in the army he commanded Infantry and Artillery Brigades, the Artillery School, an Infantry division, corps and finally Eastern Army. He was Chief Of Staff, Eastern Army during the Liberation War of Bangladesh in 1971.

¹⁶⁰Salam Azad, “**Contribution of India in the War of Liberation of Bangladesh**”, op.cit,pp-311-319



Scanned copy of the 1971 Pakistani Instrument of Surrender, Bangladesh Ministry of Liberation War Affairs¹⁶¹

War Victims and Damage

The number of victimized people during the Bangladesh Liberation War remained unknown. The total number of internally displaced persons and refugees to India ran into the millions. Estimates of the number of war dead vary enormously, from the official Bangladeshi figure of 3,000,000 to the official Pakistani figure 26,000. One source, compiling numerous guesstimates, suggests that about 1.7 million lives may have been lost.¹⁶² In addition to those who died, there were many others who were maimed or traumatized.¹⁶³ An important group consisted of numerous women who were raped by Pakistani, Bihari and Bengali men. These women-whom the state Bangladesh honoured with the title brave heroine (Birangona).¹⁶⁴

¹⁶¹ Lt. Gen JFR Jacob, op.cit, p-176.

¹⁶² Rudolph j. Rummel, **Statics of Democide: Genocide and Mass murder since 1900**, Munster Lit Verlag, 1998, pp-153-163.

¹⁶³ Sukumar biswas ed, **'Histort From Below: accounts of participants and eyewitness'**, mukti juddha gabesona Kendra, Bangladesh, Dhaka, 2007, p-160.

¹⁶⁴ Ibrahim, Neelima, **'Ami Birangona Bolcchi'**, Jagotri Prokashon, Bangladesh, Dhaka 1998, p-210.

International recognition to the New Sovereign nation state- Bangladesh

India was the first country who recognized Bangladesh's Government on 6th December, 1971. After Pakistani forces surrendered in Dhaka, President Agha Muhammad Yahya Khan had to hand over power to Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, who had been sentenced to death in Pakistan in December 1971, was freed from Pakistani custody in January 1972.¹⁶⁵ Zulfikar Ali Bhutto made the decision to free Mujibur Rahman from Pakistani custody under the tremendous pressure of the international community. Mujibur Rahman was released on 8th January, 1972, and he returned to Bangladesh on 10th January after a short trip to London and New Delhi. The fullness of Bangladesh's independence had arrived with his return. Thirty countries, including the United Kingdom and the Soviet Union, recognized Bangladesh between January 11 and February 14, 1972. Bangladesh was recognized by Indonesia and Malaysia on 24th February, 1972. On 18th July, Iraq became the first Arabian Muslim country who recognized Bangladesh. The People's Republic of Bangladesh submitted an application for membership in the U.N.O on 8th August, 1972.¹⁶⁶ Bangladesh's application for membership in the U.N.O was approved by the Security Council on 7th June, 1974, and on 17th September, 1974 Bangladesh was accepted into the International organization.

¹⁶⁵Karim, S.A, Sheikh Mujib: **Triumph and Tragedy**, The University Press Limited, Dhaka, Bangladesh, 2005, pp.-249-255.

¹⁶⁶Hamid, Shamim. **'Bangladesh and the United Nation: Common Principles, Shared Values'** The University Press Limited, Bangladesh, Dhaka, 2011, p.30.

CHAPTER – II

Evolution and development of India's bilateral relations with Bangladesh. (1971-1990)

CHAPTER TWO

EVOLUTION AND DEVELOPMENT OF INDIA'S BILATERAL RELATIONS WITH BANGLADESH. (1971-1990)

The region of South Asia has always been a volatile and conflict-ridden one in the history of international politics. Pakistan and India were the two new countries that emerged from the British India. Radcliff's line allowed Pakistan to capture East Pakistan, which was thousands of miles from its main territory. Pakistan had ruled the westernmost part of the subcontinent from 14th August, 1947. After Pakistan fell on 16th December, 1971, Bangladesh entered international politics under India's military patronage, which set the root for the Indo-Bangladesh bilateral relations.¹⁶⁷ The political landscapes of South Asian countries were profoundly altered by Bangladesh's rise to power as a new Muslim country. Bangladesh's allegiance to the Non-alignment movement (N.A.M) based on Panchsheel principles, universal adult franchise, Parliamentary Democracy, Constitutionalism, rules of law, socialism and secularism, among other things, as well as its historical and geographical proximity to India were significant compelling factors which persuade Bangladesh to collaborate with India.¹⁶⁸ India shares its international borders with the majority of South Asian countries, including Bangladesh, Pakistan, China, Nepal, Bhutan, Myanmar and Afghanistan. India has a land border that is 15,106.7 kilometers long and a coastline that is 7516.6 kilometers long, including the island territories.¹⁶⁹ India is surrounded by seven neighbouring countries and shares international borders, including land, maritime, and river borders.¹⁷⁰ India was strategically extremely sensitive to the existence of the Eastern portion (formerly East Pakistan, now Bangladesh), which shared a boundary with India from three sides-water, land, and hills.¹⁷¹ Bangladesh and India share a border that spans 4096.7 kilometers. The eight Indian provinces namely Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Tripura, and Sikkim in India's North-Eastern Region

¹⁶⁷Nair, P. S, '**Indo-Bangladesh Relations**', APH Publishing House, New Delhi, 2008, p-110.

¹⁶⁸Ahmed, Moudud, '**Bangladesh: Era of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman**', The University Press Ltd., Dhaka, 1983, p- 23.

¹⁶⁹Verma, Swati and Agarwal, Yathika, '**Border Area Prosperity through Improved Connectivity: the Case of Northeast India**' CUTS International, March, 2022, p-1

¹⁷⁰Ministry of Home Affairs. (2016). Annual Report, 2015–2016. Government of India. [http://mha.nic.in/sites/upload_files/mha/files/AR\(E\)1516.pdf](http://mha.nic.in/sites/upload_files/mha/files/AR(E)1516.pdf), Accessed on 30.07.2022

¹⁷¹Ministry of Home Affairs. (2016). Annual Report, 2015–2016. Government of India. [http://mha.nic.in/sites/upload_files/mha/files/AR\(E\)1516.pdf](http://mha.nic.in/sites/upload_files/mha/files/AR(E)1516.pdf), Accessed on 30.07.2022

(N.E.R) share an international border of 5,182 kilometers-roughly 99 percent of the region's total boundary-with several neighbouring countries, including 1,395 kilometers with China's Tibet Autonomous Region in the north, 1,640 kilometers with Myanmar in the east, 1,596 kilometers with Bangladesh.As a result,the Indian subcontinent's North-Eastern Region (N.E.R) is an important strategic location.¹⁷²There are inaccessible areas, border disruptions, difficult terrain, and a lack of connectivity throughout the region.The congested 'Chicken's Neck,' popularly known as 'Siliguri narrow Corridor' is a major obstacle that prevents the North-Eastern Region (N.E.R) from connecting to India and Bangladesh.In 1971, East Pakistan and West Pakistan engaged in internal political conflict, which led to Bangladesh becoming an independent nation state.Bangladesh endured a difficult union with Pakistan for approximately 25 years both economically and politically.East Pakistan and West Pakistan, the two wings of Pakistan were geographically separated by one thousand miles of Indian Territory following the partition from the united India.The economic exploitation and political domination of the West Pakistani ruling elites towards the East, which fostered Bengali nationalism and ultimately resulted in the dissolution of Pakistan, exacerbated the ethnic, linguistic, and cultural divides that existed between the two wings.The Bangalee (East Pakistan) people have always been unlikely partners in Pakistan, which caused geographical and cultural disaster.¹⁷³Following the transfer of power to the elected representatives of Pakistan on 14th August, 1947 and India on 15th August, 1947, based on Mahammad Ali Jinnah's 'Two Nation-Theory'¹⁷⁴within the framework of the "India Independence Act of 1947, there was an internal political conflict between East and West Pakistan over the issue of national language, Urdu or Bengali, and the politico-economic-cultural dominance of West Pakistan toward the East."¹⁷⁵The Pakistani government's perilous attempt to impose Urdu as the only national language of the country was first opposed and later resisted during the bloody language movement of the Bangalees in 1952 in East Bengal, which sparked the beginning of a nationalist movement.¹⁷⁶During the formative phase of Pakistan, the ruling

¹⁷²Verma Swati and Agarwal Yathika, op.cit, p-1

¹⁷³**New York Times**,1971.

¹⁷⁴ Mahammad Ali Jinnah's 'Two Nation-Theory is the basis of creation of Pakistan. It states that Muslims and Hindus are two separate nations, therefore Muslim should be able to have their own separate homeland in the Muslim majorities areas of India in which Islam can be practiced as the main religion.

¹⁷⁵The British Government introduced the India Independence Bill in British parliament on 4th July, 1947 and the India Independence Act was enacted after a fortnight on 18th July. The act enabled the representatives of India and Pakistan to frame their own constitution and to provide for the exceedingly difficult period of transition.

¹⁷⁶Ahmed, M. '**South Asia: Crisis of Development.**' The University Press Ltd,Dhaka, 2002, p-49.

elites' attempt to introduce Arabic script and Persian words into the Bengali language was a reflection of West Pakistani's linguistic and cultural hegemony towards the East.¹⁷⁷ Besides, the language dispute West Pakistan's ruling elites continued to exploit the Bangalees economically. The then capital, Karachi and Lahore were all located in the west while the majority of the population lived in East Pakistan. The 'One-Unit' scheme was launched by the federal government of Pakistan to merge the four provinces namely West Punjab, Baluchistan, Sindh, and the Northwest Frontier into one homogenous unit as a counterbalance against the numerical domination of the ethnic Bangalees in East Bengal. The 'One-Unit' policy was announced by the Prime Minister Choudhry Muhammad Ali on 22nd November 1954 and was implemented in 1955. However, the Bangalees, who made up the majority of Pakistan's population, were denied their democratic civil rights to lead the country. The grave magnitude of the nationalist movement was ultimately brought about by all of these political exploitation and economic deprivation.¹⁷⁸ In 1969, military dictator General Ayub Khan was overthrown by a mass uprising orchestrated by the Bangalees. In the general elections of 1970, when Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's political party, the Awami League (A.L), emerged as the single largest majority party and Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's Pakistan People's Party (P.P.P) appeared as the second largest party, the Bangalees finally said goodbye to the ruling elites of West Pakistan. The Awami League party of East Pakistan, which supported self-government for the country's Eastern region, won 167 of the 300 seats in the 1970 parliamentary elections and secured an absolute majority in the Pakistan National Assembly, granting it the authority to lead the country's government. However, Agha Muhammad Yahya Khan, the then President of Pakistan at the time, threw out the East Pakistan parliamentary election results, which set off the Bangladesh Liberation movement. The polarization between East and West Pakistan was clearly determined by the parliamentary election results. The West Pakistani civil-military elites refused to hand over power to the democratically elected Bengali national leaders who had earned the rights democratically to form the central government following the Awami League's (AL) landslide victory. Instead, President General Agha Muhammad Yahya Khan chose a military solution and responded with bullets and bayonets. The Pakistani military in collaboration with Jammāt-e-Islāmī and its killers armies Al Badr, Al Shams, Razakars carried out a planned campaign of random killings in the Eastern part of Pakistan to resist the liberation movement at any cost. The anti-liberation, anti-secular forces always

¹⁷⁷ Anisuzzaman, M. 'The Identity Question and Politics', in R. Jahan (ed.) **Bangladesh Promise and Performance**, The University Press Ltd, Dhaka, 2002, p.p- 45-56.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid, P-49

wanted to stay in united Pakistan. The last hope of maintaining Pakistan's unity was destroyed by the military actions. "In the parliamentary elections of 1970, the East Pakistan Awami League party, which advocated self governance for its Eastern part and achieved an absolute majority in the Pakistan National Assembly, the majority votes empowering the party to lead the Pakistan government. In the 1970 Pakistani parliamentary election, General Agha Muhammad Yahya Khan prevented the leader of the largest political party, the Awami League (A.L), from forming the federal government."¹⁷⁹ The election results clearly determined the polarization between East and West Pakistan to lead the country. In the aftermath of the landslide victory of the Awami League (A.L) under the leadership of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the West Pakistani civil-military elites refused to transfer power to the democratically elected Bengali national leaders who earned the rights to represent the cause of the Bangalees and instead, President General Agha Muhammad Yahya Khan opted for a military solution to suppress the liberation movement, responding with bullets for its Eastern part. The Pakistan military followed a systematic covert campaign of indiscriminate slaughter.¹⁸⁰ The covert military actions destroyed the last hope of united Pakistan within 25 years from its independence from British India in 1947. General Agha Muhammad Yahya Khan deeply realized that Punjab's political dominance had been lost if East Pakistan's Awami League party form the national government in Pakistan. In order to take control of Dacca, the largest city in East Pakistan, the Pakistani military regime took severe military action for nearly a week on the orders of the then-General Tikka Khan. In many parts of East Pakistan, the army and his collaborator Rajakar Bahini committed several kinds of human rights violation, including genocide, gang rape, kidnapping, sexual assault on women, brutal killings of opposition leaders, abduction, physical torture, and other forms of brutality. Millions of children, men, and women perished during the prolonged mass agitation and liberation war. The carefully planned covert military operation popularly known as 'Operation Searchlight,'¹⁸¹ which was carried out by the then-General of the Pakistani Army, Agha Muhammad Yahia Khan, was intended to crush the Bengali uprising. Even though the merciless violence was concentrated in Dhaka, the provincial capital, the Bangalees were still

¹⁷⁹Hamid Shamim, '**Bangladesh and United Nation: common principles, shared values**', The University Press Limited, Dhaka, 2011, p.12.

¹⁸⁰ Chowdhury, G.W, '**The Last Days of United Pakistan.**' Bloomington : Indiana University Press, 1974.

¹⁸¹Operation Searchlight was a planned ruthless and brutal military operation carried out by the Pakistani army General, Agha Muhammad Yahia Khan, to curb the Bengali nationalist movement in the erstwhile East Pakistan on 25th march 1971. The purpose of the operation was to arrest or kill the distinguished Awami League leaders, students and Bengali intellectuals to disarm the Bengali personnel of military, Para military and police force to capture armory, radio station and telephone exchange.

being driven out of the once-Eastern part of Pakistan (now Bangladesh). As a result, Eastern part of Pakistan experienced unprecedented terror. Millions of helpless Bangalees took shelter in Indian bordering states in the wake of the Pakistani army's brutal atrocities as their leaders and resistance groups crossed the Indian border. The people of East Pakistan came to India as refugees. Assam, Tripura, West Bengal, Meghalaya, and Nagaland in India's North-Eastern region saw the beginning of helpless refugee exodus from East Bengal. In India, it created problems with rehabilitation and law enforcement. Mrs. Indira Gandhi, the then charismatic Prime Minister of India and the daughter of Indian first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, made the decision to intervene militarily on a humanitarian ground to provide food, shelter and rehabilitation. On 27th March, 1971, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, the Prime Minister of India, stated the following in Loksabha: "It is not merely a suppression of a movement but it is meeting an unarmed people with tanks. We are fully alive to the situation and we shall keep constantly in touch with what is happening and what we need to do. We must not take merely theoretical view. At the same time we have to follow proper international norms."¹⁸² For this purpose, the Indian parliament passed a resolution on East Bengal following the helpless refugee exodus. The resolution urged the world's governments and people to act quickly and constructively to end the organized genocide by Pakistani army in East Pakistan.¹⁸³ At the beginning of April 1971, New Delhi's policy toward political refugees from East Pakistan took a noble turn, and the Indian Government allowed the Awami League (A.L) to establish its headquarters on Indian soil in Calcutta.

India also appealed to the international community for humanitarian aid in consideration of the ongoing influx of helpless refugees from East Pakistan. Mrs. Indira Gandhi, the then Prime Minister of India, went on a hurricane tour of the world, particularly to Belgium, Austria, West Germany, England, the Soviet Union, the United States, France and among other countries, to try to convince them of the atrocious genocide and violation of human rights committed in 1971 by the Pakistani military junta and their collaborators Rajakar Bahini. India's firm stance regarding ongoing influx of helpless refugees and human rights violation in East Pakistan during the cold war period was supported by the U.S.S.R, who responded immediately to this heinous genocide issue. Without international assistance, it was impossible for India to provide even the most basic necessities for the vast number of

¹⁸² **Bangladesh Documents, Vol. 1.** New Delhi: Publication Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, p. 669.

¹⁸³ Gandhi, I. **India and Bangladesh: Selected Speeches and Statements.** New Delhi: Orient Longman, 1971.

Bangalee refugees because the refugee crisis posed such a burden on the Indian Government as well as the West Bengal, Tripura, Assam provincial Government. “We will have to go through hell to meet this situation,” Mrs. Indira Gandhi predicted in response to a question in the Rajya Sabha on 15th June, 1971. In light of this, the Indian government appealed to the international community to identify the true nature of the situation and to exert pressure on Pakistan to reach a political settlement.¹⁸⁴ As the exiled Bangladeshi Government was preparing for such an action, India initially adopted a cautious policy of limited assistance and ruled out the possibility of direct military intervention against Pakistan. India still seems to have supported the unification of a united Pakistan, just like the superpower-United States of America and the Soviet Union did.¹⁸⁵ Indian intervention was limited to support the Awami League leadership through propaganda and diplomatic efforts. Pakistan directly accused India that India had orchestrated the political conflict in East Bengal for its own interest but India encountered this type of Pakistani propaganda asserting that the Pakistani army was engaged in combat with ‘Indian infiltrators.’ India convinced the world that the East Pakistani freedom struggle was not a dispute between India and Pakistan, but rather it was between two hostile Muslim communities in the same Muslim country. The Indian strategy was to set up an Awami League government in Dhaka for a while. India would benefit from such a government which would also diminish Chinese influence in the south Asian region during the cold war. India began its total involvement in the Bangladesh Liberation War in June-July 1971, when it intensified the recruitment of Mukti Bahini (freedom fighters) and began providing them with arms and ammunition to fight against Pakistan’s powerful regular army.¹⁸⁶ Some people were worried about how the world would react, especially from several Islamic countries with which India had important ties since her inception. Some officials argued, from a security standpoint, that an independent Islamic state that would be the second-largest in the subcontinent would be better for Indian interests than an East Pakistan that was practically captive to India.¹⁸⁷ Although the dissenting viewpoints on the East Pakistan issue could not be completely ignored, the Indian decision-makers and policy

¹⁸⁴Ibid

¹⁸⁵Hasan S. and A.R. Khan, ‘**Bangladesh Floods: The Political Debate**’, in M.G. Kabir and S. Hasan (eds) **Issues and Challenges Facing Bangladesh Foreign Policy**. Dhaka: Bangladesh Society for International Studies, 1989.

¹⁸⁶General Aurora’s (the chief of the Indian Eastern Command in 1971) interview, published in the Weekly Bichitra, 13th December 1991, p. 31.

¹⁸⁷Sisson, R. and L.E. Rose, “**War and secession, Pakistan, India and the Creation of Bangladesh.**” vistaar publication, New Delhi, 1990, p.p.-213-220.

makers quietly evaluated all proposals, suggestions and criticisms and considered India's long-term interests in future in South Asia. At the end, the Indian Government decided in favour of a military intervention. India provided Bangladesh's liberation war with aid and assistance in two strategic ways: 1) arming and training of the Mukti Bahini or guerrilla force and (2) the Indian Army's strategic military invasion of East Bengal.¹⁸⁸ The two-tier strategic policy of the Indian Government made it abundantly clear that India's real motivation for actively supporting the Bangladeshi freedom struggle was not only to support the Bangalees' legitimate cause but also to weaken its arch rival Pakistan's basis of religious 'two nation theory' militarily, diplomatically and economically. Mrs. Indira Gandhi blatantly disregarded Jinnah's 'two-nation theory,' which inculcated religious muslim nationalism and led to the establishment of Pakistan in 1947. She stated, "We have avenged a thousand years history and thrown the 'two-nation theory' into the Indian Ocean"¹⁸⁹ following Pakistan's separation in 1971. In addition, there was little doubt about India's politico-strategic consideration. Since their independence from British India, India and Pakistan have fought two wars-in 1948 and 1965. As a result, the East Pakistan Crisis of 1971 offered a unique opportunity to separate its arch adversary. This determination was, in fact, the driving force behind the Indian military intervention on behalf of the Bangladeshi freedom fighters. The necessary justification for India's action was merely the establishment of an exile Bangladeshi Government in Calcutta and the presence on its soil of ten million East Pakistani Bangalee refugees.¹⁹⁰ In addition to providing material assistance, India also made serious diplomatic efforts and attempted to influence international opinion in favour of Bangladesh. Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi sent a secret message to the head of the Pakistani government in May 1971 requesting that they exert their influence over President Auga Mohammad Yahya Khan so that the life of Mujib could be saved.¹⁹¹ Mujib was going to be executed through a secret military trial. India launched a global campaign to persuade other governments to suspend their economic and military aid to Pakistan in order to force Pakistan to change its policy of military solution toward East Pakistan.¹⁹² At that time, Indian leaders worked tirelessly to sway public opinion

¹⁸⁸ Mukharjee, D.K. 'India and Bangladesh', in L.M. Singhvi (ed.) **Bangladesh: Background and Perspectives**. New Delhi: Institute of Constitutional and Parliamentary, 1971.

¹⁸⁹ **India: The Speeches and Reminiscences of Indira Gandhi (1975)**. London: Hodder & Stoughton, 2001, p. 35. (Quoted, Hussain, Ishtiaq, Bangladesh-India Relations: Issues and Problems. **Asian Survey** 21, 2, 1981, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2643997>, accessed on 12.08.2022. p-59).

¹⁹⁰ Ghosh, P.S, 'Cooperation and Conflict in South Asia'. The University Press Ltd, Dhaka, 1989, p-.

¹⁹¹ Gandhi, I. op.cit, pp-130-145.

¹⁹² Ibid

worldwide against Pakistan's ruthless atrocities, isolating Pakistan diplomatically.¹⁹³ By September and October 1971, tensions on the border especially Jammu and Kashmir between India and Pakistan were gradually increasing, and India and Pakistan made numerous allegations, counter allegations against each other. In light of this situation, the then United Nations (U.N) Secretary General U. Thant offered to use his good offices in the potentially dangerous situation between India and Pakistan in a letter dated 20th October, 1971, to the heads of state of both countries. President Agha Mohammad Yahya Khan accepted United Nations (U.N) Secretary General U. Thant's offer, but Mrs. Indira Gandhi emphasized that India was of the opinion that only a political settlement in East Pakistan could resolve the issue permanently.¹⁹⁴ Aside from this, Pakistan's mediation of Sino-American détente prompted the Soviet Union to sign the defense pact on 8th August, 1971 which promised Soviet military assistance to India in the event of a third-party attack. As a result, India gained more power from Soviet Bloc during cold war period. In September 1971, when Mrs. Gandhi went to Moscow, Moscow let Indian military intervention if it was needed. Even though the Soviet Union preferred a negotiated solution to the conflict with Pakistan, Mrs. Indira Gandhi was able to fully persuade the Soviet authorities and secure approval for the Indian army's military invasion of East Bengal.¹⁹⁵ Mrs. Gandhi went to Washington, D.C, at the beginning of November 1971 as part of India's global campaign against Pakistan's apparent and covert support from the United States. Mrs. Gandhi was offered with a number of ideas by the then President Richard Nixon in Washington for the peaceful solution of the East Pakistan freedom struggle. President Richard Nixon first reassured her that the United States of America (U.S.A) would fully support the helpless Bangalee refugees financially. Second, he mentioned Yahya's agreement to withdraw Pakistani forces unilaterally from the border between East Pakistan and India, with the understanding that India would respond in some way in the near future. However, Mrs. Indira Gandhi did not respond to the proposal of US president.¹⁹⁶ India was unwilling to give Pakistan a chance to take over East Pakistan at that time. Before Mrs. Indira Gandhi arrived in Washington; the Indian Government had decided to use force to destroy Pakistan, rendering the meeting pointless.¹⁹⁷ India also sent a

¹⁹³Rizvi, G. 'The Rivalry between India and Pakistan', in B. Buzan and G. Rizvi(eds) '*South Asian Insecurity and the Great Powers*', London: MacMillan Press, 1986, pp. 91–126 .

¹⁹⁴Gandhi, I.op.cit,pp-120-155.

¹⁹⁵ Budhraj, V. 'Moscow and the Birth of Bangladesh', *Asian Survey* 13(5), 1973, pp- 482–495

¹⁹⁶Chowdhury, G.W,op.cit

¹⁹⁷Sisson, R. and L.E. Rose , op.cit,pp-.253-264

diplomatic mission to the Muslim world to explain that the East Pakistani freedom struggle was not a dispute between India and Pakistan, but rather it was between two hostile Muslim communities in the same Muslim country (East Pakistan and West Pakistan). India was able to partially succeed in this attempt to reduce support for Pakistan among Islamic states.¹⁹⁸ When the Pakistani Air Force launched a preemptive air strike on eleven airfields in North Western India on 3rd December, 1971, India became directly involved in the Bangladesh Liberation War. On 3rd December, 1971, India officially declared war on Pakistan for the third time, (1948, 1965, 1971) finally abandoning the methods of political and diplomatic resolution to the freedom struggle. Due to India's rigid stance, the United Nations, the United States, and other members of the international community were unable to prevent the freedom struggle. As a result, Bangalees came out in the 1971 Liberation War rejecting the artificial, impractical, and attributed land demarcation that was carried out by Sir Cyril Redcliffe in 1947¹⁹⁹ on the basis of Jinnah's religious 'Two Nation-Theory.' This was followed by 24 years of misrule, oppression, discrimination, authoritarianism and the militarization of democratic institutions. As a result, after 1948 and 1965, India and Pakistan went to war third times in 1971. With the military assistance of the 'Indo-Soviet Treaty of Friendship and Co-Operation,'²⁰⁰ India defeated Pakistan easily in a very short time. The Eastern Part of Pakistan, which is now Bangladesh, became an independent, sovereign nation state on 26th March, 1971, when India joined as a key ally on 3rd December, 1971. Bangladesh's formation as a nation state in South Asia was one of a kind and distinct from that of other South Asian countries. The remaining South Asian countries' nationalist movements were largely based on civil disobedience, non-violence, and negotiated settlements, whereas Bangladesh's nationalist movement ultimately evolved into an armed struggle for independence against 24 years of misrule, oppression, discrimination, authoritarianism and the militarization of democratic institutions.²⁰¹ As an infant nation state that had just been liberated from a war and was ravaged by the conflict, Bangladesh established her objective in

¹⁹⁸ Sisson, R. and L.E. Rose, op.cit, pp-213-220

¹⁹⁹ The Bengal Boundary Commission was established on 30th June 1947 and tasked with the demarcation of the boundaries between East Bengal and West Bengal. The Commission, chaired by Sir Cyril Radcliffe, submitted its Report, known as the "Radcliffe Award", on 13 August 1947. The Boundary Commission, responsible for delineating the boundaries, came to be popularly known as the 'Radcliffe Boundary Commission'.

²⁰⁰ Indo-Soviet Treaty of Friendship and Co-Operation was a mutual strategic treaty signed between India and the Soviet Union on 9th August 1971. The treaty was a significant deviation from India's non-alignment position in the cold war period and in the prelude to the Bangladesh Liberation war to counter Pakistan along with Sino-American Ties.

²⁰¹ Jahan, R. '**Introduction in Bangladesh, Promise and Performance**': The University Press Ltd, Dhaka, 2002, pp. 3-39.

terms of international relations to obtain foreign economic assistance, the nation-building process, constitutional development, economic re-construction of the war-ravaged population in the years to come, and recognition from the outside world. India, Bangladesh's largest next door neighbour and a trusted ally, during the 1971 Liberation War, has played a significant role in both the country's domestic politics and its foreign policy. Since then, there have been cordiality in Indo-Bangladesh bilateral relations.

FIRST PARLIAMENTARY ERA 1972-1975.

SHEIKH MUJIBUR RAHMAN'S TENURE (1972-1975)

The first phase of bilateral relations from 1972-1975 centered on Bangladesh's Government parliamentary structure. Indo-Bangladesh bilateral relations were healthy, robust, and amicable at the outset of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's introduction of the parliamentary form of government in Dacca. Sheikh Mujibur Rahman led the first Government after independence with a clear pro-Indian foreign policy. Since then Dhaka and New Delhi adopted a very close, cooperative relationship with each other until 1975. The Indo-Bangladesh Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation, and Peace was a 25-year treaty that was signed on 19th March, 1972,²⁰² forging close bilateral relations between India and the newly established sovereign nation state Bangladesh in Indian subcontinent. Mrs. Indira Gandhi, Prime Minister of India, and Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, Prime Minister of Bangladesh, were the signatories of the treaty, which was also popularly known as the 'Indira-Mujib Treaty.' This treaty obligated both countries to refrain from supporting a third country's war against the other, to respect each other's borders, and not to interfere in the internal affairs of the other countries. Additionally, it committed the two countries to enhance economic, scientific, cultural, educational and technical cooperation. Again, during Mujib period collaboration between India and Bangladesh was cultural, civilization, social, and economic. The two countries share a lot in common, including a shared history and heritage, linguistic and cultural ties, a passion for music, literature, and the arts, ethnic compliance, lingual harmony, India's role in the Liberation War of Bangladesh, geographical contiguity, cultural and linguistic affinity, and geographical dependency etc. India and Bangladesh have a shared history of fighting for freedom and liberation as well as enduring

²⁰²Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India. Published on 16th May, 2018.

feelings of fraternal and familiar ties.²⁰³ At a variety of interactional levels, this commonality is reflected in multi-dimensional relations with Bangladesh. In addition, 'Bangabandhu' Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's diplomatic relations with India and his pro-Indian foreign policy had a long history for a number of reasons. India's contribution to the Liberation War of Bangladesh was the main factor behind Mujib's Government's shift toward an Indo-friendly foreign policy. India, the powerful next door neighbour to the North, helped Bangladesh by providing moral and diplomatic support and sheltered over 10 million homeless refugees from East Pakistan for several months in time of need. India also intervened militarily and played a crucial role in the defeat of Pakistani forces in East Pakistan, facilitating Bangladesh's rise as an independent South Asian sovereign nation.²⁰⁴ Before the final victory on 16th December, 1971, even India first recognized Bangladesh as an independent nation state on 6th December, 1971. As a result, it was clear that Dhaka would pursue an Indo-friendly foreign policy and that the two countries would construct very close ties after the Bangladesh Liberation War.²⁰⁵ During Cold War Eastern Bloc like Belgium, Austria, Poland, Hungary, and Bulgaria supported the Bangladesh Liberation War for India's proper diplomacy. Bangladesh had maintained cordial multilateral ties with these Eastern Bloc countries as well as India in the months following its independence. India and Bangladesh entered into a 'peace and security treaty' with a 25-year term for cementing their relationship. During the cold war, 'Bangabandhu' Sheikh Mujibur Rahman established friendly relationship with the leaders of the socialist bloc and expressed gratitude to the U.S.S.R. 'Bangabandhu' Sheikh Mujibur Rahman by dint of his strong bargaining power was able to convince Indian Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi to withdraw the Indian Army from Bangladesh by 16th March, 1972. He was also successful in rehabilitating 10 million helpless Bangladeshi refugees from India and expressed his sincere gratitude to the Indian Government for her military and humanitarian help in time of need. In record time, 'Bangabandhu' enacted a new constitution in Bangladesh that emphasized the establishment of a secular state and a socialist economy. As a secular statesman and moderate socialist leader, he became very popular to the international community through his liberal foreign policy and the constitutional development. Sheikh Mujibur Rahman changed the provisional

²⁰³ Habibullah Md and Hossain Emran, '**Bangladesh-India Diplomatic Relations (1975-1996): Transitions, Bilateral Disputes and Legacies**' Volume XX, Issue XIV, 2020, ISSN: 2249-460x & Print ISSN: 0975-587X, **Global Journal of Human Social Science**.

²⁰⁴ Chakma, Bhumitra, '**Bangladesh-India Relations: Sheikh Hasina's India-Positive Policy Approach Singapore**': S. Rajaratnas School of International Studies, RSIS Working Paper Series, 2012, P-1.

²⁰⁵ Ibid

parliament to write a new constitution, and proclaimed the four fundamental principles of 'nationalism, secularism, democracy and socialism,' which would come to be known as 'Mujibism.' Sheikh Mujibur Rahman nationalized hundreds of industries and companies as well as abandoned land and capital and initiated land reform aimed at helping millions of poor farmers. Major efforts were launched to rehabilitate an estimated 10 million refugees.

Although the state was committed to secularism, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman soon began moving closer to political Islam through state policies as well as personal conduct. He revived the Islamic academy and banned the production and sale of alcohol and banned the practice of gambling, which had been one of the major demands of Islamic groups. Sheikh Mujibur sought Bangladesh's membership in the Organisation of the Islamic Conference and the Islamic Development Bank and made a significant trip to Lahore in 1974 to attend the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) summit, which helped repair relations with Pakistan to an extent. He also declared a common amnesty to the suspected war criminals of 1971 in some conditions to get the support of far right groups as the communists were not happy with Mujib's regime. During his regime Jammāt-e-Islami and his collaborators like the Razakars, Al Badrs, Al Shams tried to reunite Bangladesh with Pakistan. He ordered cancellation of the citizenship of jammāt top leader Golam Azam for this purpose.

Bangladesh's perception of India and consequently, its approach to India have evolved under various governments in Dhaka. During the tumultuous and formative period, the two countries maintained a cordial relationship with visits and counter visits from both sides. However, according to J. N. Dixit,²⁰⁶ "it was unfortunate that this honeymoon phase did not last for long due to the assassination of the father of the nation, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in 1975." As a result, the golden phase of Indo-Bangladesh cordial relationship came to an end in 1975. Since the bloody incident in 1975, there has been a lot of uncertainty in the country, and several coups have happened in quick succession, which has hurt the countries' relationships with India.²⁰⁷ Nevertheless, a portion of the Bangladeshi population under the influence of pro-Pakistani, anti-liberation, anti-progressive forces (Jammāt-e-Islami, the Razakars, Al Badrs, Al Shams) viewed the 'historical friendship treaty' as a means of asserting India's hegemony and bossing mentality. According to Bangladesh media Dhaka was so subservient to India that it would function as a satellite state of India and the Mujib

²⁰⁶J.N.Dixit was an Indian diplomat, who served as foreign secretary as well as National Adviser to the Prime Minister Manmohan Singh.

²⁰⁷Khanna, V. N. 'Foreign Policy of India.' New Delhi: Vikas Publishing House, 2007.

Government was selling out Bangladesh's national interest to India. Bangladesh was said to have accepted Sikkim's fate.²⁰⁸ However, the Ganges water dispute over the distribution of water between the two countries added fuel to the flame. The issue began to surface in Bangladeshi domestic politics by 1974, when the Farakka barrage was nearly finished. Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's opponents and critics said that as a reward for India's military support for him and his ruling party, Awami League, he had surrendered in the country's interest to India. The Farakka barrage incident sparked a rise in anti-Indian sentiments in Bangladesh. The Bangladeshi media significantly contributed to the development of anti-India sentiments among the country's population. Most people in Bangladesh thought that the Mrs. Indira Gandhi's Congress Government was trying to overthrow General Zia-ur Rahman's position and his domestic policies by helping the underworld to disturb Bangladesh's harmony and economic prosperity. It also brought to light the fact that Bangladesh's economy began to decline, food scarcity was extremely high, and the process of national construction was in jeopardy as a result of India not providing the river water from Farraka barrage that Bangladesh needed for agricultural production.²⁰⁹

The political history of Bangladesh ended in a praetorian, authoritarian, military, or neo-patrimonial rule from 1975-1990. The democratic beginnings of the post-liberation era did not blossom into democratic societies; rather, it gave birth to booty capitalism as a consequence of the widespread nationalization of businesses and industries. The decline of economy and booty capitalism paved the way for emergence of Neo-patrimonialism in the form of 'one-party' rule of the Bangladesh Krishok Shromik Awami League (B.A.K.S.A.L) in Bangladesh. Furthermore Bangabondhu's declaration of general amnesty in favour of the anti-liberation collaborators like Jammata-e-Islami, the Razakars, Al Badrs, Al Shams, the inefficiency of his Government to cater to the needs of the Bangladeshi people at the time of 1974 devastating floods, his three unpopular and authoritarian acts namely the declaration of national emergency on 28th December, 1974, making him president for 5 years in 1975 and formation of B.A.K.S.A.L set the stage for the rehabilitation of Jammata-e-Islam in the mainstream politics of Bangladesh. Later it sparked a strong response and a coup led by a

²⁰⁸Sikkim's merger with the Indian Union in 1975 caused for a severe tension to a particular class of Bangladeshi people. They were claiming that too much dependence upon India might bring the same implication in the fate of Bangladesh. For details See Bhumitra Chakma, "South Asia's Realist Fascination and the Alternatives," **Contemporary Security Policy**, Volume. 30, No. 3, 2009, p- 404.

²⁰⁹Kodikara, Shelton. U (Ed.). **Bangladesh: In External Compulsions of South Asian Politics.** , New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1981, p-136.

group of young officers in the army.²¹⁰ Bangladesh fell into what is more accurately referred to as a praetorian regime.²¹¹ Following the demise of the Mujib Government from 1972-1975, the military rulers of independent Bangladesh followed the same procedure as the Pakistani military rulers did before independence. Consequently, a new diplomatic approach had been adopted by different military dictators. Bangladesh descended into a capitalist, conservative, Islamist and authoritarian state from a socialist, liberal, secular, democratic state introduced by Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. By amending the constitution to make the country Islamist and to please the capitalist class, the dictators' policy appears to have attempted to satiate the poor people. They replaced the moderately socialist economy to a capitalist economy. The anti-Indian sentiments was a new political trait that had been deliberately indoctrinated by the military dictators in Bangladesh. The majority of political parties that are now out of the mainstream politics of Bangladesh have fostered this type of anti-Indian sentiments from that time until 2006.²¹² When the charismatic leader and head of state of Independent Bangladesh, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, held power until his assassination in 1975 during a bloody Coup d'état, there was no sign of anti-Indian sentiments.²¹³ When the Awami League Government in Bangladesh collapsed and a military regime led by General Ziaur Rahman took power, cordial bilateral relations between India and Bangladesh immediately deteriorated rapidly throughout the night and turned hostile. The ideologies and principles that guided the two military dictators and one elected Government of Begum Khaleda Zia (1975–1996) remained the same. After the bloody assassination of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Indo-Bangladesh friendly relations with each other became unstable and suspicious. In fact, the relationship deteriorated by the middle of the 1970s as a result of Bangladesh's participation in the Organization of the Islamic Conference (O.I.C) and maintained closer ties with Islamic countries, particularly Arabian countries. It increased emphasis on Islamic identity²¹⁴ tramping the country's ethno-

²¹⁰ Shahriar Kabir, “**Bangladesh Amra Ebong Ora**”, Ananya Publication, Dhaka, 2005

²¹¹ Khan, Shamsul I, Islam S. Amimul, Haque M. Imdadul., ‘**Political Culture, Political Parties and the Democratic Transition in Bangladesh**’ The University Press Limited, Dhaka, 2008, p.45.

²¹² Habibullah Md and Hossain Emran, ‘**Bangladesh-India Diplomatic Relations (1975-1996): Transitions, Bilateral Disputes and Legacies**’ Volume XX, Issue XIV, 2020, ISSN: 2249-460x & Print ISSN: 0975-587X, **Global Journal of Human Social Science**:

²¹³ Coup d'état also called coup. A coup is a sudden decisive exercise of force in politics to overthrow or alter the existing government by a small group. The chief requisite for a coup is control of all or part of the armed forces, the police and other military elements.

²¹⁴ Muslim identification is one of the main mechanisms of socialization by the individual's Reorganization of their belonging to the Islamic religion and gaining value orientations of Islam.

linguistic roots.²¹⁵ After the bloody brutal murder of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and his family members, China and the United States, who vehemently opposed Bangladesh Liberation War, became Bangladesh's trusted friends in the diplomatic arena. Political tyranny, religious fundamentalism and fanatical extremism began to dominate Bangladeshi politics. Mujib's term in office from 1972-1975 could be referred to as the 'honeymoon years' between India and Bangladesh. The "Indo-Bangladesh Friendship Treaty" was signed in 1972 as a result of this attempt by India and Bangladesh to amicably resolve each and every contentious issue. Between the years 1975 and 1990, Bangladesh was governed by either General Ziaur Rahman or General Hussen Muhammad Ershad avoiding Bangladesh's traditional Indo-centric foreign policy. As a result, Bangladesh's warm and friendly relations with India ended and the country became dependent on Pakistan and pro-Pakistan friendly countries for the military government's protection and support. General Hussen Muhammad Ershad made an effort to incorporate Islamic culture into Bangladeshi politics. All of the practices that have developed around Islam are generally part of Islamic culture. Language and literature, art, architecture, theater, dance, music, family life, etiquette, and diet were all examples of Islamic culture. As opposed to Bengali nationalism, which was founded on secularism, language, culture and heritage as enshrined in the constitution by Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, he (Ershad) coined Linguistic Nationalism with Islam during his term. As a result of the anti-Indian sentiments bilateral relations between the two countries gradually deteriorated when General Ziaur Rahman was in power. Following General Ziaur Rahman's assassination on 30th May, 1981, Hossain Muhammad Ershad's military rule began on 24th March, 1982.

The political history of the Peoples' Republic of Bangladesh in the 21st century could be very well described if one goes back to the British colonial rule. It reveals that the country was swinging between democracy and dictatorship, despair and hope, mass apathy and violent collective action and all of these things at once. The country was passing through a new phase of democratic transition. In 1990, democracy was restored under the tremendous pressure of the people of Bangladesh and the joint leadership of all political parties. The Non-Party Caretaker Government (N.C.G), led by Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed, organized a free, fair, and neutral Parliamentary election in 1991. Begam Khaleda Zia, the widow of General Ziaur Rahman, defeated her arch rival Sheikh Hasina, daughter of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman

²¹⁵ Lewis David, '**Bangladesh: Politics, Economy and Civil Society**.' Cambridge University Press, 2011. ISBN 978-1-139-50257-3, pp. 31-32.

and the leader of the Awami League party, to become Bangladesh's first woman Prime Minister with a thumping majority.

MILITARY ERA

LIEUTENANT GENERAL ZIA-UR RAHMAN'S TENURE (1975-1981)

Following the heinous bloody assassination of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and the brutal murder of his family members at his residence, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's senior cabinet minister Khondaker Mostaque Ahmad arrested Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's four trusted friends, Sayed Nazrul Islam, Tajuddin Ahmed, Mansur Ali and A.H.M. Qamruzzaman and then he established a new military Government in Bangladesh and immediately implemented a number of significant changes to Mujib's Indo-centric foreign policy and business practices. Under Khondaker Mostaque Ahmad's leadership, four senior Awami League party leaders and the then-acting President Sayed Nazrul Islam, Prime Minister Tajuddin Ahmed, Finance Minister Mansur Ali and Home Minister A.H.M. Qamruzzaman, who played a crucial role in the Liberation War of Bangladesh, were killed with bullets and bayonets by an anti-liberation, anti-secular force to take revenge for Pakistan's partition. Brigadier General Khaled Mosharraf launched his own coup on the same day, primarily as a means of re-establishing the army's broken chain of command. Khondaker Mostaque Ahmad was swiftly removed from office by General Khaled Mosharraf. On 7th November, a clandestine rebellion organized by the Ideological groups Jatiya Samaj tantrik Dal (J.S.D) under the initiative of a retired colonel of the Bangladesh Military, Abu Taher and a group of socialist-military officials. Shafat Jamil was detained and Khaled Mosharraf, a key figure in the 3rd November coup, was killed. After the murder of Brigadier General Khaled Mosharraf in 1975, Major General Zia-ur Rahman, a deputy Army Chief of Staff, led a very brief revolution secretly. General Ziaur Rahman assumed leadership of the country amid the chaos and rescued the entire country from a political impasse. After the bloody military coups in Bangladesh, which began with the assassination of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, General Ziaur Rahman took power for the first time in November 1975. His first move was to use radio and television to communicate with people's republic of Bangladesh. He said that the civilian government led by President Chief Justice Abu Sadat Mahammad Sayem would have his full support. Sayem dissolved Parliament and declared a 'state of emergency' with martial law on Zia's orders. Zia worked behind the scenes of the Martial Law Administration (M.L.A) to revitalize government policy and management. He sought to revive the demoralized bureaucracy, initiate new economic developmental programmes, construct infrastructure,

establish a free press and place an emphasis on family planning by lifting Mujib's one-party B.A.K.S.A.L rule. Zia was appointed Chief Martial Law Administrator (C.M.L.A) in November 1976, and on 21st April, 1977, five months after Sayem retired, she took over as the head of the state (presidency) in Bangladesh.²¹⁶

The second phase of Indo-Bangladesh bilateral relations began from 1975-1991. Since Bangladesh's liberation in 1971, bilateral relations between India and Bangladesh have experienced numerous ups and downs with the course of time. After 1975, there was no way for the two countries' relations to go beyond what was expected. Between 1975 and 1990, following the heinous assassination of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, Bangladesh was governed by Justice Abu Sadat Mahammad Sayem, General Ziaur Rahman, and General Hussain Muhammad Ershad or by a military dictator, Chief Martial Law Administrator (C.M.L.A), or Caretaker Government (C.T.G). In order to fulfill national interests and end Indian hegemony, the military regime in Bangladesh brought about fundamental shifts in its foreign policy. Because of her diplomatic and economic considerations, this shift in Bangladesh's foreign policy also led to a paradigm shift in Indo-Bangladesh bilateral relations.²¹⁷ In particular, Bangladesh diverted its foreign policy toward western countries. The relations between India and Bangladesh changed and for the first time since its liberation, Bangladesh was under the new army regime. The army-led new government formulated its foreign policy in accordance with both internal and external factors. The foreign policy of different military regimes incorporated Islamic principles solely for the purpose of gaining domestic recognition and breaking free of India's dominance and they were largely successful in doing so. This foreign policy continued until the Hossain Muhammad Ershad administration fell in 1990.²¹⁸

The second phrase of respective relations began from 1975-1991. This area will manage the conciliatory work force who were sent and the diplomats from the two countries associated with the support of reciprocal relationship. General Ziaur Rahman took a pro-Pakistan and China-based foreign policy during this second phase. He developed close relationships with Pakistan and the world's then-anti-liberation superpowers, who had previously opposed Bangladesh's liberation war. During his tenure from 1977-1982, a number

²¹⁶Franda, Marcus. 'Bangladesh: The First Decade.' South Asian Publishers, New Delhi, 1982, p.222.

²¹⁷Shahnawaz A. Mantoo, India-Bangladesh Relationship (1975-1990), *Journal of South Asian Studies*, ISSN: 2307-4000 (Online), 2308-7846(print), <http://www.escijournals.net/JSAS>, accessed on 10.08.2022.

²¹⁸Shahnawaz A. Mantoo, India-Bangladesh Relationship (1975-1990), *Journal of South Asian Studies*, ISSN: 2307-4000 (Online), 2308-7846 (print) <http://www.escijournals.net/JSAS>, accessed on 10.08.2022.

of issues between India and Bangladesh became contentious. As mentioned earlier on 15th August, 1975, President Sheikh Mujib and his entire family, with the exception of his two daughters, Sheikh Hasina and Rehana, were killed in a bloody military coup at his residence.²¹⁹ Khondaker Mushtaque Ahmed, a cabinet member of Mujib government, was the main conspirator of the bloody murder of 1975. Later he was elected President, but only for a short time. For Ziaur Rahman, this change in power opened up new opportunities for him to become the country's political leader. General Ziaur Rahman was appointed as the new Army Chief, replacing K.M. Shafiullah, who had been appointed by Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. Meanwhile, General Khaled Mosharraf, a former freedom fighter, and Shafat Jamil staged a counter-coup on 3rd November. They placed Ziaur Rahman under home arrest after forcing him to give up his position. The so-called 'Soldiers and People's Coup',²²⁰ came next. Until Ziaur Rahman, the Chief of the Army Staff and Chief Martial Law Administrator, was sworn in as the President of Bangladesh, political instability persisted in the country.²²¹ In the past, General Ziaur Rahman held the position of Army Chief. From 6th November, 1975 to 6th November, 1977, Justice Abu Sadat Mohammad Sayem served as President and Chief Martial Law Administrator (C.M.L.A.). On 29th November, 1976, he (Abu Sadat) resigned as Chief Martial Law Administrator and on 21st April, 1977, he (Abu Sadat) resigned as President. Justice Abu Sadat Mohammad Sayem was appointed to key state positions because Khondakar Mushtaq recommended that a person without a political affiliation be in power.²²² Even though General Ziaur Rahman was the government of Justice Sayem's de facto leader, he left the Bangladesh Army in 1978 as a Lieutenant General. A period of military dictatorship, uncertainty, and a capitalist economy officially began in Bangladesh politics.

A kind of soldiers' uprising, which Ziaur Rahman neither initiated nor shared the spirit of, was the occurrence that brought him to the center of the power structure. Under the direction of a retired colonel of the Bangladesh Armed Forces, Abu Taher, a clandestine Biplobi Sainik Sangstha (Organization of the Revolutionary Soldiers) organized the uprising with the intention of fundamentally altering the colonial hierarchical system of the armed

²¹⁹ Islam Syed Serajul, "The State in Bangladesh under Zia (1975-81)" *Far Eastern Survey*, volume. 24, no. 5, 1955, pp. 556-573.

²²⁰ For details on 'Soldier's and People's Coup' see Anthony Mascarenhas, '**Bangladesh: A Legacy of Blood**', London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1986.

²²¹ Franda, Marcus. '**op.cit**', p.222.

²²² Hoque, Kazi Ebadul, "Sayem, Justice Abu Sadat Mohammad," *Banglapedia Online*, 2015, http://en.banglapedia.org/index.php?title=Sayem,_Justice_Abusadat_Mohammad, accessed on 25.08.2022.

forces, such as the abolition of colonial practices and the batman system, among other things. Ziaur Rahman was chosen as a 'War Hero' somewhat by accident during the uprising, and he was also said to have sympathized with the discriminated slaves' cause. However, as soon as he assumed power, he swiftly removed his predecessors from Bangladesh's political landscape. During his time he invented Bangladeshi religious nationalism rather than Bengali nationalism.²²³ As a result, Bangladesh's friendly, warm, cooperative and glorious multilateral long standing relations with India ended, and the country became dependent on Pakistan, China, and Islamic countries like Kuwait, UAE, Baharin, Pakistan, Soudi Arabia, Libiya etc. During General Ziaur Rahman's tenure, Professoee Golam Azam, top leader of Jammāt-e-Islami was allowed to return to Dhaka. He was not granted citizenship rights for a long time. Since the beginning of Mujib tenure Professoee Golam Azam along with some top Jammāt leaders took shelter in Pakistan where they celebrated 'East Pakistan Recovery Week' under his leadership. Jammāt was confined to its act of collaboration with Pakistani army to resist the liberation of Bangladesh at any cost. Jammāt kept the office of Amir vacant, waiting for the day when Professoee Golam Azam got back his citizenship rights. After received his much awaited Bangladeshi citizenship rights in Zia-ur Rahman's regime he automatically became the Amir of Jammāt.²²⁴ The ultimate objectives of Jammāt-e-Islami were-the establishment of Islamic system in all spheres of life, Islam can be established only by those who know and practice Islam, the membership of Jammāt is open only to the commmitted Muslims.²²⁵ The mottos of Jammāt-e-Islami are-Allah is our Lord, Muhammad is our Leader, Quoran and Sunnah is our Ideal, Jihad is our means, Salvation is our end. During General Ziaur's regime mutual hostility and mistrust dominated bilateral relations between the two countries. Bilateral relations between India and Bangladesh deteriorated shortly after Ziaur Rahman took power. In response to the attempted assassination of Indian High Commissioner Mr. Samar Sen in the chancery building in Dhaka on 26th November, 1975, India took a strong stand. He was wounded and shot. After having surgery to remove the bullet, Mr. Samar Sen's condition was satisfactory. India immediately sent an Air Force plane and expert doctor to bring him back. This barbaric attack was deeply regretted by the Indian Government, which strongly condemned it. After this incident Pakistan's prompt recognition

²²³ Khan, Shamsul I, Islam S. Amimul, Haque M. Imdadul, op.cit, p.45.

²²⁴ Hiranmay Kelkar, "**Bangladesh the next Afganistan?**" Sage publication, New Delhi, 2005.p.52

²²⁵ Badaruddin Omar, "**Shatabdir Shurute Bangladesher Chitro**" Mira Prakashan, Dhaka, 2006.

of Ziaur Rahman's Government exacerbated the growing mistrust between the two countries.²²⁶

General Ziaur Rahman established the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (B.N.P) while he was President in 1978. He brought back politics with multiple parties, freedom of press, freedom of speech, free markets and accountability. He started programmes for widespread irrigation and food production, as well as social programmes to improve the lives of Bangladeshi people. In 1985, in an effort to combat India's hegemony, his government began work to form a South Asian group popularly known as S.A.A.R.C. He shifted Bangladesh away from Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's close ties to India and towards the West and China. On a domestic level, Ziaur Rahman was confronted with as many as twenty-one attempts at a coup, for which he was put on trial. As a result, many soldiers and officers of the Bangladesh Armed Forces were executed, with the majority of the trials being alleged to be skewed and false. He was criticized for passing the Indemnity Act²²⁷ and removing the ban on religion-based political parties in Bangladesh.

Professor Sukumaran Nair divided the years between the post-Mujibur regime and the end of General Ziaur Rahman's regime in Bangladesh into three phases regarding the fall and formation of the Indian Government.

1. The first phase was from November 1975-1977, when Mrs. Indira Gandhi was Prime Minister of India and there was an internal national emergency in India.

2. The second phase was from March 1977-1980, when the Janata Government (Mr. Morarji Desai) was in power. The first non-Congress Government in India, led by Mr. Morarji Desai's Janata Party, established 'Bilateral Beneficialism' as the central tenet of its approach to diplomatic relations with Bangladesh India's immediate neighbour.

3. The third phase began in 1980 and lasted until General Ziaur Rahman's assassination.²²⁸ When the Awami League Government fell apart and General Ziaur Rahman assumed control of the state, the economic ties between Bangladesh and India, as well as the diplomatic collaboration between the two countries, were put in jeopardy and turned violent.

²²⁶The New York Times, November 27, 1975.

²²⁷ 'The Indemnity Act' was introduced in Bangladesh in 1975 by General Ziaur Rahman. It was formulated to give immunity from legal action to those persons who were involved to the bloody assassination of the father of the Nation, Sheikh Mujibur Rehman on 15th August, 1975.

²²⁸Nair.p. Sukumaran, 'op.cit.pp-180-195.

The new military Government ushered in a new era of distrust and hostility toward each other. Even the coup and execution of 'Bangabandhu' Sheikh Mujib-ur-Rahman were attempted to justify on the grounds that Bangladesh would have accepted Sikkim's fate, Dhaka would have functioned as a satellite state of India, and the Mujib Government would have sold out Bangladesh's interests to India.²²⁹ The Zia regime sought to lessen Indian pressure and rivalry by cultivating closer ties with Pakistan, China, and Middle Eastern countries. As a result, hostility between Bangladesh and India increased. Indian policymakers were greatly perturbed by Dhaka's neo foreign policy and the relationship between India and Bangladesh was seriously hampered.²³⁰ The U.S.A, China and Pakistani political coalition fully supported the coup and gave it some legitimacy by supporting it politically, diplomatically and financially. This allowed Ziaur Rahman's regime to claim that Bangladesh's survival depended on its ability to leave the Indo-Soviet orbit during the cold war.

Indian concerns regarding external intervention in the region were directly or indirectly exacerbated by Bangladesh's extreme poverty, economic instability and dependency on foreign aid. By emphasizing and promoting Bangladesh's connection to the United States, China, Middle Eastern countries, and Pakistan's long-term allies, the post-Mujib rulers increased Indian apprehension.²³¹ Pakistan's wartime allies, Saudi Arabia and China, cultivated warm relationships with Zia. These countries were against Bangladesh's birth and did not acknowledge it until 1975.²³² In addition to strengthening diplomatic ties with Muslim countries and China, Zia put a special emphasis on developing close ties with Pakistan, insisting on Islamic principles over secular ones. His firm stance against Pakistan's arch enemy, India, was the strategy for establishing friendly relations with Pakistan. Sheikh Mujib's emphasis on secularism was changed to "complete trust and faith in almighty Allah"²³³ by Zia, who also altered the Constitution's ideological statement on the fundamental principles. Zia wanted to strengthen ties with other Islamic countries, particularly Saudi

²²⁹Chakma Bhumitra, "South Asia's Realist Fascination and the Alternatives," **Contemporary Security Policy**, volume. 30, no. 3, 2009, p- 404.

²³⁰ Ibid.

²³¹Jha Nalini Kant, "**Domestic Bases of Foreign Policy: Bangladesh's Policy towards India**," in *International Relations Theory and South Asia*, ed. E Sridharan: Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 2011, pp-260-297.

²³²Rahman Mohammad Mijanur, "**Foreign policy under Ziaur Rahman**", **The Daily Star Online**, May 2008, <https://www.thedailystar.net/news-detail-38950>, accessed on 10.08.2022.

²³³Ahmed Emajuddin, "Constitutional Amendments," **Banglapedia Online**, 2015, http://en.banglapedia.org/.index.php?title=Constitutional_Amendments, accessed on 10.08.2022

Arabia, Egypt, Iran, Baharin while separating Bangladesh from India.²³⁴ Zia was of the opinion that a large portion of the Bangladeshi population was experiencing an identity crisis, both as a religious group and as a nation. He introduced religious education in madrasas and the Islamization of Bangladesh in an effort to alleviate this.²³⁵ Zia, in contrast to Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, pledged only three principles: democracy, nationalism and socialism. He also eliminated secularism as an essential component of the Bangladeshi original constitution. General Ziaur Rahman altered the state's nature by making the following amendments to the constitution.

He added the obeisance "Bismillahir-Rahmaanir-Rahim" to the preamble. This means in the name of "Allah, the Beneficent, and the Merciful."²³⁶

The socialist religious free commitment to secularism was replaced by the statement "absolute trust and faith in Almighty Allah" in Article 8 (1) and 8 (1A). Under his direction, 'economic and social justice' became the new definition of socialism.²³⁷

"The state shall endeavour to consolidate, preserve and strengthen fraternal relations among Muslim countries based on Islamic solidarity," Zia stated in Article 25(2) of the constitution.²³⁸

"No person shall have the rights to form or being a member or otherwise take part in the activities of any communal or other association or union, which in the name or based on religion has for its object other political purposes," Zia said of article 38 of the constitution.²³⁹

There were many similarities between General Ziaur Rahman's policies and those of the Pakistani military junta to Islamize the country and divide India and Bangladesh. They had attempted to sway public opinion by intensifying anti-India sentiments and creating a religious fantasy that Islam was the religion of the majority of Bangladeshis where Hindus are minority. In the post-Mujib era, General Ziaur Rahman followed the same procedure as Ayub Khan did in Pakistan by amending the country's constitution and taking the necessary

²³⁴ Ahmed Emajuddin, "Constitutional Amendments," Banglapedia Online, 2015, http://en.banglapedia.org/index.php?title=Constitutional_Amendments, accessed on 10.08.2022.

²³⁵ Karlekar Hiranmay, "**Bangladesh: The Next Afghanistan?**," Sage Publication, New Delhi, 2005, pp-51-52.

²³⁶ Ahmed Emajuddin, "Constitutional Amendments," Banglapedia Online, 2015, http://en.banglapedia.org/index.php?title=Constitutional_Amendments, accessed on 10.08.2022.

²³⁷ http://en.banglapedia.org/index.php?title=Constitutional_Amendments, accessed on 10.08.2022.

²³⁸ http://en.banglapedia.org/index.php?title=Constitutional_Amendments, accessed on 10.08.2022.

²³⁹ http://en.banglapedia.org/index.php?title=Constitutional_Amendments, accessed on 10.08.2022.

steps to normalize relations with Pakistan and the countries of the Pan-Middle East. By doing all of these things, Zia preferred to begin and end his public and official speeches and messages with the prayer “Bismillahir Rahman-Ur-Rahim,” Zia had maintained religious, historical and cultural ties to the Islamic countries of the world and he wanted to strengthen those ties by hook or by crook.²⁴⁰

The following are a few of the factors that contributed to General Ziaur Rahman’s anti-India sentiments:

1. After the military coup of 1975, a large portion of society opposed the liberation of Bangladesh and believed that the people of Bangladesh were much better under Pakistani rule.²⁴¹
2. The anti-India tirade was stoked even further by the Bangladeshi media, which had a significant impact on deteriorating relations between the two neighbouring countries.²⁴²
3. The people of Bangladesh have also been enraged by a number of mutual issues that have not been resolved since independence.
4. Bangladeshi merchants and the government felt a great deal of resentment due to the illegal trafficking of goods, money and other items across the open and unsecured border. In addition, Indian goods flooded the Bangladeshi market, similar to how West Pakistani goods flooded the East Pakistani (later Bangladesh) market prior to independence.
5. Under the direction of the Research and Analysis Wing (RAW) of India, which was concerned about Bangladesh’s security, pro-Mujib devotees led by Tiger Siddiqui received both military and financial support from Mrs. Indira Gandhi to destabilize Zia Government.

On the other hand, India was also offended for a number of reasons, which also had serious impact on the friendly bilateral relationships that existed between the two countries since its inception. These are following.

1. Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and members of his family, including his wife, sons and relatives, were the victims of a string of brutal murders.

²⁴⁰Amna Mahmood, Sadaf Farooq and Ms. Nadia Awan, “Bangladesh-Pakistan Relations: A Hostage to History”, **American International Journal of Contemporary Research**, volume. 5. No. 2, 2015, pp-66-75.

²⁴¹Nair.p. Sukumaran, *op.cit*, P-85

²⁴²Ibid, p-85.

2. Additionally, several high-ranking army officials, numerous freedom fighters and four national leaders were killed under the patronage of ISI of Pakistan.
3. Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was a trustworthy friend of India who stood for the non-alignment movements (N.A.M) based on panchasheel, parliamentary democracy, socialism, secularism, and linguistic nationalism. In record time, Bangabandhu enacted a new constitution that emphasized the establishment of a secular state and a socialist economy. The Indian populace valued him because of his India-centric foreign policy and Bangladesh's constitutional development for secular character.
4. In addition, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's establishment of law, strengthening of democratic institutions and creation of economic opportunities for all Bangladeshis, regardless of caste, creed and religion, earned him the admiration of Indians. During the Zia regime under state patronage, the legacy of the support, sacrifice and contribution that the Indian people made during the Liberation War by taking shelter 10 million helpless refugees in Indian bordering states and the subsequent years of economic re-construction for the war-ravaged populace vanished.
5. Communal politics and the Islamization policy of General Ziaur Rahman led to Hindu insecurity in Bangladesh and India.²⁴³ The resurgence of pro-Pakistani state policies put communal harmony and coexistence in jeopardy once more. In Zia's regime, Bangladesh had a lot more to lose than India and posed no military threat. During his administration, the bilateral disputes ought to have been quickly resolved through diplomatic channels. Instead, "belligerence and insensitivity on the part of India, and oversensitivity and suspicion on the part of Bangladesh represented the conduct of the issues."

THE STATUS OF DISPUTES AND ISSUES WITH INDIA DURING GENERAL ZIAUR RAHMAN'S REGIME

As stated above Bangladesh did not represent a military threat and had much more to lose than India in General Ziaur Rahman's regime. The bilateral disputes should have been swiftly resolvable through diplomatic channels during his regime. Instead, the conduct of the

²⁴³Ibid, p-85.

issues was represented by “belligerence and insensitivity on India’s part, and oversensitivity and suspicion on Bangladesh’s part.”²⁴⁴

INDO-BANGLADESH BILATERAL RELATIONS IN THE CONTEXT OF DISPUTE OVER SHARING OF RIVER WATER

President Mujib was successful in reaching a temporary agreement with India on the matter of water sharing at Farakka due to the close ties with India, but this agreement expired in May 1975. The subsequent government led by General Ziaur Rahman failed to go for another treaty or to extend the tenure of the treaty. General Ziaur Rahman sought international interference on the matter to underestimate India. Bangladesh raised the issue at the Organizations of Islamic Country’s conference of foreign ministers at Istanbul, in 1976 and at the N.A.M summit at Colombo. Subsequently, the issue was also placed on the 31st session of the General Assembly of United Nation Organization (U.N.O) in November 1976 to draw international attention to the matter. To settle the issue, third rounds of ministerial talks were held, but no progress was made. Thus a bitter relation of distrust and hostility initiated at the very beginning of General Ziaur Rahman’s regime in Bangladesh.

Distribution of water among nations is a problem which afflicts each nation. From International perspective, it can be said that since water is very much important for survival of human life, every nation is increasingly concerned with this problem. From this point of view India and Pakistan, the two neighbouring countries are at the loggerheads with each other over sharing of river water particularly Ganges water since 1947.

There are many drivers of International water conflict. Among them sovereignty of each state is to be taken into account. Every nation is very much concerned with its national sovereignty and by no means the concerned state usually compromise with its sovereign rights and tries to protect its interest in the river basin areas.²⁴⁵

International river basin occupies very pertinent position and must be taken into account the determinant of the level of development of the country. That is to say, the level of economic development and technological capabilities of the basin state are also to be taken into account.

²⁴⁴ Jacques K, ‘**Bangladesh, India and Pakistan**’: Palgrave Macmillan, London, 2000, pp-3-24.

²⁴⁵ Tiwari Rakesh, “Conflicts over International Waters”, **Economic and Political weekly**, Volume-41, No-17, April 29-May5, 2006, p-1684.

Water scarcity is also a pertinent issue in the sphere of resource which usually determines the capabilities of basin state. In fact, it can be rightly said that a scarcity of water arise when demand or need of water exceeds the real supply.

Another important factor is climatic availability of water of real terms. It is well known that for the arid region, the issue of water sharing especially in dry season leads to conflict.

Another determinant which govern water dispute relates to depletion of a source (like an aquipier) because of basin diversion of sharing of water, redirection or other uses for another places, consumption, spatial distribution of population and water resources.

During Mujib's regime to Zia's regime other important factors which usually lead to international water conflict. Among them the most important is riparian structure²⁴⁶ and riparian organization. Riparian structure refers to international river basin which is linked with to all the riparian states. These riparian states might have a complex network of environmental, economic, political and securities interdependency. In this process, it creates the potentials for inter-state conflicts as well as the opportunities of co-operation.

Riparian Organisation: Actions and Options²⁴⁷

	Upstream	Downstream
Comparative Stronger Nation	Proactive operational action, emphasis on bilateralism, semblances of regional action, strongly resist outside intervention, against\abstain 1997 UN Convention	Attach strategic/security importance to water supply, suppresses upstream diversion schemes, military threats or action, offer imbalanced reciprocity, discourage upstream alliances
Comparatively Weaker Nation	Demand imbalanced reciprocity, delay as a tool to bargain, non-cooperation for UN 1997 Convention	Internationalization, campaign for outside intervention, look for riparian alliances to pressurize, non- cooperation in other critical sectors for UN 1997 Convention.

Another factor which can be highlighted in the context i.e, riparian organization (Nation state formation process, Ruling regimes, Water security etc), to be taken as continual

²⁴⁶ Riparian structure refers to how the political units are arranged in the geographical space, or the comparative location of political units in the given river basin are. It explains the spatio-temporal aspects of water availability in the basin. It is a static concept which allots almost permanent privileges and disabilities as far as access, utilization and management of water resources are concerned.

²⁴⁷ Tiwari Rakesh, op.cit, p-1686.

inputs in the sphere of dynamism of international water conflicts between India and Bangladesh. Ganges water dispute began in 1951 when the present Bangladesh was the eastern part of Pakistan. Now India faced the problem of water crisis and decided to construct a barrage at Farakka in West Bengal. According to B.M Abbas, an eminent Bangladesh water resources expert (later he became a minister of flood control, irrigation and power in 1978), “the real purpose of the barrage is to control the river for supplying Ganges water to the Indian states of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar.”²⁴⁸

India decided to solve the water dispute in order to implement her various programmes like hydroelectricity generation, industrial uses, navigation, waterway transportation, agriculture and irrigation, ground water decline, river linking project, flood control, riverbank erosion, increase water salinity etc. Moreover, India thought that the solution of water dispute is required for its environmental and maritime securities. Ganga was seen as a national river and hence the problem became a national problem. In order to overcome water scarcity the then Indian government decided in 1951 to construct a barrage at Farakka of Murshidabad district in West Bengal to control the flow of Ganges river. The Barrage was built to divert the Ganges River water into the Hoogly River during the dry season, from January to June, to flush out the accumulating silt and to increase navigability of Hoogly river for Kolkata port. Construction of Farakka dam actually began in 1964. The project was designed to convey a maximum of 40,000 Cusecs from the flow of Ganges into the Bhagirathi River which later becomes the Hoogly river and consisted of a 2,245 meters long barrage across the main channel of the Ganges and a feeder canal 38 K.M long, 150 meters wide, and 6 meters deep.²⁴⁹ When India started the project, Pakistan vehemently objected. Hence, the issue turned into a conflict which soured the relationship between the two antagonistic neighbouring countries-India and Pakistan. Eventually the construction delayed. Now, it would like to explain the Ganges Water dispute between India and Pakistan into the different phases like (phase-I): 1950-1971, (phase-II): 1971-1996: creation of Bangladesh to the signing the Ganges water treaty, change riparian organization and riparian structure, (phase-III): the latest position.

Phase-I:(1950-1971) the dispute over Ganges river in phase-I period can be described as fruitless effort because India could not be able build either Farakka barrage or make any

²⁴⁸ Abbas B.M, “**The Ganga River dispute**”, University Press, Dhaka, 1982.

²⁴⁹ Surya P. Subedi, “Hydro-Diplomacy in South Asia: The Conclusion of Mahakali and Ganges River Treaties”, **The American Journal of International Law**, Volume-93, No-4, October-1999, pp-953-962.

amicable settlement with Pakistan over the dispute. Hence, the period is marked by a general state of hostility between India and Pakistan.

Phase-II: (1971-1996): During the period Ganges water dispute took a new dimension. Indo-Pak war ended in 1965, the Bangladesh was made in 1971 which changed the riparian organization at different point of time. Now, for convenient of my discussion on this issue this phase of Ganges water dispute can be categorized in different sub-phases.

Ganges water dispute during 1971-1976

The emergence of Bangladesh as an independent nation state created a new dimension of political relationship between India and Bangladesh in the South Asian region. The foremost of this was the changing scenario of riparian structure and riparian organization of Ganga-Brahmaputra river basin. Following this, the Government of India and Bangladesh tried to look towards this issue in the new perspective of cordial bilateral relations. Since India helped in the creation of Bangladesh by supplying military and humanitarian assistance, the Bangladesh Government under the leadership of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, tried to solve this problem with Indian Government, led by former Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi. When Mrs. Indira Gandhi visited Bangladesh, signed a “Treaty of friendship, co-operation and peace” on March, 1972 where Article VI clearly stated that “the contracting parties agree to make a joint studies and take point action in the fields of flood control, river basin development and the development of hydro-electric power and irrigation.” The two charismatic leaders also formulated a comprehensive plan and both of them agreed to form a joint river commission (J.R.C) on a permanent basis in 1972. The members of this joint river commission were taken from both the countries. The commission made a plan to make a comprehensive survey over the Ganges water resources and how the water could be distributed between the two countries with an eye to the interest of both the countries. In 1974, at the ministerial level meeting with Bangladesh, India agreed to a mutually accepted solution before the Farakka Barrage began operation. They agreed to solve this problem on the basis of joint declaration, the content of the declaration are as follows-

1. There was a need to increase the volume of Ganga water during the minimum flow period to meet the full need of both Bangladesh and India.
2. The augmentation of water would be done through optimum utilization of water resources available to both the countries

Now, the two sides decided to empower the river commission constituted by India and Bangladesh to find out a reasonable solution regarding the augmentation of water. Divergent of views were put forward for augmentation of water.

Bangladesh made a proposal to the effect that augmentation of water would be done by storage facilities in the upper Ganga river basin. The reservoir in India and Nepal would store monsoon water to be released during the dry season and it would significantly augment the flow but this proposal of Bangladesh was rejected by India.²⁵⁰ On the other hand, India proposed an alternative proposal of augmentation of Ganga water flow by constructing Brahmaputra-Ganga link canal to divert the water from Brahmaputra to Ganga (Padma-Meghna river basin in Bangladesh)). But, this suggestion was unacceptable to Bangladesh on the ground that the link canal excavation will cause heavy loss of fertile land and consequent displacement of population in Bangladesh.²⁵¹

Hence, the phase of settlement of Ganga water dispute was however stalled. By the 1974 when the Farakka barrage was in a state of near completion, the issue began to surface in Bangladesh domestic politics. The opponent of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the Prime Minister of Bangladesh, accused him of surrendering in the country's interest to India as a pay off for India's support to him and his ruling party Awami League. Anti-Indian sentiments were on the rise and Farakka barrage issue served as catalyst.

Under this circumstance on 18th April, 1975 an interim agreement for 41 days, for the period 21st April to 31st May, was signed between the two countries just few month before the bloody assassination of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in Dhaka. In this agreement the two countries agreed to cover the flow of Ganga during the lean period from 21st April to 31st May in which the major portion was given to Bangladesh. The two countries decided to run the feeder canal and it was also decided that India would withdraw its share in the following manner. India would be allowed to divert 11,000 Cusecs of flow into the feeder canal in April and 16,000 Cusecs in May 1975.²⁵²

But the dispute remained unsolve. The issue came up when the Government of Bangladesh was changed and the relations with India started to deteriorate. The Farakka

²⁵⁰ Mukhopadhyay Asim, "River of Contention", **Economic and Political Weekly**, Volume-15, No-17, April-26, 1980, pp-766-768.

²⁵¹ Iyre Ramaswamy R, "The Fallacy of Augmentation: Demands on Ganga Waters." **Economic and Political Weekly**, Vol-34, No-33, August-14-20, 1999, pp-2296-2297.

²⁵² Subedi Surya P., op.cit, p-958.

Barrage issue was highly publicized by the then Government of Bangladesh through the government controlled media. In May 1976, Bangladesh raised the Farakka barrage issue at the Istanbul Islamic foreign minister conference. In its joint communiqué it expressed deep concern over the problem of equitable distribution of international river Ganga. It also highlighted that since India was not giving water as required by Bangladesh, its economy began to fall, food scarcity was very high and the process of National construction in Bangladesh was in jeopardy. Bangladesh was also raised this issue at the Non Allied Movement (N.A.M) summit at Colombo in August 1976. But, it did not yield any result. Later on, Bangladesh decided to raise this issue in the United Nation Organization (U.N.O) 31st General Assembly Session with the help of some countries like Srilanka, Serbia, Egypt, Alzeria etc. After that India and Bangladesh Official representatives agreed to meet together to sort out the water problem and accordingly reported it to the U.N.O General Assembly session in 1977 during the regime of General Ziaur Rahman.

Attempts of solutions from 1977-1988

During this period both India and Bangladesh agreed to test a trial run of Farakka Barrage for 41 days under temporary basis but the assassination of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman on 15th August, 1975 created a lot of problem. After the assassination India was reluctant to negotiate this issue with Bangladesh military regime led by General Ziaur Rahman. In 1977 the Janata Party under the leadership of Morarji Desai came to power in India. Then Indian stand towards Bangladesh regarding the Farakka Barrage became cordial. Consequently, a five year agreement with Bangladesh was signed between the then agricultural and irrigation minister of India Mr. Surjit Singh Barnala and Rear Admiral Musharraf Hussain Khan, Chief of Naval Staff and Member, President's Council of Advisors in charge of the ministry of communications, Flood Control, Water Resources and Power of Bangladesh. The term and condition of this agreement²⁵³ are given below-for appraisal at Farakka water issue between the two countries.

²⁵³ "Bangladesh- India: agreement on sharing of the Ganges' waters", **international legal materials**, Volume-17, No-1, January 1978, pp-103-106.

BANGLADESH-INDIA: AGREEMENT ON SHARING OF THE GANGES1 WATERS*

[Done at Dacca, November 5, 1977]

Government of Bangladesh Ministry of Foreign Affairs

(External Publicity Division) Dacca.

NO-14(l)76-EP. IV November 5, 1977

Agreement between the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh and the Government the Republic of India on sharing of the Ganges waters at Farakka and on augmenting its flows.

THE GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH AND THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA,

DETERMINED to promote and strengthen their relations of friendship and good neighbourliness,

INSPIRED by the common desire of promoting the well-being of their peoples,

BEING desirous of sharing by mutual agreement the waters of the international rivers flowing through the territories of the two countries and of making the optimum utilization of the water resources of their region by joint efforts,

RECOGNISING that the need of making an interim arrangement for sharing of the at Farakka in a spirit of mutual accommodation and the need for a solution of the problem of augmenting the flows of the Ganges are in the mutual interests of the peoples of the two countries.

BEING desirous of finding a fair solution of the question before them, without the rights and entitlements of either country other than those covered by this Agreement, establishing any general principles of law or precedent,

HAVE AGREED AS FOLLOWS:

A. Arrangements for sharing of the waters of the Ganges at Farakka.

ARTICLE I

The quantum of waters agreed to be released by India to Bangladesh will be at Farakka.

ARTICLE II

(i) The sharing between Bangladesh and India of the Ganges waters at Farakka from the 1st January to the 31st May every year will be with reference to the quantum shown in column 2 of the Schedule annexed hereto which is based on 75 percent availability calculated from the recorded flows of the Ganges at Farakka from 1948 to 1973.

(ii) India shall release to Bangladesh waters by 10-day periods in quantum shown in column 4 of the Schedule:

Provided that if the actual availability at Farakka of the Ganges waters during day period is higher or lower than the quantum shown in column 2 of the Schedule it shall be shared in the proportion applicable to that period;

Provided further that if during a particular 10-day period, the Ganges flows at Farakka come down to such a level that the share of Bangladesh is lower than 80 percent value shown in column 4, the release of waters to Bangladesh during that 10-day period not fall below 80 percent of the value shown in column 4.

ARTICLE III

The waters released to Bangladesh at Farakka under Article I shall not be reduced at Farakka except for reasonable uses of waters, not exceeding 200 cusecs, by India between the point on the Ganges where both its banks are in Bangladesh.

ARTICLE IV

A Committee consisting of the representatives nominated by the two Governments (hereinafter called the Joint Committee) shall be constituted. The Joint Committee shall set up suitable teams at Farakka and Hardinge Bridge to observe and record at Farakka the daily flows below Farakka Barrage and in the Feeder Canal, as well as at Hardinge Bridge.

ARTICLE V

The Joint Committee shall decide its own procedure and method of functioning.

ARTICLE VI

The Joint Committee shall submit to the two Governments all data collected by it and shall also submit a yearly report to both the Governments.

ARTICLE VII

The Joint Committee shall be responsible for implementing the arrangements contained in this part of the Agreement and examining any difficulty arising out of the implementation of the above arrangements and of the operation of Farakka Barrage. Any difference or dispute arising in this regard, if not resolved by the Joint Committee, shall be referred to a panel of an equal number of Bangladeshi and Indian experts nominated by the two Governments. If the difference or dispute still remains unresolved, it shall be referred to the two Governments which shall meet urgently at the appropriate level to resolve it by mutual discussion and failing that by such other arrangements as they may mutually agree upon.

B. Long-Term Arrangements

ARTICLE VIII

The two Governments recognize the need to cooperate with each other in finding a solution to the long-term problem of augmenting the flows of the Ganges during the dry season.

ARTICLE IX

The Indo-Bangladesh Joint Rivers Commission established by the two Governments in 1972 shall carry out investigation and study of schemes relating to the augmentation of the dry season flows of the Ganges, proposed or to be proposed by either Government with a view to finding a solution which is economical and feasible. It shall submit its recommendations to the two Governments within a period of three years.

ARTICLE X

The two Governments shall consider and agree upon a scheme or schemes, taking into account the recommendations of the Joint Rivers Commission, and take necessary measures to implement or them as speedily as possible.

ARTICLE XI

Any difficulty, difference or dispute arising from or with regard to this part of the Agreement, if not resolved by the Joint Rivers Commission, shall be referred to the two Governments which shall meet urgently at the appropriate level to resolve it by mutual discussion.

C. Review and Duration

ARTICLE XII

The provisions of this Agreement will be implemented by both parties in good faith. During the period for which the Agreement continues to be in force in accordance with Article XV of the Agreement, the quantum of waters agreed to be released to Bangladesh at Farakka in accordance with this Agreement shall not be reduced.

ARTICLE XIII

The Agreement will be reviewed by the two Governments at the expiry of three years from the date of coming into force of this Agreement. Further reviews shall take place six months before the expiry of this Agreement or as may be agreed upon between the two Governments.

ARTICLE XIV

The review or reviews referred to in Article XIII shall entail consideration of the working impact, implementation and progress of the arrangements contained in parts A and B of this Agreement.

ARTICLE XV

This Agreement shall enter into force upon signature and shall remain in force for a period of 5 years from the date of its coming into force. It may be extended further for a specified period by mutual agreement in the light of the review or reviews referred to in Article XIII.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF the undersigned, being duly authorised thereto by the respective governments, have signed this Agreement. Done in duplicate at Dacca on the 5th November, 1977 in the Bengali, Hindi and English languages. In the event of any conflict between the texts, the English text shall prevail.

Rear Admiral Musharraf Husain Khan
Chief of Naval Staff and
Member, President's Council of Advisers

Surjit Singh Barnala
Minister for Agriculture and Irrigation,
Government of the Republic of India.
in-charge of the Ministry of
Communications,

Flood Control, Water Resources and Power,
Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh.

SCHEDULE

[Vide Article II (i)1

Sharing of waters at Farakka between the 1st January and the 31st May every year.

Period		Flows reaching Farraka (based on 75% availability from observed data (1948-73).	Withdrawal by India at Farraka	Release to Bangladesh
		Cusecs	Cusecs	Cusecs
January	1-10	98,500	40,000	58,500
	11-20	89,750	38,500	51,250
	21-31	82,500	35,000	47,500
February	1-10	79,250	33,000	46,250
	11-20	74,000	31,500	42,500
	21-28/29	70,000	30,750	39,250
March	1-10	65,250	26,750	38,5000
	11-20	63,500	25,500	38,000
	21-30	61,000	25,000	36,000
April	1-10	59,000	24,000	35,000
	11-20	55,500	20,750	34,750
	21-30	55,000	20,500	34,500
May	1-10	56,500	21,500	35,000
	11-20	59,250	24,000	35,250
	21-31	65,500	26,750	38,750

The above Ganges Water treaty was under stress and strain from both the countries. Mrs. Indira Gandhi, on returning to power in January 1980, by and large, brought back the indo-Bangladesh Ganges water treaty to an antagonistic level because anti-Indian propaganda was then at the peak in Bangladesh. As a result, she refused to continue the 1977 Farakka pact and excluded Nepal from participating any measure to augment Ganges water treaty in longest time frame.

In Bangladesh a crisis situation was seen when General Ziaur Rahman was assassinated in Chittagong in 1981. The most anti-Indian chauvinistic leader Ziaur Rahman compelled Indian Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi to go away from Indian traditional doctrine of bilateralism and as a result the issue of Farakka became complicated. However,

From the Indian side, various commentators on India's stand on bilateralism argued that to refrain from superpower intervention in this matter, this regional issue may be negotiated by means of its inclusion in the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (S.A.A.R.C).

The 1977 agreement regarding distribution of water between India and Bangladesh did not last long. After the completion of five year it expired in November 1982. As a result, both the countries felt its necessary to make a Memorandum of Understanding (M.O.U) regarding Ganges water distribution and the MOU was signed on 7th October, 1982 by foreign minister of Bangladesh and India, A.R.S Doha and P.V. Narashima Roy respectively for two years during president Hussien Muhammad Ershad's visit to India. But after that, three MOUs were signed in 1983, 1984 and 22nd November, 1985 for three years. The MOU did not mentioned the clause relating to the sharing of water and as visualized in 1977 agreement regarding the feasibility of distribution of water was however followed. Now, the Bangladesh Government make a new proposal that India should construct a storage dam in the Indo-Nepal border region while India wanted that a canal be constructed across Bangladesh linking the Brahmaputra river basin into Ganges, but, unfortunately, the two proposals did not materialized for the lack of political consciousness. There are obvious reason behind this.

The Government then thought to make temporary agreement regarding the issue. With this end in mind the then Indian Prime Minister Mr. Rajiv Gandhi and the president Hussien Muhammad Ershad of Bangladesh met in 1986, but ,their proposal in the form of joint apprise were rejected by Nepal who did not support the two governments scheme for building a storage reservoir in Nepal. After the MOU of 1985 lapsed in 1985 there was no agreement or MOU between the two countries for several years for political unrest in Bangladesh.

It is clear that the 1977 agreement where 34000-55000 cusec of water, a generous distribution of water to Bangladesh did not materialize for a long time. Hence, the temporary agreement of water distribution remained stopped. The 1985 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) expired in 1985. After that Bangladesh faced a havoc flood in 1987-1988. As a result, the attention of the two Governments now shifted from water sharing to flood control. A task force was created as a result of the summit between the two heads of states and they were able to provide short term measure. It appears from this that, no serious effort was made to enter into a permanent settlement for distribution of river water between the two countries.²⁵⁴

²⁵⁴Tabassum Shaista, "Indo Bangladesh Treaty on Farakka Barage and International Law Application" **Pakistan Horizen**, Vol 56, No 3, July 2003, p.p- 54-56.

Now, in respect of sharing of water the river Teesta comes in fore. The Teesta river originates from Teesta Kangse Glacier about 7,068 meters (23,189ft.) height and flow southward through gorges and rapids in the Sikkim Himalaya. It flows through Sikkim, West Bengal and Bangladesh where after coursing through about 45 km of irrigable land merges with Brahmaputra river or Jamuna when it enters into Bangladesh and ends in the Bay of Bengal. It is an important irrigation source for paddy for farmers in both the countries. The river is flanked by white sand which is used by the construction industry in the region.²⁵⁵

The Teesta river water dispute began when West Bengal Government constructed barrage on the Teesta river in 1979 mainly for irrigation purpose. Bangladesh Government immediately opposed it. It argued that the major rice producing areas of Bangladesh especially the 'rice bowl' Rangpur region of Bangladesh lie in the Teesta and Brahmaputra river basin. Hence, the construction of barrage leads to scarcity of water for irrigation and low rice production.

To pacify Bangladesh India started negotiation of the issue in 1983 and an Ad-hoc arrangement on water sharing was concluded between India and Bangladesh. Since the upper riparian country-India controls the flow of water in the Bangladesh from the Teesta barrage at Gazaldoba, constructed to provide water to the Northern part of West Bengal. Bangladesh constructed a barrage down stream at Dalia in Lalmonirhat district which supplies water from agriculture and irrigation to draught prone areas of Northern Bangladesh. Then it was argued by Bangladesh Government that the construction of Gazaldoba barrage and the diversion of water have drastically reduced water availability at Dalia barrage particularly in the dry season.²⁵⁶

In terms of Ad-hoc arrangement both India and Bangladesh were allocated 39% and 36% water flow respectively. The remaining 25 per cent Ad-hoc sharing of water demanded by Bangladesh on equitable basis. The West Bengal Government, quite reasonably, pointed out that this demand of Bangladesh Government refuses to meet the demand because it will dry out the Northern part of West Bengal. It was also predicted by India that it was to face water scarcity by 2025.

²⁵⁵Dr. mital Aruna R, "Indo-Bangladesh water sharing issues", **international journal of Humanities and Science Research**, Volume-2, Issue-11, November 2016, pp-7-11.

²⁵⁶ Ibid.

Under this situation the Government constructed a joint river water commission in order to collect hydrological data. It was also empowered to suggest rational method for water sharing. This commission recommended to increase Bangladesh's share on the ground that West Bengal's barrage is very close to Bangladesh border (nearly 19k.m).Some water will penetrate underground and benefit both the countries.

Teesta is not the only issue. Sharing of the river water between India and Bangladesh on other rivers, particularly Feni as well as Manu, Muhuri, Khowai, Gumti, Dharla and Dudhkumar all got stalled as a result of India's vacillating attitude particularly West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee's stand on the issue is contrary to arrive at an amicable settlement, opined some commentators on Testa water dispute.

In fact, the Teesta issue has turned Indo-Bangladesh relations into an impasse that can not be easily surmountable. Bangladesh has 57cross Boundary Rivers of which 54 are shared with India and the remaining 3 with Myanmar. Any change in the flow of any of the 54 rivers shared by Bangladesh and India is bound to have an adverse impact on Bangladesh's economy, society, environment and even polity.Imtiaz Ahmed²⁵⁷in his paper, 'Teesta, Tipaimukh and River Linking: Danger to Bangladesh-India Relations', has rightly pointed out that Bangladesh being a riverine and a lower riparian country remains sensitive to the matters of water whether inland or maritime.

If Teesta dispute remains unsolved the issue will become worrisome for Bangladesh.In fact, the district being affected for shortage of water in Bangladesh as well as in North Bengal will create a problem because the people of the concerned district of both the countries depend on agriculture. The first and foremost is that India's North Eastern strategic corridor makes Bangladesh vital for India. The security of North Eastern Indian states is widely affected by Bangladesh's policies and activities. A hegemonic stance by India would have significant important on the Indo-Bangladesh bilateral relations. Therefore, India should rely on an institutional doctrine with greater involvement with smaller and weaker neighbouring states with the aim to develop friendly relations with them. It would be better to adopt a more feasible approach that would be constituted by an integrated collaborative and sustainable management of all shared rivers including Teesta.

²⁵⁷ Ahmed Imtiaz, 'Teesta, Tipaimukh and River Linking: Danger to Bangladesh-India Relations', **Economic and Political Weekly**, Vol. 47, No. 16, April 21, 2012, pp- 51-53

Tin-Bigha Corridor

The Tin-Bigha corridor is very tiny in size; under the 1974 accord between Mrs. Indira Gandhi and Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, India agreed only to lease in perpetuity to Bangladesh an area of approximately 178 meters by 85 meters near Tin Bigha to connect Bangladesh's mainland with its enclave Dahagram. The agreement on the terms of the lease was reached in 1982. Only in 1992, it was implemented.

South Talpatti Land Issue

South Talpatti, popularly known as 'New Moore Island' situated in the Bay of Bengal. The issue of sovereignty was also a part of the larger dispute over the Radcliffe Award methodology of settling the maritime boundary between India and Bangladesh. The Hariabhanga River's mouth was only two kilometres (1.2 miles) away from the island. The appearance of the island was detected by an American satellite in 1974 that indicated it to have an area of 2,500 square metres (27,000 sq ft). Later other remote sensing studies revealed that the land had steadily grown to a size of roughly 10,000 square metres (110,000 square feet) during low tide, including a number of typically submerged shoals. The island was situated in the shallow of Bay of Bengal, just south of the Hariabhanga river, which ran between Bangladesh's Satkhira region and India's South 24 Parganas area. This tiny new deltaic island was discovered by the U.S satellite, which India calls 'New Moore' and Bangladesh calls South Talpatti, and became a new dispute in the maritime boundary in 1979. Bangladesh demanded the land as its own area. To solve this issue both the countries began to talk in 1979. In May 1979 Indian first non-Congress Prime Minister Mr. Morarji Morarji Desai agreed with the demand of Deputy Prime Minister of Ziaur Rahman's Government, who had called on him to hold a joint survey. However, India changed her attitude over the issue of the South Talpatti, when the new Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi came into power in 1980. She claimed that the island belonged to India. New Moore is a 5.2 km island on which India ascertained her claim after providing Bangladesh with relevant information. India erected a number of pillars and hosted the Indian National flag on the island on 12th March, 1980. Since then the Bangladesh Government raised anti-India campaign in full swing and started collecting data and information to depict her claim over the ownership of the island. Bangladesh insisted on joint survey which India declines to accept. After Zia's visit Prime Minister Morarji Desai told a press conference that Zia's visit to New Delhi has

“marked a prominent milestone in the process of mending our fences and giving a new turn to the wheels of progress.”²⁵⁸

Despite Bangladesh and India's claims to the island, neither country established a permanent settlement there due to the island's geological instability caused by silt deposits in a delta that floods annually. According to the Radcliffe Award, which established the East Pakistan and India boundary in 1947, the 'mid-channel flow' principle or 'thalweg doctrine' is generally recognized as the international boundary on river borders between the two countries. India reportedly hoisted the Indian flag on the island in 1981 and established a temporary base for Border Security Forces (B.S.F), regularly visiting with naval gunships. India claimed that a 1981 in-depth survey of the water depths revealed India's preferred main channel and main flow on the island's Eastern side. On the other hand, the Bangladesh Government claimed, during Ziaur Rahman's visit to India in the late 1980s, that the data provided clearly showed the main current flow on the western side of the island's location, thus favoring Bangladesh.²⁵⁹ The dispute was settled in July 2014 by a final verdict in Bangladesh's favour, not subject to appeal, based on a case filed by the Government of Bangladesh in October 2009. The matter was resolved on 7th July, 2014, when the Permanent Court of Arbitration (P.C.A) delivered a verdict in the 'Bay of Bengal maritime boundary arbitration between Bangladesh and India' case.

Pro-Mujib Guerilla in India

Kader Siddiqui popularly known as tiger Siddiqui was a devoted disciple and the leader of the guerilla who wanted to take revenge and to overthrow General Zia's Government in Bangladesh. The guerilla Bahani were trained by India and Mrs. Indira Gandhi was providing necessary economic assistance to them. Ziaur Rahman accused the Indians of arming and alleged that BSF helped them to infiltrate into Bangladesh to attack the northern border outposts. In the 6th parliamentary election in India when the Janata Government headed by Mr. Morarj Desai came into power, he projected a new approach in foreign policy. He introduced 'Bilateral Beneficialism' by which Morarji Desai wants to normalize the relations between the two neighbouring countries. For this purpose he met with General Zia in London on 10th June 1977 during the meeting of the Commonwealth Nations, where Mr. Morarj Desai promised to Zia not to provide any more help to Kader Siddiqui but

²⁵⁸ Parua, Pranab Kumar. **The Ganga: Water use in the Indian Subcontinent**: Springer, New Delhi, 2006, p-158.

²⁵⁹ "Sovereignty of Spouth Talpatti island", Daily Star, 1st October, 2003

refused to deport Kader Siddiqui to Bangladesh. This incident hampered the bilateral relations between the two countries for sometimes.

Illegal migration and border issues

In South Asia, migration has become a major burning issue. This burning issue shapes the nature of Indo-Bangladesh bilateral relations. Following the 1947 partition of the Indian subcontinent, South Asia emerged as a clear zone of citizens where they lacked full safeguard. South Asia saw a lot of state dominance and neglected the issue of minority groups. As a result, the minority did not have the authority to overrule the majority. A series of severe executive actions were taken against those minorities in such areas where they became revolutionary to establish their civil and political rights. As a result, a complicated situation developed in which the government had to interact with a variety of non-state actors who, by hook or by crook, imposed their own conceptions of nationality, justice, and entitlement on the statute books. As a result, the civil and political classes continued to influence citizenship in South Asia, making it a complicated phenomenon. In this perspective, migrants remained the glue that held India and Pakistan together. Crossed migrations had an impact on both the countries, and this pattern continued to dominate the migration landscape in South Asia. After India and Pakistan gained independence, the issue of citizenship was a major concern. Millions of people chose their final nationality by crossing and re-crossing the border that separates Pakistan and India between 1947 and 1949. Hindus and Sikhs, on the other hand, who were born in the part of India that later became Pakistan and moved to India had to be given citizenship rights in the new India. Muslims, on the other hand, who left India to become Pakistani citizens had to be excluded. There was also the case of persons of Indian origin who had lived abroad for a long time in many countries for many years. When India was a free nation, they might want to stay there permanently. In light of all of these factors, the Indian Parliament enacted the Citizenship Act in 1955 and included Article 5-11 in Part-II of the Indian Constitution. Articles 5-11 of the constitution attempted to resolve citizenship issues between India and Pakistan. However, following independence, major issues arose regarding citizenship rights in Indian states, particularly in Assam, West Bengal and Punjab, where local residents demanded the deportation of illegal migrants in order to preserve their own identity. An attempt has been made to determine the cause of migration, particularly from Bangladesh to the Indian states of Assam, Mizoram, Nagaland, West Bengal and Tripura. For this purpose, Assam was confronted by a separatist movement led by the National Democratic Front of Bodoland (N.D.F.B) and the United Liberation Front of Assam

(U.L.F.A).Based on their ethnicity and regionalism, each of these groups demanded separate land for themselves to protect their own rights and identity.

During Mujib's reign, migration Problem which began on 25th March, 1971, when East Pakistan gained independence and Bangladesh was established as an infant nation state. The minority community that had been living in East Pakistan for a considerable amount of time was significantly affected by the establishment of the new nation state of Bangladesh in South Asia. However, the founding father of Bangladesh Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and his administration had a tremendous impact on society at the first phase. Muslims make up 80 percent of the population in Bangladesh, while Hindus, Christians, Buddhists, and tribals make up the remaining 20 percent. Pakistan and India formed the separate Union following an agreement based on Mohammad Ali Jinnah's "Two Nation Theory," which stipulated that Hindus in Pakistan would live as a minority and that the government would safeguard their rights properly. In a similar vein, the Hindu majority areas of Punjab would be included in India, and the rights of the minority Punjabis who remained in Pakistan would be protected by the Pakistani government.

However, the irony of the situation is that the Pakistani Government did not safeguard the rights of Hindu and Sikh minorities when Pakistan was established on 14th August, 1947. Minority people's freedom was violated, and as a result, they were tortured and their property became enemy property. As a consequence of this, Hindus began to migrate to Jessore, Khulna, Assam, Tripura, Meghalaya, and other nearby districts. Even the Chakma tribes, who lived in the Chittagong hill regions of Bangladesh, were tortured and forced to leave East Pakistan (now Bangladesh).

Officially, Bangladesh experienced a worse situation in 1971. From 1951 onward, all migrants to India were illegal, but the flow of migrants continued from 1951-1971. In addition, a significant number of Muslims who had fled Assam during the communal riots that occurred between February and March 1950 returned to the state, but only a small number of Hindus went back to East Pakistan.

The genocide in East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) and the ruthless and widespread killings of Hindus, particularly in the heart of Dhaka, horrified the international media, who reported that Hindus were brutally and mercilessly killed in the streets of Dhaka and the many rural districts of East Pakistan (now Bangladesh).

10 million homeless refugees arrived in India, particularly in Assam, West Bengal, and Tripura, following the 1971 genocide committed by the Pakistani army along with Jamat-e-Islami and its collaborators Al Badr, Al Shams, Razakars etc. in East Pakistan. After the Liberation war, it was anticipated that these refugees would return to their homeland Bangladesh. In fact, following liberation, the majority of these refugees returned to Bangladesh, but one million illegal refugees, mostly Hindus, remained in Assam and some parts of West Bengal.²⁶⁰

In fact, Migration is a complex process which is responsible for many factors. Initially when migrants first arrive in a new country, the country's original inhabitants become irritated, which have negative impact on their lives. If this migration trend continues unabated, there will be a problem that causes the people of the country to be unhappy. "Migrants are motivated by the 'push' and 'pull' factors of possible origin, destination areas and are affected to go—other things being equal—to areas where previous streams have proceeded where in the network of their predecessors make the migration process easier," asserts a number of authors who have written about migrations. According to one definition 'Migration is a permanent change in place of residence by crossing specified administrative or political boundaries.' Persons are considered to be migrant if they meet these two requirements. However, immigrants are not refugees. "a person who owing to well founded fear is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or owing to such fear is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country" is the definition of a refugee provided by the 1951 United Nations Convention on Refugees. Myron Wiener, a famous writer, defines 'migrant' as undesirable individuals who are disliked by the host community. On the other hand, 'refugees' are people who have fled from oppressive regimes or who have been rejected by their own government. However, in my research the term 'migrant' has been used to encompass both meanings. Another thing to keep in mind is that migrants rarely travel a great deal of distance at once. Their movement is frequently gradual; at first, they relocate to locales that are culturally and geographically compatible with themselves. However, this gradual outflow can eventually cross international border.²⁶¹

Migration is common problem in South Asia. It is caused by a variety of factors, including overpopulation, poverty, political unrest, natural disasters, environmental

²⁶⁰Hazarika, Sanjoy, 'Illegal Migration from Bangladesh: Problem and long term perspective', **Dialogue**, Volume.3, No.3, pp.25-26.

²⁶¹Hazarika, Sanjoy, op.cit, pp-26-31

degradation, ethnic and linguistic conflict, artificial borders and religious intolerance. Migration is a major issue in South Asia, particularly in India and Bangladesh, where it is most prevalent. It is a remarkable and intricate phenomenon of human migration. For instance, Chakmas from Bangladesh have fled to India, Tamils from India have sought refuge in India from Sinhalese persecution in Sri Lanka, and south Bhutanese of Nepali descent have moved to Nepal.

The flow of refugees between India and Pakistan is one of the most significant issues associated with migration. According to the official data, the exodus of 15 million Hindus and Muslims from 1947 to 1948, 1 million Sri Lankan Indians and Tamils from 1954 to the present, and 1 million Burmese Indians from 1954 to 1965 were all refugees.

India faced a significant socio-economic and cultural challenge as a result of this chaotic influx of migrants into the Indian Territory. Migration from Pakistan to India has continued unabated since partition. When Bangladesh was established, this migration pattern persisted. Since 1971, ongoing illegal migration from Bangladesh affected the adjacent Indian states of West Bengal, Tripura, and Assam. The migrants arrived in these states and began living there without valid identification.

West Bengal, which shares a border with Bangladesh that is more than 2,200 kilometers long. The state first acknowledged that at least 1.02 million Bangladeshis had overstayed their official visas between 1972 and 1998 in response to a writ petition filed by the All India Forum of Civil Liberty against the Government of India and others. In point of fact, the central Government's most recent population register programmes estimated that 40 lakh people in Assam are illegal migrants. The fact of the matter is that the Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi-Chief Minister Profullo Mahanto's Assam Accord was made in 1985, which stated that the list of illegal migration, whether from Bangladesh or elsewhere, would be enlisted and that they would be deported accordingly. This has caused a furore among political parties, who demanded the cancellation of their population register out of pure political motivation. However, the U.P.A Government led by Dr.Manmohan Sing did not take this government's position seriously, and the matter remained confined to the official record. The BJP Government repeatedly cited this example and had hinted that illegal migrants would be listed in every state and they should be deported. If implemented, the political motivations for migration may have disastrous effects on the state's citizens. The baffling issue of migration can now be broken down into the following categories:

Socio-Economic factor: In fact, petroleum, forest products, and tea were the primary sources of revenue for the North Eastern Region. For the majority of people, agriculture is their primary source of income. As a result of massive illegal migration from Bangladesh a smaller portion of an already limited cake is reduced. Migrants initially establish themselves in riverine regions and acquire agricultural land from the locals. As a result, for a limited amount of land, tribals occasionally become estranged from their ancestral tribal land, resulting in ethnic conflict.

Political Factor: The political repercussions of a constant influx are even more extensive. "On account of illegal migration, Bangladesh's demographic border intruded upon India's political border over a 10-20 km deep area," General Shanker Roychoudhury, M.P., stated in the Rajya Sabha in April 2000. According to a survey, Bangladeshi migrants influence the election results in West Bengal. For instance, Bangladeshi immigrants decide the outcome of polls in 52 of the 292 Assembly constituencies in West Bengal that are solely based on political interest. In a similar vein, a study unambiguously demonstrated that Bangladeshi migrants can influence the outcomes of provincial elections in another 100 Assembly Constituencies.

Lt. Gen. S.K. Sinha had aptly summarized the strategic implications of the massive influx into the North Eastern Region. Gen. S.K. Sinha, the Governor of Assam at the time, in his report to the president in 1998. He says, "Demographic invasion of Assam may result in the loss of geo-strategically vital for lower Assam districts." A demand for their merger with Bangladesh is only a matter of time; international Islamic fundamentalism may serve as the driving force. In his book 'Eastern Pakistan', Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, a pro-India leader, once said, "This possibility is far-fetched for its economy and population." Because East Pakistan must have sufficient land for its expansion... it must include Assam to be financially and economically strong, states Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.²⁶² The long-cherished design of greater East Pakistan making inroads into the strategic road link of Assam with the rest of the country, can lead to severing the entire land mass of the North East, with all of its rich resources, from the rest of the country, he stated. From a military and strategic perspective, the 'chicken-neck' popularly known as 'narrow siliguri corridor' is very important. This belt travels along the borders of West Bengal, covers the majority of the 'chicken neck' area, connects itself with Nepal, and travels along Assam, all the way up to the Cachhar area. The

²⁶²Cited in the report of Assam Governor, S.K. Sinha to the President M.K. Narayanan in 1998.

rampart growth of alien Muslim population and the subsequent growth of hundreds of Madrasa along the border districts of Assam and West Bengal amount to demographic borders of Bangladesh intruding upon the political border of India by 50 to 20 kilometers. Having such a population with questionable ties to either Bangladesh or China along the borders would be a major cause for concern in the event of an armed conflict.

Migration is unquestionably a significant issue in bilateral relations between India and Bangladesh. A problem that could not be easily fixed in Bangladesh was brought about by the volatile nature of politics in the country and the disagreements that have arisen between the Awami League (A.L.) and the Bangladesh National Party (B.N.P.) over this issue. During the four-party coalition government led by the Bangladesh National Party (B.N.P.), the radical influence on Bangladeshi society grew. The migrants who entered India at that time also became a convenient entry point for Bangladeshi and Pakistani terrorists. In fact, the Sheikh Hasina Government has been attempting to remove this trend by making Bangladesh free from a hub for ISI activities. Her Government is taking stern action against Islamist groups and North Eastern insurgent groups, but India is wary of these groups and terrorists in Bangladesh because, under the guise of illegal migration, they may enter the bordering states of India, particularly West Bengal, Assam, Manipur, and Tripura. The Indo-Bangladesh relations may suffer as a result of this possibility of a migration-related issue. The illegal migration problem in Assam has recently become a hotly debated political issue in relation to the National Population Register.

Since its inception, Assam has been confronted with serious ethnic issues. The oldest state in the North East, Assam has a long history and rich culture. It is referred to as the land of blue hills, green valleys, and majestic streams and rivers. In the past, Assam was known as 'Kamrupa', and its capital was Pragjyotispur.²⁶³ The administration under Ahom was well-organized, their revenue collection was fair, and their ministerial council was effective. The Mughal, eager to expand their kingdom eastward, were drawn to Assam under the Ahoms. Assam had successfully resisted Moghul rule, unlike the rest of India. The first Muslims to settle Assam were brought there by repeated Mughal invasions. Assamese culture and daily life well adapted to the Muslim settlers. Additionally, some of them had gained the trust of the Ahom kings and were given official positions. In addition, Rudra Singha, the king of Ahom, had imported Muslim workers with expertise in a variety of trades, including blacksmithing,

²⁶³Hazarika, Sanjoy, 'Strangers of the Mist', Viking, New Delhi, 1994, p-41.

architecture, Persian translation, tailoring, painting, drum beating, and other Muslim activities.²⁶⁴ Muslims were regarded as 'indigenous' and not as distinct from the Assamese identity. More than one hundred and fifty years ago, in 1826, when the British conquered Assam, the story of the Assamese ethnic conflict began. The British, who gained control of Assam through the Treaty of Yandaboo in 1826, shaped the state's history the most. Assam's religion and language clearly came from India. The historical fact was that the Assamese people spoke Assamese, a language of Indo-Aryan origin. The Ahoms, a Thai tribe, arrived in upper Assam in the 13th century via Burma (now Myanmar), intermarried with the locals, adopted the Assamese language, culture, and religion, and converted to Hinduism when they were forced to do so. Hindu Vaishnavism spread throughout the Assamese Bramaputra river valley in the 16th century. The British East India Company, which ruled India during this century and had its capital in Calcutta, Assam, was incorporated into the Bengal Presidency in 1838 as a result of the British East India Company's expansion of its business interests throughout the entire North Eastern Region and its subsequent expansion into the entire North East. The influx of migrants from nearby Bengal into Assam was largely caused by British rule. Due to their extensive exposure to British rule and rich cultural heritage, the Bangalee migrants were highly educated and fluent in English. As a result, the British government decided that this group was better suited for jobs as clerks, accountants, and artisans. Later, a few Bangalees with literacy entered Assam to work as lawyers, doctors, engineers²⁶⁵ and educators. Assam was given the authority of a Chief Commissioner and its capital was moved to Shillong (now in Meghalaya) as a result of the British government's decision in 1874 to separate the state from Bengal in order to better govern. The British divided Bengal, a province with a lot of people, in 1905 into a Bangalee Hindu province in the west and a new province called 'Eastern Bengal and Assam.' The British's decision to choose 'Bango Bhango' was fiercely opposed by Assamese and Bangalee Hindus. Assam was reconstituted as a separate province in 1912, with the inclusion of Sylhet, a district with a majority of Bangalee Muslims, and Cachar, a district with a majority of Bangalee Hindus, in it. Until 1947, when a referendum transferred a significant portion of Sylhet to Pakistan, these boundaries remained unchanged. As a result, Assam's tribal-populated hill regions were divided into separate states. As a result, today's Assam is only a portion of what was once

²⁶⁴Dev, Bimal, J, and Lahiri, Dilip. K, '**Assam Muslims. Politics and Cohesion**', Mittal Publication., New Delhi, 1983, p-2.

²⁶⁵Rafiabadi, H.N, '**Assam, From Agitation to Accord**', Genuine Publication and Media Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, 1985, p-10.

known as 'Assam' a few decades ago.²⁶⁶ Assam has been the subcontinent's fastest-growing region this century. When the British established tea plantations in the hilly regions, the first migration wave into Assam began shortly before the middle of the 19th century. The British brought in labourers from the tribal region of southern Bihar because they were unable to persuade Assamese cultivators, the majority of whom owned their own land, to work as tea pickers in the plantations. An influx of educated Bangalee Hindus into professional and administrative service positions came along with this migration.²⁶⁷ The Ahom ruling structure was torn down by the British, Bengali became the official language, and Bangalee Hindus were hired to run the administrative services smoothly. At the turn of the 20th century, Assamese nationalists were at odds with the Bengalis and the British, both of whom were regarded as foreign rulers, respectively. One-fourth of the Brahmaputra river valley's population, according to the 1891 census, were migrants. As a result, the indigenous population of Assam today may not even be 9.5 million, but rather 7.5-8 million. After 1900, Bangalee Muslims from East Bengal moved into the Brahmaputra river valley, bringing the largest number of people with them. East Bengal was less populous than Assam. At the south bank of the Brahmaputra, Bangalee Muslims occupied thousands of acres and cleared vast tracts of dense jungle. In this manner, Bangalee Muslims established themselves on the south bank of the Brahmaputra and occupied fertile lowlands that eventually became submerged by flood water. Since Mymensingh was the most populous district in East Bengal (now Bangladesh), the relevant data showed that the majority of people who came from Mymensingh settled here.²⁶⁸ As many as 1,18,000 migrants, or 20 percent of the population, had settled in the Goalpara district alone by 1911. The Muslim migrants advanced further up the Brahmaputra river valley over the next two decades. Even though some Muslims had established themselves in Assam as early as the 13th century, the state's religious and linguistic composition was rapidly altered by this new influx. Other migrants moved to Assam as traders, merchants, bankers, moneylenders, and small industrialists as Assam's connections to the rest of India grew. Not only did these diverse migrations alter the ethnic composition of Assam, Additionally, they contributed to the development of a political climate in which issues of ethnicity and migration took center stage. The state government

²⁶⁶Weiner, Myron , 'The Political Demography of Assam's Anti-Immigrant Movement', **Population and Development Review**, Vol. 9, No. 2, June, 1983, p.282.

²⁶⁷Weiner, Myron, '**Sons of the Soil: Migration and Ethnic Conflict in India**' Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978, pp.75-143.

²⁶⁸A detailed account of the migration from East Bengal and the reasons for it are described in the Census of India, 1931, Volume. 3, Assam, Calcutta: Government of India, Central Publications Branch, 1932.

was viewed as a tool by various ethnic groups for expanding, securing, or reshaping their place in the economy and social system. Bangalee Hindus consolidated their positions in the educational system, the professions, and within the state administration themselves during the 19th and early 20th centuries by utilizing their dominance in government administration. When electoral politics were introduced in the 1930s and 1940s, the majority of Bangalee Muslims took control of the state government. They then tried to use their position to encourage more Bangalee Muslims to migrate from East Bengal, strengthen their political position, and push for Assam to be included in the proposed Muslim majority state of Pakistan.²⁶⁹ The Muslim League's request for Assam was rejected by the British government, but they were willing to divide Assam by handing over Sylhet district to Pakistan. As soon as this large Muslim-populated region was removed from Assam, Muslims lost their power over the state government. Assam's Hindu middle class took control of the government machinery of the newly formed independent India after the 1947 partition. In this way, it was a fact that the Assamese were back in power for the first time in 150 years. As soon as the Assamese tried to establish economic and social equality with the Bangalee Hindu middle class and vigorously asserted the primacy of their cultural identity, in point of fact, Hindu middle-class people are competing with Assamese for jobs in the private sector and administrative services. The struggle that resulted in ethnic conflict for some time was caused by this competition between the Assamese middle class and the Bangalee Hindu middle class. However, the self-created state boundaries were dismantled for the sake of ground reality, and a number of Assamese groups turned to the central government for help securing their rights and interests.

The central Government decided that Assamese should be the state's official language and that 'sons of the soil', or 'Assamese Bhumiputra', should be hired in the state administrative services. The government appointed Assamese teachers to the schools in accordance with this policy. Additionally, instruction in schools, colleges, and universities was provided in Assamese. The Assamese won the support of two migrant communities, Bangalee Muslims and tea plantation workers, in this campaign to assert their culture and increase employment opportunities for the Assamese middle class. Both cast votes for the Congress party that was dominated by Assamese and declared to the census enumerators that Assamese was their native language. From 1952-1977, the Congress Party easily won every

²⁶⁹ Guha, Amalendu, '**Planter Raj to Swaraj: Freedom Struggle and Electoral Politics in Assam, 1826-1947**', New Delhi: Indian Council of Historical Research, 1977.

state assembly and parliamentary election. These two communities of immigrants served as a vote bank for politics. Assamese and local tribals violently turned against Bengali immigrants and their descendants in the early months of 1983. Many were left homeless, thousands fled the state in fear, and four thousand people were murdered mercilessly. By 1979, the political arrangement that allowed Bangalees and Assamese to live together had already broken down, and Assam has been the scene of a popular political movement against illegal immigration from Bangladesh.

The political parties of Indian states, particularly those of West Bengal, Tripura, and Assam, have been incensed by the preparation of the National Register for the purpose of identifying illegal migrants in Assam. According to the BJP, nearly two crore illegal immigrants from Bangladesh have lived in West Bengal. Possibly, it is the central Government's political vendetta. However, the ground reality is that the Indian Government has not prioritized illegal migration. In point of fact, economic factors and the Government's failure to safeguard minority communities' rights cause migration.

The Government's policy to address the issue of illegal migration has not yet been fully implemented; it was either ill-conceived or influenced by political ambitions of the ruling elite in both India and Bangladesh. The Assam Government's decision to adopt the National Register Commission's findings is undeniably correct; however, in order to finalize the list, it was necessary to exclude legitimate residents of the state. To prevent illegal migration, the B.S.F in Tripura, Bhutan, Assam, and Bangladesh must be strengthened. There should be no alteration to the cutoff date of 24th March, 1971.

The ethnic issue ought to be resolved. The state Government and the central government will work together to develop a comprehensive strategy to meet the needs of Assamese ethnic communities since ancient times. Some argue that while creating a population register is absolutely necessary in order to identify illegal migrants, resolving Assam's issues, which are frequently marred by ethnic strife, is more important.

INDIAN PRIME MINISTER MORARJI RANCHHODJI DESAI'S REGIME (1977–1979)

The Morarji Desai Government wanted to work with his small neighbour Bangladesh in every way possible to keep the region politically stable, peaceful, prosperity and developmental. Additionally, he desired to build friendly relations with Bangladesh by any means for Indian border security. Morarji Desai's 'Janata Government', the first non-

Congress government in the 6th parliamentary election, stressed the importance of maintaining friendly relationships with India's nextdoor neighbours and expressed his belief that even the smallest neighbour was important to him for national interest. His introduction of 'Beneficial Bilateralism' which had three important dimensions namely-1) personal rapport, 2) economic accommodation and political neutrality and 3) non-interference in internal affairs was the foreign policy that the new Janata Government implemented immediately. The political and economic ties between India and Bangladesh became stronger and more stable as a result of the change of Congress Government in India. On 10th June, 1977, at the heads of the Commonwealth Nations meeting in London, India's 4th Prime Minister, Morarji Desai, and Bangladesh's President, Ziaur Rahman, met for the first time to accelerate the dynamics of Indo-Bangladesh bilateral relations.²⁷⁰ At that meeting, they agreed to settle their differences. India also agreed not to allow Bangladeshis on the Indian side of the border to continue their hostile activities against the Zia Government. More than 900 of these dissidents were sent to Bangladesh as a result of this agreement. Border Security Forces (B.S.F) and Bangladesh Rifles (B.D.R) worked together to fight the insurgents as a result of this understanding. "Every attempt would be made to strengthen the relations between the two countries which began to deteriorate since the assassination of Sheikh Mujibur Rehman in 1975," the two leaders stated at the conclusion of the meeting. In 1977, the country was stabilized politically under the Zia Government, and the Desai Government in India was able to change country's foreign policy by encouraging friendly relations with its immediate neighbours. On 5th November, 1977, an agreement was reached regarding the sharing of Ganges water during the dry season. The major break through and a very encouraging step toward establishing a strong bilateral relationship based on trust and confidence was made during their tenures.²⁷¹

Ganges Water Agreement of 1977

The Ganges Water Agreement of 1977 was the most significant accomplishment during this time period (1975-1990). Despite some problems and very troubling domestic circumstances in both countries at the time, the agreement was reached. In the final week of March 1977, Morarji Desai's Janata Government, the first non-congress Government in India, took office at the center. Under the heading "beneficial bilateralism, which had three important dimensions namely personal rapport, economic accommodation, and political

²⁷⁰Muni, S. D. Major Developments in India's Foreign Policy and Relations, **International Studies**, 1978, p-96.

²⁷¹Ibid.

neutrality and non-interference in internal affairs,”the new government implemented a foreign policy of close ties with its neighbouring countries.The Janata Government began the exercise of resuming talks with the Government of Bangladesh regarding the issue of water sharing on Farakka and other issues in an effort to foster friendly relations with Bangladesh.²⁷²Three rounds of official level talks between the leaders of the two countries were held from 20thSeptember to 30thSeptember, 1977, prior to the water sharing agreement of 1977.Shri Surjeet Singh Burnala for the Government of the Republic of India and Rear Admiral Mosharraf Hussain Khan for the Government of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh negotiated and signed the agreement at the ministerial level meeting in Dhaka.The agreement was broken up into three parts: 1)a schedule,2) a side letter, and 3)15 articles.²⁷³India was required to withdraw 55,000 cusecs of water below Farakka during the lean session, when the Ganges flows at its lowest level, according to the short-term agreement.²⁷⁴A thoughtful and sympathetic view of Bangladesh’s requirements was included in this agreement. The Indian Government didn’t try to get a lot of Ganges water, which was important for the health and safety of the Calcutta port. Instead, it tried to win Bangladesh’s friendship and help by giving her some important concessions.The agreement was heavily criticized by the Indian public and press for, according to them, failing to protect India’s national interests.Admiral Mosharraf Hussain Khan, who signed the agreement on behalf of the Bangladesh Government, stated that ‘it was a historic agreement and a meaningful step of far-reaching importance in the way of finding a lasting solution to the problem.’²⁷⁵However, the leader of the main opposition party, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, criticized the agreement and stated, “By accepting a minority share in Ganges waters the Morarji Desai’s Janata Government was guilty of changing the consistent stand that India has taken prior to 1977.”Additionally, the agreement was intended more to reverse the previous Congress Government’s position than to satisfy India’s requirements and interests.It was carried out without any consideration given to the opinions of the experts.²⁷⁶In support of the agreement, Indian Prime Minister Morarji Desai stated, “it is a historic agreement of extraordinary significance and the agreement have been reached through bilateral negotiations on the basis

²⁷²Salman M. A & Kishor Uprety, ‘**Conflict and Cooperation on South Asia's International Rivers: A Legal Perspective**, World Bank Publication, New York, 2002, p-157.

²⁷³Parua, Pranab Kumar. Op.cit,p-158.

²⁷⁴Dixit J. N. ‘**Liberation and Beyond: Indo-Bangladesh Relations**’.: Konark Publishers,New Delhi, 1999,p-64.

²⁷⁵Ibid p-64.

²⁷⁶Dixit J. N, op.cit, p-308.

of accommodation and mutual good will.” In addition, he stated “that the approach and spirit that had made the agreement possible reflected its true significance.” “such an approach and spirit if applied to the larger spectrum of our relations with Bangladesh can lead to an ever-widening cooperation between the two countries both bilaterally and multilaterally and it should constitute to furtherance our objective of promoting peace and development in the sub-continent and of working together towards a better world order,” he said while expressing support for the agreement.²⁷⁷ The opposition parties launched a vehement attack on the agreement in the Lok Sabha. Chitta Basu proposed a resolution urging the House to reject the agreement because it did not provide Bhagirathi with enough water to save the Calcutta port. However, the agreement was approved by the Lok Sabha with the Janata Government’s success. Despite the countrywide criticism, the agreement was viewed as a significant confidence-building measure by both countries following Sheikh Mujibur Rahman’s 1975 departure from the honeymoon phase. The head of state of Bangladesh, Ziaur Rahman, was able to carry on negotiations to improve bilateral relations between the two countries and thanked to this agreement. As a result, Zia paid a visit to New Delhi in December 1977 to meet with Indian Prime Minister Morarji Desai and normalize the growing relations. Both leaders agreed to expedite the implementation of the 1974 land boundary agreement (L.B.A) and demonstrated a keen interest in resolving the New Moore islands dispute. India established her claim to New Moore, a 5.2-kilometer island, after providing Bangladesh with pertinent information. On 12th March, 1980, India hosted the Indian National Flag on the island and erected a number of pillars.²⁷⁸ Since then, the anti-India sentiments has intensified and the Bangladesh Government has begun gathering necessary data and information to support her claim to ownership of the island. India declines Bangladesh’s request for a joint survey. Both leaders emphasized the necessity of a long-term solution to the water issue with regard to the sharing of water at the Farakka barrage. In a press conference following Zia’s visit, Indian 4th Prime Minister Morarji Desai stated that Zia’s visit to New Delhi had “marked a prominent milestone in the process of mending our fences and giving a new turn to the wheels of progress.”²⁷⁹ On 17th April, 1979, Indian Prime Minister Morarji Desai and the Minister of External Affairs Sri Atal Bihari Vajpayee also made a trip to Dacca as a further breakthrough in the revitalization of neighbourly relations between the two

²⁷⁷ Jayapalan, N. ‘**India and Her Neighbours**’, Atlantic Publishers & Dist, New Delhi, 2000, p.p-133-134

²⁷⁸ Parua, Pranab Kumar, op.cit, p-158.

²⁷⁹ Ibid.

countries.²⁸⁰ Morarji Desai calls for more meetings and communication between Bangladesh's Border Security Forces and Indian states to figure out how to better regulate the human border. During Desai's visit, Dacca and New Delhi agreed to form committees in addition to the powerful Joint Rivers Commission (J.R.C) to devise a plan to share the waters of the Khowai and Teesta rivers and prevent erosion along the Kushiara River.²⁸¹ India agreed to import additional goods from Bangladesh during this visit, including jute, timber, paper, naphtha, rayon, newsprint, pulses, specialized textiles etc. The decision to expand cooperation through joint ventures in the fields of fertilizer, biogas, cement, and solar energy was another significant development between the two countries. In addition, India offered Dacca 200,000 tons of food grains in an emergency situation, and for this purpose an agreement was reached in May, 1979. However, the relations between Dacca and New Delhi remained tense throughout 1979 due to the influx of 20,000 Indian Muslims from West Bengal in June, following communal riots. Late in 1979, the border forces of the two countries engaged in occasional firefights at Hili, Belonia points, and across the Mahuri River.²⁸²

INDRA GANDHI'S RESURGENCE PHASE (1980-1984)

On 7th January, 1980, one day after the final vote was cast in India's 7th Parliamentary election, the headline "It's Indira Gandhi All The Way" appeared in 'The Times of India' and 'The Hindustan Times', two of the country's most prominent English Newspapers. The Janata Government headed by Morarji Desai was unable to finish the five years term, so general elections were held, which saw the Congress Party return to power in 1980. Mrs. Indira Gandhi criticized the Janata Party for its weak foreign policy and alleged that it had ignored the country's national interest shortly after taking over as Prime Minister.²⁸³ Due to her disdain for military rule, she had a negative impression of regimes that followed Mujib. She also did not like the accommodative stance that the Janata Government took toward India's next door neighbour, Bangladesh which she thought was a sellout of Indian interests. While Mrs. Indira Gandhi was critical of the Morarji Desai Government's foreign policy, particularly in South Asia, her policies toward India's neighbours changed only slightly when she took over as Prime Minister in 1980. At the end of her first term, Mrs. Indira Gandhi was

²⁸⁰ Asian Recorder. Morarji Desai's Visit, (1979, May 22- June 3), p- 3.

²⁸¹ Ibid.

²⁸² Bhasin, Avtar Singh. '**India-Bangladesh Relations Documents 1971-2002: Commerce, Economic, and Transport**', Geetika Publishers, New Delhi, 2003, pp-1394-1395.

²⁸³ Saha, Rekha. **India Bangladesh Relations.**: Minerva Associations, Calcutta, 2000, p- 66.

a little bit harsh with her next door neighbour.²⁸⁴The domestic and political shifts in Bangladesh were equally significant, as General Ziaur Rahman gained self-assurance after civilianizing his military rule through 1979's parliamentary elections. General Ziaur Rahman was well aware that India could benefit greatly from pursuing a policy of conciliation and cooperation.²⁸⁵Zia made some changes to his cabinet in order to improve bilateral relations with New Delhi. For this purpose, General Ziaur Rahman (Zia) removed Mouded Ahmed, Deputy Prime Minister and influential cabinet member who led the Bangladesh team in Ganges Water talks with Delhi under the Morarji Desai's Janata regime, to dispel India's suspicion.²⁸⁶General Ziaur Rahman (Zia) was the People's Republic of Bangladesh's first head of state to meet Mrs. Indira Gandhi and greet her cordially for her election victory.Ziaur Rahman hoped that India's attitude would change after his sudden trip to New Delhi.However, in contrast to Zia's expectations, Awami League supporters distributed sweets to express their joy at Mrs. Indira Gandhi's massive election victory.One segment of Bangladeshi society concluded as a result that India would once more interfere in the country's domestic politics.However, there were signs of improvement in the bilateral relations between the two countries over time.²⁸⁷On 20thJanuary, 1980, President Ziaur Rahman went to New Delhi to attend the conference of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (U.N.I.D.O).He had two conversations with Mrs. Indira Gandhi during his visit.At Farakka, they decided to resolve bilateral issues, particularly border issues and the sharing of Ganges waters.The Bangladesh government and its leadership felt optimistic as a result of the frequent meetings with their Indian counterparts to resolve outstanding un-resolved issues.²⁸⁸

Ziaur Rahman proposed the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (S.A.A.R.C) as a framework for multilaterally seeking solutions to various international disputes in the South Asian region. India viewed General Ziaur Rahman's (Zia) move with suspicion and distrust because its approach to resolving the conflict was bilateral rather than

²⁸⁴Singh, Nagendra Kr. '**South Asian Regionalism and Bangladesh**, Encyclopedia of Bangladesh': Anmol Publications, New Delhi, 2003, p.p-

²⁸⁵Deo, Arvind. R, "**South Asian Neighbours**", World Focus, 1991, p. 29.

²⁸⁶Nair, P. S.op.cit,pp-180-200.

²⁸⁷Saha, Rekha.,op,cit, p- 66.

²⁸⁸Singh, Kuldeep. **India and Bangladesh**.: Anmol Publications, New Delhi, 1987, pp-150-189

multilateral.²⁸⁹ India insisted that bilateral and contentious issues should be excluded from the South Asian Foreign Secretaries' preliminary meeting, which was held in Colombo on April 21-23, 1981, to discuss a Bangladesh draft paper on SAARC.

Indo-Bangladesh bilateral relations from 1975-1981 (Post-Mujib era) reveals that pragmatism replaced the emotional framework and mentality developed during the Liberation War, resulting in tensions and stresses in the two countries' bilateral relationships. In addition, the New Moore island controversy strained relations between the two countries during this phase due to the lack of progress on the issue. During this time, there were times when relations between the two countries were strained, and there were a lot of rumours that New Delhi was acting in an unreasonable way toward her next door neighbour. She was enraged by Dhaka's attempt to internationalize Ganges water issues against India's wishes, and many of the old issues were brought back to life. Bangladesh brought up the Farakka barrage issue at the conference of Islamic foreign ministers in Istanbul in May 1976. At the Non-Aligned Movement (N.A.M) summit in Colombo in August 1976, this issue was also brought up. However, it did not produce any fruitful results. With the assistance of a number of N.A.M countries, including Sri Lanka, Serbia, Egypt, Algeria, and others, Bangladesh later made the decision to bring this matter up at the 31st General Assembly Session of the United Nations Organization (U.N.O). India was worried about all of these things of Bangladesh Government. The contentious issues remained unresolved despite several attempts to normalize relations through peaceful negotiations. Although government-to-government relations were maintained, it appeared that the trust deficit could not help to maintain people-to-people relations between the two countries, despite the fact that both the governments attempted to find a long-term solution to the issues.²⁹⁰

THE TENURE OF LT.GENERAL HUSSAIN MUHAMMAD ERSHAD (1983–1990)

General Hussain Muhammad Ershad remained loyal to the new government after General Ziaur Rahman's assassination on 30th May 1981 in Chittagong by military dissidents.²⁹¹ Vice President Justice Abdus Sattar was sworn in as acting President of the People's Republic of Bangladesh in accordance with the constitution. Abdus Sattar took

²⁸⁹Hussain, Ishtiaq, Bangladesh-India Relations: Issues and Problems. *Asian Survey* 21, 2, 1981, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2643997>, accessed on 12.08.2022.

²⁹⁰Nair, P. Sukumaran. op.cit, pp-170-200.

²⁹¹http://news.bbc.co.uk/onthisday/hi/dates/stories/may/30/newsid_4401000/4401129.stm, accessed on 10.08.2022.

power after General Ziaur Rahman was killed and established a constitutional government in Bangladesh. This government only lasted a short time before it was overthrown by a military coup led by Husain Muhammad Ershad in March 1982. He declared himself Chief of Martial Law Administrator (C.M.L.A), suspended the constitution, and removed the democratically elected President from the office. General Ershad was subservient to Abdus Sattar, the new president whose intimacy with BNP had won elections in 1982.²⁹² He gave the army the order to stop General Abul Manzoor's attempt at a coup. General Ershad used the same method that General Ziaur Rahman used to capture the power. He first set up a civil government and then took over the government as a Chief Martial Law Administrator (CMLA) in a peaceful coup in March 1982. In December 1983, General Hussain Muhammad Ershad became president of Bangladesh and he held that position for eight years and eight months at a stretch.²⁹³ Finally, General Ershad founded a new political party in 1986 under the name 'Jatiya Party' (JP). He included prominent members of various social classes, and in 1986, in a disputed election, he was elected President of Bangladesh. Ershad's domestic and international policies were strikingly similar to General Ziaur Rahman. He adhered to the principles and religious ideologies of General Ziaur Rahman to revive the Islamic identity rather than Bengali secular and linguistic identity. His policies could be described as an extension of Zia's domestic and international policies. The primary characteristic of Hussain Muhammad Ershad's neo-patrimonial rule in Bangladesh was that it reduced the state apparatus to a merely 'private government, where he established a personal rule based on material interests and rewards for support and loyalty. Moreover, it did not imply any kind of symbolic legitimacy or belief in his qualifications. Md. Nazmul Islam in his article titled "India-Bangladesh Relations" wrote "Dhaka more or less followed a similar approach to India as that of the predecessor, the Zia regime"²⁹⁴ General Hussain Muhammad Ershad followed Zia's religious identity in domestic policy, converting the country into an Islamic state through constitutional amendments. During his tenure anti-liberation anti-secular anti-progressive forces like Jammāt, and other fundamentalist organizations became the centre of fierce controversy. Jammāt top leader Moulana Delwar Hossein Sayeedi was invited in 1988 December to address a meeting the Islamic teaching of Quran in Shilhet. The jammat in various meetings expressed in clear terms

²⁹²Rajkumar Singh, "President Ershad: Remembering a Departed Soul", **South Asia Journal**, July, 2019, <http://southasiajournal.net/president-ershadremembering-a-departed-soul/> accessed on 20.07.2022.

²⁹³Ghosh, P. S. Bangladesh Politics Many Imponderables. **Mainstream**, XXIX, 3, 1990.

²⁹⁴Islam Md. Nazmul, "India-Bangladesh Relations: Policy Challenges under the Narendra Modi's and Sheikh Hasina regime", **Innovation and Global Issues in Social Sciences: Congress Book**, In Globe Institution, 2017, p- 72.

that its mission was to run Bangladesh strictly in accordance with the Islamic Law. Ershad made 'Islam' the state religion by amending the Bangladesh constitution. In 1988, for this purpose article 2A was added to the 8th amendment in the constitution.²⁹⁵ He made changes to the national educational policy and made Arabic a required subject for elementary students. Despite people's occasional emphasis on Islamic identity during the post-liberation period, the dominant force in Bangladesh's socio-cultural ethos is still secular; however, this process of changing national ideology strained growing relations between the two countries.²⁹⁶ The government's efforts to islamize education and culture. He stressed the importance of maintaining close ties with China, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, and other Muslim countries. During his second military regime, Indian policy remained consistent, and Bangladesh-India relations remained cold most of the time under Hussain Muhammad Ershad's regime. The Government of Mrs. Indira Gandhi welcomed the Ershad government's installation in Bangladesh, wished to improve friendly relations with the small neighbour, and emphasized early mutual resolution of unresolved issues.²⁹⁷ In May 1982, Narasimha Rao, the then-Indian Foreign Minister of India, paid a visit to Bangladesh to improve bilateral relations and make a promise to provide 100,000 tons of wheat to the country in order to alleviate its food shortage. In October 1982, President Hussain Muhammad Ershad paid India a visit in return for maintaining good relations. At this meeting in October, the leaders agreed to form a Joint Economic Commission to identify various areas of economic cooperation between the two countries. They talked about how the 1977 Farakka agreement worked, extended it for two more dry seasons, and told the Joint Rivers Commission to find mutual solutions and ways to reach a final agreement. On 7th October, 1982, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on the Sharing of Ganges Water was signed in New Delhi for this purpose.

In addition, the leaders agreed to finish enforcing the Land Boundary Agreement of 1974. India also agreed to forever transfer the Tin Bigha Corridor to Bangladesh.²⁹⁸ They agreed to come to an understanding and friendly settlement of the maritime boundary

²⁹⁵ 8th Amendment of the Constitution of Bangladesh was amended on 7th June, 1988.

²⁹⁶ Ziring, Lawrence, '**Bangladesh from Mujib to Ershad: An Interpretive Study**': University Press, New York, 1992, p-177.

²⁹⁷ Partha S. Ghosh, '**Cooperation and Conflict in South Asia**', Manohar Publications, New Delhi, 1989, pp-156-189.

²⁹⁸ Jayapalan, N. op.cit, p- 337.

dispute. Both leaders have agreed to form a joint economic cooperation to resolve the following issues in response to General Ershad's subsequent visit.

1. They agreed to settle the ownership dispute of Newmoor/South Talpatty Island.
2. They were successful in extending the Farakka agreement from 1977 for two additional dry seasons and directed the issue of river and water sharing disputes to the joint river commission.
3. They also agreed to put into effect the Land Boundary Agreement of 1974, which had not been ratified by the Indian parliament up until that point.
4. India also agreed to permanently transfer the Tin Bigha corridor to Bangladesh.
5. In a spirit of mutual understanding and good neighbourliness, they agreed to settle the maritime boundary dispute.

A new joint economic commission was established in 1982, but it was unable to make any headway because the previous joint-economic commission, which was established shortly after the Liberation War, was in hibernation for a considerable amount of time. It has only met three times since its inception, in 1986, 1990, and 1993. Soon after Zia's fall, it appears that India wanted to rekindle bilateral relations with Bangladesh. As a result, Delhi immediately began interacting with the new military leader; however, the new leader did not alter the previous policies and also contributed to the anti-India sentiment. On 31st October, 1984, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, the Prime Minister of India, was assassinated. Satwant Singh and Beant Singh, two of her Sikh bodyguards, killed her to avenge the military attack on the Harmandir Sahib, popularly known as 'The Golden Temple', during 'Operation Blue Star'.²⁹⁹ After Mrs. Indira Gandhi's brutal assassination, her son Rajiv Gandhi became India's youngest Prime Minister when he took office at the age of 40.³⁰⁰

THE TENURE OF RAJIV GANDHI (1984-1989)

Rajiv Gandhi, India's youngest Prime Minister, was attempting to act as a Big Brother to his nextdoor neighbours. He set himself goal for India's foreign policy based on his desire to improve India's relations with its neighbours and the superpowers. He also reaffirmed his faith in the principles of Non-Aligned Movement (N.A.M) and the United Nations. In the

²⁹⁹ It was an Indian military operation to remove Sikh militant Jarnil Sing Bhindranwala and Sikh separatists from the golden temple during the regime of Mrs Indira Gandhi

³⁰⁰ Agrawal, Meena. **Rajiv Gandhi**.: Diamond Pocket Books (P) Ltd., New Delhi, 2004, p-141.

West, particularly in the United States, his statements were widely interpreted as implying that he would move away from the Soviet Union, which had traditionally been close to India since the middle of the Cold War. Indian 6th Prime Minister Mr. Rajiv Gandhi's numerous statements about the necessity of economic liberalization in his country further bolstered this viewpoint. His goal was to establish India as a leading industrial country in the developing world. Naturally, this would necessitate large-scale imports of industrial goods and advanced technology that only the West could provide. As a result, the expectation was that as India's reliance on the West grew, so would its political ties to the Soviet Union.³⁰¹ His objectives for Indian foreign policy were to improve relations with Bangladesh and its immediate neighbours. By this time, both leaders Mr. Rajiv Gandhi and General Hussain Muhammad Ershad had visited each other several times and agreed to settle down on some issues. During Rajiv Gandhi's reign, Bangladesh President General Hussain Muhammad Ershad made a number of trips to New Delhi, and the Indian Prime Minister did the same.³⁰² In 1985, Rajiv Gandhi made two trips to Bangladesh to strengthen the bilateral relations. In the wake of the deadly cyclonic devastation in the coastal belt on 2nd June, 1985, he was on a one-day visit to Bangladesh. On behalf of the Indian people he expressed his support for the distressed people of Bangladesh during this difficult time of deadly cyclonic devastation. He even paid a visit to Urrir Char, the island hardest hit by the cyclone, where he showed his goodwill toward Bangladesh and offered material assistance to the distressed people there. In June 1985, a Special Envoy of the Prime Minister of India travelled to Bangladesh following Mr. Rajiv Gandhi's visit. The goal of the meeting was, to find a long-term solution to the issue of sharing of Gangs Water, which had long been a bone of contention between the two countries.³⁰³ At the Commonwealth Summit in the Bahamas in October 1985, the two leaders General Hussain Muhammad Ershad and Rajiv Gandhi met once more and decided to work together in every way they could to improve their traditional bilateral relationship. On 22nd November, 1985, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed at the Ministerial level on the sharing of Gangs Water during the lean season for the next three years (1986-1988), with a provision to devise a plan to increase the flow through a joint study of experts from the two countries within a year.³⁰⁴ General Hussain Muhammad Ershad, President of Bangladesh, travelled to India in July 1986 and held extensive discussions with positive

³⁰¹Tripathi, Deepak. India's Foreign Policy: The Rajiv Factor. **The World Today**, 44, 1998, p-1-2.

³⁰²Jayapalan, N. op.cit, pp-133-134.

³⁰³Agrawal, Meena. op.cit, p.- 141

³⁰⁴Partha S. Ghosh, op.cit, p-. 210

attitude with Indian leaders about various unresolved issues. The two countries resolved to cooperate in the fight against cross-border insurgency, cross-border terrorism and to come to an amicable agreement regarding the river water issue. In addition, Bangladesh agreed to reverse all actions that allowed the Chakma tribe to enter Tripura illegally. President Hussain Muhammad Ershad and Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi also agreed to restart negotiations over the maritime boundary in the Bay of Bengal. They also agreed that the Joint Economic Commission (JEC) should be convened as soon as possible and considered the steps necessary for establishing imperious economic relations. Bangladesh was further reassured by India that the country would transfer the Teen Bigha Corridor (enclave). The conversations took place in a spirit of positive 'cordiality', which resulted in a greater degree of understanding between the two countries and a willingness to cooperate in solving bilateral problems.³⁰⁵ However, the Farakka Barrage issue remained the primary obstacle in Indo-Bangladesh relations that time. It was hoped that the two countries would be able to work together to solve all the problems with realistic approach.

In September 1988, President Hussain Muhammad Ershad paid a second visit to India and talked about a variety of topics related to their relationship, including the floods in Bangladesh. Bangladesh again experienced a devastating flood in 1987 and 1988. As a result, the two Governments' focus now shifted from water sharing to flood control. The summit between the two heads of state resulted in the formation of a flood management task force, which was able to provide short-term measures. Both President Hussain Muhammad Ershad and Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi agreed to establish a task force to oversee both short-term and long-term flood management measures for the Brahmaputra and Ganges rivers as well as the utilization of excess water, with the latter promising to jointly address the issue of floods brought on by the two rivers the Brahmaputra and the Ganges. On 29th September, 1988 after six hours of talks between the two Governments in New Delhi, a brief communiqué was issued containing the agreement.³⁰⁶ The Indian Prime Minister made it abundantly clear that the 'bilateralism' policy on such matters cannot be altered by rejecting Bangladesh's proposal for the involvement of a third country in resolving the issue. Bangladesh President became fruitful in convincing India to have another investigate on flood control management. India, on the other hand, was able to keep Bangladesh from trying

³⁰⁵ Jayapalan, N.op.cit, pp-133-134.

³⁰⁶ Banerjee, Paula, Sanjoy Hazarika, Monirul Hussain & Ranabir Samaddar, Indo-Bangladesh Cross-Border Migration and Trade. **Economic and Political Weekly** 34, 1999, pp- 4-5. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4408366>, accessed on 12.08.2022.

to involve other countries in bilateral issues.³⁰⁷ Despite Bangladesh governments all of the irritants, namely; relationships with Islamic countries and anti-India powers, growing process of Islamization, border clash, border deaths, illegal migrations, cattle smuggling, religious torture and other things the improvement of relationship under the leadership of the Rajiv Gandhi and Indira Gandhi's 'Congress Governments' in India, indicates that the Indo-Bangladesh bilateral relations was based on the whims of both sides' leaders rather than on the circumstances of the goals. Due to the large number of illegal migrants arriving in India from Bangladesh, which had exacerbated the economic conditions of the North-Eastern States of India—West Bengal, Assam, Mizoram, Nagaland, Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, and Manipur—India's decision to fence the entire Indo-Bangladesh border (I.B.B) strained bilateral relations with Bangladesh in course of time. Due to economic crisis in their own country, the Bangladeshis in search of employment and livelihood crossed the border and enter into Indian bordering states illegally. As a result of this chaotic influx of illegal migrants into the Indian Territory India faced significant socio-economic and cultural challenges.

As a consequence of this, the states that are adjacent to India, such as West Bengal, Tripura, and Assam, have been impacted by the ongoing illegal migration from Bangladesh since 1971. The migrants arrived in these states and began living there without valid identification. The Bangladeshis illegally crossed the border into India's North-Eastern States in search of work because of the economic crisis in their own country. This caused a number of issues for the natives of the North-East Region. Bangladesh was asked by India to stop the illegal infiltration of Bangladeshis and deport those who had entered the Indian Territory back to Bangladesh. As a consequence of this, Inter Service Intelligence of Pakistan (ISI) was involved in this matter to enrage separatists and provided every kind of assistance to separate India's North East from India, severely harming diplomatic ties between India and Bangladesh during the tenure of Rajiv Gandhi.³⁰⁸

THE TENURE OF VISHWANATH PRATAP SING (1989-1990)

India held its 9th general parliamentary (Lok Sabha) election in 1989 on November 22 and 26, with the purpose of electing members of the Lok Sabha. Rajiv Gandhi and his party

³⁰⁷ Bammi, Y. M. 'India-Bangladesh Relations: The Way Ahead', Vijay Books India Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, 2010, p- 70.

³⁰⁸ Md Habibullah and Emran Hossain, 'Bangladesh-India Diplomatic Relations (1975-1996): Transitions, Bilateral Disputes and Legacies' **Global Journal of Human Social Science**: Volume XX, Issue XIV, 2020, ISSN: 2249-460x & Print ISSN: 0975-587X.

‘The Indian National Congress’ (I.N.C) did not get majority and lost his mandate, as all opposition parties united to form a minority government known as the “The National Front” under the Prime Ministership of Vishwanath Pratap Singh (V.P.Sing). Despite the fact that the Indian National Congress (I.N.C), led by Rajiv Gandhi, was the largest party in the Lok Sabha. Since independence in 1947, “The National Front” was successful in establishing the first minority government in India. In February 1990, External Affairs Minister Mr. I.K. Gujral went to Bangladesh as part of a new peace offensive to improve relations with the neighbouring countries under the “National Front’s regime” in India. He convinced the government of Bangladesh to reactivate the Joint Rivers Commission for the equal sharing of Ganges water. The two countries decided to come up with a long-term solution to the water sharing problem.³⁰⁹ They agreed to transfer the ‘Tin Bigha corridor’ to Bangladesh and discussed the immediate deportation of illegal migrants, which was creating economic, social, and political problems in the North-East States. However, due to political rivalries between the Indian National Congress (I.N.C) and the Left Front (L.F) in West Bengal, the transfer of the ‘Teen Bigha corridor’ (enclave) to Bangladesh was delayed, and the fact that the matter had become a matter of law proved to be a source of contention. In the meantime, democracy replaced the military government in Bangladesh. In the midst of a terrible political, economic, and institutional crisis sparked by students, the democratic wave in Bangladesh shook the foundations of the Muhammad Ershad’s government at the beginning of November 1990. In a joint declaration, the mainstream opposition parties called for General Hussain Muhammad Ershad to step down and give power to a Caretaker Government (C.T.G) in order to hold free and fair parliamentary elections.³¹⁰ Begum Khaleda Zia led the seven party alliances group (B.N.P, Jatio ganotantrik Party, Progressive Nationalist Party, Bangladesh Muslim League, Democratic League, United Peoples’ Party, and National Democratic Party), and Sheikh Hasina Wajed led the eight party alliances group (daughter of late Prime Minister Sheikh Mujibur Rahaman). Both of these groups challenged Hussain Muhammad Ershad’s undemocratic authority for the restoration of parliamentary democracy in Bangladesh. During V.P.Sing regime the relations between the two countries based on mutual understanding.

³⁰⁹ Asian Recorder (news paper). Morarji Desai’s Visit, (1979, May 22- June 3), p-3.

³¹⁰ Islam, Syed Sirajul. Bangladesh in 1986: Entering a New Phase. **Asian Survey**, 27, University of California, 1987, p- 7.

THE TENURE OF BEGUM KHALEDA ZIA

First term of Begum Khaleda Zia's Government (1991-1996).

In the late 1980s, as the General Hussain Muhammad Ershad's regime came to an end, all walks of life joined a mass movement that was unprecedented. The platform of the major political parties was to resist General Hussain Muhammad Ershad's dictatorship at all costs to restore parliamentary democracy in Bangladesh. The Awami League (A.L), Bangladesh Nationalist Party (B.N.P), Jamat-e-Islami, Jatio ganotantrik Party, Progressive Nationalist Party, Bangladesh Muslim League, Democratic League, United Peoples' Party, and National Democratic Party—all called for blockades, gheraos and hartals (Strikes) throughout the country. Eventually, peoples' daily lives, communication, and economy have all stopped for the countrywide blockades and hartals from dawn to dusk. Shahabuddin Ahmed, the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, was appointed as Vice-President of Bangladesh. Under the tremendous pressure of all political parties, civil society, intelligentsia and common people Ershad resigned, and handed over power to him as Acting President because the Ershad Government could not stand against the streams of forceful and continuous mass movement. For nearly a decade, Western countries, primarily the United States, the United Kingdom, and France provided General Hussain Muhammad Ershad with necessary diplomatic support; however, after the effective end of the Cold War, these super powers stopped supporting Ershad. Additionally, Lieutenant General Nuruddin Khan, Chief of the Army Staff of Bangladesh, was opposed to support the President Ershad. After the all-pervasive students' movement General Hussain Muhammad Ershad was forced to hand over power to Justice Sahabuddin Ahmed as the head of an interim Government with the goal of arranging a free, fair, and neutral election on 6th December, 1990. Soon after, Shahabuddin Ahmed established a non-party caretaker government (N.C.G). Unicameral Jatiya Sangsad elections were held on 27th February, 1990. The Bangladesh Nationalist Party (B.N.P) won the election with the help of Jammai-e-Islami and became Bangladesh's first women Prime Minister. The Awami League's Sheikh Hasina Wajed assumed leadership of the opposition.³¹¹ The Bangladesh Nationalist Party (B.N.P) led by Begum Khaleda Zia won the most votes in the 5th General Election on 13th January, 1991, and it became the largest party in unicameral parliament, winning 140 of the 300 seats (with no seats reserved for women). The Government needs 151 seats to be formed. As B.N.P did not get absolute majority they took

³¹¹Baxter, Craig, Bangladesh in 1990: Another New Beginning? *Asian Survey*, 31, University of California Press, 1991, p-3-4.

necessary support from Jamat-e-Islami. On 20th March, 1991, Khaleda Zia was sworn in for her first term as a Prime Minister with the support of Jamat-e-Islami.³¹² With the 5th general election in the early 1990s, a new era of the second parliamentary democratic journey began after 16 years of the autocratic military regime (1975-1991). Former President Hussain Muhammad Ershad was imprisoned on corruption charges during Begum Khaleda Zia's first term in office. The newly elected Government approved more changes to the constitution, by re-established a parliamentary system and returning governing power to the office of the Prime Minister, as in Bangladesh's original 1972 constitution. Throughout the entirety of the first post-military government, the relationship between Bangladesh and India remained essentially frozen, despite the fact that a Government elected by the people was in charge of state power in Bangladesh. This was primarily due to the fact that the ruling B.N.P as a political party is center-right, anti-Indian, pro-Pakistan and largely supported by the country's business community. Furthermore, Professor Rounaq Jahan, a prominent political scientist, writes in her book 'Political Parties in Bangladesh' that "these political stands were inspired by the BNP's traditional anti-Indian posture, which was one of its foundational positions since Ziaur Rahman's regime." On the other hand, New Delhi, did not show any interest in improving relations with Bangladesh or any goodwill toward the new Government as before, mutual suspicion and mistrust persisted.³¹³ The Bangladesh Nationalist Party (B.N.P) pursued an anti-Indian foreign policy during General Ziaur Rahman's tenure and it continued after his wife Begum Khaleda Zia was re-installed in state power as Prime Minister. On the other hand, BNP adopted a policy of friendship with Islamabad as a counterpoise to Delhi's bossing and hegemonic mentality in south Asian politics. In Bangladesh, the ruling BNP, has pursued an anti-Indian foreign policy breaking the tradition that was created by Awami League's rule from the beginning of parliamentary era of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. The question of "Why BNP had undertaken the policy of anti-Indian stance and a pro-Pakistan stance even after a decade of the fall of Ziaur Rahman's Government?" is raised by the new policymaker of the B.N.P-led coalition Government (the Four Party Alliance-BNP, Jamaat-I-Islami, Bangladesh Jatio Party, Islami Oikya Jote) in the early 1990s. The answer is this coalition-Government was led by the BNP and consisted as the main force in a communal-based alliance, the BNP tried to get the attention and support of Muslims by taking an anti-

³¹²Md Habibullah and Emran Hossain, 'Bangladesh-India Diplomatic Relations (1975-1996): Transitions, Bilateral Disputes and Legacies' **Global Journal of Human Social Science**: Volume XX, Issue XIV, 2020, ISSN: 2249-460x & Print ISSN: 0975-587X .

³¹³Chakma Bhumitra, "Sheikh Hasina Government's India Policy: A Three-level Game?" **Journal of Asian Security and International Affairs**, 2(1), 2015, pp- 27-51.

India stance. This could have been done for religious vote bank politics in domestic level. In addition, Jamat-e-Islami was one of their alliance's strongest partners, traditionally engaging in politics by escalating religious hostility toward the majority Hindus in India and the minority Hindus in Bangladesh. In addition, General Zia-ur Rahman had allowed Jamat-e-Islami and its killer armies like Al-Badr, Al Shams, Razakars, which Sheikh Mujibur Rahman had banned due to its cruel atrocities and close association with Pakistani Bahini who killed thousands of lives during the 1971 Liberation War, to re-appear as a political party in Bangladesh mainstream politics. It maintained a strong sense of community and a long-standing anti-Indian stance regarding religion. In recent decade regarding India's conflict with Pakistan on a number of issues they always support Pakistan. In the general election of the 1990s, Khaleda Zia did not win an absolute majority and only succeeded in forming the National Government when Jamat-e-Islami joined with her. There were even doubts about the popularly elected Government being able to complete its five years full term by 1996. In order to pacify Jamat-e-Islami's religious and political agenda, Khaleda Zia chose to strengthen her cordial relationship with Pakistan shortly after the Government was established rather than pursue a relationship with India, a trusted neighbour since its inception. Besides when Awami League and secular leftist forces formed the "Ekattorer Ghatok Dalal Nirmul Committee" to punish Professor Golam Azam, one of the significant war criminals of 1971, instead of punishing Jammah top leader Golam Azam the BNP led coalition Government did all it could to suppress the activities of the committee by attacking the freedom fighters and charging them with treason.³¹⁴ Thus, there was little change in Indo-Bangladesh multi-lateral economic, political, and diplomatic relations from 1991-1996 under the BNP-led Coalition Government. Even before the government was formed, Khaleda Zia officially re-affirmed her anti-India stance during the election campaign. Khaleda Zia stated at a public meeting in Dhaka on 23rd February, 1991, "If Awami League's Sheikh Hasina Wajed comes to power in Bangladesh, the land until Feni will be captured by India," "You won't be a Bangladeshi citizen; You will be sold into slavery in India. As a manifestation of its anti-Indian politics, the party has also opposed closer trade and communications with India throughout its history."³¹⁵ Khaleda Zia referred to the '1972 Indo-Bangladesh military and strategic friendship treaty' as 'a treaty of slavery', which was signed

³¹⁴ Hiranmay Kelkar, op.cit.p.105

³¹⁵ Shakhawat Liton, "Has BNP forgotten its anti-India past?", **The Daily Star**, June, 2015, <https://www.thedailystar.net/frontpage/has-bnp-forgotten-its-antiindia-past-90586>, accessed on 20.08.2022.

by Mujib and Indira in 1972. Both the conflict in Kashmir and the separatist movements in India's North-Eastern states posed a serious threat to Indian sovereignty and resulted in the deaths of members of the Indian armed forces. India was worried that separatist groups might use the land in Bangladesh as bases to carry out violent attacks on India. Eventually, during the first term of Begum Khaleda Zia's Government in Bangladesh (1991-1996), Inter Service Intelligence (I.S.I) was very active. The United Liberation Front of Assam (U.L.F.A), the All Tripura Tiger Force (A.T.T.F), the National Liberation Front of Tripura (N.L.F.T), and the National Democratic Front of Bodoland (N.D.F.B) etc. are among the rebel groups that North East India's ISI agents and Jammat-e-Islami are said to have supported during the BNP's rule. In addition, it was alleged that the spy agency funded the covert operations of Bangladeshi separatist groups by patronizing and providing them with logistical support, weapons, training, and money laundering in order to destabilize Northeast India from mainland India.³¹⁶ Due to its (Coalition Government) communal intolerance and post-election violence against Hindu minorities, then Indian Prime Minister Mr. P.V. Narosingha Roy (1993-1996) was also reluctant to establish friendly relations with the B.N.P-led Coalition Government in Bangladesh. Approximately 3,000 temples were destroyed, religious torture was intolerable, numerous Hindus were forced to flee the country, and numerous Hindu women were raped during the B.N.P-led coalition Government in Bangladesh. Following the destruction of the 'Babri mosque' in December 1992, in India (Uttar Pradesh), the Khaleda Zia Government usurped Hindu properties from 1992-1996. Taslima Nasrin, a doctor by profession and world famous literary personality depicted the plight condition of the Hindu families during that time through her book 'Lajja.' Under the tremendous pressure of Jammat-e-Islami and its killer armies Al Badr, Al Shams, Razakars and many anti-liberation, anti-progressive, anti-secular forces B.N.P Government convicted Taslima Nasrin of blasphemy and humiliation of Islamic sentiments or Quranic Injunctions and declared her as the enemy of Islam. Even Jammat with several fundamentalist Islamic organizations declared fatwa against Taslima Nasrin. During her rule a section of Bangladeshi people had shown sympathy for Jammat-e-Islami who preferred to call themselves Mussalmans than Bangalees. These support base had been harbingered by Jammat itself for the sake of its survival in mainstream politics. These rural, ignorant, illiterate, religious minded people were rigorously brainwashed by the agents of Jammat. These people were indoctrinated to believe that Jammat were the true devotees of Allah. Jammat received funds from several

³¹⁶<http://www.theindependentbd.com/printversion/details/155567>, accessed on 20.07.2022.

Muslims countries like Kuwait, U.A.E, Baharin, Paistan, Soudi Arabia, Libiya etc. and several International Muslims N.G.O like the Kuwait based Revival of Islamis Heritage, U.A.E based Al Fuzaria, Khairul Ansar-Al-Khairia, Soudi Arabia based Al Harmaine Islamis Institute provided generous amount of funding to Jammāt with a view to establish an Islamic common market like European Union.³¹⁷ Jammāt and its student's wings Islami Chhatra Shibir set up Madrasahs with these foreign funds and brainwashed the young minds with its Islamis teachings to convert Bangladesh into a second Afganistan to establish a theocratic state which followed the Shariah system of law. They had spread their tentacles deep inside Bangladeshi's countryside by setting up Madrasahs and Sharias courts. They had virtually set up a parallel administration run by the Maulovis of the mosque in the countryside.³¹⁸ In spite of all these facts, the two neighbouring countries agreed that they needed to work together to solve their unresolved problems for countrys' sake. Despite the fact that numerous issues remained unresolved, the Khaleda Zia Government made no significant progress to strengthen bilateral relation with India. However, in 1992, India agreed to grant Bangladesh a 1.5-hectare perpetual lease over the Tin Bigha corridor.³¹⁹ From April 1990 to February 1992, the Secretaries' Committee met six times each between Dhaka and New Delhi to discuss Ganges water distribution, but no progress was made until 1996 under Khaleda Zia's administration. On 31st July, 1991, only a Protocol on Scientific and Technical Cooperation was signed between Bangladesh's Science and Technology Department and India's Department of Scientific and Industrial Research. Begum Khaleda Zia's visit to India on 28th May, 1992, a joint communiqué was issued in which the Prime Ministers of India and Bangladesh expressed their determination to further strengthen friendly, harmonious, and good neighbourly relations for the greater good of the peoples of the two countries and for peace and stability in the south Asian region. They agreed that efforts should be intensified to resolve the 1974 Land Boundary Agreement (L.B.A) between India and Bangladesh, the New More/South Talpatty Islands, the distribution of Ganga and Teesta water, large-scale illegal immigration across their borders, and the prompt repatriation of all Chakma refugees to Bangladesh in full safety and security. In the end, all that was left was the communiqué; there was no indication that Bangladesh took any action to improve relations with the influential neighbour or negotiate for some advantages for Bangladesh. Some of Begum Khaleda Zia's

³¹⁷ Shahriar Kabir, "Juddhaporadhider Bichar Ebong Jammāt Er Aparajniti. Ananya publication, Dhaka, 2008

³¹⁸ Borhan-Ud-din-Khan, "Dharma, Rastra, Rajniti" Ananya publication, Dhaka, 2005

³¹⁹ Harsh v Pant, "India and Bangladesh Will the Twain Ever Meet?", **Asian Survey**, Volume- xlvii, no- 2, 2007, p-233.

anti-Indian remarks after the end of her tenure are worth mentioning. When the Ganges water treaty was signed under the regime of Sheikh Hasina Wajed in 1996, Khaleda Zia as the opposition leader stated, “Although the Ganges water treaty was signed, Bangladesh will not get a single drop of water, and vehicles will be run in the mighty river the Padma within two years.” In addition, she had stated during the 1996 election campaigns that the blowing of conch shells (Shankho Dhowani), which is the Muslim prayer call, would take the place of Adhan in Bangladesh if the Awami League’s Sheikh Hasina Wajed came to power in Bangladesh. According to Khaleda Zia’s speeches, voting politics prevented her and her party, the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), from enhancing relations with India. The relationship between India and Bangladesh was neither friendly nor cooperative from 1991-1996. There was hidden fear everywhere in Indo-Bangladesh relations. The significant fact is that the post-military establishment not only entered into Bangladesh politics but also shared and benefited from the country’s power, which altered the country’s future domestic politics. Besides, several unresolved issues like the problem of sharing water, illegal migration, boundary disputes, reverse possession of territories, and other similar issues cause bone of contentions during this time period. Although both sides maintained little government-to-government relations and people-to-people relations. The Indo-Bangladesh relationship is unlikely to undergo a significant shift under the same conditions as regional and global politics. In the meantime, as is the case with India’s interactions with other small regional States in south Asia, State-to-State business, co-operation, regional peace and prosperity will continue uninterrupted during that time.

CHAPTER –III

**Issue of border security to Indo-Bangladesh
relations.**

CHAPTER THREE

ISSUE OF BORDER SECURITY TO INDO-BANGLADESH RELATIONS

Border security implies protecting borderland from the illegal movement of weapons, drugs, contraband and people. Promoting lawful trade and travel are essential for the sake of any country's security, economic prosperity and national sovereignty. In order to protect its sovereignty and territorial integrity, India, like all other sovereign nation states in the world, aspires to have proper demarcation and protection of its borders. Due to its central geographic location in the South Asian region, India shares its borders with most of the South Asian countries namely Bangladesh (4096.7 km), Pakistan (3323 km), China (3488 km), Nepal (1751 km), Bhutan (699 km), Myanmar (1643 km) and Afghanistan (106 km). India has 15,106.7 km long land border and the coastline of 7516.6 km, including the island territories.³²⁰ Out of seven neighbouring countries, India is surrounded and sharing international border which includes both land, maritime and river borders.³²¹ India shares its 4096.7 km borderland with Bangladesh. India's North-Eastern Region (NER) also comprising of eight provinces namely – Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Tripura, and Sikkim alone shares an international border of 5,182 kms (about 99 percent of its total geographical boundary) with several neighbouring countries like 1,395 kms with Tibet Autonomous Region, China in the North, 1,640 kms with Myanmar in the East, 1,596 kms with Bangladesh in the South-West, 97 kms with Nepal in the West, and 455 kms with Bhutan in the North-West.³²² This makes India's North-Eastern Region (N.E.R), a key strategic location for the Indian sub-continent. The region is permeated with difficult terrains, limited connectivity, inaccessible areas, and border disruptions. One of the major hindrances of Indian North-Eastern Region is the narrow 'Siliguri Corridor' popularly known as Chicken's Neck, a strategic geo-economic corridor connecting North-Eastern Region (N.E.R) to India. India's 'hot' to 'tepid' border faces severe security threats. Incessant illegal migration sometimes related violent conflicts; human, drugs and arms trafficking;

³²⁰ Swati Verma and Yathika Agarwal, 'Border Area Prosperity through Improved Connectivity: the Case of Northeast India' *CUTS International*, March, 2022.

³²¹ Ministry of Home Affairs. (2016). Annual Report, 2015–2016. Government of India. [http://mha.nic.in/sites/upload_files/mha/files/AR\(E\)1516.pdf](http://mha.nic.in/sites/upload_files/mha/files/AR(E)1516.pdf), Accessed on 30.07.2022

³²² Swati Verma and Yathika Agarwal, 'Border Area Prosperity through Improved Connectivity: the Case of Northeast India' *CUTS International*, March, 2022.

cross border movement of undesirables termed by International border security analyser Peter Andreas as ‘clandestine transnational actors’ (C.T.As);³²³ and economic offenders including the Indian fake currency (I.F.C) swindlers are considered among the most frightening security threats. Border threats can be categorized into three types 1) unauthorized migrants, 2) illegal transportation, 3) potential terrorists. Threats levels can also be defined as low threat levels, medium threat levels and high threat levels.

Thus border security has become one of the most serious challenges in South Asian countries especially India and Bangladesh. The policy of border management objective of a nation state is to deny territorial access to undesirable clandestine transnational actors’ (C.T.A). If the security of man and policies of development of borderland area are to be taken into account a distinct policy of the nation might be implemented. For instance, individual human security threats such as disease, poverty, human rights abuses, unemployment, violence etc. are the main sources of threats in the India–Bangladesh Border (I.B.B).

India is the seventh largest country in the world and third largest in Asian sub-continent. India is sharing 15,106.7 km of land border and the coastline of 7,516 km including island territories with the neighbouring countries. India is sharing its border with Bangladesh (4096.7 km), but the longest border is with the small country of Bangladesh, which is around 5 percent of the size of India. With the length of 4096.7 km long border the India–Bangladesh border (I.B.B) is the fifth longest border in the world.³²⁴ India and Bangladesh have very close socio-cultural, linguistic and racial affinities which evolve from a common historical colonial legacy, country’s freedom struggle and geographical proximity.

India shares its longest land border (more than 4000 km) with Bangladesh, which is porous in nature. The partition of British India in 1947 divided the Eastern territory between India and erstwhile East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) without considering the ground realities and people’s socio-economic-cultural needs. On this ruthlessly, man made demarcated land boundary, the poor people, mostly from Bangladesh are hitherto bound to cross the border in search of socio-economic security and become victims of policing practices of border security agencies like B.S.F, B.D.R, I.T.B.P, Assam Rifles etc. Resultantly, the cross-border skirmishes firing and killings between or by such border security agencies have become

³²³ Andreas, P. Redrawing the line: Borders and security in twenty-first century. **International Security**, 28(2), (2003). PP-78–111. Andreas defined CTAs as non-state actors who operate across national borders in violation of state laws and who attempt to evade law enforcement efforts.

³²⁴ Murayama, M. Border, migration and sub-regional cooperation in Eastern South Asia. **Economic and Political Weekly**, 41(14), 2006, pp- 1351–1359.

regular phenomena in the India–Bangladesh Border. All these have not only spoiled the domestic environment but have also developed a deep mistrust and suspicion among the neighbours. Nevertheless, the demand of self-determination by the separatists and insurgent groups with the support of external actors such as I.S.I of Pakistan, Jama’atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (close links with the Afghan Taliban), Harkat-ul-Jehad-al-Islami Bangladesh (close links with Al-Qaeda), Hizbut Tohid in Bangladesh have consolidated and expanded their institutional transnational networks in the past decades.³²⁵ Bangladesh and Myanmar’s territories have been used by the insurgent groups of the North East like the United Liberation Front of Assam (U.L.F.A), All Tripura Tiger Force (A.T.T.F), the National Liberation Front of Tripura (N.L.F.T), the Nationalist Socialist Council of Nagaland (N.S.C.N) and the Muslim United Liberation Tigers of Assam has made the question of India’s border security even more complex.

In fact, today the state straddles with the two ends of the security spectrum: one underlines the military dimension while the other urges human security such as disease, poverty, human rights abuses, violence, etc., with almost no or limited use of military force. With the forces of globalization, digitization and liberalization, the post-Cold War era after 1991 has emphasized upon a newly emerged definition of security, that is, human security. The Human Development Report 1994³²⁶ emphasized that security will be equated with the ‘security of individuals, not just security of territory.’³²⁷ Further, United Nation Development Programme (U.N.D.P) has urged that the concept of security must be emphasized in two ways: from an exclusive stress on territorial security to a much greater stress on people’s security; and from security through armaments to security through sustainable human development. Hence, human security pertains to the safety and well-being of ‘all the people everywhere.’³²⁸ Focusing upon two major components; ‘freedom from fear’ and ‘freedom from want’, the Canadian and Japanese relate human security to the protection of the individual’s personal safety and freedom from direct and indirect forms of threat.³²⁹ The

³²⁵ BIPSS. Transnational security: Threats to Bangladesh, *BIPSS Issue Brief*, Bangladesh Institute of Peace and Security Studies, Dhaka, 8 June. 2010, www.bipss.org.bd Accessed on 30.07.2022

³²⁶ United Nnation Development Program, *The Human Development Report 1994*, pp. 22–44.

³²⁷ Haq, M. New imperatives of human security. In M. Haq (Ed.), *Reflections on human development* New York: Oxford University Press. 1995, pp. 115–125 .

³²⁸ *ibid*

³²⁹ Axworthy, L. Canada and human security: The need for leadership. *International Journal*, 52(2), 1997, pp-183–196.

promotion of human development and good governance, and, when necessary, the collective use of sanctions and force, are central to achieving human security.

Nevertheless, natural disasters like cyclones, tsunamis, hurricanes, earthquakes, droughts, floods, storms, landslide, wild fire and volcanic activity have shown that security in its ultimate analysis is a human condition which remains vulnerable to powers beyond military solutions. In the realist view, traditional security threats like inter-state war, civil conflict, nuclear proliferation, terrorism, smuggling to states have dramatically decreased and the nation states are frequently confronted with intra-state conflicts like terrorism, arms, drugs and human trafficking. Persistent threats to the safety and security of the people have widely been considered important in border management tactics of the South Asian countries. Besides this diminution in the importance of borders as physical barriers is the awareness that 'hard' borders still exist at the edges of nation-state territories. In this interregnum, the inter-state relations are marked by a kind of turbulence on account of several trans-national, non-traditional security threats such as climate change, shortage of food, infectious disease, human and drug trafficking, mass migration and ethno-cultural conflicts. This conception can be best examined in the context of managing the India–Bangladesh Border (IBB) where the human security situation is at its worst in recent decades.

The moot question is border security management for the people of the area should be according to the system introduced by the Government. But it is a matter of fact that India–Bangladesh Border has not been done in consistent with the Government system, resulting in the creation of a sense of mistrust and suspicion in the border area. It appears from this that the Border management techniques in the India–Bangladesh Border (IBB) are contrary to the true concept of border as enshrined in the treaty of 1974 taken by the two Governments.

BORDER: CONCEPT AND EVOLUTION

Borders between nation states are institutions and processes.³³⁰ As institutions, they are established by political decisions and regulated by legal texts.³³¹ Aansi Paasi, a well known International border security analyst, writes that boundaries are institutional constructs that are used to delimit the territorial possession of a sovereign nation state. At the core of such constructs, as Emmanuel Brunet-Jailly in his book "Theorizing borders: An inter

³³⁰ Sahoo, P. Indo-Bangladesh land border management and India's security concerns. A Thesis paper, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, 2009.

³³¹ Paasi, A. Boundaries as social processes: Territoriality in the world of flows. *Geopolitics*, 3(1), 1998, pp-69–88.

disciplinary perspective”pointed out international agreements established by mutual understandings between two or among nation states. These create complex, interlocked networks of Government policies and functions that interact to form international boundaries delineating sovereign spaces.³³²

MODERN CONCEPT OF BORDER AND TRADITIONAL CONCEPT OF BORDER

The modern concept of borders and boundaries emerged with the Westphalia Treaty of 1648 which marked the beginning of the era of territorial boundaries of the nation-state in Europe. All Westphalian states have rights to demarcate and defend their borders in attempt to protect their sovereignty and territoriality. In the traditional sense, borders are considered as a line separating two sovereign territories. Therefore, the power in the modernist conception flows uniformly up to the territorial limit of its operation at the border, the crossing of which is considered a violation of sovereignty.³³³ However, the Treaty of Versailles (1919) had reviewed the territorial concept of borders at the end of the First World War. With the advent of the mapping technology and Global Positioning System (G.P.S) borders became a real issue of the Nation state.³³⁴ The mapping technology of modern sense of borders symbolized a collective attempt by state elites to establish a worldwide system of clear-cut territorial jurisdictions and to have their legal and political sovereignty confirmed cartographically. The mapping of modern sense of borders tended to proceed in three stages: 1) establishment, 2) demarcation and 3) control of the territorial border. Because of this, the conflicting territorial claims by neighbouring Nation states could no longer be ignored but had to be tackled by means of negotiation, confrontation or arbitration using soft and hard power.³³⁵

Three words in common use, namely, ‘frontier’, ‘boundary’ and ‘border’ are technically different although often used interchangeably.³³⁶ A fourth, now archaic, term is ‘march’, which is applied to the outer limits. ‘Frontier’ is the word with the widest meaning, although its original meaning was military—the zone in which one faced the enemy. In contemporary usage, it means the precise line at which jurisdictions meet, usually demarcated

³³² Brunet-Jailly, E. Theorizing borders: An interdisciplinary perspective. **Geopolitics**, 10(4), 2005, pp-633–649.

³³³ Browning, C.S., & Joenniemi, P. Contending discourses of marginality: The case of Kaliningrad. **Geopolitics**, 9(3), 2004, p.p-699–730.

³³⁴ Brunet-Jailly, E. Theorizing borders: An interdisciplinary perspective. **Geopolitics**, 10(4), 2005, pp- 633–649.

³³⁵ Baud, M., & Van Schendel, W. Toward a comparative history of borderlands. **Journal of World History**, 8(2), 1997, pp-211–242.

³³⁶ Power, D., & Standen, N. (Eds). *Frontiers in question: Eurasian borderlands (700–1700)*. 1999, New York: St Martin’s Press.

and controlled by customs, police and military personnel. Historically, border has been an all-embracing term and is now being accepted as a synonym of frontier. Nation state has used the term more specifically in the sense of borderline, border zone or borderland. However, to be precise, the term boundary, border, frontier and borderlands mean many things to many people. James Anderson and O'dowd defined borders as 'linear dividing lines in a particular space meant to mark the division between political and administrative unit and the frontier as a border region.'³³⁷ In fact, 'frontier', in recent times, is used to refer to borderlands that bisect the border between the two Nations and the adjustment territory to the border area. Therefore, the borderland is a broader concept, including a border, boundary and borderline or frontier. However, borders are key apparatus of every nation-state, particularly in relation to management and regulation of the population. The control exercised by the nation state is more intense at its borders, even though these might be geographically remote from the administrative centre and at the margins of its territorial authority.³³⁸ Unlike the above two terms, 'boundary' has a fairly well accepted meaning. It is a line without width, often having endured the process of demarcation and thus the equivalent of the 'frontier line'. If its status has to be indicated, one may qualify it as either a 'demarcated' or 'undemarcated' boundary.³³⁹ A boundary represents the line of physical contact between Nation states and affords opportunities for cooperation and discord. Boundaries are the frameworks of the Nation state.³⁴⁰ On the other hand, a frontier signifies a zone or region having width as well as length, whereas a border denotes a line.³⁴¹ As Balibar views it, borders are both multiplied and reduced in their localization and function; they are being thinned out and doubled. The quantitative relation between 'border' and 'territory' is being inverted.³⁴²

In relation to theorizing borders, the idea of the borderland is an important one because it signals the spatiality of borders themselves; no longer simply lines on a map or a

³³⁷ Anderson, J., & O'dowd, L. Borders, border regions and territoriality: contradictory meanings, changing significance. **Regional studies**, 33(7), 1999, pp-593–604.

³³⁸ Rumford, C. Introduction: Theorizing borders. **European Journal of Social Theory**, 9(2), 2006, pp-155–169.

³³⁹ Sharma, S.P. *Delimitation of land and sea boundaries between neighbouring countries*. New Delhi: Lancer Books, 1989.

³⁴⁰ Adami, V. National frontiers in relation to international law (Trans. T.T. Behrens). London: Oxford University Press, 1927.

³⁴¹ Kristof, L.K.D. The nature of frontiers and boundaries. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 49(3), 1959, pp- 269–282.

³⁴² Balibar, È. The borders of Europe. In P. Cheah & B. Robbins (Eds.), *Cosmopolitics: Thinking and feeling beyond the nation*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. 1998, pp. 216–231.

physical frontier between Nation-states, borders have their own space and have become zones of exchange, connectivity and security.³⁴³ Borders are important to the Nation state to protect their identity, but they are frequently encountered as non-boundaries, and so for many people these are much easier to cross. Borders are a complex part of the Nation state and intimately related to the nature of their physical and human environment and the state, markets and culture provide important explanatory lenses to understand them. Brunet-Jailly argues that borderland regions can be understood from the four different analytical perspectives- A) market forces and trade flows; B) policy activities of multiple levels of governments on adjacent borders; C) the particular political clout of borderland communities; and D) the specific culture of borderland communities.³⁴⁴

In the operational aspect, Peter Andreas in his article ‘Redrawing the line: Borders and security in twenty-first century’ has considered borders in three categories: 1) military border, 2) economic border and 3) police border. This categorization is a realist view of borders and territorial security and thus is fundamentally about inter-state relations. As a process, any changes in the nature of borders may be explained in terms of different historical phases in the shaping of states and territoriality, the internal relations of states and societies and their external inter-relationships in the wider system of states.³⁴⁵ For example, state borders were relatively ‘open’ in the era of imperialism before the first World War. They were relatively ‘closed’ with the growth of ‘national economy’ ‘self-sufficiency’ and a closer identification of the nation state with capital, particularly in the inter-war period. Subsequently, there was a progressive ‘(re)opening’ of borders, and this has become especially marked by the growth of trans-nationalism or intensified globalization from the 1970s.³⁴⁶ Therefore, borders are the signifier by which it is possible to differentiate the self from the other, and identify when core values attributed to the self are violated, thus causing conflict.³⁴⁷ However, in the last few decades boundaries have become increasingly less important and irrelevant with the advent of state-of-the-art weapon technology (inter-

³⁴³ Rumford, C. Introduction: Theorizing borders. *European Journal of Social Theory*, 9(2), 2006, pp-155–169.

³⁴⁴ Brunet-Jailly, E. Theorizing borders: An interdisciplinary perspective. *Geopolitics*, 10(4), 2005, pp-633–649.

³⁴⁵ Andreas, P. Redrawing the line: Borders and security in twenty-first century. *International Security*, 28(2), 2003, pp-78–111.

³⁴⁶ Anderson, J. (2001). Theorizing state borders: Politics/Economics and democracy in capitalism. Electronic Working Paper Series, WP 01, Centre for International Borders Research (CIBR), Queen’s University Belfast. www.qub.ac.uk/cibr Accessed on 30.07.2022

³⁴⁷ Hoseason, A. (2010). The role of borders as sites and progenitors of conflict: A critical analysis. *Global Discourse* [Online], 1(2). <https://globaldiscourse.wordpress.com/contents/the-role-of-borders-as-sites-and-progenitors-of-conflict-byalexander-hoseason/> Accessed on 30.07.2022

continental ballistic missiles (ICBMs), high energy laser mobile demonstrator, (HEL MD), MQ9 reaper drone, remote control rear view mirrors, etc.) and communications revolution (information and communication technology [ICT]) premised on satellite and computer technologies (CT), computer, internet, etc.

Indian Borders between Colonial Legacy and Complex Cultural Composition

There are three types of Indian borders according to their vulnerability and the manner in which they have been delineated. History, culture, and religions played a significant role in defining the Indian borders. 1) The first category gendered from the separation movements because of cultural and religious reasons like Indo-Bangladesh and Indo-Pakistan borders. Some important parts of those borders are still disputed. 2) The second category resulted from reciprocal invasions and reflect regional competition for influence and power like Sino-India borders. 3) The third inherited from the colonial period like the Indian Border with Myanmar, Bhutan and Nepal. The latter was demarcated by bilateral agreements or, at least, are quiet and stable until today.

India-Bangladesh Borders: Territorial Disputes and Cultural Misunderstandings

The 4096.7 km long India-Bangladesh Border (IBB) is the longest border that India shares with any of its neighbours. In spite of all efforts made in the last four decades, since the secession of the East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) in 1971, demarcation of the entire India-Bangladesh Border (IBB), 6.5 km remained unsettled and dispute over fixing the border still exist in some parts. In June 2015, the Governments of the two countries exchanged instruments of ratification to make operational the 1974 Land Boundary Agreement,³⁴⁸ which unanimously passed by the Indian parliament on 7th May, 2015. On 6th June, 2015, the two countries signed a historical agreement to exchange those enclaves and allow people living in border enclaves to choose to live on either in India or Bangladesh. There were 51 Bangladeshi enclaves in Indian Territory and around 111 Indian enclaves inside Bangladesh. In 1974, the two countries signed a 'Land Boundary Agreement' (LAB) to demarcate the border and prevent border conflicts. According to the agreement, these enclaves were to be exchanged except for Berubari, Angarpota and Dahagram. This agreement was a remarkable moment in the history of India-Bangladesh bilateral relations. In addition to the arbitrary division and the vague demarcation of the border which made Bangladesh surrounded by India on three sides (East, North and West), the enclaves that had embedded in the heart of

³⁴⁸ Detail of the text of the LBA attached in appendix para 5

the two countries for four decades, had been one of significant obstacles in strengthening bilateral relations and a long-lasting cause of the escalation of tension between the two neighbours. More importantly, the artificial man made delineation of the border has severely affected the traditional life of the local population who find themselves cut off from their relatives, friends, traditional markets, agricultural land, education institutions, medical facilities etc.³⁴⁹

The India-Bangladesh border (IBB) does not reflect any geographical or historical realities, but rather it is, in fact, a political and religious boundary. The partition of the Indian subcontinent in 1947 divided the population of the sub-continent in terms of religious ‘two nation theory of Mahammad Ali Jinnah.’ The secession of Pakistan both West and East was intended to create a Nation state with a majority Muslim population, but this goal has not fully achieved because of the overlapping ethnic and religious communities across the border and inside the new nation state. Muslims constitute 14.2 percent of India’s population with about 172 million adherents (Census of India, 2011), whereas Hindu Bangladeshi makes up about 8.2 percent of the Bengali population according to the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics.

The Indo-Bangladesh border is generally marked by three different topographies: 1) flat/plain, 2) riverine, and 3) hilly/jungle with practically no natural obstacles.³⁵⁰ The porosity and the various configurations of India-Bangladesh border, which stretches 4096 km, facilitates the movements of people across the border, especially from Bangladesh, which is the main source of illegal immigrants in India. The way in which people settling along the border is also another challenge facing the India’s border surveillance strategies. The people of the two countries work in close proximity and the boundary passes through the middle of several heavily populated villages and divides some houses into the two sides of the border.³⁵¹ This situation makes it difficult to control the movement of people across the border. Due to the high permeability of the India-Bangladesh Border, movement of people across the border, especially from Bangladesh to India, is characterized by its diversity comprising illegal immigrants, refugees, and climate-displaced people. The fact that, people living in the villages adjacent to the border do not subscribe to any concept of nationality or

³⁴⁹Said Saddiki ,**International Journal of Arts & Sciences**,CD-ROM. ISSN: 1944-6934 :: 07(05):111–124 (2016)border fencing in india: between colonial legacy andchanging security challenges.

³⁵⁰ N. S. Jamwal, “Border management: Dilemma of guarding the IndiaBangladesh border,” **Strategic Analysis**, Volume.28, No.1 (Jan-Mar 2004), p.8.

³⁵¹ Ibid, p-9

recognize the boundaries of the Nation-state³⁵² has exacerbated the difficulty of controlling the border. Each year, many Bangladeshis try to cross to India seeking for better job and opportunities for good living, fleeing harsh environmental conditions, or escaping political and religious persecution. Thus, in recent years, checking cross-border movements and activities has presented a major challenge to the Indian Government.

CONCEPT OF BORDER SECURITY

The concept of 'border security' has also undergone a broad change in modern time. In the era of globalization and technological innovation, the relevance of military and economic borders have significantly declined but with the growing vulnerability and transnational illegal activities of clandestine transnational actors' (C.T.As), not only on land borders but also across the coastline and air space, the policing border has expanded considerably. 'The clandestine transnational actors' (C.T.A) are as dramatically varied as their motives. They may be driven by high profits, market demand and the desire to carry out politically or religiously inspired acts of violence. They may be highly organized or disorganized and operate regionally or globally.³⁵³ What has changed over time are 'the organization of clandestine transnational actors' (C.T.A) and their methods and speed of cross-border movements. With manoeuvrability and scope for strategic alliances with like-minded groups, they are able to execute surprise terrorist strikes. Nevertheless, the unique nature of border and its socio-economic and cultural complexities do not coincide with operational definition of border in the case of the India–Bangladesh Border (I.B.B). First, given the asymmetry in the size of military of these two countries, India does not face any direct military threats from Bangladesh. Second, since the partition of India in 1947, the compressed geo-economic dependencies have constantly challenged the economic border between the two countries. The size of illegal trade is double the official trade. Third, the problem of illegal migration, insurgency, terrorism and trafficking correlates with underdevelopment. Thus, police/Military border may ensure freedom from fear, but a sustainable peace could only be achieved through ensuring freedom from want. In the context of the India–Bangladesh Border (I.B.B), Willem Van Schendel³⁵⁴, a renowned writer of 'A

³⁵² Smruti S. Pattanaik, "India–Bangladesh Land Border: A Flawed Inheritance and a Problematic Future," **Strategic Analysis**, Vol. 35, No. 5 (September 2011), p. 745.

³⁵³ Andreas, P. Redrawing the line: Borders and security in twenty-first century. **International Security**, 28(2), 2003, pp-78–111.

³⁵⁴ Willem Van Schendel is professor of modern asian history at the university of Amsterdam and head of the asian department of International institute of social history.

HISTORY OF BANGLADESH', argues that a focus on the culture of local borderland communities would help in arriving at a better understanding of how these communities may either enhance the impact of dividing territory and communities when their culture, that is, their language, ethnicity, socio-economic status and place of belonging differs, or bridges an international boundary when they share the same culture. Hence, the complex socio-cultural nature of India–Bangladesh Border (I.B.B), demands 'humanistic border' rather 'nationalistic Borders'.³⁵⁵

ORIGIN OF INDIA–BANGLADESH BORDER AFTER THE PARTITION OF BENGAL.

Pre-independence India consisted of small princely states which took care of violations on their respective borders till the British established the 'buffer system'. During Pre-independence India, Partition of Bengal i.e., Banga Bhango (1905) was one of the momentous events in the history of Bengal as well as in India. The size of Bengal presidency was large compare to Bombay and Chenny in the British Indian History. Eastern part of Bengal (now Bangladesh) had turned to a depressed province of India since the mid 18th century. The prime reason for such decline was the transfer of capital from Dhaka to Murshidabad in the early 18th century only to re-gain its lost importance and relevance in the early 20th century. Bengal, Bihar and Orissa had formed a single province under British India in 1765. After the Battle of Palsasi in 1757 and Buxar in 1764, the British crushed the Sepoy Rebellion (Mahabridraha) of 1857. Initially, Bengal was politically stable under the total control of the East India Company and later put under different administrations of Governor, Governor-General and Viceroy.³⁵⁶ After 1857 incident, the British decided to dissolve the East India Company and took direct control of Bengal Presidency. British control extended from Eastern Bengal across the entire Ganges plain, to the Indus valley in far North-Western India, with Calcutta as its capital. The British officials also moved into the Chittagong Hills. The British officials governed the local Chittagong Hills' people who had remained independent in their remote corner of East Bengal. According to the first Administrative Report of India, the area of Bengal Presidency was 25.3 million square mile and the total population was 4 crore that time. On the ground of large size and huge population, a new post of Lieutenant Governor of Bengal was created in 1854 chiefly for administrative purpose.

³⁵⁵WillemVan Schendel, W. **The Bengal borderland: Beyond the state and nation in South Asia**. London: Anthem Press.2005.

³⁵⁶Sanjay K. Bhardwaj, India–Bangladesh Border Governance: Issues anChallenges, **International Studies** 50(1&2),pp- 109–129,2016.

Secretary of Britain for India, Henry Stafford Northcote, the then Lieutenant Governor was sent to survey the causes and effects of the deadly famine of Orissa in 1866. He had formed a committee in 1867 and the administrative incapability was the main reason behind the background, losses and casualties of the deadly famine. Henry Stafford Northcote wrote in a letter to the Viceroy in 1867 that the unnatural condition of the then Bengal Presidency including Bihar and Oddisa, surpassed all examples of losses and casualties in the whole of India. After the famine of Orissa the message was conveyed that, although Bengal was the largest in area, had the largest administrative structure and was the most important province in all of India; the efficiency of the Bengal Government was far less compared to that in Bombay or in Madras Presidency. One year later another official of Bengal Presidency William Grey proposed to divide the Bengal.³⁵⁷ Henry Stafford Northcote, the then secretary of state of India in 1867 led a special committee where he proposed of a separate province. As a result, in 1874 Assam was turned into a separate province under the chief commissioner. In 1874 on the basis of the huge number of population an initiative was taken to divide Bengal although it was not effectively executed then.



In 1892 it was proposed that the territorial boundary of Bengal should be reconstructed after some tribal rebellions, although it did not work out. The commissioner of Chittagong Mr. Oldham was the first to propose in 1896 for the creation of a new province in which East Bengal should be included. He placed a proposal to the then Government of India that Chittagong and Dhaka should be incorporated with Assam to create a new province

³⁵⁷Dev Milton Kumar and Samad Md.Abdus , 'History Of Bangladesh 1905-2005' Bishwabidyalaya Prokasoni, Nelkhet, Dhaka, 2014,p.48.

called East Bengal and the capital of which could either be Dhaka or Chittagong. On the other hand, the Chief Commissioner of Assam Proposed that Chittagong, Dhaka and Mymenshingh (now all in Bangladesh) should be included to Assam. However, in 1898 the southern part of Lusai was incorporated to Assam.³⁵⁸ Another point far to Bengal of the five Uriya feudatory was transferred from Bengal to central Provinces. Andrew Fraser mentioned that these administrative adjustments had no connection to the partition of Bengal.

For the next one and a half year Andrew Fraser's proposal was discussed and placed before Viceroy Lord Curzon. He made the comment on the lengthy process of the bureaucracy was responsible for the failure of territorial adjustments. But at the same time, he took immediate steps to solve all the problems regarding territorial adjustments. Considering administrative and economic difficulties, the Secretary of State accepted of the necessity of a territorial re-organization in Bengal.³⁵⁹ At last it was accepted on 28th March, 1903. The Government announced the idea for partition of Bengal in January, 1904. The idea was opposed by Henry John Stedman Cotton, the then Chief Commissioner of Assam (1896-1902). The partition of Bengal in 1905 was made on 16th October by Viceroy Lord Curzon. The former province of undivided Bengal was divided into two new provinces 'West Bengal' or 'Western Bengal' comprising the province of Bihar and Orissa and 'Eastern Bengal and Assam' with Dhaka as the capital of the later. This partition of Bengal was promoted for administrative reason.³⁶⁰ Lord Curzon was convinced regarding the proposal's points and decided to adopt the new administrative policy of 'divided and rule.' In various Government official meetings, he highlighted the various advantages of the division of Bengal. In this respect, Lord Curzon gained the absolute support of a large majority of Muslim population of East Bengal including Nawab Salimullah of Dacca.

In such circumstances, Lord Curzon, the then Viceroy of India decided that the province of Bengal should be divided so that the East Bengal and Assam where Muslims were preponderant becomes one province with its capital in Dhaka. The provinces of Bengal and Assam were divided by the then Viceroy, Lord Curzon, into two provinces: 1) Eastern Bengal and Assam with Dacca as its capital; and 2) Western Bengal with Calcutta as its capital. It came into effect on 18th February 1905.³⁶¹ The chief aim of Curzon's

³⁵⁸ Ibid, p.49.

³⁵⁹ Sanjay K. Bhardwaj, ... International Studies 50(1&2), 2016. *op.cit.* pp- 109-129.

³⁶⁰ Sarkar Sumit, '**The Swadeshi Movement in Bengal 1903-1908**', people publishing house, Delhi, 2005.

³⁶¹ Dev Milton Kumar and Samad Md. Abdus, *op.cit.* pp.50-51.

administration was to reduce the strong influence of Bangalee politicians from liberal institutions.³⁶² Sir Bamfylde Fuller, became the first Lieutenant-Governor of the new province of East Bengal and Assam on 16th October 1905. When Sir Fuller arrived at Dhaka, the Muslims accorded him a rousing warm reception. On the same day, 'Mohanmmedan Provincial Union' was founded with Nawab Salimullah as its patron. The 'All India Muslim League' was founded in 1906 supported this partition of Bengal for the large interest of Muslim community.³⁶³ The Eminent Leaders of National Congress took serious decision in its 1905-1907 annual session on the issue of the partition of Bengal. With the issue of partition of Bengal, a sense of extreme nationalism grew and the Surat split was held in 1907 December session of Congress.³⁶⁴

The partition of Bengal met great opposition mainly from the influential middle class Hindus. The educated Bangalee Hindus (Calcutta) felt the partition 'a blow on them.' The territorial adjustment touched their interest. They controlled most of Bengal's commerce and different professions. Calcutta lawyer groups apprehended that establishment of a court of appeal at Dhaka would diminish importance of their own High Court at Calcutta. Journalist groups feared that appearance of local newspapers would restrict circulation of Calcutta press. Business community of Calcutta visualized shift of trade from Calcutta to Chittagong port. The Zamindars, mostly Hindus, who owned vast landed estates both in West and East Bengal, foresaw extra expenditure. They believed the plan would encourage growth of a Muslim power in the Muslim majority Eastern Bengal-mostly peasants and illiterate-to thwart the rapidly growing strength of the educated Hindu community. This sense and sentiments grew among the Hindu communities. The pattern had stirred up the Hindus. As a result, there were widespread agitations across the state. 16th October, 1905 the day on which the partition came into effect. It was the first partition of British Bengal before independence. The day was observed as a day of mourning and fasting throughout Bengal. The Amrita Bazaar Patrika of Calcutta wrote in an editorial next day "the people of Calcutta observed it was a day of mourning." Rabindranath Tagore, Nobel-laureate and National Poet, spoke out against this political event by means of a highly inspiring poem: "Banglar mati Banglar jal, Banglar bayu,

³⁶² Sarkar Sumit, **'The Swadeshi Movement in Bengal 1903-1908'**, people publishing house, Delhi, 2005, pp. 18-20.

³⁶³ Dev Milton Kumar and Samad Md. Abdus, *op.cit*, p.56.

³⁶⁴ Sarkar Sumit, **'A Bengali translation of Modern India: 1885-1947'**, K P Bagchi and Company, Kolkata, 2013, p.114.

Banglar phal, punya houk, punya houk hey Bhagaban.”³⁶⁵ Tagore wrote ‘Amar sonar Bangle’ as a rallying cry for proponents of annulment of partition, which much later in 1972, became the national anthem of Bangladesh. ³⁶⁶ Rabindranath Tagore introduced ‘Rakhi Bondhan’ on that day. The Hindu- Muslim and Christian put Rakhi on each other’s wrist with great zeal and eagerness as a symbol of fraternity and unity. ‘Arandhan’ was celebrated all over Bengal. Processions, hartals, road obstacle, meetings, picketing were observed on that day. Rastraguru Surendranath Bandhopadhyaya challenged Lord Curzon’s decision and told “Partition of Bengal is a settled Fact He told this settled fact must be unsettled.”³⁶⁷ A large number of national literature was created during this period. Dadabhai Naoroji, the eminent congress leader at the annual session of the congress in Kolkata in 1906 described the partition ‘a bad blunder’ which ‘may yet be rectified’ by agitation. The Bangalee Hindus organized terrorist movement without Muslim participants throughout Bengal to free India from the British rule.³⁶⁸ This was the time when extreme nationalism came to the forefront. A large number of young leaders like Arobindro Ghosh, Khudiram Bose, Rash Bihari Bose, Sachindranath Sanyal, Jotin Das, Pulin Bihari Das, and Jatindranath Mukherji carried out several armed raids to raise funds and execution of English Officials. The two leading terrorist groups ‘The Jugantar Dal’ and ‘the Anusilon Samiti’ were founded on that time. According to great historian Sumit Sarkar ‘the terrorist group changed this Swadeshi and Boycott movement from theory to action.’³⁶⁹ In the first phase of the Partition of Bengal and the agitation against it some pamphlets were to be mentioned. These were “An open letter to Lord Curzon (1904), The Case against the break up of Bengal (1905), The partition of agitation explained (1906) and The partition riddle (1906).”³⁷⁰ During this time different Bengali newspapers like ‘Sandhya’, ‘Sangiboni’, ‘Naboshakti’, ‘Hitobadi’, ‘Jugantar’, ‘Bondha matoram’ etc. took serious role to create public opinion. Not only that, the English newspapers like ‘The Statesman’, ‘The Englishman’, ‘The Pioneer’ etc. criticized the decision of the Partition of Bengal. London based ‘Daily News’ warned the British Government about the Partition of

³⁶⁵ <https://dhakadailyphoto.blogspot.in/2006/11/partition-of-bengal-1905-and-its.html>, accessed on 22.07.2022.

³⁶⁶ Dev Milton Kumar and Samad Md. Abdus, *op.cit*, pp- 57-58.

³⁶⁷ Archarya Modonmohan, “**Bharat Khotha**”, B Sarkar and Company, Kolkata, 1998, p.79 (part-II).

³⁶⁸ Dev Milton Kumar and Samad Md. Abdus, *op.cit*, p.58

³⁶⁹ Ghosh Soma, Pal Nibedita, Bonik Rakhi, ‘**Bharater sanbidhan o Shasan Byabasther** Patha Parikrama’, Progressive publisher, Kolkata, 2014, p.171.

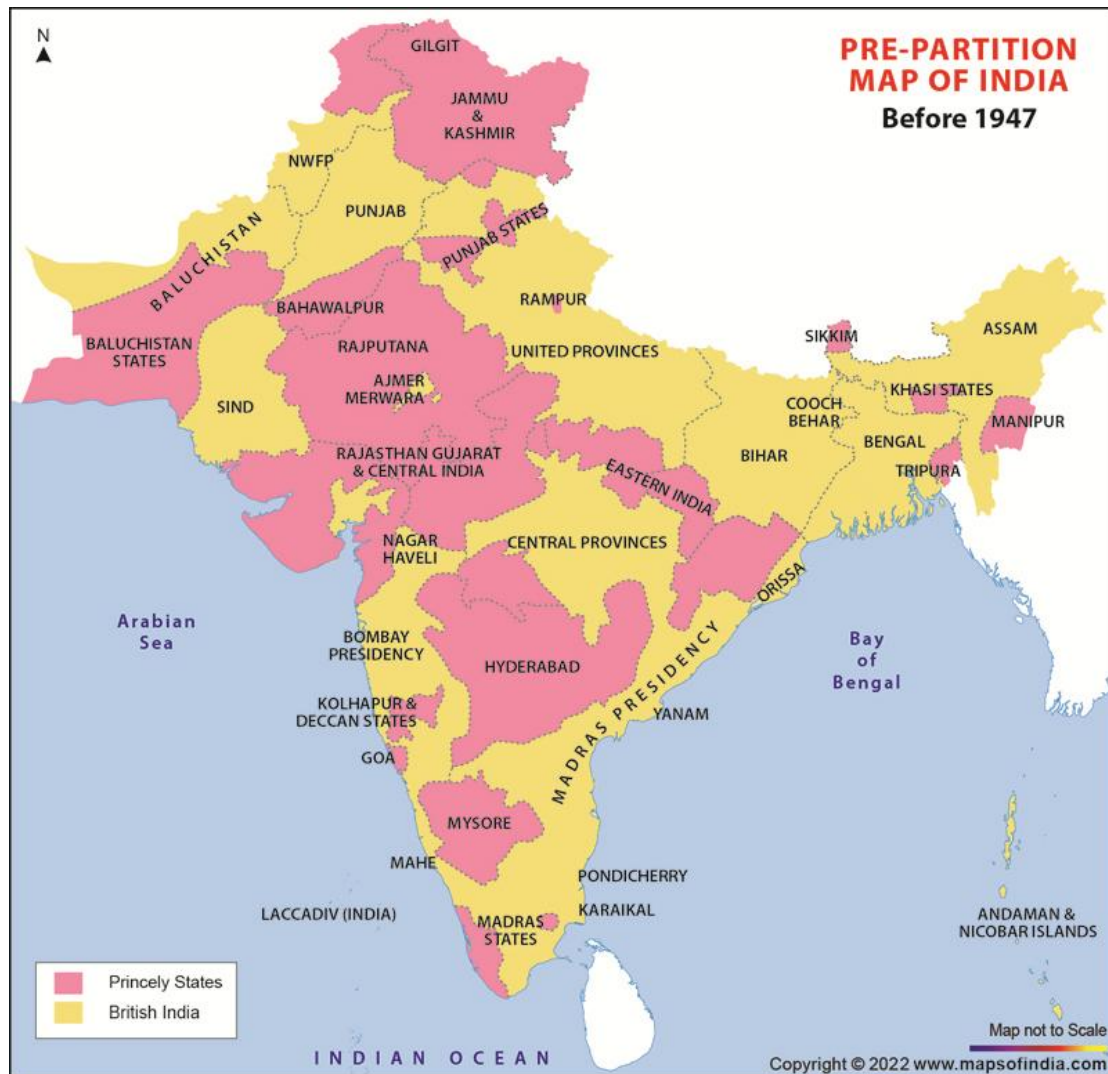
³⁷⁰ Charabarti Radharaman, ‘**Bharatiya Rashtrachintar Bikash O Rajnaitik Andolan**’, Progressive publisher, Kolkata, 2009, p-336.

Bengal and criticized “it was the lack of political foresightness of the Government.”³⁷¹ The Partition of Bengal and the mass agitation against it had far reaching effects on Indian history and national life. The twin weapons of ‘Swadeshi and Boycott’ by the Bangalees became a creed with the Indian National Congress and were used more effectively in future conflicts. The partition of Bengal was annulled before the face of seditious and anarchical situation created by the Bangalee Hindus. The Bangalee Muslims watched the hollowness of the aggregation of the British power and the rising tide of the Bangalee Hindu Nationalism. In the face of rising opposition to colonial rule the British’s ‘the division and the partition’ had to be annulled. Due to political protest, the two parts of Bengal were reunited in 1911. A new partition which divided the province on linguistic, rather than religious ground followed, with the Hindi, Oriya, and Assamese areas separated to form administrative units.³⁷² According to the suggestion of the Governor-General-in-Council, King George V at his coronation Durbar in Delhi in December 1911 announced the revocation of the partition of Bengal and the two parts of Bengal were reunited. At the same time, certain changes made in the administration, the Government of India shifted its capital at Delhi instead of Calcutta. British Government decided to annul the Partition of Bengal, the date chosen for the formal ending of the partition and the reunification of Bengal was 1st April 1912.³⁷³

371 Maity Prabhatanshu, Mondal Asit Kumar, ‘**Bharat Itihas Porikroma 1818-1964**’, Shridhar Prokasoni, Kolkata, 2010, p.436

372 Shekhar bandyopadhyay, “**plasse the partition: Adhunik Bharater Itihas**” ,translated by Krishendu Roy, Oriental Longman publication, 2004, p.p-280-300.

373 Dev Milton Kumar and Samad Md. Abdus, *op.cit*, p.62.



THE SECOND PARTITION OF BENGAL IN 1947

Within 36 years from the annulment of the first partition of Bengal, in 1947 the province was again divided into two halves along the same geographical lines mainly on communal considerations of Jinnha's 'Two Nation Theory.' In the process of partition, until October 1947, Lord Mountbatten, the then Governor General of India had a clear-cut directive from the British government to explore the options of 'unity and division.' Mountbatten's formula was mainly 'to divide India but retain maximum unity.'³⁷⁴ The legal framework and guidelines relating to the partition of Bengal, announced by then England Prime Minister Clement Attlee in the British Parliament on 3rd June 1947.

The plan of Mountbatten, the third within twelve months (Cabinet Mission Plan of June 1946, Attlee Declaration of February 1947, Mountbatten plan of June 1947) had

³⁷⁴ Chandra, B. "India's struggle for independence 1857–1947". New Delhi: Penguin Books Ltd, 1989.

received the assent of the leadership of the major political organizations in India and in Britain. In India the main political leaders had declared their acceptance of the proposal, though with heavy apprehensions. The next logical step, initiated by the dynamic leadership of Lord Mountbatten, was taken quickly and the Indian Independence Act 1947 duly introduced in the British parliament on 4th July received the Royal Assent on 18th July, 1947. Hence, the Indian Independence Act 1947 was the implementation of 3rd June plan and under this Act India and Pakistan were to emerge as two independent Dominions, and the Constituent Assembly of each dominion was to have unlimited power to frame and adopt any constitution and to repeal any act of the British Parliament, including the Indian Independence Act, if it so desired. Some important features of the 'Indian Independence Act 1947' were-

1. The Act provided for two dominion states: India and Pakistan.
2. 15th August, 1947 was declared as the appointed date for the partition.
3. Pakistan was to comprise the West Punjab, East Bengal (now Bangladesh), Territories of the Sind, North West frontier provinces, Sylhet divisions of Assam, Bhawalpur, Khairpur, Baluchistan, and 8 other princely states of Baluchistan.
4. The Province of Bengal as constituted under the Government of India Act 1935 ceased to exist.
5. Alternative two new provinces were to be constituted. To be known separately as East Bengal and West Bengal.
6. The partition of the two dominion states India and Pakistan were to be determined by a Boundary Commission which was headed by Sir Cyril Radcliffe.
7. It provided for partition of Punjab and Bengal and separate Boundary Commission to demarcate the boundaries between them.

As a result, a Boundary Commission will be set up by the Governor-General, the membership and terms of reference of which will be settled in consultation of those concerned state. It will be instructed to demarcate the boundaries of the two parts of Bengal on the basis of ascertaining the contiguous majority areas of Muslims and non-Muslims.³⁷⁵

³⁷⁵ Banarjee, A.C. "The making of Indian constitution", vol. 1. Calcutta: A. Mukharjee and Co, 1948.

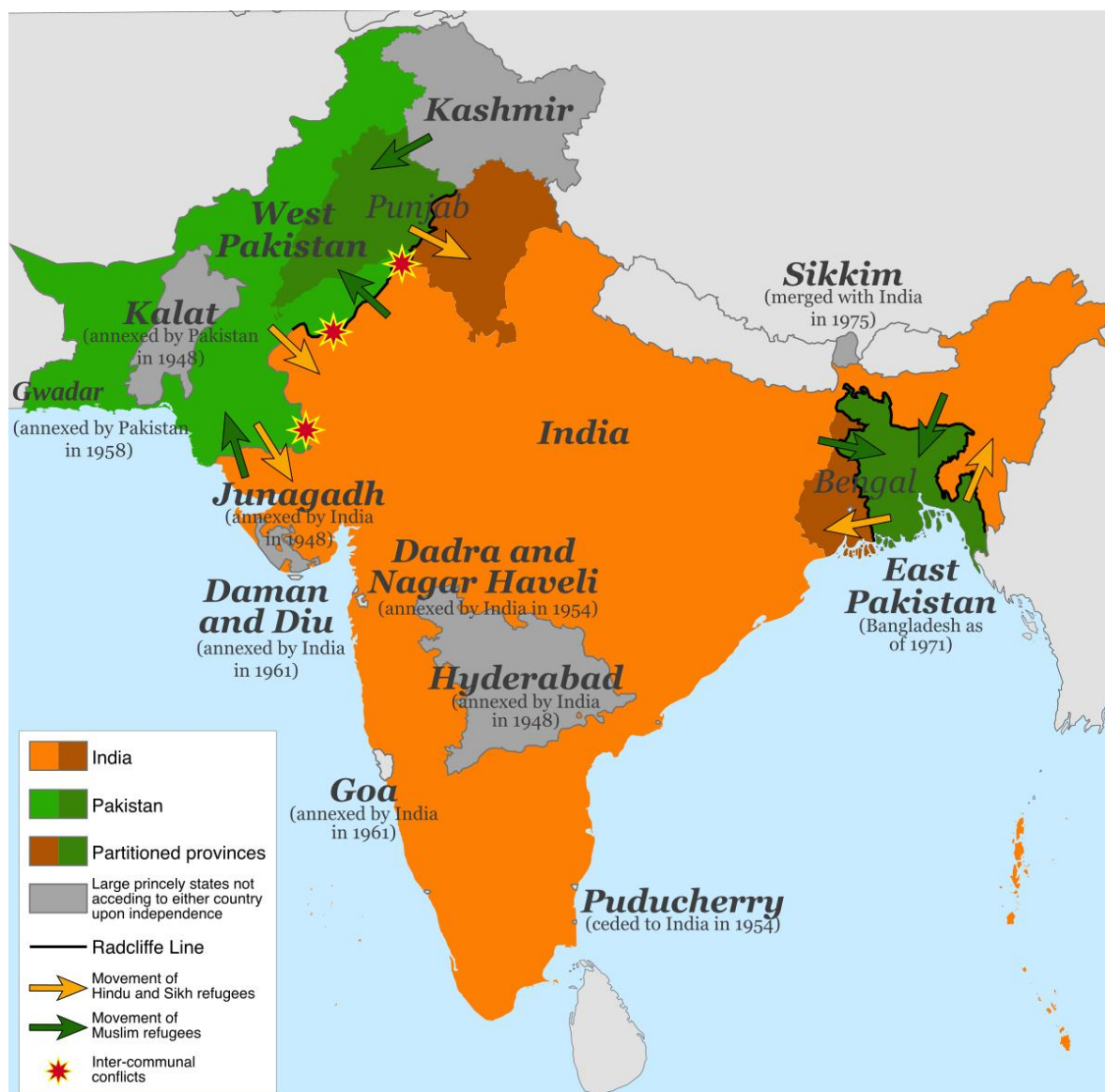
The Bengal Boundary Commission was established on 30th June 1947 and began to work the demarcation of the boundaries between East Bengal and West Bengal. The Commission, chaired by Sir Cyril Radcliffe, submitted its Report, known as the 'Radcliffe Award', on 13th August 1947. The Boundary Commission, responsible for delineating the boundaries, came to be popularly known as the 'Radcliffe Boundary Commission.' According to the report of the 'Radcliffe Award',³⁷⁶ the boundary line which was drawn along East and West Bengal was clear.³⁷⁷ There were some pressures and counter-pressures that Sir Radcliffe had to weigh against each other. He had to appear even-handed to all sides, while keeping in mind the imperatives of the British policy for the future of the sub-continent. Inevitably, his award pleased no one entirely, but there is little doubt that it displeased some less than others.

This partition officially took place during 14th and 15th August, 1947. With the partition Bengal was divided into two separate entities of West Bengal belonging to India and East Bengal (now Bangladesh) belonging to Pakistan. The Partition of Bengal in 1947 was the most recent phenomenon that brought a significant readjustment to the political geography of Bengal. The province of Bengal came to be divided into two halves in 36 years from the revocation of its first partition (1905) in the year 1947 along the same geographical position mainly on communal consideration. The Partition of Bengal of 1905 was seen as an act of colonial arrogance and blamed on the British's 'divide and rule' policy which continued till the final day of their dominancy in India. Partition of Bengal in 1947 also bears the testimony of the 'divide and rule policy' supporting the very stance of the Indian National Congress.³⁷⁸ It was actually the outcome of Mahatma Ali Jinnah's 'Two Nation Theory.' The second Partition of Bengal in 1947 after Bango-Bhango in 1905 left behind a legacy of violence which continued to this day. A massive population transfer immediately began after the partition. East Bengal was renamed East Pakistan, and later became the independent sovereign nation of Bangladesh after the Bangladesh Liberation War in 1971.

³⁷⁶ Das, M.N. *Partition and independence of India*. New Delhi: Vision Books, 1982.

³⁷⁷ **The Statesman** (Calcutta, 18 August 1947) reported that both the governments were bound to accept the terms of the award.

³⁷⁸ Dev Milton Kumar and Samad Md. Abdus, *op.cit*, pp-176-178.



After independence, India, like any other country, has been adequately conscious about its borders and has reacted and defended its boundary and territory, politically and militarily. It has also signed peace and friendship treaties or boundary agreements with Bhutan (1949), Nepal (1950), Myanmar (1967) and Bangladesh (1974 and 2015). Immediately after Partition, border disputes arose between India and erstwhile Pakistan regarding certain territorial claims. Some of the disputes were resolved by the Bagge Awards of 1950, the Nehru–Noon Agreement of 1958, and the Swaran Singh–Ahemmad Sheikh Agreement of 1959. After the independence of Bangladesh in 1971, the Land Boundary Agreement (L.B.A) of 1974 between Mrs. Indira Gandhi and Sheikh Mujibur Rahman also tried their best to resolve the border dispute. However, following a protocol on Land Boundary Agreement, 2011, the disputes are finally resolved by the exchange of instrument

of ratification on Land Boundary Agreement in 2015 between the Narendra Modi Government and the Sheikh Hasina Government.

Nature of India–Bangladesh Border and Some Emerging Issues

Indo-Bangladesh Border (IBB) is the longest land border that India shares with any of its neighbours. It covers a length of 4096.7 km abutting six (Chittagong, Dhaka, Khulna, Rajshahi, Rangpur and Sylhet out of eight Bangladeshi divisions (Chittagong, Barishal, Dhaka, Khulna, Rajshahi, Rangpur, Mymensingh and Sylhet) and five Indian states (province), namely, West Bengal (2216.7 km), Tripura (856 km), Meghalaya (443 km), Mizoram (318 km) and Assam (262 km).³⁷⁹ The border includes plains, mountain ranges, rivers, wetlands, jungle terrain, agricultural lands, national parks, sanctuaries, reserve forests, large estuaries, char lands, and enclaves with a remarkable biological and climate diversity. The boundary cuts through rivers, mountains, charlands, agricultural lands and public institutions on border areas. This unique intermix of habitation residing close to and on the boundary itself leaves the border areas heavily populated with a density of 1028 per sq. km in West Bengal and 1215 per sq. km in Bangladesh.³⁸⁰ A significant portion of this India–Bangladesh Border (I.B.B), i.e. about 790kms is riverine, 180kms is maritime. River borders pose a very complex problem because the shifting river route, soil erosion and frequent floods make it difficult to demarcate borders especially when they form chars and islands. Similarly, the people of both the countries work in close proximity and the boundary passes through the middle of the villages and even through houses, which are scattered almost along the entire stretch of the border. They use the land for cultivation till the last inch, which leads to removal of permanent boundary pillars, damages the fencing, creates patrolling problems and facilitates violent non-state actors and smugglers to cross the border for their activities. The boundary (with erstwhile East Pakistan) was determined by the Radcliffe Award of 1947. Three major land boundary disputes arose out of provisions of the award; 1) un-demarcated land boundary of approximately 6.5 km in three sectors; 2) exchange of enclaves; and 3) adverse possession of land. The Land Boundary Agreement³⁸¹ (L.B.A) between India and Bangladesh was signed on 16th May 1974 to solve the problems of border demarcation. Bangladesh ratified the agreement, but India did not because it involved ceding

³⁷⁹ Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), (2015). Annual Report (2014–15). New Delhi: Ministry of Home Affairs. <http://www.mha.nic.in/AnnualReports> Accessed on 30.07.2022

³⁸⁰ Census Report of India, 2011.

³⁸¹ Text of LBA attached appendix Chapter 5

territory and indicating those areas on the ground. After a long statutory and diplomatic battle, the protocol on the Land Boundary Agreement (L.B.A) of 2011 included four articles concerning aspects of border demarcation and exchange of enclaves. The first article of the agreement stated that the provisions of the protocol formed an integral part of the 1974 Land Boundary Agreement. The second article of the protocol dealt with the major disputed areas between India and Bangladesh and the exchange of enclaves. Article II clause (II) proposes the exchange of the enclaves. There are 111 Indian enclaves (17,258.24 acres) on the Bangladesh side and 51 enclaves of Bangladesh (7083.72 acres) on the Indian side. The agreement holds that the exchange of enclaves should be transferred as per the jointly verified cadastral enclave map signed in April 1997. These should be exchanged without claiming compensation for the additional areas going to Bangladesh. The inhabitants of enclaves did not enjoy full legal rights as citizens of either country, or facilities like food, water, electricity, education, and healthcare. Law and order agencies do not have proper access to these areas. A joint headcount estimated the population in the enclaves to be around 51,549 (37,334 in the Indian enclaves within Bangladesh). After the approval from the Indian Parliament, the Government of India sought to resolve border disputes as well as the exchange of enclaves. In the exchange of the Instrument of Ratification between India and Bangladesh, both the Governments agreed that Indian enclaves in Bangladesh and Bangladeshi enclaves in India exchanged pursuant to the 1974 agreement and 2011 protocol would stand transferred to the other with effect from the midnight of 31st July 2015. However, prior to this appointed day, both the Governments have completed all the formalities of exchange of people and their citizenship rights.³⁸² In July 2001, after breaking the existing deadlock since 1974, the West Bengal Government agreed to grant access to Bangladeshis between the two enclaves of Dahagram and Angorpota through the Tin Bigha Corridor under the Lease Agreements of 1982 and 1992. In the 4th Joint Boundary Working Group (J.B.W.G)³⁸³ meeting, both sides expressed satisfaction at the recent electrification of Dahagram and Angarpota. Both the countries also implemented 24-hour unfettered access through the Tin Bigha Corridor, and placed all necessary arrangements, including

³⁸² Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Bangladesh (MOFA). (2015). Protocol for exchange of instrument of ratification regarding the India–Bangladesh land boundary agreement, 1974 and protocol of 2011 to the land boundary agreement. <http://mofa.gov.bd/sites/default/files/Doc%20A%20Protocol%20for%20Exchange%20of%20Instrument.pdf>

³⁸³ The JBWG was set up in December 2000 to resolve matters relating to the demarcation of the un-demarcated boundary between India and Bangladesh and other outstanding issues pertaining to the territories in adverse possession (AP), enclaves and also erection of permanent boundary pillars.

infrastructure and security, expeditiously. Notably, Dahagram-Angarpota is one large Bangladeshi enclave that has not changed hands in the swap between India and Bangladesh by protocol on Land Boundary Agreement (LBA) 2011. The enclave exchange treaty of 2015 has brought Tin Bigha and the Dahagram-Angarpota enclave into focus once again, with a section of the Indian population in Mekhliganj sub-division of Cooch Behar district, particularly in Kuchlibari, demanding its transfer to India. Several organizations have threatened a movement and already bandhs (strikes) have been observed, processions taken out and petitions filed to the Chief Minister, the Prime Minister and the Ministry of External Affairs of India for this purpose.³⁸⁴

Article III of the protocol is about redrawing the boundary in the adverse possession areas in different Indian states: West Bengal, Assam, Meghalaya and Tripura. In fact, the Indian 'adverse possession' refers to territory within Indian control, but which is legally part of Bangladesh. Residents of these adverse possessions are Indian citizens. The same applies to Bangladeshi adverse possessions. India is to receive 2777.038 acres land in respect of adverse possessions, and transfer 2267.682 acres land to Bangladesh.³⁸⁵ Though the reality, is that the area is already in Bangladesh's possession and its handing over is merely a procedural acceptance of the de facto situation. For the legal transfer of land, India and Bangladesh have exchanged 1114 maps. As per the exchange of Instrument of Ratification, the ground demarcation of the boundary as per the interim strip maps will be completed by the respective survey departments of the two Governments by 30th June 2016. Most notably, the two Governments have agreed to resolve the issue of un-demarcated 6.5 km boundaries which spreads into three sectors.³⁸⁶ **First**, in the Assam sector (2.5 km of Lathitila/Dhumabari area, approximately 135 acres of land), India and Bangladesh insisted on applying different maps and data as the basis for demarcation. However, the protocol concludes that the line drawn by Sir Radcliffe from Boundary Pillar 1397 (point Y), that is, the last demarcated boundary pillar position, straight southward to the tri-junction of Mouzas Dumabari,

³⁸⁴ Nagchoudhury, S. (2015, June 9). Land Deal: Access unhindered, the little part of India that remains Bangladesh, **Indian Express**, p. 12.

³⁸⁵ Ministry of External Affairs (MEA). (2011). India & Bangladesh land boundary agreement. New Delhi: Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India. https://www.mea.gov.in/Uploads/PublicationDocs/24529_LBA_MEA_Booklet_final.pdf. Accessed on 30.07.2022

³⁸⁶ Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Bangladesh (MOFA). (2015). Protocol for exchange of instrument of ratification regarding the India–Bangladesh land boundary agreement, 1974 and protocol of 2011 to the land boundary agreement. <http://mofa.gov.bd/sites/default/files/Doc%20A%20Protocol%20for%20Exchange%20of%20Instrument.pdf> Accessed on 30.07.2022

Lathitilla and Bara Putnigaon, that is, up to iron bridge, and thence it shall run generally southwards along the midstream of the course of Putni Chara as already demarcated on the ground, till it meets the boundary between Sylhet (Bangladesh) and Tripura (India), that is, Boundary Pillar No. 1800. The villagers of these above area had been paying taxes to the Assam Government regularly.**Second**, in the West Bengal sector (1.5 km of Berubari Sector at Mouza Daikhata–56 Khudipara–Singhpara, around 56 acres of land), both sides agreed on using the Sui River as the demarcation.³⁸⁷ According to the protocol (2011), the boundary in this segment shall be drawn as a fixed boundary from existing boundary pillar 774/32-S in the strip sheet 444/6 along the Mouzas boundary of Daikhata-56 as surveyed in 1997-1998 and thereafter will follow the southern boundary of Daikhata-56 (from east to west) up to Point No 18, and there from it will follow the western boundary of Daikhata-56 (from south to north) till it meets the centre of River Sui at Point No. 15 and thereafter, will run along the centre of the River Sui up to Point No. 1, the points jointly prepared and mutually agreed on 3rd August 2011. Thereafter the International Boundary shall follow the already delineated boundary through Main Pillar (MP) 775.³⁸⁸ **Third**, the Muhuri River of the Belonia Sector is part of Tripura Naokhali/ Commilla sector. In this 2.5 km boundary, due to changes in the course and the formation of Shashaner Char (46 acres in Indian Territory); Bangladesh is unwilling to apply the present river course as the boundary line.³⁸⁹ However, the present agreement stated that the boundary in this segment shall be drawn westwards from the existing Boundary Pillar No. 2159/48-S along the agreed line, as depicted in the map prepared jointly, till it meets the southern limit of the Burning Ghat as shown in jointly surveyed map of Muhuri river area in 1977–1978.³⁹⁰ Thereafter, it shall follow the external

³⁸⁷ Ministry of External Affairs (MEA). (2011). India & Bangladesh land boundary agreement. New Delhi: Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India. https://www.mea.gov.in/Uploads/PublicationDocs/24529_LBA_MEA_Booklet_final.pdf Accessed on 30.07.2022

³⁸⁸ Ministry of External Affairs (MEA). (2011). India & Bangladesh land boundary agreement. New Delhi: Ministry of External Affairs, government of India. https://www.mea.gov.in/Uploads/PublicationDocs/24529_LBA_MEA_Booklet_final.pdf. Accessed on 30.07.2022

³⁸⁹ Ministry of External Affairs (MEA). (2002a). External Affairs Minister Jaswant Singh's statement in Rajya Sabha, 14th March. www.meadev.nic.in Accessed on 30.07.2022 ad

Ministry of External Affairs (MEA). (2002b). Union minister of state in the Ministry of External Affairs, Digvijay Singh, Rajya Sabha, unstarred question no. 999, 27 February 2002. www.meadev.nic.in, Accessed on 30.07.2022

³⁹⁰ Chatterjee, S.S. (2012). International border disputes and adverse-possession of India– Bangladesh international border: Inconceivable truth—Indian peasants pay tax but Bangladeshi farmers get ownership. <http://newsblaze.com/report/Secret-Dossier-of-Land-Dispute-Between-India-and-Bangladesh.pdf>. Accessed on 30.07.2022

limit of the Burning Ghat in the south-west direction and then turn northwards along the external limit of the Burning Ghat till it meets the centre of the existing Muhuri River. Thereafter it shall run along the mid-stream of the existing Muhuri River up to Boundary Pillar No. 2159/3-S. This boundary shall be the fixed boundary.³⁹¹ The ground demarcation of the boundary based on these interim strip maps completed by 30th June 2016.³⁹² The flows of 54 cross-border rivers constitute the approximately 1000 km long riverine borders.³⁹³ When the velocity drops, sedimentation rate increases, and the rivers change their course, braiding into multiple channels. The shifting river roots, soil erosion or frequent floods pose problems for the demarcation of borders, fixing pillars-especially when they form numerous islands and chars-leading to a host of disputes between the two countries. This generates difficulties in establishing ownership of the newly created territories, for example, in the 1980s controversies surrounding sovereignty over New Moore Island (South Talpatty) hampered the Indo-Bangladesh bilateral relations.³⁹⁴

COMPLEXITIES OF INDIO-BANGLADESH BORDER

As already mentioned the Indo-Bangladesh Border (IBB) is 4,096.7 km long, covering the states of West Bengal (2,216.7 km), Assam (263 km), Meghalaya (443 km), Tripura (856 km), and Mizoram (318 km). The border traverses a range of natural and cultural landscapes, which pose a challenge to its effective border security management. The terrain along the border is a mix of hilly and jungle tracks, plains, riverside, and low-lying land. This diverse mix of topographical features makes the border extremely porous. The thick vegetation and steep gradient in the hilly and forested tracks along North Bengal, South Assam, Meghalaya, and Tripura hinder the construction of proper roads, fences and Border Observation Posts (BOPs). Patrolling the border is quite difficult because of the lack of roads and greater inter-Border Observation Posts (BOP) distances. Consequently, insurgent groups

³⁹¹ India & Bangladesh land boundary agreement. New Delhi: Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India (2011). https://www.mea.gov.in/Uploads/PublicationDocs/24529_LBA_MEA_Booklet_final.pdf Accessed on 30.07.2022

³⁹² Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Bangladesh (MOFA). (2015). Protocol for exchange of instrument of ratification regarding the India–Bangladesh land boundary agreement, 1974 and protocol of 2011 to the land boundary agreement. <http://mofa.gov.bd/sites/default/files/Doc%20A%20Protocol%20for%20Exchange%20of%20Instrument.pdf>, Accessed on 30.07.2022

³⁹³ Jamwal, N.S. Border management: Dilemma of guarding the India–Bangladesh border. *Strategic Analysis*, 28(1), 2004, pp-5–36.

³⁹⁴ Ministry of External Affairs (MEA). (1992). *Annual report (1991–92)*. New Delhi: Ministry of External Affairs. http://www.mea.gov.in/annual-reports.htm?57/Annual_Reports, Accessed on 30.07.2022

mis-use these stretches along the border to smuggle arms and drugs and also to crossover to Bangladesh.

The riverside border along with multiple river channels, especially in Dhubri sector in Assam, makes surveillance of the entire stretch almost impossible. During dry seasons, these rivers part into tributaries, and tracking their courses at night is extremely difficult. They also throw up stretches of char land, which get inundated during floods. Though inhabited, these lands are weather-bound, and there is an inadequate presence of security forces. These char lands provide shelter to illegal immigrants from Bangladesh and turn into a hub of cross border criminal activities like smuggling, theft, robbery kidnapping, and trafficking in arms, drugs, and humans. Hallidayganj and Mancachar have become major smuggling centres in this sector. Most of the rivers constantly shift their courses inundating older land and uncovering new land masses. This creates a problem of identification of the boundary along these courses. The flat and fertile land along the border supports dense human settlement sight up to the border. There are more than a hundred villages located right along the zero line, with many houses opening into Bangladesh. The ethnic composition of the people is similar on both sides of the border, and it is quite difficult to differentiate between the citizens of India and Bangladesh. Moreover, traditional trans-border ethnic and socio-cultural ties between the two countries continue even today. This factor has helped migrants from Bangladesh to crossover to India illegally as they find a welcoming population across the border. Therefore, stretches along the borders in south Bengal, Assam, and Tripura have witnessed a large-scale influx of illegal migrants. Interestingly, where the ethnic composition of the border population is different like in North Bengal and Meghalaya, illegal migration from Bangladesh does not take place, because the indigenous population does not allow the illegal Bangladeshi migrants to settle down permanently in their territory.

The condition on the India-Bangladesh border has become rather difficult due to an increase in the density of the population. The main reasons of the increase of the population in border areas are (1) the overall increase in the population of the country as seen in the 3rd world country; and (2) the influx of illegal migrants from Bangladesh who mostly settled in the border areas. Poor governance, economic disparities, extreme poverty, unemployment, political clash, political unrest, religious intolerance etc.³⁹⁵ and frequent political instability and violence in Bangladesh are the major causes of illegal movement and activities across the

³⁹⁵ Barkat, A., Zaman, S.U., Rahman, A., & Poddar, A. (1997). **Political economy of the vested property act in rural Bangladesh**. Dhaka: Association for Land Reform and Development, 1997

border. These factors compel the people to move in search of work and food security towards India. However, the people living in low-lying areas along the rivers often move up towards the mainland during floods and these internally displaced populations are also often termed as ‘illegal migrants’. It is important to note that not only Bangladeshis, but Indians are also crossing the border for one reason or the other. The production of goods, mostly perishable in nature does not find any market on the Indian side of the border. The poor transport and communication facilities on the Indian side force Indian producers to sell their products in Bangladeshi markets. As in the case of the Meghalaya border, the boundary lies on the foothills towards Bangladesh, while the plains are in India where the vegetables are produced to be consumed by both sides. This did not initially matter to the people as the borders were virtually porous and people could visit each other freely. The intermingling ethnic groups continued to enter into marriage alliances and subsequently nurtured relations to the extent of settling down, particularly in Assam. Even though many of the land and railways linkages were discontinued after the Indo-Pak war of 1965, efforts continued to access the borders. Gradually, due to legal vigilance and tightening of control on the borders, particularly after 9/11 terrorist attack on the U.S.A World Trade Centre by the Al Qaeda and Taliban, such practices have become quite difficult. The policing of border has been expanded to include mitigating the emerging threats and illegal activities of violent non-state actors and the volume of border killings have become a concern for people living around the border areas. Many of the Indian Border Security Force (B.S.F) personnel are also recruited from the non-bordering states of India who are mostly unfamiliar with the complexities, ground realities and uniqueness of the Indo-Bangladesh Border. In the last decade, more than 900 people were indiscriminately killed by the B.S.F.³⁹⁶ These figures have increased due to the increasing regional security threats. The transnational terrorism and insurgency movements have compelled the states to take such cohesive measures to tackle the problem. Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh talked about the growing threat that naxalism and other domestic insurgent movements pose to the country’s security and integrity at the Chief Ministers’ meeting on internal security in New Delhi on 16th April, 2012.³⁹⁷ He also talked about the support that these insurgencies get from outside the country. External forces, particularly those from Bangladesh, have provided support to insurgent movements particularly in Northeast India. Assam’s Chief Minister, Mr. Tarun Gogoi, brought up this

³⁹⁶<https://www.hrw.org/report/2010/12/09/trigger-happy/excessive-use-force-indian-troops-bangladeshborder>, Accessed on 30.07.2022

³⁹⁷“Chief minister attend internal security; P. M reaches out to states”, NDTV, 16th April, 2012, New Delhi.

serious issue and the potential threat it poses to India's internal security. He pleaded for greater pressure to be placed on Bangladesh to take stern action against these insurgent groups that operate from Bangladesh territory. In addition, he demanded that border fencing with modern technologies be installed as soon as possible and emphasized the significance of increased border surveillance in North East India and Bangladesh.

The ongoing cycle of terrorism and violence in the North Eastern states over the past few years exemplifies this insurgency activities and threats. Jihadi groups and fundamentalist political organizations have increased in the region, particularly in West Bengal, lower Assam, Tripura where a significant number of illegal Bangladeshi migrants live. It is believed that Bangladesh's Directorate General of Forces Intelligence (D.G.F.I) and Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (I.S.I) are actively encouraging this transnational terrorism and insurgency movements in Northeast India to separate Northeast from mainland India. A number of the top leaders of the insurgent groups in North East India have been operating from their bases in Bangladesh for a considerable amount of time. The military-backed Government that took power in Dhaka after the tragic end of first Parliamentary Governmental rule of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in 1975, had sent some informal notices to India that it had cracked down on many of these insurgent networks inside its territory. Bangladesh had always denied the official presence of Indian militants or their camps on its soil.

Julius Dorphang, the surrendered chairman of the Hynniewtrep National Liberation Council (H.N.L.C), recently provided evidence of the Bangladeshi connection and the support that the North East insurgent groups receive on its territory. In 1992, Dorphang, along with John Kharkrang and Cheristerfield Thangkhiew, founded the Hynniewtrep Achik Liberation Council (HALC), which fought the Indian state for a separate Khasiland. The three leaders met in Dhaka in 1995, and the HALC became the HNLC. Dorphang is the first leader of any Northeast insurgent group to openly confirm his stay in Dhaka. He also supports the prevalent Indian view that nearly all North East militant groups have bases in Bangladesh. He disclosed that he had himself lived in Dhaka for several years in an apartment called Banani close to the airport. Dhaka serves as the base and several meeting took place with several top leaders of these groups. According to Dorphang, the leaders used to meet in a number of

hotels and other rented locations in Dhaka³⁹⁸. They also used to change their bases every six months, with the cadres coordinating the meetings and other logistics for their time in Bangladesh to improve coordination among cadres and leaders of other similar insurgent organizations. He also added, the HNLC and a number of other militant groups, including the National Socialist Council of Nagalim (NSCN-IM) and the National Liberation Front of Tripura (N.L.F.T), have camps and an operational presence in the Chittagong Hill Tracts of Bangladesh, and nearly all of the insurgent groups have close ties to one another within Bangladesh. He also talked about a time when the National Democratic Front of Bodoland (NDFB) had to close its camp in Bangladesh because of disagreements with the locals. It is believed that prominent insurgent leaders under the regime of Begum Kheleda Zia, operating out of Bangladesh include Bobby Marwein and Thangkhiew of the HNLC, Arabinda Rajkhowa and Paresh Baruah of the United Liberation Front of Assam (U.L.F.A), Ranjan Daimary of the National Democratic Front of Bodoland (N.D.F.B), Biswamohan Debbarma of the National Liberation Front of Tripura (N.L.F.T), and Ranjit Debbarma of the All Tripura Tiger Force (A.T.T.F). Julius Dorphang's revelations have cast serious doubt on Dhaka's commitment to repressing Northeastern insurgent groups on its soil and have sparked a number of questions. Additionally, it demonstrates New Delhi's inability to persuade Dhaka to take decisive action regarding issues pertaining to India's internal security. By supporting such insurgencies through a variety of means, Bangladesh has, in a way, been successful in pushing its own designs on the North East of India. India needs to be more proactive on these concerns for its own internal security and put more weight behind them in order to ensure that Dhaka addresses them. The jihadi influence, which has been supported by various interest groups within Bangladesh, has the potential to cause a lot of trouble in the region. As a result, the Indian state is compelled to expand policing of the India–Bangladesh Border (I.B.B) under tight security.³⁹⁹

ORIGIN OF BORDER MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Following the Kargil conflict in 1999, the border management issue was brought to the force, and a report was provided by the Kargil Review Committee. In response, the Indian Government established a 'Task Force' on Border Management in April 2000 under Madhav Godbole's leadership. Under his leadership a Group of Ministers (GoM) formed to examine

³⁹⁸ Human Rights Watch. (2010, December 9). 'Trigger happy': Excessive use of force by Indian troops at the Bangladesh border. <https://www.hrw.org/report/2010/12/09/trigger-happy/excessive-use-force-indian-troops-bangladeshborder>, Accessed on 30.07.2022.

³⁹⁹ Ibid.

the national security system as a whole and the recommendations of the Kargil Review Committee specifically consider measures for better border management. The goal of the Task Force in particular, was to consider the recommendations of the Kargil Review Committee and in this regard formulate specific proposals for the Group of Ministers' (GoM) consideration. In its report, the Group of Ministers (GoM) observed that the country's entire borders cannot be effectively managed because of certain inherent problems. First, most of the borders are either disputed or not clearly demarcated. Many are artificial, man-made boundaries that do not run along a natural barrier, which makes them extremely porous. This gives rise to multiple problems like illegal migration, cattle smuggling, drugs and human trafficking, and illegal trans-border movement of insurgents etc. In addition, the multiplicity of forces employed to guard the same border, their repeated withdrawal from the borders on other duties, the lack of adequate infrastructures along the border, and so on deter from efficient guarding of the border. To address all these problems, the Group of Ministers (GoM) broadly recommended that concerted efforts be made to settle border disputes and demarcate the limits at the earliest opportunity. It also recommended that a 'Department of Border Management' be created under the Ministry of Home Affairs of India, which would focus on border issues seriously. To enforce accountability, the Group of Ministers (GoM) Report recommended that one border guarding force should be deployed in each stretch of the border and it should not be distracted from its principal task for other internal duties. The report also recommended development of infrastructure along the border should be implemented as soon as possible to stop the illegal migrations and cross border terrorism. Against the backdrop of these recommendations, my research focus on the problems afflicting the India–Bangladesh border, examines the Government's responses to the Group of Ministers' (GoM's) recommendations, and suggests ways and means for better border management of the Indo-Bangladesh border. Several factors hamper the effective management of this long border. These include challenging terrain, unresolved boundary issues, illegal migration of Bangladeshis into India, the presence of the Indian insurgent bases in Bangladesh, and the operation of trans-border criminal gangs and networks in Bangladesh as well as India's North-East region.⁴⁰⁰

⁴⁰⁰ Pushpita Das, 'Indo-Bangladesh Border Management', **Strategic Analysis**, Volume -32, Issue 3, 2008.

OBJECTIVES OF THE BORDER SECURITY MANAGEMENT

India's border security management comprises of border development, communication with the neighbouring states and various programmes to enhance her national security. I would also like to focus on the border security management with special emphasis on the historical background of the partition of India. India got freedom in 1947 and birthed two nation India and Pakistan on Jinnah's 'Two Nations Theory.' The division was inevitable between the two newly independent state in Asian subcontinent. This Partition of Bengal in 1947 on Jinnah's 'Two Nations Theory' brought significant changes in the lives and livelihoods of people living along the borders between East Pakistan (Bangladesh) and India's five bordering States namely West Bengal, Assam, Meghalaya, Mizoram and Tripura. These five states surround East Pakistan (Bangladesh) through land, water and hill. The boundary commission headed by Sir Radcliffe divided bedrooms, kitchens, houses, villages, towns, lands and croplands of millions of people living together at the border. The final separation since its inception was, however, not a hard one because the borders were soft. Before partition in 1947, families on both sides could visit each other and the community life went on uninterrupted. The partition of India in 1947, of which today's Bangladesh was a Eastern province of Pakistan was responsible for the complexity of the border. The complex-artificial-man made-political boundary disrupted socio-economic conditions of the two immediate neighbouring countries and the border regions in particular. It did not only divide the nations but also separated families, relatives, villages, broke down connectivity linkages and hampered economy. Before partition one could go to the other land freely and plough one's cropland easily. Citizenships were only different but languages and dialects, lifestyles and food habits, Gods and Goddesses, rite and custom, traditions, common colonial past, heritage, values of secularism, democracy, linguistic & cultural ties were the same between West Bengal in India and East Bengal in Pakistan.⁴⁰¹

Border security management has two major objectives – firstly, to facilitate the movement of legitimate goods and people across the border between two sovereign countries. Secondly to ensure the security of the country by restricting entry of illegal goods and those individuals across the border who might disturb the peace. For this purpose India involved multiple agencies like-border guarding forces, customs, immigration and local police. Border

⁴⁰¹Pushpita Das , 'India-Bangladesh Border Management' A review of government's response,, **strategic analysis**, volume -32, issue 3, 2008, p-367–388.,and Pushpita Das (ed.), *India's Border Management: Select Documents* (New Delhi: Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses, 2010, p.1.

management approaches vary from one country to another — the border can be open or closed. The border management policies of a country are mainly determined by the nature of bilateral relationship. Despite divergent approaches, security is a pivotal issue of border management all over the world. For example, India shares around 15,000 kilometres of land borders with six neighbouring countries namely Nepal, Bhutan, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Myanmar and China. However, its policies are not uniform everywhere. Different countries across the world follow different border management policies based on the nature of their relationship with a specific enemy or friendly country. India has open borders with Nepal and Bhutan, where the movement of people is easier while its borders with Pakistan, China and Bangladesh are restrictive. Security is at the core of border policies, that encourages securitisation of the border, which in turn increases the propensity for militaristic measures in dealing with several challenges. It is a preference for the militaristic solution that inspires nations to deploy multiple security forces in the border. India has five border guarding forces deployed to secure its international land and maritime boundary.

India and Bangladesh at present share close ties and maintain heartily cooperation with respect to border security management. India and Bangladesh through sustained dialogue resolved different issues like delimitation of the land boundary, enclaves and land in adverse possession; which was a source of irritation between the two countries for a long period. Closure of the land boundary dispute contributed to better management of the border. For a long time, the enclaves were an important corridor for transnational crimes, cross border terrorism between the two countries and made border management extremely difficult. The peaceful resolution of the land boundary dispute further helped to boost confidence between the two countries. In 2011, India and Bangladesh signed a Coordinated Border Management Plan (C.B.M.P). The aim of signing the CBMP was to synergise efforts of the border guarding forces and to control cross-border illegal activities and crimes more effectively and maintain peace and harmony along the border.⁴⁰²

Another aspect which is openly happening in India-Bangladesh border is the violation of line of control. I would like to trace out this problem and the solutions are to be investigated since 1991. Political parties of both the countries are taking advantage of the border dispute and using them for electoral gains particularly the voters of the border areas of

⁴⁰²Said Saddiki, *International Journal of Arts & Sciences*, CD-ROM. ISSN: 1944-6934 :: 07(05):111–124 (2016) border fencing in india: between colonial legacy and changing security challenges.

both the countries. My research will concentrate on these aspects of border security step by step.

The Indo-Bangladesh border is generally marked by three different topographies: flat/plain, riverine, and hilly/jungle with practically no natural obstacles.⁴⁰³ Like all boundaries of the Indian subcontinent, the India–Bangladesh border is also an artificial one superimposed by the British colonial authorities over the existing cultural landscape. The boundary between India and erstwhile East Pakistan was not marked against an actual field survey, but on old district maps. This laid the boundary circuitous, not following natural barriers but meandering through villages, agricultural lands, and rivers, rendering the border extremely porous with many disputed pockets. A porous boundary causes a multitude of problems, ranging from illegal migration, cattle smuggling, drug and human trafficking to gun running, the free movement of insurgents, terrorists, and criminals' activities. Besides, frequent border clashes between the Border Security Forces (B.S.Fs) and Bangladesh Rifles (B.D.R) are serious incident. All these problems pose serious challenges to peace and security in this area. Therefore, the need of the hour, is to implement suitable measures to manage the Indo-Bangladesh border more better.

PURPOSE OF BORDER SECURITY MANAGEMENT IN THE INDIA–BANGLADESH BORDER

After the establishment of Bangladesh as an independent infant country in the year 1971, the international border of India, Pakistan and Bangladesh had been re-defined again. For the establishment of Bangladesh as an independent nation state, the then Government of India and the Indian Army played a major role. Since then both the countries are maintaining a very peaceful international relationship. But in the matter of territory and border issues both the countries are equally sensitive and aggressive to each other. In the past few years, there were many incidents in the border areas where both the defence personnel and civilians of both the countries got affected severely. India is sharing 15,106.7 km of international land border with different neighbouring countries and a coastline of 7,516 km including island territories. India is sharing its border with Bangladesh (4096.7 km).⁴⁰⁴ But the longest border is with the small country of Bangladesh, which is around 5 per cent of the size of India. With

⁴⁰³ N. S. Jamwal, "Border management: Dilemma of guarding the India-Bangladesh border," **Strategic Analysis**, Volume. 28, No.1 (January-Mar 2004), p.8.

⁴⁰⁴ Ministry of Home Affairs, Annual Report, 2015–2016, p-37 Government of India. [http://mha.nic.in/sites/upload_files/mha/files/AR\(E\)1516.pdf](http://mha.nic.in/sites/upload_files/mha/files/AR(E)1516.pdf) Accessed on 30.07.2022 ,

the length of 4096.7 km long border India–Bangladesh border is the 5th longest border in the world. The present day territory of Bangladesh consisted three main sections: those were 1) East-west Bengal border, 2) the Sylhet-Assam Border and 3) the border separating the Chittagong Hill Tracts (C.H.T) from India.⁴⁰⁵

Indo-Bangladesh border is highly porous in its nature and checking of illegal migration from Bangladesh is one of the biggest challenges for the Border Security Force and the Government of India.⁴⁰⁶ Taking the advantage of the porous nature of the Indo–Bangladesh border, the different extremist groups, separatists groups, militants groups, anti-national groups took up this borderland as their breeding ground. Insurgent groups mainly from the North Eastern region of India for example United Liberation Front of Assam (U.L.F.A), the All Tripura Tiger Force, the National Democratic Front of Bodoland (N.D.F.B) and the National Liberation Front of Tripura (N.L.F.T) had their camps in different locations of Bangladesh.⁴⁰⁷ Similarly, illegal activities and smuggling became the major issues to be checked in this borderland. People from both the countries are involved in different anti-national activities. Frequencies of arm smuggling, cattle smuggling, human trafficking, drugs and gold smuggling were happening in almost throughout all the bordersharing states of India and Bangladesh. Looking at the serious complexity of the border and the emerging anti-national and criminal activities, the Government of India finally decided to create border fencing in the entire Indo-Bangladesh border. The construction of the border fencing along the Bangladesh border in Assam was strongly supported as there was already a huge public demand to prevent illegal migration from Bangladesh.⁴⁰⁸ The demand for the international fencing was echoed in 1964, but after the Assam agitation in 1980s, the momentum for the demand increased for the complete sealing of the India–Bangladesh in Assam borderline.⁴⁰⁹ There were different political groups and students’ organizations who took up the border

⁴⁰⁵ Murayama, M. (2006). Border, migration and sub-regional cooperation in Eastern South Asia. **Economic and Political Weekly**, 41(14), 2006, p.p- 1351–1359.

⁴⁰⁶ Ministry of Home Affairs. (2016). Annual Report, 2015–2016. Government of India. [http://mha.nic.in/sites/upload_files/mha/files/AR\(E\)1516.pdf](http://mha.nic.in/sites/upload_files/mha/files/AR(E)1516.pdf), accessed on 30.07.2022 .

⁴⁰⁷ Das, P. India–Bangladesh border management: A review of government’s response. **Strategic Analysis**, 32(3), 2008, p-367–388.

⁴⁰⁸ Sammadar, R. **The marginal nation: Transborder migration from Bangladesh to West Bengal**. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE. In: Jones, R. (2009). Agents of exception: border security and marginalization of muslims in India. *Environment and planning: Society and Space*, 27(5), 1999, p-879–897.

⁴⁰⁹ Begum, A.A. “**Engendered lives: Women in the West Garo Hills**”. In P. Banerjee, & A.B. Ray choudhury (Eds), *Women in Indian Borderlands*,. New Delhi: SAGE, 2011, p.p. 151–175 .

issue and continuously demanding since long time for the complete sealing of this border and deportation of the illegal migrants from India to Bangladesh.

Migration was not a new phenomenon in India. Since the British period and subsequently after the partition in 1947 and again after the establishment of Bangladesh in 1971 as a new independent, sovereign country, the migration happened in overwhelming numbers. It was a continuous process. During 1911 and 1931, more than a million Bengali-speaking people migrated to Assam and again in 1951 half a million Bengali-speaking people migrated to Assam and it was not stopped thereafter.⁴¹⁰ Till 1971, this kind of migration was not considered as illegal as it happened historically. After the establishment of Bangladesh as an independent country in 1971, the year has been considered as a cut-off year. Those who migrated after 1971 and still migrating from Bangladesh are considered as illegal migrants.⁴¹¹ The 'push and pull' factors because of which the migration comes from Bangladesh to India in different phases are of different nature.⁴¹² Some of the major push factors are political upheavals, successive waves of hostile situation especially during and immediately after the partition in 1947, religious persecution, intolerance, demographic pressure, environmental crisis and adverse economic situation.⁴¹³

The creation of the border fencing was initiated in the year 1986 and it has been completed in phase wise manner. The first phase of the fencing was initiated in the west Bengal border and in the second phase starting from the year 2000, the construction work was carried out in Assam, Meghalaya, Mizoram and Tripura.⁴¹⁴ But still there are some places where the border fencing is yet to be completed. The fencings which were created in the initial stage were of single wire. Subsequently to strengthen the border security, the single wire fencing was replaced with the composite type of barbed wire border fencing in the entire Indo-Bangladesh borderland. From **Table 1**, it can be observed the phase-wise sanctioned and about to completed fencing work in the five states of India, namely, West Bengal (2216.7 km), Assam (263 km), Meghalaya (443 km), Tripura (856 km) and Mizoram (318

⁴¹⁰ Bhardwaj, S. Illegal Bangladeshi migration: Evaluating India–Bangladesh approach. **CLAWS Journal**, 2014, p-62. 21 July 20 http://www.claws.in/images/journals_doc/2042080227_SanjayBhardwaj.pdf, accessed on 30.07.2022

⁴¹¹ Ibid, p-62

⁴¹² Sinha, L.G. Report on illegal migration to Assam. In P. Das (Ed.), *India's Border Management: Select Documents* New Delhi, India: Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses, 2010, p-323.

⁴¹³ Das, P. op.cit, p-371.

⁴¹⁴ McDuie-Ra, D. The India–Bangladesh border fence: Narratives and political possibilities. **Journal of Borderlands Studies**, 29(1): Asian Borderlands), 2014, p- 82.

km). Still all the borders are not completely sealed because of land disputes between the two countries, geographically unsuitable terrain and dense forest at various locations. It is true that after the creation of the border fencing, there is a decline in the incidences of criminal activities across the border. But at the same time, due to the creation of the border fencing, the villagers of border areas got affected in various ways.

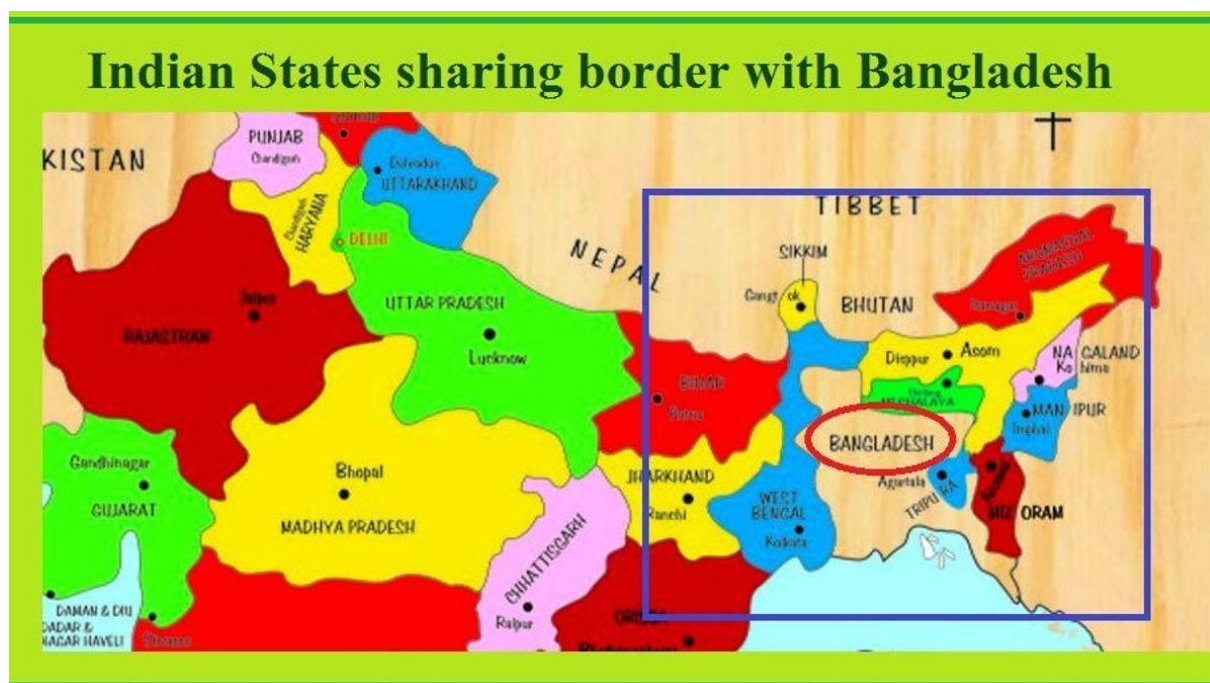


TABLE 1. STATUS OF BORDER FENCING

Name of the State	Phase-I		Phase-II		Total (Phase-I+Phase-II)	
	Sanctioned	Completed	Sanctioned	Completed	Sanctioned	Completed
West Bengal	507.00	507.00	957.78	730.11	1464.78	1237.11
Assam	152.31	149.29	76.72	74.60	229.03	223.89
Meghalaya	198.06	198.06	255.35	149.85	453.41	347.91
Tripura	-	-	834.51	784.46	834.51	784.46
Mizoram	-	-	344.41	234.54	344.41	234.54
Total	857.37	854.35	2468.77	1973.57	3326.14	2828.00
	Phase-I		Phase-II		Total(Phase-I+ Phase-II)	

Selected State-wise Status of Border Fencing on Indo-Bangladesh Border in India (As on 30.09.2014)

Source:

Indiastat.com.<http://www.indiastat.com/table/crimeandlaw/6/physicalstatusofparamilitaryarmedforces/478983/888572/data.aspx>, accessed on 30.07.2022

SL.NO	State	Length of international border (IB)	Length of international border (IB) Covered by fencing	Length of international border (IB) yet to be covered
1	West Bengal	2216.70	1638.047	578.653
2	Assam	263.00	210.017	52.983
3	Meghalaya	443.00	325.773	117.227
4	Mizoram	318.00	155.077	162.923
5	Tripura	856.00	791.118	64.882
Total		4096.70	3120.032	976.668

Source: Government of India Ministry of Home Affairs Lok Sabha unstarred question no. 1418 to be answered on the 20th September, 2020/bhadrapada 29, 1942 (saka) fencing on Indo-Bangladesh border

State	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Assam	6	6	9	3	5
Meghalay	56	26	26	24	20
Tripura	105	76	96	108	44
West Bengal	1434	797	753	974	886
Total	1601	907	884	1109	955

Length in KM

SL. No	state	Total length of international border	International boirder covered with fence	Balance length
1	West Bengal	2216.70	1638.047	578.653
2	Assam	263.00	210.017	52.983
3	Meghalaya	443.00	325.773	117.227
4	Mizoram	318.00	155.077	162.923
5	Tripura	856.00	794.373	61.627
Total		4096.70	3123.287	973.413

Source: Government of India Ministry of Home Affairs Rajya Sabha unstarred question no. 2437 to be answered on the 17th march, 2021/ phalguna 26, 1942 (saka) fencing at Indo-Bangladesh border 2437 # dr. kirodi lal meena:

Following guidelines of the Land Border Agreement of 1974 between India and Bangladesh, neither of the countries was supposed to create any defensive structure within 150 yards that is approximately 137 meter from the actual line of partition. It is important to mention that the partition line between India and Bangladesh was drawn by Sir Cyril

Radcliffe who was the Chairperson of the then Bengal Boundary Commission and he was assigned to draw the partition line just before the independence of India in the year 1947.⁴¹⁵

The partition line drawn between India and Pakistan by the Boundary Commissions is not considered as an outcome of proper practical field study.⁴¹⁶ My research suggests that Radcliffe's award was biased towards safeguarding the British interest. It was tried to ensure that the Commission and its final decision have a justifiable rational of deliberation rather than one outcome of a decision that is taken in hurriedly.⁴¹⁷ Many claimed that the partition line was drawn just by drawing lines on old map as a result this arbitrary line of partition cut crossed through the densely populous villages, market places, agricultural lands and even through houses.

FENCING OFF INDIAN BORDERS: ONE POLICY AND DIFFERENT CONTEXTS

The common denominator that characterizes the structure of India's border barriers is the main component by which they are set up. Almost all of these barriers are made up of barbed wire fence. Comparing with other cases, including US-Mexico border fence, Israeli barriers, and fences of Ceuta and Melilla, the Indian border barriers are, in general, low tech and low cost. Despite the diversity of goals targeted by the Indian border management policy, security concerns occupy the top priority of the border management systems. Indo-Bangladesh border contain a wide range of illegal infiltration, including insurgency activities, terrorism, drug trafficking, cross-border terrorism, illegal migration, cattle smuggling, border infiltration and sheltered Inter Service Intelligence (ISI) in Bangladesh and organized crimes etc. Preventing irregular crossings, especially undocumented immigrants, is the second most important purpose of the Indian border fencing policy. The porosity of these borders and the existence of some border tribes within more than one adjacent country, make border management extremely difficult. Additionally, disputes over border demarcation have complicated the construction of fences in some areas. The linkage between territorial disputes and the construction of border fences appears clearly on the India's border with Pakistan and Bangladesh, in which political concerns remain the key determinant of India's border fencing policy. It is difficult to deal with all of India's border barriers by classifying them into

⁴¹⁵ Banerjee, S. Indo-Bangladesh border: Radcliffe's ghost. **Economic and Political Weekly**, 36(18),2001, pp-1505–1506

⁴¹⁶ Das, P. India–Bangladesh border management: A review of government's response. **Strategic Analysis**, 32(3), 2008,pp-367–388.

⁴¹⁷ Chester, L. “**Border and conflict in South Asia: The Radcliffe boundary commission and the partition of Punjab**”, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2009, pp- 40–49. .

specific groups with similar characteristics, because of their various goals and different contexts in which they were built.

‘ONE BORDER ONE FORCE’ POLICY

To strengthen the border guarding forces and to infuse efficiency and accountability, a major recommendation of the ‘Group of Ministers’(GoM) Report was ‘one border one force’ policy. Consequently, the responsibility of guarding the India–Bangladesh border has been entrusted to the BSF. The deployment of forces along the Bangladesh border has also been substantially augmented. Presently, 66 battalions of BSF are deployed in the region. This has facilitated additional Border Observation Post (B.O.Ps) for better surveillance. Initially, the inter-B.O.P distance was approximately 9 k.m, but now this has been reduced to an average of 4-4.5 km. The Group of Ministers’(GoM) Report had recommended that inter-B.O.P distance should be between 2.5 and 3.5 km. With additional deployment of troops, it is expected that the inter-B.O.P distances would fulfill the standard distance recommended by the Group of Ministers’(GoM) Report in the next few years. However, a blanket application of this norm may not be effective in a hostile or insurgency-infested terrain. Such belts require a greater concentration of B.S.F personnel. It is also suggested that sensitive B.O.Ps should have the strength of a company,⁴¹⁸ rather than a platoon.⁴¹⁹ Although the B.S.F’s vigilance along the border has been increased with additional deployment of troops, there is still a lack of border force. Despite the recommendations of the ‘Group of Ministers’(GoM) Report⁴²⁰ that border guarding forces should not be involved in internal security duties, most cases B.S.F units are pulled out from the borders to perform election duties. Most of these units do not operate in full strength, as half of the personnel go for training or go on leave. The rest take up additional duties. Longer duty hours, interrupted sleep, and hostile living conditions, lack of Global Positioning System (G.P.S) gadgets, night vision binoculars, and hand-held thermal image intensifiers create severe strain on the B.S.F personnel. Considering all these problems, the Group of Ministers’(GoM) had recommended a reserve battalion to provide rest, relief, collective training, and annual changeover. Accordingly, three reserve battalions are being raised for the East wing, which will be deployed at Bhubaneshwar, Tamil Nadu, and Bihar. Additional deployment of personnel may enhance the strength of the B.S.F, but it may not account for its efficiency. For better efficiency, innovative and specialized training

⁴¹⁸ A company is a military unit consisting of 100-250 soldiers and usually commanded by a Major or a Captain.

⁴¹⁹ A platoon consists of 25-50 soldiers organized into two or more sections or squads.

⁴²⁰ Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India, Annual Report, 2015–2016.

should be imparted to the personnel so as to equip them to handle any situation. Allowing spells of rest and ensuring better living conditions are of utmost importance to keep the personnel prompt.⁴²¹

Corruption and lack of accountability in the B.S.F have tarnished its name and morale. The norm to prevent corruption should carry incentives for best performance and severe punishment for malpractice. One of the main problems for the B.S.F comprehending the language and culture of the local border area people. This difficulty leads to the B.S.F's mis-interpretation of the local people's intentions, resulting in tension. To help the B.S.F tide over the situation, more local people should be inducted in the BSF or they should be entrusted with the responsibility of helping the BSF. The success of fencing the border to prevent infiltration and smuggling along the Indo-Pak border inspired the Government of India to raise similar fences along the Indo-Bangladesh border also. The 'Group of Ministers' (GoM) Report also recommends that the entire length of the land border with Bangladesh should be fenced as a measure to secure the border against illegal migration and smuggling. The project includes laying 3,286.87 km of fences, along with building roads and bridges, and installing floodlights. The project was undertaken in two phases – phase- I (1987–1999) and phase- II (2000–present). Presently, a total of 2,455.80 km of fencing, nearly 60 percent of the border has been covered. For the first time, a 9.3 km fence has also been raised between Mantri char and Kalaibari char. On completion, 80 percent of the Indo-Bangladesh border will have been fenced. It should be noted that fencing is not a smooth process and the respective agencies had to face many difficulties in carrying out the task. Acquisition of land is a long-drawn process. Local administrative bodies and other agencies are less cooperative and there is an inordinate delay. Curiously, in many instances, the respective state Governments and vested political interests have also tried to stall the fencing process, since the Bangladeshi migrants are perceived as vote banks. As fences are erected 150 yards inside the Indian territory, many villages and cropland, agricultural lands fall behind the fences. In these areas, the local people have been vehemently protesting against the construction of fences as they fear that over the years they might have to forfeit their agricultural land falling beyond these fences. In Meghalaya, fencing work has been stalled because villagers are demanding that the fence be erected near the 'zero line' as early as possible. They have even formed a Co-ordination Committee on Border Fencing (C.C.B.F) to conduct a survey of the border and submit a report to the Government. In most cases, even

⁴²¹ Ibid.

though local residents, living beyond the fence, are worried about their safety, they are not prepared to shift to a new place. Where people were forced to vacate, rehabilitation of displaced persons has not been done properly. Construction of fences has also drawn adverse attention across the border. The B.D.R had raised serious objections for fencing within 150 yards of the border. In its view, the fence is a 'military wire obstacle' and hence it is a violation of the jointly agreed 1975 Indo-Bangladesh Border Agreement. India, however, maintains that the boundary fence is not a defensive structure but an instrument of border management meant to control illegal cross-border movements, smuggling, illegal infiltration, and so on. In most parts, the fence is laid at or beyond 150 yards from the 'zero line.' It is only in a few places (totalling 297 km, i.e., 7 percent of the border) that the fence falls within 150 yards from the zero line. In addition, India also faces stiff resistance from Bangladesh at 265 disputed spots, where security forces of both countries differ on the location of the boundary. In places fenced, the B.S.F faces different kinds of problems. Where agricultural land lay beyond the fence, gates are provided to help farmers do their routine work including grazing their animals. The B.S.F personnel guards the gates maintain that it is difficult to keep a check on the movement of people; they suggest that the individuals should be issued photo identity cards with bar code. In many areas along the West Bengal border, mango orchards and banana plantations dotting the landscape obstruct a clear view of the areas beyond the fence. They provide potential hideouts for illegal infiltrators and smugglers. The B.S.F and the various construction agencies would not have faced these difficulties. The central and state Governments strictly adhered by the Group of Ministers' (GoM) Report, which bans human habitation and cultivation in the area between the border and the fence, to keep it sanitized. Cultivation beyond the fence proves that the state Governments concerned lack the genuine political will to relocate the farming families away from the border. Further, culverts and bridges are not fully fenced. The gaps are misused by infiltrators who sneak into the Indian territory. The Group of Ministers' (GoM) Report had recommended that these gaps be secured. But in most places no efforts have been made. In some places much of the additional fencing has been washed away or damaged by heavy floods. Floodlighting of the fenced areas would help keep effective vigil. Without floodlighting, it becomes difficult to locate damages to the fence or nocturnal infiltration. According to the Home Ministry's Annual Report, the Government accepted the Group of Ministers' (GoM) recommendations and a pilot project for floodlighting along a stretch of 277 km in North Bengal has been completed. However, a senior B.S.F official says only 50 km of the fence is floodlit. Lack of resources, non-availability of electricity in the

border areas, exorbitant running cost of standby generators, and lack of dedicated electricity lines, are among the reasons cited for the poor pace of floodlighting of the border fences. It is imperative that floodlights should be installed expeditiously along the Indo-Bangladesh border.⁴²²

Apart from this, proper roads are essential for effective patrolling along the border. Along with fencing, motorable roads for providing easy and speedy movement all along the borders, are also being laid. Under phase I, 2,866.39 km of border roads have been paved and an additional 797 km has been sanctioned under phase II. Patrolling on these roads and along the border has further improved with the B.S.F's recent acquisition of Global Positioning System (G.P.S) gadgets, night vision binoculars, and hand-held thermal image intensifiers. Whilst the night vision gadgets help to trace infiltrators, the Global Positioning System (G.P.S) instruments help B.S.F personnel navigate along the winding riverside border. Doubts are cast on the effectiveness of fences to prevent illegal migration under difficult terrain conditions. It appears that the 'Group of Ministers' (GoM) Report has visualized the management of India's borders from a security perspective and has recommended measures, which would strictly regulate the illegal movement of goods and people into the Indian territory. There is no denying the fact that a country's security hinges predominantly on securing borders, but it should also be kept in mind that no two borders have the same characteristics; hence, a blanket application of the recommended measures could prove futile.⁴²³

OBSTACLES FOR FENCING IN INDIA-BANGLADESH BORDER

The fence along the Indo-Pak borders proved effective under circumstances different from those in the Indo-Bangladesh border. Here problems arise from forest tracts, hilly terrains, riverbeds, heavy rainfall, thick vegetation, loose soil, dense human settlement, besides cultivation right up to the zero line. Faulty designs, sub-standard material cause the delay of the fences. The illegal infiltrators and smugglers cut the fences effortlessly. The fence also causes hardships to local people whose movement in their own land is restricted. Despite these odds, it is true that fencing has deterred many potential smugglers and infiltrators from illegally crossing over to Indian border to a great extent. However, it appears that the entire discourse of securing India's border against infiltrators have been stretched too far. It is a

⁴²² Ibid

⁴²³ Ibid

well-known fact that almost all the illegal migrants who enter the Indian territory are economic migrants. Pushed out of their countries due to dire poverty and lack of basic amenities, poor people have no option but to look out for venues outside. As opportunities are available in India for employment, they take risks to crossover. These migrants take up menial and low paid jobs, generally shunned by the local people. Thus, they also contribute to the economy of the respective states. It is also observed that the majority of the illegal migrants into West Bengal come to avail themselves of better medical facilities provided by the state. In other words, these illegal migrants are genuinely very poor. They do not have any ulterior motives. Therefore, Indian policy makers should approach the issue of illegal migration on humanitarian grounds. These illegal migrants could be issued work permits, enabling them to earn honourably and return later. This will help the Government track their number, the nature of their work, and the extent of their spread in India. In fact, closure of migration routes forces them to look for newer routes and subjects them to exploitation by gangs engaged in human trafficking.

Some major problematic Issues affected India–Bangladesh Border security

Bangladesh stands at the centre of India's flagship 'Neighbourhood First' and 'Act East' policies. The relationship between India and Bangladesh will help ensure peace, prosperity, security and stability in South Asian Region. Bangladesh always wants to increase connectivity with India and its North Eastern Region and promote its economic development. Bangladesh is also collaborating with India in various regional and sub-regional cooperation groups like the SAARAC, BIMSTEC and BBIN etc. However, there are several crucial factors that are threatening to affect the relationship between the two countries. Some of these issues, that had tremendous impact on the bilateral relations, are discussed in the following sections.

ILLEGAL CROSS-BORDER MIGRATION

Cross-border migration has been a persistent problem in Indo–Bangladesh Border (I.B.B). Despite the improvement of several bilateral ties, this issue has hardly been resolved. Illegal cross-border migration from Bangladesh is a concern for India, especially in North Eastern Region (NER). India's concern arises out of the demographic shift in the bordering states that gives rise to the fear of socio-ethnic tensions among the locals and illegal

migrants.⁴²⁴ People in the bordering states are very wary of being marginalised in their home with the influx of cross-border illegal migrants from across the border.⁴²⁵ During the period 1979–1985, for example, Assam witnessed a six-year-long agitation against the illegal migrants from Bangladesh. The rise in the number of Bengali-speaking people in Assam, considered as migrants from Bangladesh, was the main reason behind the agitation.⁴²⁶

Of late, India claimed to have raised the issue of illegal migration with Bangladesh when Home Ministers of the two countries met in August 2019. Bangladesh, however, denied India's claim. Media reports claimed that the disagreement over the issue of illegal migration prevented them from issuing a joint declaration following the meeting.⁴²⁷

India's efforts in dealing with cross-border migration have met with little success. Initially, the Illegal Migrants Determination by Tribunal (I.M.D.T) was established in 1985 as a measure to detect foreigners, particularly in Assam. It could not resolve the immigrant issue and was nullified by the Supreme Court of India (S.C.I) in 2005.⁴²⁸ Foreigners Tribunals have been established in place of I.M.D.T for detection of foreigners in Assam.

The absence of reliable data on the number of Bangladeshi migrants in India has been an obstacle in convincing Bangladesh for a dialogue.⁴²⁹ Recently, the National Registration of Citizens (N.R.C) was carried out in Assam under the supervision of the Supreme Court of India (S.C.I) was an attempt to identify the illegal migrants from Bangladesh. The final list of

⁴²⁴In 1998, Lt General S.K. Sinha, who was Governor of Assam, had sent a report to the then President K.R. Narayanan. In the report, he wrote that the influx of illegal migrants is turning the lower Assam districts into a Muslim-majority region. Nitin A. Gokhle, "An Election Gimmick," *Outlook*, 8 May 2001, <https://www.outlookindia.com/website/story/an-election-gimmick/211561> Accessed on 30.07.2022.

⁴²⁵Sanjoy Hazarika, *Rites of Passage*, Penguin Books, 2000, p. 19.

⁴²⁶"Barpeta's Bengali Speaking Population Rises to Twice as that of Assamese Speaking People," *The Sentinel*, 21 July 2018, <https://www.sentinelassam.com/breaking-news/barpetas-bengali-speaking-population-rises-to-twice-as-that-of-assamese-speaking-people/> Accessed on 30.07.2022.

⁴²⁷"For the first time, Home Minister Amit Shah categorically raised the 'India's concern regarding the illegal movement of undocumented persons across the border' in the recently held bilateral meeting with visiting Home Minister of Bangladesh Asaduzzaman Khan.....both countries could not arrive at a consensus because Bangladesh is of the view that no such migration is taking place to India after 1971. Finally, the idea of issuing a joint statement was dropped, instead, both countries decided to come out with their statements," Gautam Lahiri, "India, Bangladesh Differ on Illegal Immigration Issue," *Millenium Post*, 9 August 2019, <http://www.millenniumpost.in/big-stories/india-bangladesh-differ-on-illegal-immigration-issue-368206>, accessed on 02.08.2022.

⁴²⁸"SC Strikes Down IMDT Act as Unconstitutional," *The Economic Times*, 13 July 2005, <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/sc-strikes-down-imdt-act-as-unconstitutional/articleshow/1168803.cms>, Accessed on 30.07.2022.

⁴²⁹"There is no Reliable Figure on the Exact Number of Illegal Immigrants from Bangladesh in India," Sanjeev Tripathi, "Illegal Immigration from Bangladesh to India: Toward a Comprehensive Solution," *Carnegie India*, 29 June 2016, <https://carnegieindia.org/2016/06/29/illegal-immigration-from-bangladesh-to-india-toward-comprehensive-solution-pub-63931>, Accessed on 30.07.2022

the National Registration of Citizens (N.R.C) excluded around two million people. The N.R.C was mired in controversy after allegations were made that the exercise left out genuine Indian citizens while failing to detect illegal migrants.⁴³⁰

The people of Bangladesh expressed concern about the National Registration of Citizens (N.R.C) by Modi Government and feared an influx of thousands of people across the border following deportation. Initially, the Government maintained that N.R.C is India's internal issue,⁴³¹ thus, covertly indicating that no migration has taken place from Bangladesh to India. Nevertheless, the matter came up in the bilateral discussion between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Sheikh Hasina in New York on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly meeting in September 2019.⁴³² Realising popular concern in Bangladesh and its possible implications on the relationship, India gave assurances that no one will be deported to that country.⁴³³ Of late, illegal migrants and refugees are being viewed differently. Members of the religious minority communities who came to India from that country to escape political and religious persecution are treated as refugees. In December 2019, Government of India amended the Citizenship Act of 1955 to ease terms of citizenship by naturalisation for religious minorities-Hindus, Buddhists, Christians and Parsis from Bangladesh, Pakistan and Afghanistan. According to the amendment, religious minorities as mentioned from any of these countries could secure Indian citizenship within six years of their stay instead of 11 years provided they have come to India on or before 31st December 2014.⁴³⁴ The amendment of the law caused major resentment in Bangladesh and the cancellation of Bangladesh Foreign Minister's visit to Delhi in December 2019 was

⁴³⁰“Assam BJP MLA Dilip Kumar Paul claimed that lakhs of illegal Bangladeshi Muslims have been included in the list. Dilip Kumar Paul, who represented Silchar assembly constituency twice, said that around 95–96 per cent illegal Bangladeshi Muslims names have appeared in the list.” Manogya Loiwal, “NRC Final List: BJP Worried over Exclusion of Hindus, the Inclusion of Illegal Bangladeshi Muslims,” **India Today**, 31st August 2019, <https://www.indiatoday.in/india/story/nrc-final-list-bjp-worried-over-exclusion-of-hindus-inclusion-of-illegal-bangladeshi-muslims-1593966-2019-08-31>, Accessed on 30.07.2022 .

⁴³¹“Citizenship Law and NRC India's Internal Issues: Bangladesh,” **The Millennium Post**, 23rd December 2019, <http://www.millenniumpost.in/big-stories/citizenship-law-and-nrc-indias-internal-issues-bangladesh-392286>, Accessed on 30.07.2022.

⁴³²“NRC will not Impact Bangladesh: Modi tells Hasina,” **The Economic Times**, 28th September 2019.

⁴³³“PM Modi Assured Sheikh Hasina India won't Deport NRC-excluded People to Bangladesh,” **News18.com**, 5th October 2019, <https://www.news18.com/news/india/pm-modi-assured-sheikh-hasina-india-wont-deport-nrc-excluded-people-to-bangladesh-1900203.html> ,Accessed on 30.07.2022

⁴³⁴The Citizenship Amendment Bill 2019, prsindia.org, accessed on 12th December 2019, http://prsindia.org/sites/default/files/bill_files/Citizenship%202019%20Bill%20Text.pdf

interpreted as an expression of displeasure over the passing of the bill.⁴³⁵ The official sources in Bangladesh, however, did not give any specific reason for the cancellation of the visit. In Bangladesh, there is a consensus amongst the political parties with respect to the issue of migration to India. Members of civil society have also joined the Government bandwagon, dismissing the need for Bangladeshis migrating to India and saying that they have better options like Malaysia, Singapore or other Muslim countries in the Middle East. Interestingly, effort has been made to create a counter-narrative by arguing that thousands of Indians are working in Bangladesh and remitting billions of dollars back home.⁴³⁶

BORDER DEATHS

The death of Bangladeshi nationals following firing by the Indian Border Security Force (BSF) is also a concern. Bangladesh urged India to stop such incidents permanently, in response to which India introduced non-lethal weapons at the Bangladesh border in 2010–2011. The BSF uses non-lethal weapons including pump-action guns, stun taser shots and rubber bullets along the Bangladesh border,⁴³⁷ which has resulted in less number of deaths. In Bangladesh, Non Governmental Organizations (N.G.O) estimated that the number of Bangladeshis died in the BSF firing has reduced from 1,000 to 455 in 2001–2010.⁴³⁸ However, the authenticity of the data is doubted. According to Bangladesh government data, around 294 Bangladeshi nationals have died from 2009 to 2018.⁴³⁹ While Bangladesh has been urging India to reduce the number of deaths to zero, the BSF personnel argue that they open fire only in self-defence, i.e., when they are attacked by the criminals in border areas, usually involved in smuggling of arms, narcotics, fake Indian currencies, cattle

⁴³⁵Geeta Mohan, “Bangladesh Foreign Minister Cancels India Visit amid Concerns over Citizenship Bill,” **India Today**, 12th December 2019, <https://www.indiatoday.in/india/story/bangladesh-foreign-minister-abdul-momen-cancels-india-visit-over-citizenship-bill-1627721-2019-12-12>, Accessed on 30.07.2022.

⁴³⁶Smruti S. Pattanaik, “Politics of Illegal Immigration and India Bangladesh Relations,” **IDSa Issue Brief**, 16th May 2014, https://idsa.in/issuebrief/PoliticsOfIllegalImmigration_sspattanaik_160514, Accessed on 30.07.2022

⁴³⁷“Non-lethal Weapons to Continue at the Indo-Bangladesh Border: BSF DG,” **The Economic Times**, 3rd August 2014, <https://m.economictimes.com/news/politics-and-nation/non-lethal-weapons-to-continue-at-indo-bangla-border-bsf-dg/articleshow/39540403.cms> Accessed on 30.07.2022

⁴³⁸Faisal Mahmud, “Death Toll Rising on the India-Bangladesh Border,” **Asia Times**, 14th January 2020, <https://asiatimes.com/2020/01/death-toll-rising-on-the-india-bangladesh-border/> Accessed on 30.07.2022

⁴³⁹ Ibid

smuggling and trafficking of women and children. The introduction of non-lethal weapons has emboldened the criminals and attacks on B.S.F have increased steadily.⁴⁴⁰

DEATHS ALONG BANGLADESH-INDIA BORDER 2001-TILL DATE	
INDIA	BANGLADESH
BSF (BORDER SECURITY FORCE)	BGB(BORDER GUARD BANGLADESH)
CASUALTIES AND LOSSES	
India claims	Bangladesh claimed
19 soldiers killed	5 soldiers killed
4425 BSF personnel were injured	Many soldiers were injured
SOURCE: 'INDIA TODAY', 7 TH May 2011,Barbaric killing of BSF jawans puts India-Bangladesh relations under severe strain"	

BORDER CLASH

According to information collected from Bangladesh Military Forces' Website updated on 26th November, 2005, Indian Border Security Forces (B.S.F) have killed more than 400 Bangladeshi civilians in four years. In addition, there are numerous press reports of illegal trespassing into Bangladesh territory by India's Border Security Forces (B.S.F). Each time the border guards of India Kill an innocent and unarmed Bangladeshi citizen, the strength of the Bangladesh Government is seriously challenged. Each time India's border guards illegally trespass into Bangladesh territory undermining the sovereignty of Bangladesh. As the river route helps smuggling several items like sugar, salt, diesel and these are carried through the land route. Goods that are smuggled from Bangladesh are saris, diesel, old garments donated by international organizations, Hilsa fish, Mosquito nets and so on. Those smuggled out of India are sugar, salt, medicine, betel nuts, timber, opium, hashish, phensydil, and so on. Sugar and salt are smuggled because the Government has granted licenses for procurement in excess of the requirement of the border population. The excess quantum is smuggled into Bangladesh where they are scarce. Illegal migration and smuggling are attributable to the lack of accountability of the security forces and those in other Government agencies, responsible for managing the border. This leads to compromising integrity. In most cases it is reported that the smugglers and the migrants bribe the securities personnel manning the border through touts to cross-over into India, with rates fixed for smuggling of goods, cattle, and people. The multiplicity of agencies, both central and state Governments, such as land customs officials, narcotics department, and state police operating

⁴⁴⁰“Non-lethal Strategy Effective but Smugglers Emboldened on India-Bangladesh Border,” **Daily Excelsior**, 20th July 2019, <https://www.dailyexcelsior.com/non-lethal-strategy-effective-but-smugglers-emboldened-on-india-bangladesh-border/>

in the border areas with over lapping areas of responsibilities and vague interpretation of procedures, also contribute towards aggravating the problem. The Group of Ministers' (GoM) Report observes that the intensification of activities across the border by groups inimical to India's interest has transformed the whole approach to border management. It argues that 'borders should be secure and sub-serve the national interest.' Accordingly, it recommends important measures, strengthening of vigilance and border guarding forces along the borders. Erecting fences, issuing identity cards to Indian citizens, developing border areas, and co-operating with Bangladesh are some of the other measures drawn to step up security along the Indo-Bangladesh border. To deal with the issues and problems of both the land and the coastal borders of the country, the Government of India has set up a Department of Border Management, under the Ministry of Home Affairs, following the 'Group of Ministers' (GoM) recommendations. The department has been adopting measures for managing the borders better in cooperation with other ministries concerned. As a result, a review of the measures undertaken by the Government to address the problems afflicting the Indo-Bangladesh border to control the border clash and illegal activities.

Rising Radicalisation and Religious Fundamentalism and Establishment of Madrasas

The fundamentalists and Jihadi elements were the notable allies of Begum Khaleda Zia's Bangladesh National Party (B.N.P). During her regime she reportedly manipulated the Islamic sentiments in weakening the then opposition Awami League Party and its allies. The Jamaat-e-Islami of Bangladesh (also called Jamaat), which is the leading Islamist political party of Bangladesh and the largest Islamic party in South Asia, became a part of the coalition Government during Begum Zia's second tenure as Prime Minister of Bangladesh (2001-2006). The main motto of the Jamaat-e-Islami of Bangladesh is "Allah is our Lord; the Quran and the Sunnah is our ideal; Jihad is our mean, and salvation is our end."⁴⁴¹ The objective of Jamaat-e-Islami as per its constitution is to establish peace in Bangladesh and in the world; to achieve the grace of Almighty Allah through efforts to establish Islamic way of life for the greater wellbeing of mankind.⁴⁴² Thus religious fundamentalism is hampering Indian border security to a great extent.

During the period, establishment of Madrasas particularly in the Indo-Bangladesh border (IBB) areas increased and emerged as the recruiting places for the terrorist outfits.

⁴⁴¹ Karlekar, Hiranmoy. 'Bangladesh : The next Afghanistan?', Sage Publication, new Delhi, 2005, P.48

⁴⁴² Ibid, p.p.136-137.

Most of these Madrasas were not registered and their syllabi included fanatic and misinterpreted religious teachings. Intelligence agencies in India have long claimed that such groups in the border districts were being sheltered in Muslim places of worship to avoid the public eye. In 2002, the then Chief Minister of West Bengal, Mr. Buddhadev Bhattacharya, said that “illegal Muslim seminaries were being used to provide sanctuary to terrorists at the behest of Pakistani’s I.S.I.”⁴⁴³ The rise of radical fundamentalism in Bangladesh has required close observation since the country first experienced a surge in activities of religious militant groups like Harkatul Jihad (Huji) and Jamaatul Mujahedeen (J.M.B) in the early 2000s. After the Awami League under the leadership of Sheikh Hasina formed the Government in 2009, the country declared a policy of ‘zero-tolerance’ to terrorism and militancy and the security forces launched massive counter-terrorism operations against the network of militant groups like Huji, JMB etc. However, the problem could not be eradicated completely, and several progressive writers, secular bloggers, liberal publishers and N.G.O workers have been killed by these religious radicals. In 2016, the terror attack in a cafe in Dhaka by the militant groups that targeted primarily foreigners⁴⁴⁴ revealed a new dangerous trend of the perpetrators belonging to affluent backgrounds with liberal education. The attack revealed the spread of influence of the radicals among the elites of the society. The growing presence of international militant organisations like the Islamic State (I.S) in the region is also a serious concern.⁴⁴⁵ Even though the Government in Bangladesh has denied the existence of any international militant organisations on its soil,⁴⁴⁶ India needs to be vigilant and monitor the borders effectively. Several jihadi Groups like Jamat, J.M.B, Huji, Hafajat-e-Islami have already developed linkages in India.⁴⁴⁷ As per an official of Counter-terrorism and Transnational Crime Unit of Dhaka Metropolitan Police, despite reduction in the incidents of

⁴⁴³**The Times of India**, 27th July, 2002.

⁴⁴⁴“Dhaka Café Attack Ends with 20 Hostages among Dead,” **The Guardian**, 3rd July 2016; also see “Why hasn’t Dhaka’s Counter Terror Measures Shown Results?,” Observer Research Foundation, 30 July 2016; <https://www.orfonline.org/expert-speak/why-hasnt-dhakas-counter-terror-measures-shown-results/> Accessed on 30.07.2022

⁴⁴⁵Iftikharul Bashar, “Islamic State Ideology Continues to Resonate in Bangladesh,” **Middle East Institute**, 3rd September 2019; <https://www.mei.edu/publications/islamic-state-ideology-continues-resonate-bangladesh> Accessed on 30.07.2022

⁴⁴⁶“No IS (islamic-state) Existence in Bangladesh: Home Minister,” **The Daily Star**, 6th May 2019, <https://www.thedailystar.net/country/no-islamic-state-is-existence-in-bangladesh-home-minister-1739569> Accessed on 30.07.2022

⁴⁴⁷“Shared List of 125 Suspects: Terror Outfit JMB Trying to ‘Spread its Tentacles’ Across India, Says NIA Chief,” **News18.com**, 14 October 2019, <https://www.news18.com/news/india/terror-outfit-jmb-trying-to-spread-its-tentacles-across-india-says-nia-chief-2344781.html> Accessed on 30.07.2022

terrorism, radicalisation in Bangladesh is on a rise,⁴⁴⁸ and the influence of the radicals is believed to have increased in the country's politics. Jamaat-e-Islami's links with the B.N.P is well known. In the 2018 election, Jamaat candidates contest the election under B.N.P's ticket indicating the amalgamation of the radicals in the mainstream political party.⁴⁴⁹ This trend is likely to influence the liberal political parties in the country. Even the ruling Awami League, a champion of secularism, had tied up with the Hafajat-e-Islami before the election of 2018.⁴⁵⁰ Hafajat-e-Islami is a religious group famous for the seizure of Dhaka in 2013 against the Shahbagh movement protestors, the popular movement that demanded death penalty for the criminals of the genocide in 1971 Liberation War. In Bangladesh, political analysts close to Awami League opined that the party's tie-up with Hafajat-e-Islami, Hiz-but Tohid before the election was more an electoral employment to counter the B.N.P's links with Jamaat-e-Islami. This move by the party points to the growing importance of the radicals in the country's politics and that even those parties with secular credentials are equally vulnerable. The hardline religious groups do not have a favourable opinion about the country's relationship with India. Jamaat-e-Islami's religious reservations regarding India are well-known. Recently, the religious groups have tried to cash on abrogation of Article 370 in Kashmir as a move by India to suppress Muslims to evoke popular anti-Indian sentiments. They carried out protests against India in Dhaka though it did not find much support from public.⁴⁵¹

The Government of Bangladesh, however, has been categorical that Kashmir is an internal issue of India.⁴⁵² The radicals were also vocal in their criticism of the Awami League Government for inviting Prime Minister Mr. Narendra Modi as chief guest in the gala event to

⁴⁴⁸ "Radicalisation Threat on the Rise: CTTC," **The Daily Star**, 11th December 2019, <https://www.thedailystar.net/city/news/radicalisation-threat-the-rise-cttc-1838785> Accessed on 30.07.2022

⁴⁴⁹ In December 2018, 25 Jamaat-e-Islami leaders contested the parliamentary election despite cancellation of the party's registration. Of them, 22 fought with BNP's electoral symbol "sheaf of paddy" and three as independent candidates. "25 Jamaat Men Stay in the Race," **The Daily Star**, 24th December 2018, <https://www.thedailystar.net/bangladesh-national-election-2018/25-jamaat-e-islami-candidate-valid-for-national-election-2018-1677853>. Accessed on 30.07.2022

⁴⁵⁰ Faisal Mahmud, "Bangladesh's Ruling 'Secular' Awami League Strengthens Ties with Islamist Parties," **Asia Times**, 7th December 2018; <https://www.asiatimes.com/2018/12/article/bangladeshs-ruling-secular-awami-league-strengthens-ties-with-islamist-parties/> Accessed on 30.07.2022

⁴⁵¹ "Islamist Parties Stage Demo to Support Kashmiris," **Dhaka Tribune**, 30th August 2019, <https://www.dhakatribune.com/bangladesh/dhaka/2019/08/30/islamist-parties-protest-kashmir-situation> Accessed on 30.07.2022

⁴⁵² Dipanjan Roy Choudhury, "Kashmir India's Internal Matter: Bangladesh Foreign Minister tells Pak FM," **The Economic Times**, 5th September 2019, http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/articleshow/70999929.cms?from=mdr&utm_source=contentofinterest&utm_medium=text&utm_campaign=cppst Accessed on 30.07.2022

celebrate the birth centenary of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib-ur Rahman on 17th March 2020 that was cancelled due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The radicals warned the Government of disruption of peace and harmony in the country if Indian Prime Minister Mr. Modi is allowed to visit Dhaka on this historical occasion. As a result, Prime Minister Mr. Modi's visit was postponed following cancellation of the event.⁴⁵³

In recent year all South Asian states are witnessing intertwined ideological, ethnic, communal and political conflicts. The worst part is that the increasing transnational coordination of the terrorists, insurgents and radical groups has added a critical dimension to counter terrorism. These linkages across the border support, encourage, train, arm and often direct terrorists and insurgent groups for their own motives.⁴⁵⁴ Consequently, proxy wars have thrown a number of challenges before the border security agencies. Transgressions along the border were, in the past, often localized in nature and had no major security implications. Now, with the technological advancement the pattern of border crimes has changed. The intricate relationship between narcotics smuggling, small arms proliferation and terrorist activities have far-reaching implications for internal security of India. The terrorist attacks on an Indian Army camp in Manipur is an example of trans-boundary criminal nexus. Fanatic religious ideologies help foster polarizing values in terms of right and wrong, good and evil, which has been co-opted by different terrorist organizations to convert a 'seeker' into a lethal killer. The politicians have also aided terrorism to divert the problems of mass poverty and unemployment. The Islamist militant groups such as Jamaatul Mujahideen Bangladesh (close links with the Afghan Taliban), Harkat-ul-Jihad-al-Islami Bangladesh (close links with Al-Qaeda, I.S), Hizb-ut Tohid in Bangladesh have consolidated and expanded their institutional transnational networks in the past decades.⁴⁵⁵ Bangladesh and Myanmar's territories have been used by the insurgent groups of the North East India like the United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA), the Nationalist Socialist Council of Nagaland (N.S.C.N) and the Muslim United Liberation Tigers of Assam (M.U.L.T.A), who started getting training in the bases of Bangladesh and Myanmar from 1992. Besides, over the years, a large number of illegal immigrants from Bangladesh settled in the North East region of India, inflaming conflict in

⁴⁵³ "Thousands Protest Against Delhi Violence," **New Age**, 28 February 2020, <https://www.newagebd.net/article/100773/thousands-protest-against-delhi-violence> Accessed on 30.07.2022

⁴⁵⁴ Sahni, A. (2002, May 12). Survey of conflict and resolution in India's Northeast. **Faultlines: Writings on Conflict and Resolution**, 12, 2002, pp-39–112.

⁴⁵⁵ BIPSS., Transnational security: Threats to Bangladesh, BIPSS Issue Brief, Bangladesh Institute of Peace and Security Studies, Dhaka, 8th June, 2010. www.bipss.org.bd Accessed on 30.07.2022.

the state of Assam, Tripura and West Bengal. All these incidents created severe problem between India and Bangladesh in their bilateral relations. During the Director General-level talks between the Border Security Force (B.S.F) and Bangladesh Rifles (B.D.R) held in New Delhi in 2002, the Border Security Force (B.S.F) had handed over a list of 99 training camps of North East insurgent groups to the Bangladesh Rifles (B.D.R).⁴⁵⁶

INSURGENCY AND INSURGENT BASES IN BANGLADESH

Once a part of Pakistan, Bangladesh inherited the seeds of conflictual relations with India from its pre-independence period. At that time, Pakistani regimes patronised insurgency and pushed hordes of illegal infiltrators into the region, with the aim to annex Assam and Tripura to East Pakistan.⁴⁵⁷ The former Pakistani Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, in his book, 'The Myth of Independence,' disclosed Pakistan's dissatisfaction over the territorial division in 1947 and admitted to his regime's pursuit of the policy to push hordes of infiltrators into Assam and Tripura, in order to convert them into Muslim majority states and finally annex them to East Pakistan. During the 1950s and the 1960s, the then Pakistani Government provided shelter, arms and training to the Naga National Council (N.N.C) and the Mizo National Front (M.N.F) for this purpose.⁴⁵⁸ These pre-independence Pakistan policies seem to have guided the post-independent military regimes that came to power in Bangladesh, which hosted anti-Indian insurgents, leading to a hostile relationship for decades.

North East India, a homogeneous land with a mass heterogeneous population, is home to 475 ethnic groups and sub-groups, speaking over 400 languages,⁴⁵⁹ and representing all the major religions. The region shares its borders with five International countries—namely, China, Myanmar, Bangladesh, Bhutan and Nepal. This multiplicity of shared borders has certainly contributed to the ethnic complexity of the region. Besides, located far from mainland India, with little physical connectivity, leading to a 'sense of isolation', and a 'meagre representation' in the Indian parliament (only 24 seats out of the 542 in the lower house, Lok Sabha), North East India has often faced armed insurgent movements from the British India to modern India. Its geographical location (frequently identified as 'isolated'),

⁴⁵⁶ Ministry of External Affairs, (2002a). External Affairs Minister Jaswant Singh's statement in Rajya Sabha, 14 March. Retrieved from www.meadev.nic.in, Accessed on 30.07.2022

⁴⁵⁷ Z. A. Bhutto, **The Myth of Independence**, Oxford University Press, London, 1969.

⁴⁵⁸ Z. A. Bhutto, **The Myth of Independence**, Oxford University Press, London, 1969. Also see Sreeradha Datta, 'Security of India's Northeast: External Linkages', **Strategic Analysis**, 24(8), November 2000, p. 1499.

⁴⁵⁹ Subir Bhaumik, **Troubled Periphery: Crisis of India's Northeast**, Sage Studies on India's Northeast, Sage, New Delhi, 2009, p. 1.

competing ethnic groups and political and economic grievances have contributed to a state of insurgency, which has a lot of similarity with Mary Kaldor's concept of the 'new wars'.⁴⁶⁰ The nature of the conflicts ranges from insurgency to secessionism, terrorism and extremism, often resulting in ethnic clashes. There are around 30 armed insurgent groups that are currently active in the region.⁴⁶¹ Many of these insurgent groups have found shelter in neighbouring countries, with whom Northeast India shares 98 percent of its border. In some cases, these neighbours have supported the insurgent groups with arms, camps and training.⁴⁶² Among them, Bangladesh, a country which shares 46 percent of its border with the Northeast India, has also sympathized with armed rebellion in India's backyard for decades. Soon after the assassination of Sheikh Mujibur Rahaman in 1975, the military regime of Bangladesh had reset Dhaka's foreign policy from Indo-centrism to establishing close ties with China, Pakistan and the Middle Eastern Muslim countries, in order to countervail India's influence in South Asia. It had also immediately allowed the Mizo insurgents to establish their bases in the Chittagong Hill Tracts (C.H.T).⁴⁶³ Since then, various regimes, except the ones headed by Sheikh Mujib's daughter Sheikh Hasina (1996-2001, 2008-2023), have provided the insurgents with money, materials and a safe zone for setting up training camps in Bangladesh. Dhaka's earlier stance had been rightly reflected in a statement of the former Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia: 'The insurgents in India's Northeast are 'freedom fighters' and Bangladesh should help them instead of curbing their activities.'⁴⁶⁴

Evidence suggests that Bangladesh's military intelligence, the Directorate General of Forces Intelligence (D.G.F.I), had provided weapons, training and sanctuary to Indian rebels from the Northeast, on a regular basis.⁴⁶⁵ There were an estimated 125 camps, smaller

⁴⁶⁰ Kunal Mukherjee, 'The Conflict in the Indian Northeast', **Defence Studies**, 14 (2), 2014, pp. 111–133.

⁴⁶¹ The Indian Ministry of Home Affairs' Annual Report, 2013–2014, listed 16 active insurgent groups in Northeast India. See 'Annexure IV: Major Militant/Insurgent Groups Active in the Northeast Indian States'. It says in Note 2, Annexure IV, that 'other militant groups are also active in the North Eastern States'. See Ministry of Home Affairs, Annual Report, 2013–2014, Government of India, New Delhi, 2014, p. 309. See also Wasbir Hussain, 'Ethno-Nationalism and the Politics of Terror in India's Northeast', *South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies*, 30(1), 2007, p. 1.

⁴⁶² Subir Bhaumik, no. 7, pp. 153–181.

⁴⁶³ Sreeradha Datta, 'Security of India's Northeast: External Linkages', **Strategic Analysis**, 24(8), November 2000, p. 1502.

⁴⁶⁴ Harsh V. Pant, "Indian Foreign Policy: An Overview", Oxford University Press, 2016, p. 101; see also H. Karlekar, 'Cautious Tango', **South Asia Intelligence Review**, 1(42), 2003.

⁴⁶⁵ Subir Bhaumik, no. 7, p. 155

hideouts and safe houses, mostly located in the Chittagong Hill Tracts (C.H.T) areas.⁴⁶⁶ It had also been reported that most of the training camps belonging to the key insurgent groups, e.g. the United Liberation Front of Assam (U.L.F.A), the National Socialist Council of Nagaland (N.S.C.N) and the Bodo Security Force (BDSF), were located in the areas bordering Bangladesh.⁴⁶⁷ The Indian Border Security Force (BSF) is known to have believed that the Naga militants had set up their bases in Salopi, near the Mizoram– Bangladesh–Myanmar border, as well as in Cox’s Bazar and Bandarban, in Bangladesh.⁴⁶⁸ In addition, Indian Border Security Force (B.S.F) and the Indian Mobile Task Force (M.T.F) had identified that the Manipur rebels were operating from camps at Nagar and Chitalhiya, located at the border villages of Sylhet, Comilla and Moulvibazar districts of Bangladesh.⁴⁶⁹ A top United Liberation Front of Assam (U.L.F.A) leader, after he had surrendered in 2002, revealed that the United Liberation Front of Assam (U.L.F.A) had opened operations in Bangladesh from 1985, by setting up safe houses at village Damai, in the Moulvibazar district, bordering Meghalaya.⁴⁷⁰ During the same year, India had handed over a list of 99 insurgent camps in its territory to Bangladesh and asked the government to take necessary steps to shut them down.⁴⁷¹ In addition, Bangladesh, in the past, has hosted several lucrative income-generating projects (e.g. hotels, private clinics, motor driving centres, drug stores and poultry farms), run by the outlawed U.L.F.A in order to sustain insurgency at home.⁴⁷² Conversely, various Indian governments have also provided sizeable support to the Chittagong Hill Tracts (C.H.T) insurgents seeking independence from Bangladesh. Notably, “the Parbatya Chattagram Jana Samhati Samiti” (P.C.J.S.S), which was established in 1972, had initially sought Indian help to carry out armed struggle, but India had refused its requests owing to the cordial relations that existed between Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and Mrs. Indira Gandhi. After Mujib’s heinous assassination, however, India began providing material support to “the Parbatya Chattagram Jana Samhati Samiti”(PCJSS), to launch an armed insurgency against

⁴⁶⁶ Ibid, p-156

⁴⁶⁷ Madhu Gurung, Ramtanu Maitra, ‘Insurgent Groups in Northeast India’, **Executive Intelligence Review**, 22(41), 1995, pp. 48–55.

⁴⁶⁸ Kunal Mukherjee, ‘India’s Fractured Northeastern Frontier: An Overview’, **Asia-Pacific Review**, 21(2), 2014, p. 156.

⁴⁶⁹ S. Datta, no. 11, p. 1503.

⁴⁷⁰ Wasbir Hussain, ‘Ethno-Nationalism and the Politics of Terror in India’s Northeast’, *South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies*, 30(1), 2007, p. 106.

⁴⁷¹ Cited in Christian Wagner, *Security Cooperation in South Asia: Overview, Reasons and Prospects*, SWP Research Paper (6), German Institute for International and Security Affairs, Berlin, 2014, p. 14.

⁴⁷² S. Datta, no. 11, p. 1506

the military regimes in power that held anti-India sentiments. India's Research and Analysis Wing (R.A.W) is known to have trained the "Chakma youths" and the "Hill guerrillas" and provided them with huge consignments of arms and ammunitions.⁴⁷³ India's B.S.F had set up clandestine bases in Tripura and Mizoram and trained the PCJSS's guerrilla wing, Shanti Bahini, and other rebels.⁴⁷⁴ The Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) rebels, who took sanctuary in these bases, later revealed that India had secretly provided arms and money to the tribal insurgents fighting for an autonomous state in Bangladesh.⁴⁷⁵ With extensive Indian support, the "Shanti Bahini forces" had grown enough in strength to undertake a guerrilla movement. They led an armed movement against the Bangladesh Army in 1977, which lasted more than a decade. While the Bangladesh Government had remained busy fighting these insurgents, India settled its problems in Tripura and Mizoram, and later slowed down its support to the Bangladeshi insurgents.⁴⁷⁶ Therefore, the policies of both Bangladesh and India had created a milieu of allegations and counter-allegations about harbouring each other's insurgents. Under Prime Minister Khaleda Zia, Indian insurgents like the ULFA, and others were openly given a free run by Bangladesh to import arms of militancy in Assam, Nagaland and other parts of the North East India. During her tenure ULFA Commander-in-Chief Paresh Barua lived in Dhaka with his family.⁴⁷⁷

Insurgent groups of North-East India were also using Bangladesh as their safe haven. In Assam there are over fifteen Islamic extremist groups and more than a dozen of the North-East insurgent groups that are provided shelter, support and training in Bangladesh.⁴⁷⁸ The then Union Minister of State for Home, I.D. Swami in July 2001, has stated in the Rajya Sabha that Thailand, Myanmar and Bangladesh are the countries from and through which illegal flow of arms to the North Eastern states is taking place.⁴⁷⁹ In 2005 the Ministry of

⁴⁷³ Nazmul H. Chowdhury, 'The Resistance Movement in the Chittagong Hill Tracts: Global and Regional Connections', *Asian Affairs*, 28(4), 2006, p. 43.

⁴⁷⁴ Amina Mohsin, '**The Politics of Nationalism: The Case of Chittagong Hill Tracts**', University Press Limited, Dhaka, 1997.

⁴⁷⁵ Sanjay Hazarika, 'Bangladeshi Insurgents Say India is Supporting Them', *The New York Times*, June 11, 1989.

⁴⁷⁶ Nazmul H. Chowdhury, 'The Resistance Movement in the Chittagong Hill Tracts: Global and Regional Connections', *Asian Affairs*, 28(4), 2006, p. 44.

⁴⁷⁷ Kumar, Praveen. 'Bangladesh as India's internal security concern', *Institute of Peace and Conflict studies (IPCS)*, Article No. 1255, December 18, 2003.

⁴⁷⁸ *The Telegraph*, March 15, 2003.

⁴⁷⁹ Minister of State in the Union Ministry of Home Affairs, I.D. Swami, Rajya Sabha, Unstarred Question no. 356, July 25, 2001. Available at http://www.claws.in/working-paper_L-MMK.pdf, accessed on 25.03.2022.

External Affairs (MEA), Government of India, had prepared a list of 172 Indian insurgent camps⁴⁸⁰ located particularly in Dhaka, Sylhet, Sherpur, Moulawi Bazar, Sumamganj etc. Cox's bazaar in Chittagong District is particularly used for the transshipment of weapons and explosives.

If the porosity of the border allows migrants from Bangladesh to infiltrate easily into India, it also allows Indian insurgents to crossover to Bangladesh and other neighbouring countries for asylum. For example, after military operations against Indian insurgent groups by Myanmar in the early 1990s, Bangladesh emerged as their preferred destination. Presently, the United Liberation Front of Assam (U.L.F.A), the All Tripura Tiger Force (A.T.T.F), the National Liberation Front of Tripura (N.L.F.T), and the National Democratic Front of Bodoland (N.D.F.B) along with other insurgent outfits from the North East have their bases in the Chittagong, Khagrachari and Sylhet districts of Bangladesh. The thick forest tracks in Meghalaya, Tripura, and Mizoram provide them ideal routes to sneak in and out of the Indian Territory. In the recent B.S.F–B.D.R meeting, the B.S.F handed over to the BDR a list of 176 insurgent camps along with a list of 72 insurgent leaders hiding in Bangladesh and another list of 79 sympathizers given shelter. This exercise seems futile because recently, Bangladesh remained uncooperative and refused to acknowledge the presence of such bases in its territory during the regime of Begum Khaleda Zia.

ILLEGAL MIGRATIONS

For decades, Bangladesh has been the biggest source of illegal immigrants in North East India. The bigger influx had taken place in the years between the partition of India in 1947 and the independence of Bangladesh in 1971. Besides, the porous borders, poor border security management, political instability and the poor socio-economic conditions in Bangladesh had often induced people to migrate to North East India. Some consider the migration from the Muslim majority Bangladesh to North East India as 'Lebensraum'—living space for the burgeoning population of Bangladesh—to create a Muslim Bongo Bhumi (Land of Bengal's Muslims).⁴⁸¹ The Hindu migrants from Bangladesh, however, moved into this area because of the ongoing Hindu–Muslim tensions. These tensions had been caused by the repressive policies of the B.N.P (Bangladesh Nationalist Party)/Jamaat regimes that were

⁴⁸⁰**The Telegraph**, 15th March, 2003.

⁴⁸¹Priyanka Upadhyaya, 'Securitization Matrix in South Asia: Bangladeshi Migrants as Enemy Alien', Paper presented at the Workshop on the Dynamics of Securitization in Asia, Singapore, 2003, S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, Nanyang Technological University, 2003, p. 11.

directed against the religious minorities.⁴⁸²The Chakmas, for instance, took shelter in Arunachal Pradesh in the 1960s, while trying to escape the ethnic riots and the intolerant policies of the military regimes.⁴⁸³Consequently, out of the 45 million population of North East India, the number of Bangladeshi illegal immigrants is estimated to range from about 5 million to 14 million.⁴⁸⁴All of these immigrants mainly choose to stay in Assam, Tripura, Mizoram, Nagaland and Arunachal Pradesh, though the majority of them, an estimated five million, reside in Assam.This increasing number of illegal immigrants has endangered the political, economy, security and demographic equations in the region, thus creating resentment and anger amongst the local population.For instance, in 1994, the All Arunachal Pradesh Students Union (A.A.P.S.U) hadled an anti-foreigner movement and demanded the removal of illegal migrants,including the Bangladeshi Chakmas, from the state. Assam’s six-year-long political turmoil, that began in 1979, was mainly rooted in the key grievance of large-scale unauthorised immigration from Bangladesh.⁴⁸⁵In Tripura, the reducing ratio of tribal people, due to the pre-ponderance of Bangladeshi population, the changing ethno religious structure of the state and the loss of a Mongoloid ethos, had created an anti-Bangalee sentiments and led to insurgency. Similarly, in Manipur, which hosts the largest number of armed insurgent groups amongst all the states of India, the main concern has been illegal immigration from Bangladesh undermining the local Manipuri identity. Moreover, the Bangladeshi immigrants have been posing a threat to the Indian states through the rise of Islamist extremism in the region. Bangladesh’s home grown Muslim militant groups, with links to international terrorism, have been playing a central role in proliferating fundamentalist ideas in the North East.According to sources in the Indian Government, there are at least 11 Islamic militant groups currently active in North East India.⁴⁸⁶Indian policymakers believe that Pakistan’s Inter Service Intelligence (I.S.I) has continued to use Bangladesh’s territory to train Islamic extremists and patronise them to fight its proxy war against India.⁴⁸⁷However, the porous nature of the Bangladesh–India border presents complex

⁴⁸² Kunal Mukherjee, ‘India’s Fractured Northeastern Frontier: An Overview’, **Asia-Pacific Review**, 21(2), 2014, p. 156.

⁴⁸³ Anup Saika, ‘**Refugees, Illegal Migrants and Local Perceptions in India’s Far East**’, Paper presented at the 25th IUSSP International Population Conference, France, July 18–23, 2005, p. 2.

⁴⁸⁴ Archana Upadhyay, ‘Terrorism in the Northeast: Linkages and Implications’, **Economic and Political Review**, 41(48), 2006, p. 4995.

⁴⁸⁵ Sanjib Baruah, ‘**India and its Northeast: Another Big Push without a Take-Off?**’, in Yasmin Saikia, Amit R. Baishya (eds.), *Northeast India: A Place of Relations*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2017, p. 50.

⁴⁸⁶ Upadhyay, no. 28, p. 4996.

⁴⁸⁷ Zahood A. Rather, ‘Security Challenges to India–Bangladesh Relations: Some Visible

challenges in the efforts to prevent illegal immigration. It is not only the world's fifth-longest land border, but also the longest border that India shares with any of its neighbours, where the boundary cuts across families, homes and villages, making it prone to violation. Additionally, the hilly and forested tracks and the river side areas, across the borders of North Bengal, South Assam, Meghalaya and Tripura, inhibit the construction of roads and Border Observation Posts (B.O.Ps), making border surveillance almost impossible. Further, due to the ethnic, linguistic, cultural, facial, physical, religious and social similarities, Bangladeshi migrants find it easy to mix with the local population, making it impractical to identify them. Seeking a resolution to this issue, India had raised the matter in several bilateral political and diplomatic forums, but various regimes in Dhaka refused India's claim. For instance, in August 1983, General H. M. Ershad had stated: 'We have security of life and food to feed our people It is therefore out of question for our people to leave for any other country illegally as has been alleged.'⁴⁸⁸ Different regimes in Dhaka had even refused to accept those who were sought to be deported from India on the basis of court orders.⁴⁸⁹ Due to Bangladesh's non-cooperation, Indian Governments had to undertake a series of steps—under the Foreigners Act, 1946, and the Illegal Migrants (Determination by Tribunal) Act, 1983, of Assam—to identify and deport the illegal Bangladeshi migrants. But many of those who were identified and pushed back, re-entered Indian territories through clandestine routes. To prevent migration from Bangladesh, the Indian Government has been constructing a border fence in the 4095-kilometre-long Bangladesh–India border, and 70 percent of it has already been completed. The 3-metre-high (around 10 feet) border fence, of barbed wire and double-walled concrete, has not been received favourably in Bangladesh. A former Bangladeshi foreign minister clarified Dhaka's position on the matter by stating: 'In the view of cordial relationship between the two countries, such measures might prove to be an unfair one.'⁴⁹⁰ One renowned human rights advocate, in fact, described the fence as the psychological expression of India's hegemony.⁴⁹¹ In recent times, the Indian Government has plans to change the status of the illegal migrants under the Citizenship Amendment Bill, 2016. The Bill proposes citizenship for the minorities migrating from neighbouring countries

Issues', **International Journal of Research**, 1(4), 2014, p. 789.

⁴⁸⁸ Sreeradha Datta, 'Indo-Bangladesh Relations: An Overview of Limitations and Constraints', **Strategic Analysis**, 26(3), 2002, p. 428.

⁴⁸⁹ Ibid, P-1505.

⁴⁹⁰ Ibid, p-1504.

⁴⁹¹ Maher Sattar, 'Bangladesh–India Border: Wall of Death', MINNPOST, April 1, 2012.

due to religious persecution. The Bill has no provision for Muslims, making it clear that citizenship acquisition for the Muslim migrants will be very difficult. The proposed Bill, however, has led to a series of protests in Assam, demanding the deportation of the Bangladeshi migrants irrespective of religious identities. Moreover, the Indian authorities have started updating the 1951 National Register of Citizens (NRC) of Assam, which does not grant citizenship based on religion. It aims, rather, to enlist the names of Indian citizens and to detect all illegal immigrants, mainly the Bangladeshis who entered Assam after 24th March, 1971. This development is also likely to cast a black shadow on the dynamics of India–Bangladesh relations.

The illegal Bangladeshi immigrants have not only changed the demography and disturbed the ecology of the North-East but also encouraged them to exercise their political rights in India as Indian citizens. This has been one of the key reasons for the rise of insurgent groups in the North-East as some of the insurgent groups like Assam Gana Sangram Parishad (A.G.S.P) started and got support of the mass due to the illegal immigrants from Bangladesh. During the Khaleda Zia period, large scale immigration of Bangladeshis particularly in the North-East has led to massive uprising and altered the demography of the region. In 2003, the then Union Home Minister had stated that over 20 million illegal Bangladeshi immigrants are residing in the country, out of which above 10 million are in Assam and West Bengal alone.⁴⁹² The then Minister of State for Home Sri Prakash Jaiswal mentioned that illegal immigration from neighbouring Bangladesh is posing the biggest threat to India's national security.⁴⁹³

CROSS-BORDER SECURITY ISSUES

A large volume of cross-border trafficking took place between Bangladesh and India. Over decades, Bangladesh has been used as a transit route by transnational criminals for small arms trafficking. This is evident from the fact that considerable numbers of illegal weapons have often been recovered from different locations within the country. From 2008-2011, a total of 27 rifles, 10,071 bullets, 3686 bombs and 61 pistols were recovered by different Bangladeshi law enforcement agencies.⁴⁹⁴ Similarly, according to the Border Guard

⁴⁹² Kiran,Raj, India aims to deport 20 million Bangladeshis, **Independent Media Centre**, January 9,2003, at <http://www.indiaindymedia.org/en/2003/01/2730.html>. accessed on 17.07. 2022.

⁴⁹³ “Illegal Immigration from Bangladesh biggest threat: Jaiswal”, **The Indian News**, May 12, 2009, available at <http://www.thaindian.com/newsportal/uncategorized/illegal-inmigrants—from-bangladesh-biggest-threat-jaiswal100191607.html>. accessed on 17.03. 2022.

⁴⁹⁴ Arms and Ammunition Recovery', 2008–2011, at <http://>

Bangladesh (B.G.B), at least 237 revolvers, 152 guns, 5,159 rounds of bullets, 196 magazines, 60 bombs, 3 grenades,⁴⁹⁵ crude bombs, 36 kg of explosives and 69 kg of gunpowder have been seized from the Indo-Bangladesh border areas between 2012 and 2016.⁴⁹⁵ Poor socio-economic conditions in Bangladesh that facilitate a ‘military-militant-mafia-nexus’ and the availability of smugglers, have contributed to the supply of illegal arms to the insurgents in North East India. There is evidence available, in fact, of illegal arms from China, arriving in Cox’s Bazar and Chittagong, and being distributed to different destinations in the North East India.⁴⁹⁶ There also exist indigenous local arms manufacturing factories, on both sides of the border, which supply illegal arms. Furthermore, in the past, Pakistan’s I.S.I is known to have managed the transfer of a large quantity of arms, discarded by the Khmer Rouge of Cambodia after its fall, to North East India, via Bangladesh. The arms were brought by the insurgents from the clandestine markets in Thailand and shipped to the Cox’s Bazar port, from where they were carried as headloads into the region.⁴⁹⁷ The involvement of the I.S.I in arms smuggling, using Bangladesh’s territory, has been confirmed after the massive blast at West Bengal’s New Jalpaiguri railway station in 2006. The investigation reports had revealed that the arms used in the blast had transited through Bangladesh.⁴⁹⁸ The Kachin Independent Army (KIA) of Myanmar had also purchased weapons from the South East Asian arms markets and transshipped them from Southern Thailand, via the Three Pagodas Pass in Myanmar, and then along the Rangong coastline, to Cox’s Bazar in Bangladesh.⁴⁹⁹ Thus, from the completely unmonitored port of Cox’s Bazar, illegal weapons have been brought to other parts of Bangladesh and Northeast India. Conversely, illicit drugs from India have been smuggled into Bangladesh for several years. Government sources report that these illegal drugs are smuggled into Bangladesh mainly from the country’s Western, Northern and Eastern borders.⁵⁰⁰ This is evident from the fact that there are regular incidents of the seizure of illegal drugs by the B.G.B forces in the border regions. Among illicit drugs, heroin, codeine,

www.satp.org/satporgtp/countries/bangladesh/database/index.html, *accessed* on 28.07.2022

⁴⁹⁵ BGB Darpan 2012–2016’, Border Guard Bangladesh, at www.bgb.gov.bd, accessed on 28.07.2022

⁴⁹⁶ Ibid, p-55.

⁴⁹⁷ Sreeradha Datta, ‘Security of India’s Northeast: External Linkages’, **Strategic Analysis**, 24(8), November, 2000, p. 1501.

⁴⁹⁸ *ibid*

⁴⁹⁹ Mukherjee, no. 16, p. 155.

⁵⁰⁰ Baseline Study on Drug Addiction in Bangladesh, Department of Narcotics Control, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh, 2017, p. 18.

cannabis, buprenorphine and yaba tablets are very popular with drug addicted people. A sizeable amount of each of these items has regularly been smuggled into Bangladesh. According to Bangladesh's Department of Narcotics Control, between 2008 and 2011, at least 600 kg heroin, 3.9 million codeine bottles, 1,60,230 kg cannabis, 3,20,438 buprenorphine ampoules and over 2.3 million pieces of yaba tablets were seized from different places within the country.⁵⁰¹ Similarly, between 2012 and 2016, at least 700 kg heroin, 4.4 million codeine bottles, 1,97,722 kg cannabis, 6,75,079 buprenorphine ampoules and over 6 million pieces of yaba tablets were seized by different law enforcement agencies.⁵⁰² Moreover, as one of the leading pharmaceutical manufacturers in the world, India produces drugs containing dextropropoxyphene (a weak, synthetic opioid, used as an analgesic) and codeine (a sleep-inducing and analgesic drug, derived from morphine).⁵⁰³ It is worth noting that, due to its worldwide notoriety for being used as a suicide drug, dextropropoxyphene has been banned in India since 23rd May, 2013. Drug traffickers smuggle this banned item from Indian companies to do business in Bangladesh. Besides, along with heroin and marijuana, phensedyl (a codeine-based cough syrup) has also been smuggled into Bangladesh from Indian factories in the North East and West Bengal. In 2011, the Bangladeshi Drug Control Nodal Agency brought out a list of factories located on the Bangladesh–North East India border, which have been producing phensedyl, for Bangladesh as their sole targeted market.⁵⁰⁴ The phensedyl bottles are re-filled with higher narcotic elements, repackaged as 'phensedyl plus' and illegally smuggled into Bangladesh.⁵⁰⁵ Most of this illegal drug trafficking took place from West Bengal, Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura and Mizoram.⁵⁰⁶ Although phensedyl has been banned in India since 2016,⁵⁰⁷ drug dealers have been attempting to smuggle this illicit item into Bangladesh. For instance, in 2017, Indian officials had seized 3045 bottles of phensedyl from West Bengal's Berhampur, and 29,600

⁵⁰¹ Annual Drug Report of Bangladesh 2011, Department of Narcotics Control, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, 2011, p. 47.

⁵⁰² Annual Drug Report of Bangladesh 2016, Department of Narcotics Control, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, 2016, p. 15.

⁵⁰³ Pushpita Das, 'Drug Trafficking in India: A Case for Border Security', **IDS Occasional Paper no. 24**, Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses, May 2012, p. 30.

⁵⁰⁴ Ashish Banik, 'Bangladesh and India's Northeast: A Security Perspective', **Daily Star**, 15th October, 2011.

⁵⁰⁵ Shishir Kant Jain, 'The Spurious Drug Menace and Remedy', *Health Administrator*, 19(1), 2006, p. 33.

⁵⁰⁶ Das, paper no. 45, pp. 30–31.

⁵⁰⁷ Himani Chandna, 'Ban on Phensedyl, Corex, Saridon, Others Due to Misinterpretation?' **Hindustan Times**, April 10, 2016.

bottles from Shillong, that were meant to be smuggled into Bangladesh.⁵⁰⁸ Besides arms and drug trafficking, India have suffered from the killings of Bangladeshis in the border areas by India's B.S.F. Bangladesh shares almost half of its international border with North East India and a considerable number of Bangladeshis live in the border areas. There have been numerous incidents of killing of Bangladeshis, by the B.S.F, in these areas. According to the local human rights' organisation, 'Odhikar', the B.S.F had killed a total of 1,133 Bangladeshis between 2000 and 2017.⁵⁰⁹ There are also reported incidents of Bangladeshis attacking the B.S.F.⁵¹⁰ The cross-border firing mainly took place at night, due to the illegal activities of smugglers, human traffickers, criminals, illegal immigrants and other illegal border-crossers. Among these, the most frequent and active groups are those of the cattle smugglers, who are mainly responsible for the border killings. According to one former B.G.B Director General (D.G), 'border killing can be stopped, if we can stop cattle smuggling'.⁵¹¹ Further, in many cases, the victims have been local villagers, who are paid by the criminals to ferry the smuggled items.⁵¹² Since the border fence lies on the Indian side, the porous nature of the Indo–Bangladesh border makes it easier for them to cross the zero line to reach India's territory, only to suffer the consequences. However, there have been many incidents of the B.S.F killing unarmed Bangladeshis who had crossed the border to meet relatives.⁵¹³ Both the countries have now introduced comprehensive and coordinated border patrol mechanism which has brought down such incidents.

CATTLE SMUGGLING

It is known fact that a large part of Bangladesh's daily protein supply comes from India. This is largely through the smuggling of cattle and other livestock from India. Nearly a million cattle are smuggled into Bangladesh annually and this illegal trade is estimated at

⁵⁰⁸Manosh Das, 'Custom Officials Seized Phensedyl from Truck', **The Times of India**, February 5, 2017; see also Jayanta Gupta, 'Over 3,000 bottles of Phensedyl Seized by BSF near Indo-Bangladesh Border', *The Times of India*, August 30, 2017.

⁵⁰⁹'Human Rights Violation in Bangladesh-India Border Area from 2000–2017', at <http://odhikar.org/statistics/statistics-on-violations-in-the-border-area/> Accessed on 28.07.2022.

⁵¹⁰ Kulbir Krishan, 'Policing the Indo-Bangladesh Border', **Strategic Analysis**, 25(5), 2001, pp. 668–671; see also 'BSF Killing: Bangla Border Tense', *The Times of India*, April 18, 2005; Ananya Bhardwaj, 'India to Take up Rising Attacks on BSF at Talks with Bangladesh Next Week', *The Print*, April 20, 2018.

⁵¹¹ Curbing Cattle Smuggling Can Stop Border Killing', **Independent**, October 7, 2016.

⁵¹² Sujoy Dhar, 'Bangladesh's Young Smugglers Risk their Lives', **Aljazeera**, June 29, 2011.

⁵¹³ Human Rights Watch, *Trigger Happy: Excessive Use of Force by Indian Troops at the Bangladesh Border*, 2010, at <https://www.hrw.org/report/2010/12/09/trigger-happy/excessive-use-force-indian-troops-bangladesh-border>; Accessed on 30.07.2022.

about Rs. 22-30 billion.⁵¹⁴ The illegal movement of cattle often results in the exchange of fire between the security force of both countries, according to a clarification issued by the Indian High Commission in Dhaka. Cross border crimes like cattle smuggling are a menace for both countries that occasionally cause firing incidents, mostly at the night. These illegal activities and firing incidents, which sometime lead to regrettable loss of lives on both sides along the India-Bangladesh Border (I.B.B), need to be tackled through joint efforts and mechanisms. In this regard, the border forces of both the countries, B.S.F and B.D.R, have worked hard to improve their coordination and their current level of co-operation are the best in many years.⁵¹⁵

YEAR	Cattle seized by BSF
2012	1,20,724
2013	1,22,000
2014	1,09,999
2015	1,53,602
2016 (upto October 2016)	1,46,967

Source: border security: capacity building and institutions (presented to Rajya Sabha on 11th april 2017) (laid on the table of Lok Sabha on 11th April 2017), Report no-203

The cattle trade is attractive and profitable because of the costs and procedural problems of the permit system, which is a requirement of the legal mechanism. Against the backdrop of Khaleda Zia's visit to India in March 2006, one of the leading newspapers 'The New Age,' carried the news seriously.

Over the years, hundreds of cattle heads have been smuggled into Bangladesh through different points of the border. The quantum of cattle smuggling is so high that in last few decades Bangladesh has become the largest exporter of beef in the world and this has also enabled a flourishing leather industry. Realizing the magnitude of this illegal cattle trade and the income that could accrue therefrom, the Bangladeshi Government has opened customs check posts to get revenue from this trade. Truck loads of cattle are brought all the way from Rajasthan, Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and Bihar ostensibly for cattle markets which are located close to the Bangladesh border. These cattle are then bought at a cheaper price and smuggled into Bangladesh. The riverside borderline is vulnerable to cattle smuggling. Earlier,

⁵¹⁴ Staff Reporter, 'Cattle Smuggling rampant on Indo-Bangladesh Border', *Hindustan Times*, November 26, 2006.

⁵¹⁵ Press Issue Release High Commission of India, Dhaka, July18, 2008, available at <http://www.hcidhaka.org/PRDetails.php?id=4>, accessed on 15.03 2022.

such smuggling was done along the West Bengal border; now the Assam route is busy for such smuggling.

CROSS BORDER TERRORISM

Terrorist activities were one of the most important issues for India during the period of the Khaleda Zia Government. It was widely recognized that a number of trans-national Islamic terrorist groups including the Al-Qaida, Taliban, Lashkar-e-Taiba had established their presence in Bangladesh. New Delhi–Dhaka ties encountered rough weather during Khaleda Zia's Government, especially on the issue of anti-India terrorist groups in Bangladesh.⁵¹⁶

The differences between India and Bangladesh are mainly security perceptions resulted in the formulating of their policies towards one another. Moreover during this time, evidence connected Bangladesh to pro-Al-Qaeda Organization of Pakistani origins supported by the Pakistani Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) such as Lashkar-e-Taiba, the militant responsible for the attacks in Mumbai in November, 2008.⁵¹⁷ Other intelligence reports obtained after the 2002 attack on the United States consulate in Kolkata, the Varanasi blasts of 2004 and the Hyderabad Mosque and Delhi blast 2007 revealed that militants were transiting through Bangladesh and also using it as grounds of training camps.⁵¹⁸ Trans border terrorism particularly in the light of the 2006 terrorist attacks on the major cities of India, involving one common point of having its base in Bangladesh, was one of the major security challenges that India faced from its Eastern neighbour Bangladesh. During Khaleda Zia regime the extremists and the terrorist organizations were able to establish themselves firmly in Bangladesh. During her period, a number of terror acts took place in India such as bomb blasts in Varanasi (March 2006) and Hyderabad blast (August 2007). In November 2007 Indian intelligence agencies busted three Jihadi cells that were operating in Kolkata, Mumbai and Jodhpur.⁵¹⁹

⁵¹⁶ Jha, Nalini Kant and Kumar, Sumit. 'India's Policy towards South Asian Neighbours', **World Focus**, Volume. XXXII, No.5, May, 2011.

⁵¹⁷ Dutta, Piyali. '**India Bangladesh Relations, Issues, Problems and Recent Developments**', Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies (IPCS), Special Report, September, 2010, available at http://www.ipcs.org/pdf_files/issue/sr97.pdf, accessed on 10.03. 2022.

⁵¹⁸ Bammi, Y.M., '**Indo-Bangladesh Relations: The way ahead**', Vij Book Publications, New Delhi, 2010, pp.237-238.

⁵¹⁹ Staff Reporter, 'Petrapole, on Indo-Bangladesh Border, gateway and terror?', **The Times of India**, June 12, 2008.

FENCING OF THE INDO-BANGLADESH BORDER

In response to these above mentioned challenges, India took the decision to fence off the entire Indo-Bangla border since 1986,⁵²⁰ which is considered as the central component of India's 'border management strategy', a collection of policies and practices aimed at 'hardening' the border and enclosing Indian Territory on its eastern periphery.⁵²¹ In 1989, the Government of India initiated the phase I of fencing its border with Bangladesh, which ended with erecting about 854 km, almost 20 percent of the border.⁵²² In 2000, India sanctioned the phase II, which aimed at fencing 2429.5 km, and by 31st January, 2005, 1275.4 km had been completed.⁵²³ In addition to the fencing, India has also constructed a series of roads along its border with Bangladesh to facilitate the monitoring operations. So far, roads in a total stretch of approximately 2,866 km have been completed⁵²⁴ in phase I, and about 2800 km of border roads and 24 km of bridges are expected to be built, under the phase II, along the Indo-Bangladesh border in the states of West Bengal, Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura and Mizoram.⁵²⁵ Since 2007, the Indian Ministry of Home Affairs has admitted that the most of the fence constructed under the Phase-I in West Bengal, Assam and Meghalaya has been damaged due to adverse climatic conditions, repeated submergence⁵²⁶ etc. Accordingly, the Government of India has sanctioned a project named Phase-III for the erection of 861 km of fencing replacing the entire fencing constructed under Phase-I⁵²⁷ 532 km of fencing has been replaced so far. The scheduled date for completion of the entire project is March 2010.⁵²⁸ Nevertheless, the India-Bangladesh border had not yet been entirely fenced off. The project has not reached the entire implementation stage because of land acquisition issues, public reactions, and

⁵²⁰ Sreeradha Datta, "Security of India's Northeast: External Linkages," *Strategic Analysis*, Volume. 24, No. 8 November, 2000, p. 1503.

⁵²¹ Duncan McDuie-Ra, "Tribals, Migrants and Insurgents: Security and Insecurity along the India-Bangladesh Border," in *Global Change, Peace & Security*, Vol. 24, No.1, 2012, p. 165.

⁵²² Rizwana Shamshad, "Politics and Origin of the Indian-Bangladesh Border Fence," paper presented to the 17th Biennial Conference of the Asian Studies Association of Australia in Melbourne, July 1-3, 2008), p.9; and Pushpita Das, "The India-Bangladesh Border: A Problem Area for Tomorrow," Working Paper (**Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses**, New Delhi, December 8, 2006), http://www.idsa.in/idsacomments/TheIndiaBangladeshBorderANewBeginning_pdas_101011, accessed on 20.07.2022.

⁵²³ Jamwal, "Border Management," *op.cit.*, p.22; see also Pushpita Das, "The India-Bangladesh Border: A Problem Area for Tomorrow," *op.cit.*.

⁵²⁴ *ibid*

⁵²⁵ Willem van Schendel, "**The Bengal Borderland: Beyond State and Nation in South Asia**", Anthem Press, London, 2005, p.237.

⁵²⁶ Government of India, Ministry of Home Affairs, *Annual Report 2007-08*, *op.cit.*, p.30.

⁵²⁷ Government of India, Ministry of Home Affairs, *Annual Report 2009-10*, p.30.

⁵²⁸ *ibid*

difficult weather conditions. In 2014, Indian Ministry of Home Affairs set again a new deadline to continue fencing along the India-Bangladesh border, which was supposed to be completed by March 2012.⁵²⁹ While some of the disputes on the interpretation and implementation of India-Bangladesh boundary, which came into existence after India's partition in 1947, were solved, many still exist.⁵³⁰ Although, Indian Government decision to construct the barbed wire fence on Indo-Bangladesh border as a 'protective device' to prevent the influx of illegal migrants and cross border terrorism across the border but the Bangladesh Government has strongly rejected this justification, based on the India-Bangladesh Agreement of 1974 popularly known as Land Boundary Agreement which prohibited clearly the construction of any 'defensive structure' of any kind or deployment any permanent or temporary border security forces by either country in their respective territories within 150 yards of the border.⁵³¹ Moreover, Bangladesh claimed that the fences intruded into Bangladeshi territory at several points and constituted an attempt to appropriate its territory.⁵³² In order to mitigate dispute between the two countries on the border management, the two countries signed in 2011 a series of agreements aimed at making a common vision about the management of their border. The March 2011 Agreement on the non-use of lethal weapons by the Border Security Force, the Coordinated Border management Plan signed in July 2011, and the Protocol to the Agreement concerning the Demarcation of Land Boundary signed in September 2011 are some of such accords that are expected to transform the India-Bangladesh border from a border management nightmare to a zone of peace and prosperity.⁵³³

Mansi Mehrotra-Khanna in his paper "Security Challenges to India-Bangladesh Relations," identified some major reasons that have rendered the India border management ineffective, including the incoherence of security personnel system, fragility, and inefficiency of different forces in charge of border control, and the porosity of the frontier. She concluded that these difficulties have kept the borders vulnerable and have, in turn, facilitated problems

⁵²⁹ **The Telegraph**, "Fenced border by 2014, says Delhi," *The Telegraph*, April 29, 2013. http://www.telegraphindia.com/1130429/jsp/northeast/story_16839610.jsp#.UzdHIYXuiRo accessed on 20.07.2022

⁵³⁰ Jamwal, "Border Management," *op.cit.*, p.-5.

⁵³¹ Hiranmay Karlekar, "**Bangladesh the Next Afghanistan**", : Sage Publication, New Delhi, 2005, p.88. See also Jamwal, "Border Management," *op.cit.*, p.30.

⁵³² V.K. Vinayaraj, "India as a Threat: Bangladesh Perceptions," **South Asian Survey**, Vol.16, No. 1, 2009, p.107.

⁵³³ Pushpita Das, "The India-Bangladesh Border," *op.cit.*

of all kinds of illegal infiltration, smuggling, and trafficking.⁵³⁴ So, although fencing has undoubtedly made infiltration more difficult, it cannot end it.⁵³⁵ Smugglers and irregular migrants have invented new ways, including cutting the barbed wire, to bypass the border security systems. Additionally, the two countries share almost 200 km of river border, mostly in Dhubri district of Assam and southern West Bengal, which is impossible to fence off. In relation to the demographic composition and distribution on the India-Bangladesh borderland, fencing the border cannot be effective in checking infiltration and stopping irregular cross-border activities, as long as each country has many enclaves and adverse possessions inside the other. This situation is expected to end after the entry into force of the 1974 Land Boundary Agreement (L.B.A), which had finally been ratified by both India and Bangladesh. In June 2015, the Governments of the two countries sealed the ratification pact to operationalize the Land Boundary Agreement (L.B.A) and exchange the enclaves. The Arbitrariness and artificiality of Indo-Bangladesh border have been reflected in the effects of India's security control and fencing strategy along this border. The fencing has stopped or delayed in some places where more than 450 villages are located within 150 yards of the border that are excluded, by the 1975 Indo-Bangladesh border agreement, from construction defensive structure or deployment security fences.⁵³⁶ Additionally, there are no less than 200 border villages are opposed to the fence, and in some border areas like Hilli in the Malda district of West Bengal, a row of houses have their front doors in India and their rear doors opening into Bangladesh.⁵³⁷ The barbed wire fence does not only affect the social and economic life of the population but also make them refugees in their motherland. It will deepen and perpetuate the arbitrary aspects of the border delineation.

It is clear that the fortification and militarization of the Indian borders by building fences and other security measures has largely failed to achieve the designed goals. That's why the Indian Governments have never ceased to pump more money to reform the existing systems or adopt new ones. Specific geographical characteristics of the Indian borders and the rampant corruption in the border patrol forces make fencing and managing physically the border in this region extremely difficult. Additionally, one of the complicated issues raised by

⁵³⁴ Mansi Mehrotra-Khanna, "Security Challenges to India-Bangladesh Relations," Working Paper 1\2010 (Center for Land Warfare Studies, 2010, p.24.

⁵³⁵ Praveen Swami, "Failed Threats and Flawed Fences: India's Military Responses to Pakistan's Proxy War," **IndiaReview**, Volume. 3, No. 2, 2004, p.166.

⁵³⁶ Chandra Moni Bhattarai, "India-Bangladesh Border Fencing and Community Responses," Conference Paper, Annual International Studies Convention 2013, December 10-12., Delhi, India.http://aisc-india.in/AISC2013_web/papers/papers_final/paper_295.pdf, accessed on 20.07.2022

⁵³⁷ Chandra Moni Bhattarai, "India-Bangladesh Border Fencing and Community Responses," op.cit.

fencing the bilateral boundaries concerned disputes over the demarcation of the border. Some countries see this fencing policy led by India as a unilateral demarcation aimed at imposing de facto borders. Even if the security challenges facing India have been the major factor for the border fortification, it can be also an impetus to reinforce regional cross-border cooperation. The regional economic integration can be a solution for both territorial disputes and irregular cross-border movements. Such regional integration process can blur political aspects of south Asia's borders and transform them into spheres of economic and cultural interaction, especially in borderlands where local people share everything- cultural heritage and natural resources.

BORDER FENCING AND DISPLACEMENT

Before partition when there was no concept of division, people were living in a common land generation to generation. They shared common culture, language and societal values. But sudden partition just before independence divided the people and separated them as citizens of two different countries. But still after so many years of partition, even the inhabitants are of two separate countries but there are similarities in their language and cultural practices in most of the places of the border between India and Bangladesh. After the massive population movement in 1947 and again in 1971 during the Bangladesh independent movement, almost every family has relatives on the other side of the border.⁵³⁸ Because of people's habitation in the geographical location since long time, still there are many border villages where people are living till the arbitrary line of partition drawn by Cyril Radcliffe in 1947. This actual line of partition is also known as the zero line which is demarcated by border pillars. After the creation of the border fencing, those people who were living till the partition line in the border villages in the Indian side are now trapped within the line of partition and the border fencing. It is estimated that approximately 90,000 people in 149 villages got directly affected who were trapped in this geographical location along the Indo-Bangladesh borderland.⁵³⁹ According to the information from the office of the Deputy Commissioner of Karimganj district of Assam, a total of 362 families were fenced out when the border fencing was created during the initial phase. According to the news media reports, even a few years ago there were 156 numbers of families who were living outside the border

⁵³⁸ Rahman, M., & Van Schendel, W. "I am not a refugee": Rethinking partition migration". **Modern Asian Studies**, 37(3), 2003, p.p-551–584. In: Jones, R. . "Agents of exception: border security and marginalization of muslims in India." **Environment and planning: Society and Space**, 27(5), 2009, p.p-879–897.

⁵³⁹ Prakash, A., & Menon, S. Fenced Indians pay for security. **Economic and Political Weekly**, XLVI(12), 2011, pp- 33–37.

fencing in Karimganj district of Assam.⁵⁴⁰ But according to the official data in the year 2014, it was found that the remaining numbers of households living outside the fenced out land dropped down to 140. Similarly in other bordering States also thousands of families got affected due to the creation of the border fencing. The data was collected by 'Indo-Bangladesh border fencing affected Resettlement Demand committee of Mizoram' revealed that the Indo-Bangladesh border fencing will displace a total of 5790 Chakma tribal families that is a total of 35,438 people from 49 villages.⁵⁴¹ Similarly in Tripura, it was estimated that 7,123 families will be adversely affected by the border fencing and finally 35,000 people were evicted from their home due to the fencing and 11,375 hectares of cultivated land fell outside the border fence in Tripura.⁵⁴² To protect the territory, to prevent the illegal migration or as a security measures whatever the purpose of the border fencing are, the creation of such defensive structure severely affected the border villagers. It is not exceptional even at the Indo-Pakistan border. It was observed that after the creation of the border fencing in India-Pakistan border huge numbers of border villages were got affected. The military border fencing separated 15,000 people from their land in Jammu and Kashmir State in 2009 (Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, 2010).⁵⁴³ The displacement of people refers to the forced movement of people from their locality or environment and occupation activities. It is a form of social change caused by a number of factors and the most common being armed conflict. Natural disaster, deadly famine, development and economic changes may also be a cause of displacement according to the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (U.N.E.S.C.O) report. After the creation of the border fencing in Indo-Bangladesh borderland, the Indian and Bangladeshi families trapped between the actual line of the partition and the Indian border fencing had started facing different problems. The emerging challenges and restrictions due to the border fencing forced all those families to be displaced leaving behind their own land, property, home and their own community.

⁵⁴⁰ **The Times of India**, 9th May, 2012. "Families in no man's land to be rehabilitated." <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/guwahati/Families-in-no-mans-land-to-be-rehabilitated/articleshow/13070772.cms>, accessed on 30.07.2022

⁵⁴¹ Chakma, P. India. In S. Stidsen (Ed.), *The indigenous world, 2007*, p.p- 398–419). Copenhagen: The International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs. ISSN 1024-0217 - ISBN 9788791563232.

⁵⁴² Subramanian, K.S., *State, policy and conflict in Northeast India*. New York, NY: Routledge, 2016.

⁵⁴³ Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC). (2010). *National and state authorities failing to protect IDPs*. <http://www.internal-displacement.org/south-and-south-east-asia/india/2010/national-and-state-authorities-failing-to-protect-idps>, accessed on 30.07.2022

CHAPTER –IV

Issue of connectivity as a determinant of Indo-Bangladesh relations.

CHAPTER FOUR

ISSUE OF CONNECTIVITY AS A DETERMINANT OF INDO-BANGLADESH RELATIONS

In this chapter an important aspect of Indo-Bangladesh relations emerges from the level of development between these two countries particularly in respect of Rail, road, Air, and bus connectivity. Here, attempt has been made to highlight the connectivity issue between India and Bangladesh since 1991. Connectivity for greater under-standing, can be divided in the following heads

- a) Physical Connectivity. b) Social Connectivity c) people to people Connectivity d) cultural Connectivity.

Some of the major obstacles of the connectivity in the border regions of the two neighbouring countries include poor roads, customs offices, poor electricity and internet connections, low cross border agency, lack of co-ordination and complex regulatory procedures etc.

Physical connectivity comprises land through road and rail networks, water through sea, port and inland water ways. Additionally, my research intends to explore collaboration in the field of energy, gas, electricity, hydropower; coordination in border management to facilitate movement of people across the border states through tourism, local trade, opening border haats, etc. and also the institutional and administrative mechanisms necessary for coordination among various agencies and stakeholders between the two countries.

One of the most vital forms of physical connectivity among different geographical locations is connectivity through roads and railways. This is true for Indo-Bangladesh bilateral relations. Road networks and railways connectivity constitute an essential means of communication for the purpose of trade and commerce. At present, rail links between the two countries are not central in terms of their use. They require substantial enhancement in order to link the region more successfully. Road networks, which are more in use, are highly inadequate to reach the level of connectivity. I have tried to explore the various dimensions and problems that exist with relation to rail and road connectivity between India and Bangladesh since 1991.

In the physical connectivity sector, I focus on rail sectors-rail that connects on India-Bangladesh since 1971. This physical aspect of this connectivity is to be analyzed in term of

transport of different commodities like Grains: Rice, Basmati rice, wheat, maize, jeera; Oil and oilseeds: Castor seeds, soy seeds, castor oil, refined soy oil, soy meal, crude palm oil, groundnut oil, mustard seed, cottonseed, etc.; Spices: Pepper, red chili, jeera, turmeric, and cardamom; Pulses: Chana, urad, yellow peas, tur dal, jute, tea, cement, timber, iron and steel, cement, forest products, paper products etc. between the two countries since 1991-2023. Emphasis is also given on air connectivity and sea connectivity. Steps for establishing enhanced connectivity links through railways, roads, inland waterways and ports were officially discussed in 2010 and 2011 joint communiqués. Here, the problems were highlighted and chalked out the ways to remove them.

A stronger connectivity not only strengthens the intra-and inter-regional trade and commerce but also generates higher income and prosperity. Transport is the backbone of economic activities and social developments. Large-scale connectivity increases in production and trade. Connectivity of each mode of transport – roads, railways, maritime, shipping and aviation – has its own physical and operational characteristics which require different considerations.⁵⁴⁴

India and Bangladesh are the members of sub-regional groupings like Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (B.I.M.S.T.E.C) and Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal (B.B.I.N) Initiative the Indian Ocean Rim Association (I.O.R.A) and the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (S.A.A.R.C). SAARC was established in 1985 in Dhaka with the purpose of enhancing co-operation particularly trade and commerce among the eight SAARC nation states like India, Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan, Afghanistan, Sri Lanka, Maldives and Pakistan. But this regional organization did not function because of sour relation between India and Pakistan for a long period for which India tilted to ASEAN. For few decades SAARC became an inactive organization for big brotherly attitude of India. BIMSTEC established in 1997 based on some principles namely sovereignty, equality, territorial integrity, political independence, peaceful co-existence, non interference in internal affairs and mutual benefits. The BBIN+M regional connectivity initiative is expected to contribute in identifying value chains⁵⁴⁵ in the region and help in more enhanced trade facilitation. It is used to describe all the business activities it takes to create a product from start to finish i.e. design, production, and distribution and so on. Value

⁵⁴⁴“India-Bangladesh Connectivity: Possibilities and Challenges,” Part 1, Observer Research Foundation (ORF), P-19. <https://www.orfonline.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/IndiaBangladesh.pdf>, accessed on 10.06.2022.

⁵⁴⁵The process or activities by which a company adds value to an article, including production, marketing, and the provision of after-sales service.

chains analysis is a means of evaluating each of the activities in a company's value chain to understand where opportunities for improvement lie.

The two countries India and Bangladesh are also part of Indian Ocean Rim Association (I.O.R.A) working together in managing the crucial maritime connectivity and ensuring its stability which is also reflected in the Modi Government's SAGARMALA (Security and Growth for All in the Region) programme, which further aims to turn the region more inclusive. Such regional connectivity initiatives based on the region's commitment to international laws and a rule-based system for trade and connectivity.

THE "SAGARMALA PROGRAMME"-A NEW SOURCE OF CONNECTIVITY

The 'Sagarmala Programme' is an initiative by the Indian Government to improve the logistics sector's performance. The prime objective of the 'Sagarmala project' is to promote port-led direct and indirect development and to provide infrastructure to transport goods to and from ports quickly, efficiently and cost-effectively. In order to meet these goals, the programme intends to reduce the amount of infrastructure needed to set up new mega ports, modernize India's existing ports, create 14 Coastal Economic Zones (C.E.Zs) and Coastal Economic Units (C.E.U), improve port connectivity through road, rail, multi-modal logistics parks, pipelines, and waterways, and encourage coastal community development among different neighbouring countries. The goal is to increase merchandise exports by US\$110 billion and create approximately 10 million direct and indirect job opportunity.⁵⁴⁶

The Ministry of Ports, Shipping, and Waterways' flagship programme, the 'Sagarmala Programme,' uses India's 7,517-kilometer coastline, 14,500 kilometers of potentially navigable waterways, and strategic location on important international maritime trade routes to promote port-led development.⁵⁴⁷ It aims "to modernize India's ports so that port-led development can grow and coastlines can be built to help India's growth. Transforming the existing Ports into modern, world-class Ports and integrating the development of the Ports, the Industrial clusters and hinterland with efficient evacuation systems through road, rail, inland, and coastal waterways resulting in Ports becoming the drivers of economic activity in coastal areas is another of its goals."⁵⁴⁸

⁵⁴⁶<https://sagarmala.gov.in/about-sagarmala/vision-objectives>, accessed on 29.10.2022.

⁵⁴⁷ concept notes on sagar mala project working paper (pdf), ministry of shipping, government of india, accessed on 29.10.2022.

⁵⁴⁸<https://sagarmala.gov.in/about-sagarmala/vision-objectives>, accessed on 29.10.2022.

In 2003, the National Democratic Alliance Government (N.D.A) led by former Prime Minister late Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee proposed the ‘Sagarmala Programme’ as the maritime counterpart to the ‘Golden Quadrilateral’, another road and highways project.⁵⁴⁹ For this purpose ‘The National Sagarmala Apex Committee’ (N.S.A.C) is made up of the Minister of Shipping, Cabinet Ministers from stakeholder ministries, and ministers in charge of ports in India’s maritime states. The programme’s goal was “to use India’s vast coastlines and industrial waterways to drive industrial development.” It was approved by the Modi Cabinet in March 2015.⁵⁵⁰ For this purpose, the overall National Perspective Plan (NPP) was approved by the National Sagarmala Apex Committee (NSAC), which also regularly reviews how these plans are being implemented.⁵⁵¹

The Sagarmala Development Company Limited (S.D.C.L) was established on 31st August, 2016, following approval from the Modi Cabinet on 20th July, 2016, with the purpose of providing funding support to project special purpose vehicles (S.P.Vs) and projects that are in line with Sagarmala’s objectives. In addition, the Sagarmala Development Company Limited (SDCL) is working on Detailed Project Reports (D.P.Rs) and feasibility studies for specific projects that may open up opportunities for the company to invest in equity in the future. In order to promote port-led development, the ‘Sagarmala Development Company’(S.D.C) was established on 20th July, 2016, with a subscribed share capital of 90 crore and an initial authorized share capital of 1,000 crore.⁵⁵² The current subscribed share capital of SDCL is 215 crore.

On 10th July, 2015, the Indian Port, Rail & Ropeway Corporation Limited (I.P.R.C.L) was established to carry out the Sagarmala Programme’s port-to-rail connectivity projects. Additionally, ‘Sethusamudram Corporation Ltd.’ participates in this project as a public sector enterprise.

On 14th April, 2016, at the inaugural ‘Maritime India Summit 2016’, Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi unveiled the ‘Sagarmala National Perspective Plan’, which contains

⁵⁴⁹ Concept notes on sagar mala project working paper (pdf), ministry of shipping, government of India, accessed on 29.10.2022.

⁵⁵⁰“Cabinet gives in pipelines nod to concept of Sagar mala Project,” **Times of India**, 27th March, 2015.

⁵⁵¹“Sagarmala’ concept and implementation towards blue revolution,” press information bureau, 27th March, 2015.

⁵⁵² Nod to sagarmala development company with Rs 1000 crore authorized share capital, **The Economics Times**, 20th July, 2016.

details on the Project Plan and Implementation.⁵⁵³ 577 projects in the areas of port modernization and new port development, port connectivity enhancement, port-linked coastal economic zone industrialization, and coastal community development have been identified for phase-wise implementation over the period of 2015 to 2035 under the Sagarmala Programme. These projects are expected to cost approximately 8.570500 lakh crore, which is equivalent to US\$120 billion in 2020. These projects should be implemented by the relevant Central Ministries/Agencies and State Governments, preferably through public private partnership (PPP) mode, according to the approved implementation plan for the Sagarmala scheme. The specifics are listed below.

Project Theme	No. of Projects	Project Cost (Rs 10)
Port Modernisation	245	₹1,416,410 million (equivalent to ₹1.6 trillion, US\$20 billion or €20 billion in 2020)
Connectivity Enhancement	210	₹2,444,640 million (equivalent to ₹2.9 trillion, US\$36 billion or €36 billion in 2020)
Port-Linked Industrialisation	57	₹4,639,700 million (equivalent to ₹5.5 trillion, US\$69 billion or €68 billion in 2020)
Coastal Community Development	65	₹69,760 million (equivalent to ₹83 billion, US\$1.0 billion or €1.0 billion in 2020)
Total	577	₹8,570,500 million (equivalent to ₹10 trillion, US\$130 billion or €130 billion in 2020)

Starting around 31-Blemish 2018, a sum of 492 ventures (₹4.255630 lakh crore (identical to ₹4.8 trillion or US\$61 billion of every 2020)) were under different phases of execution, improvement and consummation. Only 172 of the 802 projects that were approved have been completed as of 2021, and the remaining 632 projects are still in the implementation stage. Only 13 of the 98 road connectivity projects to ports and 28 of the 91 rail connectivity projects have been completed till now.

Since India's maritime route accounts for more than 90 percent of the country's total trade volume, the country's ports and trade-related infrastructure must continue to be developed to support the 'Make in India' initiative and accelerate manufacturing industry

⁵⁵³ <https://archive.pib.gov.in/documents/rlink/2016/apr/p201641402.pdf>, accessed on 29.10.2022.

expansion. India has approximately 200 non-major ports and 12 major ports that are managed by the Central and State Governments, respectively.

According to research carried out as part of the Sagarmala Programme, it is anticipated that cargo traffic at Indian ports will reach approximately 2500 million tonnes per year by 2025, despite the fact that the ports' current capacity for handling cargo is only 1500 million tonnes per year. In order to accommodate the increasing volume of traffic, a plan has been developed to raise the Indian port's annual capacity to over 3500 million tonnes by 2025. This includes developing new ports, increasing the capacity of existing ports, and improving the operational efficiency of ports.

The 'global benchmarks' were used as part of 'Project Unnati' to boost the productivity and efficiency Key Performance Indicators (K.P.I) for 12 major ports. In 12 major ports, approximately 116 initiatives were identified to simply improve efficiency and unlock more than 100 MTPA capacity. Among these, 86 initiatives have been put into action to unlock approximately 80 MTPA capacity. Six megaports and some private ports are planned in this 'Sagar mala project.'

Location	State	Status
Sagar Island	West Bengal	DPR under preparation
Paradip Outer Harbour	Odisha	DPR under preparation.
Sirkazhi	Tamil Nadu	Techno Economic Feasibility Report (TEFR) prepared.
Kanyakumari	Tamil Nadu	Major Transshipment Port at Kanyakumari. SPV formed for the purpose - March, 2019.
Belikeri	Karnataka	Techno Economic Feasibility Report (TEFR) prepared.
Vadhavan	Maharashtra	DPR under preparation.
Location	State	Status
Bhavnagar CNG Terminal	Gujarat	On 28 September 2022 the CNG terminal was inaugurated, the development of CNG Terminal and other terminals occurred at the north-side of existing Bhavnagar Port in December 2019 by the consortium led by Foresight Group, a consortium of London-based Foresight Group, Mumbai-based Padmanabh Mafatlal Group and Rotterdam-based Boskalis signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Gujarat Maritime Board (GMB) for development of the CNG terminal. Bhavnagar Port Infrastructure Pvt Ltd, a special purpose vehicle formed by the consortium to

Location	State	Status
		operate the port.
Jaigarh LNG Terminal	Jaigarh, Maharashtra	India's first floating storage and regasification unit (FSRU) Höegh Giant has arrived at H-Energy's Jaigarh terminal in Maharashtra ahead of its commissioning in the coming weeks. ⁵⁵⁴
Konkan LNG Terminal	Dabhol, Maharashtra	India gets first US LNG shipment at Dabhol GAIL is the majority owner of Konkan LNG Pvt Ltd, the firm which will run the 5 million tonnes a year LNG receipt facility. ⁵⁵⁵
Tajpur Port	West Bengal	DPR under preparation
Vizhinjam International Seaport	Kerala	DPR under preparation
Karaikal Port	Tamil Nadu	Vedanta and Adani group under competition to buy the port.
Haldia Dock Complex	West Bengal	Adani group took control of a berth at the Haldia Dock Complex (HDC)

The Sagarmala Programme's Coastal Economic Zones (CEZ) are important part of the goal of port-led industrial development of 14 business-friendly Coastal Economic Zones (CEZ) with an investment of 4,639,700 million rupees (equivalent to 5.5 trillion rupees, US\$69 billion, or €68 billion in 2020). These Coastal Economic Zones (CEZ) are centered around Indian ports and span 7,500 kilometers of the country's coastline, and the 'Make in India' indigenous manufacturing scheme is used. The maritime and inland waterways, water transportation, coastal and cruise shipping, generation of solar and wind energy, automobile, telecommunications, and information technology, and other related industries-are all areas that manufacturing units intend to target. Each Coastal Economic Zones (CEZ) will cover an economic area that is made up of several coastal districts that are well connected to the ports in that region. Each Coastal Economic Zones (CEZ) will also create synergy with industrial corridors that pass through the area, such as the Delhi–Mumbai Industrial Corridor Project, the Mumbai-Bangalore economic corridor, the Dedicated Freight Corridor, the Chennai-Bangalore Industrial Corridor, the Visakhapatnam–Chennai Industrial Corridor, and the

⁵⁵⁴<https://www.offshore-energy.biz/indias-first-fsru-arrives-at-h-energys-jaigarh-terminal/> accessed on 29.10.2022.

⁵⁵⁵<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/energy/oil-gas/india-gets-first-us-lng-shipment-at-dabhol/articleshow/63547215.cms>, accessed on 29.10.2022.

Amritsar-Delhi-Kolkata Industrial Corridor, among others. Each CEU within the CEZ, Coastal Employment Units (CEUs) serve as nodes; each CEU industrial estate houses multiple industries. Each of the CEU's 'Port-Linked Industrial Clusters' (PLICs) will have several manufacturing facilities. Benefits include a rise in India's GDP and ease of doing business by increasing export by US\$100 billion, creating 150,000 jobs by 2025, reducing the cost and time of export cargo logistics, and making Indian exports more competitive globally.⁵⁵⁶

In the South Asia, particularly India and Bangladesh the oceanic and avionics areas are moderately not all around associated with their separate worldwide organizations. In addition, private sector involvement in the construction and operation of infrastructure in these fields is on the rise in India. Therefore, land-based transportation infrastructure, development and improvement should be prioritized from South Asian regional perspective. By removing non-physical barriers to transportation and enhancing connectivity between nodes, significant efficiency gains could also be achieved. Both of these actions would raise utilization rates of the existing infrastructure between India and Bangladesh and increase the efficiency of transportation services in this region.

Over the issues of connectivity, both the Governments are undertaking various steps to restore the pre-1965 rail links and other connectivity links that existed between India and East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) before partition of India in 1947. The two Prime Ministers Shri Narendra Damodar Modi and Sheikh Hasina jointly inaugurated the newly restored railway link between Chilahati (Bangladesh) and Haldibari (India) on 17th December 2020. To enhance people to people contacts, the frequency of two passenger trains, i.e., Maitree Express (rail) and Bandhan Express (rail) were increased from 4 days a week to 5 days a week and from one day a week to two days a week respectively from February 2020. Both the countries also started using side-door container and parcel trains to maintain uninterrupted supply chains during the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic situation. The Government of India handed over 10 broad gauge diesel locomotives as part of grant assistance to Bangladesh Railways in a virtual event joined by External Affairs Minister Dr. S Jaishankar and Railways Minister Piyush Goyal and their Bangladeshi counterparts Dr. A K Abdul Momen and Md Nurul Islam Sujon on 27th July 2020. During the visit of Prime Ministers Sheikh Hasina to New Delhi in October 2019, both the governments decided to commence Dhaka-Siliguri-

⁵⁵⁶“The A to Z of Coastal economic Zone”, Decan Chronicles, 17th February, 2016.

Gangtok-Dhaka and Dhaka-Siliguri-Darjeeling-Dhaka bus service to enhance people to people contacts and the rail run of Dhaka-Siliguri-Gangtok-Dhaka was also held in December 2019. Feni Bridge (Maitree Setu in Bangladesh) connecting land custom stations (L.C.S) Subroom (Tripura) and land custom stations (L.C.S) Ramgarh (Bangladesh) has been jointly inaugurated on virtual platform by both the Prime Ministers in 2021

India and Bangladesh Government planned to begin work on a new rail link to ease surface transport by January 2015. India will build a 15-kilometre (9.3 mi) railway linking Tripura's capital Agartala with Bangladesh's South Eastern city of Akhaura, an important railway junction connected to Chittagong port, Sylhet, and Dhaka. An agreement to implement the railway project was signed between India's former Prime Minister Dr.Manmohan Singh and Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. For this purpose on both sides of the border, the brand-new railway tracks would be laid by the Indian Railway Construction Company (I.R.C.O.N).The Northeast Frontier Railways (N.F.R) is laying tracks to connect Sabroom, the southernmost border town in Tripura, which is 135 kilometers (84 miles) south of Bangladesh. Of the 15 kilometers (9.3 miles) of rail line, 5 kilometers (3.1 miles) of the tracks are in Indian territory.The Chittagong international seaport is 72 kilometers (45 miles) away from Sabroom.

BUSCONNECTIVITY

KOLKATA-DHAKA BUS SERVICE

Since its launch on 19thJune, 1999, the 'Kolkata-Dhaka Bus Service' has remained one of the most important modes of transportation between India and Bangladesh.The service has made it easier for people to talk to each other and increased trade and commerce between the two countries.The Bangladesh Road Transport Corporation (B.R.T.C) and the West Bengal Surface Transport Corporation (W.B.S.T.C) jointly operate the service.Buses go to Dhaka every Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday from Kolkata;every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday between Dhaka and Kolkata.⁵⁵⁷The length of time required to clear customs and immigration requirements at the border point is frequently one of the main obstacles that passengers and businessmen using the service face.It is necessary to take steps to make the transport procedure easier and people-centric, such as carrying out the formalities required by

⁵⁵⁷“India-Bangladesh Connectivity: Possibilities and Challenges,”Part 1, Obser Research Foundation(ORF),p.p-26-27.<https://www.orfonline.org/wpcontent/uploads/2015/06/IndiaBangladesh.pdf>, accessed on 10.06.2022.

customs while the item is in transit.⁵⁵⁸The cross-border bus service between Bangladesh and India resumed on 10th June, 2022, two years after its suspension due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Bus services between India-Bangladesh via Integrated Check Post (I.C.P) Agartala-Akhaura & Integrated Check Post (I.C.P) Haridaspur-Benapole resumed with the Dhaka-Kolkata-Dhaka bus being flagged off from Dhaka early morning on 10th June, 2022-a major step forward in enhancing affordable, people-centric connectivity, tweeted High Commission of India in Bangladesh.⁵⁵⁹

DHAKA-AGARTALA BUS SERVICE

Following quite a while of talks, the activity of the Dhaka-Agartala transport administration was settled upon on 11th July 2001. Since 2003, the Dhaka-Agartala Bus service has been available. But, few incidents of violence and strikes in Bangladesh, the Indo-Bangladesh border trade was halted, as well as the bus service between Agartala and Dhaka was postponed.⁵⁶⁰ Longstanding political turmoil and crisis between the ruling BNP and the main opposition party the Awami League (AL) intensified in 2003. The two rival political parties blamed each other for patronizing criminal elements, engaging in undemocratic behaviour, and hatching plots to annihilate the other and destroy the country. Parliament remained mostly non-functional, as the Awami League (AL) repeatedly walked out or boycotted Parliament sessions, alleging Kheleda Zia Government's restrictions on their participation in parliamentary debates. Partisanship continued to affect the functioning of civil bureaucracy and civil society organizations. However, the year's most troubling development was the controversy surrounding the judicial system. The Government continued to drag its feet on the issue of separating the judiciary from the executive, despite its pre-election campaign promise. In appointing judges to the higher courts, the Government continued to flout the seniority precedent. This led to the political opposition charge that the Government was trying to control the judiciary. The image of judiciary hit its lowest point in October, 2003 when bribery charges were brought against a judge of the High court. For the first time in the country's history, such a corruption case was sent to the supreme judicial council for right judgement. As a result, Agartala-Dhaka bus service between the two

⁵⁵⁸ Ibid

⁵⁵⁹ "Cross-Border Bus Service Between India, Bangladesh Resumes After 2 Years." AsiaN News International, 10.06.2022.

⁵⁶⁰ "India-Bangladesh Connectivity: Possibilities and Challenges," Part 1, Observer Research Foundation (ORF), p.-27. <https://www.orfonline.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/IndiaBangladesh.pdf>, accessed on 10.06.2022.

countries was stopped in view of the political turmoil in Bangladesh.⁵⁶¹ Despite frequent political disturbances the 'Agartala-Dhaka bus service' is set to resume from May 2015. Like the Kolkata-Dhaka rail link, this bus has also been named 'Maitri.' The service would run twice every week.

KOLKATA-DHAKA-AGARTALA BUS SERVICE

The decision to establish a new bus service along the 'Kolkata-Dhaka-Agartala route' is significant in the history of the two countries and fulfills a long-standing need for a direct land route from Kolkata to Tripura. Finally, during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's maiden visit to Bangladesh in 2015, the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) regarding this bus service was signed. On the Kolkata-Agartala-Dhaka route, it has been decided that there will be two buses, one operated by the West Bengal government and the other by the Tripura Government. The Benapole-Petrapole and Akhaura-Agartala check posts will be used by both India and Bangladesh on a three-day, round-trip basis, with the exception of Sundays. During a meeting in May 2015 between Nitin Gadkari, the then Union Minister of road transportation and highways, Government of India and Obeidul Quadar, the Minister of Transport in Bangladesh; representatives from the Governments of Tripura and West Bengal; India's External Affairs Ministry; the first Kolkata-Dhaka-Agartala bus flagged off in Dhaka on 6th June, 2015 by Customs and the Border Security Force.⁵⁶² From Kolkata, the bus will depart from Karunamoyee Central Bus Terminus (Salt Lake), make a stop at the Bangladesh Road Transport Corporation (B.R.T.C) International Bus Terminal in Kamalapur, Dhaka, and then make its way to the TRTC Bus Terminal in Krishnanagar, Agartala.⁵⁶³

The TRTC Bus Terminal in Krishnanagar will serve as the starting point for the trip from Agartala. Before reaching Kolkata, it will stop at the The Bangladesh Road Transport Corporation (B.R.T.C) International Bus Terminal in Kamalapur, Dhaka. On 16th October, 2015, Mr. Manik Dey, Tripura Transport Minister, officially opened the return route from Agartala to Dhaka and Kolkata while the Kolkata-to-Agartala route is still in operation. The distance between West Bengal and the landlocked-state Tripura, which is surrounded by

⁵⁶¹ "India Bangladesh connectivity: A year after Modi's visit," Observer Research Foundation (ORF) special report, 14th June 2016, p-8.

⁵⁶² "Kolkata-Dhaka-Tripura bus to roll out soon", <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/Kolkata-Dhaka-Tripura-bus-to-roll-out-soon/articleshow/47365287.cms>, accessed on 22nd August, 2022.

⁵⁶³ 'Protocol on Operation of Passenger Bus service between Kolkata and Agartala in India via Dhaka in Bangladesh', Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, New Delhi, 6th June 2015, <http://www.mofa.gov.bd/sites/default/files/Kolkata%20Agartala%20Protocol%20.pdf>. accessed on 10.06.2022.

Bangladesh from three sides, would be cut by 560 kilometers with the service Kolkata-Dhaka-Agartala.⁵⁶⁴ This is a significant decision in the history of the two countries and acknowledges a long-standing demand from the people of Tripura and West Bengal for a direct land route to Kolkata. Between Agartala and Kolkata, the new route will significantly shorten travel time and reduce distance. Besides, the Kolkata-Dhaka-Agartala link a few other bus services that were also being considered, such as bus services from Kolkata to Jessore, Kolkata to Khulna, and Siliguri to Dhaka, have not yet begun. On 22nd May to 26th May, a test drive on the Dhaka-to-Sylhet-to-Tamabil-to-Dawki-to-Shillong-to-Guwahati route was conducted to learn about the road conditions and other transportation issues. Earlier in December 2014, a trial run also took place along the 500-kilometer route.⁵⁶⁵

KOLKATA-KHULNA-DHAKA BUS SERVICE

Two buses left the premises of the West Bengal secretariat 'Nabanna' on 8th April, 2017 to begin the 'Kolkata-Khulna-Dhaka bus service' between India and Bangladesh, providing the perfect backdrop with the melody of Rabindrasangeet. The two buses were formally flagged off with balloons, marigolds, roses, and other flowers. From Hyderabad House in Delhi, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, his Bangladeshi counterpart Sheikh Hasina, and West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee jointly started the ceremony.

At Nabanna in West Bengal, senior officials from the Bangladesh Deputy High Commission and senior Bengal ministers Partha Chatterjee, Firhad Hakim, and Subrata Mukherjee simultaneously waved the green flag to begin the 409-kilometer journey. A chorus sang Tagore's enduring composition "Banglar Mati, Banglar Jol, Banglar Bayu, Banglar fol" as the two buses left the Nabanna premises one after the other. This song is popular in both Bangladesh and West Bengal. The Bangladesh Road Transport Corporation (B.R.T.C) flagged off another bus first, followed by a bus operated by the West Bengal Transport Corporation (W.B.T.C).

'Bharat Bangladesh Souhardya Yatra' (India-Bangladesh friendship Journey) was boldly written on both buses to convey the day's spirit. This is the first and third bus service between Kolkata and Dhaka, respectively. The Kolkata-Dhaka-Agartala and Kolkata-Dhaka

⁵⁶⁴ 'Tripura buses join Kolkata Dhaka Agartala service', IANS, 16th October, 2015, <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/Tripura-buses-join-KolkataDhakaAgartalaservice/articleshow/49415472.cms>. accessed on 10.06.2022.

⁵⁶⁵ 'India -Bangladesh bus service to bring people closer: Officials', **TripuraInfoways**, 1st June 2015, <http://www.tripurainfoway.com/newsdetails/TN/28705/india-bangladesh-bus-services-to-bring-people-closerofficials.html>. accessed on 10.06.2022.

bus routes are currently operated by the two countries. On the new route, buses will now operate three days per week. The Kolkata-Khulna-Dhaka bus service, according to officials with the Transport Department, will be available from Kolkata on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays; and from Dhaka on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays.⁵⁶⁶

Khulna-Kolkata direct bus service began ‘trial run testing’ through Benapole checkpoint on 30th August, 2016, marking another step towards improving road connectivity between Bangladesh and India. After Dhaka-Kolkata and Agartala-Dhaka, this was the third bus service that connected the two countries in a direct way. This action had been taken in accordance with the Motor Vehicles Agreement between Nepal, India, Bangladesh, and Bhutan (BBIN).⁵⁶⁷ Around 12:00 p.m., the then transport Minister of West Bengal, Mr. Shuvendu Adhikari, launched the bus service in front of Rubi Hospital in Salt Lake. At the inauguration ceremony, a 12-member delegations led by West Bengal’s principal secretary of the transportation department, Mr. Alapan Bandyopadhyay, was there. In addition, on the same day, Bangladesh also began operating on a trial basis goods-laden vehicles on the Dhaka-Delhi via Kolkata route.⁵⁶⁸

On 27th June, 2022, the popular cross-border bus service between Bangladesh and India resumed on the Kolkata-Khulna-Dhaka route after a two-year hiatus caused by Covid-19 pandemic. A transport of Shyamoli Paribahan with 28 travelers on board started its excursion from Kolkata’s Karunamay terminal around 9.00 a.m on Monday and arrived at the New Market area of Khulna around 8.00 p.m under tight police security, said Abani Kumar Ghosh, the head of Shyamoli Paribahan. He said “After a long time, he was very much happy to travel by road to Bangladesh. Following the spread of Covid-19, we halted the cross-border bus service on 12th March, 2020.” From now on, three daily buses will travel via Benapole from Kolkata to Bangladesh.⁵⁶⁹

DHAKA-SYLHET-SHILLONG-GUAWAHATI-DHAKA BUS SERVICE

Bangladeshi official said in Dhaka that during Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s visit to Bangladesh next month of June, 2015, India and Bangladesh will finalize the passenger

⁵⁶⁶<https://www.socialnews.xyz/2017/04/08/kolkata-khulna-dhaka-bus-drives-off-from-nabanna/>, accessed on 25.08.2022.

⁵⁶⁷<http://www.thedailystar.net/country/khulna-kolkata-test-bus-service-starts-today-1277467>, accessed on 29.10.2022

⁵⁶⁸<https://bdnews24.com/bangladesh/2016/08/30/kolkata-khulna-bus-service-begins>. accessed on 29.10.2022

⁵⁶⁹<https://www.dhakatribune.com/bangladesh/2022/06/28/kolkata-khulna-dhaka-bus-service-resumes-after-two-years>, accessed on 25.10.2022.

bus service between Guwahati and Dhaka via Shillong.⁵⁷⁰ The proposed bus service, which will travel approximately 500 kilometers, will start in Guwahati and pass through Shillong. It will then travel to the southern slopes of Dawki international trading in Meghalaya before entering the Bangladesh-Tamabil-Sylhet-Dhaka route. The Joint Secretary of Bangladesh Road Transport and Highways Division, Azharul Islam Khan told journalists that “the final decision to start the Guwahati-Shillong-Dhaka passenger bus service will be decided by both the governments (India and Bangladesh) during the visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to Dhaka next month i.e, 6th June 2015.”⁵⁷¹ The Dhaka-Shillong-Guwahati bus service, expected to be flagged off by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Bangladesh counterpart Sheikh Hasina early next month, had its first trial run on 23rd May, 2015. Bangladesh Minister for Road Transport and Bridges Obaidul Quader and Indian High Commissioner in Bangladesh Pankaj Saran launched the service ahead of Mr. Modi’s maiden visit to the country in June, 2015.⁵⁷²

An agreement and a protocol were also likely to be signed between India and Bangladesh prior to the introduction of the passenger bus service, according to Azharul Islam Khan, who is leading a 22-member Bangladesh delegations for the trial run. On 22nd May, officials in Bangladesh began the trial run of the bus service on a Bangladesh Road Transport Corporation (BRTC) bus from Dhaka. However, due to poor road connectivity, the bus did not arrive in time to the city of Guwahati in Assam. According to Azharul Islam Khan, the passenger bus service will be beneficial to both the countries. There are currently two regular bus services between India and Bangladesh: one connects Kolkata in West Bengal to Dhaka and the other connects Agartala in Tripura to Dhaka. A new bus service between Dhaka and Guwahati via Shillong has begun as a trial operation in an effort to improve communication between India and Bangladesh. On 23rd May, 2015, the bus service was officially launched by Obaidul Quader, Minister of Road Transport and Bridges, Government of Bangladesh. Following the inauguration, the Kamlapur Bus Stand in the capital served as the starting point for the first bus traveling the route. During his speech at the inaugural ceremony the minister said, “The regular bus service will be started after conducting several test round-trips.” According to the Transport Minister, “Awami League led-Government has taken such initiatives to increase the trade facilities between the two countries.” During the

⁵⁷⁰https://www.business-standard.com/article/news-ians/decision-on-guwahati-dhaka-bus-service-during-modi-s-bangladesh-visit-115052501085_1.html accessed on 29.10.2022.

⁵⁷¹“Third Indo-Bangla bus service to be inaugurated by PM Modi”, **Nagaland Post**, 25th May, 2015.

⁵⁷²“Trial run of Dhaka- Guwahati bus service”, **The Hindu**, 23rd May, 2015.

inaugural ceremony, high officials from various ministries and departments were also present there.⁵⁷³

In Indian side the Assam Public Works Department (PWD) Minister Ajanta Neog flagged off the trial run of the Guwahati-Dhaka bus service via Shillong and Dawki border point in Meghalaya at the Inter State Bus Terminus on 10th December, 2014.⁵⁷⁴ The historic 496-kilometer road link between Guwahati and Dhaka via Shillong and Sylhet was broken by the Partition. The capitals of Assam and Meghalaya on Wednesday got formally connected by road transport with the Bangladesh capital when Assam PWD minister Ajanta Neog flagged off the first Guwahati-Shillong-Dhaka bus service on 10th December, 2014. Though Wednesday's service was a trial and joint survey run, regular bus service on this route is expected to begin from February 2015.⁵⁷⁵

A deluxe air-conditioned bus with beautiful decorations from the Assam State Transport Corporation left with a joint Bangladeshi and Indian delegation to conduct a technical survey of the route for starting a regular bus service between Guwahati and Dhaka via Shillong and the Dawki border point in Meghalaya to make it easier for passengers to move between the two South Asian neighbours through a third route. In 1995, the first bus service between Kolkata and Dhaka was established by India and Bangladesh. In 2002, another bus service connected Agartala and Dhaka.

Before initiating the trial run, Mrs. Neog stated, "We sincerely believe and also hope that the road connectivity between the two countries will also promote and enhance the prospects of trade and commerce." In the presence of members of the joint delegation she also stated that the Assam Government and the Indian Government had been working together to re-open the historic route that existed prior to India's independence and establish a direct bus service between Guwahati and Dhaka to make it easier for passengers to move around and to increase trade and commerce."⁵⁷⁶

Sheikh Abdul Ahad, Bangladesh's Joint Secretary (Administration), Ministry of Home Affairs, expressed the hope that the event would open up new opportunities for people

⁵⁷³<https://www.risingbd.com/english/national/news/25037>, accessed on 29.10.2022.

⁵⁷⁴"Guwahati-Shillong-Dhaka bus flagged off; regular service from February", **Samudra Gupta Kashyap**, **The Indian Express**, 10th December, 2014.

⁵⁷⁵ Ibid

⁵⁷⁶ Ibid.

from both the countries. He stated that the members of the joint delegation would be responsible for encouraging the initiative of both countries.

The delegation boarded an Assam State Transport Corporation (A.S.T.C) bus to travel to Borapani in Meghalaya, where they boarded a smaller bus to travel to the Dawki border in order to better navigate the curves on the hilly route from Borapani to Dawki via Shillong. The delegation will travel across the border in a Bangladeshi bus. The delegation will leave for Dhaka to finish the survey after spending the night in Sylhet. Guwahati to Dawki is 196 kilometers long in India, while Sylhet to Dhaka via Tamabil is 300 kilometers long in Bangladesh.

Dhruba Hazarika, Secretary of the Assam Transport Government, told journalists that “a regular bus service on the route was expected to start in two months after the joint delegation worked out the modalities and submitted the survey report.”⁵⁷⁷

DHAKA-GANGTOK BUS SERVICE

During the visit of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to New Delhi in October 2019, both the Governments decided to commence Dhaka-Siliguri-Gangtok-Dhaka and Dhaka-Siliguri-Darjeeling-Dhaka bus service to enhance people to people contacts between the two countries and the trial run of Dhaka-Siliguri-Gangtok-Dhaka was also held in December 2019.⁵⁷⁸ After the agreements, the trial run of Dhaka-Gangtok bus service, ‘Shyamali Paribhawan’ reached Sikkim through Rangpo border. On 15th December, 2019, two buses carrying 41 people, including officials from Bangladesh, left the capital Dhaka and arrived in Siliguri. Around 8:15 p.m., a team of 18 Bangladesh Government officials, led by road transport and highway division Joint Secretary (toll and axle) Shafiqul Karim, left Gabtoli Bus Terminal in two buses. In Siliguri, they will be joined by five Indian officials. Shafiqul informed them prior to the journey that they would return home on 16th December after visiting Gangtok and Darjeeling. After visiting Darjeeling, the buses traveled nearly 1,140 kilometers to reach Sikkim on 15th December. Officials from the Sikkim Transport department, including Regional Transport Officer Roshan Pradhan and others, received the two buses. The trial run follows the bilateral agreement that was signed in October, 2019 by the Prime Minister of India and Bangladesh. As part of the trial run, the bus would stop at Tsomgo Lake

⁵⁷⁷“Historic Guwahati-Dhaka Road link reopened”, Sushanta Talukdar, Guwahati, **The Hindu**, 10th December, 2014.

⁵⁷⁸https://mea.gov.in/Portal/ForeignRelation/India_Bangladesh_March 2021.pdf, accessed on 19.08.2022.

in East Sikkim next day. According to the official reports, Bangladesh Road Transport Corporation chairman Ehsan Elahi launched the trial run in Dhaka. On 16th December, the bus will return to Dhaka. Bangladeshis frequently visit Gangtok and Darjeeling as popular tourist destinations. Before proceeding to Gangtok or Darjeeling, travelers currently have to change buses at the border between India and Bangladesh. The direct bus service will ensure that passengers have a smooth journey when it is fully operational. Bus services on this route have been proposed by private business owners. Gangtok and Darjeeling are approximately 500 kilometers and 450 kilometers, respectively, from Dhaka. India receives the majority of tourists from Bangladesh. Bangladesh is home to nearly 20 percent of all foreign visitors to India.⁵⁷⁹ Numerous travel agencies look for direct bus services to the two well-known tourist destinations. Additionally, according to officials, many Bangladeshi parents send their children to boarding schools in Darjeeling. They added that the service will make their journey to the locations easier. The managing director of Shyamoli NR Travels, Suvenker Ghosh Rakesh, who provided the officials with the buses, stated that they were prepared to conduct commercial operations on the routes if the authorities granted their approval following the trial run. Mahbub Hossain Sumon, overseeing overseer of Touch Creation Ltd, a travel service, said, "This most certainly is an incredible drive." India lifted a restriction that prevented foreigners from entering Gangtok in November 2020. He also stated that the bus service will undoubtedly be of great assistance to the visitors now. However, he stated that heavy buses would not be able to travel between Siliguri and Darjeeling on the curvy roads.⁵⁸⁰ Dhaka-Kolkata-Dhaka, Dhaka-Agartala-Dhaka, Dhaka-Sylhet-Shillong-Guwahati-Dhaka, Agartala-Dhaka-Kolkata-Agartala, and Dhaka-Khulna-Kolkata-Dhaka are the five cross-border routes that buses operate on at the moment between India and Bangladesh.

RAIL CONNECTIVITY

Rail connectivity is one of the most important forms of physical connectivity between different locations. This is also true for Bangladesh and India rail connectivity. Railways networks serve as an indispensable facilitators for trade and commerce as well as essential means of communication. Rail connections between the two countries are not widely used at the moment. In order to link the region more effectively, they need significant improvement. Road networks, which are used more, are insufficient to achieve the desired level of connectivity. As a result, it is critical to investigate the various dimensions and issues

⁵⁷⁹ "Dhaka-Gangtok bus service trial run held, **Sikim Express**", 15th December, 2019.

⁵⁸⁰ "Gantok, Darjeeling: Dhaka starts trial run of bus service" **The Daily Star**, Dhaka, 13th December, 2019.

associated with India and Bangladesh's rail and road connectivity and the ways in which these can be improved.⁵⁸¹ Several steps toward establishing increasing connectivity links through railways, roads, inland waterways, and ports were officially discussed in 2010 and 2022 when joint communiqués were signed by the respective heads of government. During this time, both countries' connectivity via Road and Rail expressed an interest in establishing and improving existing rail routes as well as revitalizing old ones. In exchange for "the development of rail infrastructure, supply of broad gauge locomotives and passenger coaches, rehabilitation of Saidpur railway workshop, procurement of buses, dredging of rivers, and strengthening of the Bangladesh Standards and Testing Institution (B.S.T.I)," India provided Bangladesh with a \$1 billion credit line.⁵⁸² Currently, there are several rail connections between India and Bangladesh via the following routes:

1. Gede (India)-Darsana (Bangladesh): Broad Gauge.
2. Singhabad (India)-Rohanpur (Bangladesh): Broad Gauge.
3. Petrapole (India)-Benapole (Bangladesh): Broad Gauge.
4. Radhikapur (India)-Birol (Bangladesh) - Broad Gauge on the Indian side and Metre Gauge on the Bangladeshi side.
5. Metre Gauge between Shahbazpur in Bangladesh and Mahisasan in India.
6. Broad Gauge: Haldibari (India)-Chilhati (Bangladesh).

The transport of goods is made possible by the routes Gede-Darsana, Singhabad-Rohanpur, and Petrapole-Benapole. Since April 2005, the Radhikapur-Birol rail route has been shut down because the Indian side's tracks have been upgraded to broad gauge, while the Bangladeshi side's tracks are still meter gauge. Due to insufficient traffic, the Mahisasan-Shahbazpur route has also remained inactive since 1996. In 2011, the Prime Ministers of both the countries came to an agreement that the Haldibari-Chilhati route, which had not been used since 1965 for Indo-Pak war, would be used again. Additionally, the early operationalization of a passenger train service running from Sealdah (Kolkata) to Joydevpur (Dhaka) and running passenger train services between Sealdah and Jamuna Bridge has been discussed by both the countries. However, all these rail connectivities are operational in 2022.

⁵⁸¹Proceedings of International Consultative Workshop India-Bangladesh Connectivity: Possibilities and Challenges, ORF Kolkata, 19-20 September, 2014.

⁵⁸²Connecting South Asia and Southeast Asia: A Bangladesh Country Study, Mustafizur Rahman, Khondaker Golam Moazzem, Mehruna Islam Chowdhury, and Farzana Sehrin, ADBI Working Paper Series, September 2014.

The relations between India and Bangladesh could be determined by their trade link- the goods, transported from India to Bangladesh and Bangladesh to India. During these period particularly since 1991-2012, the trade links between the two countries led to gains and losses i.e, on the part of Bangladesh trade imbalance and on the part of India trade balance is to be investigated. Before the partition of India in 1947, road, rail and port networks were inter-connected and what is today Bangladesh was already economically linked with the rest of the country. At that time, the transport network was an integrated system which supported an integrated economy. It was after the Partition that these links were severed. Consequently, the region became economically weaker. The decline in economic interactions resulted in a de-integration of the network. Despite the fact that the North Eastern region of India shares about 98 percent of its land border with Bangladesh, the region is connected with the rest of India only by the Siliguri narrow corridor.⁵⁸³ There is, however, a lot of scope for the North Eastern region of India and West Bengal, which shares a 2,216-km border with Bangladesh, to become an inter-connected region with and through Bangladesh, if road, rail and port linkages are re-established and those which existed previously, are revived. The inter-connection of this contiguous zone through rail, road and port links will not only bring economic gain, but also increase the mobility of the common people and enhance trust on foreign policy goal from both sides of the country.

The Indian Government's report of 2008, entitled 'Vision 2020' released at Agartala, capital of Tripura, assures the establishment of necessary infrastructure and better connectivity within the region and, subsequently, with the larger South and Southeast Asian region. For the seamless movement of trade as well as passenger traffic, the governments of both India and Bangladesh have undertaken the establishment of land ports and land custom stations (L.C.S) for this purpose.

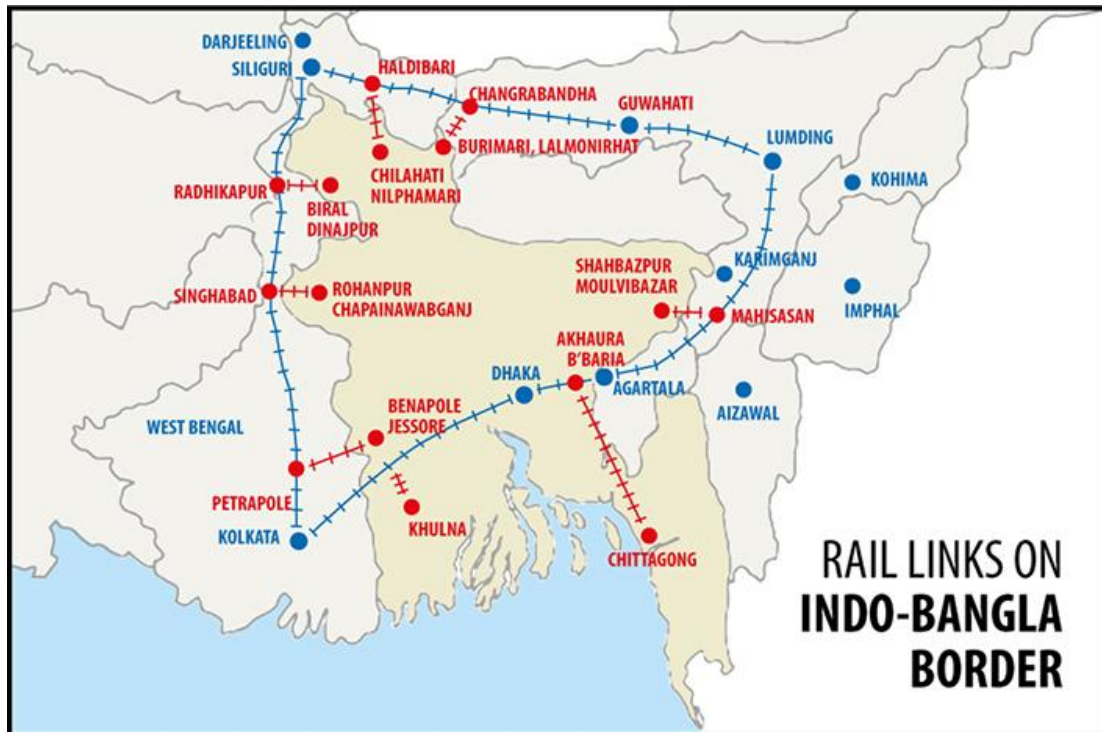
Major Border Crossings between India and Bangladesh on Rail⁵⁸⁴

Crossing Points	Modes
Benapole (BD)/ Petrapole	Road; Rail (Freight Only)
Darshana (BD)/Gede	Rail Broad Gauge (Maitree and Freight)
Rohanpur (BD)/Singhebad	Rail Broad Gauge
Birol (BD)/ Radhikapur	Rail Meter Gauge

⁵⁸³Proceedings of International Consultative Workshop India-Bangladesh Connectivity: Possibilities and Challenges, ORF Kolkata, 19-20 September, 2014.

⁵⁸⁴“India-Bangladesh Connectivity: Possibilities and Challenges,”Part 1,Observer Research Foundation(ORF),p.-27.<https://www.orfonline.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/IndiaBangladesh.pdf>, accessed on 10.06.2022.

Crossing Points	Modes
Shabbajpur (BD)/ Mahishasan	Rail Meter Gauge
Banglbandha (BD)/Phulbari	Road
Chilhathi (BD)/Haldibari	Rail (potential)
Burimari (BD)/Changra bandha	Road
Hilli (IND-BD Border)/Balurghat	Road
Tamabil (BD)/Dawki	Road
Karimganj/Zakiganj (BD)	Road
Akhaura (BD)/Agartala	Rail/Road planned



AKHAURA-AGARTALA RAIL LINK

The Akhaura-Agartala rail link is another important connection for Bangladesh-India connectivity. Akhaura is the rail junction closest to the capital of Tripura, Agartala, where the 15.054-kilometer rail project is currently being laid out. The Minister of Development of the North Eastern Region (MDONER), P. K. H. Singh, has said: “It should be noted that Agartala is one of the newest stations established by the Indian Railways, appearing on the country’s rail map only in October 2008. With the establishment of the new railway link, North East India would be connected by rail to the international sea port of Chittagong.”⁵⁸⁵ In 2010, then-Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh and Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina gave the Agartala-Akhaura link their first approval. In addition to connecting Agartala and Akhaura, it

⁵⁸⁵Deliberation of P. K.H. Singh, Minister of DoNER, Northeast Council, Government of India at Guwahati, BCIM Stakeholders’ Meeting on 18-19 June 2014.

will offer transport through Bangladesh, reducing the distance between Kolkata and Agartala from 1,700 km to 350 km.”⁵⁸⁶

Because the landlocked North Eastern states are surrounded by Bangladesh, Myanmar, Bhutan, and China, and the only land route to these states from within India is through Assam and West Bengal, surface connectivity is an important factor in time of crisis. However, a significant portion (70 percent) of this route is difficult terrain: hilly, jungle, with numerous hairpin turns and steep roads. To transport goods and heavy machinery from abroad and other parts of the country to the North East, India has sought land, sea, and rail access through Bangladesh for a long time. For instance, Agartala is 2,637 kilometers from New Delhi via Guwahati and West Bengal and 1,650 kilometers from Kolkata. In contrast, only 350 kilometers separate Kolkata from Agartala, the capital of Tripura, via Bangladesh. Notably, the Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR) is currently laying tracks to connect Sabroom, the southernmost border town in Tripura, 135 kilometers to the south of this location. The international seaport of Chittagong is only 72 kilometers away from Sabroom.

According to historical records, the idea of connecting Akhaura and Agartala by rail was first suggested in 1974, when a protocol for cross-border movement between Bangladesh and India was signed. The idea remained dormant until the December 1998 Trade Review Talks between India and Bangladesh, when it was finally brought back to life. It was agreed upon in the Joint Communiqué that was distributed during Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's visit to India in January 2010 that a grant from India would be used to fund the construction of the proposed Akhaura-Agartala railway link. The new line would connect Gangasagar, Bangladesh, with Agartala, India. A double line from Gangasagar to Akhaura and additional loop lines at Bangladesh Railways' Gangasagar and Imambari stations would be required for this purpose. The project, which will cost more than INR260 crore and will be implemented by the North Frontier Railway, will be entirely funded by the central government. The construction of the railway tracks that will connect West Bengal and Tripura via Bangladesh received funding from India in the amount of INR2.25 crore. Despite the strong potential, the implementation of road and rail connectivity between India and Bangladesh has been largely hampered by a variety of obstacles. The widespread belief in Bangladesh that India seeks transit through their territory for the sole purpose of opening up

⁵⁸⁶“India-Bangladesh Connectivity: Possibilities and Challenges,” Part 1, Observer Research Foundation (ORF), P-22. <https://www.orfonline.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/IndiaBangladesh.pdf>, accessed on 10.06.2022.

its landlocked northeast and that Bangladesh would not be granted access to India's northeast or the rest of the country is one of the most important obstacles in terms of connectivity of these. There are also those in Bangladesh who believe that India's requests are meant to undermine Bangladesh's sovereignty. Bangladesh conditionally grants transit permission to India if India permits north-to-south connectivity of the Chittagong port with Bhutan and Nepal through India.

Until now, India has only permitted trade between Nepal and Bangladesh via the 'Chicken's Neck' i.e., 'Siliguri Narrow Corridor' of West Bengal. As a result, India must take Bangladesh's point of view seriously and work toward a shared transport policy between the two countries, which would contribute to the larger objective of an interconnected Indian sub-continent.

For better connectivity both the governments have been undertaking various steps to restore the pre 1965 rail links. The authorities of both the countries decided to introduce other connectivity links that was mentioned earlier. The two Prime Ministers of India and Bangladesh inaugurated the newly restored rail way link between Chilahati (Bangladesh) and Haldibari (India) on 17th December 2020. To enhance the connectivity between the two countries of two passenger trains i.e., 'Matree Express' and 'Bandhan Express' was increased 4 days a week to 5 days a week and from one day a week to two days a week respectively from 2020. To strengthen the connectivity and people to people contact between the two countries the Prime Minister of Bangladesh gave her consent about this rail connectivity in October 2019. She also expressed her interest to start Dhaka siliguri-gangtok-dhaka and Dhaka-siliguri-dargiling bus service in December 2019. Feni bridge (maître setu) connecting Land Custom Station Subroom in Trupra and Land Custom Station (L.C.S) Ramgrah (Bangladesh) was jointly inaugurated in a virtual platform by both the Prime Ministers in 2021. This Rail Link project has been executed under Government of India grant assistance of INR 392.52 crore extended to Bangladesh. The length of the rail link is 12.24 km with a 6.78 km Dual Gauge rail line in Bangladesh and 5.46 km in Tripura has been inaugurated by the two Prime Ministers through Video conference on 1st November 2023.⁵⁸⁷

THE KHULNA-MONGLA PORT RAIL LINK

The Khulna-Mongla Port Rail Line Project has been implemented under Government of India concessional Line of Credit with a total project cost of USD 388.92 million. The

⁵⁸⁷ Ananda Bazar Patrika (Kolkata), 1st November, 2023, p-6

project entails construction of approximately 65 kms of broad gauge rail route between Mongla Port and the existing rail network in Khulna. With this, Mongla, the second largest port of Bangladesh, gets connected with the broad-gauge railway network. recently it has been inaugurated by the two Prime Ministers through Video conference on 1st November 2023.

CHITTAGONG-SILCHAR RAIL LINK

The Northeast Frontier Railway employees' union announced that Chittagong-Silchar rail project would not be finished until 2018. Officials from the Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR) addressed this concern in a progress report that was made available with 'Concern for Silchar'⁵⁸⁸ in November 2010. The report stated that as of that time, 51 percent of the superstructures of major bridges had been completed. The report also explained that the poor condition of the region's roads was making it hard for the project to be finished quickly.

The conversion of the Silchar-Agartala rail line from meter gauge to broad gauge has already begun at the Center. Additionally, surveys on expanding the rail link to Sabroom in southern Tripura have been conducted. Sabroom, Tripura's southernmost subdivision, is close to the border between India and Bangladesh.

These tracks will connect the Trans Asian Rail (T.A.R) Link from Jiribam and Moreh in Manipur to Myanmar and a road link to the Chittagong port when they are finished. In addition to connecting with Myanmar and being a part of the Trans Asian Rail (T.A.R), the rail link between Akhaura and Agartala would also allow for multimodal connections to key points in Bangladesh and the North East of India. India has asked Bangladesh to allow transit between the East and West through the latter, which would significantly shorten the distances that need to be covered at the moment. In turn, Bangladesh would be able to generate more revenue from this. More over fundamentally, it would open up opportunities for human-to-human interactions between the two countries.

Additionally, there is the possibility that the project will be hindered by insurgencies in the affected regions. Engineers working for construction companies in the Dima Hasao district claim that little has changed on the ground, despite the Assam Government's claim that it has successfully brought peace to the district by signing ceasefire agreements with the Dima Hasao Daoga (Jewel Gorlosa faction). The engineers claim that tribal insurgents and minor criminals alike have harassed them, but neither the authorities nor the police are taking

⁵⁸⁸"Concerned for Silchar" is a blog recording the political and socio-economic developments in the northeastern states of India.

any action in this respect. It is already evident that the project's delay is preventing the people of South Assam, Tripura, Manipur, and Mizoram from communicating effectively. The initial estimate for the 201-kilometer route's completion was INR 1689.12 crores, since it has increased to over INR 3,909.49 crores.⁵⁸⁹

HALDIBARI – CHILAHATI RAIL LINK

In an event that will be remembered by both Bangladesh and India as a significant step toward increasing interpersonal contact. Honourable Shri Narendra Modi, Prime Minister of India, and Honourable Sheikh Hasina during the PM-level virtual bilateral summit on 17th December, 2020, jointly inaugurated a railway connection between India's Haldibari and Bangladesh's Chilahati.⁵⁹⁰

Bangladesh's Railway Minister, Md. Nurul Islam Sujan, flagged off a goods train from Chilahati station that entered India via the international border and heralded a new era for Indians and Bangladeshis alike. The majority of the India and Bangladesh railway systems are inherited from British Indian Railways. Seven rail lines connected India and then-East Pakistan after 1947's partition (up until 1965). There are currently four operating rail connections between India and Bangladesh. 1. Petrapole (India)-Benapole (Bangladesh), 2. Gede (India)-Darshana (Bangladesh), 3. Singhabad (India)-Rohanpur (Bangladesh), and 4. Radhikapur (India)-Birol (Bangladesh) are the names of these routes. The fifth rail connection between India and Bangladesh is the Haldibari-Chilahati rail link, which will go into operation on 17th December, 2020.⁵⁹¹

The Haldibari-Chilahati rail link was in operation before 1965 Indo-Pak war. During partition of India, this was a part of the main Broad Gauge route from Kolkata to Siliguri. Even after partition, trains heading to Assam and North Bengal continued to travel through the East Pakistani territory. For instance, trains traveling from Sealdah to Siliguri once used the Haldibari-to-Chilahati link to enter East Pakistani territory from Darshana Station. However, the 1965 Indo-Pak war effectively severed all railway connections between India and East Pakistan at the time.⁵⁹² As a result, the railways in the Eastern Sector of India

⁵⁸⁹<https://www.orfonline.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/IndiaBangladesh.pdf>, accessed on 10.06.2022.

⁵⁹⁰<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseIframePage.aspx?PRID=1741647>, accessed on 18.08.2022.

⁵⁹¹“Starting of freight trains via restored Haldibari (India) – Chilahati (Bangladesh) rail link”, Ministry of Railway, Government of India, Posted On: 2nd August, 2021 by Press Information Bureau, (PIB) Delhi.

⁵⁹² “First goods train through revived Haldibari – Chilahati rail link leaves for Bangladesh”, **The Economic Times**, 31st July, 2021.

were divided in 1965. Therefore, it is easy to imagine how significant the reopening of this rail link will be.

In accordance with the joint declaration made at the May 2015 Inter-Governmental Railway Meeting (I.G.R.M) in Delhi, the Railway Board has approved the construction of a new Broad Gauge (BG) line from Haldibari station to the Bangladesh border for better connection to Chilahati (Bangladesh) [Length - 3.50 km] between 2016 and 2017 with the intention of reopening the previously closed rail link. At a cost of Rs, 82.72 billion Indian Railways has restored the tracks that lead to the international border from Haldibari station. As a result, Bangladesh Railways has upgraded and laid the missing tracks from Chilahati station to the international border. On the Bangladeshi side, the existing Chilahati-Parbatipur-Santahar-Darshana line is already broad-gauge.⁵⁹³

The Haldibari-Chilahati route, which opened on 17th December, 2020, will make it easier for Assam and West Bengal to get into Bangladesh. In order to support the expansion of regional trade and promote the economic and social development of the region, this newly opened rail link will improve rail network accessibility to the main ports, dry ports, and land borders. Once passenger trains are planned for this route, the common people and businessmen of both countries will be able to benefit from both passenger and goods traffic. Tourists from Bangladesh will be able to easily visit destinations like Darjeeling, Sikkim, and Dooars in addition to Nepal, Bhutan, and other countries once this new link is operational. This brand-new rail connection will also be beneficial to the economy of these South Asian countries.

“CONSTRUCTION OF DOUBLE LINE RAIL TRACK BETWEEN KHULNA-DARSANA JUNCTION SECTION OF BANGLADESH RAILWAY” AND “CONVERSION OF METER GAUGE LINE INTO DUAL GAUGE LINE FROM PARBATIPUR TO KAUNIA SECTION OF BANGLADESH RAILWAY”.

On the railway front there are remarkable developments between India and Bangladesh. Both the countries signed agreements on 25th August, 2022, to carry out long-pending railway projects that would bring people across the border even closer than before. On 25th August, 2022, at Rail Bhaban in Dhaka, contracts for consulting services were signed for the projects ‘Construction of Double Line Rail Track Between Khulna-Darsana

⁵⁹³ “India, Bangladesh resume freight train operation via Haldibari-Chilahati route,” **Hindustan Times**, Published on 2nd August, 2021.

Junction Section of Bangladesh Railway’ and ‘Conversion of Meter Gauge Line Into Dual Gauge Line from Parbatipur to Kaunia Section of Bangladesh Railway.’ Both projects are being implemented under the second concessional Line of Credit (LoC) of US 2 billion dollar that the Indian government provided to the Bangladeshi government, as stated in a press release issued by the Indian High Commission in Dhaka.⁵⁹⁴ With nearly one-fourth of the Government of India’s Line of Credit (LoC) portfolio dedicated to Bangladesh, it is one of India’s largest development partners. Under Government of India’s Line Of Credit, the Khulna-Darsana rail line project is being constructed at a cost of US 312.48 million dollar. This rail line has 147 girder bridges and culverts and a total length of 126.25 kilometers (double line), 14.40 kilometers (loop line). The project would increase the capacity for goods transportation and improve connectivity on the Khulna-Dhaka, Chilahati, and Rajshahi routes as well as between Mongla Port and Darsana-Gede route. Fuel delivery to the proposed fuel-based power plants in Harian, Bheramara, Santahar, Amanura, Faridpur, Thakurgaon, and Rangpur would also be made easier by this project. Joint Venture of STUP Consultants Pvt.Ltd. has been given the contract for consulting services Ltd. as well as Associates Architects Engineers & Consultants Pvt.Ltd. (‘AARVEE’) with Design Consultants Ltd. (Partner in Bangladesh).

The goal of the project is to construct a dual gauge railway track in order to increase line capacity and improve efficiency in the Lalmonirhat-Kaunia-Rangpur-Parbatipur-Kanchan-Panchagarh section, the Kanchan-Birol-Birol Border section, and the Shantahar-Bagura-Kaunia-Rangpur-Parbatipur-Kanchan-Panchagarh corridor of the Bangladesh Railway.⁵⁹⁵

Additionally, this would facilitate easier cross-border traffic at the Birol border. In addition, when this project is finished, fuel can be brought directly from the Khulna region to the Rangpur division. According to the press release, the signing of the consultancy contracts for these significant railway connectivity projects, which are being carried out under concessional of Government of India’s Line of Credit (GoI LOC), is anticipated to significantly enhance subregional connectivity, trade, and commerce, as well as accelerate growth throughout the region.

⁵⁹⁴<https://www.thenewsgate.in/india-and-bangladesh-signs-pact-for-better-rail-connection/> accessed on 19.10.2022.

⁵⁹⁵“India and Bangladesh sign pact for better rail connection”, *NewsGate Press Network*, 25th August, 2022.

‘MAITREE EXPRESS’

‘Maitree Express’ the first modern, fully air-conditioned international express train service that run between Dhaka in Bangladesh and Kolkata in the Indian state of West Bengal. The Bengali name ‘Maitree Express’ refers to the significance of the friendly relations between India and Bangladesh since its creation in 1971. Prior to the partition of India in 1947, train services existed between India and East Pakistan and after the creation of Bangladesh in 1971, the Maitree Express re-established this connection between Dhaka and Kolkata in 2008 after being closed for 43 years. During Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s maiden visit to Bangladesh in June 2015, the possibility of introducing a second Maitree Express was deliberated. The second train will run between Khulna and Kolkata.⁵⁹⁶ In 2017, a second train service, the ‘Bandhan Express’, was inaugurated connecting Kolkata with the Bangladeshi city of Khulna, replicating the previous one.

However, due to Covid 19 situation all over the world train service in this route resumed on 29th May, 2022.⁵⁹⁷ The 1947 Partition of India disrupted this rail links in the province of Bengal, which was divided into the Indian state of West Bengal and later separated as East Bengal (Bangladesh) from Pakistan. Overnight train service ran frequently between Kolkata, Goalanda, Dhaka, and Narayanganj during the time that the British controlled the unincorporated land. In addition, prior to the partition of India, the Gede–Darshana and Chilahati–Haldibari routes of the Darjeeling Mail that connected Kolkata (Sealdah Station) with Siliguri traversed the region that later became East Pakistan. From Sealdah, three train services ran between the two countries: 1) the East Bengal Mail to Parbatipur Junction via Gede-Darshana, 2) the East Bengal Express to Goalundo Ghat via Gede-Darshana, and 3) the Barisal Express to Khulna via Benapole–Petrapole. These services ran until 1965, when the Indo-Pak Conflict over the issue of Kashmir broke out and all passenger train connections were cut off to secure border for the purpose of national security in India.

During bilateral talks, in 2001, the two governments agreed on to run, The ‘Maitree Express.’ During Indian Foreign Minister Mr. Pranab Mukherjee’s visit to Dhaka in February 2007, the concept of train service received a significant boost. In response to Indian security

⁵⁹⁶India to consider Bangladesh proposal for second Maitree train', BusinessStandard, 7 June 2015, http://www.business-standard.com/article/newsians/india-to-consider-bangladesh-proposal-for-second-maitree-train-115060700807_1.html. accessed on 08.09.2022.

⁵⁹⁷<https://www.psuconnect.in/news/railways-resume-train-services-between-india-bangladesh/32785/>, accessed on 08.09.2022

demand; a 'box-fencing' system was to be erected on either side of the no-man's land between the two countries. The inauguration of the train service was held on the occasion of the Bengali New Year (Nanabarsha, Pahela Boishak). On 8th July, 2007, the first train ran from Kolkata to Dhaka as a test run. Indian government officials were to meet their Bangladeshi counterparts on 14th April 2008 to finalize this train schedules.

On 14th April, 2008, the train service was inaugurated to much fanfare on the occasion of the Bengali New Year. Distinguished individuals, such as Indian Railway Minister Lalu Prasad Yadav, Priya Ranjan Dasmunsi, Union Minister of Information and Broadcasting; Gopal Krishna Gandhi, Governor of West Bengal and Liakat Ali Chowdhury, the Bangladesh High Commissioner to India attended the flag-off ceremony for the first train leaving Kolkata from Chitpur railway station. The inaugural train from Kolkata to Dhaka was officially flagged off by Indian Foreign Minister Shri Pranab Mukherjee.⁵⁹⁸ At the same time, another train carrying passengers from Dhaka to Kolkata left. On its first run, however, the 360-seats of 'Calcutta to Dhaka express train' only carried 65 people, including journalists and politicians. An official statement from the Indian Ministry of External Affairs stated, "The agreement will strengthen bilateral relations and provide an alternative mode of passenger transportation." Indian Railways officials stated that the train service was launched hurriedly and that when information would spread in public, there would be a greater response among the passenger between the two countries." The public's reaction to the launch of the train service was mixed in both the countries. Thousands of people cheered the inaugural train as it traveled from Kolkata to the border crossing point in Gede. However, the Nikhil Banga Nagarik Sangha (All Bengal Citizens Committee), a group that represents Hindu refugees from Bangladesh, protested the launch of the train service, citing the persecution of Hindu minority people in Bangladesh, possible infiltration of terrorists into India and calling for the rehabilitation of Bangladeshi Hindu refugees. Police reports stated that 87 people, including 11 women, had been arrested for blocking this train by squatting on the tracks and refusing to move. Police blamed the group for planting three crude bombs on the route, which were defused a day before the launch on 13th April, 2008.

The 'Maitree Express' operates five days per week. From Kolkata, the train travels approximately 250 miles (400 km) to Dhaka. In the past, Kolkata and Dhaka had two stoppages for immigration checks. One on the Indian side in Gede, and another on the

⁵⁹⁸<https://pib.gov.in/Pressreleaseshare.aspx?PRID=1830026>, accessed on 18.08.2022.

Bangladesh side in Dorshona. Dhaka and Kolkata have completed immigration and customs since November 2017. As a result, Travel time has been cut by two and a half hours. To cover the entire route, it takes approximately 8 hours and 50 minutes. Diesel locomotives with broad gauges travel the entire route. At Dorshona in Bangladesh, the crew and locomotives are changed. The Bangabandhu Bridge over the Jamuna River and the Hardinge Bridge over the Padma River, both over 100 years old, are the two major river crossings. Since 14th April, 2017 (in Bengali Nababarsa, Pahela Boishak) all coaches were upgraded to Linke Hofmann Busch (L.H.B) coaches with air conditioning, enhancing the travel experience more comfortable. The train service was increased to five days per week in February 2020 from four days per week up until that point, with additional runs on Tuesdays and Wednesdays from Dhaka and Kolkata. It departs Kolkata at 07:15 (IST) on the same day and arrives in Dhaka at 16:05 (BST). In a similar vein, it departs Dhaka at 08:15 (BST) and arrives in Kolkata at 16:00 (IST) the following day. There are no lengthy pauses during ferry crossings or border checks along this train's route. Additionally, it costs less than the air-conditioned luxury bus services that run from Kolkata to Dhaka. Dhaka Cantonment and Kolkata (Chitpur) stations are the terminal points, respectively. Even though Kolkata is a true terminal, local trains can take passengers to Kamalapur, Dhaka's main station, from the Dhaka cantonment station. The train used to run four days a week, but in February 2020, the frequency was increased to five days a week. There is a public bus terminal right outside the Kolkata railway station that connects to various parts of the city. The development of the Kolkata–Dhaka Maitree train service is comparable to that of the 'Samjhauta Express' that connects India's Delhi to Pakistan's Lahore. The train departs Dhaka Cantonment on Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday. In the case of the Maitree Express, both India and Bangladesh have used them as symbols of good will and cooperation. Unlike the majority of Indian trains, this one cannot be booked online through the IRCTC website. At the booking counters of Chitpur Station in Kolkata, tickets are only available in local currency. Before purchasing a ticket, a passport with a valid Bangladeshi visa is required. In the past, it was necessary to specify the port of entry as 'By rail-Gede' for an Indian visa or 'By rail-Darshana' for a Bangladeshi visa when applying for a visa. After the visa has been issued, tickets will be issued. The requirement to specify a specific port and mode of transportation has been eliminated since both the countries began issuing e-Visas. Tickets for this popular train must be purchased at least five to six days in advance. Return tickets are available for up to two weeks prior to the departure date on a pre-determined number of seats as of from 18th June, 2014.

‘BANDHAN EXPRESS’

‘Bandhan Express’ is a weekly international express train service that connects the Indian city of Kolkata with the Bangladeshi city of Khulna. It is the second modern, fully air-conditioned passenger train connection between Bangladesh and the Indian state of West Bengal. In English, the Bengali word ‘Bandhan’ means ‘bonding.’ At first, it was known as the Maitree Express II. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, this train’s commercial run has been halted since March 2020. However, on 29th May, 2022, the train began operating once more.⁵⁹⁹ On 9th November, 2017 via video conference from Kolkata, Shri Narendra Modi, Prime Minister of India; Sheikh Hasina, Prime Minister of Bangladesh and West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee launched the Kolkata–Khulna ‘Bandhan Express’. After the Kolkata–Dhaka Maitree Express train service was operational, the name ‘Sonartari’ was proposed for the second India–Bangladesh train on the Kolkata–Khulna route. However, the name ‘Sonartari’ is used in both countries’ trains and railways, so it was replaced. After that, the names ‘Bandhan’ and ‘Sampritee’ were proposed. Finally, everyone agreed on the name ‘Bandhan’, which means ‘bonding.’ The route is an exact replica of the previous Barisal Express route. The train travels from the Indian side of Kolkata to Petrapole, where it makes stops at Dum Dum and Bangaon rail station before reaching the Indian border. After that, the train travels through Jhikargachha and Jessore on the Bangladesh side to Benapole before arriving at the Khulna railway station. There are no immigration or customs checks for this train at the international border between India and Bangladesh. In Kolkata and Khulna, the immigration procedure is carried out. Before buying a ticket for the Bandhan Express train, one needs a passport and a visa that are both in good condition now. Tickets can be purchased at the Chitpur railway Station in Kolkata, India, and the Khulna Railway Station in Bangladesh.⁶⁰⁰ In order to attract more passengers, the two Governments agreed on 8th March, 2019 to make a three-minute stoppage at Jessore, and 200 tickets have been reserved for passengers from Jessore railway station. Since its inception, the train has only run on Thursdays; however, in February 2020, the frequency was increased, and the train now runs twice a week-on Sunday and Thursday.⁶⁰¹

⁵⁹⁹<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/india-bangladesh-train-services-resume-after-two-years-officials/articleshow/91871668.cms>, accessed on 10.08.2022.

⁶⁰⁰“India-Bangladesh ‘Bandhan Express’ train services resume”, **The Economic Times**, 29th May, 2022.

⁶⁰¹Ibid.

‘MITALI EXPRESS’

Government of India and People’s Republic of Bangladesh, decided to start a new passenger train service named ‘Mitali’ via recently-restored Haldibari-Chilahati rail link to further strengthen people to people connectivity through Rail networks. This third passenger train service between New Jalpaiguri (India)–Dhaka (Bangladesh)-‘Mitali Express’ which was virtually inaugurated by both the Prime Ministers on 27th March, 2021.⁶⁰² The third passenger train ‘Mitali Express’ travel between Dhaka, Bangladesh, and New Jalpaiguri rail station of West Bengal, will significantly improve rail connectivity between the two countries. According to a senior Northeast Frontier Railway official, ‘Mitali Express’ will operate twice per week, on Sunday and Wednesday. The train known as the Mitali Express (13131/13132) is a weekly international non stop passenger express train service that connects the Indian city of Siliguri (West Bengal) to Dhaka, the capital of Bangladesh. It is the third modern, fully air-conditioned train between Bangladesh and the Indian state of West Bengal. On 26th March, 2021, when Indian Prime Minister was in Dhaka to celebrate Bangladesh’s 50th anniversary of independence (Golden Jubilee), this non-stop passenger train with ten compartments on the new 513 km route from Dhaka was officially inaugurated by the Prime Minister of the two neighbouring countries. This train route reestablished the previous Siliguri route between India and Bangladesh after 56 years of interruption. To purchase a ticket for the Mitali Express train, passengers must first have a passport and a valid visa. Earlier the train was inaugurated on 26th March, 2021, but due to the Covid-19 pandemic situation, this train could not be started and its commercial run was postponed. On the other hand, the train made its first commercial run on 1st June, 2022. It was flagged-off virtually by Shri Ashwini Vaishnaw, Hon’ble Minister of Railways of India and Md. Nurul Islam Sujon, Hon’ble Railway Minister of Bangladesh on 1st June, 2022. The New Jalpaiguri to Dhaka ‘Mitali Express’ train was jointly flagged off on the occasion of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman’s centenary and the golden jubilee (fifty years) of Bangladesh’s independence. Railway officials proposed four different names Mitali, Sampriti, Suhrid, and Bondhu for the name of the new train to the Prime Minister of Bangladesh. The name ‘Mitali’ was selected by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. A Bengali name ‘Mitali’ is similar to Maitree and Bandhan. In English, the Bengali word ‘Mitali’ means friendship. The train departs from the Bangladeshi side of the Dhaka Cantonment railway station, makes stops at Parbatipur and Chilahati, and then travels across the border to Haldibari. Dhaka is 453

⁶⁰²<https://pib.gov.in/Pressreleaseshare.aspx?PRID=1830026>, accessed on 12.08.2022

kilometers away from Chilahati, and New Jalpaiguri is 71 kilometers away from Chilahati. Chilahati has two additional coaches for passengers traveling to India from that region. After crossing the Indian border, the train makes a stop at Haldibari before arriving at New Jalpaiguri Railway Station. Although the proposed halts on the Indian side do not include Jalpaiguri Railway Station, despite demands for a stop at Jalpaiguri Town. Since its launch, the bi-weekly train has run on Sundays and Wednesdays from New Jalpaiguri and on Mondays and Thursdays from Dhaka cantonment. However, the stoppage at Haldibari and Chilahati, these two stations prohibit passengers from boarding or deboarding.

The train will depart New Jalpaiguri at 11:45 a.m. (IST) on the regular service. It will leave Haldibari (India) at 13.05 p.m. (IST) and arrive at Haldibari at 12.55 p.m. The train will depart from Chilahati at 14.25 hours (BST) to reach Dhaka Cantonment at 22:30 hours (BST), the official stated. The train will arrive at Chilahati (Bangladesh) at 13.55 hours (BST). The Dhaka Cantonment-New Jalpaiguri 'Mitali Express' will also operate on Mondays and Thursdays on its return trip; departing the Dhaka Cantonment at 21:50 (BST). The train will depart from Chilahati at 06.15 (BST) and arrive at Chilahati (Bangladesh) at 05.45 (BST). The train will depart from Haldibari (India) at 06.05 (IST) to reach New Jalpaiguri at 07:15 (IST). Haldibari will be reached at 06.00 (IST). The official at the railway said, "The Dhaka Cantonment-New Jalpaiguri will have four First Class Air Conditioner (Sleeper), four Air Conditioner Chair cars, and two luggage-and-generator vans."

The fare is likely to be calculated both in US dollars and Indian rupee. It will be used for all transactions at the New Jalpaiguri station. The exchange rate of the Indian rupee against the US dollar on the first day of each month will be used to determine the monthly ticket price. The ticket prices will be set by Indian Railways because they will be the only ones responsible for operating and maintaining the train. The basic fare will also include a 5 percent GST. Tickets will be available in India at the PRS counters at New Jalpaiguri, Guwahati, and Kolkata railway stations.⁶⁰³

FIRST CONTAINER TRAIN CONNECTIVITY

India and Bangladesh added yet another feather to their cap with regard to connectivity initiative when the first container train connects the two countries through Petrapole-Benapole border in West Bengal. On 27th March, 2020 the first-ever container train

⁶⁰³“India-Bangladesh ‘Bandhan Express’ train services resume”, **The Economic Times**, 29th May, 2022.

from India made its way to Benapole, Bangladesh, demonstrating the advancement of the Indian foreign policy goal popularly known as ‘Neighbourhood-First.’ On 27th March, 2020, the train carrying fifty containers arrived at its destination carrying textile fabric in addition to soaps, shampoos, and other fast-moving consumer goods (F.M.C.G). An official told to ‘India Today’ that this container train will be a regular service that will connect various Indian Railways network terminals to Bangladesh. It will connect Benapole, Jessore, Singia, Noapara, and Bangabandhu Setu (West) railway stations in Bangladesh with terminals designated by Concor (Container Corporation of India).

In 2017, Concor India and the Bangladesh Container Company Ltd. had reached an agreement. In April 2018, a test run of the first container train was conducted from Kolkata to the Bangabandhu Setu West railway station. The relationship between New Delhi and Dhaka has not changed, despite reports of growing Chinese influence in the countries that are thought to be India’s closest territorial allies. The ties between the two countries will only get stronger as a result of this new railway infrastructural connectivity.

Additionally, due to the low cost of product transportation, this service will encourage traders and businessmen to consider India for import purposes. This train carried 40 containers of fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) cargo and 10 containers of fabrics. The exporters from Indian side are Procter & Gamble, Arvind Ltd and Vardhaman Textiles Ltd. The advantage of container is that any exporter can move even one container (20 tonnes)-it is possible to aggregate traffic of various exporters and send in one train. The container train will reduce the cost of imports and exports between the two countries by five times, from Rs 7,000 per tonne to Rs 1,500 per tonne, when compared to roads. From India to Bangladesh, the typical lorry takes 15 days to transport goods in the same route. It can reach Bangladesh in 25 to 48 hours using this container train service through Railways network.⁶⁰⁴

INDIA HANDED OVER 10 BROAD GAUGE (BG) LOCOMOTIVES TO BANGLADESH FOR BETTER CONNECTIVITY

Dr. S. Jaishankar, the External Affairs Minister, and Shri Piyush Goyal, the Minister of Railways and Commerce & Industry, Government of India, handed over 10 Broad Gauge (BG) locomotives to Bangladesh in a ceremony on 27th March, 2020. Shri Suresh C. Angadi,

⁶⁰⁴“First-ever container train from India arrives in Bangladesh, Railways to hand over 10 locomotives.”

Times of India, 27.03.2020, and “Expanding connectivity: First cargo train launched to Bangladesh via Bengal’s key border zone”, **The Economic Times**, 27th March, 2020.

the Minister of State for Railways, Government of India, was also at the event. On behalf of the Bangladesh government, Md. Nurul Islam Sujan, minister of railway, and Dr. Abul Kalam Abdul Momen, minister of foreign affairs, People's Republic of Bangladesh received the Indian locomotives.⁶⁰⁵

An important promise made during the state visit of the Hon'ble Prime Minister of Bangladesh, Sheikh Hasina to India on October 2019 is fulfilled by the transfer of these locomotives with grant assistance from the Indian government. The Indian side has appropriately modified the locomotives in accordance with Bangladesh Railway's requirements. The increasing number of passenger and freight train operations in Bangladesh will be handled by these locomotives.

Dr. S. Jaishankar, Minister of External Affairs, Government of India, stated, "I am delighted to join this ceremony of handing over 10 locomotives to Bangladesh." I am pleased to learn that container and parcel trains have begun operating between the two countries. Our businesses will be given new opportunities as a result of this. I am pleased to learn that trade can now be moved by rail. The supply of essentials commodities was interrupted throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, particularly during the holy month of Ramadan. He also talked about how deep the relationships between India and Bangladesh have been for a long time and are based on trust and respect in terms of connectivity and infrastructure. He expressed his delight at the fact that the Covid-19 pandemic had not slowed down bilateral cooperation and expressed his anticipation for additional significant milestones of connectivity in the ongoing historic 'Mujib Barsho'.⁶⁰⁶

Shri Piyush Goyal, Minister of Railways and Commerce & Industry, Government of India, stated, "It gives me enormous pleasure to hand over 10 broad gauge locomotives for the use of Bangladesh Railways."⁶⁰⁷ The ongoing freight train operations between India and Bangladesh will benefit from the use of these locomotives. These locomotives have undergone modifications to ensure that they can be used in Bangladesh. We have made significant progress in our respective efforts to achieve growth and development. In the past few years, India and Bangladesh have made significant progress in connectivity

⁶⁰⁵<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/india-to-handover-10-broad-gauge-locos-to-bangladesh/article32189638.ece>, accessed on 25.10.2022.

⁶⁰⁶<https://indianexpress.com/article/india/india-hands-over-10-broad-gauge-locomotives-to-bangladesh-6526629/>, accessed on 28.10.2022.

⁶⁰⁷<https://indianrailways.gov.in/railwayboard/>, accessed on 16.10.2022.

sector. Currently, our bilateral relationship is at its best. The Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's concept of "Sabka Sath, Sabka Vikas, and Sabka Vishwas" is reflected in our 'Neighbourhood First Policy.' Both the leaders of India and Bangladesh are committed to reestablishing the railway connection that existed before 1965. Four of the seven rail links that existed at the time are still in use today. A new rail link between Agartala in India and Akhaura in Bangladesh is being built and funded through Grant Assistance from India to improve regional rail connectivity. By speeding up the transportation of essential goods during Covid-19, both Railways have demonstrated exceptional foresight in managing the crisis and maintaining the supply chain. Benapole in Bangladesh is where container train and parcel train services have been introduced. The beginning of these two services already occurred in July. We have been able to move numerous products from both sides to enhance sub-regional connectivity, trade and commerce as well as accelerate growth and prosperity through the region. Because of railroads, our bilateral trade can continue without interruption or risk to public health. The people's better future is being ensured by both railways. During the press conference on behalf of the Indian Railways, Shri Piyush Goyal also committed that India will provide "complete, undivided, and unlimited support to Bangladesh and its development of the Bangladesh rail network. He further emphasized the significance of railway cooperation in expanding the economic partnership between the two countries and enhancing bilateral trade and connectivity.

In recent years, trade across their land borders was disrupted, so India and Bangladesh have increased their rail cooperation to lessen the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic losses. Essential goods have been transported across the border with the assistance of rail, a cost-effective and environmentally friendly option. In June, freight train exchanges on both sides reached their highest levels ever. For the purpose of transporting essential goods and raw materials, a total of 103 freight trains were utilized. Between India and Bangladesh, parcel and container train services have also recently begun. The scope of bilateral trade is anticipated to significantly expand as a result.⁶⁰⁸

SPECIAL PARCEL TRAIN CONNECTIVITY

On 13th July, 2020, the Indian Railways operated a unique parcel train that traveled beyond borders to Bangladesh. Dry chillies in bulk were transported by train from Guntur in

⁶⁰⁸“Indian Railways hands over 10 Broad Gauge Locomotives to Bangladesh” Press Information Bureau, Government of India, Ministry of Railways, 27 JUL 2020 4:21PM by PIB Delhi.

Andhra Pradesh to Bangladesh.⁶⁰⁹ Division's first-ever international service, a Time-Tabled Parcel Express to Bangladesh, was made possible by the famed Guntur Chilli, which is known for its distinctive flavour around the world. A parcel express carrying 9 rakes containing 4,068 tonnes of dry chilli packed in bags left Reddypalem Station in July and arrived at Benapole Railway Station in Bangladesh within three days. Guntur division, which has a large platform for commercial operations, has also done well. It has loaded 10.42 lakh tonnes of freight and earned 148.56 crore so far, compared to 58.61 crore in earnings for 2019-2020, a 153.47 percent increase in goods revenue.

This is a major achievement for Guntur Railway Division, and the running of Time-Tabled Parcel Train to Bangladesh has opened up opportunities for other divisions.⁶¹⁰ Divisional Railway Manager of Guntur, Mr.R. Mohana Raja informed 'The Hindu' that "We are currently trying to expand it by transporting additional goods. In order to facilitate exports, we have also established a Business Development Unit and are in contact with tobacco, cotton, and other commercial crop traders." Time-tabled parcel trains typically use at least 40 rakes, but after Guntur division obtained approval from the Railway Board, it used 9 rakes to transport a parcel van to Bangladesh. Now, divisions in Nagpur, Nanded, and Maharashtra, have begun shipping onion and turmeric to other countries. Companies and businessmen can now book freight online through the Railways' online Freight Operating System (FOS). The Railways are looking for opportunities to collaborate with leading businesses in the South Asian region after the successful initiative. To make it possible for farmers to transport small quantities of dry chilly in the goods train, the South Central Railway's Guntur Zone altered the conditions.

Additionally, it reduced the expense of transportation from India to Bangladesh. Dry chillies were once transported to Bangladesh in small quantities by road by Guntur-area farmers and merchants. 16 parcel vans carried 384 tons of dried chillies aboard the Special Parcel Express train. A railway ministry spokesperson told, "While sending chillies to the neighbouring country Bangladesh by road costs approximately Rs 7,000 per tonne, the cost of carrying them by goods trains has come out to be Rs 4,608 per tonne." When compared to

⁶⁰⁹<https://www.livemint.com/news/india/indian-railways-sends-its-1st-ever-parcel-train-to-bangladesh-11594554536242.html>, accessed on 12.10.2022.

⁶¹⁰<https://indianrailways.gov.in/railwayboard/> accessed on 12.10.2022.

road transport, which typically costs Rs 7,000 per tonne, special train transportation was much more cost-effective at Rs 4,608 per tone.⁶¹¹

Farmers and merchants in and around Guntur used to pay this sum to transport small quantities by road to Bangladesh. During the Covid- 19 lockdown period, the supplies were damaged to a great extent. During the Covid -19 period, Indian Railways made railway parcel vans available to e-commerce companies and other customers, including state governments, for the quick mass transportation of essential items like medical supplies, medical equipments, and food. In order to guarantee the continuous supply of essential items, the railways have operated over 4,304 time-tabled parcel special trains on specific routes.⁶¹² At a time when passenger operations were completely shut down as a result of the nationwide lockdown that was imposed on 25th March, this is a significant accomplishment and grand success for Indian Railways to continue its cordial relations with Bangladesh.⁶¹³

MAITRI SETU

‘Maitri Setu’, known as the ‘Gateway of Northeast’, is a 150-meter long (490-foot) bridge on the Feni River that connects Tripura in India to Chittagong port in Bangladesh. It provides a shorter and more cost-effective alternative to the longer route through Assam between India’s Eastern and Western states. Earlier Indian Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi and Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina laid the foundation stone for the bridge in June 2015. In 2016 it has been started with an estimated cost of Rs.70 crore in Tripura to transport heavy machineries and goods from the North Eastern states to the rest of India via Bangladesh’s Chittagong international port.⁶¹⁴ The 150-meter long bridge will cut travel time by 36 minutes by connecting Sabroom in Tripura with Ramgarh’s Chittagong Sea Port.⁶¹⁵ India was responsible for building the bridge and the approach roads to it in Bangladesh and India. The project would be carried out by the National Highways and Infrastructure

⁶¹¹<https://www.hindustantimes.com/cities/chandigarh-news/ambala-railway-division-sends-parcel-train-to-bangladesh-101624817948923.html>, accessed on 16.10.2022.

⁶¹²“In a first, India sends a parcel train to Bangladesh,” **The Economic Times**, 12th July, 2020. https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/transportation/railways/in-a-first-india-sends-a-parcel-train-to-bangladesh/articleshow/76923020.cms?utm_source=contentofinterest&utm_medium=text&utm_campaign=cpps, accessed on 20.09.2022.

⁶¹³“Parcel train takes chillies to Bangladesh, creates history” **Times of India**, July 13, 2020.

⁶¹⁴“India begins work on bridge linking northeast to Chittagong”, **TripuraInfoways**, 13 June 2016.

⁶¹⁵‘Tripura-Chittagong sea port bridge to be funded by Centre’, **The Times of India**, 29 April 2016, <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/agartala/Tripura-Chittagong-sea-port-bridge-to-be-funded-by-Centre/articleshow/52037052.cms>. accessed on 09.10.2022.

Development Corporation Limited (N.H.I.D.C.L). It gives landlocked North East India access to the sea and makes it possible to transport heavy machinery and goods through Bangladesh.

On 9th March, 2021, the bridge was officially opened to the public by the Prime Minister of India, Mr. Narendra Modi.⁶¹⁶ During inauguration Prime Minister Shri Modi said, “Agartala will become the closest city in the country to an international sea port. Opening of any bridge is testimony to Bangladesh’s continued commitment to support our nextdoor neighbour, India in strengthening connectivity in the region.” The Feni bridge will also help Bangladesh’s trade with Nepal and Bhutan. Sheikh Hasina, the Prime Minister of Bangladesh, describing it as ‘Historic.’ She also said: “The connectivity is not only strengthening the friendship between India and Bangladesh but also proving to be a strong link of business too. The Indian Prime Minister addressed that the entire region is being developed as a trade corridor between North-East India and Bangladesh.” He emphasised that the rail and water connectivity projects that have been realised in recent years have been strengthened by this bridge. This will improve the connectivity of south Assam, Mizoram and Manipur, along with Tripura with Bangladesh and South-East Asia.” The bridge will give Tripura access to Bangladesh’s Chittagong Port, which is 80km away from Sabroom. Prime Minister Modi also laid the foundation stone for setting up an Integrated Check Post (I.C.P) at Sabroom.⁶¹⁷ The bridge was given the name ‘Maitri Setu,’ which is a symbol of the growing friendship and bilateral ties that exist between India and Bangladesh since its inception.⁶¹⁸ The Indian government took on the project, which cost 133 crores of rupees. The bridge was built by Ahmedabad based Dineshchandra R. Agrawal Infracon Private Limited (DRA Infracon), with the cost 133 crores of Indian rupees and connects Tripura to the Chittagong port in Bangladesh. Rehabilitating the railway link between Santir Bazar railway station in India and Feni Junction railway station in Bangladesh is planned for an extension of the rail link to Chittagong Port and Cox’s Bazar deep water port in Bangladesh. This will also provide the strategic redundancy and alternative to the ‘Kaladan Multi-Modal project’ route for India in the event of war with China. The land route between Agartala and Kolkata Port

⁶¹⁶<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/pm-modi-inaugurates-maitri-setu-between-india-and-bangladesh/article34026410.ece>, accessed on 09.10.2022.

⁶¹⁷https://www.icwa.in/show_content.php?lang=1&level=1&ls_id=6030&lid=4125, accessed on 29.09.2022.

⁶¹⁸https://mea.gov.in/press-releases.htm?dtl/33595/Prime_Minister_to_inaugurate_Maitri_Setu_between_India_and_Bangladesh, accessed on 29.09.2022.

via this bridge is only 450 kilometers through Bangladesh, whereas the land route via the Siliguri Corridor is 1600 kilometers. If the goods are sent through this bridge via Chattogram Port, which is 200 kilometers away, the logistics costs from Agartala to Kolkata Port will be 80 percent lower than those of the Siliguri Narrow Corridor.⁶¹⁹ Despite the fact that a new World Bank study predicted that transport connectivity between the two South Asian neighbours would raise national income by as much as 17 percent in Bangladesh and 8 percent in India. It also found that increased connectivity could boost Bangladesh's exports to India by 297 percent and India's exports to Bangladesh by 172 percent.⁶²⁰

Prime Minister Modi also said "The connectivity is not only strengthening the friendship between India and Bangladesh but also proving to be a strong link of business too. He addressed that the entire region is being developed as a trade corridor between North-East India and Bangladesh."

The Prime Minister emphasised that the rail and water connectivity projects that have been realised in recent years have been strengthened by this bridge. This will improve the connectivity of south Assam, Mizoram and Manipur, along with Tripura with Bangladesh and South-East Asia." The bridge will give Tripura access to Bangladesh's Chittagong Port, which is 80 km away from Sabroom (Tripura). Prime Minister Modi also laid the foundation stone for setting up an Integrated Check Post at Sabroom.⁶²¹

RUPSHA RAILWAY BRIDGE

On the Rupsha River, the currently under construction Rupsha Railway Bridge (Khan Jahan Ali Bridge) will connect Khulna and Mongla Port via the railway network. Bangladesh Railway and Indian Larsen & Toubro Limited have signed an agreement to construct the bridge, which will connect Khulna and Mongla Port via the railway network. The bridge will be 5.13 kilometers (3.19 miles) long. The Executive Committee of National Economic Council (E.C.N.E.C) approved the 'Khulna-Mongla Railway Project' on 21st December, 2010. This project will be finished in 2024. The engineering consultants for design and construction supervision services are STUP Consultants Pvt Limited of India. Since 1st January, 2018, STUP Consultants have been associated with this Project. On 25th June, 2022, the bridge construction was completed. On 25th June, 2022, the Rupsha Rail

⁶¹⁹<https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1703457>, accessed on 19.08.2022.

⁶²⁰ **Times of India**, 10.03.2021. New Delhi.

⁶²¹https://www.icwa.in/show_content.php?lang=1&level=1&ls_id=6030&lid=4125, accessed on 29.09.2022.

Bridge, which is a component of the Khulna-Mongla Port Rail Line Project that is being undertaken under the Government of India Line of Credit (LoC) of US 7.862 billion dollar, was completed. As the Indian fiscal year ended in March 2022, disbursements under these Line of Credit (LOCs) reached the milestone of \$1 billion, and as the Bangladeshi fiscal year ended on 30th June, 2022, disbursements are expected to reach \$1155 million.⁶²²

From the Standard High-Water Level (SHWL), the main bridge has a navigational clearance of more than 18 meters. The steel bridge superstructure's construction materials were brought to India via road, sea, and inland rivers. The Rupsha railway bridge and the Khulna-Mongla port rail line will make it much easier to move goods from one place to another, and the increased connectivity and accessibility to Mongla Port will make it easier for local businesses, including farmers in the area, to get their products into South Asian markets. It is also anticipated to boost tourism to popular destinations in Bangladesh's southwest through this connectivity.⁶²³

PADMA MULTIPURPOSE BRIDGE

On 25th June, the Padma Setu introducing in a new era of connectivity for the country was inaugurated by Bangladesh's Prime Minister, Sheikh Hasina. The Padma Multipurpose Bridge Project (PMBP) is a bridge that can be used for both rail and road. It crosses the Padma River, which is the Ganges' affluent section after it enters Bangladeshi territory. The country's largest bridge and the second-largest in the Indo-Gangetic Plain is the main bridge, which spans 6.15 kilometers. One of the most innovative and challenging developmental dream project of Padma Multipurpose Bridge Project (PMBP)" has been entirely funded by the Government of Bangladesh in an era when competing connectivity strategies and foreign direct investments flood the markets of South Asia. It will strengthen the country's ties to its nextdoor neighbour India.⁶²⁴

According to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Bangladesh, this new 'Padma Bridge' will lead to 'collective prosperity, socio-economic development of Bangladesh, and enhanced regional connectivity in South Asia and make it easier for people, goods, and services to move around, increasing trade and connectivity at the same time.' In addition, The

⁶²² https://iccesd.com/proc_2018/Papers/r_p4212.pdf, accessed on 19.09.2022.

⁶²³ "Rupsha Rail Bridge in Khulna completed under India's LOC", New Age, **Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha, Dhaka**, Published on, July 03, 2022. <https://www.newagebd.net/article/174981/rupsha-rail-bridge-in-khulna-completed-under-indias-loc>, accessed on 29.08.2022.

⁶²⁴ <https://www.orfonline.org/expert-speak/padma-multipurpose-bridge-project/>, accessed on 20.10.2022.

Padma Multipurpose Bridge is a steel truss bridge with two levels-the first level, there is a railway track, and on the second level, there is vehicular traffic.Compared to the 8-hours journey over the ‘Bangabandhu Bridge’, the railway track will reduce travel time between the major cities of Jessore and Dhaka.This bridge will connect Bangladesh’s South Western districts like Faridpur, Jessore, Kushtia, Bhola, and Barishal with the country’s Northern and Eastern regions. By 2024, it is anticipated to be operational.

From a regional perspective, the railway track also has the potential to improve connectivity between Bangladesh and India, which is one of the country’s priorities for its foreign policy.The travel time from Dhaka to Kolkata, for instance, will be reduced to three to four hours after the bridge is implemented.It will also connect Bangladesh to India’s North Eastern Region (NER) if it is further connected with the Akhaura-Agartala rail link, which is only 159 kilometers from the Padma Setu.Promoting initiatives to improve connectivity has been the natural progress of the growing ties between India and Bangladesh.Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has repeatedly urged India to use Bangladesh’s facilities, like the Chittagong Port, Mongla port to improve connectivity in India’s landlocked North East, especially to make it easier for India to get to the sea.⁶²⁵

Bangladesh will also be a part of the Asian Highway Network (A.H.P), which aims to connect 32 countries to Europe via roads, through this Mega Multipurpose Bridge. Three routes—Asian Highway 1 (AH-1), Asian Highway 2 (AH2), and Asian Highway 41 (AH-41)—are currently being constructed in the country. The bridge forms an essential part of AH-1.In addition, the Padma bridge’s rail network will be added to the Trans-Asian Rail Route (T.A.R), which aims to connect Bangladesh via rail with the countries in South and Southeast Asia like India, Myanmar, and China.

INLAND WATER CONNECTIVITY

For India and Bangladesh, waterway connectivity has enormous potential for economic and inter-personal connections.First signed in 1972, ‘the India-Bangladesh Protocol on Inland Water Transit and Trade’ is renewed every two years.However, since 3rd October, 2001, this pattern has not been followed, and the renewal has only been carried out piecemeal.In accordance with the protocol, India and Bangladesh agreed to use inland waterways for both intra-country trade and the transportation of goods between countries’ border areas.The protocol stipulates that Indian and Bangladeshi vessels will split the tonnage

⁶²⁵ Ibid

of inter-country and transit cargo 50:50 basis. The two countries decided in April 2015 to renew the Protocol every five years automatically.⁶²⁶

The following transit routes are specified in the protocol⁶²⁷

Kolkata-Haldia-Raimongal-Chalna-Khulna-Mongla-Kaukhali-Barisal-Hizla-Chandapur-Narayanganj-Aricha-Sirajganj-Bahadurabad-Dhubri-Pandu and vice-versa; kolkata-Haldia-Raimongal-Mongla-Kaukhali-Barisal-Hizla-Chandpur-Narayanganj-Bhairab Bazar-Ajmiriganj-Markuli-Sherpur-Fenchuganj-Zakiganj-Karimganj and vice-versa.

Rajshahi-Godagari-Dhulian and vice-versa Karimganj-Zakiganj-Fenchuganj-Sherpur-Markuli-Ajmiriganj-Bhairab Bazar-Narayanganj-Chandpur-Aricha-Sirajganj-Bahadurabad-Chilmari-Dhubri-Pandu and vice-versa.

Under this protocol, the following ports of call in each country have been nominated for facilitating inter-country trade:

India: Kolkata, Haldia, Karimganj, Silghat and Pandu;

Bangladesh: Narayananganj, Khulna, Mongla, Ashuganj and Sirajganj.

The following are some of the operational parameters listed in the protocol:

Preservation and navigation; port charges and other fees; facilities for handling; and the provision of bunkers, supply bunkers, purchase provisions and stores during a voyage, repair facilities, conduct customs checks, transfer freight, transport and tranship cargo, settle disputes, and other things.

Some experts are hesitant to accept waterways as the cheapest mode of transportation when discussing Indo-Bangladesh protocol routes due to the fact that most rivers are not navigable throughout the year. In order to solve this navigable issue, adequate dredging facilities should not only be established but also made mandatory to enable the rivers navigable. Additionally, the cost of transporting cargo to the riverfront has increased significantly due to the absence of night navigational facilities.⁶²⁸ It is important to note that India has six national waterways, with NW 6 being the most recent to be added in 2013. From

⁶²⁶“India, Bangladesh agree inland water transit contract auto renewal”, <http://www.thehindubusinessline.com/news/international/india-bangladesh-agree-inland-water-transit-auto-renewal/article7138068.ece>, accessed on 2nd October, 2022.

⁶²⁷“India-Bangladesh Connectivity: Possibilities and Challenges,” Part 1, Observer Research Foundation (ORF), P-22. <https://www.orfonline.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/IndiaBangladesh.pdf>, accessed on 10.06.2022.

⁶²⁸Ibid.

Kolkata-Sundarban-Chalna-Khulna-Mongla, Kaukhali-Barisal-Narayanganj-Aricha-Dhubri-Pandua, NW-2 is the primary protocol route. From Narayangaj, NW-6 splits off into Bhairabbajar, Ajmerganj, Karamganj, and Lakhipur. The brand-new route crosses the Barak and Kusiara rivers. The Brahmaputra is connected to these two rivers, which receive very little water. They are seasonal travel routes. The Protocol route has two components: commerce and transit (export and import).

COASTAL SHIPPING

A draft proposal that would allow coastal trade between India and Bangladesh was recently approved by the Bangladesh Cabinet.⁶²⁹ The time it currently takes for trade between the two countries via river and sea routes. It will greatly reduce time and cost for goods. The agreement is expected to be ratified during Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's maiden visit to Bangladesh in June 2015. During the Bangladeshi delegation's visit to India from 19th April to 23rd April, talks at the Secretary level led to the agreement's conclusion. Bangladesh's Pangaon Inland Container Terminal (ICT) and India's Farraka and Bandel on the National Waterway-1 (NW-1) are among the ports of calls.⁶³⁰ The Indian government will hold internal talks before deciding whether Farakka should be a port of calls⁶³¹.

As of now, exchange through sea routes passes by means of Singapore or Colombo. Because it takes ships from Bangladesh four to five days to reach India, this route requires more time and money for trade, the coastal trade agreement will become extremely important for India and Bangladesh. Through the coastal route, trade will take less time and low cost, allowing for more economic cooperation and benefits.

The agreement states that the route will only be open for the movement of cargo. It does not cover the movement of passengers, warships, paramilitary forces, or oceanographic and scientific research vessels. A planned Standard Operating Procedure⁶³² (SOP) will be used to put the agreement into action. With automatic renewal provisions, the agreement will operate for a period of five years.

⁶²⁹“Cabinet okays draft of deal on coastal shipping with India”, **The Daily Star**, 5th May 2015, <http://www.thedailystar.net/city/cabinet-okays-draft-deal-coastal-shipping-india-80551>, accessed on 1st October, 2022.

⁶³⁰“India Bangladesh finalise draft pact on coastal shipping” Business Standard, 24 April 2015, file:///C:/Users/abc/Desktop/Coastal%20agreement/India,%20Bangladesh%20finalise%20draft%20pact%20on%20coastal%20shipping%20_%20Business%20Standard%20News.htm, accessed on 11th October, 2022.

⁶³¹ A place where ships customarily stop for supplies, repairs, fuels, transshipment of cargo.

⁶³² Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) provides clear cut directions and detailed instructions needed to perform a specific task or operation consistently and efficiently.

On 6th June, 2015, the Agreement was finally signed during Prime Minister Modi's visit to Bangladesh. It provided for the Bangladeshi port of Pangaon Inland Container Terminal (ICT) and the Indian ports of Farraka and Bandel on the National Waterway (NW)-1. The Standard Operating Procedure for an Agreement on Coastal Shipping was finalized in November 2015 between Bangladesh and India government officials. The Agreement facilitates the use of bilateral waterways in accordance with the laws of both countries. The agreement allows for eight routes, with the possibility of additional additions as both of the governments deem necessary or feasible.⁶³³

Conservancy and pilotage regulations are outlined in the Standard Operating Procedure (S.O.P). It makes it possible to provide the necessary handling facilities, supply bunkers, purchase provisions and stores during a voyage, repair facilities, conduct customs checks, transfer freight, transport and tranship cargo, settle disputes, and other things. The Joint Shipping Committee is also required to meet twice a year, or more frequently if necessary, to discuss issues related to the Agreement. Under the terms of the agreement, only River Sea Vessels (R.S.V) of Types III and IV will be permitted to operate.⁶³⁴ Due to the inability of large vessels to transport goods between Bangladesh's and India's sea ports to make a profit, goods were originally shipped first to Singapore and Colombo. The supplies were returned to India and Bangladesh ports in smaller river sea vessels after the entire procedure took between 30 and 40 days. Additionally, the lengthy sea route increased transportation costs. Because of this, smaller vessels are needed to connect to the sea ports in India and Chittagong port in Bangladesh. The regular plying of ships has been made easier because of this agreement. As a result, both the cost and time required for transportation have decreased to approximately ten days. Among other benefits, competitive cargo rates will improve the infrastructure of sea ports' connections to remote areas and contribute to their improvement.

The coastal shipping agreement was signed in 2015, concluding the talks that began in 2012. The two governments' move is expected to lower the cost of EXIM cargo and benefit cargo destined for India's North East by way of inland waterways from the Chittagong port. The deep draft ports on India's East coast will act as hub ports for goods going to

⁶³³India and Bangladesh sign Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) to operationalize agreement on coastal shipping', Press Information Bureau, Ministry of Shipping, Government of India, 15 November 2015,

<http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=130487>, accessed on 11th October, 2022.

⁶³⁴Ibid

Bangladesh. This will reduce the cost for Bangladesh and bring more cargo to these Indian ports. On 16th March, 2016, Bangladesh's Shipping Minister Shajahan Khan officially launched the coastal shipping service between the two countries at the Chittagong port to strengthen the bilateral relations through waterway connectivity.

For this purpose the container ship left Chittagong Port in Bangladesh on 23rd March and arrived at Krishnapatnam Port in India on 28th March to begin coastal shipping. The approval of the coastal agreement has had a significant positive impact on Tripura. The heavy equipment shipment for the OTPC (ONGC Tripura Power Company Limited) Palatana Power Project in Tripura will now travel via Bangladesh's Ashugunj Port, saving time and money. Additionally, Tripura benefits from the ease with which rice stocks can be transported from the Vishakhapatnam port to Tripura via Ashugunj Port, in Bangladesh.⁶³⁵

On 22nd June, 2016, as transit between India and Bangladesh becomes operational, a Bangladeshi ship carrying 1,000 tonnes of corrugated iron sheets from the Kolkata port was scheduled to depart Ashuganj, Bangladesh, for Tripura. Shajahan Khan, the Shipping Minister of Bangladesh, and Mashiur Rahman, the Economic Affairs Advisor to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, will officially open the shipment for transshipment.⁶³⁶ Before making their way to the Akhaura in Tripura, the goods will be unloaded at the Ashuganj port and reloaded onto Bangladeshi trucks. The transshipment will last for ten days in total.

India must pay an additional Tk 50 per tonne for shipping goods from the Ashuganj port to Akhaura, and the transshipment fee has been set at Tk 192.25 per tonne. In addition, India will pay labour handling, pilotage, and berthing fees in addition to Tk 10 per tonne for shipping goods through two Bangladeshi canals—Mongla-Ghashiakhali and Gabkhan Canal.⁶³⁷

⁶³⁵ Tripura's shipments via Bangladesh river seaports get huge boost: Cabinet approves India Bangladesh agreement on Coastal Shipping', **Tripura Infoways**, 29th May, 2016 <http://www.tripurainfoway.com/newsdetails/TN/28446/tripura-s-shipments-via-bangladesh-river-seaports-gethuge-boost-cabinet-approves-india-bangladesh-agreement-on-coastalshipping>.

html. accessed on 11th October, 2022.

⁶³⁶ Rejaul Karim Byron and Md Fazlur Rahman, 'Transit gets operational', **The Daily Star**, Dhaka, 14th June 2016, <http://www.thedailystar.net/backpage/transitgets-operational-1239373>. accessed on 10th October, 2022.

⁶³⁷ Sahidul Hasan Khokon, Indo-Bangladesh transshipment formally begins today, **India Today**, 17th June 2016, <http://indiatoday.intoday.in/story/indobangladesh-transshipment-formally-begins-today/1/694040.html>. accessed on 14th October, 2022.

MARITIME CONNECTIVITY

Due to its capacity to transport large volumes at low cost per unit of freight, maritime connectivity has historically been the primary mode of transportation in international trade. Consequently, major urban or trading centers in coastal areas have been the result of land transport development patterns. As a result, land transport link among several countries are particularly underdeveloped in Asia Pacific particularly South Asian Region. However, over the course of the past few decades, governments in the region have made significant efforts to expand their national road, railway, ports and in some instances, inland waterway networks, both within their own countries and by connecting to those of their neighbours. The development of a country's major seaports, particularly container ports, has been essential to the expansion of international trade. Indian container terminals have dominated the South Asian region's container terminals for the past two decades, handling increasingly larger cargoes. However, none of the top ten busiest container ports in the world are located in South Asia. By volume, Asia still has the most important liner routes to Europe and North America. However, intra-Asian shipping has significantly increased, particularly between India and South East and East Asian countries. Containerized trade in South Asia has also been rapidly expanding, driven by trade between China and India. Nowadays, direct shipping services or transshipment and transit operations through hub ports link nearly all coastal countries in South Asia. However, there is a lot of variation between the two countries; transporting availability is as yet very poor between two South Asian countries India and Bangladesh. The top ten include three land locked and one island country in South Asia that trade with transshipment ports in neighbouring countries. The 'UNCTAD' Liner Shipping Connectivity Index, which includes measures of the number and capacity of ships as well as the extent of services, is one measure of shipping connectivity. This index demonstrates that, between 2006 and 2011, a number of South Asian economy, including Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Bangladesh and India saw significant increases in shipping connectivity. As a result, as a nation's liner connectivity index rises, shipping costs fall, boosting competitiveness and increasing container traffic. On the other hand, trade costs are likely to have been higher in different countries where liner shipping connectivity has decreased. By investing in and maintaining their maritime ports, governments in South Asia can attract more ships and a wider variety of ships. They might also boost competitiveness by making land transportation, particularly by road and rail, more efficient. Acceleration of more ambitious programmes of upgrading and modernization is possible. India and Bangladesh

reached a number of important agreements to make it easier to connect inland and coastal waterways for trade and cruise travel. India's shipping secretary, Shri Gopal Krishna, and his Bangladeshi counterpart, Md Abdus Samad, signed an agreement to use Bangladesh's Chattogram and Mongla ports for the movement of goods to and from India. They also signed a standard operating procedure (SOP) for the movement of cruise services and passengers. In addition, India and Bangladesh have signed an addendum to the Protocol on Inland Water Transit and Trade (PIWTT) to add Dhubrin and Pangoan as new ports of call. Trade and tourism will gain momentum as a result of these agreements, which will make it easier for goods and passengers to move between the two countries. India and Bangladesh agree to include the Rupnarayan river (National Waterway 86) from Geonkhali to Kolaghat (Medinipur district) in the protocol route to designate Kolaghat in West Bengal as a new port of call. Bangladesh agreed to Chilmari as a stopping point. Fly ash, cement, and other building materials will be able to travel more easily from India to Bangladesh via the Inland Waterways (IWT) connectivity on the Rupnarayan River as a result of this. On a reciprocal basis, the two countries agreed to designate Badarpur on the Barak River (NW-16), Karimganj in Assam, and Ghorasal of Ashuganj in Bangladesh as extended ports of call. India made a proposal to extend the protocol routes from Kolkata all the way to Silchor in Assam.

After the declaration of additional ports of call and the extension of protocol routes, it is anticipated that the amount of cargo transported on protocol routes through Inland Waterways (IWT) connectivity will significantly rise to 3.5 million metric tons. Through waterways, the North Eastern States of India (NER) would be directly connected to the ports of Kolkata, Haldia, both in India and Chittagong and Mongla both in Bangladesh. This could make it easier to move EXIM cargo and save money on logistics. The finalized standard operating procedure (S.O.P) for the movement of cruise ships and passengers on inland protocol routes and coastal shipping routes is yet another significant agreement signed between the two countries in recent times. It is likely that these river cruises will begin between Kolkata, Bangladesh, Guwahati, and Jorhat and back. In addition, it was decided to hire a project management consultant to oversee and monitor the dredging of the Asuganj-Zakiganj and Sraiganj-Daikowa stretches of the India-Bangladesh protocol route in Bangladesh. Bangladesh will pay the remaining 80 percent of the cost, while India will pay the other 80 percent.

INLAND AND COASTAL WATER WAYS CONNECTIVITY

A joint monitoring to bring about significant reduction in logistic cost and faster delivery of Bangladesh export cargo, Indian side raised the point regarding permitting third party EXIM Trade under coastal shipping Agreement (P.I.W.T.T) by allowing trans-shipment through ports on the East Coast of India. Bangladesh agreed to hold stakeholder consultations and revert on the matter. Both sides have also agreed for development of Jogighopa as a trans-shipment terminal for movement of cargo to Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland and Bhutan and notifying Musiganj River terminal by Bangladesh Customs for routing third party EXIM cargo through Kolkata port. Discussions were also held to make Nakugaon Land Port in Bangladesh and Dalu IPC in India operational and to connect Gelephu (Bhutan) as tripartite cross-border route. Seven of India's major ports are along the country's eastern coast, including the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. India has 13 major ports. For India's maritime trade with Bangladesh, the ports of Kolkata-Haldia, Paradip, Visakhapatnam, and Chennai are crucial. It is critical in this setting that in the year 2016-2017 inside the Kolkata port, the Kolkata dock recorded the most elevated trade figure of 17, 79, 766 tons (dry, breakbulk and compartments) while the Haldia dock recorded the most elevated import figure of 17, 682 tons (general freight and holders) among every one of the significant ports on India's east coast. The significance of proximity and long-standing trade ties is clearly demonstrated by these facts about the flow of containers and cargo. In Bangladesh, international cargo is handled by two major ports: Chittagong and Mongla (at Khulna), the former being the main seaport on the Karnafuli River. A new port, Payra, was opened in Patuakhali to alleviate pressure on these two ports and meet the growing demands of the country's economy. The Matarbari port, like Payra's, will help alleviate the congestion at Chittagong and Mongla ports, and once completed, it is anticipated that Matarbari port will be able to compete with Colombo (Srilanka) in terms of transshipment. Additionally, a plan exists to construct a second deep-sea port in Sonadia as part of the 'Bay of Bengal Industrial Growth Belt or Big-B' initiative. Maritime transportation is the most energy-and cost-effective mode of transportation in the world, and shipping industries are crucial to the development of commerce and economic growth. Recognizing this, the Coastal Shipping Agreement (C.S.A) has been under discussion since 2012 as part of efforts to improve maritime connectivity between India and Bangladesh.

India and Bangladesh signed a Coastal Shipping Agreement (C.S.A) at the New Mooring container terminal in Chittagong Port to boost bilateral trade connectivity directly

through ports rather than having goods shipped via Colombo, Singapore, or Klang before the agreement. Additionally, it has cleared the way for Indian goods arriving at the Chittagong Port to be transported to India's North East. Multimodal transportation, such as rail, road, or inland waterways, can be used to transport cargo from Kolkata to either Chittagong or Mongla in Bangladesh or the North East of India. The following routes can be used for this purpose with permission from Bangladesh: Chittagong/Mongla to Dawki (Meghalaya), Chittagong/Mongla to Sutarkandi (Assam), and Agartala (Tripura, India). As Bangladeshi vessels are registered as river-sea vessels in India, they are eligible for certain stipulations that are reserved for Indian coastal vessels. Trade between India and Bangladesh has benefited from this. On the other hand, the coastal shipping route requires increase of ship in numbers. There is currently only container traffic, but there is a pressing need to include cargo ships in order to reduce costs. Even though direct shipping between India and Bangladesh started in 2016, the cargo volume didn't grow as much as expected due to congestion at the Chittagong port in Bangladesh. Bangladeshi shipping lines have recently begun transporting containerized cargo from Kolkata to the Pangaon inland river port, but the volume is still quite low. The only inland container terminal (I.C.T) in Bangladesh at this time is Pangaon, which is located 26 kilometers from Narayanganj on the river Sitalakkha. Indian ships are currently transporting plastic, rice, crude oil, leather, medicines, cosmetics, and rice to Bangladesh. The Indian side may look into shipping cargoes like food grains and raw materials for clothing over sea routes to boost bilateral trade. Between the years 2016 and 2017, it was observed that the protocol route was used to export 2,59,8023 mt of fly ash from India to Bangladesh. Nevertheless, the fact remained that these vessels frequently returned empty. Private trading agencies have incurred more expenses as a result of this. The proportion of Indian vessels in inland water transport (I.W.T) intercountry trade remains negligible despite the protocol's requirement of a 50:50 cargo ratio. In particular, some of the important issues that have limited the anticipated growth of inland water transport (I.W.T) include the necessity of dredging, the absence of assured fairways, and the absence of facilities for night navigation. A series of conversations may be held on both sides of the border to educate stakeholders about the advantages of waterway commerce. The Bay of Bengal is also well-known for its turbulence, and it frequently experiences natural disasters. Additionally frequent tsunamis, cyclones, havoc floods, heavy storm are common in The Bay of Bengal region. The Indian east coast, also known as the 'Cyclone High Damage Risk Zones' and bounded to the west by the Bay, experiences an average of three cyclones annually, particularly between May and June and October and November. The country also experiences frequent earthquakes

and floods, as well as rising sea levels. Due to its physical proximity to the Indian state of West Bengal, Bangladesh shares a vulnerability to natural disasters. These natural calamities frequently turn into disasters because a large number of people from both countries live in this coastal region and depend on the sea for their livelihood. In many previous events, it has been observed that natural calamities that hit West Bengal also hit Bangladesh, and vice versa. As a result, bilateral collaboration in disaster management is necessary on a urgent basis. These efforts must also be spread among the people rather than being restricted to the state level. As a result, joint efforts must be made to build capacity in both Bengals' disaster-affected distressed communities, which will also help spread mutual best practices more effectively. This can be extended to the level of ports, and Bangladeshi ports can collaborate with those in West Bengal, Odisha, Andhra Pradesh, and Tamil Nadu to create an efficient early weather warning system. In this regard, a hotline can also connect the relevant ports. As the vulnerability is the same, joint training of the port community could also be done. Additionally, the region around the Bay of Bengal is extremely susceptible to climate change. The region is experiencing an increase in severe storm frequency and net land loss as a result of global warming, which is also causing an increase in sea surface temperature and sea level. Apart from maritime collaboration for capacity-building, joint research, training, the establishment of joint working groups, and cooperation in the areas of blue economy⁶³⁸ and marine security, these are some important issues that need to be addressed bilaterally for better bilateral relations between the two countries. MV Trans Samudera, a cargo vessel sailing under the flag of Bangladesh, on 4th September, 2022 set sail from the Kolkata port on a special mission. Carrying 25 tonnes of TMT Bars of Tata Steel, the ship will explore new routes for the movement of cargo to and from India's North Eastern states using the waterways in India and Bangladesh. The steel bars will be unloaded at Chittagong Port where MV Trans Samudera will load a container of tea that will travel to the port in Bangladesh from south Assam's Silchar through the Dawki and Tamabil Land Customs Stations (L.C.S). The ship will carry this cargo back to Kolkata. In March 2022, in a Joint Group of Customs (J.G.C) meeting between India and Bangladesh, Shyama Prasad Mukerjee Port (S.M.P), Kolkata, was entrusted with carrying out four such trial runs. These will have to be completed within six months. This is part of the Agreement on the use of Chittagong and Mongla Ports (A.C.M.P) between the two countries. The MV Trans Samudera will explore

⁶³⁸The term blue economy is the sustainable use of ocean resources for economic growth, improved livelihood and jobs while preserving the health of ocean ecosystem.

the route between Tamabil and Chittagong. Earlier, the MV Rishad Rayan already sailed to and from Mongla to survey the route between Tamabil and Mongla. Syama Prasad Mukerjee Port (S.M.P), Kolkata will carry out trials between Mongla and Tamabil, Tamabil and Chittagong, Chittagong and Sheola and Mongla and Bibirbazar. While Tamabil in Bangladesh's Sylhet is close to the border with Meghalaya, Sheola is barely 25 km by road to Karimganj in Assam. Bibirbazar is also close to the border with Tripura. The idea to move cargo from the ports of Kolkata or Haldia to Chittagong and Mongla will significantly improve maritime connectivity between Bangladesh and India. This cargo can then be moved by road to Tamabil, Sheola or Bibirbazar from where they would cross the border into India. Commodities from the North East can also travel back to Kolkata or Haldia along the same route.⁶³⁹

The successful trial of transshipment of goods to India's North-Eastern states via the Chittagong port has significantly improved maritime connectivity between Bangladesh and India in recent time. The MV Shejyoti set sail for Chittagong on 18th July from the Syama Prasad Mukherjee Port in Kolkata, with cargo for businesses in Bangladesh and four containers for Tripura and Assam, India. The trip was historic because it was the first time the facility for transshipment to India's land locked North-Eastern region through the Chittagong port was tested. The move is anticipated to strengthen economic and commercial ties between the two countries. Earlier the bilateral agreement that was signed in 2018 to allow the use of Chittagong and Mongla ports for this purpose led to the creation of this transshipment facility. During her visit to India in October 2019, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina also signed a standard operating procedure (SOP) about this. Through Akhaura, goods can be transhipped from Chittagong and Mongla via road, rail, and water routes to Agartala (Tripura); Tamabil brought Dawki to Meghalaya; Sheila's Sutarkandi (Assam); and Tripura, Srimantpur, via Bibirbazar. The cargo for the North-East of India was transported by road from Chittagong to Agartala during the trial.⁶⁴⁰ The container ship MV Shejyoti (IMO: 9237876, MMSI 405000257), which will transport cargo from Kolkata to Tripura via the Chattogram (Chittagong) Port in Bangladesh, was launched by Union Minister of State for shipping

⁶³⁹“Cargo vessel sails from Kolkata to explore new transit route to Northeast via Bangladesh.” NE NOW NEWS, 4th September, 2022.

⁶⁴⁰<https://www.thestatesman.com/bengal/mv-shejyoti-cargo-ship-sets-sail-for-bangladesh-under-mou-1502909506.html>, accessed on 28.08.2022.

Mansukh Mandaviya on 17th July, 2020. It is a General Cargo Ship built in 2001 (21 years old) and currently sailing under the flag of Bangladesh.⁶⁴¹

The first container vessel, MV Shejyoti, operated by CJ-Darcl and Pennon Shipping, will carry four transit containers loaded with TMT steel bars from Tata Steel and pulses from Estimated Time of Completion (E.T.C)⁶⁴² Agro Processing as part of an agreement between India and Bangladesh for the movement of Indian goods via waterways, rail, road, or multimodal transport⁶⁴³. The containers will be unloaded and then loaded onto trailers at Chittagong Port. The containers will then be transported by road over a 200-kilometer journey to Agartala. In addition, it was learned that this multimodal route will likely be used to transport a significant amount of rice, wheat, pulses, steel, and project cargo to the North-East region in the future.

The Indian government granted permission to open this route between the Shyama Prasad Mukherjee Port in Kolkata and Bangladesh Chittagong Port. The port spokesperson emphasized that the establishment of this route bolsters India and Bangladesh's long-standing bilateral relationship. Both countries stand to benefit from this multimodal route. In addition, it was mentioned earlier that the route would reduce the distance, time, and logistical costs of shipping goods to and from the North East of India. The main benefits for Bangladesh are job creation, increased investment in the logistics sector, integration of supply chain facilities, and promotion of business services like insurance, transportation etc.

The Union Minister of State for shipping, Mansukh Mandaviya flagged off the journey, virtually, in the presence of Mr. Vinit Kumar, chairman, Shyama Prasad Mukherjee (SMP) Port in Kolkata and other senior officers present at the Kolkata Dock. It was learnt that Kolkata is also coordinating the ship movement with the help of High Commission of India at Dhaka and Chattogram Port Authority at Bangladesh. Customs authorities, Tripura government and land port authority are also providing necessary help for this purpose.⁶⁴⁴ The successful trial of transshipment of goods to India's North-Eastern states via the Chittagong port has significantly improved maritime connectivity between Bangladesh and India.

⁶⁴¹<https://en.prothomalo.com/business/transshipment-indian-goods-laden-ship-arrives-at-chattogram-port>, accessed on 28.08.2022.

⁶⁴² Estimated Time of Completion (ETC) commonly used to denote the date and time at which a ship is expected to complete its cargo operations.

⁶⁴³ It includes public transportation, rails and waterways, bicycle and pedestrian. It support the needs of all uses whether they choose to walk.

⁶⁴⁴ **The Statesman News Service**, Kolkata, July 17, 2020.

A clear illustration of the cooperative attitude that guides the bilateral relations can be found at the facility's inception. The goals of the two countries are to improve their connectivity and build a partnership that will benefit both sides for the benefit of the people who live across the border. India's Shipping Minister Mansukh Mandaviya made the observation during the flag-off ceremony that the transit route will provide both countries with new opportunities. Bangladesh State Minister of Shipping Khalid Mahmud also stated that the trial run will open a new horizon for the two countries during a webinar on India-Bangladesh relations. It has been a fantastic step to gain access to the ports of Chittagong and Mongla because it will not only help the region escape its status as a landlocked area but also add another route for connectivity. Since the facility is likely to significantly shorten travel times and distances, making trade feasible, it is anticipated that it will also boost development and enhance trade in terms of connectivity in this region.

Bangladesh, which generates revenue, is likely to benefit. The facilities, will improve business services and generate revenue for the country. Since Bangladeshi vessels and trucks will be used to move the Indian cargo, it is anticipated that this will help Bangladesh in the creation of jobs and investment in the logistical sector. In addition, Indian cargo must pay the necessary taxes to use the Bangladeshi facilities.

The facility is thought to be the first step in the Awami League government's plan to make Bangladesh a hub for better connectivity. The response is generally positive. However, Indian vessels were given priority at the Chittagong Port, according to some media reports that have criticized the government. Rear Admiral. S.M. Abul Kalam Azad, Chairman of Chittagong Port, however, called the media's claim false and misleading. He stated that Indian vessels would receive the same treatment as other foreign vessels.

The on going's bilateral relations between India and Bangladesh have not gone over well with some vested interests. The current maritime connectivity exemplifies the two countries' determination to continuously work toward improving the bilateral relations, which has been steadily growing for more than two decade. The plan has made improving connectivity a top priority. In this regard, the two countries have been concentrating on enhancing their cooperation in connection with maritime and inland waterways.

AIR CONNECTIVITY

Despite the economic downturn, there have been increases both in the number of air passengers and the volume of air freight in South Asia. Between 2000 and 2010, for example,

international passenger traffic in South Asian countries increased by 18.24 percent per annum to 76 million. The air freight reached to 2452.99 million ton-km in 2010, increased by about 10 percent per annum since 2000. Aircraft departures in South Asia were increased by about 8 percent per annum in the last decade. For example, in absolute term, Afghanistan, Maldives and Nepal were net losers in air freight during 2000 and 2010; rest South Asian countries were net gainers. Maldives and Nepal were net losers in air passengers in the same period. Many airlines closed their operations in Pakistan, Nepal and Maldives, whereas rise in aircraft departure in India has been phenomenal. In general, India has been driving the growth in air transportation sector in South Asia. Delhi is fast becoming the air transportation hubs in South Asia, and may act like a strong pillar in regional aviation cooperation in South Asia. However change in air transportation performance has been uneven across South Asia. The increase in passenger and cargo transported by air is partly due to the improvement of air transport connectivity in the region. During the past decade, more low-cost carriers have entered the market, flight frequencies have increased, and countries have invested in new and existing airports. Most countries in South Asia are now linked, either directly or through hubs, and have taken progressive steps towards developing air service agreements and liberalizing their air transport industry. However, the region is yet to achieve full liberalization of air freight and passengers. Capital cities in South Asia are yet to be connected by direct airlines. For example, Delhi and Islamabad or Dhaka and Islamabad are yet to have direct flight. Even though bigger economies have direct air links for passenger and freight in South Asia, smaller countries, more importantly, landlocked and island countries heavily depend on neighbouring countries for air transportation⁶⁴⁵. The landlocked and island countries in South Asia tremendously suffer from aviation infrastructure. Special attention should be given to improve the aviation infrastructure in landlocked and island countries. Air traffic in South Asia is poised to continue to grow strongly. For the period 2010-2020, the International Civil Aviation Organization (I.C.A.O) estimates that passenger aircraft movement will increase annually by about 5 percent, while between 2010 and 2014, passenger traffic on many intra-South Asia routes is projected to increase annually by about 10 percent. Any improvement in Air connectivity will reduce the time and cost for air travel could stimulate a considerable increase, more importantly in landlocked and island countries. Engaging private sector in developing and running airports and airlines would be one great

⁶⁴⁵ Website of the High Commission of India, Dhaka Bangladesh, brief on road, rail and air connectivity, 30th March 2022

solution to lack in aviation connectivity. So, governments should facilitate private sector to develop aviation industry. For examples like Indian company GMR, which is running Delhi and Hyderabad international airports in India, is developing Greenfield airports in abroad. However, while investment in airports is important, governments should also consider the transport infrastructure needed to link them to their production and population centres by developing their overland transport networks. The peripheral and inland areas in South Asia should also be covered by air transport networks. Biman Bangladesh Airlines, the national carrier of Bangladesh connects Dhaka with Delhi and Kolkata. Besides, private carrier Jet Airways of India also connects India's financial capital city Mumbai and national capital City, Delhi and Kolkata while United Airways of Bangladesh, connects Kolkata with Dhaka and Chittagong. Both the countries decided to introduce air transit for trade purposes. This new system of connectivity was signed in May 2020 by India and Bangladesh. As a result, for travel by air, around 100 flights operate weekly between New Delhi, Kolkata, Mumbai and Chennai to Dhaka and Chittagong.⁶⁴⁶ During Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Bangladesh in March 2021, Sheikh Hasina 'offered the use of Chittogram and Sylhet International Airport, by the people of North East India, especially of Tripura.'⁶⁴⁷ There are presently many flights operating weekly between India and Bangladesh connecting various Indian cities like New Delhi, Kolkata, Mumbai and Chennai to Dhaka and Chittagong. From Bangladesh, US-Bangla Airlines, NOVOAIR, Regent Airways and Biman Bangladesh; and from India, Jet Airways, Spice Jet, Indigo and Air India are operating flights between India and Bangladesh.

PEOPLE TO PEOPLE CONNECTIVITY

The first turning point on people to people connectivity in border area came in 1965 when the first India-Pakistan war began over the dispute in Jammu and Kashmir. The full scale war ended through a cease-fire agreement between India and Pakistan but the political relationship and rivalry between the two neighbouring countries remained unchanged. There were infiltrations and accusations of covert operations and so India and Pakistan began to tighten the grips on their borders. As a result, the free movement of people between East Pakistan (later Bangladesh) and India were affected. The two countries were no longer ready to allow people on both sides to travel without proper valid documents. Visa, passport

⁶⁴⁶Website of the High Commission of India, Dhaka Bangladesh, brief on road, rail and air connectivity, 30th March 2022.

⁶⁴⁷'Joint Statement issued on the occasion of the visit of Prime Minister of India to Bangladesh' Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, 27th March 2021.

regimes began and people on both sides began to realize that they were living in two separate countries and had got separated permanently. As a result, restrictions on trade, commerce, communications and movement began. People who were families outside the border could not visit each other, the markets they used to visit to buy products were now inaccessible to them. Doctors, hospitals, educational institutions they used to share were no longer approachable to them. On the other hand, many poor people could not afford to visit country's capital to get passports and visas for visiting friends, families and relatives outside the country.

The second turning point on people to people connectivity between India and Bangladesh came in 1971 when millions of Bangladeshis crossed the border into India to survive their lives from the atrocities of the Pakistani Razakar Bahini and Pakistani Army. They fled to India for food and shelter and began to fight for their country's freedom. The 10 months bloody Liberation War lasted from March-December of 1971 and ended with the creation of new land Bangladesh – an independent infant Nation State in Indian subcontinent on 16th December, 1971. The relationship between India and Bangladesh is anchored in history and lies on the principles of sovereignty, equality, trust, understanding, and growth, vision of peace and stability that goes far beyond a strategic partnership.

The friendship on both sides of the border between India and Bangladesh, however, did not last long on account of devastating famine in Bangladesh as well as illegal migration in India in 1974. As a result, the border became a major ground for the proliferation of cross-border crimes. Major crimes across the India-Bangladesh border include-human trafficking, drug smuggling, arms/ammunition/ explosive, trafficking, dealing with fake currencies, trespassing (arm/unarmed) of the border, smuggling, theft, terrorism, straying of animals, cattle smuggling and illegal migration, smuggling of arms and narcotics, trafficking of women and children and there were serious accusations from the Indian side that illegal migration of Bangladeshi people into India was on the rise. As a result India tightened its border by erecting barbed wire, watch tower, BOP and deployed BSF to surveillance the illegal activities of border areas.

IMPORTANT BILATERAL AGREEMENT

An Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between the two Governments for cooperation in fashion technology, skills exchange, productivity enhancement and techno-commercial collaboration in development of textiles. Investor road shows organized in

Mumbai, Chennai and Kolkata in June 2013 by the Board of Investment of Bangladesh in partnership with Confederation of Indian Industries (C.I.I) and the India-Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce and Industry resulted in signing of Memorandum of Understanding between Indian and Bangladeshi companies amounting to almost US\$ 100 million for investment in Bangladesh. In view of duty-free, quota-free access to 46 textile tariff lines of greatest sensitivity and duty-free, quota-free access to all items except 25 tariff lines consisting of tobacco, spirits and alcohol to Bangladesh, Bangladesh exports to India rose from \$ 498.4 million in 2011-2012 to US\$ 563.9 million in 2012-2013, an increase of 13.15 per cent over the previous year. It is the highest ever level of exports from Bangladesh to India and makes Bangladesh currently India's largest trading partner among SAARC countries.⁶⁴⁸ Cooperation in the areas of trade, commerce and connectivity continued through the 8th Joint Working Group (JWG) meeting on Trade held in New Delhi on 13-14th June 2013; the 9th Joint Group on Customs held in Dhaka on 21-22nd October 2013; and the 16th Standing Committee under Protocol on Inland Water Transit and Trade (P.I.W.T.T) held on 29th September 2013 in Dhaka. The Integrated Check Post (I.C.P) at Agartala was inaugurated by Home Minister Shri Sushil Kumar Shinde in the presence of Bangladesh Home Minister Dr. Muhiuddin Khan Alamgir on 17th November 2013. The Ninth round of Joint Working Group (J.W.G) on Trade was held in Dhaka on 12-13th March 2014 during which the two sides reviewed the current status of bilateral trade and discussed measures to improve border infrastructure for trade, trade facilitation by information exchange, upgradation of testing facilities and removal of bottlenecks to trade. Institutional talks continued in the sectors of Textile Cooperation, Health Cooperation, Fisheries and Trade Cooperation. The First Meeting of the Joint Working Group (JWG) for Textile Cooperation was held in Dhaka on 27th February, 2014. The First meeting of the Joint Working Group on Health Cooperation was held in New Delhi on 26-27th February 2014. The First Meeting of the Joint Working Group on Fisheries Cooperation was held on 12-13th March 2014, in Dhaka. Similarly, the first meeting of the Task Force on Fake Currency Notes was held in New Delhi on 22-24th January 2014. Cooperation in power sector has progressed satisfactorily during the period. Grid connectivity between India and Bangladesh was jointly inaugurated through video conferencing by the Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on 5th October 2013, which has enabled Bangladesh to import 500 MW of power from

⁶⁴⁸https://www.mea.gov.in/Uploads/PublicationDocs/23873_EXTERNAL_AFFAIR_Eng_AR_2013-14.pdf, accessed on 10.12.2018, **Annual Report 2013-14**, Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, New Delhi

India. During the visit of Power Secretary Shri Uma Shankar to Bangladesh in April 2013, three agreements namely, Power Purchase Agreement (P.P.A), Implementation Agreement (I.A) and Supplementary Joint Venture Agreement (S.J.V.A) were signed for the Joint Venture 1320 MW Power Plant in Khulna. The sixth meeting of the India-Bangladesh Joint Steering Committee (J.S.C) on Cooperation in the Power Sector was held in New Delhi on 26-27th June 2013 and the second meeting of the JWG on Renewable Energy Cooperation was held in Dhaka in November 2013. ONGC Videsh Ltd (OVL) and Petrobangla signed two Production Sharing Contracts for exploration and production of oil and gas in two shallow water blocks in the Bay of Bengal on 17th February 2014. This is the first time, Bangladesh awarded shallow water blocks to Indian state-run oil company OVL to explore gas and oil. Steady progress has been achieved in the utilization of the US\$ 1 billion Line of Credit extended to Bangladesh, which is the largest single line of credit given by India to any country. Projects worth US\$ 795 million have already been agreed upon and 14 contracts for 11 projects have been signed. Most of them are under the implementation/completion stage. Similarly, US\$ 150 million out of US\$ 200 million was India's Neighbours released in three tranches during the year as grant-in-aid. Government of India also fulfilled its commitment by establishing IT labs in model schools of each of the 64 districts of Bangladesh, inaugurated by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on 4th September 2013. India also distributed 2800 solar lamps to the families affected by cyclone Sidr that rocked the coastal areas in November 2007 causing widespread death and destruction. India and Bangladesh signed an Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on 11th April 2013 on implementation of Small Development Projects.⁶⁴⁹

The First sub-regional meeting between Bangladesh, Bhutan and India on Water & Power and Transit & Connectivity was held on 18th April 2013 and 19th April 2013 in Dhaka, respectively. This meeting was the first initiative of its kind and is expected to pave the way for future comprehensive cooperation in the sub-regional context towards attainment of common aspirations of economic development and prosperity of the region for mutual benefit. As part of continuing exchanges in the defence sector, Bangladesh Chief of Army Staff, General Iqbal Karim Bhuiyan visited India from 31st March to 5th April 2013 and General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Eastern Command, Lieutenant General Dalbir Singh, visited Bangladesh on 23- 26th September 2013.⁶⁵⁰ Defence cooperation between the two

⁶⁴⁹ Ibid

⁶⁵⁰ Ibid

countries was further strengthened by 4th Army to Army Staff talks held in Dhaka on 25-28th August 2013 and 1st Navy to Navy Staff talks held in New Delhi on 15-17th April 2013. A first-ever high-level delegation of Vice Chancellors of leading universities of Bangladesh visited India on 14-19th December 2013. The visit aimed at strengthening educational cooperation, exchanges and contacts between India and Bangladesh. Professor Emeritus of Dhaka University and eminent Bangladeshi scholar and writer Professor Anisuzzaman was conferred the Padma Bhushan for Literature and Education in 2014. Professor Anisuzzaman is the first recipient of this Award in Bangladesh.⁶⁵¹

President Pranab Mukherjee's visit to Bangladesh

President Pranab Mukherjee visited Bangladesh on 3-5th March, 2013 in a trip that is expected to take bilateral relations between the two neighbours to new heights. This was the first visit by an Indian President to Bangladesh after nearly 40 years and only the second after its liberation from Pakistan since 1971. Before Pranab Mukherjee Former President V.V. Giri had visited Bangladesh in 1974.⁶⁵² This was also his first visit after becoming the President of India in 2013. During his visit he was accompanied by the Minister of State for Railways Shri Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury and an Indian Parliamentary Delegation consisting of 4 MPs from major political Parties.⁶⁵³

Despite widespread protest by the oppositions Jamaat-e-Islami (Jamaat) and the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) against an unprecedented Shahbag upsurge by those demanding the death penalty for the war criminals of 1971, Indian President Pranab Mukherjee stuck to his visit sending a clear message that India values good neighbourly relations with Bangladesh.⁶⁵⁴ So this visit assumed significance for two reasons: (1) it happened at a time when the country seem to be once again reviving the spirit of the liberation war. (2) Through the visit India tried to consolidate its bilateral relations with Bangladesh which had seen an upswing in the last couple of years. Bangladesh too attached a lot of importance to the visit and rolled out the red carpet for President Pranab Mukherjee who was honoured with Bangladesh's national award for his valuable contribution to the

⁶⁵¹ Ibid

⁶⁵² www.theindependentbd.com/index.php?option=com-content&view=article&jd=158310:warm-welcome-to-indian-president-in-dhaka, accessed on 08.04.2016.

⁶⁵³ Ranjana Narayan, 'Pranab in Dhaka amid more deaths', **The New Indian Express**, New Delhi, March 3, 2013.

⁶⁵⁴ Jaynath Jacob, 'Violence, deaths and snub greet Pranab in Dhaka', **Hindustan Times**, Kolkata, 3rd March, 2013.

country's liberation war in 1971. Indeed during the 1971 war, he was one of the main Indian political leaders who supported and assisted the Provincial Government of Bangladesh in Kolkata. The people of Bangladesh bear a debt of gratitude to him. He was handed over a crest of 'Bangladesh Muktiyuddho Sammanona' (Bangladesh Freedom Honour) in the ceremony at the Darbar Hall in the Bangladesh President Bhavan (Banga Bhavan) by President Zillur Rahman.⁶⁵⁵ At the occasion President Mukherjee said "I feel humbled as I receive this prestigious award, the 'Bangladesh Liberation War Honour' as I feel that my contribution was modest." He also said "as I recall those days I can't help the feeling that my effort was almost peripheral compared to the enormous responsibilities shouldered by many others during the freedom struggle – not only in Bangladesh but also in India. Therefore I accept this distinction conferred on me with a greatest humility."⁶⁵⁶ He was also conferred the degree of 'Doctor of Law Honori's (D.Litt)' by the Dhaka University.⁶⁵⁷ Besides, the Indian President held meeting with all top leaders of the Awami League (A.L) Government to deepen the bilateral relations. He also met General Hussien Mumtaz Ershad who called on him and discussed the Teesta and land border issues. During this visit Indian President Shri Pranab Mukherjee made clear India's intention to take the bi-lateral relations as well as people to people connectivity with Bangladesh to a new level. The Teesta River Water sharing deal and Land Boundary Agreement are two important issues for Bangladesh. During his visit Mukherjee underlined the need for building consensus on two key issues to improve ties with Dhaka.⁶⁵⁸

He also pointed out that in a democracy there are "divergence of views on many issues but there are some areas where there is a consensus to develop good relations with Bangladesh in such an area on which there is consensus."⁶⁵⁹ Making a strong case for transit through Bangladesh, President Mukherjee said that it could pave the way for greater integration between South and South-East Asia. He also pointed out that Bangladesh has a unique geographical location that can make it act as a bridge between South and South-East

⁶⁵⁵ President's states visit to Bangladesh (March 3-5, 2013), Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, available at www.mea.gov.in/photofeatures.htm?805/presidents+state+visit+to+bangladesh+march+3+2013, accessed on 08.04.2016.

⁶⁵⁶ **Bharat Bichitra Fortnightly**, A High Commission of India Publication, Volume.8, No.2, 15th March, 2013, available at www.hcidhak.org/fortnight/20130315_eng.pdf, accessed on 08.04.2016

⁶⁵⁷ Zaglul Ahmed Chowdhury, 'How has the state visit of Pranab gone off?' **The Financial Express**, Bangladesh, 7th March, 2013.

⁶⁵⁸ <http://www.bdnews24.com/Bangladesh/2013/03/03/pranab-mukherjee-in-dhaka>, accessed on 08.04.2016.

⁶⁵⁹ <http://www.bdnews24.com/Bangladesh/2013/03/03/pranab-mukherjee-in-dhaka>, accessed on 08.04.2016

Asia. The only bitter part of the visit was the cancellation of the scheduled meeting with the Indian President by the main opposition leader of Bangladesh, Begum Khaleda Zia. The Jamaat was in violent agitation in the country to press for a halt to the trial of fundamentalist leaders for war crimes during Bangladesh's liberation war. The BNP itself announced another strike on 5th March, which was immediately after the strike called by the Jamaat.⁶⁶⁰

Sushma Swaraj's visit to Bangladesh

Smt. Sushma Swaraj's first stand-alone visit in June, 2014 as the External Affairs Minister had set the tone for India's bilateral relations with Bangladesh under the National Democratic Alliance (N.D.A) regime. This formed part of the Prime Minister Narendra Modi's focus on the 'Neighbourhood First Policy.' This visit not only provided her with a firsthand knowledge of where the bilateral relations stood, but was to 'renew acquaintance'. She met with Bangladesh's President, Prime Minister and the Foreign Minister as well as the leader of opposition BNP Rowshan Ershad and Begum Khaleda Zia which was equally significant in India's effort to establish broad based relationship cutting across the party line.

While the visit was proposed as a good will visit, some of the issues from the Bangladesh side that have been bedeviling bilateral relations came up for discussion particularly the conclusion of Teesta water Treaty and the ratification of the Land Boundary Agreement. Smt. Swaraj assured Dhaka that New Delhi would conclude the Land Boundary Agreement as soon as possible and would try to make a consensus on 'Teesta water issue' with West Bengal. Both sides agreed to new measures to further consolidate bilateral relations to increase the frequency of Moitree Express, selling additional 100 MW electricity from Tripura, reducing firing incidents at the border etc. Both the countries also agreed to start a new bus service from Dhaka-Shillong-Guwahati and provide five year multi-entry visa to children under the age of 18 and people above the age of 65, open four more border haats in Meghalaya, extradite Bangladeshi criminals who use the porous border to take shelter in India after committing crime in Bangladesh. Continuing with its earlier policy, Hasina's government assured that it would not allow its territory to be used against India. Clearly, the government in New Delhi wanted to try and tackle some of the nagging issues like trade and transit and river water sharing. During her visit both the countries took some necessary steps

⁶⁶⁰“After 40 yrs, Prez to visit Bangladesh”, **Hindustan Times**, Kolkata, 26th February, 2013, and **Hindustan Times**, Kolkata, 3rd March, 2013.

to build confidence⁶⁶¹. **First**, while it is important to increase the frequency of Moitree express and add additional AC coaches to the train, both the countries need to take steps to see that immigration process for the passengers is simplified and is completed in the minimum possible time. Passengers often complain that immigration takes much more time than the travel time. This is the reason Moitree express which connected the two countries after 43 years has not been a popular mode of transport. The train service is renewed every three years by both the countries. **Second**, efforts need to be made to operationalize border haats in other bordering states. Meghalaya is the only state which has two functional border haats. **Third**, to reduce firing incidents at the border requires effective border guarding mechanism. This would need close cooperation between the Border Security Force (BSF) of India and the Bangladesh Border Guard (B.B.G). Night curfew is generally imposed by the BSF on the border to prevent illegal activities and no such measure is adopted by the BBG. External Affairs Minister Smt. Sushima Swaraj emphasized the need to ‘put in place legal and administrative regime which encourages adherence to law’ and help in reducing incidents at border. Since smuggling is a major problematic issue for the two countries, close cooperation must be needed to tackle the problem. In fact, the BSF and BGB lists of challenges they face while guarding the border presented at the border coordination meetings is a mirror image of each other; yet they cannot optimise cooperation because both have different priorities. While the Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) has a problem with phensydil being smuggled into Bangladesh; it has no such problem with the cattle smuggling; for the BSF the opposite is true. Without coordination it would be difficult to enforce zero killing. It is thus important to devise means to see how the two forces (BSF and BBG) jointly can prevent illegal activities in the border that is responsible for most of firings. **Fourth**, the Joint River Commission which was made redundant during the BNP regime as no meeting was held should meet at regular interval.

The External Affairs Minister’s meeting with the leader of opposition BNP Rawsan Ershad and Begum Khaleda Zia was significant. It was evident that the BNP was keen on having this meeting after it had refused to meet President Pranab Mukherjee in 2013. India has been consistently engaging the B.N.P for the past few years in its attempt to develop broad-based political relationship. India is not very keen to engage Jamaat-a party which many Indian think that it has a role in fomenting terrorism with Pakistani ISI and anti-India propaganda and continues to have relationship with different separatist groups and political

⁶⁶¹ **The Telegraph**, Kolkata, 27th June, 2014.

forces that are keen to destabilize India. Its role in the attack on Hindu minorities in Bangladesh remain an issue of concern. The External Affairs Minister (E.A.M) proposed 'new approaches and fresh thinking' for the purpose of 'building productive partners in the neighbourhood.' It was evident that the National Democratic Alliance (N.D.A) government will consolidate the relationship and take it further as Prime Minister Modi in his letter to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina wrote "to foster a new era of cooperation and connectivity across the South Asian region."⁶⁶² She also handed over a letter from Narendra Modi to her Bangladesh counterpart Sheikh Hasina inviting her to visit India soon and committing her government to "further accelerating our engagement and strengthening the framework of our relationship."⁶⁶³ Swaraj's speech on "India-Bangladesh Relations: A Framework for Cooperation" at the Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies (B.I.I.S.S) meeting has been widely discussed in Bangladesh's civil society. In her speech, Swaraj emphasised on comprehensive and equitable partnership, mutually beneficial relationship, youth development and youth-led development, people to people contact, and inter-linkages to move forward in South Asia. She referred to the fact that both India and Bangladesh shed blood together in 1971 Liberation War and she did not forget to mention Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman as the architect of Bangladesh. The Minister enthralled the audience in Dhaka as she spoke, "I come to Bangladesh with a message of friendship and goodwill from the newly elected government in India. I come with the goal of enhancing our relationship and mutual understanding. I come with the belief that the potential of our partnership is vast. I come with the faith that the people of both our countries desire and deserve closer relations and concrete results.... Our desire is that India and Bangladesh should flourish together as two equal partners. We share not just our past but also our future."⁶⁶⁴

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's maiden visit to Bangladesh

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee went to Dhaka trip on 6th June, 2015 to renew an international agreement with Bangladesh. The West Bengal Chief Minister had been to Dhaka in February 2015 on the invitation of the Bangladesh government. This time she was accompanied with Modi. Sheikh Hasina government's expectation was fulfilled when India signed the historic Land Boundary

⁶⁶²[http://www.Sushma Swaraj's visit to Bangladesh_ A new beginning_ _ Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses.html](http://www.SushmaSwaraj's%20visit%20to%20Bangladesh_%20A%20new%20beginning_%20Institute%20for%20Defence%20Studies%20and%20Analyses.html), accessed on 01.04.2016.

⁶⁶³**The Telegraph**, Kolkata, 27th June, 2014.

⁶⁶⁴http://www.ipcs.org/pdf_file/issue/SR177-Forecasts-Bangladesh-Delwar.pdf, accessed on 13.04.2016.

Agreement (LAB) along with 21 other agreements though the Teesta Water Treaty remained unsolved. Prime Minister Narendra Modi passed the Constitution amendment bill seeking to settle India's 41-year-old border issue with Bangladesh. The bill operationalized the '1974 India-Bangladesh Land Boundary agreement' that provides for outright exchange of 161 enclaves held by the two countries. The Centre also declared rehabilitation package for enclave dwellers willing to come to India. Mamata Banerjee's party 'Trinomul Congress' (T.M.C) lent its support to the Bill after external affairs minister Smt. Sushma Swaraj gave a specific assurance on rehabilitation package in Parliament.⁶⁶⁵ A list of 22 agreements were signed, exchanged, adopted and handed over between Bangladesh and India during Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's maiden visit to Dhaka. These were-Exchange of Instruments of Ratification of 1974 Land Boundary Agreement and its 2011 Protocol; Exchange of letters on Modalities for implementation of 1974 Land Boundary Agreement and its 2011 Protocol; Bilateral Trade Agreement (renewal); Agreement on Coastal Shipping between Bangladesh and India; Protocol on Inland Water Transit and Trade (renewal); Bilateral Cooperation on Agreement between Bangladesh Standards & Testing Institution (BSTI) and Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) on Cooperation in the field of Standardization; Agreement on Dhaka-Shillong-Guwahati Bus Service and its Protocol; Agreement on Kolkata-Dhaka-Agartala Bus Service and its Protocol; Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Coast Guards; Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Prevention of Human Trafficking; Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Prevention of Smuggling and Circulation Fake Currency Notes; Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Bangladesh and India and for Extending a New Line of Credit (LoC) for US \$2 billion by Government of India to Government of Bangladesh; Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Blue Economy and Maritime Cooperation in the Bay of Bengal and the India Ocean; Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Use of Chittagong and Mongla Ports; Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for a Project under IECC (India Endowment for Climate Change) of SAARC; Memorandum of Understanding on Indian Economic Zone; Cultural Exchange Programme for the years 2015-2017; Statement of Intent on Bangladesh-India Education Cooperation (adoption); Agreement between Bangladesh Submarine Cable Company Limited (BSCCL) and Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) for leasing of international bandwidth for internet at Akhaura; Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between University of Dhaka, Bangladesh and University of Jamia Milia Islamia, India; Memorandum of Understanding between

⁶⁶⁵**The Times of India**, Kolkata, 6th June, 2014.

University of Rajshahi, Bangladesh and University of Jamia Milia Islamia, India; Handing over of Consent Letter by Insurance Development and Regulatory Authority (IDRA), Bangladesh to Life Insurance Cooperation (LIC), India to start operation in Bangladesh.⁶⁶⁶

President Ram Nath Kovind visit to Bangladesh.

President Ram Nath Kovind paid a state visit to Bangladesh from 15th-17th December, 2021 to commemorate Bangladesh's 50th anniversary of independence.⁶⁶⁷ President Kovind's two-day state visit was at the invitation of Bangladesh President Abdul Hamid. President Kovind was in Dhaka as the chief guest to attend the celebrations of the Golden Jubilee of the Victory Day of Bangladesh.⁶⁶⁸ This was his first trip to Bangladesh since the Covid-19 pandemic. On the occasion of golden jubilee a military parade took place, and Indians from each of the three services joined in this celebration. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and her Awami League supporters had not forgotten that India, under the leadership of late Prime Minister Smt. Indira Gandhi, played a significant crucial role in the Liberation war of Bangladesh in 1971. The Eastern command of the Pakistani army, led by General A.A.K Niazi, and 93,000 Pakistani soldiers also gave up their weapons and surrendered to the Indian and Bangladeshi forces on 16th December 1971. This resulted in the end of the liberation war and the birth of a free nation in South Asia. In the Liberation War, more than 1,000 Indian soldiers also perished. During his first visit to Dhaka president Kovind was at the National Martyr's Memorial in the capital, where he honoured all those who gave their lives for freedom struggle. In 1971, the Pakistani military carried out a military crackdown that resulted in the deaths of approximately three million Bangladeshi people. These deaths occurred not only during the conflict but also during the time preceding it, when brutal Pakistani force was used against civilians. The notorious murder of Dhaka university intellectuals and students, as well as atrocities committed against the civilian population who supported the independence movement. Indian foreign secretary Mr. Harsh Vardhan Shringla said at a Press conference ahead of the President Ram Nath Kovind's visit to Bangladesh, "It was an article of faith for us." India stood shoulder to shoulder with the people of Bangladesh. He also stated that Dhaka remained the central pillar of India's 'Neighborhood

⁶⁶⁶**The Daily Star**, Dhaka, 6th June 2014.

⁶⁶⁷ "President Kovind begins 3-day visit to Bangladesh to attend 50th Victory Day celebrations",

Hindustan Times, 15th December, 2021

⁶⁶⁸<https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/president-ram-nath-kovind-begins-3-day-visit-to-bangladesh-to-attend-50th-victory-day-celebrations-101639541783189.html>, accessed on 28.08.2022.

First Policy’ and that relations between Bangladesh and India were in a golden phase. He was not in the mood to be reminded of the communal unrest in Bangladesh caused by the Citizenship Amendment Act (C.A.A), the National Register of Citizens (N.R.C), or the communal riot for humiliation of holy Koran on the hand of idol Lord Ganesh in Bangladesh during the Durga Puja celebrations in 2021. Instead, he focused on the positive aspects of the relationship between the two countries and said that the political leaders of the two countries “addressed issues that come up from time to time.” Overall, he said, all of this did not affect how strong the relationship between the two countries was. ‘Opportunity to renew our bonds,’ he said, referring to the President’s visit. He went on to discuss the breadth and depth of the relationship, stating that despite the Covid-19 pandemic, bilateral trade was up 14 percent from \$9.46 billion last year to \$10.78 billion this year (2021).

He pointed out that the purpose of the President’s visit was “to remember a great victory for a great cause.” Both Delhi and Dhaka are in a celebratory mood right now, and any unfavorable questions are being brushed aside for the time being.⁶⁶⁹

MEDICAL TOURISM: A NEW WAY OF CONNECTIVITY

India has really arisen as an exceptionally safe destination of Bangladeshi people for better medical treatment. People all over the world now recognize and generally agree that India is home to some of the best-trained medical professionals in the world. The advantages go on and on, including zero waiting times, a wide range of procedures and treatment options, top-notch infrastructure, and skilled personnel to perform any medical procedure.⁶⁷⁰ India and Bangladesh have been successful in forging strong ties in several sectors. Health and tourism are most prominent among them. It highlights the transfer of knowledge and resources between the two countries. Formal agreements were signed for advanced medical research with long term targets and disease surveillance. More collaborative projects like the Jawaharlal Institute of Post-graduate Medical Education and Research-BIMSTEC Telemedicine Network in Puducherry to improve regional cooperation in healthcare among the BIMSTEC member countries will be beneficial for the entire region.

⁶⁶⁹<https://www.mea.gov.in/pressreleases.htm?dtl/34603/State+Visit+of+the+President+of+India+to+Bangladesh+December+1517+2021>, accessed on 28.10.2022.

⁶⁷⁰<https://archive.dhakatribune.com/world/south-asia/2021/07/24/54-of-medical-tourists-to-india-are-bangladeshis-data-show,also> “54% of medical tourists to India are Bangladeshis, data shows”, **Dhaka Tribune**, 24th July, 2021, Eisamay(Kolkata), 29th August, 2018, p-7

A large number of patients are traveling from Bangladesh to India for various medical and surgical treatments as medical tourism grows rapidly. Saving money on typically expensive procedures is the primary draw for these medical tourists. In addition, many procedures and treatments that are readily available and reasonably priced in India are unavailable in Bangladesh. The majority of treatments in India cost less than one tenth of what they do in other major countries like the United States or the United Kingdom, France, Japan and Germany. As a result, more Bangladeshi citizens are traveling to India for better medical treatment. However, despite its wealth, Bangladesh's healthcare system is not performing well. Because these factors are affecting the country's overall development, the government of Bangladesh has been trying sincerely to overcome the health crisis and the lack of medical resources. Due to inadequate resource distribution and limited access to high-quality medical care, widespread corruption, dire poverty, and a lack of resources, public healthcare in Bangladesh generally lacks clinical standardity and quality.⁶⁷¹

As a medical tourism destination, India maintains not only a strong accreditation system but also a large number of accredited facilities. Expert physicians and specialists with national and international experience, use of cutting-edge technology that matches global benchmarks, skilled doctors, highly trained nurses, paramedics and assistant staff, low or no waiting period rejuvenation and recreational programmes for patients, huge costs benefits, therefore, India is unquestionably the best option if a complicated procedure or other critical treatment has been recommended to the patient or someone who care about. India is a very lucrative destination due to its world-class medical facilities, which are comparable to those of any Western countries, competitive treatment costs, and patient-friendly atmosphere.⁶⁷²

With the advancement of globalization newer and newer technologies are being adopted on a regular basis in India, all of the leading and well-known hospitals have made significant investments in technology and surgical techniques. As a result, high-end technology is used to perform complex heart surgeries, cancer treatments, neurosurgeries, and even general surgeries for safer and better outcomes, fewer complications, faster recovery, and shorter hospital stays. All of these benefits demonstrate that India is completely prepared

⁶⁷¹“54% of medical tourists were from Bangladesh”, **Times of India**, 24th July, 2021.

⁶⁷²Ilkogretim Online - Elementary Education Online, 2020; Vol 19, Issue 4: p.p- 7136-7145 <http://ilkogretim-online.org>, accessed on 28.08.2022.

and mature when it comes to being a destination for medical tourism.⁶⁷³The following are a few of the things that are attracting the attention of the Bangladesh medical tourists to India.

1. Free second opinion: Any health-related discomfort or serious illness causes us to feel a lot of anxiety and doubt; whether it's about the diagnosis or the doctor's skill. Medical hospital arrange for a complimentary second opinion through their affiliated hospitals and doctors, surgeons to help patient resolve this issue. The trust that exists between Doctor and patient is unquestionably bolstered by this.

2. Clinical camps are held to raise public awareness of a variety of health issues and to provide free and easily accessible services. In these camps, there are doctors and paramedics who can give patient detailed advice on a variety of critical illnesses, as well as the best course of treatment, changes to one's lifestyle and diet.

3. Special packages: Another important concern for patients when choosing a treatment location is whether or not they can afford the treatments. Indian hospitals make sure that patients are happy and completely satisfied with the prices of their desired treatments and procedures. Both private and public hospitals create individualized medical packages keeping in mind with patients' socio-economic backgrounds.

4. Language Assistance: The doctor and the patients should always be able to communicate with each other. As a result, it is a very important issue because health recovery require precise and in-depth communication. Therefore, it is very important for the medical staff to comprehend what the patient is trying to say. Indian hospitals take care of any interruptions by arranging skilled translators and interpreters to ensure patients' request. It reaches the doctor correctly and vice versa. Besides Bangladeshi national language is Bengali and india's west Bengal has the same. That is why, most of the Bangladeshi medical tourist come to Kolkata for better treatment.

5. Services for follow-up: For a speedy recovery, prompt follow-up is absolutely necessary. The procedure is considered to be incomplete if proper follow-up is not provided. If this stage is skipped, the procedure will be unsuccessful for both the patient and the surgeon. By arranging for follow-up services even after the patient has returned to his home country

⁶⁷³<https://www.tour2india4health.com/en-bd/>accessed on 28.08.2022.

6. Quick visa assistance: Indo–Bangladesh visa assistance staff is available around the clock to handle all of patients’ visa-related questions and concerns. Officials are aware that there is a degree of urgency associated with each health issue. As a result, they make every effort to make the visa procedure as easy as possible for patient so that they don’t waste time and get the best treatment on time.

CRUISE TOURISM: A NEW WAY OF CONNECTIVITY

According to the Maritime India Vision (2030)⁶⁷⁴, the governments of India and Bangladesh will work together to promote cruise tourism by using the various transboundary rivers that run between the two countries. As a means of connecting tourist destinations along the Ganga, Brahmaputra, and other transboundary rivers, ‘river cruise tourism’ on the Indo-Bangladesh Protocol (IBP) route is being promoted.⁶⁷⁵

On 26th June, 2008, the Indian government approved the Ministry of Shipping’s Cruise Shipping Policy. Under the chairmanship of Secretary (Shipping), a Steering Committee has been established to address all Cruise Tourism-related issues. The Member Secretary of this Committee is the Joint Secretary of the Ministry of Tourism. The goals of the Cruise Shipping policy are to make India a desirable destination for cruise tourism by providing cutting-edge infrastructure and other facilities throughout the country. It also aims to attract all kind of foreign tourists to cruise shipping in India and to make cruise shipping more popular with Indian and neighbouring tourists.

However, a number of obstacles must be overcome, including security concerns; passenger and crew immigration screening, customs clearance, and health clearance for all foreign tourists who want to enjoy river cruise. There are a number of cruise lines that operate ships both within the borders of India and Bangladesh and across those borders. These are following cruise operators in India such as Heritage River Journeys Pvt Ltd, The Far Horizons Tours Pvt Ltd, The Assam Bengal Navigation Co., The Brahmaputra Cruise Pvt Ltd, VIVADA Inland Waterways etc.

⁶⁷⁴<https://sagarmala.gov.in/sites/default/files/MIV%202030%20Report.pdf> accessed on 20.08.2022.

⁶⁷⁵In 1972, the India-Bangladesh Protocol on Inland Water Transit and Trade (PIWTT) was first signed to restore trade and transit through the river. In April 2015, the two countries decided to renew the Protocol automatically after five years. In October 2018, the SoP and MoU on Passenger and Cruise Services on Coastal and Protocol routes were signed. Its purpose is to enhance the bilateral movement of passengers, tourists and cruise; improve creditability, accuracy, efficiency and transparency; and minimises hindrances in service and operation.

The current river cruise route between Dhaka and Guwahati includes stops in various villages along the Brahmaputra's river banks. This gives tourists a lot of chances to interact with the locals and learn about their way of life, life style, food habit, language, dialect, custom and creed. The main points and ideas from the online and in-person discussions about sustainable cruise tourism that took place during the tour. Following procedures are maintained during the tour.

For tourists and tour operators, between India and Bangladesh would help promote river tourism in a big way. This would attract domestic tourists from India and Bangladesh, which would encourage short-distance tourism in Transboundary Rivers.

Collaborations and consultations with stakeholders across borders between the two countries increase the development of cruise tourism. Digitalization and innovative thinking are required to connect tour operators and other stakeholders across borders. Tour operators from both countries should be consulted by the appropriate authorities, in this case the Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI) and the Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BWITA) meet on regular basis. Promoting river tourism can also be made easier by forming alliances with journalists and new-age travel writers, travel bloggers who are willing to write about a variety of aspects of the protocol route as well as niche and unexplored routes.

In order to provide the services and safeguard the rights of indigenous communities, youth, women, and artisans, as well as the general public, participants in discussions about river cruise tourism must be included. The local arts and crafts can be showcased thanks to tourism. There is a lot of demand for labour, both skilled and unskilled, which will help the local economy. Communities should receive financial assistance and expert advice on tourism in order to reap the benefits of the industry. The region's overall development will benefit as a result of this. There are many streamlined rules for traveling: India and Bangladesh's stakeholders have primary concerns regarding travel restrictions and regulations, particularly in light of Covid-19. In order to make cross-border tourism easier, it is necessary to simplify rules and procedures like on-board immigration and customs clearance as well as adhere to the Covid protocols. It was suggested that Hemnagar, West Bengal, be considered as an immigration hub. At immigration points, integrated checkpoints should be established.

In order to create a sustainable infrastructure for river cruise tourism, partnerships between the public and private sectors should be encouraged. Promoting sustainable river cruise tourism necessitates environmentally friendly shores, silencers, oil separators, and

technologically advanced ships. Some initiatives, such as boats of a smaller size and cabins on boats, require little capital investment and offer budget-friendly options for domestic tourists from both the countries. In order to propel the cruise tourism industry forward, it is necessary to involve the private sector in the construction of port facilities and to provide incentives for the construction and maintenance of vessels.

In order to maintain river cruise tourism and avoid unforeseen circumstances while traveling, it is essential to ensure navigability throughout the year. Tourism opportunities must be investigated for greater benefits, and feasibility studies must be conducted in shorter routes of marginal unexplored rivers. The private sector and civil society organizations should be involved in market analysis, and the governments of India and Bangladesh should collaborate to develop river cruise tourism.⁶⁷⁶

TOURISM CONNECTIVITY

Tourism is an important metric of a country's soft power potential, marked by an increase in movement of people and enabling people-to-people connectivity. India, West Bengal, in particular and Bangladesh share many cultural ties. Tourism between West Bengal and Bangladesh is common, and events like the Dhaka Literature Festival, Dhaka Art Summit and the Dhaka Global Dialogue have become platforms for cultural exchange not only between India and Bangladesh but also with a host of other countries in the South Asia. After the liberalisation of the Revised Travel Agreement (RTA) between India and Bangladesh in 2013 and 2018, the number of tourists from Bangladesh increased by 80 percent, making it the top source for foreign arrivals. A significant number of these Bangladeshis' arrivals can be attributed to medical and clinical tourism in India. India and Bangladesh must consider digitizing various processes to ensure secure travel and create more tourism circuits between them. India is one of the world's oldest civilizations and is known for its diverse and extensive cultural heritage. While numerous civilizations have existed, some have even vanished into oblivion, India's spirit has remained unconquerable. Over the years, it has made overall socio-economic progress. India is the seventh largest nation in the world. It stands out from the rest of Asia because it is surrounded by mountains, jungle, hill, river and the sea, giving it a unique geographical beauty. Each visitor (tourist) to India can take advantage of a different aspect of the country's beauty and personality.

⁶⁷⁶<https://cuts-citee.org/pdf/guiding-statement-trosa.pdf> (December, 2021), accessed on 20.08.2022.

India is the largest, sovereign, and democratic republic in South Asia, bordering Pakistan, Nepal, China, and Bangladesh. Whether it's the snow-capped, tranquil peaks of the north or the sunny, tranquil beaches of the south, dense forests, beautiful temples, vibrant festivals, or cities that have grown to become the nation's Information Technology (I.T) hubs, there is something for everyone. India is regarded as the world's largest democracy and one of the fastest-growing economy. In addition, India is a fascinating tourist destination with an abundance of diversity and delectable cuisine that is certain to entice visitors to return for more.

Spiritually, India respects all belief systems and is a secular country where many religions were born and are living and flourishing together. "If there is one place on the face of this Earth where all the dreams of living men have found a home from the very earliest days when Man began the dream of existence, it is India," said Romain Rollan, a world famous French philosopher.

India surrounds Bangladesh, which is located on the Northern coast of the Bay of Bengal. In the Southeast, Bangladesh shares a small common border with Myanmar. It is a tropical country that is mostly found in the deltas of large Himalayan rivers. Locally referred to as the Jamuna river, the Padma is formed when the Brahmaputra River joins a portion of the Ganges to form the Padma. Following its junction with the Meghna, a third large river, the Padma joins the Bay of Bengal. Bangladesh's current form is the result of a lengthy political evolution. The historical region of Bengal, which is located in the Northeastern part of the Indian sub-continent, includes a portion of what is now Bangladesh. East Bengal, which was once a part of India and there were predominantly Hindu people, and the Sylhet district of the Indian state of Assam make up the majority of Bangladesh. In 1971, Bangladesh became a sovereign and independent nation with the help of India. Bangladesh's fauna and plants are typical of a riverine and tropical swamp. Palms and flowering trees dot the landscape, which is mostly green throughout the year. The Royal Bengal tiger, which is in danger of extinction, lives in the vast forest area known as the 'Sundarbans' in the southwest. Additionally, there are numerous species of birds and waterfowl, as well as cheetahs, leopards, crocodiles, elephants, spotted deer, monkeys, boars, bears, and pheasants. However, Bangladesh's limited natural resources have been severely strained by overpopulation. Forest land has been significantly reduced as a result of agricultural expansion and firewood and timber cutting, and the majority of the land is already cultivated.

The below table shows the percentage share of Bangladeshi tourists visited India from 2007 to 2017. The analysis of the graph shows that the percentage is fluctuating upto 2012. After that it is increasing in an increasing rate. Percentage of Bangladesh tourist arrivals to India.⁶⁷⁷

YEAR	PERCENTAGE
2007	9.45
2008	10.25
2009	9.07
2010	7.47
2011	7.34
2012	7.40
2013	7.53
2014	10.92
2015	14.13
2016	15.08
2017	21.49

INBOUND TOURISM: FOREIGN TOURIST ARRIVALS (FTAs), ARRIVALS OF NON-RESIDENT INDIANS (NRIs) AND INTERNATIONAL TOURIST ARRIVALS (ITAs) 1981, 1991, 2001 & 2011-2021.⁶⁷⁸

Year	FTAs in India(in Million)	Percentage (%) Change over Previous year	NRIs arrivals in India (in Million)	Percentage (%) Change over Previous year	International Tourist Arrivals in India (in Million)	Percentage (%) Change over Previous year
1981	1.28	2.0	-	-	-	-
1991	1.68	-1.7	-	-	-	-
2001	2.54	-4.2	-	-	-	-
2011	6.31	9.2	-	-	-	-
2012	6.58	4.3	-	-	-	-
2013	6.97	5.9	-	-	-	-
2014	7.68	10.2	5.43	-	13.11	-
2015	8.03	4.6	5.74	5.7	13.76	5.0
2016	8.80	9.6	6.22	8.4	15.03	9.2
2017	10.04	14.1	6.77	8.8	16.81	11.8
2018	10.56	5.2	6.87	1.5	17.42	3.6
2019	10.93	3.5	6.98	1.6	17.91	2.8
2020	2.74	-74.9	3.59	-48.6	6.33	-64.7
2021	1.52	-44.5	5.48	52.6	7.00	10.6

⁶⁷⁷<https://tourism.gov.in/sites/default/files/2020-04/Final%20Report%20on%20Visit%20of%20Nationals%20of%20Bangladesh%20to%20India.pdf>, accessed on 20.08.2022.

⁶⁷⁸Bureau of Immigration, Govt. of India. <https://tourism.gov.in/sites/default/files/2022-09/India%20Tourism%20Statistics%202022%20%28English%29.pdf>, accessed on 10.08.2022.

MONTH-WISE BREAK-UP OF NON RESIDENT INDIANS ARRIVALS (ITAs) IN INDIA (2019-2021)

MONTH-WISE BREAK-UP OF INTERNATIONAL TOURIST ARRIVALS (ITAs) IN INDIA ⁶⁷⁹

MONTHS	2019	2020	2021	Growth 2020/19 (%)	Growth 2021/20 (%)
January	1551947	1730952	581000	11.53	-66.43
February	1492719	1513549	541430	1.40	-64.23
March	1462838	615985	613085	-57.89	-0.47
April	1282355	3053	491807	-99.76	16008.97
May	1233736	29524	224663	-97.61	660.95
June	1395170	189546	253543	-86.41	33.76
July	1593705	297298	411527	-81.35	38.42
August	1474406	290430	457561	-80.30	57.55
September	1241027	302558	550855	-75.62	82.07
October	1569480	373708	845186	-76.19	126.16
November	1699316	477918	947525	-71.88	98.26
December	1916815	512601	1091453	-73.26	112.92
Total	17913514	6337122	7009635	-64.62	10.61

Source: Bureau of Immigration, Govt. of India

MONTHS	2019	2020	2021	Growth 2020/19 (%)	Growth 2021/20 (%)
January	440907	611702	486338	38.74	-20.49
February	402203	495109	431118	23.10	-12.92
March	484602	287681	479317	-40.64	66.61
April	507704	233	413089	-99.95	177191.42
May	618600	25760	204898	-95.84	69.41
June	668724	180956	217473	-72.94	20.18
July	775580	284643	339026	-63.30	19.11
August	673569	270669	364833	-59.82	34.79
September	489514	274391	435194	-43.95	58.60
October	624463	332214	653771	-46.80	96.79
November	606876	406941	683658	-32.94	68.00
December	690417	422057	773806	-38.87	83.34
Total	6983159	3592356	5482521	-48.56	52.62

Source: Bureau of Immigration, India.

The Bangladesh has been the second largest amongst tourist generating markets for India in the year 2021. The arrivals from Bangladesh grew to 2577727 in 2019 from 431312 during 2001 and afterwards a decreasing trend was seen with 240554 arrivals in 2021. The

⁶⁷⁹ Ibid.

following graph shows the yearly trends in the tourist arrivals from Bangladesh during 2001-2021⁶⁸⁰.

Inbound Tourism in India 60 India Tourism Statistics, 2022 The most preferred mode of travel for nationals from Bangladesh in 2021 was land (69.3%) followed.

SOCIAL AND CULTURAL CONNECTIVITY

Social and cultural connectivity are also a determinant between India and Bangladesh. The social situation in these two countries is to be focused during the period (1991-2023). The cultural connectivity is also dominated cordial relations between the two countries. In the cultural sectors I would like to highlight India-Bangladesh cultural links in the field of drama, festival, cinema, writings of different writers, poets of both the countries. It will be a major source of connectivity between the two countries. The cultural connectivity between India and Bangladesh was first signed in December 1972, in Dhaka. There are strong cultural, ethnic, and historical ties between the two countries from time immemorial. Art and culture, mass media, including television, radio, films, and the press, sports and youth activities, archaeology, museums, libraries, and archives, and educational activities are all covered by the Cultural Agreement of 1972. The Cultural Exchange Programme (C.E.P) helps India and Bangladesh achieve the goals outlined in the 1972 Cultural Agreement. On 11th January, 2010, during Sheikh Hasina's Visit to India, the current Cultural Exchange Programme (C.E.P) was renewed in New Delhi in the presence of the Prime Minister of the two countries.⁶⁸¹ On 7th April, 2011, in New Delhi, discussions on cultural cooperation between India and Bangladesh took place at the secretary level. Shri Jawhar Sircar, Secretary, Ministry of Culture, Government of India, led the Indian delegation, and Ms. Suraiya Begum, Secretary, Ministry of Culture, Government of Bangladesh, led the Bangladesh delegation. One of the important significant part of this agreements was to jointly celebrate the 150th birth anniversary of Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore with warmth and cordiality.

CULTURAL CONNECTIVITY

Indira Gandhi Cultural Centre (IGCC) in Bangladesh is a Cultural Centre of the Indian Council for Cultural Relations of India. It was introduced in 2010, IGCC routinely puts together projects covering a wide-range of social exercises. Yoga, Hindi, Hindustani

⁶⁸⁰India Tourism Statistics, 2022, <https://tourism.gov.in/sites/default/files/2022-09/India%20Tourism%20Statistics%202022%20%28English%29.pdf> accessed on 10.08.2022.

⁶⁸¹Press Information Bureau, Government of India, Ministry of Culture, 7th April, 2011, Delhi.

Classical Music, Manipuri Dance, and Painting are all regularly taught by the Indira Gandhi Cultural Centre (IGCC). The courses are extremely well known with the Bangladeshi understudies. The Hindi teacher at Indira Gandhi Cultural Centre (IGCC) also teaches Hindi at Dhaka University's Institute of Modern Languages. Since 2011, Indian council for cultural relations (ICCR) has established a Tagore Chair at Dhaka University. The 'Hindi' Chair at Dhaka University was also established in January 2017. Every year, Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) gives scholarships to Bangladeshi students who want to take general arts, sciences, and engineering courses as well as specialized ones like culture, drama, music, fine arts, sports, etc. For the past 43 years the publication of the Bengali literary monthly magazine 'Bharat Bichitra' is widely read by people from all walks of life and is regarded as one of Bangladesh's best of its kind. The High Commission of Bangladesh website provides additional information regarding cultural exchanges and programmes. During Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's visit to India in April 2017, the two Prime Ministers decided to name 2018 "the Year of India in Bangladesh and 2019 the Year of Bangladesh in India." In addition, the two countries have decided to mark the 50th anniversary of Bangladesh's liberation in 2021 and the 75th anniversary of India's independence in 2022. For the past 43 years, the Bengali literary monthly magazine 'Bharat Bichitra' has been published in print and online by the High Commission of India on regular basis.⁶⁸²

Indian Council for Cultural Relations and The Indira Gandhi Cultural Centre in Bangladesh

Through cultural exchange with other countries and their people, the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (I.C.C.R), an autonomous organization of the Indian Government, contributes to India's global cultural relations. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the first Education Minister of independent India, established it on 9th April, 1950. It has regional offices in Bangalore, Chandigarh, Chennai, Cuttack, Goa, Guwahati, Hyderabad, Jaipur, Kolkata, Lucknow, Mumbai, Patna, Pune, Shillong, Thiruvananthapuram, and Varanasi.⁶⁸³ Some new foreign cultural centers have been established by the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (I.C.C.R) in Dhaka, Thimpu, Sao Paulo, Kathmandu, Bangkok, Kuala Lumpur, and Tokyo. A copy of the Hindu figurine of Shiva Nataraja was donated to the Museum of Asian Art in Corfu, Greece.

⁶⁸²https://mea.gov.in/Portal/ForeignRelation/Bangladesh_September_2017_en.pdf, accessed on 10.10.2022.

⁶⁸³<https://iccr.tripod.com/aboutus.htm> accessed on 10.10.2022.

The Council fulfills its mandate of cultural diplomacy through a wide range of activities. The Indian Council for Cultural Relations (I.C.C.R) financially supports a number of cultural institutions across India and sponsors individual dance, music, photography, theatre, and visual arts performers in addition to organizing cultural festivals abroad and in India. Additionally, it manages the Jawaharlal Nehru Award for International Understanding.

The Indira Gandhi Cultural Centre (I.G.C.C) at Dhanmondi, Dhaka in Bangladesh, is a Cultural Centre of the Indian Council for Cultural Relations of India. It was formally inaugurated on 11th March, 2010 by His Excellency Dr. Karan Singh, then Hon'ble President of the Indian Council for Cultural Relations, along with His Excellency Mr. Abul Kalam Azad, then Hon'ble Minister for Information and Cultural Affairs of Bangladesh.

The Centre promotes bilateral cultural linkages between India and Bangladesh by organizing cultural programmes, cultural seminars, workshops and trainings engaging India based Gurus professionals and trainers for Yoga, Hindi, Indian classical Vocal Music and Indian Dances such as Kathak and Manipuri. It also engages high class professionals from Bangladesh who had their trainings from Indian Gurus or in Indian Universities. The Centre has library with over 21,000 books in the fields of Indian art, culture, politics, economics and fiction. The Council has deputed three teachers to the Dhaka Centre in the streams of Vocal (Indian Classical Music), Hindi and Yoga.⁶⁸⁴

Both the two countries emphasized the need to strengthen these shared cultural ties and the shared cultural heritage. There were many topics for cultural discussion among them were- Monuments and archaeology; museums and visual arts; national science museums; films and media; library and archives; performing arts; joint nominations of intangible cultural heritage for UNESCO; joint commemorations of Rabindra Nath Tagore's 150th birthday etc. The two countries were pleased to note that the several activities have already taken place under the Cultural Exchange Programme (C.E.P) 2010-2012: Visit of a designation of specialty people to Bangladesh in December, 2010; Support of Bangladesh in the International Film Festival at Goa in November, 2010. On the invitation of the Sahitya Academy, Shri Syed Al Faruq, Shri Belal Choudhury, Shri Rafiq Azad, and Smt Jahanara Parveen, went to Shantiniketan for a 'Kavita Utsav' to commemorate Rabindra Nath Tagore's 150th birthday. The National Archives of Bangladesh and the National Archives of India (N.A.I) have also worked closely together for this purpose. "Ananda Jagya," a festival

⁶⁸⁴<https://www.iccr.gov.in/indianculturalcenter/indira-gandhi-cultural-centre-dhaka-bangladesh>, accessed on 08.08.2022.

of Indian performing arts held in Bangladesh, featured a retrospective of Uttam Kumar films in Dhaka and Chittagong.⁶⁸⁵ The following activities for the upcoming year were identified by both countries during the discussions.

1) Bangladeshi artists will be invited to participate in the Triennial – India by Lalit Kala Academi. India will participate in the Bangladeshi Asian Art Biennial.

2) Sahitya Academi and Bangla Academy enhance cooperation, and Sahitya Academy will publish a collection of Bangladeshi poetry.

3) Collaboration among the two countries' national museums. Modalities for the exchange of archival records between the National Archives of Bangladesh and the National Archives of India (NAI) should be maintained regularly.

4) Collaboration with the IGNCA, also known as the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts. An exhibition of modern Indian art, from the Company School to modern contemporary art, will be sent by the National Gallery of Modern Art (NGMA). The Bangladeshi contemporary art exhibition will also be held at the National Gallery of Modern Art (NGMA).

5) Improved participation in the area of archaic exploration, including visits of specialists from the two countries, heritage building and preparing by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) and the Directorate of Paleontology of Bangladesh (DPB).

6) UNESCO should be approached about including shared heritage sites on the list of World Heritage Sites. Advancement of the Buddhist circuit. Visits by Indian specialists in the fields of archaeology, museology, archives, etc. to Bangladesh.

7) Providing Bangladeshi scholars with instruction at the most prestigious National institutes, such as the National School of Drama, National Museum Institute, and National Archival Institute.

8) Working together in the field of science museums, Participation in both countries' film festivals, including those for children, collaboration in the fields of film, television, theater, and the performing arts.

9) Collaboration and capacity building in the library sciences field. Collaboration in the conservation of manuscripts.

⁶⁸⁵ Ibid

10) An opening ceremony was held in New Delhi between 7th and 9th May, 2011, Bangladeshi VIP sat the presence with performing artists. Between May 2011 and May 2012, joint programmes in India and Bangladesh focused on the performing arts—dance, drama, and films—as well as original prints and paintings, exhibitions, seminars, conferences, and scholar retreats, among other things at the Paris headquarters of UNESCO.

11) ‘Robi Tirtha’-Tagore Circuit, which will be planned through the tourism departments, Assistance with restoration techniques for Tagore-related heritage sites in Bangladesh.⁶⁸⁶

On 25th May, 2018, Prime Minister Narendra Modi stated that while India and Bangladesh are different countries, they share cultural ties that are defined by a number of public policies. During his attendance at the Vishwa Bharti University convocation ceremony with Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi noted that this was a rare occasion in which the leaders of two countries were in attendance at the same university event.⁶⁸⁷

Prime Minister Modi stated, “We could learn multiple lessons from each other and ‘Bangladesh Bhawan’ is one of such examples which is soon going to be inaugurated,” highlighting the significance of bilateral cultural relations between India and Bangladesh. He also stated, “During the Vedic era, certain values were imparted to the country that were then carried forward by individuals like Rabindranath Tagore.” While featuring the worth of the expression “Vasudeva Kutumbakam”, he kept saying that Tagore wanted to foster this whole College (Vishwa Bharti) into such a spot where everybody would want to reside in. He went on to say that Gurudev devoted his entire life to upholding the principles outlined in this mantra of “Vasudeva Kutumbakam.”⁶⁸⁸ He approached the residents to know about trans-public culture, custom, and dialects and yet forewarned them not to fail to remember the conventional Indian qualities.

MAITRI DIWAS OR FRIENDSHIP DAY CELEBRATION

A joint statement issued after talks between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Bangladeshi counterpart Sheikh Hasina in Dhaka on 26th March, 2021 stated that India and

⁶⁸⁶ Ibid

⁶⁸⁷ https://www.business-standard.com/article/news-ani/cultural-ties-bind-india-bangladesh-together-pm-modi-118052500657_1.html, accessed on 20.10.2022.

⁶⁸⁸ Ibid

Bangladesh have decided to celebrate 6th December, the day on which India formally recognized Bangladesh, as “Maitri Diwas.”⁶⁸⁹ During the visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to Bangladesh in March 2021 to attend the National day of Bangladesh, it was decided to commemorate 6th December as the “Maitri Diwas or Friendship Day.”

Prime Minister Modi emphasized in the joint statement from the Ministry of External Affairs that ‘Bangabandhu’ Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, one of the greatest leaders of our time, will be remembered for his bravery and unmistakable contribution to Bangladesh’s independence.

According to the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), Prime Minister Modi also mentioned Bangabandhu’s role in fostering peace, security and development in the region. On Maitri Diwas Ministry of External Affairs (M.E.A) said-“During the visit of PM Shri Narendra Modi to Bangladesh in March 2021 to attend the National day of Bangladesh, it was decided to commemorate 6th December as Maitri Diwas (Friendship Day). Ten days before the liberation of Bangladesh, India had recognised Bangladesh on 6th December 1971. India was one of the first countries to establish bilateral diplomatic ties with Bangladesh. The holding of Maitri Diwas is a reflection of the deep and abiding friendship between the peoples of India and Bangladesh that has been forged in blood and shared sacrifices.”⁶⁹⁰

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina expressed her gratitude to India for awarding Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman the ‘Gandhi Peace Prize’ for the year 2020 in recognition of his outstanding contributions to the social, economic, and political transformation of Bangladesh through non-violent and other Gandhian methods.⁶⁹¹ “Both India and Bangladesh issued commemorative postage stamps to commemorate the friendship’s 50th anniversary. It was decided to celebrate ‘Maitri Diwas’ on 6th December, 1971, when India recognized Bangladesh.” According to the statement, “The Indian side announced the establishment of the Bangabandhu Chair at the University of Delhi for this purpose.”

⁶⁸⁹India, Bangladesh to recognise December 6 as 'Maitri Diwas', Times Of India, 27th March, 2021 also available at <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/india-bangladesh-to-recognise-december-6-as-maitri-diwas/articleshow/81727980.cms>, accessed on 10.08.2022.

⁶⁹⁰<https://newsonair.com/2021/12/06/india-bangladesh-maitri-diwas-a-much-deeper-connotation/#:~:text=Ten%20days%20before%20the%20liberation,Bangladesh%20on%2006%20December%201971.>, accessed on 10.08.2022.

⁶⁹¹<https://newsonair.com/2021/12/06/india-bangladesh-maitri-diwas-a-much-deeper-connotation/#:~:text=Ten%20days%20before%20the%20liberation,Bangladesh%20on%2006%20December%201971.>, accessed on 10.08.2022.

In light of the establishment of diplomatic ties between the two countries and the 50th anniversary of Bangladesh's independence, the two countries have agreed to jointly commemorate this historic occasion in 19 countries namely Belgium, Canada, Egypt, Indonesia, Russia, Qatar, Singapore, U.K. Australia, France, Japan, Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Switzerland, Thailand, UAE and USA.⁶⁹²

“Both the countries noted with satisfaction that the Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman biopic has begun filming and is expected to be finished on time, under the direction of renowned Indian filmmaker Shyam Benegal.” The officials of Ministry of External Affairs stated, “Both sides emphasized the necessity of beginning work on the Liberation War documentary as soon as possible.”⁶⁹³

The ministry added that the 122-member tri-service Bangladesh Armed Forces contingent's participation in India's 2020 Republic Day celebrations was acknowledged by both sides with gratitude.

“In honour of the Golden Jubilee of the establishment of diplomatic relations, Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi extended an invitation to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to visit India in 2022.” As part of the commemoration of the historic events, both sides welcomed the port call made at Mongla by the Indian Naval Ships ‘Sumedha and Kulish’ on 8th March to 10th March, 2021, at the invitation of Bangladesh. This was an Indian Navy ship's first trip to Mongla Port. As part of the joint celebrations, “a Bangladesh Navy Ship is also scheduled to make a port call at Vishakhapatnam.”

The Bangladesh side was pleased that the Indian Government decided to offer 1,000 “Shuborno Jayanti Scholarships” to Bangladeshi students who want to study in Indian universities.

The Prime Minister of Bangladesh expressed gratitude to the Indian side for taking into consideration Bangladesh's proposal to name the historic road that runs from Mujib Nagar to Nadia on the border between Bangladesh and India ‘Shadhinota Shorok’ in honour of the road's historical significance during the Bangladesh Liberation War. As part of the joint celebrations, the road's opening was anticipated by both the countries.

⁶⁹²<https://ddnews.gov.in/international/maitri-diwas%E2%80%99-be-celebrated-18-countries-6-december-commemorate-india-bangladesh>, accessed on 10.08.2022.

⁶⁹³“Maitri Diwas’ to be celebrated in 18 countries on 6 December to commemorate India Bangladesh friendship” Rajesh Jha, Dhaka, D.D News, 03.12.2021.

CELEBRATION OF BANGLA BHASHA ANDOLON

The Bengali language movement popularly known as, ‘Bhasha Andolon’ was a political movement occurred in the former East Bengal, which was later renamed East Pakistan in 1954. It called for the recognition of Bengali as the official language of the then-Dominion of Pakistan. This would have allowed the language to be used in government affairs, continue its use as a medium of education, continue its use in media, currency, and stamps, and keep its writing in the Bengali script. The selection of a national Pakistani language on Bengali speaking people became a contentious issue since the creation of Pakistan in 1947. The language issue became the focal point of this conflict because imposing ‘Urdu’ was part of a mission to Islamize East Bengal (Bangladesh). The West-Pakistan government did not pay any heed to the language that predominated in East-Bengal. Dr. Ziauddin Ahmed, a former vice-chancellor of the Aligarh Muslim University of India had suggested that ‘Only Urdu’ should be the state language of the future state of Pakistan. At the same time a noted Bengali linguist from Dacca University, Dr. Md. Shahidullah, deprecated and denounced this heinous attempt of West Pakistani leaders in strong terms and opposed the suggestion and put forth arguments in favour of ‘Bangla’ (Bengali language) as the future national language of Pakistan.⁶⁹⁴

The number of Bengali speakers was higher in comparison with the number of Urdu speakers in Pakistan. As stated earlier Urdu was the language of the elite, used only by 7 percent of Pakistanis especially in West Pakistan. In contrast, Bengali was spoken by 56 percent of Eastern Wing (East Bengal). The West-Pakistani leaders did not consider this statistical factor while choosing an official language. While arguing that Bengali can still remain a primary language for everyday use of the people in the Eastern Province, Mohammed Ali Jinnah, the founding father of Pakistan and the first Governor General, declared on the 24th of March 1948 during a conference in Dhaka University that Urdu language will become the State language of Pakistan.⁶⁹⁵ This declaration triggered a great outrage among the people of the East Bengal that became to be known as the Bengali Language Movement (Bhasha Andolan). Denying Bengali its status of a State language of Pakistan and its intended extinction were unacceptable to the Bangalee people. They realized that their mother tongue ‘Bengali’ would not survive the aggression of the West-Pakistani

⁶⁹⁴ Dev, Milton Kumar and Samad Md. Abdus, ‘History Of Bangladesh 1905-2005’ Bishwabidyalaya Prokasoni, Dhaka, Bangladesh, 2014, p-188.

⁶⁹⁵ WILLEM VAN SCHENDEL ‘A History Of Bangladesh’ Cambridge university press, New Delhi, 2009, p-111

government if this decision was not protested at once. At that time, the abolition of the Bengali language was already felt by means of how it was being corrupted. The West-Pakistani elites administered modifications of the language by replacing Sanskrit (the basis of the language) words with Urdu words. Working-class altogether the elite of East-Pakistan took several initiatives to ensure the acknowledgment of Bengali as an official State language of Pakistan along with Urdu and English. The most prominent one was the demonstration on the 21st of February 1952. The procession sought to express defiance against the order under section 144 of the Criminal Procedure Code (C.P.C). This order issued on the 20th of February, prohibited any kind of demonstration or protest aimed at altering the State language. During the turmoil phase students at schools, colleges and universities often played a decisive role in turning political grievance into popular resistance and forcing the Pakistan state to change its policies. There was a growing sense of deprivation and disappointment in East Bengal and a strong anti-West Pakistani feeling was spreading that a new form of Pakistani colonial rule had replaced British imperialism.⁶⁹⁶ Thousands of boys and girls from different schools and colleges together with university students all over Dhaka assembled on the campus of Dhaka University. As soon as they passed the campus gates armed policemen beat them heavily. The students retaliated by throwing bricks, upon which the police used tear gas and then fired into the crowd. Many were injured and five people, including a nine year old boy, were killed. Over the next few days more demonstrations, killings and arrests occurred.⁶⁹⁷ Numerous political activists, leaders brought out a procession in front of the Provincial Assembly appealing for the rights of Bengali language to be accepted as an official language. The language movement was both a political as well as the cultural movement of East Bengal advocating the recognition of the Bengali language as an official language of the then domination of Pakistan in order to allow its use in Government affairs, the continuation of its use as a medium of education, its use in media, currency and stamps and to maintain its writing in the Bengali script.⁶⁹⁸

Since then the 21st of February is celebrated in Bangladesh and West Bengal as 'Language Martyrs Day.' A memorial was erected on the spot where the first killings had taken place. The 21st February became a key national holiday in Bangladesh and in 1999, following the proposal by the Bangladesh government, UNESCO proclaimed 21st February as

⁶⁹⁶ WILLEM VAN SCHENDEL, *op.cit*, p-113.

⁶⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁹⁸ ASM Shamsul Arefin, **Bangladesh Documents 1971, Part 1**, Bangladesh Research and Publications, Dhaka, Bangladesh, 2009, p-51

the 'International Mother Language Day' in recognition of the sacrifices rendered by Bangalees.⁶⁹⁹ The 21st of February is observed worldwide as International Mother Language Day to raise awareness of linguistic and cultural diversity and encourage multilingualism. It was first made public by UNESCO on 17th November, 1999 and the United Nations General Assembly officially recognized it in 2002 with the adoption of UN resolution no 56/262. International Language Day is a part of a larger effort to "promote the preservation and protection of all languages used by peoples of the world," as stated in UN General Assembly resolution 61/266, adopted on 16th May, 2007. This resolution also designated 2008 as 'the International Year of Languages.' It is also observed in West Bengal, India. On the occasion of 'International Mother Language Day' on 21st February, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee said that one must respect and love all languages, taking the lead in remembering the martyrs. "Today is Bhasha Dibas, the day that people were killed in Dhaka because they wanted to make Bengali the official language. The 'language martyrs' of Ekushe February (February 21) deserve my deepest respect. She wrote in a tweet, "We must love and respect all languages."⁷⁰⁰

A torchlight procession began near the Academy of Fine Arts as the programmes began at midnight, with various parts of Kolkata illuminated. Students from Bangladesh also participated in Bengali plays, kirtans, and Sufi songs throughout the night.⁷⁰¹ Alpana, multicolored geometric floor patterns, were used by students from Bangladesh and West Bengal to decorate the B.T. Road near the Rabindrabharati University. The morning procession known as 'Probhat Feri' was organized by employees of the Bangladesh Deputy High Commission in this location. During the procession, floral tributes were paid to the images of the martyrs. Schools all over the state held rallies, and several of them featured marching bands marching through alleys while loudly singing 'Ekusher Gaan.' Special programmes commemorating the history of the pivotal struggle were broadcast on local television and FM radio on the occasion in Bangladesh, Tripura, Assam, and West Bengal.⁷⁰²

⁶⁹⁹ MAHAMMED AYOUB, ANIRUDHA GUPTA, RAHMATULLAH KHAN, G P DESPANDE, R NARAYANAN, AND SISIR GUPTA, op.cit, p.p-,25-48.

⁷⁰⁰ "Remember the martyrs: Bengal observes International Mother Language DayArt Culture", **Hindustan Times**, Kolkata, 22nd February, 2018.

⁷⁰¹ Ibid

⁷⁰² Ibid

CELEBRATION OF POHELA BOISHAKH

Bangalees around the world celebrate ‘Noboborsho (New Year) or Pahela Baishakh’ in the second week of April each year. In Bangladesh, Tripura, Assam, and West Bengal, ‘Pohela Boishakh’ is a well-known festival. The Bangalee people have a special connection to this day. For the Bangalees business community; the Pahela Baishakh also marks the start of the new fiscal year.

Bangalees enthusiastically welcome the Bengali New Year after the three-day Gajan Festival. In addition, as a sign of prosperity, many Bangalees households wear new clothing in the new year. In Pohela Boishakh, the greeting ‘Shubho Noboborsho’ is the customary way to greet one another. This tradition was continued until the partition of India. After the partition of India in 1947 and later the creation of Bangladesh in 1971 the Bengali speaking people enthusiastically and cordially celebrate this Pohela Boishakh. Pohela Boishakh is a representation of Bengali rural culture. New clothes are worn and the house is cleaned and decorated. The day is an opportunity to improve relationships with other people. On this day, a lot of people go to see friends and family. “Eso He Boishakh, Dole Nabin Pata, and other Bengali melodies can also be heard playing in the clubs. A few fairs are held all around the locale of Bangladesh, Tripura, Assam, and West Bengal. Pohela Boishakh marks the beginning of the Boishakhi Mela, which lasts from a few days to a week. Cosmetics, jewelry, and a variety of agricultural products are among the items available in the mela. Organizations for Jatra, gazon, Pala Gan, putul nach, Kavigan, and other events abound in both the countries. one can also find rides like the merry-go-round at some Boishakhi festivals. Apart from that, there are various programmes on this at a number of locations.”⁷⁰³ Recently some fanatic Bangladeshi fundamentalist organizations declared fatawa over this celebration as anti-Islamic culture. As a result there was cultural conflict between progressive force versus anti-liberation force in Bangladesh in 2023.⁷⁰⁴

THE RABINDRA-NAZRUL JAYANTI CELEBRATION

The bonds between India and Bangladesh are rich and suffused with history. Every facet of human life—social, economic, cultural, intellectual, political, and spiritual—is connected between the two countries from time immemorial. The two countries discussed

⁷⁰³ <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/religion/festivals/pohela-boishakh-2022-today-know-everything-about-bengali-new-year/articleshow/90858525.cms>, accessed on 20.10.2022.

⁷⁰⁴ Eisamay Kolkata, 12 th April, 2023, p-7

the successful December 2010 visit of India's Secretary of Culture to Bangladesh and conducted an in-depth evaluation of the Cultural Exchange Programme's (CEP) implementation. The recent excellent bilateral ties are a reflection of an all-encompassing partnership that is based on equality, trust, and comprehension and goes far beyond a strategic partnership. The Bangladesh government has made preparations to commemorate the birthdays of Rabindranath Tagore and Kazi Nazrul Islam, the National Poet, appropriately. On 8th May, 2022, Nobel laureate poet Rabindranath Tagore will turn 161 years old, and on 24th May, National Poet of Bangladesh Kazi Nazrul Islam will turn 123 years old. Kazi Nazrul Islam, better known as the "Bidrohi Kobi," (rebel poet) was born on the 11th Joishtha of the Bengali calendar year 1306, or 24th May 1899 of the English calendar year in Churulia, near Asansol, in the Burdwan district of West Bengal. According to the Bengali calendar, Wednesday, 25th May is his birthday in Bangladesh. His 'Nazrul Geeti and Nazrul Sangeet repertoire' is extensive. He wrote about many different topics. A strong sense of humanism, justice, and rebellion against oppression pervades Nazrul's poems. During Bangladesh's liberation war, it served as an inspiration.⁷⁰⁵

KM Khalid, State Minister for Cultural Affairs, Peoples' Republic of Bangladesh presided over a recent meeting in this regard. According to a press conference on 5th May, 2022, released by the Cultural Affairs Ministry, the meeting decided to put on elaborate programs to celebrate the two poets' birthdays. This year, the celebration of Rabindranath Tagore's 161st birthday is themed "Crisis of Humanity and Rabindranath."

The Bangla Academy and the Culture Affairs Ministry jointly released souvenirs and posters for this special occasion. Special discussions, cultural programmes, and numerous other events will be organized by the ministry's various departments and agencies. This year, the main celebration of the birthday took place at Rabindra Kuthibari in Shilaidaha, Kumarkhali upazila, Kushtia district of Bangladesh. At Patisar in Naogaon district and South Dighi in Khulna district, as well as in Kushtia district, various national-level programmes have been drafted to commemorate Guru Dev Rabindranath. The poetry of Rabindranath Tagore is preserved in the three districts. Dr. Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury, Speaker of the National Parliament, was the chief guest at the event's opening ceremony at Rabindra Kuthibari on 8th May, 2022.

⁷⁰⁵ <https://newsonair.gov.in/Main-News-Details.aspx?id=441615>, accessed on 20.10.2022.

The event presided over by State Minister for Cultural Affairs KM Khalid, and Member of Parliament Simeen Hussain Rimiwas attended as a special guest. The welcome address was given by Secretary of the Culture Affairs Ministry Md. Abul Mansur, and the commemorative speaker was Ekushey Padak winner Prof. Sanat Kumar Saha. Other programs extensively broadcasted by private radio and television channels, Bangladesh Television, Bangladesh Betar, and the live broadcast of the inaugural ceremony. Bangladesh 'Shilpakala Academy' organized a cultural program following the inaugural session that includes dance and drama performances. Nazrul was just 14 years old when Tagore won the Nobel Prize in 1913. Tagore had an impact on him, as did other young people his age. According to Mahbub Uz Zaman, the Ambassador of Bangladesh to China Tagore had a limitless impact on Nazrul. He told that Nazrul, whose productive life lasted only 11 years due to ill health, has emerged as a poet, journalist, politician, and novelist with unparalleled versatility. He also fought for India's independence and the realization of the rights of marginalized communities. During this brief period of productive life, Nazrul produced songs of immense depth. He was truly a genius, stated Mahbub Uz Zaman⁷⁰⁶. In India, the nation will mark the 123RD birthday of the national poet of Bangladesh, Kazi Nazrul Islam. In honour of Kazi Nazrul Islam, a poet, cultural and social organizations all over the country are hosting events on this day.

The Minister of State for Culture, KM Khalid, laid a wreath on Kazi Nazrul Islam's grave early in the morning in the Dhaka University area to kick off the poet's birthday celebrations. Poet Muhammad Nurul Huda, Director General of the Bangla Academy, Director General of the National Museum Khondakar Mostafizur Rahman, and senior government officials also paid floral tribute to the poet. The country's covid situation has significantly improved, and after a two-year hiatus, programmes with offline audience and artist participation are now taking place. The name 'Rebel's Centenary' has been chosen as the theme for the centennial of Kavi Nazrul's birth by the Bangladeshi government.

Additionally, an event was also held at Rabindra Sarobar in Dhaka under the direction of the Kobi Nazrul Institute's Executive Director. The district Deputy Commissioners will form committee with local MPs, public representatives, and well-wishers to honour his birthday. In both the countries Cultural programmes, discussion groups, essay and recitation competitions, and other forms of celebration were held in all of the country's educational

⁷⁰⁶<https://newsonair.gov.in/Main-News-Details.aspx?id=441615>, accessed on 20.10.2022.

establishments to mark the occasion of his birth. In all districts, pictures, poems, and paintings about the world poet were displayed. In addition, banners, festoons, posters, digital displays, and lighting were set up on various road islands. Programs based on various creative works by the great poet was put on by Bangla Academy and Bangladesh 'Shilpakala Academy' as part of the national celebrations.

The music and poetry of Nobel laureate Rabindranath Tagore and Bangladeshi national poet Kazi Nazrul Islam resonated at a joint gathering of fans and followers of the renowned poets hosted by the High Commission of India and Indian council for cultural relations in Bangladesh.

The 'Rabindra-Nazrul Jayanti' event, which was held on 7th May, 2022, to commemorate Tagore's 161st and Nazrul's 123rd birthdays, the two most versatile and great Bengali poets who left their mark on the national and international arenas with their poetry and music, attracted a large crowd.⁷⁰⁷ Exquisite Kathak and Bharatanatyam dancers gave specially choreographed presentations, and Tagore and Nazrul's inspiring poetry was read by diplomats, diaspora members of both countries, and many Tagore admirers.⁷⁰⁸

Various programmes were also held to mark the occasion by Bangladeshi missions abroad.⁷⁰⁹ According to Pradeep Kumar Rawat, India's new ambassador in China, India and Bangladesh share a cultural heritage that is based on their shared history and civilisations. "The cultural history of Bengal combines a number of different ways of life. "Great men of letters and accomplishments have been produced by this culturally fertile and intellectually stimulating region." He also stated, "I pay my humble respects to Poet Kazi Nazrul Islam and Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore, who are shining examples of the shared rich common heritage of India and Bangladesh." "Gurudev Tagore and Kazi Nazrul Islam are two of the 'Panchokobi,' or five great writers in Bengali literature, who have shaped our national identities as well as Bangla literature and culture. This is best shown by the simple fact that Gurudev Tagore wrote the national anthems for our two countries, Jana Gana Mana and Amar Shonar Bangla." He also mentioned "Tagore's life and teachings show that he was always looking for new ideas, was persistent, and tried everything. He stated, "Gurudev

⁷⁰⁷ <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/india/india-bangladesh-jointly-celebrate-birth-anniversary-of-tagore-nazrul-in-china/articleshow/92161491.cms?from=mdr> accessed on 20.10.2022.

⁷⁰⁸ <https://www.bangladesh.com/blog/rabindra-and-nazrul-jayanti-celebrations/> accessed on 20.10.2022.

⁷⁰⁹ <https://bangladeshpost.net/posts/special-progs-to-celebrate-birth-anniv-of-tagore-nazrul-85009#:~:text=The%20161st%20birthday%20of%20Nobel,Islam%20is%20on%20,accessed on 20.10.2022>

demonstrated brilliance and pragmatism, which continues to be relevant even today, and broke the barrier of time and region.”

“He enlightened the world with his immortal speeches and poems and taught us to be proud of our nation, culture, and ethos. He emphasized social empowerment, education, and learning. His vision motivates our nations and many other nations around the world to work toward achieving these objectives.”

“Nazrul’s writings were a perfect amalgamation of varying traditions,” he said. “On the other hand, ‘Bidrohi Kobi’ Kazi Nazrul Islam was a remarkable literary genius and a true rebel (Bidrohi), who on his quest for self-expression and freedom of thought, preached unforgettable lessons on pluralism, secularism, and the importance of an egalitarian society.” “Setting a clear example of art transcending boundaries, he is said to have introduced the concept of ghazals to the modern Bengali imagination,” he stated.

Mahbub Uz Zaman, the Ambassador of Bangladesh to China, stated in his address that the joint event between the embassies highlighted the friendship and close ties between the two neighbouring countries. He told, “We are bound together by the glorious Bangladesh war for independence in 1971. Tagore and Nazrul maintained a close relationship infused with respect and love despite their 38-year separation. “Social justice, non-communism, and humanity are all depicted in their literary works.”

According to him, Ananda Smarakoon, who wrote the song and studied at India’s Viswabharati University in Santiniketan, was inspired by Tagore, who also wrote the national anthems of Bangladesh and India. Nazrul and Tagore shared admiration, respect, and affection. He claimed that Nazrul, who had been deeply influenced by Tagore’s writings since he was a child, also wrote several poems about Tagore.

To commemorate Kazi Nazrul Islam’s birth anniversary, the High Commission of India and Indira Gandhi Cultural Centre (IGCC) jointly put on an evening of Nazrul songs on that day. On this particular occasion, the Special Guest was Khilkhil Kazi, Nazrul’s granddaughter. Khairul Islam Shakil, a well-known Nazrul Geethi artist, gave a performance of Nazrul songs at the event that was held in the auditorium of Shilp Kala Academy in Dhaka.⁷¹⁰

⁷¹⁰<https://newsonair.gov.in/Main-News-Details.aspx?id=441615>, accessed on 20.10.2022.

On 24th May, 1972, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman brought Kazi Nazrul Islam and his family from India to Bangladesh. This day also marks the anniversary of that event. On this day, Minister for Post and Telecommunications Mustafa Jabbar unveiled a unique commemorative stamp at Trishal in Mymensingh to mark the occasion.

VISARJAN OF DURGA PRATIMA: THE DAY OF IMMERSION

On the banks of the Ichamati river, which separates India and Bangladesh, there is the town of Taki in West Bengal, a place of green pastures and ponds. Every year, it hosts enthusiastic Durga Puja celebrations, just like the rest of the state. During Durga Puja celebrations the streets of Taki city are illuminated by fairy lights, loudspeakers blast Bollywood and Bengali songs, and pandals, or marquees, compete to carry the goddess Durga's tallest, glossiest 'pratimas' (idols).⁷¹¹ However, a particular custom performed on the Puja's final day sets Taki apart from other border towns. For the immersion of idols similar preparations are being made by its neighbours in Satkhira, Kumilla, Dhaka a district in Bangladesh across the border. The 'pratimas' are carried by the residents of both countries into their respective boats before being taken to the border security boats that are floating in the middle of the river along the international boundary. The two groups of neighbours wave to one another, greet one another, and then immerse the idols together with deafening cries of "Durga Mata ki-Joy, Aschhe bochor abar hobe!" (Until next year) People from the two countries, which are separated by geopolitical boundaries, gather for a day to celebrate a common heritage. Superintendent of police (S.P), Basirhat police district, Joby Thomas K, said: "People were eager to witness the immersion. They were allowed this year but with certain restrictions. We deployed a large police force to ensure security, working in coordination with the BSF and the Taki civic administration."⁷¹²

On the eve of 'visarjan—the day of immersion'—residents of both countries would cross the riverine boundary and dock in the neighbouring country to shop and socialize. This practice continued until the early 2000s. Local people said, "There would be a little mela on both sides." During these visits across the border, people made a lot of friends. Whether they were Hindus or Muslims, they always showed the utmost hospitality among them."⁷¹³

⁷¹¹<https://www.anandabazar.com/west-bengal/24-parganas/durga-puja-2022-puja-committees-are-losing-interest-on-idol-immersion-at-ichamati-river/cid/1375059>, accessed on 20.10.2022.

⁷¹²"Boat rides back for immersion", The Telegraph (online), 06th October, 2022

⁷¹³http://www.north24parganas.gov.in/sites/default/files/document/immersion_of_durga_idols.pdf, accessed on 20.10.2022.

The meeting time would be announced by the border guards (B.S.F) at six o'clock. The residents would cross the river into their respective boats and trawlers and head back to their homelands. Visitors didn't need an entry pass, Visa or passport check. Residents of Taki claim that an implicit trust was at its core. With security concerns about cross-border terrorism, illegal immigration, and cattle trade dominating mainstream discourse, the practice of an open-border tradition seems extraordinary now. On the eve of 'visarjan—the day of immersion' in Indo-Bangladesh riverine border people believe that the border towns' close ties are entirely natural due to their shared ethnic identity, their mutual practice of soft diplomacy, and the significance of Durga Puja for the Bengali community.⁷¹⁴ The Puja festivities have always been more social than religious affairs. The majority of pandal makers are members of the community, and Muslims take part in the festivities in large numbers. Along the border, numerous villages are within shouting distance of one another, occasionally separated by a slender mud path or shallow streams. Many people in the border towns had a hard time accepting the creation of East Pakistan in 1947 and Bangladesh in 1971 due to their shared linguistic identity. Restrictions on freedom of movement were frequently too much to bear for many, who had friends and relatives across the border—sometimes even in their backyards.

A prominent zamindar family, initiated Taki's first communal Durga Puja celebrations in the 1970s. The traditional boat ride for the immersion on the Ichhamati river goes back a few centuries when the local zamindar families introduced it. "There were at least seven zamindars in undivided Bengal, who introduced boat rides preceding the immersion. In time, the villagers under their rule also joined the celebration. The tradition continued even after Bengal was divided in 20th June, 1947" Visitors traveled across the border for visarjan as the event grew in scope.

The Indian side made the decision to fence its 4,098-kilometer border with Bangladesh in 1989. Even now, thirty years later, the work is only half done. Along the border, one can see two-foot rock stumps used as border pillars and a 10-foot fence made of concertina wires. Since local livelihoods depended on fencing the Ichamati river's perimeter, the Border Security Forces (B.S.F), increased security and surveillance instead. Additionally, they constructed floating outposts in the river and watch towers along the river front. On the

⁷¹⁴ Ibid

occasion of Visarjan day-long free pass across the border was almost non-existent by the beginning of the 2000s.⁷¹⁵

Mamata Banerjee, the Chief Minister of West Bengal, who is very eager to improve cultural relations with Bangladesh, reportedly held a 'Milan Mela' in Taki, which is a festival to celebrate immersion, which made it possible to relax border regulations on visarjan day. Diplomatic relations between the two countries were at their best under the Prime Ministership of Sheikh Hasina. India had started a public border-retreat ceremony at the Petrapole-Benapole checkpoint four years earlier, with the highlight being the security personnel shaking hands before calling it a day every day. India and Bangladesh's border forces were alert but not intrusive at Taki as they patrolled on steamers equipped with guns, cameras, and life jackets. The one-of-a-kind Puja celebrations along the luxuriant river front had attracted thousands of visitors. The Ichamati promenade was filled with revelers from both countries who waved to their neighbours across the border as nearly a hundred boats chugged along the length of the promenade. The security personnel announced that the celebrations should end at six o'clock. The boats were led back to the coast by their flashlights and loudspeakers over the next hour.⁷¹⁶

The Ichhamati River at Taki in North 24 Parganas (W.B, India) presents a one-of-a-kind spectacle at the conclusion of Durga Puja on Vijaya Dashami: boats full of people from both India and Bangladesh congregate there to immerse their respective idols 'Devi Durga.' On the river, as far as the eye can see, there are boats of all sizes and shapes, each one waving the flag of its own country.

Citizens of both the countries can participate in this cultural phenomenon as well. Packages have been announced by the West Bengal Tourism Department Corporation (WBTDC) for Dashami trips to the Ichhamati River, where the two countries will immerse the idols. Kolkata is only two hours away from Taki. It is situated on the Ichhamati River's banks. Bangladesh is on the other side of the Ichhamati river. In Taki, there were once grand houses, but they have all fallen into disrepair. One can take the launch service to Machranga Island, which is 129 acres in size, from the ferry ghat. The immersion ceremony is attended by a large number of people on both sides of Bangladesh and India every year. It is a good time

⁷¹⁵ Ibid

⁷¹⁶ http://www.north24parganas.gov.in/sites/default/files/document/immersion_of_durga_idols.pdf, accessed on 20.10.2022.

to cultivate peace among people on both sides. In order to immerse the Durga idol, boats from both sides travel down Ichhamati river.

The West Bengal Tourism Department Corporation's (WBTDC) plans call for the package to be available for just Rs 2,000. At 11:00 in the morning, passengers on Vijaya Dashami can board the luxurious Volvo buses that will travel to Hansnabad. At noon, they will board the ship that will take them to the river from there. They will reach Taki via the river route. Onboard the vessel, all beverages and lunch will be provided. By 3.00 p.m. in the afternoon, visitors will reach Taki. Visitors will be able to witness the immersion of idols across two borders while the ships are anchored there from 3:00 to 5:30 p.m. The ship will then return to Hansnabad, where buses can take you back to Kolkata.⁷¹⁷

BOOK FAIR: A NEW WAY OF CONNECTIVITY

BANGLADESH BOOK FAIR

People from all over the world attend the Bangladesh book fair in Kolkata. The 10th Bangladesh Book Fair took place from 2nd December-11th December, 2022, in Kolkata.⁷¹⁸ The venue for the fair is the book hub of Kolkata, College Square, located on College Street. The place is surrounded by Calcutta University, Calcutta Medical College and Presidency University.

A notice signed by Mazharul Islam, convener of the International Book Fair Committee and vice president of the Bangladesh Book Publishers and Sellers Association, confirmed the date. On 14th November, 2022, the International Book Fair Committee held a meeting at the Anyaprokash office in Dhaka. By 19th November 2022, the committee has requested that all publishers deposit Tk5,000 via pay order. The committee office will assign stalls on 20th November 2022, at 5 p.m.

Earlier on 2nd November, 2018 Bangladesh Book fair was opened in the Mohor Kunja premises, which was west of Rabindra Sadan, Kolkata. This time, at 4:00 p.m., a lot of ministers from Bangladesh were present at the inauguration of the book fair. In 2011, the government started the Bangladesh Book Fair in Kolkata for the first time. The fair will be attended by approximately 44 book stores and several prominent Bangladeshi publishers this year. This book fair will feature up to 69 publishing houses.

⁷¹⁷<https://www.getbengal.com/details/durga-immersion-watch-from-a-launch-at-taki-on-river-ichhamati>, accessed on 20.10.2022.

⁷¹⁸“Bangladesh Book Fair in Kolkata to start on December 2”, **Dhaka Tribune, Dhaka**, 16th November, 2022.

At the Fair, a cultural programme that focuses on Bangladeshi folk traditions will be organized by Bangladeshi people. The social programmes is held at night, where the two specialists of India and Bangladesh took an interest. A special highlight will be Gurudev Ravindra Nath Tagore and Nazrul Islam's collection of poems. From 2nd November through 11th November, the book fair will be open. It takes 11 days to complete. Book lovers will be able to visit the fair every day from 2:00 to 8:00 p.m., as well as on Saturday and Sunday from 2:00 to 8:30 p.m.⁷¹⁹ Besides, Indo Bangladesh film festival was a common phenomenon between the two countries. On 21st September 2018 it was organized by Bidhannagar film society. The secretary of Bidhannagar film society Mr. Anshu Sur told that it will strengthen the cultural connectivity between the two countries⁷²⁰.

KOLKATA BOOK FAIR

The 45th International Kolkata Book Fair with Bangladesh as its theme began, on Monday, 28th February, 2022 at the Central Park Mela Ground in Salt Lake. It was inaugurated by West Bengal first women Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee. It included different events such as folk, music, poetry reading and performance. It was also the 8th Kolkata Literature Festival.⁷²¹ At the International Book Fair, 'Bangladesh Day' was observed for two days. The cultural programme that was held at SBI Auditorium in honour of Bangladesh Day, had attracted enthusiastic participation from people from all walks of life, including writers, readers, and publishers from West Bengal.⁷²²

Inaugurating the Kolkata International Book Fair, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee said "she is happy that Bangladesh is the theme country at the 45th edition of the book fair, on the 50th year of its liberation." Minister of Cultural Affairs of Bangladesh K M Khalid, who was also present on the occasion, talked about bilateral cultural ties between Bangladesh and West Bengal and thanked the book fair authorities for focusing on his country on its 50th year of Independence. She said the ties between West Bengal and the sovereign country Bangladesh cannot be "measured with a tape."⁷²³ "You (Bangladesh) have Nazrul (Islam) and we have Rabindranath Tagore as our national poets. But they cannot be

⁷¹⁹ <https://www.theholidaystory.com/bangladesh-book-fair-kolkata-mohor-kunja-park/> accessed on 10.10.2022.

⁷²⁰ Eisamay (Kolkata), 18th september, 2018, p-6

⁷²¹ <https://indianexpress.com/photos/lifestyle-gallery/the-45th-kolkata-international-book-fair-begins-7799384/> accessed on 10.10.2022.

⁷²² <https://www.thedailystar.net/news/bangladesh/news/bangladesh-day-marked-kolkata-book-fair-2975796> accessed on 10.12.2022.

⁷²³ 'West Bengal-Bangladesh ties can't be measured with a tape', **The Daily Star**, 1st March, 2022, Dhaka.

divided by any Partition,” C.M said. Cautioning against efforts to drive a wedge between people along religious lines, she said none can dictate people’s choice of food, attire or language. “On both sides of the border, we observe the International Language Day on 21st February. Mamata said “We also utter ‘Jai Bangla’ along with ‘Jai Hind’ and ‘Vande Mataram.”

She paid tributes to ‘Bangabandhu’ Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, and paid her respect to Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. Even though Bangladesh is the focal theme of this year’s book fair, the shadow of Russia-Ukraine conflict hung on the event when the Chief Minister urged the Fair authorities to take a pledge for world peace during the event as a tribute to the victims of the war between Russia and Ukraine.⁷²⁴

On the occasion of Book fair, several seminars on Bangabandhu, the Liberation War, and Bangladesh were also planned. This year, a number of events were held to mark the golden jubilee of Bangladesh’s independence and the centenary of ‘Bangabandhu’ Sheikh Mujibur Rahman’s birth. The book fair began on 28th February and ran through 13th March, 2022.

MUJIB SCHOLARSHIP

On 6th September, 2022 Prime Minister of Bangladesh, Sheikh Hasina, announced the Mujib Scholarship for direct descendants of Indian soldiers who died or suffered serious injuries during the 1971 Bangladesh Liberation War.⁷²⁵ The awards will be conferred on 7th September, 2022. Hasina’s father, ‘Bangabandhu’ Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, is honoured with the award. The scholarship will be awarded to 200 family members of Indian Army personnel.

Hasina stated “Tomorrow, I will confer Mujib Scholarship to the direct descendants of soldiers or officers of the defence forces of India who were martyred or gravely wounded during Bangladesh Liberation War. She also expressed “We are grateful for valuable support from the government and people of India in great War of Liberation of Bangladesh in 1971,

⁷²⁴ Ibid

⁷²⁵ <https://www.dailypioneer.com/2022/india/hasina-announces-mujib-scholarship-for-indian-martyrs-of-1971-b--desh-war.html>, accessed on 18.10.2022.

which was a watershed moment in our bilateral relations.”⁷²⁶ As many as 1,984 Indian Army personnel were killed in the war, according to the Bangladeshi government official report.

The Hasina Government had earlier honoured other Indian supporters of the freedom movement of Bangladesh, including writers and politicians. Hasina had previously proposed bestowing similar honours on the soldiers who gave their lives for the country’s liberation. Hasina, who is on a four-day visit to India, also oversaw the signing of a memorandum of understanding (MoU) between Prasanna Bharti and Bangladesh Television (B.T.V) on cooperation in broadcasting.

On 7th September, 2022, at a function in New Delhi, Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina delivered the ‘Bangabandhu’ Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Student Scholarship. The direct descendants of soldiers and officers of the Armed Forces of India who were killed or critically wounded during the historic 1971 Liberation War were awarded the first-ever ‘Bangabandhu’ Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Student Scholarships.⁷²⁷

According to External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar, who attended the event, bilateral relations between India and Bangladesh have made significant progress in ways that have not only shaped the partnership’s current trajectory but also its path forward. He stated that the ties between the two countries are in many ways a continuation of the blood-based ties that were established fifty years ago. He said, as we recollect that time, we honour the famous image of the noteworthy 1971 Freedom War, a legislator, who freed from mistreatment, the soul of a courageous group and delivered a country. He added that ‘Bangabandhu’ Sheikh Mujibur Rahman is a man of action, bravery, and conviction for Indians. Dr. Jaishankar stated that both countries have also commissioned a biopic on him, which is nearing completion, out of respect for him.⁷²⁸

⁷²⁶India - Bangladesh Joint Statement during the State Visit of Prime Minister of Bangladesh to India, 7th September, 2022, New Delhi.

⁷²⁷<https://newsonair.gov.in/News?title=Bangladesh-PM-Sheikh-Hasina-confers-Bangabandhu-Sheikh-Mujibur-Rahman-Scholarship-on-Indian-students-in-New-Delhi&id=4473>, accessed on 10.10.2022.

⁷²⁸ Ibid

CHAPTER – V

Issue of infrastructure in India's relations with Bangladesh.

CHAPTER FIVE

ISSUE OF INFRASTRUCTURE IN INDIA'S RELATIONS WITH BANGLADESH

Infrastructure is the services and facilities that a country, city, or other area's economy, households, and businesses require to function. It is the collection of facilities and systems that serve that area. Public and private infrastructures like roads, railways, bridges, tunnels, water supply systems, sewers, electrical grids, and telecommunications make up infrastructure. As a rule, infrastructures have been characterized as the actual parts of interrelated frameworks giving states and administrations fundamental to empower, support, or upgrade everyday environments and keep up with the general climate. Basic infrastructure includes communication and transportation, sewage, water, education system, health system, clean drinking water, monetary system etc.

Infrastructure connects households across metropolitan areas to higher quality opportunities for employment, health care and education. Here, I would like to point out the infrastructural link between India and Bangladesh. To find out how the infrastructure of both the countries made an impact upon the lives and livelihoods of the people of both the countries is the one of the objectives of my research. Infrastructure is the prime factor which determines the connectivity between the two countries. It is the first development parameter of the two countries. Infact, Infrastructure determines the sphere of development. Hence Infrastructure connotes the connectivity more fruitful. The settlement of the boundary dispute in 2014, the ratification of the Land Boundary Agreement (L.B.A) and the successful exchange of enclaves in 2015 have been major developments in the India-Bangladesh relations in recent years. In pursuance of these agreements the two countries have began to cooperate in the sectors like rail, bus, bridge, space and nuclear technology, I.T, shipping, electronics, energy, tourism and the civil nuclear programme. In this respect it can be said that the total number of agreements since 1991-2023 regarding infrastructure between the two countries ranges to more than 200. It can be said that initially the agreements were in the form of Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) between the two countries. Besides, New Delhi extended to three Lines of Credit (LoC) amounting to US-\$8 billion to Dhaka from 2010-2023 for the development of infrastructure such as roads, railways, shipping, ports etc.

Green infrastructure and sustainable infrastructure are frequently discussed in contemporary infrastructure discussions, particularly in light of the enormous societal transformations that required to mitigate and adapt to climate change. Through the sustainable development goals, particularly Sustainable infrastructural motto, “Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure,” the international community has developed policy centered on this sustainable infrastructural motto. The term ‘green infrastructure’ or ‘blue-green infrastructure’ refers to a network that provides the ingredients necessary to construct with nature in order to address issues related to climate change and urbanization. The principal part of this approach incorporates temperate water the board, environment transformation, the decrease of intensity stress, expanding biodiversity, food creation, better air quality, feasible energy creation, clean water, and sound soils, as well as additional human-centric capabilities, for example, expanded personal satisfaction through amusement and the arrangement of shade and safe house in and around towns and urban communities. An ecological framework for the social, economic, and environmental health of the surroundings is also provided by green infrastructure. In modern times, activists and academics have also called for green infrastructure that strengthens existing structures of unequal access to nature-based services rather than reinforcing them.

A subset of ‘sustainable and resilient infrastructure,’ which is defined by standards like the standard for sustainable and resilient infrastructure, is green infrastructure. However, ‘low-carbon infrastructure,’ such as renewable energy infrastructure and public transportation systems, can also be referred to as green infrastructure. Green infrastructure can also be part of ‘sustainable drainage systems’ or ‘sustainable urban drainage systems’ that manage water quantity and quality while enhancing biodiversity and amenities.

Infrastructure divided into two distinct categories, such as 1) hard infrastructure and 2) soft infrastructure. Hard infrastructure is the physical networks that a modern industry needs to work. Hard infrastructure includes roads, bridges, ports, railways etc. All institutions that uphold a country’s economic, health, social, environmental, and cultural standards are considered to be part of the country’s soft infrastructure. These institutions include educational programmes, official statistics, and recreational facilities, law enforcement agencies, and emergency services etc.

Infrastructure further divided into following distinct categories. 1) Sustainable infrastructure, 2) Material infrastructure.

Sustainable infrastructure refers to the processes of design and construction that take into consideration their environmental, economic, and social impact. Sustainable infrastructure includes water, energy, transportation, and waste management. Renewable energy, power plant and the means of exchange between them and the homes and businesses that use them are all part of sustainable energy infrastructure. Wind, solar, and hydraulic power are examples of well-researched and widely used renewable energy sources, as are more recent and less utilized forms of power generation like fusion energy. In order to be taken into account sustainable, energy infrastructure must not only maintain sufficiently low prices for consumers but also maintain a strong supply in relation to demand. Material infrastructure is defined as “those immobile, non-circulating capital goods that essentially contribute to the production of infrastructure goods and services needed to satisfy basic physical and social requirements of economic agents.” There are two distinct qualities of material infrastructures: 1) fulfillment of social needs and 2) mass production. The first characteristic deals with the basic needs of human life. The second characteristic is the non-availability of infrastructure goods and services. In general sense there are various materials that can be used to build infrastructure like asphalt, concrete, steel, masonry, wood, polymers, composites etc.

Economic infrastructure can be defined as internal facilities of a country that make business activity possible, such as communication, transportation and distribution networks, financial institutions and markets, and energy supply systems. Economic infrastructure support productive activities and events. Physical infrastructure includes roads, highways, railways, bridges, airports, sea ports, cycling infrastructure, water distribution networks, sewer systems, and irrigation plants for better agricultural production.

Social infrastructures are created to increase social comfort and promote economic activity. These include schools, parks and playgrounds, structures for public safety, waste disposal plants, hospitals, and sports areas etc.

India-Bangladesh bilateral relation and the scale of cooperation is equally wide and touches every aspect of above mentioned infrastructures along with disaster management, education of students and other aspects of human resource development, training and capacity building, defence cooperation, rail infrastructure, border hatt infrastructure, pipe line project, space technology, nuclear cooperation etc. Till March 2022 India had funded 68 high impact community development projects (HICDPs) in Bangladesh such as construction of student

hostels, academic buildings, skill development and training institutes, cultural centres, and orphanages.⁷²⁹

TRAINING AND CAPACITY-BUILDING

A number of training courses are being conducted for interested Bangladesh officials including personnel of administration, police, judiciary, fire-fighters, narcotic officials, nuclear scientists, teachers etc. Bangladesh is also an important Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) partner country, and around 800 participants from Bangladesh availed of training courses under the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (I.T.E.C) programme annually. In addition, scholarships are granted by Indian Council for Cultural Relations (I.C.C.R) every year to students from Bangladesh for pursuing general courses in arts, sciences, engineering and also specialized courses for culture, drama, music, fine arts and sports.⁷³⁰

The 53rd field administration capacity building programme for Bangladeshi civil servants was launched at the National Centre for Good Governance (N.C.G.C) in Mussoorie in India on 11th October, 2022. The National Centre for Good Governance was set up in 2014 by the Government of India as an apex institution in the country. It focuses on good governance, policy reforms, training and capacity building, and also to work as a think tank. It has taken up capacity building of civil servants of several foreign countries in partnership with Ministry of External Affairs (MEA).⁷³¹“Prior to 2019, 1,500 civil servants of Bangladesh were trained at the National Centre for Good Governance (NCGG). After the completion of phase-I, capacity-building of another 1,800 civil servants of Bangladesh were taken up, which is expected to be completed by 2025,” the Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions said in a statement. For this purpose, the two countries signed the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in February 2019 in the 5th meeting of the India-Bangladesh Joint Consultative Commission.⁷³² Only this institute has educated 1,727 Bangladesh Civil Service field officers, including Assistant Commissioners, Sub Divisional

⁷²⁹CLAWS Journal I Vol. 15, No. 1. Summer 2022.

⁷³⁰<https://newsonair.gov.in/News?title=53rd-Capacity-Building-programme-in-Field-Administration-for-Civil-Servants-of-Bangladesh-inaugurated-at-Mussoorie&id=449197> accessed on 16.10.2022.

⁷³¹ Ibid

⁷³²“1,800 Bangladesh civil servants to be trained at NCGG by 2025: Govt” Disha Kumari, **Hindustan Times**, 12th October, 2022.

Magistrates, and Additional Deputy Commissioners. Following are the main key points of the 53rd capacity building programme.⁷³³

- The Government of India established the National Center for Good Governance in 2014.

- The center works as a think tank and focuses on policy reform, training, capacity building, and good governance.

- Working with Minister of External Affairs, the center has focused on building the capacity of public servants in a number of different countries with the special emphasis on her nextdoor neighbour Bangladesh.

- 15 countries have received training from it, including Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Kenya, Tanzania, Seychelles, Gambia, Maldives, Sri Lanka, Laos, Vietnam, Bhutan, Myanmar, and Cambodia.

- The goal of the capacity building programme for civil servants in developing countries is to provide them with cutting-edge knowledge, abilities, and tools for implementing and designing efficient public policy for the welfare of the common people.

- In addition, the attendees will have the opportunity to tour a number of ongoing projects, including the Delhi Metro, Smart City, the Morarji Desai National Institute of Yoga, the Central Information Commission, and the Election Commission of India.⁷³⁴

DEFENCE INFRASTRUCTURE

The 4th India-Bangladesh Annual Defence Dialogue, co-chaired by Defence Secretary Dr Ajay Kumar and Principal Staff Officer of Armed Forces Division of Bangladesh Lieutenant General Waker-Uz-Zaman, was held in New Delhi on 11th August, 2022.⁷³⁵ During their interaction, they reviewed ongoing defence cooperation between the two countries and expressed satisfaction that collaboration is growing despite difficulties imposed by the covid-19 pandemic. The talks covered the existing bilateral exercises and training and agreed to increase the prosperity of these exercises. Both the countries reviewed the progress on various bilateral defence cooperation initiatives and expressed commitment to further elevate engagements between the Armed Forces. Various aspects of defence industrial and capability

⁷³³ Ibid

⁷³⁴ Ibid.

⁷³⁵ <https://www.mod.gov.in/sites/default/files/pre11.pdf>. accessed on 10.10.2022

building cooperation came up for detailed discussions. Both the countries emphasised the need to work closely to implement the USD 500 million Line of Credit (LoC) extended from India for defence items.⁷³⁶ The Bangladesh Defence Secretary explained their efforts in United Nation (UN) for maintaining peace keeping. The Armed Forces of both the countries continued to seek bilateral cooperation in multiple fields and the increased engagements are a positive sign for the future relationship between the two countries. Dr Ajay Kumar also invited the Bangladeshi delegations for the upcoming Defence-Expo 2022 and stated that in the domain of defence infrastructure both countries have great potential of cooperation in defence trade, strategic development and joint military production.⁷³⁷

Taking into account that the Indian Armed force and Mukti Bahini battled side by side in 1971 Liberation War, shared safeguard ties even originated before Bangladesh's freedom. Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi and Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the architect of Bangladesh, signed the 'India-Bangladesh Friendship Treaty' shortly after Bangladesh independence. In spite of the fact that it was a comprehensive document that covered all aspects of security, including people-to-people exchanges, Bangladesh viewed this treaty primarily as a security pact. But, after the assassination of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman it was ignored by the military governments and disregarded by the public, so it was abolished in 1997 under the regime of General Ziaur Rahman.⁷³⁸ Today, the Bangladesh military is the third-largest in South Asia and plays a significant role in the country's future. Bangladesh military officers who were commissioned after 1971 gradually rose to senior positions, defense relations began to improve and Pakistani inclined military personnel were reinstated. General Moeen Ahmed, who graduated from the first course at the Bangladesh Military Academy, became Chief of Army Staff (C.O.A.S) in 2008 and also led a temporary Care taker government in Bangladesh. The first step for military to military cooperation however was started only in 2017 with the signing of three Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) on defence supplies and technology transfer and cooperation in defence and security studies between respective Staff Colleges and National Defence Colleges.⁷³⁹ For this purpose, 'Military Exercises' among all three services took place annually—'SAMPRITI' for the Army, 'BONGO SAGOR' for the Navy, and a multilateral involving the Air Forces,

⁷³⁶ Press Information Bureau (defence wing) Government of India, New Delhi, 11th August, 2022.

⁷³⁷ Ibid

⁷³⁸ Joyeeta Bhattacharjee, 'India-Bangladesh defence cooperation: Coming of age, at last?', ORF Issue Brief 26th July 2018.

⁷³⁹ 'India-Bangladesh meet: Three defence co-operation MoUs signed' ANI, 8th April, 2017.

‘SAMVEDNA.’⁷⁴⁰ Since 2018, the navies and coast guards have been carrying out coordinated patrolling exercises ‘CORPAT’ in the Bay of Bengal to strengthen maritime security. A large number of men and officers from Bangladesh have taken military training courses in India over the years. The first such training was held where retired Chief of Army Staff took the Long Gunnery Staff Course at the School of Artillery in Devlali. Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (H.A.D.R), anti-terrorism coordination, and other topics are included in the scope of joint exercises. Cross-border cycling expeditions, parachuting and free fall exercises, and whitewater rafting events are examples of joint adventure and sports activities. Additionally, multilateral United Nation peacekeeping exercises like ‘SHANTIR OGROSENA’ in April 2021 are held.⁷⁴¹ For the first time a 122-member tri-service Bangladeshi military contingent marched on Rajpath in Delhi as part of the Parade on 72nd Republic Day of India in 2021. Similarly, on 16th December, 2021 an Indian contingent marched in Bangladesh’s Victory Day Parade in Dhaka. There is no doubt that a lot has been accomplished in some areas of military cooperation, there is still a fundamental problem to be solved. The need to dispel the doubts of middle rank military personnel of Bangladesh about the intention of Indian military personnel toward Bangladesh. This doubt arose out of the Bangladesh military strength to face Indian military in the event of any attack on Bangladesh. It is for this reason that the transparent effort is required to bring about this vacillating attitude change so that perceptions of each other are realistic, forward-looking, and not based on incorrect premises. As a result, it is crucial to institutionalize as many of these interactions as possible, including bilateral exercises, courses of instruction, and visits, in order to build mutual trust, clear up misconceptions, and keep the two militaries in a fraternal relationship. In addition, it must be acknowledged that the majority of Bangladeshi officers are familiar with United Nation peacekeeping operations and have completed courses in Islamic countries like Turkey and Pakistan. As a result, expanding the size and scope of interactions is essential if the two countries are to boost self-assurance at home. In this regard Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina’s endeavours to host Indian veterans of the 1971 war, including their widows and dependents, annually in December, 2021 as a tribute to their sacrifice is a very positive initiative. India responds by simultaneously hosting Mukti Juddha delegations each year. Besides, academic syllabi in training academies and courses of instruction should include objective accounts of the 1971 war as well as a long view of India-

⁷⁴⁰ Indian Defence Diplomacy: A Handbook’, Commodore Roby Thomas, MP-IDSA Monograph Series No. 74, November 2021.

⁷⁴¹ Ministry of Defence, Government of India, Press Information Bureau (PIB release) 12th April, 2021.

Bangladesh bilateral relations. Likewise, the constantly sure input from serving Bangladeshi officials who have visited India with their families on lengthy courses ought to be used to upgrade by and large round military to military collaboration. Bangladesh's concerns about not wanting to be 'allied' with India continue to pique India's defense interest. This is one reason why the size of the exercises stays at the tactical level. Interoperability is manageable despite the Bangladeshi military's possession of mostly Chinese-made weapons and platforms although dissatisfaction with some of these systems is still growing.⁷⁴² Some positive progress toward expanding the agreeableness of Indian weaponry and other protection related things in Bangladesh can be observed. The \$500 million Indian Lines of Credit (LoC) that were extended in December 2019 for the import of defense equipment are likely to be put into action.⁷⁴³ It enhances sub-regional defense cooperation as well as accelerates mutual trust to each other for strengthening bilateral relations between the two countries.

JOINT MILITARY EXERCISE 'Ex SAMPRITI-X'

A joint military exercise "Ex SAMPRITI-X" between India and Bangladesh began at the Bangladeshi military station of Jessore on to strengthen the military cooperation on 5th June, 2022. As part of the bilateral cooperation between the two countries in the area of defense, the exercise will continue until 16th June, 2022.⁷⁴⁴

It provided an opportunity to the contingents from both the armies to understand each other's tactical drills and operational techniques as well as to share their experience on 'Counter Insurgency', 'Counter Terrorism', 'Peace Keeping and Disaster Relief Operation' under the United Nations (U.N) mandate. Senior officers of both the armies conveyed their appreciation to the participating contingents for achieving the objectives of the exercise.⁷⁴⁵ Other aim of this military exercise is to improve inter-operability and cooperation between the Army of the two countries. "The point of the activity is to fortify interoperability between the two armed forces and to see each other's strategic drills and functional

⁷⁴² Dipanjan Roy, 'Chinese arms to Dhaka fail quality and longevity tests one after another', Choudhary, **The Economic Times**, 3rd November, 2021.

⁷⁴³ 'Bangladesh to import defence items from India under \$500-million LOC', **Press Trust of India**, 16th December, 2021, Delhi.

⁷⁴⁴ "India, Bangladesh hold joint military exercise as part of bilateral defence cooperation", **India Today**, 6th June, 2022.

⁷⁴⁵ Ibid

methods.” In this joint military exercise ‘A Dogra Regiment Battalion’ is representing the Indian contingent.⁷⁴⁶

The army of the two countries will collaborate on a variety of simulated counter terrorism, humanitarian, and disaster relief, and United Nations peacekeeping scenarios during the joint military exercise in 2022. The exercise will come to an end with a final validation exercise in which soldiers from both the countries will work together to simulate a counter terrorism operation.⁷⁴⁷ This exercise is a chance to improve defence understanding, build trust, and work together with the armies of both countries.” The Indian Army stated in a press conference that the exercise will benefit both armies by gaining from each other’s vast experience, which will further contribute to peace and stability in the South Asian region.⁷⁴⁸

India and Bangladesh have been conducting the bilateral military exercise since 2010. It is an important bilateral military exercise to strengthen defence cooperation between the two countries. The exercise was conducted as Command Post Exercise (C.P.X) and Field Training Exercise (F.T.X). More than hundred and fifty officers of various ranks took part in the exercise. During the exercise, apart from the operational activities, a number of sports and social interactions were also organized.⁷⁴⁹

The 12-day long joint military exercise between India and Bangladesh ‘Sampriti’ culminated after a validation exercise at Jashore in Bangladesh with an eye to focus on creating capabilities in humanitarian assistance and disaster relief as well as counter-terrorism operations and the UN Peace Keeping operations.⁷⁵⁰ Both the armies of the two countries learnt from the best practices of each other during the exercise. The joint exercise resulted in better understanding and enhancing interoperability between the two countries. The exercise between the Armies of the two countries further strengthened the military cooperation between India and Bangladesh.

Indo-Bangladesh bilateral Joint Military Exercise “Ex SAMPRITI-X” concluded on 16th June, 2022 at Jashore Military Station, in Bangladesh. The Closing Ceremony of the

⁷⁴⁶Ministry of Defence, Government of India, Press Information Bureau: 5th June, 2022, Delhi. Available at <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseIframePage.aspx?PRID=1831346>.

⁷⁴⁷Ibid

⁷⁴⁸<https://newsonair.gov.in/News?title=India-Bangladesh--joint-military-exercise-Sampriti-culminates-in-Jashore&id=442796>, accessed on 20.10.2022.

⁷⁴⁹Ibid

⁷⁵⁰“India-Bangladesh joint military exercise Sampriti culminates in Jashore”, **All India Radio News**, 16th June, 2022

10th edition of “Ex Sampri-X” was attended by Lieutenant General Ataul Hakim Sarwar Hasan, Chief of General Staff, Bangladesh Army along with Major General Praveen Chhabra, General Officer Commanding 20 Mountain Division of Indian Army and Major General Md Nurul Anwar, General Officer Commanding 55 Division of Bangladesh Army.⁷⁵¹

JOINT NAVAL MILITARY EXERCISE ‘MILAN’

The Indian Navy is the host of the multilateral naval exercise known as ‘Milan.’ The biennial event, which began in 1995 and features social events as well as sporting fixtures between participating countries, includes professional exercises and seminars. The Andaman and Nicobar Command in India was in charge of all Milan editions, which were held in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. The naval exercise ‘Milan’ was held in Port Blair from 6-13 March 2018.⁷⁵² In 2020, the Navy decided to hold the next Milan in Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh, under the Eastern Naval Command. It was chosen because it had more sea space and infrastructure for the exercise.⁷⁵³ With 30 foreign navies confirming their consent for participation, the Milan exercise in 2020 would have been the largest ever. On the other hand, the coronavirus pandemic caused the Indian Navy to postpone the exercise in early March 2020.⁷⁵⁴ The military exercise ‘Milan’ 2022 was attended by 42 countries, with 13 countries sending warships and 39 countries sending delegations. Bangladesh’s ‘BNS Umar Farooq’ took part in this exercise. Except for 2001, 2005, 2016, and 2020, the event has been held every two years. Due to the International Fleet Review, neither the 2001 nor the 2016 editions were held. The Indian Ocean earthquake and tsunami of 2004 caused the 2005 event to be moved to 2006. The covid-19 pandemic resulted in the cancellation of the 2020 event.

The 11th Milan was held in Visakhapatnam from 25th February to 4th March, 2022. The Eastern Naval Command hosted the exercise for the first time in Visakhapatnam, making it the largest ever. The 2022 edition was officially inaugurated on 26th February at the Naval Auditorium in Visakhapatnam by Minister of State for Defence Ajay Bhatt. The event was also attended by Admiral R. Hari Kumar, and the Ambassadors, High Commissioners, Chiefs

⁷⁵¹ Ministry of Defence, Government of India, Press Information Bureau : 16th June, 2022, Delhi. Available at <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseIframePage.aspx?PRID=1834605> assessed on 20.11.2022

⁷⁵² “India to host mega naval exercise amid China’s manoeuvring in high seas”. **The Economic Times**, 25th February, 2018.

⁷⁵³ “Naval exercise MILAN concludes in Visakhapatnam”. **The Hindu**, 5th March, 2022.

⁷⁵⁴ “Indian Navy postpones multilateral exercise Milan 2020 due to coronavirus”. **The Economic Times**, 3rd March, 2020.

of Navies, delegation heads of participating countries, and the Commanding Officers and crew of all participating ships.⁷⁵⁵ A ‘MILAN village’ was also established at the Tarang Naval Institute as part of the exercise to showcase Indian handicrafts, cuisine, and arts, particularly from the host state of Andhra Pradesh, and serve as a venue for social interaction and cultural exchange between the participants countries. The theme of the 11th edition was “Camaraderie, Cohesion, and Collaboration.” The Indian Navy invited 46 countries, including all ‘Quad Nations’,⁷⁵⁶ to participate in this Naval Exercise. 13 countries sent warships to the ‘Milan 2022 exercise,’ and 39 countries were represented by delegations.⁷⁵⁷ A total of 26 ships-13 foreign and 13 Indian Navy-participated in the exercise, as well as 21 aircraft and 1 submarine.⁷⁵⁸

The 2022 version incorporated a harbor stage (25-28 February) trailed by an ocean stage (1-4 Walk). According to the Indian Navy “A series of complex and advanced exercises were undertaken in all three dimensions of naval operations to enhance compatibility, interoperability, mutual understanding, and maritime cooperation among the partner navies.” Aircraft anti-submarine exercises, surface target firings, and the simulation of intricate operational scenarios were all part of the sea phase. The navies conducted anti-warfare drills over the first two days of the sea phase. One example was a Boeing P-8 Poseidon from the United States Navy directing an Indian fighter plane attack on a warship formation. Additionally, the navies fired weapons at low-flying air targets. The fleet tanker Indian Navy Ship (INS) ‘Shakti’ (A57) performed underway replenishment for the ships of the participating navies and carried out cross-deck landing operations during helicopter operations over the following days of the sea phase. Other events during Milan 2022 included an operational demonstration by the Indian Navy followed by an International City Parade (including foreign contingents) on the evening of 27th February, an international maritime seminar with the theme – ‘Harnessing Collective Maritime Compet.’

The closing ceremony was held onboard I.N.S Jalashwa (L41) and was led by Rear Admiral Sanjay Bhalla, Flag Officer Commanding Eastern Fleet.⁷⁵⁹ According to David Catterall, Commanding officer of the USS Fitzgerald, ‘Milan Military Exercise’ offered many

⁷⁵⁵ “Multi-national naval exercise Milan-22 opens in Vizag”. **Deccan Chronicle**, 27th February, 2022.

⁷⁵⁶ The Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (QSD), more commonly referred to as the ‘Quad’, is a strategic security dialogue between the United States, Australia, India, and Japan that is maintained by member-country talks.

⁷⁵⁷ “Multi-national naval exercise MILAN-22 begins in Vizag”, **Hindustan Times**, 28 February, 2022.

⁷⁵⁸ “Multi-nation Milan naval exercise concludes in Visakhapatnam”, **The Times of India**, 5th March, 2022.

⁷⁵⁹ “Naval exercise MILAN concludes in Visakhapatnam”, **The Hindu**, 5th March, 2022.

opportunities for “like-minded navies that sharing a common vision of a more stable, open, and prosperous Indo-Pacific Region, to operate and train alongside one another.” He also said, “We are grateful for India's efforts to harmonize our contributions to the region and their hosting of this important event, and we look forward to ensuring future engagements to build strong alliances and partnerships.” The joint exercise promoting understanding and interoperability between India and Bangladesh in defence infrastructural sector. Further it helped in strengthening defence ties between the two countries in south Asian region. These military exercises prove invaluable in war perspective as well as humanitarian aid and disaster relief operations

RAIL INFRASTRUCTURE

During Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's visit to New Delhi, a number of infrastructure projects were launched, announced, and revealed. According to the two memorandums of understanding (MoU) were signed on 6th September, 2022. The Indian Railways will offer Information Technology solutions for the computerization of the Bangladesh Railway's passenger ticketing and freight operations, as well as provide training to the Bangladesh Railway's employees.⁷⁶⁰

During Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's ongoing visit to New Delhi, the two Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) were signed. A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) that was signed by the Ministry of Railways (Railway Board) of the Government of India and the Ministry of Railways (Railway Board) of the Government of People's Republic of Bangladesh regarding the training of Bangladesh Railway personnel in India envisions a framework for cooperation as well as ways to make training easier at Indian Railways institutes. Seminars, workshops, classroom training, and field training will all be part of this. According to officials, the Indian Railways will also work with officials in the neighbouring country as needed, such as to visit Bangladesh and help to set up and improve training facilities there as well as study requirements. Collaboration in Information Technology systems such as Freight Operations Information System (FOIS) and other IT applications for Bangladesh Railway is the subject of the other MoU.

Through the Centre for Railway Information Systems (C.R.I.S), this will include information technology solutions for all aspects of the Bangladesh Railway, including the

⁷⁶⁰ Ministry of Railways, Government of India, Press Information Bureau, 6th September, 2022, Delhi.

computerization of passenger ticketing, freight operation and control office, train inquiry system, and digital asset management, human resource, and finance infrastructure.

In addition, the 5.13-kilometer Rupsha rail bridge was opened by the two countries. This bridge is an essential component of the 64.7-kilometer Khulna-Mongla Port single-track broad gauge rail project. It connects Mongla Port and Khulna for the first time by railway infrastructure. It then connects Mongla Port to central and northern Bangladesh as well as to the border with India at Petrapole and Gede in Indian state West Bengal.

“The introduction of the rail route span over the Rupsha waterway is a noteworthy stage towards improving rail infrastructure. Under India’s Line of Credit (LoC), this bridge is an essential component of the brand-new railway line being constructed between Khulna and Mongla Port. During a joint declaration with Sheikh Hasina in front of the media, Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi issued a statement announcing that India would “continue to extend all support for the development and expansion of Bangladesh’s railway system.”⁷⁶¹ Additionally, it was announced that the road and highways department of the Bangladesh Government would receive 25 packages of road construction equipment and machinery from India.

In addition, the Khulna-Darshana railway link project was announced to improve the existing infrastructure by doubling the broad gauge. This project will connect Khulna to the cross-border rail link at Gede-Darshana, thereby expanding the rail infrastructure between the two countries, particularly to Dhaka and, in the future, Mongla Port.

The project is expected to cost \$312.48 million USD. The economy will be able to connect more and support each other with the development of trade infrastructure on the border and the expansion of connectivity between our two countries. “Our trade with each other is expanding quickly. Today, India is Bangladesh’s largest Asian market for exports. We will soon begin discussions on the Bilateral Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (BCEPA) to further accelerate this growth,” Modi stated.

The existing metre-gauge railway line in another infrastructure project, the Parbatipur-Kaunia railway line, will be upgraded to dual-gauge at an estimated cost of USD

⁷⁶¹ Ministry of Railways, Government of India, 2021

120.41 million. The project will improve bilateral rail connectivity by connecting to the existing cross-border rail between Birol (Bangladesh) and Radhikapur (West Bengal).⁷⁶²

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT INFRASTRUCTURE

‘High Impact Community Development Projects’ (HICDPs) is a short-term, community-oriented projects primarily focused on the improvement of infrastructure in rural Bangladesh. ‘High Impact Community Development Projects’ (HICDPs) are intended to have a significant impact on the community, particularly in the areas of sustainable development, health, education, gender and child empowerment, sports, and income and livelihood generation. They are planned and carried out by local governments in accordance with the priorities and requirements of the respective communities. As they have a direct impact on the lives of the people at the grassroots level, these projects, which are focused on basic socio-economic development, are found to be an effective tool for addressing rural poverty. At the Alipur Rahmania College in Chittagong, Bangladesh, the brand-new science block was officially opened by the Information Minister of Bangladesh and the Indian High Commissioner.⁷⁶³ Bangladesh Information Minister Hasan Mahmud and Indian High Commissioner Riva Ganguly Das have virtually inaugurated the new science block of the Alipur Rahmania College in Bangladesh’s Chattogram. It was built for 51.43 lakh Bangladeshi takas under the India-funded High Impact Community Development Project (HICDP) scheme.

On 14th July, 2020, through video conference from their respective residences, the minister and the Indian envoy jointly inaugurated the school’s building in Hathazari Upazila of Chattogram. The event was led by Indian Assistant High Commissioner in Chattogram, Anindyo Banerjee, with local lawmaker Anisul Islam Mahmud as special guest.⁷⁶⁴ Riva Ganguly Das, the then Indian High Commissioner in Bangladesh, spoke India’s involvement in the promotion of education in Bangladesh was emphasized, and the two countries pledged to continue working together in the future.

Through the High Impact Community Development Project, “India is also undertaking various capacity building projects covering social and human development

⁷⁶² Ibid

⁷⁶³ “India-funded science block of Bangladesh college inaugurated,” **ENEWS TIMES**, 14th July, 2020, also available at <https://www.enevstime.in/enews/india-funded-science-block-of-bangladesh-college-inaugurated-281.html>

⁷⁶⁴ Ibid

aspects that are of direct benefit to local communities in Bangladesh.” These projects are in addition to interactions that take place at the government level. India provides assistance to building projects in a variety of fields under the HICDP, including education, information technology, health, restoration of museums and other cultural and heritage infrastructure, disaster management, and urban development.

The Information Minister of Bangladesh, expressed gratitude to the Indian Government for taking similar actions in the past. The traditional, historical and genuine relationship exists between India and Bangladesh since its creation in 1971. He said, “We speak the same language, hear the chirping of the same birds, and were born and raised in the same river basin in many states, including India’s neighbour West Bengal and other states.”⁷⁶⁵ Since its independence, Bangladesh’s economic growth has been aided by the Indian government. He also praised the Indian government’s contribution to Bangladesh’s economic growth and stated that bilateral trade relations have reached a new high as India sends goods to its North Eastern states via Bangladesh roads after unloading containers from ships at Chattogram Port. The leaders of Bangladesh and India have realized that he was right when he said that a country’s progress cannot be sustained without the progress of its neighbours. According to a statement issued by the Indian High Commission, he also stated that the construction of this building will benefit both the students and the entire village in Bangladesh.

Anisul Islam Mahmud, a local MP, stated, “We hope that India will continue to cooperate in this manner in the future. I would like to express my deepest gratitude to the Indian Government on behalf of the Hathazari people of Bangladesh.”

The construction of the building, whose foundation stone was laid by then Assistant High Commissioner of India in Chittagong, Mr. Somnath Halder on 26th July, 2017, was completed in January but the inauguration programme was delayed due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the Indian mission said.⁷⁶⁶ The science block was built for 51.43 million Bangladeshi takas as part of the India-funded High Impact Community Development Project. Videography has been used to officially open the block. Along with the Agartala-Akhaura rail link, dredging of inland waterways, the India-Bangladesh Friendship Pipeline, The High Impact Community Development Projects (HICDPs) in the areas of education,

⁷⁶⁵ *ibid*

⁷⁶⁶ *Ibid*

health, water, urban development, disaster management, community welfare, the construction of academic buildings, cultural centers, skill development and training institutes, student hostels, and education for orphans, among other things, have all received grant funding from the Indian government within Bangladesh.⁷⁶⁷ High Impact Community Development Projects (HICDPs) likewise structure a significant piece of India's formative help to Bangladesh, with India having financed 68 HICDPs, including 16 extra HICDPs are being carried out.⁷⁶⁸

VISA INFRASTRUCTURE

The Indian Visa Application Center (IVAC) at Jamuna Future Park (JFP) in Dhaka was officially inaugurated by Indian Home Minister Rajnath Singh and Bangladeshi counterpart Asaduzzaman Khan by presenting a few visa applicants with passports containing Indian visas.

On 14th July, 2018, a brand-new integrated, cutting-edge Indian Visa Application Center (IVAC) was opened at Jamuna Future Park (JFP) in Dhaka. Mr. Harsh Vardhan Shringla told reporters after the inauguration that the High Commission in Dhaka issued 14 lakh visas last year. Additionally, he stated that the applicants for visas will be treated as guests at the new integrated visa center, which will issue 5,000 visas per day with all existing facilities. The High Commission gave 9.76 lakh visas in 2016 and today Bangladeshi individuals comprise the biggest number of guests to India.⁷⁶⁹ The Indian High Commission in Dhaka and the two Assistant High Commissions in Chittagong and Rajshahi together issue the highest number of Indian visas compared to any other Indian Mission abroad. The numbers are increasing manifold with the figures touching 9.33 lakhs in 2016. There are 12 Indian Visa Application Centres (IVAC) in Bangladesh managed by the State Bank of India (SBI): four in Dhaka (Gulshan, Dhanmondi, Motijheel and Uttara), Chittagong, Sylhet, Rajshahi, Khulna, Mynmensingh, Rangpur, Barisal and Jessore.

In the inauguration Day many distinguished personalities Mr. Braj Raj Sharma, Special Secretary (Border Management) at the Indian Ministry of Home Affairs, Mr. Harsh Vardhan Shringla, Indian High Commissioner in Dhaka, and Jamuna Group Chairman Nurul Islam Babul were present. Mohammad Nazrul Islam received a five-year multiple entry tourist visa from the Indian Home Minister (under the freedom fighter category), Amal Chandra

⁷⁶⁷<https://pib.gov.in/Pressreleaseshare.aspx?PRID=1587180>, accessed on 16.10.2022.

⁷⁶⁸ Press Information Bureau, Government of India, Ministry of Commerce & Industry, 4th October, 2019, New Delhi.

⁷⁶⁹ "World's largest Indian visa centre inaugurated in Dhaka" **The Daily Star**, 14th July, 2018.

Natta received a five-year multiple entry tourist visa from the Bangladesh Home Minister (under the senior citizen category), Jannattul Ferdous received a one-year multiple entry tourist visa from the High Commissioner, and Begum Sharifa received a six-month triple entry medical visa from the Special Secretary (Border Management) to travel to Bengaluru for better medical treatment.

In two phases, the brand-new Indian Visa Application Center (IVAC) at Jamuna Future Park (JFP) will take the place of all of Dhaka's previous Indian Visa Application Center (IVACs)—Motijheel, Uttara, Gulshan, and Mirpur Road. The existing Indian Visa Application Center (IVACs) in Motijheel and Uttara will be replaced by the new Indian Visa Application Center (IVAC) in Jamuna Future Park (JFP) that started on 15th July, 2018. The remaining two Indian Visa Application Center (IVACs) in Dhaka—Gulshan and Mirpur Road—will also be moved to Indian Visa Application Center (IVAC), Jamuna Future Park (JFP) by 31st August, 2018. After that, there will only be one Indian Visa Application Center (IVAC) at Jamuna Future Park (JFP) for all visa applications in Dhaka that do not require a prior appointment. According to the Indian High Commission in Dhaka, the brand-new Indian Visa Application Center (IVAC) in Jamuna Future Park (JFP) is a model visa center for establishing a direct connection between the two countries.⁷⁷⁰

The Indian Visa Application Center (IVAC), which will be situated in a commercial area that is 18,500 square feet in size, will include amenities such as coffee and soft drink, vending machines, food kiosks, comfortable seating arrangements in an air-conditioned waiting area, and facilities for submitting applications from as many as 48 countries. Senior citizens, women, muktijodhas, and business applicants will each have their own dedicated counters. A dedicated service counter with a helpdesk for printing, copying, and other services will be available here at low costs. The new Indian Visa Application Center (IVAC), which is expected to be in a large, safe shopping mall, is expected to make it easier for applicants to get visas and also to reduce waiting time considerably.

The High Commission of India's ongoing efforts to further streamline the Indian visa application process and strengthen people-to-people connections between India and Bangladesh are reflected in the consolidation of visa application services at the JFP and the provision of amenities. The Indian Visa Application Centre (I.V.A.C) in Bangladesh will be managed by the State Bank of India (SBI) for an additional two years. On 10th August, 2022,

⁷⁷⁰Ibid

officials from the SBI and the High Commission of India in Dhaka signed an agreement to extend operations for two more years. Amit Kumar, the head of SBI operations in Bangladesh, represented the SBI, and Dr. Binoy George, the Deputy High Commissioner of India to Bangladesh supervise the project. The High Commissioner of India Mr. Vikram Doraiswami spoke at the event and expressed satisfaction with the operation of the IVAC centers in Bangladesh.⁷⁷¹

In addition, the Indian Visa Application Centre (IVAC) will soon launch a few new services, including slot booking, online form fill up and submission, and the launch of a mobile app. Additionally, a priority lounge was opened at the Indian Visa Application Centre (IVAC) in Dhaka.

At present S.B.I operates 15 Indian Visa Application Centres (IVAC) in Bangladesh. In 2018, 'The Jamuna Future Park IVAC center' in Dhaka opened. It is the largest center in India for visa applications. In 2005, SBI established the first Indian Visa Application Centre (IVAC) in Dhaka.

Each day, the Indian Visa Application Centre (IVAC) handles an average of more than 5.5 thousand visa applications. Over 16 lakh Bangladeshi visas were issued in 2019 by the Indian High Commission. After being disrupted in 2020 and 2021 by the Covid 19 pandemic, the High Commission of India's visa operations have been operating at full swing, giving priority to applicants for all visa categories, including those in emergency medical situations.⁷⁷²

During the 3rd India-Bangladesh Consular Dialogue on 25th July 2022 in Dhaka, both the countries agreed to ease travel by further liberalizing entry and exit regulations as well as visa procedures.⁷⁷³ On a variety of topics, the two sides discussed ways to improve cooperation and coordination on consular matters. Standard Operating Procedures (S.O.Ps) for repatriating each other's detained nationals and expediting the release of detained fishermen were two of these.

According to press that was released on 24th July 2022 by the Indian High Commission in Dhaka, the close bilateral cooperation between law enforcement agencies to

⁷⁷¹<https://newsonair.gov.in/News?title=SBI-to-run-Indian-Visa-Centres-in-Bangladesh-for-two-more-years&id=445822>, accessed on 10.10.2022.

⁷⁷²Ibid.

⁷⁷³<https://newsonair.com/2022/07/25/india-bangladesh-discuss-liberalisation-of-visa-procedures/> accessed on 10.10.2022.

prevent terrorism, cross-border crimes, and increase mutual legal assistance was welcomed by India and Bangladesh positively.⁷⁷⁴

The commitment on both sides to continue working toward citizen-centered consular mechanisms was reiterated. Observing the interesting companionship and exceptional connection between the two countries, they consented to additionally fortify respective relations through simpler and greater people-to-people trades. New Delhi will be the location of the following Consular Dialogue. During the consular dialogue, the Indian delegation was led by Dr. Ausaf Sayeed, Secretary (CPV & OIA) while the Bangladesh delegation was led by Amb. Mashfee binte Shams, Secretary (East), Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Peoples' Republic Bangladesh. India and Bangladesh established the Consular Dialogue Mechanism (CDM) in 2017 to discuss and enhance consular, visa, and mutual legal assistance cooperation.⁷⁷⁵

INDIA'S ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE TO BANGLADESH FOR INFRASTRUCTURAL DEVELOPMENT

India had extended 3 Lines of Credits (LoC) to Bangladesh in the last 7 years amounting to US\$ 8 billion. This makes Bangladesh the largest recipient of Lines of Credits (LoC) funds from India till 2022. During the visit of Bangladesh Prime Minister to India in January 2010, India had announced a US\$1 billion Line of Credit (LoC) for Bangladesh covering projects in public transportation, roads, railways, bridges and inland waterways etc. Most of these projects have been completed and the remaining are at various stages of completion. India had extended the second Lines of Credits (LoC) of US\$ 2 billion during the visit of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi to Bangladesh in June 2015. This second Lines of Credit (LoC) covers 15 projects in the areas of Roads, Railways, Power, Shipping, Special Economic Zones, Health and Medical Care and Technical Education. During the visit of Bangladesh Prime Minister (PM) to India in April 2017, India extended a third LoC of US\$ 4.5 billion to Bangladesh. The new Line of Credit (LoC) will cover projects in the areas of Port Construction, Railways, Roads, Airports, Power and Energy, Telecommunications, and Shipping infrastructure. In addition to Lines of Credits (LoC) funds, Government of India also provides grant assistance to Bangladesh for projects under 'Aid to Bangladesh.' Projects such as construction of schools, colleges buildings, laboratories, dispensaries, deep tube wells,

⁷⁷⁴ Ibid

⁷⁷⁵ Ibid

community centres, renovation of historical monuments, heritage buildings etc. have been financed by government of India under this programme. At present, three Sustainable Development Projects (SDPs) are being undertaken in the cities of Rajshahi, Khulna and Sylhet. The extended development work of RabindraNath Tagore's ancestral house in Shilaidaha is as well as 36 community clinics in selected districts of Bangladesh also being undertaken. Reading infrastructural development one of the biggest infrastructures under the Indian grant assistance is the Bangladesh section of the Agartala-Akhaura rail-link that connects Indian state Tripura with Bangladesh.

INDO-BANGLADESH FRIENDSHIP PIPELINE INFRASTRUCTURE

Foreign Secretary of India, Mr. Harsh Vardhan Shringla stated on 16th December, 2021, that work on the India-Bangladesh Friendship Pipeline Project (IBFPP), which will enable the two countries to integrate their energy requirements, is making good progress and may be inaugurated next year. Siliguri in West Bengal in India and Parbatipur in the Dinajpur district of Bangladesh will be connected by the India-Bangladesh Friendship Pipeline Project (I.B.F.P.P), which was signed in 2018. One million metric tons of oil will be transported annually through the 130-kilometer pipeline project. According to Mr. Shringla, the “very unique and significant pipeline that enables us to integrate our energy requirements” is the India-Bangladesh Friendship Pipeline Project (IBFPP).⁷⁷⁶ Mr. Harsh Vardhan Shringla told reporters in Dhaka that the project is going very well and that “we would be in a position to inaugurate it next year.” He said this after President Ram Nath Kovind met with the top leadership of Bangladesh on 15th December, 2021, and promised to help promote economic cooperation between the two neighbouring countries in South Asia. The India-Bangladesh Friendship Pipeline Project (IBFPP) will use the Siliguri Marketing Terminal to ship fuel to Bangladesh from the Numaligarh Refinery Limited (NRL) in Assam. According to Mr. Shringla, bilateral trade between the two countries has steadily increased in recent time. A year-over-year increase of 14 per cent was achieved in 2020, which is very encouraging in term of recent Indo-Bangladesh bilateral relations.

Mr. Shringla added that the two countries are also in talks for a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement. Bangladesh's exports to India have reached the billion dollar mark and continue to rise steadily. He stated that Lines of Credits (LoC) have made excellent progress. Bangladesh is responsible for nearly a third of our credit lines; In

⁷⁷⁶“India-Bangladesh Friendship Pipeline could be inaugurated next year: Harsh Vardhan Shringla”, **The Hindu**, 16th December, 2021.

extremely lenient credit terms, India has given Bangladesh \$10 billion. He also stated, “These lines of credit (LoC) have actually contributed to improving our infrastructure and connectivity, not only along the border but also in other parts of Bangladesh.”⁷⁷⁷ We are going to work on further streamlining this and look at another package that our High Commissioner is working on. Additionally, we will investigate the next steps. However, despite covid 19 pandemic, we have disbursed over \$120 billion in Lines of Credits (LoC) funds in the past year. Therefore, I believe we are doing okay, and the economic sector has made positive progress in this regard.”⁷⁷⁸

Assam based Numaligarh Refinery Limited (NRL), plans to finish the construction of the India-Bangladesh Friendship Pipeline (IBFPL) project by the end of the year.⁷⁷⁹ The 2G Ethanol Project, the Refinery Expansion Project (NREP), the Paradip Numaligarh Crude Oil Pipeline (PNCPL), and the Crude Oil Import Terminal at Paradip (COIT) are all projects in which the company is investing more than Rs 35,000 crore.

On 22nd September, 2022, Numaligarh Refinery Limited (NRL) held its 29th Annual General Meeting. Managing Director Numaligarh Refinery Limited (NRL) Mr. B J Phukan was present at the meeting, which was presided over by Chairman Numaligarh Refinery Limited (NRL) and CMD OIL, Dr. R Rath. During the fiscal years 2021 and 2022, the company has declared a dividend of 150 percent, which has already been paid out as an interim dividend throughout the year. “Numaligarh Refinery Limited (NRL) is determined in its pursuit of executing the major ongoing projects in hand,” Dr. R Rath stated. Specifically, the India-Bangladesh Friendship Pipeline Project (IBFPL), the 2G Ethanol Project, the Numaligarh Refinery Expansion Project (NREP), the Paradip Numaligarh Crude Oil Pipeline (PNCPL), and the Crude Oil Import Terminal at Paradip (COIT). Your company intends to invest more than Rs 35,000 crore over the next five years to complete these projects, which will enable long-term revenue and business growth and money. As a result, completing these projects on time and within budget remains the company’s primary focus. He added that the 130-kilometer Indo-Bangladesh Friendship Pipeline project (IBFPL) for exporting NRL products to Bangladesh from the Siliguri Marketing Terminal is making good progress.”⁷⁸⁰

⁷⁷⁷Ibid

⁷⁷⁸ The Hindu, 16th December, 2021

⁷⁷⁹“Numaligarh Refinery Limited to complete construction of India-Bangladesh Friendship Pipeline by end of year” **The Economic Times**, 19th September, 2022.

⁷⁸⁰Ibid

Numaligarh Refinery produced 2,624 TMT in fiscal year 2021-2022, which included 23 TMT of imported crude oil. In addition, the refinery began blending 10 per cent ethanol in motor spirit (petrol) at its Siliguri and Numaligarh marketing terminals in the first year, producing 1,122 KL of ethanol, and this trend is continuing into the current fiscal year. The company's annual sales turnover was its highest ever, at Rs 23,546 crore, up 26.95 per cent from the previous year's Rs 18,548 crore, primarily due to rising product prices. The company also achieved its highest-ever Profit before Tax (PBT) with Rs 4,848 Crore, up 18.37 percent from the previous year's Rs 4,083 Crore, primarily due to an increase in overall gross margin and higher inventory gains. As of 31st March, 2022, the company's net worth was Rs 8,388 crores, up from Rs 5,596 crores the year before. In the form of taxes, duties, and dividends, the company has contributed a total of Rs 5,809 crore to the government's coffers. The company said that Numaligarh Refinery Limited (NRL) spent Rs 3,605 crore on stand-alone capital, three times more than its previous high of Rs 1,029 crore in the fiscal year 2020-2021.⁷⁸¹

According to R Rath, Chairman of Numaligarh Refinery Limited (NRL), the 130-kilometer India-Bangladesh Friendship Pipeline (IBFPL) project is 'progressing well' and is anticipated to be completed by the end of the year 2022. This was stated by the head of Numaligarh Refinery Limited (NRL) at the Assam-based company's 29th Annual General Meeting on 19th September, 2022.⁷⁸² The project aims to ship oil products to Bangladesh from the Siliguri Marketing Terminal in the state of West Bengal.

According to the Daily Star (New Delhi) correspondent, he stated that NRL had set a goal to commission IBFPL by October, 2022 and that the overall physical progress as of June 30 was 92.7 per cent. According to Rath, Numaligarh Refinery Limited (NRL) was "decisive in its pursuit of executing the major ongoing projects in hand, including the India-Bangladesh Friendship Pipeline (IBFPL) project."

One of the five projects that will make it possible for (Numaligarh Refinery Limited) NRL's long-term revenue and profit growth is the India-Bangladesh Friendship Pipeline

⁷⁸¹ Ibid

⁷⁸² "India-Bangladesh Friendship Pipeline project to be completed this year." **The Daily Star**, 20th September, 2022. Also available at <https://www.thedailystar.net/news/bangladesh/development/news/india-bangladesh-friendship-pipeline-project-be-completed-year-3123736> accessed on 12.10.2022.

project (IBFPL).As a result, the company's primary focus remains completing this and four other projects on time and within budget, he added.⁷⁸³

President Ramnath Kovind discussed trade and infrastructural issues during separate meetings with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, Foreign Minister A.K. Abdul Momen, and President Mohammad Abdul Hamid of Bangladesh. He said that network shapes a significant mainstay of India-Bangladesh relations, as indicated by a public statement given by Rashtrapati Bhavan. Mr. Kovind stated that the proximity of the two countries has a lot to offer, and he was pleased to note that Bangladesh is one of India's largest trading partners. Mr. Kovind stated that India anticipates more organized and smooth trade relation with Bangladesh. According to the Press release, he mentioned that there is a lot of scope for collaboration in the fields of space technology, nuclear technology, defense, pharmaceuticals, and other advanced science and technology. The formal "Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement" would significantly increase bilateral trade.⁷⁸⁴ Recently Joint Virtual Inauguration of the India-Bangladesh Friendship diesel Pipeline project was held by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi and Prime Minister of Bangladesh, Sheikh Hasina on 18th March 2023 via video-conference. This is the first cross border energy pipeline between India and Bangladesh, built at an estimated cost of Rs 377 crore, of which the Bangladesh portion of the pipeline built at a cost of approximately Rs 285 crore, has been borne by the Indian Government under-grant assistance.⁷⁸⁵

SPACE TECHNOLOGY AND SCIENTIFIC COOPERATION

Bangladesh and India have agreed to officially join New Delhi's 'South Asia Satellite' initiative, which will see the launch of a communication satellite for South Asia by the Indian Space Research Organization (I.S.R.O).According to bdnews24, the agreement was signed on 23rd March,2017, by Indian High Commissioner Mr.Harsh Vardhan Shringla and Chairman of the Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (B.T.R.C), Shahjahan Mahmood.⁷⁸⁶

According to the High Commission, Bangladesh has now formally agreed to participate in the Indian Government's 'South Asia Satellite' initiative.Using Indian Space

⁷⁸³Ibid

⁷⁸⁴Ibid

⁷⁸⁵ Eisamay, Kolkata, 18 March 2023, p-9

⁷⁸⁶ "Bangladesh to join India's South Asia Satellite initiative", **The Statesman**, 23rd March, 2017.

Research Organization's (ISRO) Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle (GSLV Mk-II), India will launch a two-ton class communication satellite with 12 Ku band transponders (36 Mhz each) to serve South Asia. Telemedicine, teleeducation, intergovernmental networks, emergency disaster communication, television broadcast, and Direct To Home (D.T.H) television services are among the proposed applications for the satellite system.⁷⁸⁷ Recently Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina expressed gratitude to Indian Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi and I.S.R.O for Chandrayaan-3's successful safe and soft landing on the south pole of the Moon on 5th August, 2023.

Each participating country may use a dedicated transponder with a capacity of 36 to 54 Mhz for internal purposes. The High Commission stated in a statement that "content creation and utilization would be the responsibility of each country. This one-of-a-kind endeavour will unite the region in a cooperative and collaborative endeavour for the benefit of the people of the participating countries, with the exception of Pakistan."

Prior to the SAARC Summit in Kathmandu in 2014, Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi stated that the launch of the satellite would be a 'gift to India's neighbours.' The High Commission stated, "This satellite is an expression of India's commitment to the development of the South Asian region and a reflection of India's willingness to share its expertise and technology for the benefit of the region." The agreement was signed just in time for Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's trip to India next month.⁷⁸⁸

BILATERAL TRADE AND INVESTMENT

India and Bangladesh have trade agreement which is facilitative in nature. India and Bangladesh are members of various regional trade organizations including the Asia Pacific Trade Agreement (APTA), SAARC Preferential Trade Agreement (SAPTA) and the Agreement on South Asian Free Trade Area (SAFTA) which govern the tariff regimes for trade. Under SAFTA, India has granted duty free quota free access to Bangladesh on all items except alcohol and tobacco. Various bilateral institutional mechanisms including Commerce Secretary Level Meeting, Shipping Secretary Level Talks, Joint Working Groups on Trade, Customs and Fisheries and Sub-groups on Banking and Land Custom Station (LCS), Integrated Check Post (ICP) Infrastructure meet regularly to facilitate the trade between the

⁷⁸⁷"Bangladesh join India's South Asia Satellite Program," **India Today**, 23rd March, 2017.

⁷⁸⁸ Ibid.

two countries.⁷⁸⁹ The first Trade Agreement between India and Bangladesh was signed in 1972. This ‘Indio-Bangladesh Trade Agreement’ was last renewed during Prime Minister (P.M) Narendra Modi’s visit to Bangladesh in June 2015 for a period of 5 years with a provision for auto renewal. There are a number of other trade related agreements that have been signed between India and Bangladesh. Bilateral trade between the two countries has grown steadily over the last decade. In the five years, total trade between the two countries has grown by more than 17 per cent. India’s exports to Bangladesh in the period July 2016–March 2017 stood at US\$ 4489.30 million and imports from Bangladesh during Final Year 2016-2017 stood at US\$ 672.40 million.⁷⁹⁰ India has provided duty free quota free access to Bangladesh on all tariff lines except tobacco and alcohol under South Asian Free Trade Agreement (SAFTA) since 2011. Four Border Haats, two each in Tripura and Meghalaya, have been established for the benefit of border area communities. Additional Border haats on the India-Bangladesh border are under consideration. Total Indian investment proposals in Bangladesh registered with the Bangladesh Investment Development Authority (BIDA) exceed US\$ 3 billion. Indian Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in Bangladesh reached US\$ 88.0 million in 2015-2016. During Prime Minister (PM) Sheikh Hasina’s visit to India in April 2017, 13 agreements worth around US\$ 10 billion of Indian investment mainly in power and energy sectors in Bangladesh were signed.

TRADE THROUGH RAILWAY CONNECTIVITY

According to a study by World Bank “Improving transport connectivity between the two neighbouring countries India and Bangladesh could increase exports even further, yielding a 297 percent increase in Bangladesh’s exports to India and a 172 percent increase in India’s exports to Bangladesh.”⁷⁹¹ It is anticipated that income would increase by 16.6 percent in Bangladesh and 7.6 percent in India with full transport integration without border barriers. This illustrated why the two governments place a high priority on connectivity, not only for bilateral trade but also for connecting the Bangladesh–Bhutan–India–Nepal (BBIN) sub-region.⁷⁹²

⁷⁸⁹Ministry of Commerce & Industry, Government of India, “India - Bangladesh Business forum meets in New Delhi”, 4th October, 2019 by Press Information Bureau(PIB), Delhi.

⁷⁹⁰More details on bilateral trade statistics are available on the website of High Commission.

⁷⁹¹Matías Herrera Dappe and Charles Kunaka, eds, “Connecting to Thrive: Challenges and Opportunities of Transport Integration in Eastern South Asia”, World Bank, 2021, p. 4.

⁷⁹²Ibid

Roadways have remained an important mode of transportation despite the fact that they are the most expensive. The Chairman of the Land Port Authority (LPA) of Bangladesh states “The majority of the goods traveling from Bangladesh to India move by land, with 70.4 per cent of exports to India having been transported by road or rail.”⁷⁹³

During the visit of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to India, some remarkable steps were taken to improve the existing rail connectivity even further as mentioned in the earlier chapter (chapter-4). The much-anticipated upgrade of the Khulna–Darshana and Parbotipur–Kaunia railway lines, which was supposed to be finished in 2018, was announced a consulting contract by the two countries. The Khulna–Darshana rail project will help improve connectivity between the Mongla Port and Darsana-Gede railway network on the Indian border, as well as on the Khulna–Dhaka, Khulna–Chilahati, and Khulna–Rajshahi routes in Bangladesh.⁷⁹⁴ (Map1)

Map 1. India–Bangladesh Railway Network



Similarly, the Parbotipur–Kaunia railway line would improve connectivity between Bangladesh’s Lalmonirhat and Panchgarh. As this route connects the Birol–Radhikapur route to Nepal and Assam on the eastern side, it would also be crucial for sub-regional BBIN

⁷⁹³ Md. Alamgir, “Land Ports in Connectivity, Trade, Growth”, *New Age*, 14th June, 2022.

⁷⁹⁴ “India and Bangladesh Partner on Two Rail Projects”, *Railway Technology*, 26th August, 2022.

connectivity. This rail project has been elevated from ‘low priority’ in Bangladesh to ‘medium priority’ because of its regional importance.⁷⁹⁵

The restored Haldibari–Chilahati rail route, which opened in August 2021 after 56 years, is expected to carry 20 freight trains per week.⁷⁹⁶ The emphasis on Railway Bridge is evident as the two countries inaugurated ‘Rupsha Rail Bridge’, which will connect Khulna with Mongla port for the first time by single-track broad gauge rail line. It is important to note that Bangladesh’s imports from India account for 99 percent of the cargo that is moved by rail.⁷⁹⁷ (Map-1).

For railway trade, Bangladesh has requested India to open this rail route for exports to Bhutan for the sake of country’s economy while India has requested to remove all restrictions placed on trade at this border area to make the best use of this rail connectivity fruitful. Map 1 shows the existing rail connectivity and how these rail networks connect to major border areas with India. The power stations are marked in the map-1 to show how these rail routes can be used to supply raw material to these power plants sector.

Cargoes from the North East India can be transported via the ‘Maitri Bridge’ over the Feni river to the Chittagong port, which is just 80 kilometers from Sabroom, a town in South Tripura. This rail infrastructure will further develop rail network of south Assam, Mizoram and Manipur alongside Tripura with Bangladesh and further to South-East Asia.⁷⁹⁸ During the inauguration of this ‘Maitri Bridge’, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina emphasized its significance on bilateral level and sub-regional level. She added, “Trade should not be hindered physically by man made political boundaries. The railway infrastructural network in Bangladesh and India, as well as the potential for sub-regional connectivity as these lines connect to Nepal and Bhutan via India. The bridge will also help Bangladesh’s trade with Nepal and Bhutan.”⁷⁹⁹

⁷⁹⁵ Tuhin S. Adhikari, “Khulna-Darshana Double Rail Track: Half of Project Period Gone for Nothing”, **The Daily Star**, 23rd September, 2020.

⁷⁹⁶ “Starting of Freight Trains via Restored Haldibari (India) – Chilahati (Bangladesh) Rail Link”, Press Information Bureau, Ministry of Railways, Government of India, 2nd August, 2021, Delhi.

⁷⁹⁷ “Delegation of Journalists from Bangladesh Calls on Railway Minister”, Press Information Bureau, Ministry of Railways, Government of India, 18th September, 2013, Delhi.

⁷⁹⁸ “PM Inaugurates ‘Maitri Setu’ between India and Bangladesh”, Press Information Bureau, Prime Minister’s Office, Government of India, 9th March, 2021, Delhi.

⁷⁹⁹ “Political Boundaries Should Not Become Physical Barriers for Trade: Bangladesh PM Sheikh Hasina”, **Financial Express**, 9th March, 2021.

TRADE THROUGH WATERWAY CONNECTIVITY

Operationalisation of the Protocol on Inland Water Transit and Trade which was originally signed in 1972 and renewed in 2015⁸⁰⁰ has resulted in movement of goods using a combination of sea, inland waterways from 2016 onwards.⁸⁰¹ The second addendum to this protocol signed in May 2020 also included two new Protocol routes, five new ports of call and two extended ports of call.⁸⁰² In February 2022, the Protocol was utilised to transport food grains as well with 200 Metric Tonnes of rice leaving Patna by ships via National Waterway - 1 for Pandu (near Guwahati), travelling 2,350 km to reach its destination after one month.⁸⁰³ Trade by the 3,500 kms of waterways remains the eco friendly, well disposed, minimal expense method of network between India and Bangladesh. However, navigability remains one of the significant challenges during dry season as just more modest vessels with little draft can continue on this waterways. After India chose to connect National waterway 1 and National waterway 2 to the India-Bangladesh Protocol Route (I.B.P.R), two additional routes were added to the eight working routes in the extra addendum to the India-Bangladesh Protocol Route (IBPR) of 1972.⁸⁰⁴

In 2019, after India opened up National Waterway, Bhutan take advantage of Dhubri (Assam) to transport stones to Bangladesh's Narayanganj which requires just six days, saving money on transportation costs as well as time.⁸⁰⁵ In March 2022, the National waterway 1 and National waterway 2 were connected facilitating with transport across Ganga and Brahmaputra — the two significant waterways that India and Bangladesh share.⁸⁰⁶ During Sheikh Hasina's visit to India, it was reported that National waterway 5 and 6 will be connected. This will reduce the distance between National waterway 1 and waterway 2 by

⁸⁰⁰Devanjana Nag, 'Indo-Bangladesh Protocol on Inland Water Transit and Trade to improve trading between two nations; details', *Financial Express*, 5 February 2021.

⁸⁰¹ 'Shipment arrives in Tripura under new India-Bangla transit protocol', IANS 19th June, 2016.

⁸⁰² Website of the High Commission of India, Dhaka, Bangladesh, brief on bilateral relations 30th March, 2022.

⁸⁰³ Vessel carrying food grains sails from Patna to Pandu in Assam', News Service Division- All India Radio, 6th March, 2022.

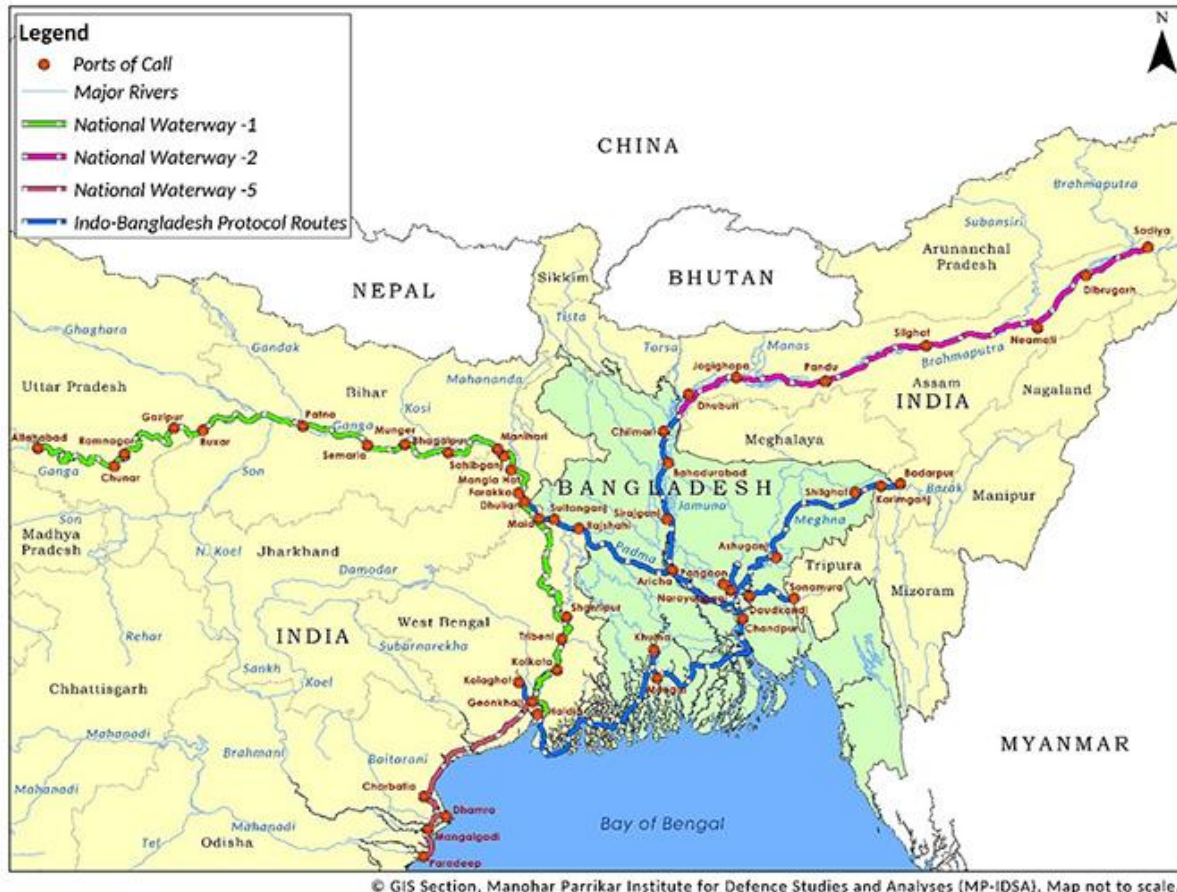
⁸⁰⁴ 'Second Addendum on Protocol on Inland Water Transit and Trade between India and Bangladesh, 2020', Press Information Bureau, Ministry of Port, Shipping and Waterways, Government of India, Delhi, 20th May, 2020.

⁸⁰⁵ To improve the navigability, two stretches of IBP routes, i.e., Sirajganj–Daikhowa and Ashuganj–Zakiganj are also being developed at a cost of Rs 305.84 crore on an 80:20 share basis (80 per cent being borne by India and 20 per cent by Bangladesh).

⁸⁰⁶ Subhash Narayan, "Brahmaputra G Connected with Ganga via Indo Bangladesh Protocol Route", *Mint*, 6th March, 2022.

1,000 kms.⁸⁰⁷ (Map2) and connect North East of India through Bangladesh and further to India.

Map 2. National Waterways 1, 2 and 5 along with India–Bangladesh Protocol Routes



Inclusion of Jogigopha, where a multimodal strategic park is being proposed, would also help in better waterway connectivity network to Meghalaya, Assam and Bhutan. This was a long-standing demand as stones from Bhutan can be transported safely through this route instead of Dhubri (Assam). For this reason, The Ministry of Shipping, India currently permits shallow draft automated vessels in this river route. Goods from Assam can now reach Tripura through the newly announced river route of Dhoudkhadi and Sonamura and from Aricha it can reach Dhulian in West Bengal depending on the destination of cargo (Map 3; new route is marked in the map-3).

⁸⁰⁷ Ibid

Map 3. India–Bangladesh Inland Waterways Protocol Route along with New routes



© GIS Section, Manohar Parrikar Institute for Defence Studies & Analyses (MP-IDSA). Map not to scale.

This also indicates that though the waterway is cheaper route to transport goods, but the depth of the river determines a vessel's navigability. Not surprisingly, there is overwhelming dependency on road and rail as ports are not very well-connected to the existing rail and road infrastructure.

TRADE THROUGH LAND PORTS CONNECTIVITY

The Land Port infrastructure also requires immediate attention to accelerate trade and commerce between India and Bangladesh in this region. Bangladesh's Benapole (Land Port

Station) requires more attention, despite the fact that the land port on the Indian side of Petrapole has been modernized recently. In the World Bank's Bangladesh Regional Connectivity Project (Phase 1), infrastructure is being built in three land ports stations in Bangladesh namely Ramgarh, Sheola, and Benapole. Besides, Bhomra, Burimari, and Bholaganj Land Port Station of Bangladesh are also being considered in this respect.⁸⁰⁸ Congestion is still a major problem at Benapole, which is still the largest trading destination between India and Bangladesh. Benapole needs board road with four lanes to connect to it. The construction of board road with four lanes will, in part, speed up cargo clearance. On the other hand, Agartala–Akhaura Land Port, has better facilities due to its arterial road connection to the National Highway 8. It ranks second in terms of land port in size. In every country, highway infrastructure makes transit trade extremely difficult. The World Bank reports indicates that transport vehicles in Bangladesh travel at an average speed of 19 kilometers an hour along main corridors, referring that traffic is congested on the roads. As a result, it hampered the trade growth in this region.

It is essential to note that Bangladesh's domestic 'Readymade Garment Industry' has grown as a result of its import of raw materials from Indian market. It has increased the amount of ready-made garment when it exports to Western markets. As a result, many businessmen in Bangladesh argue that Bangladesh should not become overly concerned about its trade balance with India. These are essential products that Bangladesh expects to benefit somewhere else. India is still Bangladesh's second-largest trading partner, after China. Bangladesh's seventh-largest export destination is India, while China is not even among Bangladesh's top 11 export destinations (Table 1).

Table 1: Total imports as percentage of total trade of Bangladesh

	China		India	
	Import	Export	Import	Export
2019-2020	20.64%	-	12.07	3.51%
2020-2021	20.36	-	15.98	3.29

Source: Foreign Trade Statistics of Bangladesh 2020-2021, Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, Statistics and Informatics Division, Ministry of Planning, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, May 2022, p. xiv (import), p. xxx (for export).

⁸⁰⁸“Bangladesh Constructing 7 New Land Ports”, South Asia Subregional Economic Cooperation (SASEC), 26th August, 2021

Bangladesh remains India's largest regional trade destination in South Asia. Since 2009, bilateral trade has increased from US\$ 2 billion to almost US\$ 19 billion. In 2021, Bangladesh will account for 47.2 percent of India's exports to the region and 36 percent of India's imports from the region.⁸⁰⁹ With the removal of the non-tariff trade barriers that are currently in place, it is likely to expand even more. The time it takes to clear cargo vehicles is one of the many obstacles. During Sheikh Hasina's visit, India requested Bangladesh to establish 'one major land port station on the border with North Eastern States of India, without port restrictions or negative list restrictions, for easier market access. For this purpose India established Agartala–Akhaura 'integrated check posts' (I.C.P) for easier market access. According to an official report, a cargo truck takes 138 hours to move across the border from India to Bangladesh, and it requires 22 documents and 55 signatures.⁸¹⁰ From Benapole on the Bangladesh side to Petrapole on the Indian side, it takes about 120 hours.⁸¹¹ A 'World Bank Report' states that Bangladesh's Benapole border station can only clear up to 370 trucks, while India's Petrapole border can handle up to 750 trucks a day.⁸¹² Capacity of the movement of cargo and passengers has increased on the Bangladesh side is almost about 87,000 in fiscal year (FY) 2013 to more than 1,08,000 in FY 2021, according to a study conducted by the National Board of Revenue (N.B.R) in Bangladesh. However, the capacity of the land port has not changed. The port handles approximately 8,000 passengers per day in addition to cargo-laden trucks.⁸¹³ A 24-hour customs clearance has also been implemented, but this has not significantly improved the situation for border trade.

Petrapole, on the other hand, necessitates a complete overhaul of the road infrastructure despite the fact that India has comparatively better clearance facilities to optimize cross-border trade. The Asian Development Bank (A.D.B) states that "lack in parking facility with limited clearance of Indian cargo on Bangladeshi side leads to significant waiting period for cargo vehicles. As a result worse traffic congestion and exporters' parking and detention fees hampered the trade relations between the two

⁸⁰⁹“Yearly Export-Import Data Bank”, Ministry of Commerce, Government of India.

⁸¹⁰Nayanima Basu, “It takes 138 hrs, 55 signatures to move 1 truck from India to Bangladesh, says World Bank”, **The Print**, 29th April, 2022.

⁸¹¹Time Release Study 2022, National Board of Revenue, Government of Bangladesh, p. 7.

⁸¹²Mandakini Kaul, “A Visit to India's Busiest Integrated Border Crossing Shows Need for Regional Cooperation and Connectivity”, World Bank, 10th February 2022.

⁸¹³Time Release Study 2022, National Board of Revenue, Government of Bangladesh, no. 17.

countries.”⁸¹⁴Over time, a local nexus that profits from this non-tariff barrier includes those who have private parking spaces in this region. Private parking owners have benefited from India’s attempt to narrow congested free parking by imposing heavy penalties after 24 hours. Currently it has capacity for 2,000 cars to be parked there. Bangladesh’s five-year plan includes spending 2 percent of GDP on the power, energy, and infrastructure sectors.⁸¹⁵According to World Bank’s Doing Business report 2020 in the ‘Trading Across Borders’ category Bangladesh ranks 168 out of 190 countries while India is ranked 63 in this categories.⁸¹⁶Additionally, it intends to use public–private partnership (P.P.P) funding to mobilize 1–1.5 percent of GDP for infrastructural development.⁸¹⁷

Table 2: Exports and Imports in Selected Land Ports (in Million Metric Tonnes)

Na Of the port	2015-2016		2016-2017		2017-2018		2018-2019		2019-2020	
	EXPORT	IMPORT	EXPORT	IMPORT	EXPORT	IMPORT	EXPORT	IMPORT	EXPORT	IMPORT
Benapole	1.2	.47	1..3	.32	1.9	(.35)	2.1	.40	2.03	.31
Sonamasjid	1.6	...	2.7	.025	2.6	(.012)	2.3	(.015)	1.3	.012
Hilli	.84	.006	2.4	.004	1.6	.016	1.3	.037	1.8	.022
Akhaura	11	568480	2	214,955	60	201580	66	209962	67	141881
Bibir Bazar	231	108915	455	135320	317	158331	479	170458	354	133870
Banglabandh	935486	.0831	0.6	7051	1207323	69205	1796869	42632	1186058	113390
Bhomra	1816930	91109	2254764	127430	4656415	119510	2201557	311771	2516070	206328
Nakugaon	.04212	33trucks	.009	.0007	.065	.0013	.085	.0006
Tamabil					.78	.001	1.8	.001	1.4	.0006
Sonahaat							.13	.0001	.20	.005

Note: Burimari is excluded from the table as numbers are given in terms of truckload than volume in metric tonnes. In 2016–2017, there were only 33 truckloads of trade in Nakugaon land port.

Source: Export and Import data of the Bangladesh Land Port Authority.

⁸¹⁴“Strengthening Trade Along the Dhaka–Kolkata Route for a Prosperous and Integrated South Asia”, Asian Development Bank, December 2021, p. 15.

⁸¹⁵Doing Business 2020–Comparing Business Regulation in 190 Economies, World Bank, 2020 , p. 8

⁸¹⁶“Strengthening Trade Along the Dhaka–Kolkata Route for a Prosperous and Integrated South Asia”, no. 20, p. 7

⁸¹⁷8th Five Year Plan, 2020-2025, General Economics Division, Bangladesh Planning Commission, p. 119.

RAIL ROUTES OFFER BOOST TO INDIA–BANGLADESH CROSS-BORDER TRADE

India's diplomatic initiative known as 'Act East Policy' aims to encourage economic and cultural cooperation with other countries in the South Asian region. One of the main areas of 'Act East Policy' is to focus in the country's bilateral cooperation with its nextdoor neighbour Bangladesh through improving connectivity.⁸¹⁸ This includes steps to increase bilateral trade through the use of railway infrastructural networks and to improve rail connectivity with Bangladesh.

Trade over land between India and Bangladesh

India and Bangladesh share a land border that is over 4,000 kilometers long, making it the 5th longest land border in the world. Between the two countries, there are 34 Land Customs Stations (L.C.S), 2 Integrated Check Posts (I.C.P), and 5 railroad exchange points through which cross-line exchange works. Despite the presence of multiple land customs stations (LCS) in both the countries the Benapole-Petrapole integrated check posts (ICP) are used for the majority of the goods' overland transportation. It is one of the busiest and most congested land ports because it is the only land port that allows the import and export of almost all goods, with the exception of a few that are regulated by customs authority. According to World Bank's new report that it requires 138 hours to move a truck from the Indian side to the Bangladesh side through the integrated check posts (ICP).⁸¹⁹

On the other hand, land customs stations (LCS), such as the Ghojadonga-Bhomra, Mahadipur-Sonamasjid, and Changrabandha-Burimari, freight movement has significantly increased. As a result, stakeholders are increasingly realizing that these land customs stations (LCS) need to upgrade with proper infrastructural facilities.⁸²⁰

The most recent patterns of bilateral trade between India and Bangladesh through rail road.

Of late, other than the trade through land ports, there has been a positive change in the development of cargo through freight corridor. The majority of land customs stations (LCS)

⁸¹⁸ Ministry of External Affairs (MEA). Act East Policy. Press Information Bureau, Government of India. 23rd December, 2015.

⁸¹⁹ Dappe, M. H., and C. Kunaka (eds). "Connecting to Thrive: Challenges and Opportunities of Transport Integration in Eastern South Asia". World Bank Publications, 2021.

⁸²⁰ Landport Authority of India (LPAI). Annual Report 2019-20. Department of Border Management, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India, 2020.

are very close to freight corridor. When the worldwide coronavirus disease covid-19 struck heavily Bangladesh and Indian railways attempted to maintain bilateral trade through the five railway exchange points. Since the pandemic, bilateral trade through railroad has increased significantly. Table 1 shows the development of trade through railroads.

Table 1: Number of wagons and freight trains used to transport goods from India to Bangladesh A train's rake is a collection of connected wagons. 42 wagons are typically transported in freight rakes from India to Bangladesh.

Years	No of Rakes	No of Wagons	Freight volume in Metric Tons
2019-2020	665	70,587	1,677,825
2020-2021	1,330	139,177	3,043,457
2021-2022	1,664	165,265	3,706,946

Source: Ministry of Railways, India and Bangladesh.

There have been three significant developments in cross-border rail logistics, in addition to the increase in the volume of cargo handled by railways. In the past, only food grains, fly ash, maize, limestone, and gypsum were handled by railroads as bulk cargo. During the COVID-19 pandemic, when land ports were closed or only partially operational for worldwide lock down, there was more demand for the transportation of goods via railways, which led to a wider range of goods being transported by rail. Spices, cotton, sugar, fast-moving consumer goods, industrial raw materials, automobiles, passenger cars, tractors etc. were among the first essential commodities to be transported by freight trains. Besides fertilizers, petroleum, oil, and lubricant products, jute, tea, cement, timber, iron and steel, forest products, paper products, and coal are among the goods transported by freight trains as well as inland water system.

For this purpose a parcel train service between India and Bangladesh was established following the success of the rail transportation of goods. Due to their limited capacity, parcel trains have made it possible for businesses to export smaller quantities of high-value goods like chemicals, textiles, cotton, cotton yarn, fabric, fast-moving consumer goods and other garment industry inputs.

Besides, a container train service and automobile cargo movement were added to the traditional freight train service and the parcel train service. According to High Commission of India (H.C.I), Dhaka, 2020, these significant steps have made railways an effective

alternative for providing fast, safe logistics solutions to encourage bilateral trade between the two countries.

The fact that goods transported by trucks must be trans-shipped onto other trucks at the border, whereas freight trains can move much closer to their final destinations within Bangladesh's territory, is another factor that has given rail an unusual advantage over roads for cross-border trade.

Due to port congestion and massive shipping delays, rail is an emerging alternative for some regions, despite the fact that maritime transport is still the most common mode of transportation for international trade. Rail cargo movement between the People's Republic of China and Europe has increased by 176 percent in the past two years. From 2019-2020, cargo movement between India and Bangladesh increased by more than 130 percent as shown in Table 1. Automobile transportation has also seen a significant shift from road to rail transportation. Compared to just two years ago, the majority of automobile cargo from India to Bangladesh is transported by rail.⁸²¹ Additionally, the availability of container train services has enhanced the possibilities for the transportation of valuable goods.

According to the Ministry of Commerce in 2022, India's exports to Bangladesh increased significantly from \$9.6 billion in 2020-2021 to \$14.5 billion in 2021-2022, making Bangladesh India's fourth-largest export destination in 2022. This increase in bilateral trade between the two countries can be attributed in part to the rail transportation of goods. The most recent pattern of bilateral trade between India and Bangladesh is shown in Table 2.

Table:2

Financial Year	Export from India to Bangladesh (value in US Dollars)	Import from Bangladesh to India (value in US Dollars)
2019-2020	8,200.75	1,264.74
2020-2021	9,691.56	1,091.66
2021-2022	14,586.86	1,800.88

Source: Ministry of Commerce, Government of India. (Trade Statistics).

AIR INFRASTRUCTURE

For travel by air, around 100 flights operate weekly between New Delhi, Kolkata, Mumbai and Chennai to Dhaka and Chittagong.⁸²² During Prime Minister Narendra Modi's

⁸²¹Ministry of Railways, Government of India, 2021

⁸²²Website of the High Commission of India, Dhaka Bangladesh, brief on road, rail and air

visit to Bangladesh in March 2021, Sheikh Hasina ‘offered the use of Chittogram and Sylhet International Airport, by the people of North East India, especially for Tripura.’⁸²³ There are presently many flights operating weekly between India and Bangladesh connecting various Indian cities like New Delhi, Kolkata, Mumbai and Chennai to Dhaka and Chittagong. From Bangladesh, US-Bangla Airlines, NOVOAIR, Regent Airways and Biman Bangladesh; and from India, Jet Airways, Spice Jet and Air India are operating flights between India and Bangladesh.

The central region of Bangladesh would be served by the proposed large-scale airport development known as Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib International Airport. In 2009, the government of Bangladesh unveiled Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib International Airport as the country’s newest airport. Prior to selecting a facility with three runways, the government had taken into consideration a variety of developmental proposals. The government appointed Nippon Koei to carry out a feasibility study that will cost BDT1.2 billion (USD15.3 million) and is anticipated to be finished by June 2017. The airport will spread out over 8000 acres, and potential locations in the Dhaka, Madaripur, and Munshiganj districts are being considered. Rashed Khan Menon, the minister in charge of civil aviation of Bangladesh, said that the main airport, Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport, is having some constraints to grow, so the government needs to think about building a new airport, which could be the country’s new aviation infrastructure for better connectivity. It is named after the country’s former Prime Minister Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, who is also popularly known as ‘Bangabandhu.’ The Sheikh Mujib International Airport will have three 4420-meter runways. The project will cost BDT500 billion (USD6.4 billion) and be finished in about ten years.

The government of Bangladesh and Germany’s Avi Alliance expressed interest to build this airport in public-private partnership (PPP) model to jointly finance, design, develop, and run Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib International Airport.

According to Mahbub Ali, the Minister of Civil Aviation and Tourism of Bangladesh, the plans for the development of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib International Airport’s site selection have been finalized by the government of Bangladesh. According to Mr. Ali, the

connectivity, 30th March 2022.

⁸²³ ‘Joint Statement issued on the occasion of the visit of Prime Minister of India to Bangladesh’ Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, 27th March 2021.

airport will be situated near the Padma River where Bangladesh recently built 'Padma Bridge'. As a result it will increase Bangladesh's trade with India.

POWER INFRASTRUCTURE

During Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit, several steps were taken to engage Indian private sectors in generating power to help Bangladesh achieve its 2021 target of electricity generation. Effort is being made to increase the Bheramara–Baharampur grid inter-connection from 500 MW to 1,000 MW. Bangladesh has proposed additional power import from India in a phase wise manner on the western side of Bangladesh through construction of an additional grid interconnection, and India has agreed to look into the proposal. Power generation from the North East region (Rangia/Rowta) to Muzaffarnagar of India is again significant. This ± 800 KV, 7000 MW HVDC multi-terminal bi-pole DC grid line is going to pass through Bangladesh. India has proposed suitable power tapping points at Barapukuria in Bangladesh so that Bangladesh can benefit from this transmission line. India has also agreed to construct the Ramphal power project in Bangladesh. Mongla and Bheramara are proposed power plant sites for two Indian Special Economic Zones (SEZ) in Bangladesh.⁸²⁴

Reliance Power will make the largest foreign investment in Bangladesh to construct a 3000 MW power plant which was signed by the executives of the company during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's maiden visit to the Eastern neighbour country Bangladesh. The power plant is a historical one as it is considered to be one of the largest foreign investments made by an Indian company in a South Asian country Bangladesh. Similarly, better political understanding between the two countries may reinforce the project's execution. Reliance power invests nearly \$ 3 billion, which is approximately Rs 19000 crores for generating electricity in three years from signing the power purchase agreement. Bangladesh is already availing electricity from India through the power grid that is constructed between the two countries. The high-voltage transmission line runs from Baharampur in West Bengal, to Bheramara in Kushtia district, in south-west Bangladesh and transmits 500 MW of electricity.

⁸²⁴Pattanaik, S, Smruti, 'India–Bangladesh Relations: Moving towards Greater Synergy' **Indian Foreign Affairs Journal**, Volume. 10, No. 3, July–September, 2015, p.224.

The news about this large economic investment from foreign country comes amidst the signing of the historical land boundary agreement between the two countries.⁸²⁵

Reliance Power will also set up a 2 million tonnes per annum floating liquefied natural gas (LNG) import terminal, a 3,000 Megawatt power plant and a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to this effect was signed by Reliance Power during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's two-day official visit to Dhaka in Bangladesh in 2015. Reliance Power will use the equipment that had contracted for its 'Samalkot project' in Andhra Pradesh for setting up the power plant in Bangladesh in three years from the date of signing the power purchase Agreement (PPA). Earlier the company had invested a 2,400 MW gas-based power project at Samalkot in Andhra Pradesh, which got stalled owing to lack of supplies of allocated gas from Reliance Industries' KG-D6 block. The equipment of this gas-based power project will be under appropriate warranties from General Electric (GE), USA and the other global suppliers. "Reliance is proposing to utilize these brand new equipment from Samalkot project, including advanced class 9FA machines supplied by General Electric (GE) of USA, for the proposed project at Bangladesh, under appropriate warranties from American General Electric (GE) and the other global equipment suppliers. This will help set up the project on a fast-track basis." The equipment for the project has been procured and is ready with the company. Reliance Power will invest \$3 billion in an integrated facility comprising a 3,000 MW LNG-based combined cycle power plant and an LNG terminal with a Floating Storage and Regasification Unit (FSRU), making it the largest foreign investment in Bangladesh. The Bangladesh Power Development Board (BPDB) will provide land for the project. The Floating Storage and Regasification Unit (FSRU) terminal shall be set up at Maheshkhali Island in Cox's Bazar district of Bangladesh. "The FSRU project can be set up quickly and can generate the country's rising demand for electricity and will provide clean and green power." The project is comparable with Bangladesh's master plan of 2010 for supplying the country's growing power demands as well as to supply domestic gas reserves in the country.⁸²⁶

During the visit Indian Prime Minister Modi handed over to Prime Minister of Bangladesh Sheikh Hasina the audio recording of Bangabandhu's Speech at Brigade Maidan,

⁸²⁵Tojo Jose, 'Reliance to construct Rs 19000 crore power project in Bangladesh' **Indian Economy**, New Delhi, June 6, 2015, available at <http://www.indianeconomy.net/post/278/reliance-to-construct-rs-19000-crore-power-pr/> accessed on 10.04.2018.

⁸²⁶ <https://talecup.com/bangladesh-to-have-3-billion-gas-set-up-by-reliance/>, accessed on 10.04.2018. Eisamay (Kolkata), 7th september, 2018, p-13

Kolkata (06 February 1972), DVD of Parliamentary Debate on Land Boundary Agreement, Mementos of INS Vikrant, Replica of a dredger supplied to Mongla Port, Photo and replica of one of the 24 Automatic Weather Stations installed in Bangladesh under the ‘STORM Programme.’ This marks the beginning of cordial bilateral relations between the two countries under Modi government.

In return Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina also handed over to Prime Minister Modi a photograph of the “Signing Instrument of Surrender in 1971”; a map indicating the location of Special Economic Zones (SEZs) for India; a photograph of the model of the Maitree Super Thermal Power Project (2x660 MW) at Rampal. Prime Minister Modi thanked Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina for the warmth and cordiality shown and gracious hospitality extended to him and members of his delegation during their stay in Bangladesh. Prime Minister Modi extended an invitation to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to pay a visit to India as early as possible. The invitation was accepted and it was agreed that the visit would take place at a mutually convenient date.⁸²⁷

One of the defining features of Indo-Bangladesh bilateral relations is cooperation in the power sector. However, keeping in mind the need to strike a balance between addressing energy deficit and achieving sustainable development objectives, the collaboration of the two countries has now extended to include hydrocarbon and renewable energy sources as well.⁸²⁸ Bangladesh is right now bringing in around 660 MW power from India. The two Prime Ministers launched the power and Internet bandwidth exports from Tripura to Bangladesh in March 2016. At Rampal, a 50/50 joint venture between India’s National Thermal Power Corporation (N.T.P.C) and Bangladesh Power Development Board (B.P.D.B) is developing the 1320 MW coal-fired ‘Maitree thermal power plant.’ During the Bangladesh Prime Minister’s visit to India in April 2017, Indian public and private companies and the Bangladesh government reached several agreements for the generation, supply, and financing of more than 3600 MW of electricity. In 2018, the supply of an additional 500 MW is anticipated to begin.

In the past two years, energy sector cooperation between India and Bangladesh has also made significant progress. In the oil and gas industry of Bangladesh, numerous public

⁸²⁷http://www.mea.gov.in/bilateral-documents.htm?dtl/25346/Joint_Declaration_between_Bangladesh_and_India_during_Visit_of_Prime_Minister_of_India_to_Bangladesh_quot_N, accessed on 10.04.2016.

⁸²⁸<https://diplomacybeyond.com/the-energy-at-the-vanguard-of-bangladesh-india-ties/> accessed on 10.10.2022.

sector companies from India, including the Indian Oil Corporation (I.O.C), Numaligarh Refinery Limited (NRL), and Petronet LNG Ltd., collaborate with their Bangladeshi counterparts. As stated earlier India has agreed to provide funding for the India-Bangladesh Friendship Pipeline project, which will run from Siliguri to Parbatipur and transport diesel from Numaligarh Refinery Limited to Bangladesh. In collaboration with Oil India Limited, ONGC Videsh Ltd. has acquired two shallow water blocks and is currently investigating natural resources there.⁸²⁹

Earlier in 2017, the following Indian businesses proposed investing \$9 billion in various energy projects in Bangladesh: EXIM Bank of India and Bangladesh India Friendship Power Company Limited reached an agreement worth \$1.6 billion (bn) to provide debt financing for the construction of the 1320 MW coal-fired Maitree Power Project in Rampal, Bangladesh. NTPC Vidyut Vyapar Nigam Limited and the Bangladesh Power Development Board (BPDB) signed a \$3.15 billion agreement to supply power from Nepal. Additionally, they signed a \$138 million agreement to supply 60 MW of additional power from Tripura to Bangladesh. An agreement worth \$2 billion with Adani Power and an agreement worth \$1 billion with Reliance Power to supply electricity and establish plants in Bangladesh. Reliance Power agreed to construct a 750 MW gas-power plant, the first phase of 3,000 MW, in Meghnahat, Bangladesh, while Adani agreed to supply 1600 MW of power to Bangladesh from its coal-fired Godda plant in Jharkhand in India.

HYDROCARBON INFRASTRUCTURE

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed for the use of the liquefied natural gas (LNG) terminal with Petrobangla and Petronet LNG, the establishment of a 500 million metric standard cubic feet per day LNG terminal at Kutubdia Island by Reliance Power, and LNG cooperation with Indian Oil Corporation. In addition, on 5th October, 2019, during Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's most recent visit to India, the two Prime Ministers launched a project to use Bangladesh trucks to transport bulk L.P.G from Bangladesh to Tripura. Bangladesh has enough wealth of exploring hydrocarbon resources, including natural gas, which accounts for 75.4 per cent of its total commercial energy consumption.⁸³⁰ The total gas initially in place (GIIP) of the 27 gas fields discovered since 1955 has been estimated to be 39.0 trillion cubic feet, with a total renewable gas reserve (Proved plus probable) of 27.12

⁸²⁹https://mea.gov.in/Portal/ForeignRelation/Bangladesh_September_2017_en.pdf, accessed on 10.10.2022.

⁸³⁰https://mea.gov.in/Portal/ForeignRelation/Bangladesh_September_2017_en.pdf, accessed on 10.10.2022.

trillion cubic feet (TCF).As much as 15.22 trillion cubic feet (TCF) of gas was produced up until December 2017, leaving only 11.91 trillion cubic feet (TCF) of renewable gas.⁸³¹As per the BP's Factual Survey of World Energy 2020, while petroleum gas creation in Bangladesh expanded from 18.7 billion cubic meters (BCM) in 2009 to 28.7 billion cubic meters (BCM) in 2019, with 8 per cent development per annum, flammable gas utilization expanded to 34.4 billion cubic meters (BCM) in 2019 from 18.7 billion cubic meters (BCM) in 2009, enrolling a yearly development of 25.3 per cent, connoting a tremendous flood in gas interest.Bangladesh has been forced to heavily rely on imported liquefied natural gas (LNG) to help bridge the growing gap between demand and its onshore gas production, despite the fact that this increased concerns regarding future natural gas demand, which at best could be met for only 12 years.Surprisingly, only two of the 27 gas fields in Bangladesh's offshore waters need to be developed immediately.As a result Dhaka has attracted foreign investors to explore its offshore waters.In light of the results of two-dimensional (2D) seismic surveys, ONGC Videsh Limited (OVL) has already revised its plans to begin drilling an offshore exploratory well to define the natural gas reserve in the shallow sea block SS-04.On 17thFebruary, 2014, Petrobangla and OVL, the operator of blocks SS-04 and SS-09, entered into two production sharing contracts (PSCs) that were scheduled to expire in February 2019.On the other hand,the production sharing contracts (PSCs), had been extended by Petrobangla by 24 months until February 2021, and then by two years until February 2023.The drilling of these shallow-water wells is expected to begin in October 2021.Bangladesh and India have agreed to form an equal joint venture to establish LPG import terminal in Bangladesh as the most recent example of energy cooperation in the hydrocarbon sector. As a result, the cost of LPG imports would be reduced, making it more affordable for Bangladesh's Sustainable renewable energy through low-carbon push. Despite Bangladesh and India's energy cooperation, which is being led by the power sector to meet their growing energy needs in the midst of faster economic development, both countries will need to reevaluate and reorient their bilateral cooperation in the direction of sustainable recovery following covid-19. A fresh perspective is required to envision a better future for their citizens. As local air pollution continue to rise in this regard, energy transition from carbon emissions is at the center of recovery plans. To overcome the challenges Bangladesh and India should work together to achieve deep decarbonization, both bilaterally and through subregional cooperation.They work together so that the region is to have a sustainable

⁸³¹ Ibid

future. Their ongoing collaboration to combat against the Covid-19 pandemic in terms of health and uninterrupted supply chains ought to now extend beyond the obvious to include efforts toward a future economy that uses less carbon. Some of the initiatives that the two countries ought to look into soon are decarbonization of the power sector and electrification of transportation. According to the Joint-Statement of the India-Bangladesh Virtual Summit, such initiatives of decarbonization ought to now be the new normal in their joint efforts to improve cooperation in energy efficiency and clean energy, with a greater emphasis on renewable energy like solar and wind. A significant shift toward renewables and battery storage would assist in reducing power subsidies in both countries and benefit from an unprecedented fall in solar and wind power. Additionally, solar PV, wind, and batteries are anticipated to continue getting cheaper. The solar power tariff reached a new low in December 2020, falling from 2/kWh in November to 1.99/kWh. This necessitates revisiting some of Bangladesh and India's existing power cooperation. In this way this could address the developing worried of deteriorating overcapacity in the Bangladesh energy framework, wherein by and large power limit usage in the financial year 2019-2020 was only 40 per cent, down from 43 per cent, in the earlier year, as verified by the Bangladesh Power Development Board (B.P.D.B). Bangladesh's Sustainable and Renewable Energy Development Authority has already released a Draft National Solar Energy Roadmap to meet this challenge. In it, it proposes a high-deployment solar installation programme with a goal of installing up to 30,000 MW of solar power by 2041⁸³². The energy shifting policy of Bangladesh toward clean energy should be taken into consideration by Indian businesses communities while investing in power projects there. Future energy cooperation between Bangladesh and India should take into account the changing global energy system, which presents a chance for batteries and cleaner energy fuels like green hydrogen to play a larger role due to the low costs of solar and wind energy. As a result, the ongoing energy cooperation between the two countries and clean energy technologies like hydrogen-producing electrolyzers and batteries fit well into sustainable recovery plans.

NUCLEAR POWER PLANT INFRASTRUCTURE

During Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's visit to New Delhi, a number of infrastructure projects were launched, announced, and revealed. This includes the Maitree power plant's Unit I being unveiled. The 1,320 (660x2) MW very basic coal-terminated

⁸³² Ibid

nuclear energy station at Rampal, Khulna is being set up at an expected cost of around USD 2 billion with USD 1.6 billion as Indian Improvement help under the Concessional Supporting Plan.

India signed a historic tripartite agreement for civil nuclear cooperation with forerunner partners Bangladesh and Russia on 1st March, 2018. With the proposed supply of equipment and materials for the power station being built by Russia in Bangladesh, Nuclear Power Cooperation of India Limited (NPCIL) will play a crucial role in the construction of a nuclear power plant on Bangladesh soil. India has also been training Bangladeshi nuclear scientists for the project and providing support for capacity building for this purpose.⁸³³

Deputy Director General of Rosatom, Russia's civil nuclear body, Nikolay Spassky, Bangladeshi Ambassador S.M. Saiful Hoque, and Indian Ambassador to Russia Pankaj Saran signed the agreement on 1st March, 2018 in Moscow. On a turnkey contract, Rosatom is building a nuclear power plant in Bangladesh. According to Rosatom officials, the scope of work includes equipment design, production, and supply, as well as construction, installation, pre-commissioning, and commissioning.

India expressed an interest in participating in a Russian project in Bangladesh due to its previous experience operating Russian-built nuclear power plants and the Kudankulam nuclear power Plant in Tamil Nadu.

The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) established a framework for the project's implementation by the Russian contractor, Indian, and Bangladeshi experts. In particular, the parties will collaborate on personnel mentoring and training, experience sharing, and consulting support. According to Economic Times News Agency, officials, Indian companies can be involved in the project's construction and installation, as well as the supply of non-critical materials and equipment.⁸³⁴

This will be Bangladesh's first nuclear power plant. "Today marked a turning point in history for both of our nations as well as the sector as a whole. Nikolay Spassky stated, We are confident that this is the first step toward the formation of a new regional cooperation agenda that looks to the future."

⁸³³ "India, Russia, Bangladesh sign tripartite pact for civil nuclear cooperation", **The Economic Times**, 1st March, 2018.

⁸³⁴ Ibid

“We still have a long way to go with nuclear technology,” Ali Zulquarnain, the former Chairman of the Bangladesh Atomic Energy Commission, told Economic Times from Dhaka. Our trusted neighbour India is further developed than us in such manner. Russia builds some of the nuclear power plants in India, and the two countries have good working relationships in this regard. Additionally, Bangladesh can collaborate with the two countries and benefit from their experiences.

Although India has established joint ventures in third countries in Africa, South East Asia, and Central Asia, as well as worked with major powers like the United States, Russia, and Japan on a variety of projects, this would be the first time Delhi has been involved in a civil nuclear project on the foreign soil of Bangladesh, highlighting India’s global entry into a crucial nuclear industry. In light of Delhi’s proposal to Moscow to manufacture some nuclear power reactor equipment in India, will also boost the ‘Make in India’ initiative.

Earlier a deal between Delhi and Moscow for joint civil nuclear ventures in third countries was reached a few years ago. Later, during PM Sheikh Hasina’s visit to India in April, 2018, India signed a civil nuclear cooperation agreement and two other related agreements with Bangladesh. After an agreement with Sri Lanka, this was Delhi’s second such agreement in the area, demonstrating India’s growing status as a responsible nuclear power country.

On the Padma River’s bank there are the two units of the Rooppur Nuclear Power Plant, each with a 1200 MW capacity. The generation units at the Rooppur Nuclear Power Plant will be based on VVER-1200 reactors with 3+ generation technology. The VVER-1200 is Russia’s strongest reactor, and it has three main advantages. It demonstrates high performance, durability, and safety. One of the world’s most advanced reactors, the VVER-1200 project has a unique combination of active and passive safety systems that provide maximum resistance to external and internal impacts, such as earthquakes, tornadoes, and plane crashes. Earlier Bangladesh and Russia agreed in February 2011 to build the 2,000 MW Ruppur Nuclear Power Plant, which will have two reactors, each of which will produce 1,200 MW of power. The nuclear power plant will be constructed at Ruppur, in the Ishwardi subdistrict of Pabna, in the country’s northwest, on the Padma River. It is anticipated that the RNPP will cost up to \$2 billion US. India is also likely to receive VVER-1200 technology for the second set of six nuclear reactors built by Russia. Russian officials told ‘Economics

Times’ that this technology adheres to ‘Post-Fukushima’ nuclear power plant safety standards.⁸³⁵

DREDGING INFRASTRUCTURE

Bangladesh is a living delta that was formed by rivers carrying sediments down from the Himalayas. At least 54 of these rivers are shared by Bangladesh and India. The water of these rivers is crucial for preventing salinity intrusion from the sea, as well as for agriculture, navigation, and inland fisheries, all of which are major source of the people’s income in Bangladesh.

Sand, clay, and silt are among the sediments that these rivers and other bodies of water carry around 2.4 billion tons of each year. Of late, the Bangladesh government has granted a \$71 million agreement to various organizations to dig waterways as a component of a World Bank-supported undertaking to help transport routes between central India and its North Eastern states through Bangladesh.

By using Ashuganj river port, which is 50 kilometers (31 miles) from Agartala city (Tripura) in North Eastern India, the dredging of the routes will improve Bangladesh’s connectivity with the seven North Eastern Indian states. When the contract was signed, a member of the Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (I.W.T.A) named Matiur Rahman stated to the media, that “This will enhance trade and people-to-people contact between Bangladesh and India.” He continued, Completion of dredging of the Dhaka-Chittagong-Ashuganj River route which will allow ships to come to Dhaka’s Pangaon Inland Container Terminal, accelerating the pace of trade and business between Bangladesh and India.

The Centre has sanctioned over Rs 24 crore for dredging in Gomati, a transboundary river between India and Bangladesh, and setting up 10 floating jetties for a waterway project, an Indian official said on 12th February, 2022. Of the total 93-km proposed waterway from Sonamura in Tripura’s Sepahijala district to Daudkandi in the neighbouring country Bangladesh, around 15.5-km stretch needs dredging to operationalise the route.”⁸³⁶ Tripura

⁸³⁵“India, Russia, Bangladesh sign tripartite pact for civil nuclear cooperation”, **The Economic Times**, 1st March, 2018.

⁸³⁶“Centre sanctions over Rs 24 crore for dredging in Gomati river to boost Indo-Bangla waterway project: Official, The Economic Times,” 13th February, 2022, also available at <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/infrastructure/centre-sanctions-over-rs-24-crore-for-dredging-in-gomati-river-to-boost-indo-bangla-waterway-project->

state transport department principal secretary L Darlong said “The Ministry of Shipping has sanctioned Rs 24.53 crore to undertake dredging works in Gomati and construction of 10 floating jetties from Udaipur in Gomati district to Sonamura.” The state government has already requested the Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI) to help the local administration for the strategic project. The Centre will take up the dredging issue with the Bangladesh government to commence such work on its part. A permanent jetty would come up near Srimantapur Land Customs Station (LCS) in Sonamura with an estimated cost of Rs 5.04 crore, the official said. He also said “We came to know that Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI) has already floated tender for construction of a permanent jetty at Srimantapur. The authorities were asked to finalise the process of awarding the contract soon to expedite the project.” The Centre has set a goal to bring vessels with a carrying capacity of 200-300 tonnes from Daudkandi to Sonamura by the end of May. Union Minister of Ports and Shipping, Mr. Sarbananda Sonowal, is scheduled to visit the state on 15th February to review progress of the dredging project. A trial run on the waterway from Bangladesh to Tripura was carried out in September 2020.⁸³⁷

According to Biplab Kumar Deb, the then Chief Minister of Tripura, the Indian Government has agreed to cover 80 per cent of the total cost of dredging the Meghna River on Bangladesh’s side. From Sonamura in the Sepahijala district of Tripura to Daudkandi in Bangladesh, a 40-kilometer river bed must be dredged to raise the water level high. According to him, when it is finished, the Indo-Bangla waterway that connects the river Gomati will become operational with enough navigability. After meeting with India’s Ports, Shipping, and Waterways Minister Sarbananda Sonowal on 15th February, 2022, Biplab Kumar Deb told reporters, that “The Central government is ready to bear 80 per cent of total cost for dredging work on the Bangladesh side while the remaining part will have to be incurred by the host country.” Mr. Deb also said, India’s Ministry of Ports, Shipping, and Waterways will conduct a hydrographic joint survey in the Howrah and Deo rivers for better navigation.⁸³⁸

On 23rd June, 2022, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina proposed collaborating with India to dredge rivers that are shared by the two neighbouring countries for their mutual interest. When Vikram Kumar Doraiswami, Indian High Commissioner to Bangladesh, visited

official/articleshow/89544399.cms?utm_source=contentofinterest&utm_medium=text&utm_campaign=cppst, accessed on 30.08.2022.

⁸³⁷ IBID.

⁸³⁸ <https://www.tbsnews.net/world/south-asia/india-will-bear-80-cost-dredging-work-meghna-river-bangladesh-side-tripura-cm>, accessed on 30.08.2022.

her at her Jatiya Sangsad Office, the premier made this proposal. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's Press Secretary Ihsanul Karim informed journalists this proposal after the press conference. Hasina stated during the talks that regular river dredging could guarantee water conservation. In this regard, she expressed concern regarding the devastation caused by the recent floods in the Indian states of Assam, Meghalaya, and Arunachal Pradesh. After heavy rains in the mountains of North-East India, the Prime Minister informed the Indian envoy Mr. Vikram Kumar Doraiswami that floods had ravaged much of the country's north-eastern region. She stated that the government of Bangladesh is prepared to collaborate with India to recover from any such natural disaster. In response, Indian ambassador in Bangladesh Doraiswami stated that India is also prepared to assist Bangladeshi flood victims. According to the press secretary Ihsanul Karim, Doraiswami handed over Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's a letter in which he invited Sheikh Hasina to visit India. The high commissioner said that officials from the two countries are working on the planned visit, which is expected to take place in September 2023, through diplomatic channels. He mentioned that, just a few days before the Bangladesh Prime Minister's visit, there will be a ministerial level meeting between the two countries to make it successful. The High commissioner of India on behalf of Prime Minister Modi thanked the premier for successfully constructing the cherished Padma Bridge over the Padma river. In this regard, he mentioned that the newly constructed mega bridge will increase regional connectivity and establish a direct connection between the two countries. The Prime Minister was informed by the Indian High Commissioner that a trial run on shipping goods to India via Chittagong port has already taken place, and that similar trials will also take place along four distinct routes. The Indian ambassador, on the issue of electricity, said that New Delhi will establish a company and invest in the construction of a transmission line to transport electricity from Nepal to Bangladesh.⁸³⁹

Mr. Biplab Kumar Deb, the former chief minister of Tripura stated that the proposed waterway would be useful for accelerating Tripura's infrastructure development and that the Union Ministry has already approved the construction of 10 floating jetties that will run from Udaipur in the Gomati district to Sonamura in the Sepahijala district.

"Due to the high cost of transportation, steel and cement are quite expensive in Tripura. If construction materials are transported through the Indo-Bangla waterway, the high

⁸³⁹Hasina proposes joint river dredging with India to tackle floods," The Daily Star, June 24, 2022.

cost of transportation will be reduced,” said Mr. Biplab Kumar Deb. On the other hand, Dhaka will benefit from the proposed waterway as well. Through Tripura, significant quantities of wheat are shipped to Bangladesh. If they use the waterway, the cost of transportation will naturally decrease,” he stated. A Land Ports Authority of India (LPAI) official stated on 16th February that the Land Ports Authority of India (LPAI), the Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI), and the state had previously signed a tripartite agreement to handle the day-to-day operation and maintenance of jetties or other facilities.⁸⁴⁰

WATER SHARING AGREEMENT FOR THE KUSHIYARA RIVER

The memorandum of understanding (MoU) on interim water sharing of the Kushiya river will be signed during Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina’s visit to India in the first week of September, according to state Minister for Water Resources of Bangladesh Zahid Farooque on 26th August, 2022. He stated that the Indian Cabinet has received the agreed-upon draft of the MoU in order to complete the procedures prior to signing the agreement. After returning from New Delhi, the state minister for Water Resources of Bangladesh told reporters at the Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport in Dhaka, “We firmly believe that the MoU will be signed when our prime minister will be visiting India. At the Joint Rivers Commission (JRC) meeting in New Delhi, he led the Bangladesh delegation. The Joint Rivers Commission (JRC) meeting was held following a lapse of 12 years. Bangladesh will receive 153 cusec of Kushiya river water from India. “We also put pressure on them regarding the release of Teesta water. We immovably accept that we will before long see an answer for that end,” he expressed, alluding to top state leader Sheikh Hasina’s reiterated call for finalization of Teesta water sharing arrangement. The two countries discussed issues related to water-sharing treaties of various rivers, including the Ganga and Teesta, at the 38th ministerial level Joint Rivers Commission (JRC) meeting in New Delhi. The finalization of the design and location of the water intake point on the Feni River to meet the drinking water requirements of Sabroom town in Tripura in accordance with the October 2019 Bangladesh-India MoU on this subject was also welcomed by both countries at the meeting. The exchange of water from flood prone rivers of India is one important area of discussion in which India has agreed to extend assistance to Bangladesh. In order to assist Bangladesh in dealing with unforeseen flood events, India has recently extended the period of flood data sharing beyond October 15, 2019.

⁸⁴⁰“Centre to bear 80% dredging work cost of Meghna River: Tripura CM,” The Hindu, 16th February, 2022.

The 54 rivers flowed through India and Bangladesh. Out of these seven of which have already been identified for the prioritization of the development of the framework for water sharing agreements. During the meeting, it was decided to add 8 more rivers for data exchange to this ongoing cooperation area. The technical level committee of the Joint Rivers Commission (JRC) will continue to discuss the issue. During the Joint Rivers Commission (JRC) meeting, a variety of ongoing bilateral issues of mutual interest were discussed, such as the sharing of flood data, the prevention of river pollution, joint studies on sedimentation management, river bank protection projects, and so on.⁸⁴¹ On 22nd August, 2022, water resources secretary-level discussions between the two countries preceded the Joint Rivers Commission (JRC) meeting.

On 7th September, 2022, India and Bangladesh, both are South Asian neighbours, signed an interim water sharing agreement for the Kushiya river. In Bangladesh and Assam, (India) the Kushiya River serves as a distributary river. That is to say Kushiya River has been serving as a distributary river for the rivers existing in this areas. It's structures on the India-Bangladesh line as a part of the Barak river, when the Barak isolates into the Kushiya and Surma. As a result, the waters of the Kushiya flow from the Indian state of Nagaland to Manipur, Mizoram, and Assam via tributaries. From its starting point at the mouth of the Barak, otherwise called the Amshid bifurcation point, the Kushiya river toward the west framing the limit between Assam, (India) and the Sylhet Locale of Bangladesh. The Kushiya covers approximately 160 kilometers. Since the Ganga water treaty of 1996, this is the first such agreement between the two countries. The people of Assam and the Sylhet division of Bangladesh will benefit from the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) regarding the sharing of Kushiya river waters. "We have signed a significant agreement to share Kushiya river water. This will help southern Assam in India and Sylhet locale in Bangladesh," Prime Minister Modi said after the discussions with Sheikh Hasina at a joint media communication at the Hyderabad House.

Prime Minister Modi stated that the livelihoods of people from both countries have been linked to the rivers that run through the Indo-Bangladesh border. "These rivers, folk tales about them, folk songs, have also been witness to our shared cultural heritage, These rivers, folk tales about them, folk songs."

⁸⁴¹"Kushiya river water sharing deal to be signed during PM's India visit", **The Daily Star**, 26th August, 2022.

In the meantime, Hasina emphasized the need for additional agreements of this kind as to the functioning of other rivers. “I recall that the two countries have worked together and resolved numerous issues out of friendship, Hasina stated. She further added “We hope that all outstanding issues, including the Teesta water sharing agreement, will be resolved as soon as possible as long as Modi Government will remain in power in Delhi.”⁸⁴²

In addition, the Indian premier stated, “I had a productive conversation with my Bangladeshi counterpart on enhancing cooperation in relation to flood mitigation. We have also extended the period of data sharing and India has been sharing flood-related data with Bangladesh in real time.”

Hasina was previously greeted warmly by Modi at a ceremonial reception at the Rashtrapati Bhawan in India. She stated that “the two countries were also working to strengthen their economic ties in order to meet the basic needs of their citizens. Developing the economy and fulfilling the basic needs of our people are our primary objectives. Any issue can be resolved through mutual friendly discussion. Therefore, we always do that.” Modi hosted a one-on-one lunch for the visiting dignitary at the Hyderabad House following the bilateral talks.⁸⁴³

THERMAL POWER INFRASTRUCTURE

Along with the Payra Power Plant in Pataukhali, Bangladesh’s largest power plant, the 1,320MW coal-fired Maitree super thermal power project is located in Moithara, Rampal, in the Bagerhat district, approximately 23 kilometers south-east of Khulna city. The Sundarbans, a UNESCO World Heritage Site with one of the largest mangrove forests, are approximately 14 kilometers from the project site. The closest railway station, which is approximately 36 kilometers from the project site, is the Khulna Junction station.

Two 660MW ultra-supercritical coal-fired units and a twin reinforced concrete chimney (RCC) with a glass-reinforced plastic (GRP) liner will make up the Maitree power plant. Emissions will be controlled by equipping both units with dry bottom ash handling and

⁸⁴²India, Bangladesh sign first water sharing pact in 25 years”, **The Economics Times**, 07.09.2022. also available at https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/india/india-bangladesh-sign-first-water-sharing-pact-in-25-years/articleshow/94035253.cms?utm_source=contentofinterest&utm_medium=text&utm_campaign=cppst, accessed on 06.10.2022.

⁸⁴³India, Bangladesh sign first water sharing pact in 25 years”, **The Economics Times**, 07.09.2022. also available at https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/india/india-bangladesh-sign-first-water-sharing-pact-in-25-years/articleshow/94035253.cms?utm_source=contentofinterest&utm_medium=text&utm_campaign=cppst, accessed on 06.10.2022

flue gas desulfurization (FGD) systems. A mill reject system, a coal de-blocking device, an auxiliary boiler, a condensate polishing unit, air conditioning and ventilation systems, and other ancillary facilities will be included in this project. The project also includes a 1.2-kilometer-long jetty at Akram Point, approximately 60 kilometers downstream from the Mongla Port in Bangladesh, to receive coal supplies from Australia, Indonesia, and South Africa. The coal will continue to be transported by smaller ships through the Passur River to the power plant site from Akram Point. The project has a water intake system that uses the Passur River to get process water. To maintain a plant load factor (PLF) of 80 percent, the Maitree super thermal power station is expected to require 3.8 million tonnes of coal per year (Mtpa). In May 2017, components and services for the steam generator island package for the 1.3GW coal-fired power project will be provided by Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL).

The project under Indian Concessional Financing Scheme loan of USD 1.6 billion began in 2017, and commissioning is anticipated for 2022. Bangladesh India Friendship Power Company (BIFPCL), a 50/50 partnership between the Bangladesh Power Development Board (BPDB) and India's state-run National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC), is developing it. In south-west Bangladesh, the coal-fired facility is being built on a 1,834-acre site along the Passur River. The Export-Import (EXIM) Bank of India is providing funding for the Maitree super thermal power project with a loan amounting to 1.6 billion pounds (\$1.3 billion). In March 2017, Bangladesh India Friendship Power Company (BIFPCL) signed a loan agreement with the Export-Import (EXIM) Bank of India. In July 2016, Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL) was given an engineering, procurement, and construction (EPC) contract for the Maitree super thermal power plant worth £1.15 billion (\$1.5 billion). In September 2018, BTL engineering, procurement, and construction (EPC), a subsidiary of India's Shraichi Group, was given a contract worth £23 million (\$31 million) to design, manufacture, supply, and commission the plant's entire coal conveyor system. Afcons Infrastructure, a subsidiary of India's Shapoorji Pallonji Group, and the Dextra Group are also contractors and suppliers working on the coal jetty for the power plant. It strengthens the dynamics of Indo-Bangladesh bilateral relations in terms of power sector. Unit I of the Maitree Super Thermal Power Plant was unveiled jointly by both Prime Ministers in September 2022 and Unit 2 on 1st November 2023. The operationalization of Maitree Super Thermal Power

Plant will enhance energy security in Bangladesh. These projects will strengthen connectivity and energy security in the region⁸⁴⁴.

BROADCASTING INFRASTRUCTURE

In a big boost to India-Bangladesh cooperation, the Government of India has decided to show BTV World, a channel owned by Bangladesh TV, on the Doordarshan Free Dish which will be available for the viewers of Doordarshan in our country. At the same time, DD India would be made available in Bangladesh for being viewed by the people in that country. Under the agreement, both the public broadcasters would make available live telecasts of news, cultural and educational programmes for mutual broadcast. Doordarshan and BTV may also broadcast live, any specific event such as visit of high dignitaries to each others' countries or cultural events of significance. This arrangement is as a result of an Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed between Prasar Bharati and Bangladesh TV (BTV) on 7th May, 2019.⁸⁴⁵ The channel-BTV World would be of special interest to the viewers of Eastern India. The decision marks an important watershed in strengthening of ties between the two countries and follows with an earlier decision taken by the two Governments to co-produce a film on Banga Bandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, which will be directed by the eminent film Director/Producer Shri Shyam Benegal.⁸⁴⁶

INVESTMENT

Bangladesh and India have made significant progress on trade and investment in the past ten years. Historically, trade between Bangladesh and India has favoured India and the trade imbalance still remains high over US \$4 billion in 2010-2011 against Bangladesh.⁸⁴⁷ Indian leaders have expressed their commitment to reduce this imbalance and New Delhi has already taken some positive steps towards that direction. For example, it removed 47 Bangladeshis products from the negative list of imports in order to allow them duty free access to Indian market.⁸⁴⁸ Consequently, exports from Bangladesh to India are expected to grow at US\$ 1 billion by July 2012 over a period of one year.⁸⁴⁹ India also agreed to provide power-starved Bangladesh 250 Mega Watts (MW) of electricity from its grid, for which the

⁸⁴⁴ Ananda Bazar Patrika(Kolkata), 1st Novembert, 2023, p-6

⁸⁴⁵ Press Information Bureau, Government of India, Ministry of Information & Broadcasting, 19th June 2019, Delhi

⁸⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁴⁷ [Http://www.mea.gov.in/mystart.php?42439](http://www.mea.gov.in/mystart.php?42439). accessed on 10.04.2018.

⁸⁴⁸ Staff Reporter, 'Wider Access to Bangla Goods', **The Telegraph**, Kolkata, January 12, 2010.

⁸⁴⁹ [Http://www.bdnews24com/details.php?id=219917&cid=2](http://www.bdnews24com/details.php?id=219917&cid=2). accessed on 10.04.2018.

two countries signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) during Sheikh Hasina's visit to New Delhi in January 2010. Eventually, a formal agreement was signed in March 2012 under which Bangladesh would receive 250 Mega Watts (MW) of electricity from top Indian Power utility NTPC Ltd and could buy another 250 Mega Watts (MW) through competitive bidding.⁸⁵⁰ Additionally, India has offered its assistance to build a 1,320 MW electricity production plant in Khulna as a Joint Venture with Bangladesh. In recent times exports from Bangladesh to India have declined furthermore. Anil Ambani Group from 'Reliance Power' and 'Adani Group' are set to sign agreements to invest nearly USD 5 billion to set up two power plants in Bangladesh during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit in 2015. The two groups will sign separate MoUs with Bangladesh's Power Development Board for this purpose.⁸⁵¹

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi and West Bengal chief minister Mamata Banerjee went to Dhaka trip on 6th June, 2015 to renew an international agreement with Bangladesh. The Bengal chief minister (CM) had been to Dhaka in February this year on the invitation of the Bangladesh government. This time she was accompanied with Modi. Shiekh Hasina government expectation was fulfilled when India signed the historic Land Boundary Agreement (LBA) along with 21 other agreements though the Teesta Water Treaty remained unsolved. Prime Minister Narendra Modi passed the Constitution amendment bill seeking to settle India's 41-year-old border issue with Bangladesh. The bill operationalized the '1974 India-Bangladesh Land Boundary agreement' that provides for outright exchange of 161 enclaves held by the two countries. The Centre also declared rehabilitation package for enclave dwellers willing to come to India. Mamata Banerjee's party lent its support to the Bill after external affairs minister Sushma Swaraj gave a specific assurance on rehabilitation of Bengal people in the Parliament.⁸⁵² According to an estimate, around 37,000 people are living in Indian enclaves in Bangladesh while 14,000 people are staying in Bangladeshi enclaves in India. India and Bangladesh already completed an exercise in July to ascertain the views of the residents in the enclaves whether they would like to take Indian or Bangladeshi citizenship. None living in Bangladeshi enclaves in India wants to shift to that country, as per a joint survey. However, an estimated 600 people want to migrate to India.

⁸⁵⁰'Bangladesh to buy 500 MW of electricity from India', **Dawn**, Karachi, 6th March, 2012.

⁸⁵¹http://zeenews.india.com/business/news/companies/reliance-power-adani-to-invest-5-billion-in-bangladesh-power-plants_128216.html, accessed on 10.04.2018.

⁸⁵²**The Times of India**, Kolkata, 6th June, 2014.

The Modi government sanctioned a Rs 3,048 crore-package for rehabilitation of the people affected by the exchange of enclaves under the Land Boundary Agreement (LBA) implementation. Between 31st July, 2015 and 30th June, 2016, the entire hand over process, including physical exchange of enclaves and land parcels in adverse possession along with boundary demarcation, is expected to be completed. India and Bangladesh will print, sign at plenipotentiary level and exchange the strip maps of un-demarcated sectors. Both governments will facilitate “orderly, safe and secure passage” to the enclave dwellers along with their “personal belongings and movable property” to Bangladesh or India through proper ‘travel documents’, according to a letter exchanged by the two countries. The passage “will be arranged by the respective governments by 30th November, 2015.” India and Bangladesh have also outlined the modalities of a complex process of settlement of immovable property. The dwellers, who are hoping to move from one enclave to another country as proper citizen for the first time since Independence in 1947, will have to provide “details of the records and specifications of immovable property” to the local district administration.⁸⁵³ Prime Minister Narendra Modi described the Indo-Bangladesh land boundary agreement as a ‘meeting of hearts’ and not just exchange of land. The land boundary agreement was often referred to as India’s lack of commitment to honour an agreement signed in 1974. Accordingly, after the exchange of instrument of ratification, 75 teams and 30 observers from the two countries worked round the clock from 6th to 16th July to ascertain the view of exchange dwellers regarding their choice of citizenship. On the mid-night of 31st July, the exchange of enclaves was concluded nearly 70 years after partition of India. Interim strip maps were prepared by both the sides on land under adverse possession as well as demarcation of border and were exchanged in June 2016. Demarcation of 6.5 kilo-metres of the border on the ground will also be completed in July 2016.⁸⁵⁴

CABLE LANDING INFRASTRUCTURE

The agreement which did not merit much media attention was the one which will connect India to the International Gateway in Bangladesh for voice, data and internet traffic for India’s North–Eastern States which have chronically suffered from indifferent and downright poor service in this important digital domain. An ‘International Gateway’ is being established in Agartala (Tripura). This will be connected to the Cox’s Bazaar Cable Landing

⁸⁵³ **Hindustan Times**, New Delhi, July 31, 2015.

⁸⁵⁴ Pattanaik, S, Smruti, ‘India–Bangladesh Relations: Moving towards Greater Synergy’ **Indian Foreign Affairs Journal**, Volume. 10, No. 3, July–September, 2015, p.221

Station in Bangladesh, to an International Gateway. When that becomes a reality, India's North Eastern States will get the extended bandwidth for internet traffic that they have been left without for so long. The cost of this project will be offset by better revenue generation for both sides. India's BSNL will lay the optical fibre cable network from Agartala in Tripura to Akhaura in Bangladesh to connect to the Bangladeshi network. This is huge gain for internet infrastructural development.

The future of Bangladesh-India ties and the eastern region of the sub-continent lie in creating a web of connectivity that integrate roads, railways, waterways and coastal shipping for the faster and easier transportation of goods. Connectivity infrastructure remains the bedrock of a more efficient transportation for India's 'Act East Policy' and bringing the North-Eastern States into the mainstream of the Indian economy.⁸⁵⁵

During the visit of Narendra Modi to Dhaka the two countries have established a India-Bangladesh Joint Consultative Commission (JCC) at the foreign minister's level to discuss trade and investment, security, connectivity, border management, water, power, shipping, renewable energy, development of Cable Landing Station military cooperation, art and culture, people to people exchanges, and human resource development. The Joint River Commission (JRC) has been revived to look into water sharing issues between the two countries. For this purpose both the countries have now formulated joint basin management.⁸⁵⁶ During Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's visit, the two countries signed Memorandum of Understandings (MOUs) on Prevention of Smuggling of Fake Currency Notes, Cooperation between Coast Guards and Prevention of Human Trafficking. They also emphasized, "effective implementation of the Coordinated Border Management Plan (CBMP) for better border management so as to prevent cross border criminal activities, irregular movements, incidents of violence and tragic loss of lives."⁸⁵⁷

Besides a list of 22 agreements were signed, exchanged, adopted and handed over between Bangladesh and India during Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Dhaka. These were-Exchange of Instruments of Ratification of 1974 Land Boundary Agreement and its 2011 Protocol; Exchange of letters on Modalities for implementation of 1974 Land Boundary Agreement and its 2011 Protocol; Bilateral Trade Agreement (renewal);

⁸⁵⁵http://www.mea.gov.in/bilateral/documents.htm?dtl/25346/Joint_Declaration_between_Bangladesh_and_India_during_Visit_of_Prime_Minister_of_India_to_Bangladesh_quot_N, accessed on 10.04.2016.

⁸⁵⁶Pattanaik, S, Smruti ,op.cit., p.224.

⁸⁵⁷ Ibid., p.222

Agreement on Coastal Shipping between Bangladesh and India; Protocol on Inland Water Transit and Trade (renewal); Bilateral Cooperation on Agreement between Bangladesh Standards & Testing Institution (BSTI) and Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) on Cooperation in the field of Standardization; Agreement on Dhaka-Shillong-Guwahati Bus Service and its Protocol; Agreement on Kolkata-Dhaka-Agartala Bus Service and its Protocol; Memorandum of Understanding between Coast Guards; Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Prevention of Human Trafficking; Memorandum of Understanding on Prevention of Smuggling and Circulation Fake Currency Notes; Memorandum of Understanding between Bangladesh and India and for Extending a New Line of Credit (LoC) for US \$2 billion by Government of India to Government of Bangladesh; Memorandum of Understanding on Blue Economy and Maritime Cooperation in the Bay of Bengal and the India Ocean; Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Use of Chittagong and Mongla Ports; Memorandum of Understanding for a Project under IECC (India Endowment for Climate Change) of SAARC; Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Indian Economic Zone; Cultural Exchange Programme for the years 2015-17; Statement of Intent on Bangladesh-India Education Cooperation (adoption); Agreement between Bangladesh Submarine Cable Company Limited (BSCCL) and Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) for leasing of international bandwidth for internet at Akhaura; Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between University of Dhaka, Bangladesh and University of Jamia Milia Islamia, India; Memorandum of Understanding between University of Rajshahi, Bangladesh and University of Jamia Milia Islamia, India; Handing over of Consent Letter by Insurance Development and Regulatory Authority (IDRA), Bangladesh to Life Insurance Cooperation (LIC), India to start operation in Bangladesh.⁸⁵⁸

Bangladesh Prime Minister, Sheikh Hasina, urging Indian investors to set up industries in Bangladesh to export products into the vast markets of India and Southeast Asia and reserving three Special Economic Zones (SEZ) for Indian investors. It is clear there is great potential for a strong and sustained economic cooperation between the two countries. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina have also agreed to create an India-Bangladesh C E O's Forum to provide policy level inputs in various areas of trade and investment and to facilitate exchanges among the business communities in both countries. This will lead to better negotiations on exports, imports and trade balance between the two countries.

⁸⁵⁸**The Daily Star**, Dhaka, 6th June 2014.

The potential for improved economic ties also provides India and Bangladesh an opportunity to ascend regional and global value chains by boosting their manufacturing sectors and investment environments. Organizations such as the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC), South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) and the Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal initiative (BBIN) could play a catalyzing role in shaping regional prosperity and introducing a greater focus on environmental and service-provision cooperation.

India and Bangladesh are the members of sub-regional organizations like BIMSTEC (Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation) and the BBIN (Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal) Initiative and the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC). Indian former Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh's visit to Dhaka last September, 2011 was not just mark another Indo-Bangladesh summit held in the neighbouring country. What was distinguishing this trip undertaken along with a group of Indian chief ministers is its singular importance. Dr. Manmohan Singh was the first Indian head of government to lead a high-powered delegation since 1972 a similar visit was undertaken by Mrs. Indira Gandhi for signing the historic 'Indo-Bangladesh treaty of peace and friendship'.⁸⁵⁹ Dr. Manmohan Singh's visit was crucial in geostrategic, economic as well as political terms for both countries suffered the same concerns for a long period. Both the Prime Minister had almost identical ideology and vision which helped them reach a consensus on the issues of exchanging long awaited enclaves of adverse possession or opening a new route through Bangladesh, India, Bhutan and Nepal (BBIN) to quickly link a pact allowing trucks and cars to travel seamlessly through these countries.⁸⁶⁰ The BBIN+M regional connectivity initiative is expected to contribute in identifying value chains in the region and help in more enhanced trade facilitation. It is also reflected in the Modi government's 'SAGARMALA' (Security and Growth for All in the Region) programme, which further aims to turn the region more inclusive. The two countries are also part of Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) that working together in managing the crucial maritime region, and ensuring its stability which India and Bangladesh want to further their diplomatic ties in the post-pandemic era and a sustained effort must be made towards building a partnership of development-sharing through mechanisms such as creating trade

⁸⁵⁹ Pramanik, Bimal 'Growing Indo-Bangladesh Relations', **World Focus**, Volume. XXXIII, No.2, February, 2012, p.62.

⁸⁶⁰ Chakravarty, Pinak Ranjan, 'Bangladesh-India Ties: Pragmatic Transformation' **Indian Foreign Affairs Journal**, Volume. 10. No. 3. July-September, 2015, p.214.

routes, best water management practices, and an overall shared vision of improved connectivity and businesses between the two countries.

Such regional connectivity initiatives should be based on the region's commitment to international laws and a rule-based system for trade and connectivity. At a time of significant restructuring amid the COVID-19 pandemic, it is imperative that both countries also implement a culture of sustainable manufacturing. While the Indian government announced a US\$24 billion economic stimulus and a bailout of approximately US\$10 billion for micro, small and medium enterprises, Bangladesh announced a financial assistance package of US\$8.6 billion to counter the adverse effects of the Covid-19 pandemic. India is also keen to collaborate with Bangladesh in various fields like startups, IT, online workshops and consultancy etc.

The frame work agreement on cooperation for development was signed by the two Prime Ministers, for enhancing mutually beneficial bilateral cooperation in a wide range of areas. These include promotion of trade, investment and economic cooperation, connectivity, water resources, management of natural disasters, generation, transmission and distribution of electricity from renewable or other sources, promotion of scientific, educational and cultural cooperation, people to people exchanges, environmental protection and responding to challenges of climate change through adaptation, sub-regional cooperation in the power sector, water resources management, physical connectivity, environment and sustainable development and enhancing cooperation in border security. These agreements may be amended by mutual consent in order to enhance, deepen and widen the scope of cooperation, including regional/ sub-regional expansion. These agreements would enable the two countries to realize their shared destiny and common vision through the optimum utilization of opportunities for mutual benefit.⁸⁶¹

During Manmohan Singh's visit to Dhaka the following agreements were signed between the two countries.

Under the regime of Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Sing (UPA-II) the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Governments of the Republic of India and the People's Republic of Bangladesh on Cooperation in the Field of Fisheries seeks to promote development of cooperation fisheries and aquaculture and allied activities, programmes, exchange of scientific materials, information and personnel. A Joint Working Group would

⁸⁶¹ Pramanik, Bimal. op.cit., p.62

be set up to facilitate cooperation under the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) and review progress. The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) would be valid for an initial period of 5 years and can be extended further through mutual consent.⁸⁶² The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Cooperation between Doordarshan (DD) and Bangladesh Television (BTV), An Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on cooperation between the Doordarshan, India and the BTV, Bangladesh was signed by the representatives of two organizations in Dhaka on 6th September, 2011. Under the agreement, both the public broadcasters would make available live telecasts of news, cultural and educational programmes for mutual broadcast. Doordarshan and BTV may also broadcast live, any specific event such as visit of high dignitaries to each others' countries or cultural events of significance. MoU between the National Institute of Fashion Technology (NIFT), New Delhi and Bangladesh Garment Manufacture and Exporters Association (BGMEA), Bangladesh Institute of Fashion Technology (BIFT), Dhaka: The Memorandum Of Understanding (MoU) on academic cooperation between National Institute of Fashion Technology (NIFT), New Delhi and Bangladesh Garment Manufacture and Exporters Association (BGMEA), Bangladesh Institute Fashion Technology (BIFT), Dhaka seeks to promote cooperation between the two institutes in the areas of exchange of students and faculty and training and research activities concerning design, management, and technology. National Institute of Fashion Technology (NIFT) is a statutory institute under the Ministry of Textiles, Government of India. It was set up in 1986 to train professionals to meet the requirements of the textiles industry. Bangladesh Institute of Fashion Technology (BIFT) established in 1999 by the Bangladesh Garment Manufacture and Exporters Association (BGMEA), is affiliated to the National University of Bangladesh.⁸⁶³

VACCINE 'MAITRI' INITIATIVE

COLLABORATION TO COMBAT THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

At the invitation of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Prime Minister of People's Republic of Bangladesh Sheikh Hasina attended the Leaders of SAARC Countries' video conference on 15th March, 2020, to share assessments of the current situation pertaining to this pandemic, consider best practices, and identify cooperative steps to minimize and mitigate the spread of the disease. In order to assist Bangladesh in its fight against the covid-19

⁸⁶²Ibid., p.63

⁸⁶³ Ibid., p.64.

pandemic, the Indian Government has provided it with three tranches of medical assistance as part of bilateral cooperation. These tranches include 30,000 surgical masks, 15,000 head covers, 50,000 surgical latex gloves, 100,000 tablets of the medicine hydroxychloroquine, and RT-PCR test kits that can conduct 30,000 tests between March and April 2020. Additionally, the Indian Government has been offering a variety of online training modules to educate Bangladeshi medical professionals regarding COVID-19 patients' treatment and care. In order to assist Bangladesh in its efforts to combat the pandemic, the Indian Government gave 2 million Covishield (Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccines) to the country in January 2021. A trilateral Memorandum Of Understanding (MoU) has been signed by the Government of Bangladesh, Bangladesh export import company (BEXIMCO) Pharmaceuticals Limited of Bangladesh, and the Serum Institute of India (SII) to acquire 3 million doses of the covid-19 vaccine from the Serum Institute of India (SII).⁸⁶⁴

The Indian Government launched the humanitarian assistance known as 'Vaccine Maitri' to distribute covid-19 vaccines to different countries all over the world. On 20th January, 2021, the government started providing vaccines. India had distributed approximately 16.29 crore (162.9 million) vaccine doses to 96 countries as of 21st February, 2022. The Indian government provided 1.43 crore (or 14.3 million doses) to 48 countries out of these. The remaining 10.71 billion were provided by vaccine manufacturers in accordance with its commercial obligations, and 4.15 billion were provided by COVAX obligations. In light of India's own covid crisis and the domestic demand for these vaccines, the Indian Government temporarily halted Covishield exports toward the end of March 2021. In September, the Health Minister of India, Mr. Mansukh Mandaviya, made the announcement that India will resume exporting vaccines to the rest of the world in October, 2021.⁸⁶⁵

On 27th March, 2021 India gave the UN peacekeepers 200,000 doses of the Oxford Astra Zeneca covid-19 vaccine (Indian version). These vaccines will be given to all peacekeeping missions. India has two approved vaccines against covid-19: Covaxin and Covishield. The Indian government exported both of them and used them in grants to other countries. The Drug Controller General of India (DCGI) granted approval for the emergency or conditional use of Covishield on 1st January, 2021. The first covid-19 vaccine developed by Bharat Biotech in collaboration with the Indian Council of Medical Research (I.C.M.R.)

⁸⁶⁴ <https://www.aninews.in/news/world/asia/indian-high-commission-thanks-bangladesh-for-extending-support-to-india-in-fight-against-covid-1920210429155625/> accessed on 10.10.2022.

⁸⁶⁵ "India send first Oxygen Express to Bangladesh to help out with Covid 19", Hindustan Times, 25th July, 2021, New Delhi.

and National Institute of Virology (N.I.V) was approved for emergency or conditional use by the Drug Controller General of India on 2nd January, 2021.

India has sent humanitarian and clinical aid to Bangladesh in a significant move. As the second wave of the covid crisis eases, this development demonstrates India's resurgence as a supplier of medical supplies. The 'Oxygen Express' from Indian Railways will cross the international border for the first time and deliver to Bangladesh ten containers 200 metric tons of liquid oxygen. The operation is being carried out by South Eastern Railway, and the train will depart Tatanagar in Chakradharpur division on 24th July, 2021 and arrive in Benapole, Bangladesh in due course of time.⁸⁶⁶

This is the first time ever that the 'Oxygen Express' is put into operation to a neighbouring country, from Indian Railways. When India was struck by the devastating Covid crisis earlier this year, Indian Railways launched 'Oxygen Express' domestically on 24th April, 2021.⁸⁶⁷ Over 35000 MT of liquid oxygen were transported to 15 states, according to railways, and approximately 480 'Oxygen Expresses' were operational.

Keep in mind that India was contacted by Bangladesh and Indonesia when the Covid crisis imprisoned it. Bangladesh sent injections of Remivir, medications, and protective gear to India. In the Northeastern states of India that bordered with Bangladesh, a significant amount of Remdisivir was utilized there. For the Indian people fighting the covid-19 pandemic, Bangladesh has offered to send emergency medicines and supplies for medical equipment.⁸⁶⁸

According to a press release issued by the foreign ministry of Bangladesh, the supplies include approximately 10,000 vials of injectable and oral antivirals, 30,000 personal protective equipment (P.P.E) kits, several thousand tablets containing zinc, calcium, vitamin C, and other essentials.⁸⁶⁹ It stated that Dhaka is prepared to provide and mobilize support in every possible way to save lives and that Bangladesh stands in solidarity with India, its next door neighbour, at this critical pandemic time. The Government of Bangladesh conveys its

⁸⁶⁶ . Hindustan Times, 25th July, 2021.

⁸⁶⁷ <https://www.deccanherald.com/national/india-resumes-helping-others-with-covid-19-aid-to-counter-china-sends-oxygen-to-bangladesh-indonesia-1012490.html>, accessed on 12.10.2022

⁸⁶⁸ "India Thanks Bangladesh For Extending Support In Fight Against COVID-19", NDTV, 29th April, 2021.

⁸⁶⁹ <https://www.aninews.in/news/world/asia/indian-high-commission-thanks-bangladesh-for-extending-support-to-india-in-fight-against-covid-1920210429155625/> accessed on 10.10.2022

deepest sorrow and condolences for the recent deaths in India caused by the covid-19 pandemic.

LAND CUSTOMS STATIONS INFRASTRUCTURE

In order to facilitate cross-border trade, both India and Bangladesh have established land customs stations (L.C.S), which is also known as land ports. Infrastructure for cargo handling, storage, and revenue collection are provided by these land ports. In order to meet the increasing demand from traders on both sides of the borders, land ports have also been upgraded to Integrated Check Posts (I.C.Ps) at specific important points of entry along the border. It is required that the Integrated Check Posts (ICPs) contain immigration, border security, customs, warehousing, banking facilities, and fuel stations as well as other regulatory agencies. Petrapole-Benapole, Agartala-Akhura, and Dawki-Tamabil are significant Integrated Check Posts (ICPs). These land ports are necessary for dealing with Integrated Check Posts (ICPs) at Agartala because they serve as points of contact for travelers and traders entering and leaving each country. Both the Governments are developing mechanisms that will increase the benefits of Land Custom Stations (L.C.T.S) and Integrated Check Posts (I.C..Ps). However, the two countries must establish a quicker and more comprehensive response system. The length of time required to inspect and evaluate cargo that is being transported from one country to another is one of the most common complaints made by traders. Since the ports on the Indian side of the border receive the majority of complaints, it takes a long time to process the details. Bangladesh also prohibits the export of motorbikes and electronic goods to India, which the latter seeks to lift. Goods that have already been certified by Bangladesh can't enter India because Indian ports require quality certification for this purpose. Another issue that needs to be addressed is India's sudden ban on certain essential Bangladeshi products in India.

Bangladesh Land Port Authority (B.L.P.A) came into existence under Bangladesh Sthala Bandar Kartipaksha Act, 2001 (Act 20 of 2001) to work with and further develop import and product among Bangladesh and adjoining neighbours specially India. The Ministry of Shipping of Bangladesh has overseen the Bangladesh Land Port Authority's (BLPA) operations since its inception.⁸⁷⁰ 23 Land Customs Stations have been designated as Land Ports to this point. Benapole, Bhomra, Burimari, Akhaura, and Nakugaon-five of the declared land ports-are managed by the Bangladesh Land Port Authority (BLPA) itself. On the other

⁸⁷⁰[http://bsbk.portal.gov.bd/sites/default/files/files/bsbk.portal.gov.bd/page/1da6d5ad_5287_4dc7_8146_0326260b1894/overview%20\(Sep'16\).pdf](http://bsbk.portal.gov.bd/sites/default/files/files/bsbk.portal.gov.bd/page/1da6d5ad_5287_4dc7_8146_0326260b1894/overview%20(Sep'16).pdf), accessed on 06.10.2022.

hand, Private Port Operators (PPO) are in charge of the Sonamosjid, Hili, Teknaf, Bibirbazar, and Banglabandha Land Ports on a Build, Operate, and Transfer (B.O.T) basis. The Birol Land Port will also be developed and run by a private port operator.⁸⁷¹ The remaining 12 land ports—Tamabil, Darshona, Belonia, Gobrakura-Koroitoli, Ramgarh, Sonahat, Chilahati, Tegamukh, Daulatganj, Sheola, Dhanua Kamalpur, and Balla—are currently undergoing development. There are a total of 315 approved personnel for Bangladesh Land Port Authority (B.L.P.A).⁸⁷²

In order to facilitate trade, India has requested that 225 items be removed from Bangladesh's sensitive list under the South Asian Free Trade Agreement (S.A.P.T.A).⁸⁷³ Bangladesh has so far removed 21 items and has informed India that consultations are being held on the status of other items. The misuse of letters of credit and other banking issues that confront importers and exporters also require resolution. It is difficult for Indian businesses to send money back.

Along with enhancing the physical connectivity of land ports to the hinterland, these issues need to be handled with care and speed. The two countries can consent to an exchange on the particular items that face limitations or postponements because of Non Tariff Barriers (NTBs) and devise estimates that would continuously facilitate these limitations and increment the volume of exchange. To avoid unnecessary delays, several infrastructures like weighbridges at border entry points, streamlined customs procedures, increased trader awareness of regulations, and expanded storage facilities can all be improved. Additionally, banking arrangements at Land Custom Stations (LCTs) are required because the majority of land post-based bank branches lack the necessary resources to manage cross-border trade. These steps will make enough scope for increased bilateral trade while also assisting in the management of issues related to Non Tariff Barriers (NTB) in a manner that is both more effective and efficient. As pointed out by Farooq Sobhan, President of the Bangladesh Enterprise Institute, improvements to the infrastructure along the border, including the

⁸⁷¹https://nbr.gov.bd/uploads/publications/LSC_Book_PDF_comp.pdf, accessed on 06.10.2022.

⁸⁷²Ibid

⁸⁷³Summary Record of India-Bangladesh Meeting of the Joint Working Group on Trade held on 13-14 June 2013, Ministry of External affairs, Government of India, available at http://commerce.nic.in/trade/Joint_Statement_India_Bangladesh_13_14_June_2013.pdf, accessed on 11th October, 2021.

addition of additional border posts, would make it easier to regulate cross-border movement of people.⁸⁷⁴

BORDER HAAT INFRASTRUCTURE

A border haat is a temporary market set up on the zero line of the border between India and Bangladesh. On a specific day each week, people from both countries can buy their house hold articles and goods. People in remote villages near the border area have access to these markets, which not only let them buy necessities but also let them do business that could help them make more money. The Balamari-Kalaichar Border haat, which opened on 23rd July, 2011 in Meghalaya, was the first border haat. In 2012, the Dolara-Balat border haat took place in Sunamganj, Meghalaya. On the other hand, the border trade between the two nextdoor neighbours, has been going on since 1972, but it has been a tumultuous endeavour due to the extensive smuggling that started soon after. A comprehensive plan for the operation of border haats can be found in the 2011 Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the two governments regarding the establishment of border haats.⁸⁷⁵ The decision to establish border haats was finalized with the intention of formalizing illicit trade through the border areas and providing people with an economic opportunity living in remote areas along the border between India and Bangladesh. Forty locally grown agricultural and manufactured finished products for trading at these Border haats have been identified.⁸⁷⁶ Indian states of Meghalaya and Tripura have given the significance of establishing these border haats on their respective borders with Bangladesh. The Director General for South Asia, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Bangladesh, Mr. Tareq Md. Ariful Islam added that border haats are also important because they play a social role by engaging people living in remote areas. It is for this reason that the selection of sites for these border haats is very important. It has been a long time since the proposals for border haats were raised, so the speed of setting up the

⁸⁷⁴<https://www.google.com/search?q=PART+1+India-Bangladesh+Connectivity%3A+Possibilities+and+Challenges&oq=PART+1+India-Bangladesh+Connectivity%3A+Possibilities+and+Challenges&aqs=chrome..69i57j0j7&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8>, accessed on 20.08.2021

⁸⁷⁵ Memorandum of Understanding on the Establishment of Border Haats across the border between India and Bangladesh, in http://commerce.nic.in/trade/MOU_Border_Haats_across_Border_India_and_Bangladesh2010.pdf, accessed on 3rd April, 2021.

⁸⁷⁶ Mode of Operation of Border Haats Across the Border Between Bangladesh and India, 15 May 2012, http://commerce.nic.in/trade/MOU_Border_Haats_across_Border_India_and_Bangladesh2010.pdf, accessed on 16th August, 2021.

proposed border haats needs to be looked into.⁸⁷⁷ It is important to increase the number of border hats in border area to strengthen country's economy. In addition to the location, supporting infrastructure, such as banking and security facilities, is required. When choosing locations for the border haats, it is important to keep in mind the viability of these infrastructure supplements. Numerous experts in Bangladesh have also stated that border haats need to have their infrastructural improvement. In addition to infrastructural support, border trade through these haats poses a significant issue. For locals especially from rural area who aren't used to official trade rules and regulations, regulatory mechanisms like Non Triff Barriers of different products (N.T.Bs), the border hat is a necessary means for their livelihood. This makes it difficult for them to deal with the prospect. People are frequently discouraged by the Non Triff Barriers (N.T.Bs), which frequently restrict the scope of trade that would otherwise be possible through illegal trade. As a result, it is believed that, although the Non Triff Barriers (N.T.Bs) may not completely disappear, simpler regulations would encourage increased participation in border trade through these border haats. The establishment of these border haats is intended to promote the well-being of people living in border regions and strengthen bilateral economic ties between the two countries. However, the operation of these border haats is controlled and monitored by a number of official regulations. These rules are necessary to stop illegal movement and illegal trade. Besides, they have limitation how much can be traded and engaged in these border haats.

Four Border Haats, two each in Tripura (Srinagar and Kamalasagar) and Meghalaya (Kalaichar and Balat), have been established for the benefit and welfare of the communities living along the border areas of both the countries. Ten additional Border Haats on the India-Bangladesh border are under implementation.⁸⁷⁸ The first major objective of the border hatt infrastructure is to make it easier for people and legitimate goods to cross the border between the two countries. secondly, to keep the country safe by making it harder for people who might cause a disturbance at the border or bring in illegal goods to enter the country. Border management necessitates the involvement of numerous agencies, including customs, immigration, and local police, for this purpose. Depending on whether the relationships are adversarial or friendly, border management strategies may differ from country to country. However, security remains an essential component of border management in term of opening

⁸⁷⁷ibid

⁸⁷⁸Ministry of Commerce & Industry, Government of India, "India - Bangladesh Business forum meets in New Delhi", 4th October, 2019 by Press Information Bureau, Delhi.

border haat everywhere. For instance, India and six other countries—Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal, Myanmar, Pakistan, and China—share approximately 15,000 kilometers of international land borders; however, India's policy of opening border haat in border area was vary from country to country. India's borders with Pakistan and Bangladesh are restrictive, but its borders with Nepal and Bhutan are open, making it easier for people to move around. India has five deployed border guards namely Central Industrial Security Force (C.I.S.F), Central Reserve Police Force (C.R.P.F), Indo -Tibetan Border Police (I.T.B.P), National Security Guard (N.S.G), Border Security Force (B.S.F) to protect the international land boundary. India has tested the new strategy of opening border haat more openly, as evidenced by its experiments along its border with Bangladesh. The new approach that Bangladesh has taken to managing its borders is reflected in the establishment of border haats along its border.⁸⁷⁹

Trafficking in women and children, smuggling of arms and drugs, and cattle smuggling are examples of major crimes committed across the India-Bangladesh Border. Additionally, the border is prone to informal trade. India initially placed an emphasis on border security through regulation and guarding. India implemented a number of steps, including the deployment of the Border Security Force (BSF) between entry and exit points to guard the international border, the establishment of a Border-Out Post (B.O.P), the installation of flood lighting, the installation of barbed wire fences within 150 meters of its territory, and an increase in border surveillance. India established immigration check posts (I.C.P.) and land custom stations (L.C.S.) at designated entry and exit points along the border with Bangladesh to control the border. For this purpose India's Border Area Development Programme (B.A.D.P) aimed to meet the special developmental needs of people living in remote and inaccessible areas near the international border by building infrastructure, providing economic opportunities, and encouraging a sense of security consciousness among the border population. India recognized the necessity of developing the bordering areas and realized that neighbouring countries' collaboration are needed to work together to make border haat infrastructure more effective. The border haats are for the most part situated at line focuses that have restricted availability with the closest metropolitan places. As a result, people who live in remote border regions either do not have access to improved agricultural

⁸⁷⁹India-Bangladesh Connectivity: Possibilities and Challenges (part-1), ORF, Also available at <https://www.google.com/search?q=PART+1+India-Bangladesh+Connectivity%3A+Possibilities+and+Challenges&oq=PART+1+India-Bangladesh+Connectivity%3A+Possibilities+and+Challenges&aqs=chrome..69i57j0j7&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8>, accessed on 20.08.2021

implements or must pay prices that are higher than the market price (which also includes the cost of transportation) to purchase the implements.

In terms of border haat infrastructure, India and Bangladesh currently have friendly cooperation and close ties. The peaceful settlement of the land boundary dispute further contributed to the improvement of trust between India and Bangladesh. To maintain the improvement of trust a Coordinated Border Management Plan (C.B.M.P) was established in 2011 between India and Bangladesh. Human trafficking, drug smuggling, arms, ammunition, and explosives trafficking, dealing with fake currencies, border trespassing (armed or unarmed), smuggling, theft, terrorism, straying animals, cattle smuggling, and illegal migration were all part of the Coordinated Border Management plan. In accordance with this plan, the two countries agreed to coordinate their patrols, exchange intelligence, hold talks and meetings between their forces to resolve issues together, and respond to a serious incident with joint action. In order to provide a means of subsistence for the bordering communities Bangladesh and India, decided to establish border haats. In addition, it sought to formalize the cross-border informal trade. In 2011, India and Bangladesh constructed their first border haat in Tripura and Meghalaya that are in close proximity to Bangladesh. There are four border haats that are in operation at the moment. In the beginning, goods produced close to the border were transported in these border haats, but over time, the number of products has grown. The four operational border haats are as follows:

- Balat (Meghalaya)-Sunamganj (Sylhet) • Kalaichar (Meghalaya)-Kurigram (Rangpur) • Srinagar (Tripura)-Chagnaiya (Chittagong) • Kamalasagar (Tripura)-Kasba (Chittagong)

Each of these border haats sees annual trade in goods worth approximately Rs 40 million. The volume of trade that takes place between India and Bangladesh through formal channels is approximately US\$10 billion, so the proportion of trade that occurs through the border haats is negligible. Despite this, these border haats have had a profound effect on the communities' daily lives. The communities that are located close to the border have benefited greatly from the border haats. By selling their products in the border haats, traders benefit, and customers save money because they don't have to travel far to buy them. Again, the border haats are giving local communities new ways to make more money because they also run food and tea stalls and provide transportation on the haat days. By participating in the economic activities that have emerged as a result of the establishment of the haats, these haats are also contributing to the empowerment of women in these areas.

The border haats are a clear destination from more conservative approaches to addressing border security issues and add a new dimension to the border cooperation between India and Bangladesh. The border haats emphasize the close connection that exists between border communities, security, and trade—all these factors that are frequently overlooked when formulating policies. The border haats emphasize the significance of border communities to efficient border management and security. The expansion of the border haats will enable a larger number of people to take advantage of its benefits, which will in turn contribute to the growth of the region and strengthen interpersonal ties. It will also help in maintaining the two countries' border cooperation⁸⁸⁰.

A memorandum of understanding (MoU) to promote cross-border trade and cooperation through the establishment of border haats was signed by the Prime Ministers of Bangladesh and India in 2010 as part of a comprehensive framework agreement that covered a variety of topics. In April 2017 the governments of both India and Bangladesh decided to open six additional border haats (Kamalpur in India-Kurmaghat in Bangladesh, Radha Nagar Krishna Nagar border haat, Tarapur- Kamalasagar border haat, Balamari-Kalicharan border haat, Dolura-Balatborder haat, and Baganbari-Rinku border haat) in accordance with the vision of the MoU. An addendum had been signed in the border communities living close to the haats. They were given more opportunities for economic and trade activities by these addendum. After the partition of Bengal in 1947, the well-established demand and supply structures that had been severed historically, the border haat initiative recognized and established the long-standing people-to-people contact in this sub-region were reestablished again. Additionally, the initiative of opening border haats aimed to reduce smuggling and the associated illegal and disruptive activities in the relevant border areas by redirecting informal trade into formal channels. Raw cotton, yarn and fabric, cereals, vehicles, machinery, boilers and equipment, residues and waste, edible vegetables, electrical machinery, iron and steel, plastics and plastic goods, and organic chemicals are among the most commonly imported goods comes in the border haats from India. Ready-made garments, jute and jute goods, animal or vegetable fats and oils, rags and other clothing, lead and lead goods, fish and crustaceans, beverages, spirits and vinegar, copper and copper goods, and plastics and plastic goods are among Bangladeshi products comes in the border haats.⁸⁸¹

⁸⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸⁸¹ Ibid

A significant amount of agricultural trade occurs through various informal channels in addition to formal channels. In the border haats varieties of Seed like rice, jute, pulses, additional vegetables and spices like tomato and onion, fresh vegetables, betel nuts, and seasonal fruits like mango, banana, apple, and guava make up the majority of them. Spices like fresh onion, turmeric, and ginger are also included in informal trade. Sugar and salt are two other food items that are traded informally. In addition, informal channels are used to trade a variety of agricultural inputs like fertilizer, pesticides, animal feed, fish feed, and vaccines for animals and fish. There is a significant demand for Bangladeshi seeds for bitter gourd, cucumber, cauliflower, turai (Jhinga), and herbicide. Farmers claim that Indian seeds and herbicides are more expensive than their Bangladeshi counterparts in terms of productivity and quality. So, once a week, Indian farmers buy these things sporadically from the border haats.

Vendors purchase goods from those border haats and then sell them in local markets and manage to make a handsome profit. They have also been given opportunities to earn more money. These border haats not only help to increase trade but also provide locals with opportunities for earning an standard living. As a result, border haats have had a direct impact on opportunities for all parties involved in it, including vendors, transporters, workers, service providers, and even vendees, to generate more income. The border haats have not only provided residents of far-flung border regions with opportunities to earn a living, but they have also made it possible for them to purchase essential goods at reasonable prices. Border haats have also contributed to the reduction of informal and illegal trade. Through the border haats, however, women's participation can be increased. In addition, the haats have evolved into places where friends and family can meet, connect, and socialize without having to go through cumbersome immigration and passport procedures.

Farmers from India and Bangladesh who live near border haats may be able to exchange their surplus agricultural products and horticultural products through border haats. Rice, wheat, pulses, spices, and vegetables are potential important commodities. Various agricultural inputs, such as seeds, pesticides, fertilizers, and herbicides, can be exchanged on border haats. Trade of these contributions through conventional channels requires satisfaction of some clean and phyto-sterile commitments. These agricultural inputs are traded in significant quantities through informal channels in order to circumvent the formal channels' frequently time-consuming and cumbersome procedures. The volumes traded through informal channels may significantly decrease if these products are allowed to be traded

through the border haats. However, this would necessitate the implementation of appropriate biosafety standard. In this regard, the governments of India and Bangladesh could work together to compile a list of biosafety-related agricultural inputs with the appropriate licenses and certifications. It is absolutely necessary to train rural entrepreneurs to trade agricultural equipment and inputs. Agriculture is a broad field in which each seed has its own production method. This highlights the significance of providing rural business owners with appropriate training on agro-inputs. This, in turn, may guarantee farmers' access to high-quality services and assistance. Since every seed has a production technology, proper training is necessary to guarantee production.

BBIN CONNECTIVITY INFRASTRUCTURE

A route through Bangladesh, India, Bhutan, and Nepal (BBIN) was opened during Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's visit to Dhaka in early June to link a pact that allows trucks and cars to move seamlessly through these countries quickly. During a flurry of meetings and messages with these three neighbouring countries namely Bhutan, Bangladesh and Nepal, the Modi government signed a sub-regional motor vehicles agreement for trade and commerce. In foreign office jargon, the motor vehicles agreement among Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, and Nepal, which is called the BBIN in short, would grant New Delhi unprecedented transit rights with all of its South Asian land border-sharing countries other than Pakistan. As it will boost sub-regional cooperation within SAARC in the eastern region, this is a welcome move. Terrorism, economic crisis, migration, pandemics, global warming, regional territorial conflict and other problems in a changing and globalized world inspired the idea of subregional cooperation. It could be effectively resolved through international cooperation and support.⁸⁸² To sign the agreement Bangladesh, India, Bhutan, and Nepal (BBIN), the four neighbouring countries' transport ministers were originally scheduled to meet in Thimphu, the capital of Bhutan at the end of June, 2015. However, the meeting was moved to 15th June 2015 in an effort to get a deal done before Modi goes to Dhaka. Foreign secretary of India, Mr. Subrahmanyam Jaishankar stated at a convention on India-Bangladesh ties on 15th June 2015, "Our enthusiasm has been fully reciprocated by Bangladesh, not just in bilateral relations but in sub-regional cooperation through initiatives like the Bangladesh, India, Bhutan, and Nepal (BBIN)."⁸⁸³ We are extremely eager to move

⁸⁸²Chakravarty, Pinak Ranjan, 'Bangladesh-India Ties: Pragmatic Transformation' **Indian Foreign Affairs Journal**, Volume. 10. No. 3. July-September, 2015, p.214.

⁸⁸³ Ibid.

this along. According to officials, “during Modi’s visit to Dhaka, it is anticipated that two additional key initiatives related to trade and transit will take shape.” These include the potential announcement of electronic visas for Bangladeshi tourists and a revised trade agreement. Bus services between Calcutta and Agartala, as well as Guwahati and Dhaka, are expected to be inaugurated by Modi and Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. Modi has invited Mamata Banerjee, the chief minister of West Bengal, as well as Tarun Gogoi, the Chief Minister of Assam, and Manik Sarkar, the Chief Minister of Tripura, to accompany him, but no one has yet confirmed this invitation. Six months after Pakistan obstructed a larger SAARC agreement, the Bangladesh, India, Bhutan, and Nepal (BBIN) a ‘sub-regional’ motor vehicles agreement for trade and commerce, is being promoted. A South Asian motor vehicle agreement was reached by India and the six other SAARC countries, allowing a truck from Bangladesh’s eastern end to travel to Afghanistan’s western edge. India’s earlier expectation was the agreement will be finalized at the SAARC summit in Kathmandu in November 26-27, 2014, but Pakistan opposed it. Now under tremendous pressure from other SAARC countries, Pakistan agreed to a joint statement under which the transport ministers of the grouping were to meet soon to finalise the agreement.⁸⁸⁴

⁸⁸⁴ **The Telegraph**, Kolkata, May 27, 2015.



CONCLUSION

CONCLUSION

The study of 'Dynamics of India-Bangladesh relations since 1991: border security, connectivity and infrastructure' undertaken in previous chapters clearly state that dynamics of India-Bangladesh relations has gone through several ups and downs. The relationship between India and Bangladesh has witnessed their share of positive and difficult phases between this particular span of time (1991-2023). There have been both good and bad times between the two countries in the dynamics of their relationship. There are some areas where there have been cordial cooperation between the two nextdoor neighbours, like the Ganges water distribution treaty, successful repatriation of the chakma refugee, the settlement of the long standing boundary dispute in 2014, the ratification of the Land Boundary Agreement (LBA) and the successful exchange of enclaves in 2015 have been major developments in the India-Bangladesh relationship in recent decade. Besides in the field of energy, gas, electricity, hydropower; coordination in border management to facilitate movement of people across the border, local trade, opening border haats, introduction of passenger and freights train, Kolkata-Dhaka, Kolkata-Agartala-Dhaka bus service, inland water connectivity etc. are fully solved issues. All these issues have been negotiated and settled to some extent. In pursuance of several bilateral agreements the two countries have began to cooperate in the sectors like rail, bus, bridge, space and nuclear technology, Information Technology, shipping, electronics, energy, medical tourism, medical assistance of Covid 19 pandemic, cruise tourism and the civil nuclear programme. In the field of disaster management, education of students and other aspects of human resource development, training and capacity building, defence cooperation, rail infrastructure, community development projects, development of visa application centres, border hatts infrastructure, friendship pipe line project, space technology and scientific cooperation, nuclear cooperation, bilateral trade and investment, dredging project, thermal power project, broadcasting cooperation, land and customs station, check posts infrastructure etc. both the countries are working in a positive way.

But apart from these issues in the dynamics of their relationship there are a large number of areas where conflict and confrontation still persist. There have some major thorny issues that persisted over the decades. During the period of 1991-2006, except Sheikh Hasina's regime from 1996-2001 the relationship between India and Bangladesh were neither cordial nor cooperative. During Khaleda Zia's tenure several state actors and non state actors like ISI, religious fundamentalist, religious political parties, foreign policymakers and pro Pakistani Bangladeshi army contributed to the Islamisation process in Bangladesh. During

her second tenure from 2001-2006 the four party coalition government namely BNP, Jamaat-e-Islami, Bangladesh Jatio Party, Islami Oikya Jote, led by the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), largely ignored Indian security concerns, border infiltration and sheltered Pakistani Inter Service Intelligence (ISI) based insurgent groups like National Democratic Front of Bodoland, National socialist council of Nagaland, National Liberation Front of Tripura, People's Liberation Army of Manipur, United Liberation Front of Assam, Muslim United Liberation Tigers of Assam, Kamtapur Liberation Organisation, People's United Liberation Front (PULF), Zomi Re-unification Organisation (ZRO), Thadou People's Liberation Army (TPLA), Manipur Naga People's Front (MNPf), Manipur Naga Revolutionary Front (MNRf), People's Liberation Army (PLA) and its political wing the Revolutionary People's Front (RPF), United National Liberation Front (UNLF) and its Armed wing the Manipur People's Army (MPA), Kuki Independent Army (KIA), Zomi Revolutionary Front (ZRF), Hynniewtre National Liberation Council (HNLC), Garo National Liberation Army (GNLA), The National Socialist Council of Nagaland (Khaplang) [NSCN/K], Adibasi Kobra Force (Assam) etc. in Indian North Eastern Region to spread terror and hamper Peace and prosperity in the country. Nevertheless, the demand of self-determination by those above mentioned separatists and insurgent groups with the support of external actors such as ISI of Pakistan, Joish-e-Mohammad, Lashkar-e-Taiba, Lashkar-e-Omar, Jammāt-e-Islami, Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh, Harkat-ul-Mujahideen, Taliban, Harkat-ul-Jihad-al-Islami Bangladesh, Al-Qaeda, Hizb-ut-Tohid in Bangladesh have consolidated and expanded their institutional transnational networks with the help of Begum Khaleda Zia Government's support in the past decades.

There are certain outstanding issues that acted as major irritants in the relations between the two countries. One of the major irritants is related to Teesta water sharing issue. What are the major irritants in the way of solving the Teesta water crisis? Is my research question. It has been broadly discussed in one of the chapters of the research work. Bangladesh is a very small agrarian country with 142.32 million people. In recent time agricultural sector of Bangladesh is facing many challenges especially for occurrence of chronic climate change and for barrage construction. The Teesta river being a major source of ground water recharge in north western part of Bangladesh. It had been utilized for irrigation purpose for a long time. Teesta Barrage project (TBP) which is located at the Teesta Flood Plain (TFP) at Dalia point in Nilphamari district, has been a major source of surface water for

irrigation in north western part of Bangladesh by gravity flow since 1990.⁸⁸⁵ For the last several years Teesta area is facing serious water related problems like river bed siltation, low water flow and water bodies becoming dry etc.⁸⁸⁶ India and Bangladesh started their bilateral journey with the birth of Bangladesh in South Asia on 16th December 1971. After the partition from United Pakistan under the leadership of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman attempts to build nation building process and modernize agriculture in order to become self sufficient in agricultural production and reduce dependence on nature have been made. Since India helped in the creation of Bangladesh by supplying military and humanitarian assistance, the Bangladesh Government under the leadership of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, tried to solve water sharing problem with Indian Government, led by former Prime Minister late Mrs. Indira Gandhi by signing a “Treaty of friendship, co-operation and peace”⁸⁸⁷ on 19th March, 1972 where Article VI of the treaty clearly stated that “the contracting parties agree to make joint studies and take point action in the fields of flood control, river basin development and the development of hydro-electric power and irrigation.” The two charismatic leaders also formulated a comprehensive plan and both of them agreed to form a joint river commission (JRC) on a permanent basis in 1972. Nevertheless, several natural disasters like cyclones, tsunamis, earthquakes, droughts, floods, storms, landslide, and soil erosion, water scarcity have been the common phenomena between the two riverine countries. People of both the countries use their land for cultivation till now. That is why Bangladesh is called a agrarian country in South Asia. The leaders of both the countries decided to solve the water dispute in order to implement various programmes like hydroelectricity generation, industrial uses, navigation, waterway transportation, agriculture and irrigation, ground water decline, river linking project, flood control and riverbank erosion, increase water salinity etc. Moreover, both the countries thought that the solution of water dispute is required for their agricultural, environmental and maritime securities.

⁸⁸⁵ Haque, A.K, Aich, D., Subhani,R.,Bari,E., and Diyan, MA.,Atale of tamed river: The value of ecosystem services of Teesta river-an estimate of value of provisional services in agriculture and fisheries. Asian Centre for Development 2014, Dhaka.

⁸⁸⁶ The Daily Star, Dhaka 16th April, 2011.

⁸⁸⁷ ‘Indo-Bangladesh Friendship Treaty’ was a treaty that was signed on 19 March 1972.It was also known as Indira-Mujib treaty. The twelve Article incorporated in the treaty. some of the Article are –the present treaty is signed for a term of 25 years, and shall be renewed by mutual agreement(Article-xi). Any differences interpreting any Article of the treaty shall be settled on a bilateral basis by peaceful means in spirit of mutual respect and understanding. (Article-xii). Both the parties shall promote relations in the fields of arts, literature, education, culture, sports and health.. (Article-vii). The contrasting parties condemn colonialism and racialism of all forms,and reaffirm their determination to strive for their final and complete elimination. (Article-ii).

According to international law principles Rivers fall broadly into two categories namely 1) national and 2) international. A national river is one whose banks and mouth are entirely within the territory of single state's borders. On the other hand International River, flows through or between the territories of two or more states, whereas in this scenario, the river itself is a part of the territory of one state and is subject to that state's complete sovereignty. In this scenario, sovereignty is exercised by each riparian state⁸⁸⁸ over the part of the river that passes through its territory.⁸⁸⁹

Distribution of water among different countries is a problem which afflicts each country. From International perspective, water is very much important for survival of human life and agricultural need, every country is increasingly concerned with this problem. From this point of view India and Bangladesh, the two South Asian neighbouring countries are strongly displeased with each other over sharing of water particularly Teesta. There are more than 200 rivers in Bangladesh that originate in other upstream countries like India, Nepal, and China. Among of them Teesta, Feni, Manu, Muhuri, Khowai, Gumti, Dharla and Dudhkumar etc are remarkable in Bangladesh.

Water scarcity is also a pertinent issue in the sphere of resource which usually determines the capabilities of basin state.⁸⁹⁰

Another factor regarding Teesta water, occupies very pertinent position is the level of development of the country. International river basin occupies very pertinent position and that is to say, the level of economic development and technological capabilities of the basin state are to be taken into account.

Next factor is climatic availability of water of real terms. It is well known that for the arid region, the issue of water sharing especially in dry season leads to conflict. In the case of Teesta water distribution climatic availability of water in dry season is the main cause of conflict between India and Bangladesh for three decades.

Other determinant which governs water dispute relates to depletion of a source (like an aquifer) because of basin diversion of sharing of water, redirection or other uses for another places, consumption, spatial distribution of population and water resources. Among

⁸⁸⁸ A riparian state is located alongside a river. Riparian state means a state through whose territory a watercourse passes.

⁸⁸⁹ Maryan Green, International Law, Paris, 1987

⁸⁹⁰ A state of the territory of which includes a portion of the drainage basin and which shall have proclaimed and maintained.

them the most important is riparian structure⁸⁹¹ and riparian organization. It refers to international river basin which is linked with to all the riparian states. These riparian states might have a complex network of environmental, economic, political and securities interdependency. In this process it creates the potentials for inter-state conflicts as well as the opportunities of co-operation.

Another important factor which can be highlighted in the context i.e, riparian organization (nation state, ruling regimes, water securities), to be taken as continual inputs in the sphere of dynamism of international water conflicts. Here, Rakesh Tiwari's paper "conflict over international water" is an illustrative reference who explained the function of these concepts in different River basin.

Riparian Organization: Actions and Options⁸⁹²

	Upstream	Downstream
Comparative Stronger Nation	Proactive operational action, emphasis on bilateralism, semblances of regional action, strongly resist outside intervention, against\abstain 1997 UN Convention	Attach strategic \security importance to water supply, suppresses upstream diversion schemes, military threats or action, offer imbalanced reciprocity, discourage upstream alliances
Comparatively Weaker Nation	Demand imbalanced reciprocity, delay as a tool to bargain, non-cooperation for UN 1997 Convention	Internationalization, campaign for outside intervention, look for riparian alliances to pressurize, non-cooperation in other critical sectors, for UN 1997 Convention.

Since ancient times, there has been a problem with riparian states sharing trans-boundary fresh water. There are more than 200 rivers in Bangladesh that originate in other countries like India, Nepal, and China. Nearly all of these rivers flows through India before entering Bangladesh. Now, in respect of sharing of water the river Teesta comes in fore. Among these rivers, the Teesta is a significant one-the issue of sharing of the water of which

⁸⁹¹ Riparian structure refers to how the political units are arranged in the geographical space, or the comparative location of political units in the given river basin are. It explains the spatio-temporal aspects of water availability in the basin. It is a static concept which allots almost permanent privileges and disabilities as far as access, utilization and management of water resources are concerned. For more information see Ramaswamy R Iyre, "Conflict-Resolution: Three River Treaties", Economic and Political Weekly, Vol. 34, No. 24 (Jun. 12-18, 1999), p-1516.

⁸⁹² Rakesh Tiwari ,op.cit, p-1686.

has not yet been tackled between the two countries. Discussion regarding the utilization of the Teesta water for irrigation purpose began during the British rule before the partition of India.⁸⁹³

After partition from the British India in 1947 and the break-up of Pakistan in 1971, Bangladesh implemented her plans separately to the use of Teesta water for irrigation purpose with a view to increase agricultural production. For that irrigation purpose the two countries decided to build two barrages on the river in their own territories. In order to use Teesta water for irrigation, the authorities of Bangladesh constructed a barrage at Dalia, which is situated at downstream..Just a short time after the initiation of the activity of the Dalia blast, the Indian specialists began working the Gazoldoba Multipurpose Barrage at the upstream in Jalpaiguri district of West Bengal. The Dalia barrage became practically ineffective as a result of this Indian barrage at the upstream. Furthermore, the people of Bangladesh to the downstream area faced bitter experience of flash floods in their own areas for the Gazoldoba Multipurpose Barrage. The authorities of both the countries have met numerous times and signed treaties to resolve the barrage issue, but nothing has worked. Treaties that are only politically motivated and do not include provisions for the riparian states to receive economic benefits are unlikely to last. In addition, a proposal has been made for an ideal solution to the Teesta River's water-sharing issue. Besides, what extent of problems confronted by the people of Bangladesh and hamper the bilateral relations between the two countries is also shown elaborately.

Teesta River is a 414 km (257 mi) long river that ascends in the Pauhunri Mountain of eastern Himalayas, flows through the Indian provinces of Sikkim and West Bengal and subsequently enters into Bangladesh through Rangpur division. It enters the Brahmaputra River in Bangladesh, where it meets several other major rivers of the Bengal delta before entering the Bay of Bengal.⁸⁹⁴ The Teesta river originates from Teesta Kangse Glacier about 7,068 metres (23,189ft.) height and flow southward through gorges and rapids in the Sikkim Himalaya. It flows through Sikkim, West Bengal and Bangladesh where after flowing

⁸⁹³ The British Government introduced the India Independence Bill in British parliament on 4th July, 1947 and the India Independence Act was enacted after a fortnight on 18th July. The act enabled the representatives of India and Pakistan to frame their own constitution and to provide for the exceedingly difficult period of transition.

⁸⁹⁴ Mullick ,MRA, Babel, M.S and Perret, S.R, "Discharge based economic valuation of immigration water, evidence from the Teesta River, Bangladesh" irrigation and drainage, 2011, 60(4), pp-481-492. Also available at https://www.academia.edu/11387685/Dischargebased_economic_valuation_of_irrigation_water_Evidence_from_the_Teesta_River_Bangladesh, accessed on 12.03 2023.

through about 45 km of irrigable land merges with Brahmaputra river or Jamuna river when it enters into Bangladesh and ends in the Bay of Bengal. It flows through the districts of Mangan, Gangtok, Pakyong, Kalimpong, Darjeeling, and Cooch Behar as well as the cities of Rangpo, Jalpaiguri, and Mekhliganj in India (West Bengal). It flows through the Lalmonirhat, Rangpur, Kurigram, and Gaibandha districts of northern Bangladesh. It joins the Brahmaputra River in Bangladesh at Phulchhari Upazila. The river runs 305 kilometers (190 miles) in India and 109 kilometers (68 miles) in Bangladesh. The Teesta is Sikkim's largest river and West Bengal's second-largest river, after the Ganges. It is an important irrigation source for paddy farmers in both the countries. The river is flanked by white sand which is used by the construction industry in the region.⁸⁹⁵

The Dalia Barrage is the largest irrigation project of Bangladesh. It is located at Donai-Dalia point in the Lalmonirhat district of Bangladesh, across the Teesta river. When East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) was a part of Pakistan at the time, the largest irrigation project was started in 1960. The actual implementation of the Dalia Barrage was when Bangladesh got independence from Pakistan and it started under military dictatorship. The actual construction of the barrage was commenced in 1979 at Dalia point of Duani. Teesta Barrage is located on Teesta river at Duani in Hatibandha upazila in Lalmonirhat district of Bangladesh. The barrage is a 615 meter long concrete structure fitted with 44 radial gates having a discharge capacity of 12,750 cusec of water. It is used to divert 280 cusec of water for irrigation through a canal taking off on the right bank. The barrage was completed in August 1990 with a 110m long Canal Head Regulator to control flow of water into the irrigation canal. The barrage was operational in 1993 for providing water for only about 30% of the project area.⁸⁹⁶ There is a 4500 km long organization arrangement of channels for providing water system to the field. Through the barrage regulation, water flows automatically through all stages of the project, which is also gravity irrigation. In the project's first year of operation, 1993, a dry-season area of approximately 65,000 bighas (16,000 acres) was planted with high-yielding varieties of paddy. The goal of the project was to control flooding and soil erosion over a target area of 750,000 hectares, 540,000 of which could be irrigated. Seven districts in northern Bangladesh were included in this project. Agricultural production clearly increased during the first five years of operation of the

⁸⁹⁵Dr. Aruna R mital, "Indo-Bangladesh water sharing issues", international journal of Humanities and Science Research, vol-2, issue 11, November 2016, pp-7-11.

⁸⁹⁶ M.D Fakrul Islam and Yoshiro Higano. Equitable Sharing of Bilateral International Water: A Policy Measure for Optimal Utilization of the Teesta River" January 2001, Studies in Regional Science 32(1), pp-17-32

barrage. But later, during the dry season, the project's operation was halted due to internal and external issues. As a result, the Teesta basin community has suffered significant economic losses and environmental concerns as a result of the country's largest irrigation project, which has cost millions of dollars to complete. Due to a lack of agricultural development, poverty increased in Bangladesh with the due course of time. This hamper the bilateral relations between the two countries.

In the meantime India constructed a barrage across the Teesta in the Jalpaiguri district. The Indian (West Bengal) Government built a barrage on the Teesta multipurpose project in 1979, primarily for irrigation purposes and to divert water from the Teesta to the Mahananda river in north Bengal. This marked the beginning of the Teesta river water dispute between the two countries. This multipurpose action of the barrage is likely to harm the natural environment near teesta area. At the beginning of India's Teesta multipurpose project, a barrage was built at Gozoldoba in the Jalpaiguri district, situated about 66 km upstream of the Dalia barrage site of Bangladesh. It covered 228 acres and was 66 kilometers upstream of the Dalia barrage site. Another one of its goals was to generate hydropower for the purpose of expanding West Bengal's power supply. The government of Bangladesh opposed it right away. It argued that the Teesta and Brahmaputra river basins are where the majority of Bangladesh's major rice-producing regions, particularly the rice bowl Rangpur region in Northern Bangladesh, are located. Consequently, the construction of the barrage results in a lack of rice production and a lack of water for irrigation in Bangladesh.⁸⁹⁷

To pacify Bangladesh India started negotiation of the issue in 1983 and an Ad-hoc Arrangement on water sharing was concluded between India and Bangladesh. Since the upper riparian country India controls the flow of water in the Bangladesh from the Teesta barrage at Gazaldoba, constructed to provide water to the Northern part of West Bengal. As mentioned earlier Bangladesh constructed a barrage down stream at Dalia in Lalmonirhat district which supplies water from agriculture and irrigation to draught prone areas of Northern Bangladesh. Then it was argued by Bangladesh Government that the construction of Gazaldoba barrage and the diversion of water from Teesta to Mahanada have drastically reduced water availability at Dalia barrage in Bangladesh particularly in the dry season.⁸⁹⁸ Water in the river

⁸⁹⁷ M.D Fakrul Islam and Yoshiro Higano. *Equitable Sharing of Bilateral International Water: A Policy Measure for Optimal Utilization of the Teesta River*, op.cit, p-19

⁸⁹⁸ Imtiaz Ahmed, "Teesta, Tipaimukh and River Linking: Danger to Bangladesh –India Relations", *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol- XLVII, No- 16, April 21, 2012, pp-51-53.

during dry season is derived generally from ground water fed by the previous season's precipitation

In terms of Ad-hoc Arrangement both India and Bangladesh were allocated 39% and 36% water flow respectively. The remaining 25% Ad-hoc sharing of water demanded by Bangladesh on equitable basis. The Gazaldoba barrage started to withdraw water excessively in the dry season in 1996 when Dalia barrage of Bangladesh was in full operation. Due to this operation of the Gazaldoba barrage, the water flow of the Teesta river decreased significantly, threatening the situation of the barrage area. Exclusive control of Teesta water in the dry season at Gazaldoba makes the Dalia barrage useless and furthermore sudden release of excessive water through the Gazaldoba barrage in the rainy season causes heavy floods and bank erosion in Bangladesh. It leads to serious suffering of the people of Bangladesh.⁸⁹⁹

The West Bengal Government quite reasonably pointed out that this demand of Bangladesh Government not be met because it will dry out the Northern part of West Bengal. It was also predicted by India that it will face water scarcity by 2025.

Under the circumstance, the Government constructed a joint river commission in order to collect hydrological data and suggest rational method for water sharing. This commission recommended to increase Bangladesh's share on logic that West Bengal's Teesta barrage is very close to Bangladesh border (nearly 19k.m). Some water will penetrated underground and benefit the country.

But, the problem of Teesta Water sharing remained unresolved till now. In 2010, the Prime Minister, of India and Bangladesh issued a joint communiqué which started that the Teesta issue would be resolved soon. As a sequel to this event, the two countries prepared a draft agreement on the Teesta issue and the statement of principles of sharing of water in the lean season. These documents were to form the basis on interim agreement on Teesta between India and Bangladesh. The Bangladesh Government and its leadership felt optimistic as a result of the frequent meetings with their Indian counterparts to resolve outstanding unresolved issues including teesta water.

Imtiaz Ahmed who teaches international relations at the university of Dhaka at Bangladesh in an illuminating paper, "Teesta, Tipaimukh and River Linking: Danger to Bangladesh-India Relations" vividly described the implication of Teesta water sharing

⁸⁹⁹ The Daily Ittefaq, Bangladesh, 25th June, 2000

between India and Bangladesh. It appears that Imtiaz Ahmed has rightly pointed out that ever since the Awami League regime in Bangladesh came to power in 2009, it signed a 50 Clauses historic communiqué with India. Following this, the Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina visited New Delhi in January 2010 and she hoped an amicable settlement of the Teesta dispute which will strengthen Indo-Bangladesh bilateral relations. But, unfortunately, her hope marred. Following the visit of India's Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh to Dhaka in September 2011, particularly when the water sharing agreement could not be signed and it was cancelled at the very last moment.⁹⁰⁰ It may be the Chief Minister of West Bengal Mamata Banerjee had good reasons to stall the agreement over Teesta with Bangladesh. The stand point taken by Chief Minister of West Bengal Mamata Banerjee may be right because the paucity of water may hamper the agricultural production of entire North Bengal. Moreover, Chief Minister of West Bengal wanted a guarantee from New Delhi as to how much water Sikkim where the Teesta originated would be willing to share with West Bengal. But it is the centre-state conflict or federal government's compulsion to make a consensus regarding international issues with other provincial states. According to international water treaty Bangladesh has the rights to get 50:50 ratio basis Teesta water. Bangladesh is still suffering for the lack of Teesta water and its agricultural production deteriorate. As a result, it hampered Indo-Bangladesh bilateral relations.⁹⁰¹

What will be the future perspectives of 'Indo-Bangladesh Ganges water treaty?' it has been answered in one of my chapters of this thesis paper. India got freedom in 1947. Its leaders decided to solve the water dispute in order to implement various programmes like hydroelectricity generation, industrial uses, navigation, waterway transportation, agriculture and irrigation, ground water decline, river linking project, flood control and riverbank erosion, increase water salinity etc. as Ganga was seen as a national river and hence the problem became a national problem. In order to overcome water scarcity the then Indian government decided in 1951 to construct a barrage at Farakka of Murshidabad district in West Bengal to control the flow of Ganges river. The Barrage was built to divert the Ganges River water into the Hoogly River during the dry season, from January to June, to flush out the accumulating silt and to increase navigability of Hoogly river for Kolkata port. Construction of Farakka dam actually began in 1964. The project was designed to convey a maximum of 40,000 Cusecs from the flow of Ganges into the Bhagirathi River which later

⁹⁰⁰ Ibid,

⁹⁰¹ This comment was given during my interview with Taslima Aktar, Associate Professor, University Of Chittagong, Chittagong, Bangladesh.

becomes the Hoogly river and consisted of a 2,245 meters long barrage across the main channel of the Ganges and a feeder canal 38 K.M long, 150 meters wide, and 6 meters deep.⁹⁰² When India started the project, Pakistan vehemently objected. Hence, the issue turned into a conflict which soured the relations between the two antagonistic neighbouring countries. Eventually the construction delayed. In my research I explained the Ganges Water dispute between India and Pakistan into the phases like (phase-I): 1950-1971, (phase-II): 1971-1996: creation of Bangladesh to the signing the Ganges water treaty, change riparian organization and riparian structure, (phase-III): the latest position.

Phase-I:(1950-1971) the dispute over Ganga river in phase-I period can be described as fruitless effort because India could not be able to build either Farakka barrage or make any amicable settlement with Pakistan over the dispute. Hence, the period is marked by a general state of hostility between India and Pakistan.

Phase-II: (1971-1996): During the period Ganges water dispute took a new dimension. Indo-Pak war ended in 1965, the Bangladesh was made in 1971 which changed the riparian organization at different point of time.

Ganga water dispute during 1971-1976

The emergence of Bangladesh as an independent nation state in 1971 created a new dimension of bilateral relationship in the South Asian region. The foremost of this was the changing scenario of riparian structure and riparian organization of Ganga-Brahmaputra river basin. Following this, the government of India and Bangladesh tried to look towards this issue in the new perspective of bilateral relations. Since India helped in the creation of Bangladesh by supplying military and humanitarian assistance, the Bangladesh Government under the leadership of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, tried to solve this problem with Indian Government, led by former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi. The two charismatic leaders also formulated a comprehensive plan and both of them agreed to form a joint river commission (JRC) on a permanent basis in 1972. The members of this joint river commission were taken from both the countries. The commission made a plan to make a comprehensive survey over the Ganges water resources and how the water could be distributed between the two countries with an eye to the interest of both the countries. In 1974, at the ministerial level meeting with Bangladesh, India agreed to a mutually accepted solution before the Farakka Barrage began

⁹⁰² Surya P.Subedi, "Hydro-Diplomacy in South Asia: The Conclusion of Mahakali and Ganges River Treaties", *The American Journal of International Law*, Vol-93, No-4, October-1999, p-958.

operation. They agreed to solve this problem on the basis of joint declaration, the content of the declaration are as follows-

1. There was a need to increase the volume of Ganga water during the minimum flow period to meet the full need of both Bangladesh and India.

2. The augmentation of water would be done through optimum utilization of water resources available to both the countries

Now, the two sides decided to empower the river commission constituted by India and Bangladesh to find out a solution regarding the augmentation of water. Bangladesh made a proposal to the effect that augmentation would be done by storage facilities in the upper Ganga river basin. The reservoir in India and Nepal would store monsoon water to be released during the dry season and it would significantly augment the flow but this proposal of Bangladesh was rejected by India.⁹⁰³ On the other hand, India proposed an alternative proposal of augmentation of Ganga water flow by constructing Brahmaputra-Ganga link canal to divert the water from Brahmaputra to Ganga (Padma-Meghna river basin in Bangladesh). But, this suggestion was unacceptable to Bangladesh on the ground that the link canal excavation will cause loss of fertile land and consequent displacement of population in Bangladesh.⁹⁰⁴

Hence, the phase of settlement of Ganga water dispute was however stalled. By the 1974 when the Farakka barrage was in a state of near completion, the issue began to surface in Bangladesh domestic politics. The opponent of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the Prime Minister of Bangladesh, accused him of surrendering in the country's national interest to India as a pay off for India's support to him and his ruling party Awami League. Anti-Indian sentiments were on the rise and Farakka barrage issue served as catalyst.

Under this circumstances, on 18th April, 1975 an interim agreement for 41 days, for the period 21st April to 31st May, was signed between the two countries in Dhaka. In this agreement the two countries agreed to cover the flow of Ganga during the lean period from 21st April to May in which the major portion of water was given to Bangladesh. The two countries decided to run the feeder canal and it was also decided India would withdraw its

⁹⁰³ Asim Mukhopadhyay, "River of Contention", *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol-15, No-17, April-26, 1980, pp-767.

⁹⁰⁴ Ramaswamy R Iyre, "The Fallacy of Augmentation: Demands on Ganga Waters.", *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol-34, No-33, August-14-20, 1999, p-2296.

share in the following manner. India would be allowed to divert 11,000 Cusecs of flow into the feeder canal in April and 16,000 Cusecs in May 1975.⁹⁰⁵

But the dispute remained. The issue came up when the government of Bangladesh was changed after the bloody assassination of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman on 15th August, 1975 and the relations with India started to deteriorate. The Farakka Barrage issue was highly publicized by the then military Government of Bangladesh through the Government controlled media. In May, 1976, Bangladesh raised the Farakka barrage issue at the Istanbul Islamic foreign ministers' conference. In its joint communiqué it expressed deep concern over the problem of equitable distribution of international river Ganga. It also highlighted that since India was not giving river water as required by Bangladesh, its economy began to fall, food scarcity was very high and the process of National construction in Bangladesh was in jeopardy. Bangladesh also raised this issue at the Non Allied Movement (NAM) summit at Colombo in August, 1976. But, it did not yield any result. Later on, Bangladesh decided to raise this issue in the United Nation Organization (UNO) at its 31st General Assembly Session with the help of some other countries like Sri Lanka, Syria, Egypt, Algeria, etc. After that India and Bangladesh representatives agreed to meet together to sort out the problem and accordingly reported it to the UNO General Assembly session in 1977.

Attempts of solutions from 1977-1988

During this period both India and Bangladesh agreed to test a trial run of Farakka Barrage for 41 days under temporary basis but the bloody assassination of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman on 15th August, 1975 created a lot of problem. After the assassination, India was reluctant to negotiate this issue with Bangladesh military regime led by General Zia-ur Rahman. In 1977 the Janata Party under the leadership of Morarji Desai came to power in India. Then Indian stand towards Bangladesh regarding the Farakka Barrage became cordial. Consequently, a five year agreement with Bangladesh was signed between the then agricultural and irrigation minister of India Mr. Surjit Singh Barnala and Rear Admiral Musharraf Hussain Khan, Chief of Naval Staff and Member, President's Council of Advisors in charge of the ministry of communications, Flood Control, Water Resources and Power of Bangladesh.

The Ganges Water treaty was under stress and strain from both the countries. Mrs. Indira Gandhi, on returning to power in January, 1980, by and large, brought back the Indo-

⁹⁰⁵ Surya P. Subedi, op.cit, p-958.

Bangladesh Ganges water treaty to an antagonistic level because anti-Indian propaganda was then at the peak in Bangladesh by the Government controlled media. Consequently, she refused to continue the 1977 Farakka pact and excluded Nepal from participating any measure to augment Ganga water treaty in longest time frame.

In Bangladesh, a crisis situation was seen when General Ziaur Rahman was assassinated in Chittagong in 1981. The most anti-Indian chauvinistic leader Ziaur Rahman compelled Mrs. Indira Gandhi to go away from Indian traditional doctrine of bilateralism and as a result the issue of Farakka became complicated. However, From the Indian side, various commentators on India's stand on bilateralism argued that to refrain from superpower intervention in this matter, this regional issue may be negotiated by means of its inclusion in the SAARC.

The 1977 agreement regarding distribution of water between India and Bangladesh did not last long. After the completion of five year it expired in November 1982. As a result, both the countries felt it necessary to make a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) regarding Ganges water distribution and the MOU was signed on 7th October, 1982 by foreign minister of Bangladesh and India, A.R.S Doha and P.V. Narashima Roy respectively for two years during President Hussain Mohammad Ershad's visit to India. But after that, three MOUs were signed in 1983, 1984 and 1985 respectively. The 1985 MOU was valid for three years. The MOU did not mention the clause relating to the sharing of water and as visualized in 1977 agreement regarding the feasibility of distribution of water was however followed. Now, the Bangladesh Government made a new proposal that India should construct a storage dam in the Indo-Nepal border region while India wanted that a canal be constructed across Bangladesh linking the Brahmaputra river basin into Ganges, but, unfortunately, the two proposals did not materialize.

The Government of India then thought it worthwhile to make temporary agreement. With this end in mind the then Prime Minister, Rajiv Gandhi, and the President Hussain Mohammad Ershad of Bangladesh met in 1986, but, their proposals were rejected by Nepal who did not support the two government's scheme for building a storage reservoir in Nepal. The MOU of 1985 accordingly lapsed and there was no agreement or MoU between the two countries for several years on many account particularly for political unrest.

It reveals from the study of the paper on "Indo Bangladesh Treaty on Farakka Barage and International Law Application" that the 1977 agreement where 34000-55000 cusec of

water, tended to be a generous distribution of water to Bangladesh did not materialize for a long time since Bangladesh faced a havoc flood in 1987-1988 leading to the concerned Governments shifted their previous stand from water sharing to flood control. A task force was created as a result of the summit between the two heads of states and they were able to provide short term measure. It appears from this that, no serious effort was made to enter into a permanent settlement for distribution of water between the two countries.⁹⁰⁶

The Awami League party under the leadership of Sheikh Hasina Wajed came to power in Bangladesh on 23rd June 1996. As a result, a major shift in Indo-Bangladesh relations was seen. When Sheikh Hasina Wajed assumed power then a renewed demand for water raised in Bangladesh. It stated that Bangladesh government should revert back to the 1977 agreement but the problem arose which came from West Bengal Government's stand which demanded 40000 cusec water from Farakka Barage to maintain navigability of Calcutta port.⁹⁰⁷ A series of talks was held in Dhaka and New Delhi but the dispute regarding the quantum of water to be released to Bangladesh and India remained unsolved. In this way, the dispute went till September 1996 and the 'political will' to solve the problem was lacking from both the countries.

Under the Government of Sheikh Hasina Wajed the bilateral relations of the two countries turn into a new phase. As a sequel to this development, the sharing of Ganga water was taken favourably by both the countries and the terms of the treaty were beneficial to both of them. As a result, both the countries got water for a long time which helped Bangladesh in making water resources planning and management for the country's overall development. Water sharing provision has been delinked from augmentation. Hence, Bangladesh got enough water from Farakka and the sharing of water was on the proportion of 50:50 instead of 62.7:37.3 as provided in 1977 agreement.⁹⁰⁸ In the treaty it was mentioned that 35000 cusec of water was to be diverted to Farakka resulting in protecting of Calcutta port which was not possible in 1977 agreement. India gained much in this 1996 Ganges water treaty because it could undertake project for upstream utilization but India should not unilaterally reduce the total flows regarding Farakka. During her tenure the important agreements of the '30-year

⁹⁰⁶ Shaista Tabassum, "Indo Bangladesh Treaty on Farakka Barage and International Law Application" Pakistan Horizon, Vol 56, No 3, July 2003, pp 55-56.

⁹⁰⁷ Kazi Montu, "Farakka Dispute", Economic and Political weekly, Vol-15, No-27, July-5, 1980, p-1132.

⁹⁰⁸ Rakesh Tiwari, op.cit, p-1690.

Water Sharing Agreement of the Ganges' in December 1996 ⁹⁰⁹brought New Delhi and Dhaka closer to each other. The agreement offered a new formula for the sharing of Ganges waters on equitable basis was signed on 12th December, 1996 with the august presence of Sheikh Hasina and H.D Deve Gowda in New Delhi.⁹¹⁰

Another significant irritant emerged with illegal migrations. How far the present political regime in India has involved with the issues of illegal immigration with Bangladesh? Is one of my research question. It can be said that in the contexts of Indo-Bangladesh bilateral relations migration is undoubtedly an important issue. Migration problem came up after 1971, 25th March when East Pakistan got freedom and Bangladesh was created. This creation of new nation state in South Asia made a major impact on the minority community who were living in the territory of East Pakistan for long. But, at the onset of Bangladesh and the initial stage of the administration of Bangladesh run by founding father Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, made a tremendous impact on the society. In Bangladesh 80% of the people are Muslims and remaining 20% are Hindus, Christian, Buddhists and Tribals. When India got freedom in 1947, Indian Union and Pakistan was set up on the basis of an agreement that Hindus in Pakistan would live as minority and the government would protect their rights. Similarly in Punjab the Hindu majority Punjabi areas would be included in India having the minorities Punjabis who remained in Pakistan would be protected by the Pakistan government and their rights would be safeguarded.

But the irony of the fact is that at the creation of Pakistan on 14th August, 1947, the Pakistan Government did not protect the rights of minorities Hindus and Sikhs. The liberty of minority people were encroached and accordingly they were tortured, their property made enemy property. As a result, Hindu began to migrate in the neighbouring district of Khulna, Jessore and Assam, Tripura, Meghalaya etc. and even the tribes of Chakma who lived in Chittagong hill areas of East Pakistan (Bangladesh), were subjected to torture and they were compelled to leave East Pakistan (Bangladesh).

The situation was worse at the creation of Bangladesh in 1971. Officially, all migrants to India from 1951 onwards are illegal but migration has continued during 1951-1971 period it were the Bengali Hindus who dominated the migrating people. Besides, a large number of

⁹⁰⁹ Bindral, S.S. 'Farakka Barrage Agreement: A Review in Dirender Grover (ed.) **Encyclopedia of SAARC Nations**, Vol.4, No.2, New Delhi, Deep and Deep Publications , pp.580-596.

⁹¹⁰ Ibid

Muslim who had fled Assam in the wake of communal riots in February-March 1950 came back to Assam, but among them very few Hindus went back to East Pakistan.

The genocide in Bangladesh and ruthless and rampant killings of Hindu particularly at the heart of Dhaka city which made a horror to international media giving coverage that Hindus were brutally and mercilessly killed in the street of Dhaka as well as the many rural areas of Bangladesh districts.

Following this genocide by Pakistan army in East Pakistan in 1971, hordes of refugees (10 millions) came to India particularly in Assam, West Bengal and Tripura. It was expected that these refugees would go back to Bangladesh after the liberation war. In fact, after liberation, most of these refugees went back to their homeland Bangladesh but one million illegal refugees mostly Hindus stayed back in Assam and some parts of West Bengal.⁹¹¹

In fact, migrant is a complex process which is responsible for many factors. Initially, migrants when enter in a particular country the original inhabitants feel irritant and this adversely affect the lives of the original people in that country. If this trend of migration continues unabated, a problem arise which creates discontent of the people of the country's concern. Many authors of migrations argue that "migrants are motivated by the 'push' and 'pull' factors of possible origin, destination areas and are affected to go—other things being equal—to areas where previous streams have proceeded where in network of their predecessors make the migration process easier. According to one definition "migration is a permanent change in place of residence by crossing of specified administrative or political boundaries. The person who fulfills these two criteria is regarded as a migrant." But refugees are not immigrants. The UN Convention on Refugees, 1951, defines refugee "as a person who owing to well founded fear is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or owing to such fear is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country." According to Myron Wiener migrant are the unwanted people who are not liked by the host community. On the other hand refugees are the people who have been rejected by their own government or the people or who have fled due to oppression by brutal regimes. However, in the present study the term migrant has been used in a manner as to include both senses. Another point to be remembered is that migrants do not necessarily move long distances in one go. Their movement is often incremental -they initially move to areas close to themselves which are

⁹¹¹ Hazarika, Sanjoy, 'Illegal Migration from Bangladesh: Problem and long term perspective', **Dialogue**, Vol.3, No.3,p.25-26.

compatible geographically and culturally. However, over a period of time this gradual outflow can cross International Borders.

The major problems of migrations which can be mentioned here is India–Pakistan refugees flow. Data shows that in 1947-1948 the flow of refugees involving 15 lakhs Hindus and Muslims, exodus of Burmese Indians is about 1 lakh during the period of 1954-1965, exodus of Srilankan Indians and Tamils about 1 lakh from 1954 and still continuing.

These havoc influx of migrations into Indian Territory created a major socio-economic and cultural problem in India. Since partition migration from Pakistan to India went on unabated. This trend of migration continued when Bangladesh was created. Now, the adjoining states of India like West Bengal, Tripura, and Assam, were affected as a result of continues illegal migration from Bangladesh since 1971. The migrated people came in these states and began to live without any valid documents.

In response to a writ petition filed by the All India Forum of Civil Liberty against the Government of India and the others, the state first declared that not less than 1.02 million Bangladeshi had overstayed their official visas between 1972-1998. In fact, a recent population register programme by the Central Government estimated that 40 lakhs people of Assam are illegal migrants. These has created a furore in the political parties who demanded cancellation of their population register which was totally politically motivated but the fact is that Rajiv Gandhi-Profullo Mahanto's Assam Accord in 1985 made which stated that the list of illegal migration either Bangladesh or other would be enlisted and they would be deported accordingly. But this stand of the then government was not seriously taken by Manmohan Sing led UPA Government and the matter remained in the official file only. The BJP Government cited this example again and again and they had hinted that in every state illegal migration would be listed and they would be deported. The political motives of migration, if implemented, may led to disastrous consequences to the people in the state. Now, the moot question of migration may be divided into the following categories.

Socio-economic factor: in fact, the economy of the north eastern region of India rooted in products like tea, petroleum and forest products. Agriculture is the predominant means of livelihood for bulk of the population. Massive illegal migration from Bangladesh turns into a reduced share of an already limited cake. Initially, migrants settle in the riverine areas and acquire land from locals. As a result, for limited land this occasionally causes alienation of tribals from their ancestral tribal land leading to ethnic conflict.

Political factor: the political fallout of a relentless influx is even more far reaching. General Shanker Roychoudhury, M.P, told in the Rajya Sabha in April 2000 that “on account of illegal migration, Bangladesh’s demographic border intruded upon India’s political border over a 10-20 km deep area.” A study has shown that out of the 292 Assembly Constituencies in west Bengal Bangladesh immigrants can determine the outcome of polls in as many as 52 constituencies for political interest. Besides in other 100 Assembly Constituencies they can influence the poll outcome.

Strategic implications of massive influx into the North Eastern Region had been well summed by Lt. Gen. S.K.Sinha, the then Governor of Assam, in his report to the president in 1998. According to him “demographic invasion of Assam may result in loss of geo-strategically vital districts of lower Assam. It will be only a matter of time when a demand for their merger with Bangladesh may be made... International Islamic fundamentalism may provide the driving force.” Those who think this possibility far-fetched may recall the words of a ‘pro-India’ leader like Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in his book “Eastern Pakistan; Its population and Economics.” According to Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, “Because East Pakistan must have sufficient land for its expansion... it must include Assam to be financially and economically strong.”⁹¹² He has pointed out that “the long cherished design of greater East Pakistan making inroads into the strategic land link of Assam with the rest of the country, can lead to severing the entire land mass of the North East, with all its rich resources, from the rest of the country. The ‘chicken-neck’ area (Narrow Siliguri Corridor) is strategically very important from military and strategic point of view.” The rampant growth of alien Muslim population and the consequent growth of hundreds of Madrasa along the border districts of Assam and West Bengal amount to demographic borders of Bangladesh intruding upon the political border of India by 50-20 km. This belt travels along the borders of West Bengal, covers most of the ‘chicken neck’ area, connects itself with Nepal and travels along Assam, all the way upto Cachhar area. In case of an armed conflict with either Bangladesh or China, having such a population with suspect loyalties along the borders would be a major cause for concern for India.

In the contexts of Indo-Bangladesh bilateral relations illegal migration is undoubtedly an important issue. The volatile nature of Bangladesh politics and the conflicts between Bangladesh National Party (B.N.P) and Awami League (A.L) over this issue has created a

⁹¹² Cited in the report of Assam Governor, S.K. Sinha to the President in 1998.

problem in Bangladesh which could not be easily overcome. It is a fact that the radical influence on Bangladeshi society increased during the Bangladesh National Party (B.N.P) led four party coalition Government. The migrants, who infiltrated at that time was also become a convenient root for Pakistani as well as Bangladeshi terrorists to enter into India. In fact, Bangladeshi had become a hub for ISI activities but sheikh Hasina Government has been trying to reverse this trends. Her government is acting against Islamist groups and against North Eastern insurgent group but India is afraid of these insurgencies and terrorists' group in Bangladesh and in the disguise of migration they may enter into the bordering state of India particularly Assam, Manipur, Tripura and West Bengal. This possibility of migration induced problem may vitiate the Indo-Bangladesh bilateral relations. Recently, Assam illegal migration problem is a much debated political issue regarding the National Population Register.

The preparation of National Register for detection of illegal migrants in Assam has evoked furore among the political parties of Indian states particularly West Bengal, Tripura and Assam. The Bharatiya Janata Party (B.J.P) has stated that nearly two crore illegal people coming from Bangladesh has been living in West Bengal. It seems to be, a political vendetta of the central government against the regional government. But the fact is that the illegal migration has not been high on the agenda of the government of India. In fact, migration happens due to economic reason and the government's apathy to protect the minority communities and safeguard their rights.

No comprehensive policy has yet not been implemented to overcome the illegal migration problems, The Government policy was either half hearted or guided by political motives of the ruling elite of both India and Bangladesh. The result of National register commission taken by Assam Government is undoubtedly a right decision but what is necessary to make the list final has been to exclude the genuine people from the list who are legal inhabitants of the state. Strong vigilance in both India and Bangladesh, Tripura, West Bengal and Assam side must be strengthened to restrict illegal migrations. The cut of date 24th March 1971 should not be changed under any circumstance.

A comprehensive plan is to be formulated by the state government in collaboration with central government to fulfill the demands of ethnic communities living in Assam, Tripura and West Bengal from time immemorial. Some experts argue that preparation of population register in order to identify the illegal migrants are no doubt a necessity but more

important is to solve the problems of Assam, Tripura and West Bengal who are constantly crisis ridden for ethnic strife.

What is the impact of the ongoing process of islamisation of Bangladesh on her bilateral relations with India? Is one of my research questions. This research work is an attempt to find answers. Following the transfer of power to the elected representatives of Pakistan on 14th August, 1947, based on Mahammad Ali Jinnah's 'Two Nation-Theory' within the framework of the "India Independence Act of 1947, there was an internal political conflict between East and West Pakistan over the issue of national language, Urdu or Bengali, and the politico-socio-economic-cultural dominance of West Pakistan toward the East." The Pakistani Government's perilous attempt to impose Urdu as the only national language of the country was first opposed and later resisted during the bloody language movement of the Bangalees in 1952 in East Pakistan, which sparked the beginning of a linguistic nationalist movement. During the formative phase of Pakistan, the ruling elites' attempt to introduce Arabic script and Persian words into the Bengali language was a reflection of West Pakistani's linguistic and cultural hegemony towards the East. Besides, the language dispute West Pakistan ruling elites continued to exploit the Bangalees economically. The then capital, Karachi and Lahore were all located in the west while the majority of the population lived in East Pakistan. The 'One-Unit' scheme was launched by the federal government of Pakistan to merge the four provinces namely West Punjab, Baluchistan, Sindh, and the North West Frontier into one homogenous unit as a counterbalance against the numerical domination of the ethnic Bangalees in East Bengal. The 'One-Unit' policy was announced by the Prime Minister Choudhry Muhammad Ali on 22nd November 1954 and was implemented in 1955. However, the Bangalees, who made up the majority of Pakistan's population, were denied their democratic rights to lead the country in 1970 National election. The grave magnitude of the nationalist movement was ultimately brought about by all of these political exploitation and economic deprivation. As a result, Bengali Nationalism came out in the 1971 Liberation War rejecting the artificial, impractical, and attributed land demarcation that was carried out by Sir Cyril Redcliffe in 1947. This was followed by 24 years of misrule, oppression, discrimination, authoritarianism, and the militarization of democratic institutions which foster anti-west Pakistani feelings that eventually led to the triumph of Bengali nationalism over Islamic nationalism. The Eastern Part of Pakistan, which is now Bangladesh, became an independent, sovereign nation state on 26th March, 1971, when India joined as a key ally on 3rd December, 1971. India defeated

Pakistan in a very short time with the military assistance of the 'Indo-Soviet Treaty of Friendship and Co-Operation.' Bangladesh's formation as an infant nation state in South Asia was one of a kind and distinct from that of other South Asian countries. The remaining South Asian countries' nationalist movements were largely based on civil disobedience, non-violence, and negotiated settlements, whereas Bangladesh's nationalist movement ultimately evolved into an armed struggle for independence against 24 years of misrule, oppression, discrimination, authoritarianism, and the militarization of democratic institutions. This led to the birth of a separate nation state based on Bengali Nationalism. Since then there was a gradual process of Islamization by the religious fundamentalists namely Jammāt-e-Islami and its killer armies like Razakars, Al Shams, Al Badr who had collaborated with Pakistani army to butcher the Bengali freedom fighters with a view to prevent the secession of East Pakistan from the West Pakistan in 1971. At the outset, the introduction of socialist, liberal, secular and parliamentary form of Government in Bangladesh, led by country's founding father Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, made the Indo-Bangladesh relations healthy, robust and amicable. He believes religion should be a matter of personal choice. Article-III of 1972 constitution clearly stated the prohibition of the abuse of religion for political purpose. In 1974, to make his concept of secularism acceptable to all he initiated Qudrat-i-Khuda to look into the defect of the Madrasa system. Mujib ordered cancellation of the citizenship rights of Jammāt's top leaders and head Professor Golam Azam who took shelter in Pakistan after liberation war. After visiting several countries like Pakistan, Saudi Arabia finally they went to London and start re-building Jammāt through spreading religious teaching to establish a theocratic state following the rules of Shariah through the youths and its student wing Islami Chhatra Sibir in Bangladesh. After the assassination of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in 1975 Professor Golam Azam was allowed to return to Dhaka in General Zia-ur Rahman's Presidentship. General Hussain Muhammad Ershad followed Zia's religious identity in domestic policy, converting the country into an Islamic state through constitutional amendments. During his tenure anti-liberation, anti-secular, anti-progressive forces like Jammāt, and other fundamentalist organizations became the centre of fierce controversy. Jammāt top leader Moulana Delwar Hossein Sayeedi was invited in 1988 December to address a gathering the Islamic teaching of Quran in Sylhet. The Jammāt in various gatherings expressed in clear terms that its mission was to run Bangladesh strictly in accordance with the Islamic Law. Ershad made 'Islam' the state religion by amending the Bangladesh constitution. In 1988, for this purpose article 2A was added to the 8th amendment in the constitution. The government efforts to Islamize education and culture. He stressed the importance of

maintaining close ties with China, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, and other Muslim countries. During the second military regime, Indian policy remained consistent, and Bangladesh-India relations remained cold most of the time under Hussain Muhammad Ershad's regime. On 20th March, 1991, Khaleda Zia was sworn in for her first term as a Prime Minister with the support of Jamat-e-Islami.⁹¹³ With the 5th general election in the early 1990s, a new era of the second parliamentary democratic journey began after 16 years of the autocratic military regime (1975-1991). Former President Hussain Muhammad Ershad was imprisoned on corruption charges during Begum Khaleda Zia's first term in office. The newly elected Government approved more changes to the constitution, by re-established a parliamentary system and returning governing power to the office of the Prime Minister, as in Bangladesh's original 1972 constitution. Throughout the entirety of the first post-military government, the relationship between Bangladesh and India remained essentially frozen, despite the fact that a Government elected by the people was in charge of state power in Bangladesh. This was primarily due to the fact that the ruling BNP as a political party is center-right, anti-Indian, pro-Pakistan and largely supported by the country's business community. The question of "Why BNP had undertaken the policy of anti-Indian stance and a pro-Pakistan stance even after a decade of the fall of General Ziaur Rahman's Government?" is raised by the new policy maker of the BNP-led coalition Government (the Four Party Alliance-BNP, Jamaat-I-Islami, Bangladesh Jatio Party, Islami Oikya Jote) in the early 1990s. The answer is this coalition-Government was led by the BNP and consisted as the main force in a communal-based alliance, the BNP tried to get the attention and support of Muslims by taking an anti-India stance. This could have been done for religious vote bank politics in domestic level. In addition, Jamat-e-Islami was one of their alliance's strongest partners, traditionally engaging in politics by escalating religious hostility toward the majority Hindus in India and the minority Hindus in Bangladesh. In addition, General Zia-ur Rahman had allowed Jamat-e-Islami and its killer armies like Al-Badr, Al Shams, Razakars, which Sheikh Mujibur Rahman had banned due to its cruel atrocities and close association with Pakistani Bahini who killed thousands of lives during the 1971 Liberation War, to re-appear as a political party in Bangladesh mainstream politics. It maintained a strong sense of community and a long-standing anti-Indian stance regarding religion. In order to pacify Jamat-e-Islami's religious and political agenda, Begum Khaleda Zia chose to strengthen her

⁹¹³Md Habibullah and Emran Hossain, 'Bangladesh-India Diplomatic Relations (1975-1996): Transitions, Bilateral Disputes and Legacies' **Global Journal of Human Social Science**: Volume XX, Issue XIV, 2020, ISSN: 2249-460x & Print ISSN: 0975-587X .

cordial relations with Pakistan shortly after the Government was established rather than pursue a relations with India, a trusted neighbour since its inception. Besides when Awami League and secular leftist forces formed the “Ekattorer Ghatak Dalal Nirmul Committee” to punish Professor Golam Azam, one of the significant war criminals of 1971, instead of punishing Jammāt top leader Azam, the BNP led coalition Government did all it could to suppress the activities of the committee by attacking the freedom fighters, secular bloggers and charging them with treason. During the first term of Begum Khaleda Zia’s Government in Bangladesh (1991-1996), Inter Service Intelligence (ISI) was very active. The United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA), the All Tripura Tiger Force (ATTF), the National Liberation Front of Tripura (NLFT), and the National Democratic Front of Bodoland (NDFB) are among the rebel groups that Northeast India’s ISI agents and Jamāt-e-Islami are said to have supported during the BNP’s rule. In addition, it was alleged that the spy agency funded the covert operations of Bangladeshi separatist groups by patronizing and providing them with logistical support, weapons, training, and money laundering in order to destabilize Northeast India from mainland India.⁹¹⁴ Due to its communal intolerance and post-election violence against Hindu minorities, then Indian Prime Minister P.V. Narosingha Roy (1993-1996) was also reluctant to establish friendly relations with the BNP-led coalition government in Bangladesh. Approximately 3,000 temples were destroyed, religious torture was intolerable, numerous Hindus were forced to flee the country, and numerous Hindu women were raped during the BNP-led coalition government in Bangladesh. Following the destruction of the ‘Babri Mosque’ in December 1992, in India (Uttar Pradesh), the Khaleda Zia Government usurped Hindu properties from 1992- 1996. Taslima Nasrin, a doctor by profession and world famous literary personality depicted the plight condition of the Hindu families during that time through her book ‘Lajja.’ Under the tremendous pressure of Jamāt-e-Islami and its killer armies Al Badr, Al Shams, Razakars and many anti-liberation, anti-progressive, anti-secular forces BNP Government convicted Taslima Nasrin of blasphemy and humiliation Islami sentiments or Quranic Injunctions and declared her as the enemy of Islam. Even Jamāt with several fundamentalists Islamic organizations declared fatwa against Taslima Nasrin. During her rule a section of Bangladeshi people had shown sympathy for Jamāt -e-Islami who preferred to call themselves Mussalmans than Bangalees. These support base had been harbingered by Jamāt itself for the sake of its survival in mainstream politics. These rural, ignorant, illiterate, religious minded people

⁹¹⁴<http://www.theindependentbd.com/printversion/details/155567>, accessed on 20.07.2022.

were rigorously brainwashed by the agents of Jammāt. These people were indoctrinated to believe that Jammāt were the true devotees of Allah. Jammāt received funds from several Muslims countries like Kuwait, UAE, Baharin, Paistan, Soudi Arabia, Libiya etc. and several International Muslims N.G.O like the Kuwait based Revival of Islamis Heritage, UAE based Al Fuzaria, Khairul Ansar-Al-Khairia, Soudi Arabia based Al Harmaine Islamis Institute provided generous amount of funding to Jammāt with a view to establish an Islamic common market like European Union.⁹¹⁵ Jammāt and its student's wings Islami Chhatra Shibir set up Madrasahs with these foreign funds and brainwashed the yough minds with its Islamis teacheings to convert Bangladesh into a second Afganistan to establish a theocratic state which followed the Shariah system of law. They had spread their tentacles deep inside Bangladeshi's countryside by setting up Madrashas and Sharias courts. They had virtually set up a parallel administration run by the Maulovis of the mosque in the countryside.⁹¹⁶

As far as the question under what circumstances both the countries are engaged for solving the problem of terrorism? is concerned, it has been answered here. The democratic transition in 1991 was continued after a caretaker Government came into office on 15th July, 2001 headed by Justice Latifur Rahman. The 'Four Party Coalition Government' led by Begum Khaleda Zia, took over power at a time of great domestic and global uncertainty. For the first time in independent Bangladesh the Jamaat -e-Islami had joined the cabinet and began a new chapter in the politics of the Jamaat in Bangladesh. Its journey at this phase has been very difficult as it had to perform an extremely delicate balancing act in the face of changing and unforeseen critical and turbulent domestic and global environment following the 9/11 terrorist attack on American World Trade Centre (W.T.C) by Al Qaeda leader Osama Bin Laden. The event dramatically changed the US attitude towards the Islamists Terrorists, particularly the radical ones with the remotest link with the Taliban Government or the Al Qaeda network. It was unfortunate that Begum Khaleda Zia's coalition Government came to power at a wrong time with wrong partners. The Awami League, pro-Awami League intellectuals and media in particular, worked zealously to prove that with the BNP-led four party coalition government in power with Jamaat and Islami Oikyo Jote as its partners, Bangladesh was about to become a Taliban-infested hot-bed of Islamic militancy. They also portrayed the coalition government as a 'protector and promoter of the Taliban' and all sorts of Islamic radicals which did not tolerate the religious minority and wanted its members to

⁹¹⁵ Shahriar Kabir, "Juddhaporadhider Bichar Ebong Jammāt Er Aparajñiti. Ananya publication, Dhaka, 2008

⁹¹⁶ Borhan-Ud-din-Khan, "Dharma, Rastra, Rajñiti" Ananya publication, Dhaka, 2005

leave Bangladesh for Jihad against USA and the West. Sheikh Hasina led that campaign from the front at home and abroad. She was in her speech in a conference on “Democracy, Human Rights and Security Threats,” held in Brussels on 29th October, 2002, referring to the reports in the ‘Far Eastern Economic Review’ (FEER) and ‘TIME’ magazine, claimed that the four party alliance snatched away victory in the 8th unicameral parliamentary (Jatiyo Sansad) election through conspiracy and riggings. Since taking power on 10th October, 2001, the four party coalition government had made Bangladesh through its direct and indirect support to the militant Islamists a haven for the Islamist fundamentalists and terrorist groups. All these reports reiterated charges made by others and blamed the four party coalition government, particularly the Jamaat as a militant Islamic terrorist party. The same theme was further harped on by Mr. Bertil Linter, the author of the ‘Far Eastern Economic Review’ (FEER) report, in a serialized article in ‘The Bangladesh Observer,’ a Dhaka based English Daily Newspaper send numerous reports in the domestic press. Various notorious activities of Jammatt were highlighted by the Awami League abroad which to a certain extent, damaged the reputation of Bangladesh as a moderate Muslim Democratic country. These campaigns forced India’s Hindu Nationalist BJP led NDA Government’s Prime Minister Late Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee to send his security adviser, Mr. Brojesh Mishra, to Bangladesh to convey India’s concern over these reports and happenings in Bangladesh in this regard. The Convenors of Bangladesh Caucus in the US Congress, Mr. Benjamin Gilman and Mr. Joseph Crowley also visited Bangladesh to see for themselves the validity of the campaigns. It had made ethical and ideological compromise in the domestic sector as a compulsion of ‘power politics’ as it had to swallow various acts of its dislikes done by its major alliance partner, the BNP. The new Government had started its journey with the allegation of repression of the minority Hindus following the elections. The Government was blamed for its apparent inability and reluctance to address the issue quickly that in some areas there were attacks against the Hindu minority population by local criminals. In a few cases, vengeance seekers tried to take revenge against those minorities who were considered ‘too closely’ associated with the Awami League from the birth of Bangladesh.⁹¹⁷ In order to save the helpless refugees to return to their homes, active Indian political intervention became inevitable. Despite the need to seek and maintain friendly ties with the Khaleda Zia government, it would be difficult for India to avoid discussing the status of minorities in Bangladesh, especially when such the intolerable situation leads to refugee influx into the bordering Indian states. On 4th December,

⁹¹⁷ Kabir, Bhuian md.monoar., *op.cit.*, pp.186-188.

the Union Home Minister told the Lok Sabha that “about 1000 people of minority community have crossed over into India, because of religious persecution.”⁹¹⁸

Attacks against minorities particularly against Hindus, Buddhists and ethnic minorities such as the Chakmas, Ahmediyya became the part of Bangladeshi Political culture during the regime of Khaleda Zia’s four party coalition Government. Showing the inactiveness of Khaleda Zia’s coalition government, they retaliated with violence through formation of a military force called ‘shanty Bahini’ which waged a war not only against the state but against the Bangalee settlers. The organized and persistence violence against religious minorities was a comparatively new phenomenon since the general elections of 2001. The Human Rights Watch (HRW) Report described these attacks as part of a larger trend within the society: “the recent upsurge in the persecution of the Ahmediyya can be understood as part of a gradual trend in Bangladesh from the country’s secular roots toward more blending of religious and politics.”⁹¹⁹ In November 2002 the European Parliament adopted a one-sided resolution condemning Bangladesh for not respecting the rights of the minorities.⁹²⁰ The International Crisis Group (ICG) expressed its concern over the issue and told the Khaleda Zia’s Government to take necessary step to improve the situation. Violence was not only to political contestation. It also affected the everyday life of ordinary citizens. Killings, raping, looting, kidnapping, murder etc. were the common fact in those days. After a year of failures, with police and joint-police-Para-militia drives the government finally turned to the military to fight against crimes.⁹²¹ Mr. Bertil Linter, the author of the ‘Far Eastern Economic Review’ (FEER) report expressed his concern and told that “the process was is irreversible, but if left unchallenged for too long, Bangladesh could deteriorate and become a new nest for terror. There is still time for a counter-revolution.”⁹²² During the month long ‘Operation Clean Heart’ by the police and military was began to arrest criminals and restore law and order in the country.⁹²³ In late November, Jatiya Sangsad passed the “Speedy Trial

⁹¹⁸ Datta, Sreeradha., ‘Post Election Communal Violence in Bangladesh’, *Strategic Analysis*, Volume-26, No-2, April-June, 2002, p.317.

⁹¹⁹ Riaz, Ali and Fair, C. Christine (ed.), *op.cit.*, pp.33-34.

⁹²⁰ Kabir, Bhuian md.monoar., *op.cit.*, p.188.

⁹²¹ Jahan, Rounaq., ‘Bangladesh in 2002: Imperiled Democracy’ *Asian survey*, volume-XLIII, No-1-January-February, 2003, pp.224-225.

⁹²² Linter, Bertil., ‘Bangladesh: A Cocoon Of Terror’ *Far Eastern Economic Review*, volume 165, No 13-25, 27th June 2002, p.17.

⁹²³ Jahan, Rounaq., *Op.cit.*, p.223

Tribunal Act” 2002 for speedy trial of major offences such as murder, rape and possession of firearms or explosive or narcotics, amidst strong protest from the opposition.

In 2003, Bangladesh was considered a dangerous terror hub for anti-India groups. It was the headquarters of the Harkat-ul-Jihad Islami (HuJI), the group that was responsible for gun-running and coordinating several attacks in India, a haven for the United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA) and a training ground for ISI-backed groups. Bangladeshi forces exchanged fire with jawans from the Indian Border Security Force (BSF) frequently. The image of the bodies of 16 jawans killed in Pyrdiwah in 2001, hanging from poles like animals and being carried by Bangladeshi villagers, was etched in every Indian’s memory. Not to mention India’s constant worry of Bangladeshi illegal immigrants, an estimated million-plus at the time, crowding the country’s cities, wrecking the economy and straining resources.⁹²⁴

On 21st August, 2004 there was a grenade attack on the Awami League leaders by the terrorist. Following the grenade attacks on the Awami League meeting on 21st August, 2004 the campaign led by Shahriar Kabir, Hassan Imam and other Awami League leaders demanded international intervention in Bangladesh for secular government pointing out that almost all bomb attacks were carried out against the ‘democratic’, ‘secular’, ‘non-communal’, and ‘progressive’ elements, institutions, ceremonies and minority institutions in Bangladesh. This time, too, they raised fingers at the Jamaat-e-Islami and its allies like Razakars, Al Badr, Al Shams for playing a crucial role behind the scene or at least, promoting and protecting the grenades attackers. Despite its categorical denial of any role whatsoever in the grenades attack on the Awami League meeting, the Awami League (A.L) leader Sheikh Hasina, pointed fingers at the Jamaat-e-Islami by saying that her death would have benefited Khaleda Zia and Moulana Nizami. Awami League (A.L) leader Sheikh Hasina herself charged that Jamaat had between 12 or 16 radical Islamist terrorist groups under different names in different places inside and outside the country. The Awami League and the secular forces tried to construct polarization in Bangladesh politics between the ‘pro-liberation’, ‘pro-democratic’, and ‘secular’ forces and the right wing and Islamic forces. Eventually these campaigners resulted into a hearing on the status of the Bangladeshi minorities in the US in early 2004. The US assistance secretary for the South Asian Affairs, Mrs. Christina Roccaa, in late May 2004 expressed concern over the reported rise of some Islamist terrorist groups like JMJB, HUJI. The US ambassador to Dhaka, Mr. Harry K. Thomas jr. also expressed similar

⁹²⁴ Ibid.

concern as he suggested that five militants terrorist groups were at work in Bangladesh. He, like the liberal-secular-progressive forces in Bangladesh blamed the fundamentalists for the killings of a journalist, Humayun Kabir Balu, in the left-extremist-infested South Western Bangladesh. As a result, the chairman of one faction of the Islamic Oiko Jote (IOJ), Maulana Shakiui Hadith Allama Azizul Haque criticized the US ambassador and reminded him of his limit and refuted his observation of the existence of Islamic militant groups. The Jamaat leader also unequivocally criticized the activities of the newly emerged radical organization, JMB and clearly spelt its distance from the JMB and other groups as a few JMB leaders were reportedly engaged in these terrorist activities.⁹²⁵

The bilateral relationship between India and Bangladesh was neither co-operative nor friendly during the regime of Begum Khaleda Zia. The BNP leader and Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia showed negative attitude about the renewal of the ‘treaty of friendship, co-operation and peace’ with India, and she pledged “to free Bangladesh from the shackles of Indian domination and the limitation of Bangladesh’s sovereignty which the treaty imposes due to the lack of foresightness of the late Prime Minister Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.” The foreign policy of Bangladesh during the regime of Begum Khaleda Zia was primarily a projection of the country’s socio-economic and political compulsion in international politics. Bangladesh foreign policy always revolved round by certain basic factors such as the geographical realities of the region, its search for securities, historical background and cultural affinities.⁹²⁶ Many moderate Muslims, minorities and also India were concerned that with the BNP’s accession to power, the Islamic component of Bangladesh nationalism would acquire higher silence, which would not only adversely affect bilateral relations but may also pose problems for India and its own pluralistic society.⁹²⁷ India strongly opposed the ‘mosque-based education’ in rural Bangladesh and the case of Ayman Muhammad Rab’I al-Zawahiri, an Egyptian deputy of Osama Bin Laden who used the Chittagong port and temporarily located himself in Dhaka. Indo-Bangladesh relations from 2001-2006 were not good due to political instability, problems of governance, Islamisation and danger of religious extremism. Besides, the four party alliance led by Khaleda Zia’s anti-Indian feeling was responsible for the then growing tension of the two countries. The importance of Bangladesh was also viewed in term of political and economic necessity from the prism of regionalism,

⁹²⁵ Kabir, Bhuian md.monoar., *op.cit.*, pp. 192-193.

⁹²⁶ Datta, Sreeradha., ‘Bangladesh Foreign Policy vis-a vis India’, *Strategic Analysis*, Volume-27, No-2, April-June, 2003, pp.264-265.

⁹²⁷ Ibid., p.263

related mainly to SAARC because regionalism appeared to New Delhi as a vehicle to develop better linkages with the countries, in SAARC and beyond. In this context, New Delhi had given priority in its foreign policy ambit with reference to all countries of South Asia, but with special emphasis on Bangladesh.⁹²⁸

Terrorist activities were one of the most important issues for India during the period of the Khaleda Zia Government. It was widely recognized that a number of trans-national Islamic terrorist groups including the Al-Qaida, Taliban, Lashkar-e-Taiba had established their presence in Bangladesh. New Delhi -Dhaka ties encountered rough weather during Khaleda Zia's Government, especially on the issue of anti-India terrorist and insurgent groups.⁹²⁹

The differences in security perceptions between the two countries resulted in the hardening of their policies towards each other. Moreover during this time, evidence connected Bangladesh to pro Al-Qaeda Organization of Pakistani origins supported by the Pakistani Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) such as Lashkar-e-Taiba, Jaish-e-Mohammad the militant responsible for the attacks in Mumbai in November, 2008.⁹³⁰ Other intelligence reports obtained after the 2002 attack on the United States consulate in Kolkata, the Varanasi blasts of 2004 and the Hyderabad Mosque and Delhi blast 2007 revealed that militants were travelling through Bangladesh and also using it as grounds of training camps.⁹³¹

Trans border terrorism particularly in light of the 2006 terrorist attacks on the major cities of India, involving one common point of having its base in Bangladesh, was one of the major security challenges that India faced from its eastern neighbour. During her period the extremists and the terrorist organizations were able to establish themselves firmly in Bangladesh. As stated earlier during this period, a number of terror acts took place in India such as bomb blasts in Varanasi (March 2006) and Hyderabad (August 2007). In November

⁹²⁸ Chakraborty, Tridiv and Chakraborty, Mohor., 'India and Bangladesh under UPA Phase II: Crests, Through and the Way Ahead', *World Focus*, Volume-XXXIII, No-2, February, 2012, p.3

⁹²⁹ Jha, Nalini Kant and Kumar, Sumit. 'India's Policy towards South Asian Neighbours', *World Focus*, Volume. XXXII, No.5, May, 2011.

⁹³⁰ Dutta, Piyali. 'India Bangladesh Relations, Issues, Problems and Recent Developments', Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies (IPCS), Special Report, September, 2010, available at http://www.ipcs.org/pdf_files/issue/sr97.pdf, accessed on 10.03. 2018.

⁹³¹ Bammi, Y.M., 'Indo-Bangladesh Relations: The way ahead', Vij Book Publications, New Delhi, 2010, pp.237-238.

2007 Indian intelligence agencies busted three Jihadi cells that were operating in Kolkata, Mumbai and Jodhpur.⁹³²

Insurgent groups of North-East India were also using Bangladesh as their safe haven. In Assam there are over 15 Islamic Terrorists extremist groups and more than a dozen of the North-East insurgent groups that are provided shelter, support and training in Bangladesh.⁹³³ The then Union Minister of state for Home, I.D. Swami in July 2001, has stated in the Rajya Sabha that Thailand, Myanmar and Bangladesh are the countries from and through which illegal flow of arms to the North Eastern States is taking place.⁹³⁴ In 2005 the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), Government of India had prepared a list of 172 India insurgent group camps.⁹³⁵ The fundamentalists and Jihadi elements were the notable allies of Begum Khaleda Zia's Bangladesh National Party (BNP). During her regime she reportedly manipulated the Islamic sentiment in weakening the then opposition Awami League and its allies. The Jamaat-e-Islami of Bangladesh (also called Jamaat), which is the leading Islamic political party of Bangladesh and the largest Islamic party in South Asia, formed part of the Government during Zia's second tenure as Prime Minister in 2001-2006. The main motto of the Jamaat-e-Islami is Allah is our Lord; the Quran and the Sunnah is our ideal; Jihad is our mean, and salvation is our end.⁹³⁶ The objective of Jamaat-e-Islami as per its constitution is to establish peace in Bangladesh and in the world; to achieve the grace of Almighty Allah through efforts to establish islamic way of life for the greater well being of mankind.⁹³⁷

During the period, establishment of Madrasas particularly in the border areas increased and emerged as the recruiting places for the terrorist outsets. Most of these Madrasas were not registered and their syllabi included fanatic and misinterpreted religious teachings. Intelligence agencies in India have long claimed that such groups in the border districts were being sheltered in Muslim places of worship (Mosque) to avoid the public eye. In 2002, the then Chief Minister of West Bengal(2003-2011), Mr.Buddhadev Bhattacharya,

⁹³² Staff Reporter, 'Petrapole, on Indo-Bangladesh Border, gateway and terror?', *The Times of India*, June 12, 2008.

⁹³³ **The Telegraph**, March 15, 2003.

⁹³⁴ Minister of State in the Union Ministry of Home Affairs, ID Swami, Rajya Sabha, Unstarred Question no. 356, July 25, 2001. Available at http://www.claws.in/working-paper_L-MMK.pdf, accessed on 25.03 2018.

⁹³⁵ **The Telegraph**, March 15, 2003.

⁹³⁶ Karlekar, Hiranmoy. '**Bangladesh : The next Afghanistan**', Sage Publication, new Delhi, 2005, P.48

⁹³⁷ *Ibid.*, pp.136-137.

said that illegal Muslim seminaries were being used provide sanctuary to terrorists at the behest of Pakistani's ISI.⁹³⁸

Political turmoil and violence began with the Bangladesh Rifles revolt in Dhaka. Just months after Sheikh Hasina came to power; a mutiny by border-security soldiers in an encampment in Dhaka led to 56 officers being killed. Some 800 Paramilitary personnel still face trial for their involvement in the uprising, and the crisis frayed ties between the civilian administration and elements of the military establishment. It was a mutiny staged on 25th and 26th February 2009 by a section of the Bangladeshi Rifles (BDR), a Paramilitary force mainly engaged with guarding the borders of Bangladesh.

The Bangladesh Army reported a failed coup d'état that took place in December 2011 by rogue military officers and expatriate attempting to destabilize the democratic process and overthrow the Awami League led Government of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. Military officials stated that the coup was instigated by hard-line Islamist military officers, while other analysts suggested it may have been caused by military unrest over a 2009 crackdown on the military. Intelligence sources reported that the coup was an attempt to introduce Sharia Law by Islamist military officers with ties to Hizb-ut-Tahrir, an Islamist Terrorist group that is outlawed in Bangladesh. The coup attempt had apparently been planned over several weeks or months with support of religious fanatics outside of Bangladesh.

Brig. Gen. Muhammad Masud Razzaq, then Director of the Personnel Services Directorate described the conspiracy involving a dozen active duty and retired officers that he said was intended "to spread disaffection in the Bangladeshi Army." He also said the plot was uncovered in December following the detention of mastermind Professor Ghulam Azam, former Ameer of the Jamaat-e-Islami Bangladesh, who opposed the independence of Bangladesh during and after the 1971 war, is alleged to have led the Razakar and Al-Badr formations that resisted the India-trained Mukti Bahini. A slew of arrests had taken place silently in Bangladesh through December, prompting Khaleda Zia the former Prime Minister to allege that army officers were becoming victims of "sudden disappearance". First, the retired Lieutenant Colonel Yusuf was arrested after he allegedly tried to instigate a serving Major to join him in executing his malicious plan on 13th December, 2011. After the Major passed on the matter through his chain of command, the retired officer was arrested under the Army Act, according to the statement of the Brigadier to the media. Soon, another officer,

⁹³⁸ **The Times of India**, July 27, 2002.

Major Ziaul Haq, is said to have confided in a fellow officer about the plot but this officer, too, alerted the authorities. The army immediately cancelled Ziaul's leave, stopped his transfer and remanded him in custody on 23rd December. Similarly, Zakir was arrested on 31st December, 2011, accused of meeting a serving officer to instigate him to actions against the state. However, Ziaul somehow managed to escape and is now in hiding. On 28th December, a military court of inquiry was established to investigate the matter and punish those who involved in it. India expressed her deep concern and told that it was an attempts to damage 'democracy' in Asian subcontinent. The military spokesperson also said the initial investigations found non-resident Bangladeshis (NRB) link to the plot while at least one of the officers, the fugitive Major, was linked to ban Islamist terrorit group Hizb-ut-Tahrir who wanted to establish the 'Islamic Caliphate' to unite the muslim community globally.⁹³⁹

The attempt at mutiny within the Bangladesh army appeared to be well planned to unseat Hasina by former Prime Minister Kheleda Zia's exiled son Tareque Rahman in collaboration with UK based terrorist Hizb-ut-Tahrir to distort Bangladesh's liberal-secular-progressive identity which was the basis on which the liberation war was fought. Fortunately it was a timely detection of the plot that saved the day for the Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. It was a disturbing that the two major coup attempts were made in less than three governments. There was Hizb-ut-Tahrir-BNP-Jamaat-e-Islami axis behind the plot that goes beyond the boundary of Bangladesh. These were part of attempts by BNP-Jamaat-e-Islami alliance to unrattle the Hasina government ever since she came to power and initiated process to prosecute war criminals among Jamaat leadership and probe BNP's corrupt deals and links with extremist forces and terrorist groups. The objective of the munity was aimed at removing top brass of the army whom the rebels charged of being 'pro-Indian' and 'anti-Islamic'.⁹⁴⁰

On another political and judicial note the Sheikh Mujibur Rahman murder trial resumed in 2009 after a long gap to try the convicted murders of the founding father of Bangladesh, killed along with most of his family in a military coup on 15th August, 1975. After long 34 years the court ruled in favour of execution for the 12 army officers who were responsible for the bloody coup. As a result 5 of the accused were in jail and other petitions for life sentence had been denied. Sheikh Hasina Government tried her best to imprison the

⁹³⁹Ibid.

⁹⁴⁰Roy Chaudhury, Dipanjan. '40 years of Bangladesh' independence: Threats against its identity continue' *World Focus*, Volume-XXXIII, No-2, February, 2012, p.71.

rest of the convicted killers who had fled to foreign countries and was trying to persuade those governments to extradite them.⁹⁴¹ The religious extremist groups were adamant over the issue and tried to commit political violence and destroy government property but the Hasina Government tackled the situation with expert hand for country's sake.

Since 2000, there has been growing demands in Bangladesh for justice related to war crimes committed during the 1971 freedom struggle; the issue was central to the 2008 Parliamentary election of Awami League led 14-party Grand Alliance's election manifesto. Its rival, four-party alliance (BNP, Jamaat-e-Islami, Bangladesh Jatio Party, and Islami Oikya Jote) had several leaders alleged to have committed war crimes. On 29th January 2009 the new Parliament under the leadership of Sheikh Hasina unanimously passed a resolution to prosecute war criminals according to the International Crimes Tribunals Act 1973. The government worked to amend the law, updating it and incorporating in it other nations' experience, provided the legal basis for the trial of individuals and political parties that had committed war crimes during Bangladesh liberation war, 1971. On 25th March 2010, the Awami League led Coalition government announced the formation of a three-member tribunal, a seven-member investigation agency, and a twelve-member prosecution team to conduct the trials under the ICT Act 1973. On 18th December 2011, a formal charge was filed by the prosecution against Abdul Quader Molla with the charge of the Pallab murder, Killing of pro-liberation poet Meherunnesa, her mother and two brothers, the Khandoker Abu Taleb killing, the Ghatar Char and Bhawal Khan Bari killings, the Alubdi mass killing (344 people died), the rape and murder of Hazrat Ali and his family.⁹⁴² On 5th February 2013, the International Crimes Tribunals Act (I.C.T) found Abdul Quader Mollah guilty of crimes against humanity and was sentenced to life imprisonment for the Alubdi and Ali killings and 15 years each for the Pallab, Meherunnesa and Taleb murders. The day before the verdict was announced, Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami, election partner of BNP in 2001 and 2008, declared a nationwide dawn-to-dusk general strike for 5th February in protest of their leader Abdul Quader Mollah's conviction of anti-human activity. Protest began right after the verdict was announced and many young people were outraged against religious extremist Jamaat-e-Islami's country wide general strikes and violence. They wanted Abdul Quader Mollah's death sentence rather than life imprisonment. The verdict was criticised in social media, and a

⁹⁴¹ Momen, Mehnaaz. 'Bangladesh in 2009: The Peril Within.', *Asian Survey*, Volume- 50, No-1, pp.157-158.

⁹⁴² Bandyapadhaya, Koushik., 'Bangladesher Andoloner Laksha Moulobad', *Prehapprobesh*, Volume-9, No-3, March, 2013, p.25.

peaceful demonstration began at Shahbagh Square in Dhaka in 2013. Student organisations started the protest immediately after the Judgement in the Shahbag square that was the actual call for people to gather in the Shahbag square within half an hour of the Judgement. It took half an hour to spread out the call for protest through different social media and later the satellite TV channels and some other social and cultural organisations called for different programmes in the same venue who later worked together. Demonstrators gathered at Shahbag Circle; they painted murals on the road, drew cartoons, hanged effigies of war-crimes suspects and chanted slogans, with a vow to continue demonstrating until their demands were fulfilled. Thousands of people gathered with banners, posters, Bangladeshi flags and placards in Shahbag Square with their demands. In Dhaka, traffic was stopped as thousands of people took to the streets, formed human chains and stood in silence. On 21st February, International Mother Language Day, the number of protesters reached more than 100,000. Its leadership declared 26th March 2013, the Independence Day of Bangladesh, as the deadline for the government to ban Jamaat-e-Islami from politics. The hunger strikers said at a press briefing that they would send an open letter to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina during the 100th hour of their protests. They sworn an oath that the leadership of the mass of people from the Gonojagaran Mancha (National Awakening Stage) will continue the movement from Teknaf to Tetulia until capital punishment is handed down to those Razakar and Al-Badr members who committed war crimes against humanity like genocide, mass killing, looting, and rape in 1971 and they further took the oath that they will continue this demonstration and keep demanding trials, under a special tribunal, of those Razakars, Al Shams and Al-Badr activists who were convicted, and under trial, but freed after 1975. The protesters appealed to all Bangladeshi to boycott the war criminals' business entities – Islami Bank, Ibn Sina, Focus, Retina and various other coaching centres, academic, business and cultural organisations through which they were spreading anti-liberation sentiments among the children. At the same time, they requested the pro-liberation mass media to boycott the war criminals like Jamaat, Razakars and Al-Badr and their mass media like Diganta Television, Daily Naya Diganta, Amar Desh, The Daily Sangram, Sonar Bangla Blog etc. Bangladeshis abroad have expressed solidarity with the protests through social media, websites, Facebook and Twitter. Demonstrations of solidarity have also taken place in Australia, Malaysia, Germany, and the United States. At a rally at the Angel Statue in Melbourne, demonstrators signed a petition to Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina demanding death for war criminals. Bangladeshis in Taiwan also expressed their solidarity

with the Shahbag protests. A candlelight vigil was held that evening for Rajib, a blogger and activist who was killed several hours before the demonstration.

On 28th February the International Crimes Tribunal sentenced Delwar Hossain Sayeedi, vice-president of Jamaat-e-Islami to death for convictions on 8 out of 20 charges of war crimes and crimes against humanity committed during the 1971 Bangladesh Liberation War. Jamaat followers were enraged by the court's decision, claiming that the case against Delwar Hossain Sayeedi was politically motivated and the international war crimes tribunal be stopped and its party leaders freed. His lawyers, supporters, and followers accused AL behind the plot and called for a nationwide two-day strike with a view to destroy government property by means of violence across Bangladesh. By the end of the day thirty-five people were dead, including three police officers; an additional eight hundred were injured. Opposition leader Khaleda Zia criticised government's brutality and declared a nationwide dawn-to-dusk hartal along with Jammat for government's corruption, misrule, oppression, and mass killings. According to the BBC, it marked "the worst day of political violence in Bangladesh in decades." Jamaat supporters singled out Hindu citizens, attacked their homes in many parts of the country, and tortured Hindu women. Following the sentence, activists of Jamaat-e-Islami and its student wing Islami Chhatra Shibir attacked Hindus in different parts of the country. Hindu properties were looted, Hindu houses were burnt into ashes and many statues were destroyed and scores of houses set ablaze, leaving hundreds of people homeless throughout the country. While the government has held the Jamaat-e-Islami responsible for the attacks on minorities, the Jamaat-e-Islami leadership has denied any involvement. Minority leaders have protested the attacks and appealed for justice. The Supreme Court of Bangladesh has directed law enforcement to start suo motu investigation into the attacks. Attacks on Hindu minorities have been the work of extremists supported by the Jamaat and Bangladesh National Party (B.N.P). After the Judge's decision to give the death sentence to Delwar Hossain was released, the Jamaat and BNP burst into riots against governments, as well as attacking minorities and local police. After the verdict, the Jamaat-e-Islami took to the streets in protest against the verdict. They attacked the establishment including the police, fire brigade, disrupted the traffic and set vehicles on fire. According to Hindu community leaders, more than 50 Hindu temples and 1,500 Hindu houses were destroyed in 20 districts during that time.

These attacks have been heavily criticized by the United States, as well as India and other peace-demanding nations and organizations. In India, activists of Gairik Bharat burned

an effigy of Sheikh Hasina in Silchar, in protest against her failure to protect the Hindu minorities in Bangladesh. The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), West Bengal unit demands the central government to create pressure on Bangladesh government to protect the Hindus from Islamic extremism. In Rajya Sabha, the then main opposition Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) demanded that an all-party delegation be sent to Bangladesh to assess the atrocities on Hindus by Jamaat-e-Islami in collaboration with different terrorist groups. Expressing serious concern on the continued attacks on the Hindus in Bangladesh the South Assam Bengali Hindu Association demanded the intervention of the Indian President Pranab Mukherjee in stopping the atrocities on Hindus in Bangladesh. The British High Commissioner in Dhaka, Mr. Robert Gibson expressed his deep concern and resentment upon the attack upon the religious places and the recent attacks in a press conference on Sunday 3rd March held in Dhaka. The Amnesty International has called upon the Bangladesh government for giving better protection to the minority Hindus in the country. In 6th March report, titled 'Bangladesh: Wave of Violent Attacks against Hindu Minority', the Amnesty International said as many as 40 Hindu temples were vandalized in attacks by supporters of an Islamic party with different terrorists groups. Several hundred were rendered homeless as shops and houses belonging to the Hindu community were burnt down over the past week, it said. The report gave Bangladesh's war crimes trial as the context to the violence against the Hindus.

How far the rail, road air and water connectivity shape the future direction of Indo-Bangladesh relation? –the answer is a stronger connectivity not only strengthens the intra-and inter-regional trade and commerce but also generates higher income and prosperity. Transport is the backbone of economic activities and social developments. Large-scale connectivity increases in production and trade. Connectivity of each mode of transport – roads, railways, maritime, shipping and aviation – has its own physical and operational characteristics which require different considerations.

India and Bangladesh are the members of sub-regional Organizations like Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) and Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal (BBIN) Initiative and the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC). SAARC was established in 1985 in Dhaka with the purpose of enhancing co-operation particularly trade and commerce among the SAARC nation states like India, Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan, Afghanistan, Sri Lanka, Maldives and Pakistan. But this regional organization did not function because of antagonistic relation between India and Pakistan for a long period for which India tilted to ASEAN. Now SAARC became an inactive

organization for big brother attitude of India. BIMSTEC established in 1997 based on some principles namely sovereignty, equality, territorial integrity, political independence, peaceful co-existence, non interference in internal affairs and mutual benefits. The BBIN+M regional connectivity initiative is expected to contribute in identifying value chain in the region and help in more enhanced trade facilitation in south Asian region.

The two countries India and Bangladesh are also part of Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) working together in managing the crucial maritime connectivity and ensuring its stability which is also reflected in the Modi government's SAGARMALA (Security and Growth for All in the Region) programme, which further aims to turn the region more inclusive. Such regional connectivity initiatives should be based on the region's commitment to international laws and a rule-based system for trade and connectivity.

In the South Asia, particularly India and Bangladesh the oceanic and avionics areas are moderately not all around associated with their separate worldwide organizations. In addition, private sector involvement in the construction and operation of infrastructure in these fields is on the rise in India. Therefore, land-based transportation infrastructure, development and improvement should be prioritized from a regional perspective. By removing non-physical barriers to transportation and enhancing connectivity between nodes, significant efficiency gains could also be achieved. Both of these actions would raise utilization rates of the existing infrastructure between India and Bangladesh and increase the efficiency of transportation services.

Over the issues of connectivity, both India and Bangladesh Governments are undertaking various steps to restore the pre-1965 rail links and other connectivity links that existed between India and East Pakistan (Bangladesh) before partition in 1947. The two Prime Ministers Narendra Damodar Modi and Sheikh Hasina jointly inaugurated the newly restored railway link between Chilahati (Bangladesh) and Haldibari (India) on 17th December 2020. To enhance people to people contacts, the frequency of two passenger trains, i.e., Maitree Express (rail) and Bandhan Express (rail) were increased from 4 days a week to 5 days a week and from one day a week to two days a week respectively from February 2020. Both the countries also started using side-door container and parcel trains to maintain uninterrupted supply chains during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic situation. The Government of India handed over 10 broad gauge diesel locomotives as part of grant assistance to Bangladesh Railways in a virtual event joined by External Affairs Minister Dr S Jaishankar and Railways Minister Piyush Goyal and their Bangladeshi counterparts Dr A K Abdul Momen and Md

Nurul Islam Sujon on 27th July 2020. During the visit of Prime Ministers Sheikh Hasina to New Delhi in October 2019, both the governments decided to commence Dhaka-Siliguri-Gangtok-Dhaka and Dhaka-Siliguri-Darjeeling-Dhaka bus service to enhance people to people contacts and the rail run of Dhaka-Siliguri-Gangtok-Dhaka was also held in December 2019. Feni Bridge (Maitree Setu in Bangladesh) connecting land custom stations (LCS) Subroom (Tripura) and land custom stations (LCS) Ramgarh (Bangladesh) has been jointly inaugurated on virtual platform by both the Prime Ministers in 2021

Since its launch on 19th June, 1999, the ‘Kolkata-Dhaka Bus Service’ has remained one of the most important modes of transportation between India and Bangladesh. The service has made it easier for people to talk to each other and increased trade and commerce between the two countries. The Bangladesh Road Transport Corporation (BRTC) and the West Bengal Surface Transport Corporation (WBSTC) jointly operate the service. Buses go to Dhaka every Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday from Kolkata; every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday between Dhaka and Kolkata. The length of time required to clear customs and immigration requirements at the border point is frequently one of the main obstacles that passengers and businessmen using the service face. It is necessary to take steps to make the transport procedure easier and people-centric, such as carrying out the formalities required by customs while the item is in transit.⁹⁴³ The cross-border bus service between Bangladesh and India resumed on 10th June, 2022, two years after its suspension due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Bus services between India-Bangladesh via Integrated Check Post (ICP) Agartala-Akhaura & Integrated Check Post (ICP) Haridaspur-Benapole resumed with the Dhaka-Kolkata-Dhaka bus being flagged off from Dhaka early morning on 10th June, 2022-a major step forward in enhancing affordable, people-centric connectivity, tweeted High Commission of India in Bangladesh.

Rail connectivity is one of the most important forms of physical connectivity between different locations. This is also true for Bangladesh- India rail connectivity. Railways networks serve as an indispensable facilitators for trade and commerce as well as essential means of communication. Rail connections between the two countries are not widely used at the moment. In order to link the region more effectively, they need significant improvement. Road networks, which are used more, are insufficient to achieve the desired level of connectivity. As a result, it is critical to investigate the various dimensions and issues

⁹⁴³ Ibid

associated with India and Bangladesh's rail and road connectivity and the ways in which these can be improved. Several steps toward establishing increasing connectivity links through railways, roads, inland waterways, and ports were officially discussed in 2010 and 2022 when joint communiqués were signed by the respective heads of government. During this time, both countries' Connectivity via Road and Rail expressed an interest in establishing and improving existing rail routes as well as revitalizing old ones. In exchange for "the development of rail infrastructure, supply of broad gauge locomotives and passenger coaches, rehabilitation of Saidpur railway workshop, procurement of buses, dredging of rivers, and strengthening of the Bangladesh Standards and Testing Institution (BSTI)," India provided Bangladesh with a \$1 billion credit line.⁹⁴⁴ Currently, there are several rail connections between India and Bangladesh via the following routes:

1. Gede (India)-Darsana (Bangladesh): Broad Gauge.
2. Singhabad (India)-Rohanpur (Bangladesh): Broad Gauge.
3. Petrapole (India)-Benapole (Bangladesh): Broad Gauge.
4. Radhikapur (India)-Birol (Bangladesh) - Broad Gauge on the Indian side and Metre Gauge on the Bangladeshi side.
5. Metre Gauge between Shahbazpur in Bangladesh and Mahisasan in India.
6. Broad Gauge: Haldibari (India)-Chilhati (Bangladesh).

The transport of goods is made possible by the routes Gede-Darsana, Singhabad-Rohanpur, and Petrapole-Benapole. Since April 2005, the Radhikapur-Birol rail route has been shut down because the Indian side's tracks have been upgraded to broad gauge, while the Bangladeshi side's tracks are still meter gauge. Due to insufficient traffic, the Mahisasan-Shahbazpur route has also remained inactive since 1996. In 2011, the Prime Ministers of both countries came to an agreement that the Haldibari-Chilhati route, which had not been used since 1965 for Indo-Pak war, would be used again. Additionally, the early operationalization of a passenger train service running from Sealdah (Kolkata) to Joydevpur (Dhaka) and running passenger train services between Sealdah and Jamuna Bridge has been discussed by both countries. However, all these rail connectivities are operational in 2022.

⁹⁴⁴Connecting South Asia and Southeast Asia: A Bangladesh Country Study, Mustafizur Rahman, Khondaker Golam Moazzem, Mehruna Islam Chowdhury, and Farzana Sehrin, ADBI Working Paper Series, September 2014.

For India and Bangladesh, waterway connectivity has enormous potential for economic and interpersonal connections. First signed in 1972, the India-Bangladesh Protocol on Inland Water Transit and Trade is renewed every two years. However, since 3rd October, 2001, this pattern has not been followed, and the renewal has only been carried out piecemeal. In accordance with the protocol, India and Bangladesh agreed to use inland waterways for both intra-country trade and the transportation of goods between countries' border areas. The protocol stipulates that Indian and Bangladeshi vessels will split the tonnage of inter-country and transit cargo 50:50 basis. The two countries decided in April 2015 to renew the Protocol every five years automatically.⁹⁴⁵

The following transit routes are specified in the protocol⁹⁴⁶

Kolkata-Haldia-Raimongal-Chalna-Khulna-Mongla-Kaukhali-Barisal-Hizla-Chandapur-Narayanganj-Aricha-Sirajganj-Bahadurabad-Dhubri-Pandu and vice-versa; kolkata-Haldia-Raimongal-Mongla-Kaukhali-Barisal-Hizla-Chandpur-Narayanganj-Bhairab Bazar-Ajmiriganj-Markuli-Sherpur-Fenchuganj-Zakiganj-Karimganj and vice-versa.

Rajshahi-Godagari-Dhulian and vice-versa

Karimganj-Zakiganj-Fenchuganj-Sherpur-Markuli-Ajmiriganj-Bhairab Bazar-Narayanganj-Chandpur-Aricha-Sirajganj-Bahadurabad-Chilmari-Dhubri-Pandu and vice-versa.

Under this protocol, the following ports of call in each country have been nominated for facilitating inter-country trade:

India: Kolkata, Haldia, Karimganj, Silghat and Pandu;

Bangladesh: Narayananganj, Khulna, Mongla, Ashuganj and Sirajganj.

Some experts are hesitant to accept waterways as the cheapest mode of transportation when discussing India-Bangladesh protocol routes due to the fact that most rivers are not navigable throughout the year. In order to solve this issue, adequate dredging facilities should not only be established but also made mandatory to enable the rivers navigable. Additionally, the cost of transporting cargo to the riverfront has increased significantly due to the absence

⁹⁴⁵“India, Bangladesh agree inland water transit contract auto renewal”, <http://www.thehindubusinessline.com/news/international/india-bangladesh-agree-inland-water-transit-auto-renewal/article7138068.ece>, accessed on 2nd October, 2022.

⁹⁴⁶“India-Bangladesh Connectivity: Possibilities and Challenges,” Part 1, Observer Research Foundation(ORF), P-22. <https://www.orfonline.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/IndiaBangladesh.pdf>, accessed on 10.06.2022.

of night navigational facilities.⁹⁴⁷ It is important to note that India has six national waterways, with NW 6 being the most recent to be added in 2013. From Kolkata-Sundarban-Chalna-Khulna-Mongla, Kaukhali-Barisal-Narayanganj-Aricha-Dhubri-Pandua, NW-2 is the primary protocol route. From Narayangaj, NW-6 splits off into Bhairabbajar, Ajmerganj, Karamganj, and Lakhipur. The brand-new route crosses the Barak and Kusiya rivers. The Brahmaputra is connected to these two rivers, which receive very little water. They are seasonal travel routes. The Protocol route has two components: commerce and transit (export and import).

Due to its capacity to transport large volumes at low cost per unit of freight, maritime shipping has historically been the primary mode of transportation in international trade. Consequently, major urban or trading centers in coastal areas have been the result of land transport development patterns. As a result, land transport links among several countries are particularly underdeveloped in Asia Pacific Region. However, over the course of the past few decades, governments in the region have made significant efforts to expand their national road, railway, and in some instances, inland waterway networks, both within their own countries and by connecting to those of their neighbours. The development of a country's major seaports, particularly container ports, has been essential to the expansion of international trade. Indian container terminals have dominated the South region's container terminals for the past two decades, handling increasingly larger cargoes. India and Bangladesh reached a number of important agreements to make it easier to connect inland and coastal waterways for trade and cruise travel. India's shipping secretary, Shri Gopal Krishna, and his Bangladeshi counterpart, Md Abdus Samad, signed an agreement to use Bangladesh's Chattogram and Mongla ports for the movement of goods to and from India. They also signed a standard operating procedure (SOP) for the movement of cruise services and passengers. In addition, India and Bangladesh have signed an addendum to the Protocol on Inland Water Transit and Trade (PIWTT) to add Dhubri and Pangoan as new ports of call. Trade and tourism will gain momentum as a result of these agreements, which will make it easier for goods and passengers to move between the two countries. India and Bangladesh agree to include the Rupnarayan river (National Waterway 86) from Geonkhali to Kolaghat (Medinipur district) in the protocol route to designate Kolaghat in West Bengal as a new port of call. Bangladesh agreed to Chilmari as a stopping point. Fly ash, cement, and other building materials will be able to travel more easily from India to Bangladesh via the Inland Waterways (IWT) on the Rupnarayan River as a result of this. On a reciprocal basis, the two

⁹⁴⁷ Ibid.

sides agreed to designate Badarpur on the Barak River (NW-16), Karimganj in Assam, and Ghorasal of Ashuganj in Bangladesh as extended ports of call. India made a proposal to extend the protocol routes from Kolkata all the way to Silchor in Assam.

After the declaration of additional ports of call and the extension of protocol routes, it is anticipated that the amount of cargo transported on protocol routes through Inland Waterways (IWT) will significantly rise to 3.5 million metric tons. Through waterways, the North Eastern States of India would be directly connected to the ports of Kolkata, Haldia, both in India and Chittagong and Mongla both in Bangladesh. This could make it easier to move EXIM cargo and save money on logistics. The finalized standard operating procedure (SOP) for the movement of cruise ships and passengers on inland protocol routes and coastal shipping routes is yet another significant agreement signed between the two countries. It is likely that these river cruises will begin between Kolkata, Bangladesh, Guwahati, and Jorhat and back. In addition, it was decided to hire a project management consultant to oversee and monitor the dredging of the Asuganj-Zakiganj and Srajanj-Daikowa stretches of the India-Bangladesh protocol route in Bangladesh.

How far Infrastructural development has enhanced dynamics of India-Bangladesh bilateral relation? India-Bangladesh bilateral relation and the scale of cooperation is equally wide and touches every aspect—be it digital infrastructure, disaster management, education of students and other aspects of human resource development, training and capacity building, defence cooperation, rail infrastructure, border hatt infrastructure, pipe line project, space technology, nuclear cooperation etc. Till March 2022 India had funded 68 High Impact Community Development Projects (HICDPs) in Bangladesh such as construction of student hostels, academic buildings, skill development and training institutes, cultural centres, and orphanages etc. primarily focused on the improvement of infrastructure in rural Bangladesh. It has significant impact on the community, particularly in the areas of sustainable development, health, education, gender and child empowerment, sports, and income and livelihood generation. They are planned and carried out by local governments in accordance with the priorities and requirements of the respective communities. As they have a direct impact on the lives of the people at the grassroots level, the Joint HICD Projects, which are focused on basic socio-economic development, are found to be an effective tool for addressing rural poverty.

Bangladesh is an important India's Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) partner. A number of training courses are being conducted for interested Bangladesh officials

including personnel of administration, police, judiciary, fire-fighters, narcotic officials, nuclear scientists, teachers etc. from Bangladesh availed of training courses under the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) programmes annually. In addition, scholarships are granted by Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) every year to students from Bangladesh for pursuing general courses in arts, sciences, engineering and also specialized courses for culture, drama, music, fine arts and sports etc. The 53rd Field Administration Capacity Building Programme for Bangladeshi Civil Servants was launched at the National Centre for Good Governance (NCGC) in Mussoorie in India on 11th October, 2022. It focuses on good governance, policy reforms, training and capacity building, and also to work as a think tank. It has taken up capacity building of civil servants of several foreign countries in partnership with Ministry of External Affairs (MEA). After the completion of phase-I, capacity-building of another 1,800 civil servants of Bangladesh were taken up, which is expected to be completed by 2025.” For this purpose, the two countries signed the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in February 2019 in the 5th meeting of the India-Bangladesh Joint Consultative Commission. Under this programme 1,727 Bangladesh Civil Service field officers, including Assistant Commissioners, Sub Divisional Magistrates, and Additional Deputy Commissioners have been trained.

A joint military exercise “Ex SAMPRITI-X” between India and Bangladesh began at the Bangladeshi military station of Jessore on 5th June, 2022. As part of the bilateral cooperation between the two countries in the area of defense, the exercise continued until 16th June, 2022. The aim of the joint military exercise was to strengthen the military cooperation between the two countries. The exercise also provided an opportunity to the contingents from both the armies to understand each other’s tactical drills and operational techniques as well as to share their experience on Counter Insurgency, Counter Terrorism, Peace Keeping and Disaster Relief Operation under the United Nations (UN) mandate.

During Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina’s visit to New Delhi, a number of infrastructure projects were launched, announced, and revealed. According to the two memoranda of understanding (MoU) were signed on 6th September, 2022. The Indian Railways will offer Information Technology solutions for the computerization of the Bangladesh Railway’s passenger ticketing and freight operations, as well as provide training to the Bangladesh Railway’s employees. Seminars, workshops, classroom training, and field training will all be part of this. According to the Indian Railways officials, the Indian Railways will also work with officials in the neighbouring country as needed, such as to visit

Bangladesh and help to set up and improve training facilities there as well as study requirements. Collaboration in Information Technology systems such as Freight Operations Information System (FOIS) and other IT applications for Bangladesh Railway is the subject of the other MoU. Through the Centre for Railway Information Systems (CRIS), this Freight Operations Information System (FOIS) will include information technology solutions for all aspects of the Bangladesh Railway, including the computerization of passenger ticketing, freight operation and control office, train inquiry system, and digital asset management, human resource, and finance infrastructure.

India has extended 3 Lines of Credits (LoC) to Bangladesh in the last 7 years amounting to US\$ 8 billion. This makes Bangladesh the largest recipient of Lines of Credits (LoC) funds from India till 2022. During the visit of Bangladesh Prime Minister to India in January 2010, India had announced a US\$1 billion Line of Credit (LoC) for Bangladesh covering projects in public transportation, roads, railways, bridges and inland waterways. Most of these projects have been completed and the remaining are at various stages of completion. India had extended the second Lines of Credits (LoC) of US\$ 2 billion during the visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to Bangladesh in June 2015. This second Lines of Credit (LoC) covers 15 projects in the areas of Roads, Railways, Power, Shipping, Special Economic Zones, Health & Medical Care and Technical Education. During the visit of Bangladesh Prime Minister (PM) to India in April 2017, India extended a third LoC of US\$ 4.5 billion to Bangladesh. The new Line of Credit (LOC) will cover projects in the areas of Port Construction, Railways, Roads, Airports, Power & Energy, Telecommunications, and Shipping. In addition to, Lines of Credits (LoC) funds, Government of India also provides grant assistance to Bangladesh for projects under 'Aid to Bangladesh.' Projects such as construction of school/college buildings, laboratories, dispensaries, deep tube wells, community centres, renovation of historical monuments/buildings etc have been financed by Government of India under this programme. At present, three Sustainable Development Projects (SDPs) are being undertaken in the cities of Rajshahi, Khulna and Sylhet. The extended development work of RabindraNath Tagore's ancestral house in Shilaidaha is as well as 36 community clinics in selected districts of Bangladeshis also being undertaken as a part of dynamics of Indo-Bangladesh bilateral relations.

Foreign Secretary of India, Mr. Harsh Vardhan Shringla stated on 16th December, 2021, that the India-Bangladesh Friendship Pipeline Project (IBFPP), which will enable the two countries to integrate their energy requirements, is making good progress. Siliguri in

West Bengal in India and Parbatipur in the Dinajpur district of Bangladesh will be connected by the India-Bangladesh Friendship Pipeline Project (IBFPP), which was signed in 2018. One million metric tons of oil will be transported annually through the 130-kilometer pipeline project. According to Mr. Shringla, the “very unique and significant pipeline that enables us to integrate our energy requirements” is the India-Bangladesh Friendship Pipeline Project (IBFPP).⁹⁴⁸ He told reporters in Dhaka that the project is going very well and that “we would be in a position to inaugurate it next year.” He said this after President Ram Nath Kovind met with the top leaders of Bangladesh on 15th December, 2021 and promised to help promote economic cooperation between the two neighbouring countries. The India-Bangladesh Friendship Pipeline Project (IBFPP) will use the Siliguri Marketing Terminal to ship fuel to Bangladesh from the Numaligarh Refinery Limited (NRL) in Assam. According to Mr. Shringla, bilateral trade between the two countries has steadily increased. A year-over-year increase of 14 percent was achieved in 2020, which is very encouraging.

Bangladesh and India have agreed to officially join New Delhi’s “South Asia Satellite” initiative, which will see the launch of a communication satellite for South Asia by the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO). According to bdnews24, the agreement was signed on 23rd March, 2017, by then Indian High Commissioner Mr. Harsh Vardhan Shringla and Chairman of the Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (BTRC), Shahjahan Mahmood.⁹⁴⁹

According to the High Commission, Bangladesh has now formally agreed to participate in the Indian government’s ‘South Asia Satellite’ initiative. Using Indian Space Research Organization’s (ISRO) Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle (GSLV Mk-II), India will launch a two-ton class communication satellite with 12 Ku band transponders (36 Mhz each) to serve South Asia. Telemedicine, teleeducation, intergovernmental networks, emergency disaster communication, television broadcast, and Direct To Home (DTH) television services are among the proposed applications for the satellite system.⁹⁵⁰ Each participating country may use a dedicated transponder with a capacity of 36 to 54 Mhz for internal purposes. The High Commission stated in a statement that content creation and utilization would be the responsibility of each country. This one-of-a-kind endeavour will

⁹⁴⁸“India-Bangladesh Friendship Pipeline could be inaugurated next year: Harsh Vardhan Shringla”, **The Hindu**, 16th December, 2021.

⁹⁴⁹ “Bangladesh to join India’s South Asia Satellite initiative”, **The Statesman**, 23rd March, 2017.

⁹⁵⁰ “Bangladesh join India’s South Asia Satellite Program,” **India Today**, 23rd March, 2017.

unite the region in “a cooperative and collaborative endeavour for the benefit of the people of the participating countries,” with the exception of Pakistan.

Prior to the SAARC Summit in Kathmandu in 2014, Prime Minister Narendra Modi stated that the launch of the satellite would be a “gift to India’s neighbours.” The High Commission stated, “This satellite is an expression of India’s commitment to the development of the South Asian region and a reflection of India’s willingness to share its expertise and technology for the benefit of the region.” The agreement was signed just in time for Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina’s trip to India next month.⁹⁵¹

With regard to trade and commerce between India and Bangladesh the Land Port infrastructure also requires immediate attention. India’s Benapole (Land Port Station) requires more attention, despite the fact that the land port on the Indian side of Petrapole has been modernized recently. In the World Bank’s Bangladesh Regional Connectivity Project (Phase 1), infrastructure is being built in three land port stations in Bangladesh namely Ramgarh, Sheola, and Benapole. Besides, Bhomra, Burimari, and Bholaganj Land Port Station of Bangladesh are also being considered in this respect. Congestion is still a major problem at Benapole, which is still the largest trading point between India and Bangladesh. Benapole needs a road with four lanes to connect to it. The second cargo gate’s construction will, in part, speed up cargo clearance. On the other hand, Agartala–Akhaura Land Port, has better facilities due to its arterial road connection to the National Highway 8. It ranks second in terms of land port in size. In every country, highway infrastructure makes transit trade extremely difficult. The World Bank reports that transport vehicles in Bangladesh travel at an average speed of 19 kilometers an hour along main corridors, indicating that traffic is congested on the roads.

It is essential to note that Bangladesh’s domestic ‘Readymade Garment Industry’ has grown as a result of its import of raw materials from Indian market. It has increased the amount of ready-made clothing it exports to Western markets. As a result, many people in Bangladesh argue that Bangladesh should not become overly concerned about its trade balance with India. These are essential products that Bangladesh expects to benefit somewhere else. There are 34 land customs stations (LCS), 2 integrated check posts (I.C.P), and 5 railroad exchange points between the two countries through which cross-line exchange works. The Benapole-Petrapole integrated check posts (ICP) are used for the

⁹⁵¹ Ibid.

majority of the goods' overland transportation, despite the presence of multiple land customs stations (LCS). It is one of the busiest and most congested land ports because it is the only land port that allows the import and export of almost all goods, with the exception of a few that are regulated by customs agencies. A new report by the World Bank that it requires 138 hours to move a truck from the Indian side to the Bangladesh side through the integrated check posts (ICP).⁹⁵²

On the other hand, land customs stations (L.C.S), such as the Ghojadonga-Bhomra, Mahadipur-Sonamasjid, and Changrabandha-Burimari, freight movement has significantly increased. As a result, stakeholders are increasingly realizing that these land customs stations (L.C.S) need to upgrade their infrastructure.⁹⁵³ Of late, other than the trade through land ports, there has been a positive change in the development of cargo through freight corridor. The majority of land customs stations (LCS) were very closed to freight corridor when the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) struck heavily. The railways of Bangladesh and India attempted to maintain bilateral trade through the five railway interchange points during Covid period.

For travel by air, around 100 flights operate weekly between New Delhi, Kolkata, Mumbai and Chennai to Dhaka and Chittagong. During Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Bangladesh in March 2021, Sheikh Hasina 'offered the use of Chottogram and Sylhet International Airport, by the people of North East India, especially of Tripura.' There are presently many flights operating weekly between India and Bangladesh connecting various Indian cities like New Delhi, Kolkata, Mumbai and Chennai to Dhaka and Chittagong. From Bangladesh, US-Bangla Airlines, NOVOAIR, Regent Airways and Biman Bangladesh; and from India, Jet Airways, Spice Jet and Air India are operating flights between India and Bangladesh.

During Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit, steps were taken to engage Indian private sectors in generating power to help Bangladesh achieve its 2021 target of electricity generation. Effort is being made to increase the Bheramara–Baharampur grid inter-connection from 500 MW to 1,000 MW. Bangladesh has proposed additional power import from India in a phase wise manner through construction of an additional grid interconnection on the

⁹⁵² Dappe, M. H., and C. Kunaka (eds). "Connecting to Thrive: Challenges and Opportunities of Transport Integration in Eastern South Asia". World Bank Publications, 2021.

⁹⁵³ Landport Authority of India (LPAI).. Annual Report 2019-20. Department of Border Management, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India, 2020.

western side of Bangladesh, and India has agreed to look into the proposal. Power evacuation from the North East region (Rangia/Rowta) to Muzaffarnagar of India is again significant. This ± 800 KV, 7000 MW HVDC multi-terminal bi-pole DC grid line is going to pass through Bangladesh. India has proposed suitable power tapping points at Barapukuria in Bangladesh so that Bangladesh can benefit from this transmission line. India has also agreed to construct the Ramphal power project. Mongla and Bheramara are proposed as sites for two Indian Special Economic Zones (SEZ).

During Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's visit to New Delhi, a number of infrastructure projects were launched, announced, and revealed. This includes the Maitree power plant's Unit I being unveiled. The 1,320 (660x2) MW very basic coal-terminated nuclear energy station at Rampal, Khulna is being set up at an expected expense of around USD 2 billion with USD 1.6 billion as Indian Improvement Help under the Concessional Supporting Plan.

As a part of infrastructural development, India signed a historic tripartite agreement for civil nuclear cooperation with forerunner partners Bangladesh and Russia on 1st March, 2018. With the proposed supply of equipment and materials for the power station being built by Russia in Bangladesh, Nuclear Power Cooperation of India Limited (N.P.C.I.L) will play a crucial role in the construction of a nuclear power plant on Bangladesh soil. India has also been training Bangladeshi nuclear scientists for the project and providing support for capacity building.⁹⁵⁴ Deputy Director General of Rosatom, Russia's civil nuclear body, Nikolay Spassky, Bangladeshi Ambassador S.M. Saiful Hoque, and Indian Ambassador to Russia Pankaj Saran signed the agreement on 1st March, 2018 in Moscow. On a turnkey contract, Rosatom is building a nuclear power plant in Bangladesh. According to Rosatom officials, the scope of work includes equipment design, production, and supply, as well as construction, installation, pre-commissioning, and commissioning. India expressed an interest in participating in a Russian project in Bangladesh due to its previous experience operating Russian-built nuclear power plants and the Kudankulam nuclear power Plant in Tamil Nadu. This will be Bangladesh's first nuclear power plant. "Today marked a turning point in history for both of our nations as well as the sector as a whole. Nikolay Spassky stated, We are confident that this is the first step toward the formation of a new regional cooperation agenda that looks to the future."

⁹⁵⁴ "India, Russia, Bangladesh sign tripartite pact for civil nuclear cooperation", **The Economic Times**, 1st March, 2018.

“We still have a long way to go with nuclear technology,” Ali Zulquarnain, the former Chairman of the Bangladesh Atomic Energy Commission, told *Economic Times* from Dhaka. Our trusted neighbour India is further developed than us in such manner. Russia builds some of the nuclear power plants in India, and the two countries have good working relationships in this regard. Additionally, Bangladesh can collaborate with the two countries and benefit from their experiences.

This would be the first time Delhi has been involved in a civil nuclear project on foreign soil of Bangladesh, highlighting India’s global entry into a crucial nuclear industry. In light of Delhi’s proposal to Moscow to manufacture some nuclear power reactor equipment in India, will also boost the ‘Make in India’ initiative.

On the Padma River’s bank there are the two units of the Rooppur Nuclear Power Plant, each with a 1200 MW capacity. The generation units at the Rooppur Nuclear Power Plant will be based on VVER-1200 reactors with 3+ generation technology. The VVER-1200 is Russia’s strongest reactor, and it has three main advantages. It demonstrates high performance, durability, and safety. One of the world’s most advanced reactors, the VVER-1200 project has a unique combination of active and passive safety systems that provide maximum resistance to external and internal impacts, such as earthquakes, tornadoes, and plane crashes. Earlier Bangladesh and Russia agreed in February 2011 to build the 2,000 MW Rooppur Nuclear Power Plant, which will have two reactors, each of which will produce 1,200 MW of power. The nuclear power plant will be constructed at Rooppur, in the Ishwardi subdistrict of Pabna, in the country’s northwest, on the Padma River. It is anticipated that the Rooppur Nuclear Power Plant (RNPP) will cost up to \$2 billion US.

India is also likely to receive VVER-1200 technology for the second set of six nuclear reactors built by Russia. Russian officials told ‘*Economics Times*’ that this technology adheres to ‘Post-Fukushima’ nuclear power plant safety standards.⁹⁵⁵

Bangladesh is a living delta that was formed by rivers carrying sediments down from the Himalayas. At least 54 of these rivers are shared by Bangladesh and India. The water of these rivers is crucial for preventing salinity intrusion from the sea, as well as for agriculture, navigation, and inland fisheries, all of which are a major source of the people’s income. Sand, clay, and silt are among the sediments that these rivers and other bodies of water carry around

⁹⁵⁵“India, Russia, Bangladesh sign tripartite pact for civil nuclear cooperation”, *The Economic Times*, 1st March, 2018.

2.4 billion tons of each year. Of late, the Bangladesh government has granted a \$71 million agreement to various organizations to dig waterways as a component of a World Bank-supported undertaking to help transport routes between central India and its North Eastern states through Bangladesh.

By using Ashuganj river port, which is 50 kilometers (31 miles) from Agartala city (Tripura) in North Eastern India, the dredging of the routes will improve Bangladesh's connectivity with the seven North Eastern Indian states. When the contract was signed, a member of the Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (IWTA) named Matiur Rahman stated to the media, that "This will enhance trade and people-to-people contact between Bangladesh and India." He continued, Completion of dredging of the Dhaka-Chittagong-Ashuganj River route which will allow ships to come to Dhaka's Pangaon Inland Container Terminal, accelerating the pace of trade and business between Bangladesh and India.

India has sanctioned over Rs 24 crore for dredging in Gomati, a transboundary river between India and Bangladesh, and setting up 10 floating jetties for a waterway project, an official said on 12th February, 2022. Of the total 93-km proposed waterway from Sonamura in Tripura's Sepahijala district to Daudkandi in the neighbouring country, around 15.5-km stretch needs dredging to operationalise the route."⁹⁵⁶ Tripura state transport department principal secretary L Darlong said "The Ministry of Shipping has sanctioned Rs 24.53 crore to undertake dredging works in Gomati and construction of 10 floating jetties from Udaipur in Gomati district to Sonamura." The state government has already requested the Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI) to help the local administration for the strategic project. The Centre will take up the dredging issue with the Bangladesh Government to commence such work on its part. A permanent jetty would come up near Srimantapur Land Customs Station (L.C.S) in Sonamura with an estimated cost of Rs 5.04 crore. According to Biplab Kumar Deb, the then chief minister of Tripura, the Indian government has agreed to cover 80 percent of the total cost of dredging the Meghna River on Bangladesh's side.

On 23rd June, 2022, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina proposed collaborating with India to dredge rivers that are shared by the two neighbouring countries for their mutual

⁹⁵⁶ "Centre sanctions over Rs 24 crore for dredging in Gomati river to boost Indo-Bangla waterway project: Official, The Economic Times," 13th February, 2022, also available at https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/infrastructure/centre-sanctions-over-rs-24-crore-for-dredging-in-gomati-river-to-boost-indo-bangla-waterway-project-official/articleshow/89544399.cms?utm_source=contentofinterest&utm_medium=text&utm_campaign=cppst, accessed on 30.08.2022.

interest. When Vikram Kumar Doraiswami, Indian High Commissioner to Bangladesh, visited her at her Jatiya Sangsad Office, the premier made this proposal. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's Press Secretary Ihsanul Karim informed journalists this proposal after the press conference. Hasina stated during the talks that regular river dredging could guarantee water conservation. In this regard, she expressed concern regarding the devastation caused by the recent floods in the Indian states of Assam, Meghalaya, and Arunachal Pradesh. After heavy rains in the mountains of North-East India, the Prime Minister informed the Indian envoy Mr. Vikram Kumar Doraiswami that floods had ravaged much of the country's north-eastern region. She stated that the Government of Bangladesh is prepared to collaborate with India to recover from any such natural disaster. In response, Indian ambassador in Bangladesh Doraiswami stated that India is also prepared to assist Bangladeshi flood victims. According to the press secretary Ihsanul Karim, Doraiswami handed over Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's a letter in which he invited Sheikh Hasina to visit India. The high commissioner said that officials from the two countries are working on the planned visit, which is expected to take place in September 2023, through diplomatic channels for G-20 Summit. The High commissioner of India on behalf of Prime Minister Modi thanked the premier for successfully constructing the cherished Padma Bridge over the Padma river. In this regard, he mentioned that the newly constructed mega bridge will increase regional connectivity and establish a direct connection between the two countries. The Prime Minister was informed by the Indian High Commissioner that a trial run on shipping goods to India via Chittagong port has already taken place, and that similar trials will also take place along four distinct routes. The Indian ambassador, on the issue of electricity, said that New Delhi will establish a company and invest in the construction of a transmission line to transport electricity from Nepal to Bangladesh.⁹⁵⁷

Two 660MW ultra-supercritical coal-fired units and a twin reinforced concrete chimney (R.C.C) with a glass-reinforced plastic (G.R.P) liner will make up the Maitree power plant. Emissions will be controlled by equipping both units with dry bottom ash handling and flue gas desulfurization (F.G.D) systems. A mill reject system, a coal de-blocking device, an auxiliary boiler, a condensate polishing unit, air conditioning and ventilation systems, and other ancillary facilities will be included in this project. The project also includes a 1.2-kilometer-long jetty at Akram Point, approximately 60 kilometers downstream from the Mongla Port in Bangladesh, to receive coal supplies from Australia,

⁹⁵⁷“Hasina proposes joint river dredging with India to tackle floods,” The Daily Star, June 24, 2022.

Indonesia, and South Africa. The coal will continue to be transported by smaller ships through the Passur River to the power plant site from Akram Point. The project has a water intake system that uses the Passur River to get process water. To maintain a plant load factor (PLF) of 80 percent, the Maitree super thermal power station is expected to require 3.8 million tonnes of coal per year (Mtpa). In May 2017, components and services for the steam generator island package for the 1.3GW coal-fired power project will be provided by Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (B.H.E.L). It began in 2017, and commissioning is anticipated for 2022. Bangladesh India Friendship Power Company (B.I.F.P.C.L), a 50/50 partnership between the Bangladesh Power Development Board (B.P.D.B) and India's state-run National Thermal Power Corporation (N.T.P.C), is developing it. In south-west Bangladesh, the coal-fired facility is being built on a 1,834-acre site along the Passur River. The Export-Import (EXIM) Bank of India is providing funding for the Maitree super thermal power project with a loan amounting to 1.6 billion pounds (\$1.3 billion). In March 2017, Bangladesh India Friendship Power Company (BIFPCL) signed a loan agreement with the EXIM Bank of India. In July 2016, Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL) was given an engineering, procurement, and construction (E.P.C) contract for the Maitree super thermal power plant worth £1.15 billion (\$1.5 billion). In September 2018, BTL engineering, procurement, and construction (EPC), a subsidiary of India's Shracchi Group, was given a contract worth £23 million (\$31 million) to design, manufacture, supply, and commission the plant's entire coal conveyor system. Afcons Infrastructure, a subsidiary of India's Shapoorji Pallonji Group, and the Dextra Group are also contractors and suppliers.

In a big boost to India-Bangladesh cooperation, the Government of India has decided to show BTV World, a channel owned by Bangladesh TV, on the Doordarshan Free Dish which will be available for the viewers of Doordarshan in our country. At the same time, DD India would be made available in Bangladesh for being viewed by the people in that country. This arrangement is as a result of an Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed between Prasar Bharati and Bangladesh TV (BTV) on 7th May, 2019.⁹⁵⁸ The channel-BTV World would be of special interest to the viewers of Eastern India. The decision marks an important watershed in the strengthening of ties between the two countries and follows with an earlier decision taken by the two Governments to co-produce a film on Banga Bandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, which will be directed by the eminent film Director/Producer Shri Shyam Benegal.

⁹⁵⁸ Press Information Bureau, Government of India, Ministry of Information & Broadcasting, 19th June 2019, Delhi

In order to facilitate cross-border trade, both India and Bangladesh have established land customs stations (L.C.S), which is also known as land ports. Infrastructure for cargo handling, storage, and revenue collection are provided by these land ports. In order to meet the increasing demand from traders on both sides of the border, land ports have also been upgraded to Integrated Check Posts (I.C.Ps) at specific important points of entry along the border. It is required that the Integrated Check Posts (ICPs) contain immigration, border security, Customs, warehousing, banking facilities, and fuel stations as well as other regulatory agencies. Petrapole-Benapole, Agartala-Akhura, and Dawki-Tamabil are significant Integrated Check Posts (ICPs). These land ports are necessary for dealing with Integrated Check Posts (ICPs) at Agartala because they serve as points of contact for travelers and traders entering and leaving each country. Both governments are developing mechanisms that will increase the benefits of Land Custom Stations (LCTS) and Integrated Check Posts (ICPs). However, the two countries must establish a quicker and more comprehensive response system. The length of time required to inspect and evaluate cargo that is being transported from one country to another is one of the most common complaints made by traders. Since the ports on the Indian side of the border receive the majority of complaints, it takes a long time to process the details. Bangladesh also prohibits the export of motorbikes and electronic goods to India, which the latter seeks to lift. Goods that have already been certified by Bangladesh can't enter India because Indian ports require quality certification. Another issue that needs to be addressed is India's sudden ban on certain essential Bangladeshi products.

A comprehensive plan for the operation of border haats can be found in the 2011 Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the two governments regarding the establishment of border haats. The decision to establish border haats was finalized with the intention of formalizing illicit trade through the border areas and providing people living in remote areas along the border between India and Bangladesh with an economic opportunity. Indian states of Meghalaya and Tripura have given the significance of establishing these border haats on their respective borders with Bangladesh. The Director General for South Asia, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Bangladesh Mr. Tareq Md. Ariful Islam added that border haats are also important because they play a social role by engaging people living in remote areas. It is for this reason that the selection of sites for these Border haats is very important. It has been a long time since the proposals for border haats were raised, so the speed of setting up the proposed border haats needs to be looked into. It is important to increase the number

of border haats in border area to strengthen country's economy. In addition to the location, supporting infrastructure, such as banking and security facilities, is required. Numerous experts in Bangladesh have also stated that border haats need to have their infrastructural improvement. In addition to infrastructural support, border trade through these haats poses a significant issue. For locals especially from rural area who aren't used to official trade rules and regulations, regulatory mechanisms like Non Triff Barriers of different products (NTBs), the border hat is a necessary means for their livelihood. This makes it difficult for them to deal with the prospect. People are frequently discouraged by the Non Triff Barriers (NTBs), which frequently restrict the scope of trade that would otherwise be possible through illegal trade. As a result, it is believed that, although the Non Triff Barriers (NTBs) may not completely disappear, simpler regulations would encourage increased participation in border trade through haats. The establishment of these border haats is intended to promote the well-being of people living in border regions and strengthen bilateral economic ties between the two countries. However, the operation of these Border haats is controlled and monitored by a number of official regulations. These rules are necessary to stop illegal movement and trade.

Finally comes the question-What are the major impediments in the development of consensus regarding the issues of border security? First of all it can be said that the terrain along the Indo-Bangladesh border is a mix of hilly and jungle tracks, plains, riverside, and low-lying land. This diverse mix of topographical features makes the border extremely porous. The thick vegetation and steep gradient in the hilly and forested tracks along North Bengal, South Assam, Meghalaya, and Tripura hinder the construction of proper roads, fences and Border Observation Posts (BOPs). Patrolling the border is quite difficult because of the lack of roads and greater inter-Border Observation Posts (BOP) distances. Consequently, insurgent groups mis-use these stretches along the border to smuggle arms and drugs and also to crossover to Bangladesh.

The riverside border along with multiple river channels, especially in Dhubri sector in Assam, makes surveillance of the entire stretch almost impossible. During dry seasons, these rivers part into tributaries, and tracking their courses at night is extremely difficult. River border line poses a very complex problem because the shifting river route, soil erosion and frequent floods make it difficult to demarcate borders especially when they form chars and islands. They also throw up stretches of char land, which get inundated during floods. Though inhabited, these lands are weather-bound, and there is an inadequate presence of security forces. These char lands provide shelter to illegal immigrants from Bangladesh and turn into

a hub of criminal activities like smuggling, theft, kidnapping, and trafficking in arms, drugs, and humans. Hallidayganj and Mancachar have become major smuggling centres in this sector. Most of the rivers constantly shift their courses inundating older land and uncovering new land masses. This creates a problem of identification of the boundary along these courses. The flat and fertile land along the border supports dense human settlement right up to the border. There are more than a hundred villages located right along the zero line, with many houses opening into Bangladesh. The ethnic composition of the people is similar on both sides of the border, and it is quite difficult to differentiate between the citizens of India and Bangladesh. Moreover, traditional trans-border ethnic and socio-cultural ties continue even today. This factor has helped migrants from Bangladesh to crossover to India illegally as they find a welcoming population across the border. Therefore, stretches along the borders in south Bengal, Assam, and Tripura have witnessed a large-scale influx of illegal migrants. Interestingly, where the ethnic composition of the border population is different like in North Bengal and Meghalaya, migration from Bangladesh does not take place, because the indigenous population does not allow the illegal Bangladeshi migrants to settle down permanently in their territory.

The condition on the India-Bangladesh border has become rather difficult due to an increase in the density of the population. The main reasons of the increase of the population in border areas are (1) the overall increase in the population of the country; and (2) the influx of illegal migrants from Bangladesh who mostly settled in the border areas. Poor governance, economic disparities, poverty, unemployment, political clash, political unrest, religious intolerance etc. and frequent political instability, political persecution, pre and post election violence in Bangladesh are the major causes of illegal movement and activities across the border. These factors compel the people to move in search of work and food security towards India. However, the people living in low-lying areas along the rivers often move up towards the mainland during floods and these internally displaced populations are also often termed as 'illegal migrants'. It is important to note that not only Bangladeshis, but Indians are also crossing the border for one reason or the other. The production of goods, mostly perishable in nature does not find any market on the Indian side of the border. The poor transport and communication facilities on the Indian side force Indian producers to sell their products in Bangladeshi markets. As in the case of the Meghalaya border, the boundary lies on the foothills towards Bangladesh, while the plains are in India where the vegetables are produced to be consumed by both sides. This did not initially matter to the people as the borders were

virtually porous and people could visit each other freely. The intermingling ethnic groups continued to enter into marriage alliances and subsequently nurtured relations to the extent of settling down, particularly in Assam. Even though many of the land and railways linkages were discontinued after the India–Pakistan war of 1965, efforts continued to access the borders. Gradually, due to legal vigilance and tightening of control on the borders, particularly after 9/11 terrorist attack on World Trade Centre (U.S.A), Indian Parliament attack on 13th December, 2001, Mumbai serial terrorist attack by Laskar-e-Taiba on 26th November, 2008 such practices have become quite difficult. The policing of border has been expanded to include mitigating the emerging threats and illegal activities of violent non-state actors and the volume of border killings have become a concern for people living around the border areas. Many of the Indian Border Security Force (BSF) personnel are also recruited from the non-bordering states of India who are unfamiliar with the complexities, realities and uniqueness of the Indo-Bangladesh Border. In the last decade, more than 900 people were indiscriminately killed by the BSF.⁹⁵⁹ These figures have increased due to the increasing regional security threats. The transnational terrorism and insurgency movements have compelled the states to take such cohesive steps to tackle the problem. Former Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh talked about the growing threat that naxalism and other domestic insurgent movements pose to the country's security and integrity at the Chief Ministers' meeting on internal security in New Delhi on 16th April, 2012.⁹⁶⁰ He also talked about the support these insurgencies get from outside the country. External forces, particularly those from Bangladesh (Jamat-e-Islami and its killer armies like Al-Badr, Al Shams, Razakars Harkat-ul-Jihad Islami), have provided support to insurgent movements in particular in Northeast India. Assam's chief minister, Tarun Gogoi, brought up this issue and the potential threat it poses to India's internal security. He pleaded for greater pressure to be placed on Bangladesh to take action against these insurgent groups that operate from its territory. In addition, he demanded that border fencing be installed as soon as possible and emphasized the significance of increased border surveillance in North East India and Indo-Bangladesh border areas. All these factors are the major barrier in the development of consensus regarding the issues of border security between the two countries.

⁹⁵⁹<https://www.hrw.org/report/2010/12/09/trigger-happy/excessive-use-force-indian-troops-bangladeshborder>, Accessed on 30.07.2022

⁹⁶⁰“Chief minister attend internal security; P. M reaches out to states”, NDTV, 16th April, 2012, New Delhi.

Bilateral relations between India and Bangladesh since 1971 are in turmoil. There are some obvious reasons for this. The majority people of Bangladesh have been likely to be in the mindset of conceiving India as a constant threat to Bangladesh integrity and prosperity. There has been a phenomenon among the big countries to dominate small countries by hook or by crook in order to make their influence upon the smaller countries for the sake of their dominance upon the smaller one. Since the creation of Bangladesh in 1971 Bangladesh faced several tremendous problems to make her economy stable and politically strong to face outside challenges. The main reason behind this has been the fundamental attitude of regionalism among them which make this country to expand its wider vision of statism beyond its periphery. It is argued that the people of today's Bangladesh did not belong to the genesis of the creation of Bangladesh and they thought that Bangladesh is nothing but a territory entirely dominated by successive Indian governments' hegemony. Bilateral relations between India and Bangladesh in the South Asian region in general, would always be affected by this geo-political factor. This psychological fear factor working in the mind of majority Bangladeshi people that perceives India as a threat. Bangladesh, on account of being small in size and deficient in resources, was run by this kind of psycho-pathological phenomenon. A latent fear prevails upon the majority people of Bangladesh by Bangladeshi government controlled media that an Indian hegemony encompasses Bangladesh and Bangladesh will act as a satellite state of India. Mujib's Awami League government would have sold out Bangladesh's national interests to India for her military assistance during the Liberation War. In Bangladesh domestic politics, during four party coalition government's tenure from 2001-2006, Bangladesh branded India as an 'enemy country' and as a result, during the BNP coalition tenure the bilateral ties were at low ebb. Recently, Indian Government's decision to construct the barbed wire fence on Indo-Bangladesh border as a 'protective device' to prevent the influx of illegal migrants and cross border terrorism across the border but the Bangladesh government has strongly rejected it, described the fence as the psychological expression of India's 'hegemony' in south asian region. Besides, India's indifference to Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh and India's strategic closeness with Myanmar is another bone of contention between the two countries that hampers the depth of bilateral relations. There was enough evidence available of illegal arms from China, arriving in Cox's Bazar and Chittagong, and being distributed to different destinations in the North East India to separate it from mainland India.⁹⁶¹ Small states insecurity-syndrome of India's

⁹⁶¹ Op.cit, BGB Darpan 2012-2016', Border Guard Bangladesh, at www.bgb.gov.bd, accessed on 28.07.2022

predominance in South Asian region is paramount reason for People's Republic of Bangladesh to develop geo-economic-defensive-strategic relations with People's Republic of China. The friendly relations between China and Bangladesh in regional and international affairs is also a cause of concern in the growing bilateral relations between India and Bangladesh. During Begum Khaleda Zia term's of office (1991-1996, 2001-2006) China's 'encirclement policy', 'strategic defense closeness' with Bangladesh, extreme Islamic fanatic fundamentalism and Zia's friendly relation with China and Pakistan were a matter of security concern for Indian Government. At the conclusion of Chinese Prime Minister Zhu Rongji's visit to Bangladesh, Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre (BCFCC) built at Sher-e Bangla Nagar in Dhaka. In December 2002 Khaleda Zia paid a five-day official visit to China when China agreed to provided Bangladesh with a grant of about US \$ 7.25 million for the construction of the sixth Bangladesh-China Friendship Bridge over the Dhaleswari River for the betterment of rural development. China's efforts to develop strategic depth in Bangladesh, as part of its foreign policy of encircling India have raised eyebrows in India. The proposed highway from Kuming in China to Chittagong via Myanmar would facilitate strategic connectivity between the two countries. These were great blow to India for geo-economic safety and geo-strategic security. Not only that, Bangladesh's proximity with China and Pakistan was a matter of concern for Indian foreign policy during that time to till date. In October 2016, Chinese President Xi Jinping visited Bangladesh. In July, 2019 Bangladesh Prime Minister, Sheikh Hasina officially visited China and attended at the 13th Summer Davos Forum. Chinese Prime Minister Li Keqiang, chairman of the standing committee of People's Republic of China Li Zhanshu met Hasina respectively for upgradeing fruitful coordination and cooperation in the various fields of politics, economy, military and culture. China is Bangladesh largest trading partner and Bangladesh is also china's third largest trading partner in south Asia. On 15th June, 2020 at patrolling point 14, Indian and Chinese troops clashed for six hours in a steep section of a mountainous region in the Galwan Valley was a great threat to Indian security and proved Chinese territorial expansionism policy. China's proposed 'One Belt-One Road' project through Pakistan and India's proposed 'Rail and Shipping corridor' through Soudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates and Jordan excluding Pakistan to connect European Union is a counter pressure to china to stop Chinese territorial expansion and hegemony in South East Asia and South China sea. In response to media queries on the so called 2023 "standard map" of China, the Official Spokesperson, Shri Arindam Bagchi said: "We have today lodged a strong protest through diplomatic channels with the Chinese side on the so called 2023 'standard map' of China that lays claim to India's Arunachal

Pradesh as Chinese territory. We reject these claims as they have no basis.” Such steps by the Chinese side only complicate the resolution of the boundary question.⁹⁶² The BRICS expansion process and the decision on inviting the Argentine Republic, the Arab Republic of Egypt, the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates to become full members of BRICS from 1st January 2024 once again proved Chinese hegemonic strategic control over the new member countries⁹⁶³ in order to expand its power, position and influence in those region to accommodate its long term interest. On 13th May 2023 at Indo-Bangladesh 6th oceanic conference Indian foreign minister S. Jayshanker told about the Chinese hegemony in south Asian region.

Some pertinent controversies arose as regard the relations between India and Bangladesh. Some prominent Bangladeshi personalities (Md. Firoz Alamun, Assistant Professor, Islamic University, Kustia, Bangladesh, Taslima Akter, Associate Professor, University Of Chittagong, Chittagong, Bangladesh.) whom I had the opportunity to meet in relation to my work “Dynamics of India-Bangladesh relations since 1991: Border security, Connectivity and Infrastructure” argued that India-Bangladesh relations are at stake for the reason as stated below.

Still Bangladesh has not forgone their tradition about the old perception that India as before did not change its hegemonic attitude towards Bangladesh.

A section of Bangladeshi people always think that India is aggressive and to some extent hegemonic with regard to trade relations and the basic problem of Bangladesh particularly in regard to water distribution such as release of adequate quantum of water from Teesta to Bangladesh particularly for the cultivation of main crops like rice, wheat, maize, pulses, potato and oil seeds etc. In northern region of Bangladesh from Teesta with the lame excuse that the West Bengal successive governments did not agree to this stand only for its interest in the northern Bengal which the state of West Bengal perceives dry out and later on it became a political issue between India and Bangladesh. Several visits, meetings, dialogues by the Prime Minister of both the countries held at Dhaka and New Delhi did not bear out any fruit. In several elections in Bangladesh this issue became prominent in the hands of opposition party of Bangladesh BNP, J.P, Jammāt and others. Now the Sheikh Hasina Government who is likely to face the issue in the coming Jatiya Sansad election held in 2024. It is an issue which could not

⁹⁶² Press conference, Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, 29th August, 2023, New Delhi.

⁹⁶³ Ananda Bazar Patrika, (Kolkata), 19th August, 2023, p-9

be resolved without the sacrifice of India in the interest of maintaining stability in Bangladesh particularly for the Sheikh Hasina Government who has been trying best to resolve the water problem but it is antithetical to the common people of Bangladesh who still regard India as anti-Islamic country even they know it well that more than 12 crore Muslims have been living in India with freedom and fundamental rights as enshrined in Part III of Indian Constitution.

The conclusion that have been derived from my PhD study that there are a large number of long standing bilateral disputes between the two countries that have not been resolved due to lack of genuine political will on the part of Bangladesh and to some extent India as well. It can be pointed out that the issues of confrontation between India and Bangladesh so far as the regimes changes in both the countries are concerned. Here in lies the episode that the two contending parties the Awami League or the BNP on the Bangladesh side and the U.P.A led by the Indian National Congress and the N.D.A led by Bharatiya Janata Party (B.J.P) on the Indian side made the paradox of the growing relations complicated. In the era of globalization and liberalization common awareness among the common masses of Bangladesh as well as media, intelligentsia, politicians irrespective of caste, creed, religion and community must realize that the real enemies of the country are not the small states insecurity-syndrome of India's predominance, or psychological fear of Indian hegemony or blind anti-Indianism but poverty, illiteracy, malnutrition, natural calamities and unequal distribution of the social resources along with communalism, terrorism or religious fundamentalism in Bangladesh. India, a next door neighbouring country of Bangladesh, always plays a vital role in the global politics and international affairs. Bangladesh should avoid vacillating attitude and adopt the pragmatism, positive and realistic approach to deal with all the matters for its national interest. Bangladesh has become a significant partner to India in regional politics and development over the past twenty years. Recently Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's august presence with West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee and Cricket Association of Bengal (CAB) President Sourav Ganguly at the iconic cricket stadium in the city of joy Kolkata's Eden Garden to introduce the 'Pink Ball Test' between the two countries created a new chapter in the history of Indo-Bangladesh bilateral relations. Besides, though Bangladesh is not the member of Group 20 countries, India has shown her genuine solidarity by inviting her trusted neighbour Bangladesh as guest country in the global G-20 Leaders Summit on 9-10 September, 2023 held in New Delhi under the Indian Presidency. The G-20 slogan is 'One Earth-One Family-One Future.' Prime Minister Narendra Modi held a bilateral meeting with his Bangladeshi counterpart Sheikh Hasina, a day before the G-20 Leaders Summit begins in Delhi. The two leaders discussed the entire

gamut of bilateral cooperation including political and security cooperation, border management, trade and connectivity, water resources, power and energy, development cooperation, cultural and people to people ties. Current developments in the region and cooperation in the multilateral fora were also discussed to strengthen the multifaceted relationship between the two countries based on strong historical and cultural ties and mutual trust and understanding.⁹⁶⁴

⁹⁶⁴ Press conference, Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, 8th September, 2023, New Delhi.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

BIBLIOGRAPHY

PRIMARY SOURCES

- Annual report of Bangladesh trade, Government of Bangladesh, Dhaka, 2010-2011.
- Annual report of Ministry of commerce, Government of Bangladesh, Dhaka, 2001-2002
- Annual report of Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, New Delhi, 2014-2015.
- Annual report of Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, New Delhi, 2013-2014
- ‘India Bangladesh Political and Economic Relation’, Ministry of External Affairs, India, 2014
- Assessment of Development in Bangladesh-Political Economy in Perspective, Dhaka, 2015.
- Bangladesh Bilateral Trade, Ministry of External Affairs, India, 2014.
- Independent Media Centre Report, January 9, 2003
- Joint Declaration between Bangladesh and India, Dhaka, 7th June, 2015.
- Minister of State in the Union Ministry of Home Affairs, ID Swami, Rajya Sabha, Unstarred Question no. 356, July 25, 2001.
- President’s states visit to Bangladesh (March 3-5, 2013), Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India
- Press Issue Release High Commission of India, Dhaka, July 18, 2008
- Ministry of Commerce & Industry, Government of India, “India - Bangladesh Business forum meets in New Delhi”, 4th October, 2019 by Press Information Bureau(PIB), Delhi.
- Ministry of Commerce & Industry, Government of India, “India - Bangladesh Business forum meets in New Delhi”, 4th October, 2019 by Press Information Bureau, Delhi.
- Ministry of Defence, Government of India, Press Information Bureau: 5th June, 2022 , Delhi. Available at <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseIframePage.aspx?PRID=1831346>.
- Ministry of Defence, Government of India, Press Information Bureau : 16th June, 2022 , Delhi. Available at <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseIframePage.aspx?PRID=1834605> assessed on 20.11.2022

“Yearly Export-Import Data Bank”, Ministry of Commerce, Government of India. 29th May, 2022, 8th Five Year Plan, 2020-2025, General Economics Division, Bangladesh Planning Commission, p. 119.

Ministry of External Affairs (MEA). (2002b). Union minister of state in the Ministry of External Affairs, Digvijay Singh, Rajya Sabha, unstarred question no. 999, 27 February 2002. www.meadev.nic.in, Accessed on 30.07.2022

Ministry of External Affairs (MEA). (1992). *Annual report (1991–92)*. New Delhi: Ministry of External Affairs. http://www.mea.gov.in/annual-reports.htm?57/Annual_Reports, Accessed on 30.07.2022

Ministry of External Affairs (MEA). Act East Policy. Press Information Bureau, Government of India. 23rd December, 2015.

Ministry of External Affairs, (2002a). External Affairs Minister Jaswant Singh’s statement in Rajya Sabha, 14 March. Retrieved from www.meadev.nic.in, Accessed on 30.07.2022

Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, 27th March 2021.

Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, 27th March 2021.

Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India. Published on 16 May, 2018.

Ministry of Home Affairs, Annual Report, 2015–2016, p-37 Government of India. [http://mha.nic.in/sites/upload_files/mha/files/AR\(E\)1516.pdf](http://mha.nic.in/sites/upload_files/mha/files/AR(E)1516.pdf) Accessed on 30.07.2022

Ministry of Home Affairs. (2016). Annual Report, 2015–2016. Government of India. [http://mha.nic.in/sites/upload_files/mha/files/AR\(E\)1516.pdf](http://mha.nic.in/sites/upload_files/mha/files/AR(E)1516.pdf), Accessed on 30.07.2022

Ministry of Home Affairs. (2016). Annual Report, 2015–2016. Government of India. [http://mha.nic.in/sites/upload_files/mha/files/AR\(E\)1516.pdf](http://mha.nic.in/sites/upload_files/mha/files/AR(E)1516.pdf), Accessed on 30.07.2022

Ministry of Railways, Government of India, 2021

Mode of Operation of Border Haats Across the Border Between Bangladesh and India, 15 May, 2012, http://commerce.nic.in/trade/MOU_Border_Haats_across_Border_India_and_Bangladesh2010.pdf, accessed on 16th August, 2021.

Islam, Amir-Ul, ‘History of Bangladesh War of Independence, documents’, Vol-15, Ministry of Information, Gov. of Peoples Republic of Bangladesh, Dhaka, 1985

Nayanima Basu, “It takes 138 hrs, 55 signatures to move 1 truck from India to Bangladesh, says World Bank”, The Print, 29th April, 2022.

Ministry of Defence, Government of India, Press Information Bureau (PIB release) 12th April, 2021.

Ministry of External Affairs (MEA). (2002a). External Affairs Minister Jaswant Singh’s statement in Rajya Sabha, 14th March. www.meadev.nic.in Accessed on 30.07.2022

Ministry of External Affairs (MEA). (2011). India & Bangladesh land boundary agreement. New Delhi: Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India. https://www.mea.gov.in/Uploads/PublicationDocs/24529_LBA_MEA_Booklet_final.pdf. Accessed on 30.07.2022

Ministry of External Affairs (MEA). (2011). India & Bangladesh land boundary agreement. New Delhi: Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India. https://www.mea.gov.in/Uploads/PublicationDocs/24529_LBA_MEA_Booklet_final.pdf. Accessed on 30.07.2022

Ministry of External Affairs (MEA). (2011). India & Bangladesh land boundary agreement. New Delhi: Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India. https://www.mea.gov.in/Uploads/PublicationDocs/24529_LBA_MEA_Booklet_final.pdf. Accessed on 30.07.2022

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Bangladesh (MOFA). (2015). Protocol for exchange of instrument of ratification regarding the India–Bangladesh land boundary agreement, 1974 and protocol of 2011 to the land boundary agreement. <http://mofa.gov.bd/sites/default/files/Doc%20A%20Protocol%20for%20Exchange%20of%20Instrument.pdf>

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Bangladesh (MOFA). (2015). Protocol for exchange of instrument of ratification regarding the India–Bangladesh land boundary agreement, 1974 and protocol of 2011 to the land boundary agreement. <http://mofa.gov.bd/sites/default/files/Doc%20A%20Protocol%20for%20Exchange%20of%20Instrument.pdf> Accessed on 30.07.2022

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Bangladesh (MOFA). (2015). Protocol for exchange of instrument of ratification regarding the India–Bangladesh land boundary agreement, 1974 and protocol of 2011 to the land boundary agreement.<http://mofa.gov.bd/sites/default/files/Doc%20A%20Protocol%20for%20Exchange%20of%20Instrument.pdf>, Accessed on 30.07.2022

Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) ,(2015). *Annual report (2014–15)*. New Delhi: Ministry of Home Affairs. <http://www.mha.nic.in/AnnualReports> Accessed on 30.07.2022

Ministry of Home Affairs. (2016). Annual Report, 2015–2016. Government of India. [http://mha.nic.in/sites/upload_files/mha/files/AR\(E\)1516.pdf](http://mha.nic.in/sites/upload_files/mha/files/AR(E)1516.pdf), Accessed on 30.07.2022

Ministry of Home Affairs. (2016). Annual Report, 2015–2016. Government of India.[http://mha.nic.in/sites/upload_files/mha/files/AR\(E\)1516.pdf](http://mha.nic.in/sites/upload_files/mha/files/AR(E)1516.pdf), accessed on 30.07.2022 .

Ministry of Railways, Government of India, 2021

Ministry of Railways, Government of India, Press Information Bureau,6th September, 2022, Delhi.

“Starting of freight trains via restored Haldibari (India) – Chilahati (Bangladesh) rail link”,Ministry of Railway, Government of India,Posted On: 2nd August, 2021 by Press Information Bureau, (PIB) Delhi.

“Starting of Freight Trains via Restored Haldibari (India) – Chilahati (Bangladesh) Rail Link”, Press Information Bureau, Ministry of Railways, Government of India, 2ndAugust, 2021, Delhi.

India - Bangladesh Joint Statement during the State Visit of Prime Minister of Bangladesh to India, 7th September,2022,New Delhi.

'India and Bangladesh sign Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) to operationalize agreement on coastal shipping', Press Information Bureau,Ministry of Shipping, Government of India, 15 November 2015

Press Information Bureau (defence wing) Government of India, New Delhi, 11th August,2022.

Press Information Bureau, Government of India, Ministry of Commerce & Industry, 4th October, 2019, New Delhi.

Press Information Bureau, Government of India, Ministry of Culture, 7th April, 2011, Delhi.

Press Information Bureau, Government of India, Ministry of Culture, 7th April, 2011, Delhi.

Press Information Bureau, Government of India, Ministry of Information & Broadcasting, 19th June 2019, Delhi

Press Information Bureau, Government of India, Ministry of Shipping, 12th March-2020.

‘Bangladesh Documents, Vol. 1’,: Publication Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, New Delhi, p. 669.

“Indian Railways hands over 10 Broad Gauge Locomotives to Bangladesh” Press Information Bureau, New Delhi Government of India, Ministry of Railways, 27 JUL 2020 4:21PM by PIB Delhi. United Nations Development Program, *The Human Development Report* 1994, p.p. 22–44.

Census Report of India, 2011.

Bureau of Immigration, Govt. of India. <https://tourism.gov.in/sites/default/files/2022-09/India%20Tourism%20Statistics%202022%20%28English%29.pdf>

SECONDARY SOURCES

BOOKS

- Abbas B.M , “**The Ganga River dispute**”, University Press, Dhaka, 1982.
- Adami, V. **National frontiers in relation to international law** (Trans. T.T. Behrens). London: Oxford University Press,1927.
- Agrawal, Meena. **Rajiv Gandhi.**: Diamond Pocket Books (P) Ltd.,New Delhi, 2004
- Ahmed Nizam, ‘**Non Party Caretaker Government in Bangladesh-Experience and Prospect**’, The University Press Limited , Dhaka, 2004.
- Ahmed, M. ‘**South Asia: Crisis of Development**’, The University Press Ltd,Dhaka,Bangladesh ,2002,
- Ahmed, M.**South Asia: Crisis of Development.**: The University Press Ltd,Dhaka, 2002
- Ahmed, Moudud, ‘**Bangladesh: Era of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman**’,.: The University Press Ltd., Dhaka, 1983
- Aiyar, Vidyasagar ‘Bangladesh’ in Dipankar Banerjee, (ed.) ‘**Comprehensive and Co-operative security in South Asia**’, Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies, New Delhi.
- Anisuzzaman, M. ‘**The Identity Question and Politics**’, in R. Jahan (ed.) **Bangladesh Promise and Performance**, The University Press Ltd,Dhaka,2002
- Anisuzzaman, M. ‘**The Identity Question and Politics**’, in R. Jahan (ed.) **Bangladesh Promise and Performance**, The University Press Ltd,Dhaka,Bangladesh, 2002
- Anisuzzaman, M. op.cit,pp. 45–56. And Ahmed, M.‘**South Asia: Crisis of Development**’,.: The University Press Ltd, Dhaka , Bangladesh,2002.
- Anthony Mascarenhas, ‘**Bangladesh: A Legacy of Blood**’, London: Hodder and Stoughton,1986.
- Archarya Modonmohan, “**Bharat Khotha**”, B Sarkar and Company,Kolkata,1998 (part-II).
- ASM Shamsul Arefin, **Bangladesh Documents 1971,Part 1**,Bangladesh Research and Publications,Dhaka,Bangladesh,2009,
- ASM Shamsul Arefin, **Bangladesh Documents 1971,Part 1**,Bangladesh Research and Publications,Dhaka,Bangladesh,2009

- Balibar, È. The borders of Europe. In P. Cheah & B. Robbins (Eds.), **Cosmopolitics: Thinking and feeling beyond the nation**. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. 1998,
- Bammi, Y. M. '**India-Bangladesh Relations: The Way Ahead**', Vijay Books India Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, 2010
- Bammi, Y.M., '**Indo-Bangladesh Relations : The way ahead**', Vij Book Publications, New Delhi, 2010.
- Banarjee, A.C. "**The making of Indian constitution**", vol. 1. Calcutta: A. Mukharjee and Co, 1948.
- Barkat, A., Zaman, S.U., Rahman, A., & Poddar, A. (1997). **Political economy of the vested property act in rural Bangladesh**. Dhaka: Association for Land Reform and Development, 1997
- Begum, A.A. "**Engendered lives: Women in the West Garo Hills**". In P. Banerjee, & A.B. Ray choudhury (Eds), *Women in Indian Borderlands* ,. New Delhi: SAGE, 2011
- Bindral, S.S. '**Farakka Barrage Agreement: A Review in Dirender Grover (ed.)** Encyclopedia of SAARC Nations, Vol.4, No.2, New Delhi, Deep and Deep Publications.
- Chandra, B. "**India's struggle for independence 1857–1947**". New Delhi: Penguin Books Ltd, 1989.
- Charabarti Radharaman, '**Bharatiya Rashtrachintar Bikash O Rajnaitik Andolan**', Progressive publisher, Kolkata, 2009
- Chester, L. "**Border and conflict in South Asia: The Radcliffe boundary commission and the partition of Punjab**", Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2009
- Chowdhury, G.W, '**The Last Days of United Pakistan**', Bloomington, : Indiana University Press, 1974.
- Chowdhury, G.W. '**The Last Days of United Pakistan**'. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1974.
- Dappe, M. H., and C. Kunaka (eds). "**Connecting to Thrive: Challenges and Opportunities of Transport Integration in Eastern South Asia**". World Bank Publications, 2021.

- Das, M.N. **Partition and independence of India**. New Delhi: Vision Books,1982.
- Datta, Sreeradha. **‘Caretaker Democracy Political Process in Bangladesh, 2006-2008’**, Institute of Defence studies and analysis, August, 2009.
- Dev, Bimal, J, and Lahiri, Dilip. K, **‘Assam Muslims. Politicsand Cohesion’**, Mittal Publication., New Delhi, 1983, p-2.
- Dev, Milton Kumar and Samad Md.Abdus , **‘History Of Bangladesh 1905-2005’** Bishwabidyalaya Prokasoni, Dhaka, 2014.
- Dixit J. N. **‘Liberation and Beyond: Indo-Bangladesh Relations’**, Konark Publishers,New Delhi, 1999,p-64.
- Dutta,V.P., **‘India’s foreign policy in a changing world’**, Vikash Publishing House, New Delhi,1999.
- Franda, Marcus. **‘Bangladesh: The First Decade.’**: South Asian Publishers,New Delhi ,1982,p- 222.
- Gandhi, I. **‘India and Bangladesh: Selected Speeches and Statements’**, New Delhi: Orient Longman,1972
- Gandhi, I. **India and Bangladesh: Selected Speeches and Statements**. New Delhi: Orient Longman,1972.
- Garry Jonathan Bass, **“The Blood Telegram: India’s secret war in East Pakistan”**, Random Houser Group Limited, U.K,2013
- Ghosh Soma, Pal Nibedita, Bonik Rakhi, **‘Bharater sanbidhan o Shasan Byabasther Patha Parikrama’**, Progressive publisher ,Kolkata,2014
- Ghosh, P.S.’**Cooperation and Conflict in South Asia’**, The UniversityPress Ltd,Dhaka ,Bangladesh,1989
- Guha ,Amalendu, **‘Planter Raj to Swaraj: Freedom Struggle and Electoral Politics in Assam, 1826-1947’**, New Delhi: Indian Council of Historical Research, 1977.
- Hamid Shamim, **‘Bangladesh and United Nation: common principles, shared values’**, The University Press Limited, Dhaka, Bangladesh, 2011
- Hamid Shamim, **‘Bangladesh and United Nation: common principles, shared values’**, The University Press Limited, Dhaka, 2011

- Hamid, Shamim. '**Bangladesh and the United Nations Common Principles, Shared Values**', The University Press Limited , Dhaka , 2011 .
- Haq, M. New imperatives of human security. In M. Haq (Ed.), **Reflections on human development** New York: Oxford University Press.1995
- Haque, Md.Shahabul and Alam, Md. Bayezid. '**Bangladesher Jote Rajniti :1954-2014**', Abosar publication, Dhaka, 2014.
- Haque, Md.Shahabul and Alam, Md. Bayezid. '**Bangladesher Jote Rajniti :1954-2014**', Abosar publication, Dhaka,Bangladesh, 2014
- Hasan S. and A.R. Khan, '**Bangladesh Floods: The Political Debate**', in M.G. Kabir and S. Hasan (eds) '**Issues and Challenges Facing Bangladesh Foreign Policy**', Dhaka: Bangladesh Society for International Studies,1989.
- Hasan Zaheer, '**The Separation of East Pakistan the Rise and Realization of Bengali Muslim Nationalism**', University Press Limited,Dhaka,Bangladesh, 1994
- Hazarika, Sanjoy , '**Strangers of the Mist**', Viking, New Delhi, 1994, p-41.
- Ibrahim, Neelima, '**Ami Birangona Bolcchi**', Jagotri Prokashon, Bangladesh, Dhaka 1998
- India: The Speeches and Reminiscences of Indira Gandhi (1975)**. London: Hodder & Stoughton,2001
- International Relations Theory and South Asia*, ed. E Sridharan: Oxford University Press,New Delhi, 2011, p.p-260-297.
- Islam Md. Nazmul, "'India-Bangladesh Relations: Policy Challenges under the Norendra Modi's and Sheikh Hasina regime'", **Innovation and Global Issues in Social Sciences: Congress Book**, In Globe Institution, 2017, p- 72.
- IslamRafiquel, '**Bangladesh Liberation Movement**', The University Press Limited(UPL), Dhaka,1987.
- Jacob, Lt. Gen JFR., '**Surrender At Dacca Birth of a nation**' Manohar publishers , New Delhi, 2015.
- Jacques K, '**Bangladesh, India and Pakistan**',.: Palgrave Macmillan, London ,2000
- Jahan, R.'**Introduction in Bangladesh, Promise and Performance**': The University Press Ltd,Dhaka, 2002

- Jamal Ahmed Abdulla, 'Mukti Bahini and the Liberation War of Bangladesh, A Review of Conflicting views', **Asian Affairs, centre for development Research**, Bangladesh, vol-30.(4),2008.
- Jayanta Kumar Ray, "**Democracy and Nationalism on trial: a study of East Pakistan**," Indian institute of advances study, Simla, 1968
- Jayapalan, N. '**India and Her Neighbours**', Atlantic Publishers & Dist, New Delhi, 2000
- Jha, Nalini Kant (ed.) '**Indian Foreign Policy in a Changing World**', South Asian Publishers, New Delhi, 2000.
- Joyeeta Bhattacharjee, 'India-Bangladesh defence cooperation: Coming of age, at last?', ORF Issue Brief 26th July 2018.
- Kabir Md. Monoar Bhuian '**Politics and Development of the Jamaat-e-Islami Bangladesh**, South Asian Publishers, New Delhi, 2006.
- Karim, S.A, Sheikh Mujib: **Triumph and Tragedy**, The University Press Limited, Dhaka, Bangladesh, 2005, p.p.-249-255.
- Karlekar Hiranmay, "**Bangladesh: The Next Afghanistan?.**" SAGE, new Delhi ,2005, p-51–52.
- Karlekar, Hiranmoy. '**Bangladesh: The next Afghanistan**', Sage Publication, new Delhi, 2005.
- Khan, Shamsul I, Islam S. Amimul, Haque M. Imdadul., '**Political Culture, Political Parties and the Democratic Transition in Bangladesh**' The University Press Limited, Dhaka, 2008.
- Khan, Shamsul I, Islam S. Amimul, Haque M. Imdadul., '**Political Culture, Political Parties and the Democratic Transition in Bangladesh**' The University Press Limited, Dhaka, 2008
- Khanna, V. N. **Foreign Policy of India**. New Delhi: Vikas Publishing House, 2007
- Kodikara, Shelton. U (Ed.). **Bangladesh: In External Compulsions of South Asian Politics.** , New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1981
- Lt. Gen JFR Jacob, '**Surrender At Dacca Birth of a nation**' Manohar publishers, New Delhi, 2015.

- M. Rafiqueel Islam, “**International Legal Implication, The Bangladesh Liberation Movement**”, university press limited, Dhaka, Bangladesh, 1987
- MAHAMMED AYOUB, ANIRUDHA GUPTA, RAHMATULLAH KHAN, G P DESPANDE, R NARAYANAN, AND SISIR GUPTA, **BANGLADESH A STRUGGLE FOR NATIONHOOD**, vikash publication, Delhi, 1971
- Maity Prabhatanshu, Mondal Asit Kumar, ‘**Bharat Itihas Porikroma 1818-1964**’, Shridhar Prokasoni, Kolkata, 2010
- Mandakini Kaul, “A Visit to India’s Busiest Integrated Border Crossing Shows Need for Regional Cooperation and Connectivity”, World Bank, 10th February 2022.
- Matías Herrera Dappe and Charles Kunaka, eds, “Connecting to Thrive: Challenges and Opportunities of Transport Integration in Eastern South Asia”, World Bank, 2021, p. 4.
- Mukharjee, D.K. ‘**India and Bangladesh**’, in L.M. Singhvi (ed.) **Bangladesh: Background and Perspectives**. New Delhi: Institute of Constitutional and Parliamentary, 1971.
- Murshid, Ghulam., ‘**Muktijuddha O Tarpur : Ekti Nirdoliyo Itihas**’, Prothoma Prokashan, Dhaka, 2013.
- Murshid, Ghulam., ‘**Muktijuddha O Tarpur : Ekti Nirdoliyo Itihas**’, Prothoma Prokashan, Dhaka, Bangladesh, 2013
- Nair, P. S, ‘**Indo-Bangladesh Relations**’, APH Publishing House, New Delhi ,2008.
- Partha Chatterjee, the second partition of Bengal, chapter 2, published in Ranabir Samaddar, (edited book), ‘**Reflections on Partition in the East**’ CALCUTTA REASEARCH GROUP, VIKAS PUBLISHING HOUSE PVT LTD, New Delhi, 1997
- Partha S. Ghosh, ‘**Cooperation and Conflict in South Asia**’, Manohar Publications, New Delhi ,1989, p.p-156-189.
- Rahman Masihur, ‘**Democracy in Crisis**’, The University Press Limited, Dhaka, 2008.
- Rahman Md. Moksuder(ed), ‘**Swadhin Bangladesher Ovyudoyer Itihas**’, Aleya Book Depot, Dhaka, 2015.
- Rahman Md. Moksuder(ed), ‘**Swadhin Bangladesher Ovyudoyer Itihas**’, Aleya Book Depot ,Dhaka, Bangladesh, 2015

- Rahman A.T. Rafiqur, '**Bangladesh Election 2008 and Beyond: Reforming Institutions and Political Culture for a sustainable Democracy**', The University Press Limited (UPL), 2008.
- Rehman, Sobhan (ed.), '**Bangladesh India relations: Perspectives from civil society** Dialogues, Center for Policy Dialogue', University press limited, Dhaka, 2002.
- Riaz, Ali and Fair, C. Christine (ed.) '**Political Islam and Governance in Bangladesh**', Routledge Taylor and Francis Group, London and New York, 2011.
- Richard Sisson and Leo E. Rose, '**WAR AND SECESSION PAKISTAN, INDIA AND THE CREATION OF BANGLADESH**', Vistaar Publications, New Delhi, 1990, P-9.
- Rizvi, G. '**The Rivalry between India and Pakistan**', in B. Buzan and G. Rizvi (eds) **South Asian Insecurity and the Great Powers**, MacMillan Press, London, 1986
- Rizvi, G. '**The Rivalry between India and Pakistan**', in B. Buzan and G. Rizvi (eds) '**South Asian Insecurity and the Great Powers**', London: MacMillan Press, 1986, p.p. 91–126.
- Rudolph j. Rummel, **Statics of Democide: Genocide and Mass murder since 1900**, Munster Lit Verlag, 1998, p.p-153-163.
- S. settar and indira baptista gupta (ed), '**pangs of partition: the parting of ways**', (vol-1) manohar publishers and distributors, New Delhi, 2002. p-192.
- Saha Rekha, '**India Bangladesh Relations**', Minerva Associates (publications) pvt ltd., Kolkata, 2000.
- Saha, Rekha. **India Bangladesh Relations**.: Minerva Associations, Calcutta, 2000, p- 66.
- Salahuddin Ahmed, "**Bangladesh Past and Present**", A.P.H. Publishing Corporation, New Delhi, 2004
- Salam Azad, "**Contribution of India in the War of Liberation of Bangladesh**", Ankur prakashni, Bangladesh, Dhaka, 2003, p.152
- Sanjoy Hazarika, **Rites of Passage**, Penguin Books, 2000, p. 19
- Sarkar Sumit, '**A Bengali translation of Modern India: 1885-1947**', K P Bagchi and Company, Kolkata

- Sarkar Sumit, '**The Swadeshi Movement in Bengal 1903-1908**', people publishing house, Delhi, 2005.
- Sarkar, Avik., '**Bangla name desh**' (ed.), Ananda Private Limited, Kolkata, 2006.
- Sharma, S.P. **Delimitation of land and sea boundaries between neighbouring countries.** New Delhi: Lancer Books, 1989.
- Shekhar bandyopadhyay, "**plassey theke partition: Adhunik Bharater Itihas**" ,translated by Krishendu Roy, Oriental Longman publication, 2004
- SinghKuldip, '**India and Bangladesh**', Anmol Publication, Delhi, 1987.
- Sumit Sarkar, A Bengali Translation of '**Modern India: 1885-19047**', K.P. Bagchi and Company, Kolkata, 2013
- Tripathi, Salil, '**The Bangladesh War And its Unquiet Legacy**', yale University Press, 2016, p-146
- Weiner, Myron, '**Sons of the Soil: Migration and Ethnic Conflict in India**' ,Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978
- WILLEM VAN SCHENDEL '**A History Of Bangladesh**' Cambridge university press, New Delhi, 2009
- WillemVan Schendel, W. **The Bengal borderland: Beyond the state and nation in South Asia.** London: Anthem Press. 2005.
- Ziring, Lawrence, '**Bangladesh from Mujib to Ershad: An Interpretive Study**', : University Press, New York ,1992

JOURNALS

- Bajpai Arunoday, 'Dynamics of India-Bangladesh Relation', **World Focus**, Volume XXXIII, No.2, February 2012.
- Jamwal, N.S. Border management: Dilemma of guarding the India–Bangladesh border. **Strategic Analysis**, 28(1),2004, p.p-5–36.
- Baud, M., & Van Schendel, W. Toward a comparative history of borderlands. **Journal of World History**, 8(2), 1997
- Banerjee, S. Indo-Bangladesh border: Radcliffe's ghost. **Economic and Political Weekly**, 36(18),2001, p.p-1505–1506
- Axworthy, L. Canada and human security: The need for leadership. **International Journal**,52(2), 1997,p.p-183–196.
- Anderson, J., & O'dowd, L. Borders, border regions and territoriality: contradictory meanings, changing significance. **Regional studies**, 33(7),1999, p.p-593–604.
- Andreas, P. Redrawing the line: Borders and security in twenty-first century. **International Security**, 28(2), (2003). P.P-78–111. Andreas defined CTAs as non-state actors who operate across national borders in violation of state laws and who attempt to evade law enforcement efforts.
- Andreas, P. Redrawing the line: Borders and security in twenty-first century. **International Security**, 28(2),2003, p.p-78–111
- Said Saddiki ,**International Journal of Arts & Sciences**,CD-ROM. ISSN: 1944-6934 :: 07(05):111–124 (2016)border fencing in india: between colonial legacy andchanging security challenges.
- Das, P. India–Bangladesh border management: A review of government's response. **Strategic Analysis**, 32(3),2008
- Weiner, Myron , 'The Political Demography of Assam's Anti-Immigrant Movement', **Population and Development Review**, Vol. 9, No. 2,June, 1983, p.282.
- Rahman Shelley Mizanur, 'Modi's visit to Bangladesh and south asian perspective', **south asian journal**, 14, Fall/2015.
- Vinayaraj, B.K. 'India as a threat: Bangladeshi Perceptions', **South Asian Survey**, Vol.16 No.2, January, 2009.

- Rumford, C. Introduction: Theorizing borders. **European Journal of Social Theory**, 9(2),2006
- Deo, Arvind. R, “**South Asian Neighbours**”, World Focus,1991, p. 29.
- Rashiduzzaman,M., ‘Bangladesh in 2001:The Election and a New Political Reality?’ **Asian Survey**, volume-XLII, No.1, January /February, 2002.
- Mastoor, Maryam., ‘india-bangladesh relations:a new phase of cooperation’, **Regional studies**,Vol.XXIX,No.3,Summer2011.
- Datta, Sreeradha., ‘Post Election Communal Violence in Bangladesh’, **Strategic Analysis**, Volume-26, No-2, April-June, 2002.
- Ghosh, P. S. Bangladesh Politics Many Imponderables. **Mainstream**, XXIX, 3,1990.
- Jahan, Rounaq., ‘Bangladesh in 2002: Imperiled Democracy’ **Asian survey**, volume-XLIII, No-1-January-February, 2003.
- McDuie-Ra, D. The India–Bangladesh border fence: Narratives and political possibilities. **Journal of Borderlands Studies**, 29(1): Asian Borderlands), 2014, p- 82.
- Muni, S. D. Major Developments in India’s Foreign Policy and Relations,**International Studies**, 1978,p-96.
- Linter, Bertil., ‘Bangladesh: A Cocoon Of Terror’ **Far Eastern Economic Review**, volume 165, No 13-25, 27th June 2002.
- Jahan, Rounaq., ‘Bangladesh in 2003: Vibrant Democracy or Destructive Politics?’ **Asian survey**, volume-XLIV, No-1, January/February, 2004.
- Datta, Sreeradha., ‘Bangladesh Foreign Policy vis-a vis India’, **Strategic Analysis**, Volume-27, No-2, April-June, 2003.
- Chakraborty, Tridiv and Chakraborty,Mohor., ‘India and Bangladesh under UPA Phase II: Crests, Through and the Way Ahead’, **world focus**, Volume-XXXIII, No-2 , February, 2012.
- Jha ,Nalini Kant and Kumar, Sumit. ‘India’s Policy towards South Asian Neighbours’, **World Focus**, Volume. XXXII, No.5, May, 2011.

- Ahmed, Nizam., 'Non- Party Caretaker Governments and Parliamentary Elections in Bangladesh: Panacea or Pandora's Box?' **South Asian Survey**, Volume-11, No-1, 1-6, 2004.
- Chakroborti, Tridib. 'Sheikh Hasina's India Mission: From Distance to Proximity', **World Focus**, Volume.XXXII, No.2, February 2010.
- Bhattacharjee,Joyeeta. 'Changing Dynamic of Bangladesh Politics and India's Internal Security', **Dialogue** ,Volume. 10, No. 2, October-December, 2008.
- Chakravarty, Pinak Ranjan, 'Bangladesh–India Ties: Pragmatic Transformation' **Indian Foreign Affairs Journal**, Volume. 10. No. 3. July–September, 2015.
- Roy Chaudhury, Dipanjan. '40 years of Bangladesh' independence: Threats against its identity continue' **World Focus**, Volume-XXXIII , No-2, February, 2012.
- Momen, Mehnaaz. 'Bangladesh in 2009: The Peril Within.' **Asian Survey**, Volume- 50, No-1, 2009.
- Islam, Syed Sirajul. Bangladesh in 1986: Entering a New Phase. **Asian Survey**, 27, University of California,1987
- Bandyapadhaya, Koushik.,'Bangladesher Andoloner Laksha Moulobad',**Prehapprobesh**, Volume-9, No-3, March, 2013.
- Prodip, md.Mahbub Alam and Rabbani, Golam. 'Abolition of Non Party Caretaker Government System In Bangladesh: Controversy and Reality', **Global Journal of Arts Humanities and Social Sciences**, Volume-2, No- 2, July, 2014.
- Kumar ,Praveen. 'Bangladesh as India's internal security concern', **Institute of Peace and Conflict studies (IPCS)**, Article No. 1255, December 18, 2003.
- Pramanik,Bimal 'Growing Indo-Bangladesh Relations', **World Focus**, Volume. XXXIII, No.2, February, 2012.
- Pattanaik, S, Smruti, 'India–Bangladesh Relations: Moving towards Greater Synergy' **Indian ForeignAffairs Journal**, Volume. 10, No. 3, July–September, 2015.
- Bharat Bichitra Fortnightly**, A High Commission of India Publication, Volume.8, No.2, March 15, 2013.

- Intiaz Ahmed, “Teesta, Tipaimukh and River Linking: Danger to Bangladesh –India Relations”, **Economic and Political Weekly**, Vol- XLVII, No- 16, April 21, 2012, pp-51-53.
- Browning, C.S., & Joenniemi, P. Contending discourses of marginality: The case of Kaliningrad. **Geopolitics**,9(3),2004,p.p-699–730.
- Brunet-Jailly, E. Theorizing borders: An interdisciplinary perspective. **Geopolitics**,10(4),2005, p.p-633–649.
- Brunet-Jailly, E. Theorizing borders: An interdisciplinary perspective. **Geopolitics**, 10(4),2005,p.p- 633–649.
- Brunet-Jailly, E. Theorizing borders: An interdisciplinary perspective. **Geopolitics**, 10(4),2005, p.p-633–649.
- Budhraj, V. ‘Moscow and the Birth of Bangladesh’, **Asian Survey**13(5),1973,p.p- 482–495
- Chatterjee, S.S. (2012). International border disputes and adverse-possession of India–Bangladesh international border: Inconceivable truth—Indian peasants pay tax but Bangladeshi farmers get ownership. [http://newsblaze.com/report/ Secret-Dossier-of-Land-Dispute-Between-India-and-Bangladesh.pdf](http://newsblaze.com/report/Secret-Dossier-of-Land-Dispute-Between-India-and-Bangladesh.pdf). Accessed on 30.07.2022
- Dipankar Roy, ‘Chinese arms to Dhaka fail quality and longevity tests one after another’, Choudhary, **The Economic Times**, 3rd November, 2021.
- General Aurora’s (the chief of the Indian Eastern Command in 1971) interview, published in the **Weekly Bichitra**, 13th December 1991, p. 31.
- Hoseason, A. (2010). The role of borders as sites and progenitors of conflict: A critical analysis. **Global Discourse**[Online], 1(2). <https://globaldiscourse.wordpress.com/contents/the-role-of-borders-as-sites-and-progenitors-of-conflict-byalexander-hoseason/> Accessed on 30.07.2022
- Indian Defence Diplomacy: A Handbook’, Commodore Roby Thomas, MP-IDSA Monograph Series No. 74, November 2021.
- Islam Syed Serajul, “The State in Bangladesh under Zia (1975-81),” **Far Eastern Survey**, vol. 24, no. 5,1955,p.p- 556-573.
- Iyre Ramaswamy R, “The Fallacy of Augmentation: Demands on Ganga Waters.”, **Economic and Political Weekly**, Vol-34,No-33,August-14-20,1999,p.p-2296-2297.

- Kristof, L.K.D. The nature of frontiers and boundaries. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 49(3),1959, p.p- 269–282.
- Mukharjee, D.K. ‘**India and Bangladesh**’, in L.M. Singhvi (ed.) **Bangladesh: Background and Perspectives**. Institute of Constitutional and Parliamentary, New Delhi ,1971, p-110.
- Mukhopadhyay Asim, “River of Contention”, **Economic and Political Weekly**, Vol-15, No-17, April-26, 1980, p.p-766-768.
- Murayama, M. (2006). Border, migration and sub-regional cooperation in Eastern South Asia. **Economic and Political Weekly**, 41(14),2006,p.p- 1351–1359.
- Murayama, M. Border, migration and sub-regional cooperation in Eastern South Asia. **Economic and Political Weekly**, 41(14),2006,p.p- 1351–1359.
- N. S. Jamwal, “Border management: Dilemma of guarding the IndiaBangladesh border,” **Strategic Analysis**, Vol.28, No.1 (Jan-Mar 2004), p.8.
- Paasi, A. Boundaries as social processes: Territoriality in the world of flows.**Geopolitics**, 3(1), 1998,p.p-69–88.
- Parua, Pranab Kumar. **The Ganga: Water use in the Indian Subcontinent.**: Springer, New Delhi ,2006, p-158.
- Power, D., & Standen, N. (Eds). *Frontiers in question: Eurasian borderlands (700–1700)*. 1999, New York: St Martin’s Press.
- Pramanik, Bimal ‘Growing Indo-Bangladesh Relations’, **World Focus**, Volume. XXXIII, No.2, February, 2012, p.62.
- Pushpita Das , ‘*Indo-Bangladesh Border Management*’, **strategic analysis**, vol -32, issue 3, 2008.
- Sahni, A. (2002, May 12). Survey of conflict and resolution in India’s Northeast. **Faultlines: Writings on Conflict and Resolution**, 12,2002, p.p-39–112.
- Sammadar, R. **The marginal nation: Transborder migration from Bangladesh to West Bengal**. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE. In: Jones, R. (2009). Agents of exception: border security and marginalization of muslims in India. *Environment and planning: Society and Space*, 27(5), 1999, p-879–897.

- Sinha, L.G. Report on illegal migration to Assam. In P. Das (Ed.), *India's Border Management: Select Documents* New Delhi, India: **Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses**,2010, p-323.
- Smruti S. Pattanaik, "India–Bangladesh Land Border: A Flawed Inheritance and a Problematic Future," **Strategic Analysis**, Vol. 35, No. 5 (September 2011), p. 745.
- Sukumar biswas ed, '**Histort From Below: accounts of participants and eyewitness**', mukti juddha gabesona Kendra, Bangladesh,Dhaka, 2007,p-160.
- Surya P.Subedi, "Hydro-Diplomacy in South Asia: The Conclusion of Mahakali and Ganges River Treaties", **The American Journal of International Law**, Vol-93, No-4, October-1999, p.p-953-962.
- Swati Verma and Yathika Agarwal, 'Border Area Prosperity through Improved Connectivity: the Case of QANortheast **India**' **CUTS International**,.March, 2022.
- Tabassum Shaista, "Indo Bangladesh Treaty on Farakka Barage and International Law Application" **Pakistan Horizen**, Vol 56, No 3,July 2003,p.p- 54-56
- Dr. Aruna R mital, "Indo-Bangladesh water sharing issues", **International Journal of Humanities and Science Research**, vol-2, issue 11, November 2016, pp-7-11.
- Dr. mital Aruna R, "Indo-Bangladesh water sharing issues", **international journal of Humanities and Science Research**, vol-2, issue 11, November 2016, p.p-7-11.
- Habibullah Md and Hossain Emran, 'Bangladesh-India Diplomatic Relations (1975-1996): Transitions, Bilateral Disputes and Legacies' Volume XX, Issue XIV,2020,ISSN: 2249-460x & Print ISSN: 0975-587X ,**Global Journal of Human Social Science**.
- Harsh v Pant, "India and Bangladesh Will the TwainEver Meet? **Asian Survey**, Vol. xlvii, no. 2, 2007,p-233.
- Hasan S. and A.R. Khan, '**Bangladesh Floods: The Political Debate**', in M.G. Kabir and S. Hasan (eds) **Issues and Challenges Facing Bangladesh Foreign Policy**. Dhaka: **Bangladesh Society for International Studies**,1989
- Hazarika, Sanjoy, 'Illegal Migration from Bangladesh: Problem and long term perspective', **Dialogue**, Vol.3, No.3,p.25-26.
- Hazarika, Sanjoy, 'Illegal Migration from Bangladesh: Problem and long term perspective', **Dialogue,A journal of Astha Bharati**, New Delhi, Vol.3, No.3,2002,p.p.25-26.

“Bangladesh- India: agreement on sharing of the Ganges’waters”, **international legal materials**, vol-17, No-1, January 1978, pp-103-106.

Bharat Bichitra Fortnightly, A High Commission of India Publication, Volume.8, No.2, 15th March, 2013, available at www.hcidhak.org/fornight/20130315_eng.pdf, accessed on 08.04.2016

Bhardwaj, S. Illegal Bangladeshi migration: Evaluating India–Bangladesh approach. **CLAWS Journal**, 2014, p-62. 21 July 20 http://www.claws.in/images/journals_doc/2042080227_SanjayBhardwaj.pdf, accessed on 30.07.2022

BIPSS. Transnational security: Threats to Bangladesh, *BIPSS Issue Brief*, Bangladesh Institute of Peace and Security Studies, Dhaka, 8 June. 2010, www.bipss.org.bd Accessed on 30.07.2022

BIPSS., Transnational security: Threats to Bangladesh, *BIPSS Issue Brief*, Bangladesh Institute of Peace and Security Studies, Dhaka, 8 June, 2010. www.bipss.org.bd Accessed on 30.07.2022.

Andreas, P. Redrawing the line: Borders and security in twenty-first century. **International Security**, 28(2), 2003, p.p-78–111.

Asim Mukhopadhyay, “River of Contention”, **Economic and Political Weekly**, Vol-15, No-17, April-26, 1980, pp-766-768.

Banerjee, Paula, Sanjoy Hazarika, Monirul Hussain & Ranabir Samaddar, Indo-Bangladesh Cross-Border Migration and Trade. **Economic and Political Weekly** 34, 1999, p.p- 4-5. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4408366>, accessed on 12.08.2022.

Bangladesh Documents, Vol. 1. New Delhi: Publication Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, p. 669.

Baxter, Craig, Bangladesh in 1990: Another New Beginning? **Asian Survey**, 31, University of California Press, 1991, p-3-4.

Bhasin, Avtar Singh. ‘**India-Bangladesh Relations Documents 1971-2002: Commerce, Economic, and Transport**’, Geetika Publishers, New Delhi, 2003, p.p-1394-1395.

Budhraj, V. ‘Moscow and the Birth of Bangladesh’, **Asian Survey**, 13(5):1973, p.p- 482–495.

Sahoo, P. *Indo-Bangladesh land border management and India’s security concerns*. A Thesis paper, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi., 2009.

- Chakma Bhumittra, "Sheikh Hasina Government's India Policy: A Three-level Game?" **Journal of Asian Security and International Affairs**, 2(1), 2015,p.p- 27–51.
- Chakma Bhumittra, "South Asia's Realist Fascination and the Alternatives," **Contemporary Security Policy**, vol. 30, no. 3, 2009,p- 404.
- Chakma, Bhumittra, '**Bangladesh-India Relations: Sheikh Hasina's India-Positive Policy Approach Singapore**': S. Rajaratnas School of International Studies, RSIS Working Paper Series, 2012, P-1.
- Chakravarty, Pinak Ranjan, 'Bangladesh–India Ties: Pragmatic Transformation' **Indian Foreign Affairs Journal**, Volume. 10. No. 3. July–September, 2015, p.214.
- Chakravarty, Pinak Ranjan, 'Bangladesh–India Ties: Pragmatic Transformation' **Indian Foreign Affairs Journal**, Volume. 10. No. 3. July–September, 2015, p.214.
- Cited in the report of Assam Governor, S.K. Sinha to the President M.K Narayanan in 1998.
- CLAWS Journal I Vol. 15, No. 1. Summer 2022.
- Ahmed Intiaz, 'Teesta, Tipaimukh and River Linking: Danger to Bangladesh-India Relations', **Economic and Political Weekly**, Vol. 47, No. 16, APRIL 21, 2012, p.p- 51-53
- Amna Mahmood, Sadaf Farooq and Ms. NadiaAwan, "Bangladesh-Pakistan Relations: A Hostageto History", **American International Journal of Contemporary Research**, vol. 5. No. 2, 2015,p.p-66-75.
- Maniruzzaman Talukdar, '**The Bangladesh revolution and its aftermath**', Bangladesh books, Dhaka, Bangladesh,1980
- Rajkumar Singh, "President Ershad: Remembering a Departed Soul", **South Asia Journal**, July, 2019, <http://southasiajournal.net/president-ershadremembering-a-departed-soul/> accessed on 20.07.2022.
- Ramaswamy R Iyre, "The Fallacy of Augmentation: Demands on Ganga Waters.", **Economic and Political Weekly**, Vol-34,No-33,August-14-20,1999,pp-2296-2297.
- 1Ranjana Narayan, 'Pranab in Dhaka amid more deaths', **The New Indian Express**, New Delhi, March 3, 2013.
- Salman M. A & Kishor Uprety, '**Conflict and Cooperation on South Asia's International Rivers: A Legal Perspective**,. World Bank Publication, New York, 2002, p-157.

- Sanjay K. Bhardwaj, *India–Bangladesh Border Governance: Issues and Challenges*, **International Studies** 50(1&2), p.p- 109–129, 2016.
- Shakhawat Liton, “Has BNP forgotten its anti-India past?”, *The Daily Star*, June, 2015, <https://www.thedailystar.net/frontpage/has-bnp-forgotten-its-antiindia-past-90586>, accessed on 20.08.2022.
- Shekher Bandhayapadhyay, ‘**Palasi Theka Partition: Adhunik Bharater Itihas**’, Orient Blackswan private Limited, Kolkata, 2013. (Translated by Krishendu Roy), p-403.
- Singh, Kuldeep. **India and Bangladesh.**: Anmol Publications, New Delhi, 1987, p.p-150-189
- Singh, Nagendra Kr. ‘**South Asian Regionalism and Bangladesh, Encyclopedia of Bangladesh**’.: Anmol Publications, New Delhi, 2003, p.p-
- Sisson, R. and L.E. Rose, “**War and secession, Pakistan, India and the Creation of Bangladesh.**” vistaar publication, New Delhi, 1990, p.p-.213-220.
- Lewis **David**, ‘*Bangladesh: Politics, Economy and Civil Society*.’ Cambridge University Press, 2011. P.p. 31–32. **ISBN 978-1-139-50257-3**, 2011.
- Subodh Kumar Mukhopadhyay, ‘**Adhunik bharat: 1818-1964-britishraj theke purna swaraj**’, Mitram, Kolkata, 2009, p-515.
- Hussain, Ishtiaq, *Bangladesh-India Relations: Issues and Problems*. **Asian Survey** 21, 2, 1981, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2643997>, accessed on 12.08.2022.
- Iftekharul Bashar, “Islamic State Ideology Continues to Resonate in Bangladesh,” **Middle East Institute**, 3rd September 2019; <https://www.mei.edu/publications/islamic-state-ideology-continues-resonate-bangladesh> Accessed on 30.07.2022
- Pattanaik, S, Smruti, ‘India–Bangladesh Relations: Moving towards Greater Synergy’ **Indian Foreign Affairs Journal**, Volume. 10, No. 3, July–September, 2015, p.224.
- Proceedings of International Consultative Workshop India-Bangladesh Connectivity: Possibilities and Challenges, ORF Kolkata, 19-20 September, 2014.
- Pushpita Das, ‘*India-Bangladesh Border Management*’ A review of government’s response,, **strategic analysis**, vol -32, issue 3, 2008, p-367–388., and Pushpita Das (ed.), *India’s Border Management: Select Documents* (New Delhi: Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses, 2010, p.1.

Rafiabadi, H.N, ‘**Assam, From Agitation to Accord**’, Genuine Publication and Media Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, 1985, p-10.

Verma ,Swati and Agarwal ,Yathika, ‘**Border Area Prosperity through Improved Connectivity: the Case of Northeast India**’ CUTS International, March, 2022,p-1

Tripathi, Deepak. India's Foreign Policy: The Rajiv Factor. **The World Today**, 44, 1998,p-1-2.

Tiwari Rakesh, “Conflicts over International Waters”, **Economic and Political weekly**, Vol-41, No-17, April 29-May5, 2006, p-1684

NEWSPAPERS

The daily Bangladesh Protidin, Dhaka

The daily Inquilab, Dhaka

Daily News, Dhaka

Ananda Bazar Patrika, Kolkata

Eisamay, (Kolkata)

Hindustan Times, Kolkata, 3rd March, 2013.

Hindustan Times, New Delhi

Hindustan Times, New Delhi, July 31, 2015.

Asian Recorder(news paper). Morarji Desai’s Visit, (1979, May 22- June 3), p-3.

Dawn, Karachi

Dawn,4th March, 1971

Deccan Chronicle, Bangalore

The daily Prothom Alo, Dhaka

The Daily Star, Dhaka, 6th June 2014.

The Daily Star, Dhaka, 6th June 2014.

The daliy Manabzamin and Jugantor, Dhaka

The Financial Express, Bangladesh

The Hindu, New Delhi

The Indian News, New Delhi

The New Indian Express, New Delhi

The New York Times, November 27, 1975.

The People, 3rd March, 1971.

The Statesman (*Calcutta, 18 August 1947*) reported that both the governments were bound to accept the terms of the award.

The Telegraph, Kolkata, 27th June, 2014.

The Telegraph, Kolkata, May 27, 2015.

The Times of India, 27th July, 2002.

The Times of India, Kolkata, 6th June, 2014.

The Times of India, Kolkata, 6th June, 2014.

Time Release Study 2022, National Board of Revenue, Government of Bangladesh, p. 7.

Time Release Study 2022, National Board of Revenue, Government of Bangladesh, no. 17.

Times of India, 10.03.2021. New Delhi.

Times of India, 10.03.2021. New Delhi.

Times of India, 27.03.2020, and “Expanding connectivity: First cargo train launched to Bangladesh via Bengal’s key border zone”, **The Economic Times**, 27th March, 2020.

"Multi-national naval exercise Milan-22 opens in Vizag". **Deccan Chronicle**, 27th February, 2022.

"Naval exercise MILAN concludes in Visakhapatnam". **The Hindu**, 5th March, 2022.

‘Bangladesh to import defence items from India under \$500-million LOC’, **Press Trust of India**, 16th December, 2021, Delhi.

‘India-Bangladesh meet: Three defence co-operation MoUs signed’ **ANI**, 8th April, 2017.

‘Shipment arrives in Tripura under new India-Bangla transit protocol’, **IANNS** 19th June, 2016.

“Bangladesh to join India’s South Asia Satellite initiative”, **The Statesman**, 23rd March, 2017.

“Dhaka-Gangtok bus service trial run held, **Sikim Express**”, 15th December, 2019.

“First goods train through revived Haldibari – Chilahati rail link leaves for Bangladesh”, **The Economic Times**, 31st July, 2021.

“India Bangladesh connectivity: A year after Modi’s visit,”Obser Research Foundation (ORF) special report, 14th June 2016,p-8.

“India, Bangladesh resume freight train operation via Haldibari-Chilahati route,”**Hindustan Times, Published** on 2nd August, 2021.

“India, Russia, Bangladesh sign tripartite pact for civil nuclear cooperation”, **The Economic Times**,1st March, 2018.

Nagchoudhury, S. (2015, June 9). Land Deal: Access unhindered, the little part of India that remains Bangladesh, **Indian Express**, p. 12.

Nod to sagarmala development company with Rs 1000 crore authorized share capital, **The Economics Times**, 20th July, 2016.

'West Bengal-Bangladesh ties can't be measured with a tape', **The Daily Star**,1st March,2022,Dhaka.

“Multi-national naval exercise MILAN-22 begins in Vizag”, **Hindustan Times**, 28 February, 2022.

"India to host mega naval exercise amid China's manoeuvring in high seas". **The Economic Times**, 25thFebruary, 2018.

"India, Bangladesh hold joint military exercise as part of bilateral defence cooperation", **India Today**, 6th June, 2022.

"Indian Navy postpones multilateral exercise Milan 2020 due to coronavirus". **The Economic Times**, 3rd March, 2020.

"Kushiyara river water sharing deal to be signed during PM’s India visit", **The Daily Star**, 26th August,2022.

"Remember the martyrs: Bengal observes International Mother Language DayArt Culture",**Hindustan Times**, Kolkata,22nd February, 2018.

"World’s largest Indian visa centre inaugurated in Dhaka"**The Daily Star**, 14th July, 2018.

- “ India send first Oxygen Express to Bangladesh to help out with Covid 19”, **Hindustan Times**, 25th July, 2021, New Delhi.
- “ India Thanks Bangladesh For Extending Support In Fight Against COVID-19”, **NDTV**, 29th April, 2021.
- “1,800 Bangladesh civil servants to be trained at NCGG by 2025: Govt” Disha Kumari, **Hindustan Times**, 12th October, 2022.
- “Bangladesh Constructing 7 New Land Ports”, South Asia Subregional Economic Cooperation (SASEC), 26th August, 2021
- “Barpeta’s Bengali Speaking Population Rises to Twice as that of Assamese Speaking People,” **The Sentinel**, 21 July 2018, [https://www. sentinelassam.com/breaking-news/barpetas-bengali-speaking-population-rises-to-twice-as-that-of-assamese-speaking-people/](https://www.sentinelassam.com/breaking-news/barpetas-bengali-speaking-population-rises-to-twice-as-that-of-assamese-speaking-people/) Accessed on 30.07.2022.
- “Boat rides back for immersion”, **The Telegraph (online)**, 06th October, 2022
- “Cabinet gives in pipelines nod to concept of Sagar mala Project,” **Times of India**, 27th March, 2015.
- “Cabinet okays draft of deal on coastal shipping with India”, **The Daily Star**, 5th May 2015, <http://www.thedailystar.net/city/cabinet-okays-draft-deal-coastal-shipping-india-80551>, accessed on 1st October, 2022.
- “Cargo vessel sails from Kolkata to explore new transit route to Northeast via Bangladesh.” **NE NOW NEWS**, 4th September, 2022.
- ‘India -Bangladesh bus service to bring people closer: Officials’, **TripuraInfoways**, 1st June 2015, <http://www.tripurainfoway.com/newsdetails/TN/28705/india-bangladesh-bus-services-to-bring-people-closerofficials.html>. accessed on 10.06.2022.
- “54% of medical tourists were from Bangladesh”, **Times of India**, 24th July, 2021.
- “After 40 yrs, Prez to visit Bangladesh”, **Hindustan Times**, Kolkata, 26th February, 2013, and
- “Assam BJP MLA Dilip Kumar Paul claimed that lakhs of illegal Bangladeshi Muslims have been included in the list. Dilip Kumar Paul, who represented Silchar assembly constituency twice, said that around 95–96 per cent illegal Bangladeshi Muslims names have appeared in the list.” Manogya Loiwal, “NRC Final List: BJP Worried over Exclusion of Hindus, the Inclusion of Illegal Bangladeshi Muslims,” **India**

Today, 31 August 2019, <https://www.indiatoday.in/india/story/nrc-final-list-bjp-worried-over-exclusion-of-hindus-inclusion-of-illegal-bangladeshi-muslims-1593966-2019-08-31>, Accessed on 30.07.2022 .

“Bangladesh join India’s South Asia Satellite Program,” **India Today**, 23rd March, 2017.

“Bangladesh Book Fair in Kolkata to start on December 2”, **Dhaka Tribune**, 16th November, 2022.

Zaglul Ahmed Chowdhury, ‘How has the state visit of Pranab gone off?’ **The Financial Express**, Bangladesh, 7th March, 2013.

Hindustan Times, 15th December, 2021

Md. Alamgir, “Land Ports in Connectivity, Trade, Growth”, **New Age**, 14th June, 2022.

New York Times, 1971.

Pakistan Times, 27th March, 1971.

Pakistan Times, 3rd February, 1971

‘Bangladesh to buy 500 MW of electricity from India’, **Dawn**, Karachi, 6th March, 2012.

“Centre sanctions over Rs 24 crore for dredging in Gomati river to boost Indo-Bangla waterway project: Official, The Economic Times,” 13th February, 2022, also available at https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/infrastructure/centre-sanctions-over-rs-24-crore-for-dredging-in-gomati-river-to-boost-indo-bangla-waterway-project-official/articleshow/89544399.cms?utm_source=contentofinterest&utm_medium=txt&utm_campaign=cppst, accessed on 30.08.2022.

“Centre to bear 80% dredging work cost of Meghna River: Tripura CM,” **The Hindu**, 16th February, 2022.

“Chief minister attend internal security; P. M reaches out to states”, **NDTV**, 16th April, 2012, New Delhi.

“Citizenship Law and NRC India’s Internal Issues: Bangladesh,” **The Millennium Post**, 23rd December 2019, <http://www.millenniumpost.in/big-stories/citizenship-law-and-nrc-indias-internal-issues-bangladesh-392286>, Accessed on 30.07.2022.

- “Cross-Border Bus Service Between India, Bangladesh Resumes After 2 Years.” **AsiaN News International**, 10.06.2022.
- “Delegation of Journalists from Bangladesh Calls on Railway Minister”, Press Information Bureau, Ministry of Railways, Government of India, 18th September, 2013, Delhi.
- “Dhaka Café Attack Ends with 20 Hostages among Dead,” **The Guardian**, 3rd July 2016; also see “Why hasn’t Dhaka’s Counter Terror Measures Shown Results?,” Observer Research Foundation, 30 July 2016; <https://www.orfonline.org/expert-speak/why-hasnt-dhakas-counter-terror-measures-shown-results/> Accessed on 30.07.2022
- Gautam Lahiri, “India, Bangladesh Differ on Illegal Immigration Issue,” *Millenium Post*, 9 August 2019, <http://www.millenniumpost.in/big-stories/india-bangladesh-differ-on-illegal-immigration-issue-368206> ,accessed on 02.08.2022.
- “Gantok, Darjeeling: Dhaka starts trial run of bus service” **The Daily Star**, Dhaka, 13th December, 2019.
- “Guwahati-Shillong-Dhaka bus flagged off; regular service from February”, *Samudra Gupta Kashyap*, **The Indian Express**, 10th December, 2014.
- “Hasina proposes joint river dredging with India to tackle floods,” **The Daily Star**, June 24, 2022.
- “Historic Guwahati-Dhaka Road link reopened”, Sushanta Talukdar, Guwahati, **The Hindu**, 10th December, 2014.
- “In a first, India sends a parcel train to Bangladesh,” The Economic Times, 12th July, 2020. https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/transportation/railways/in-a-first-india-sends-a-parcel-train-to-bangladesh/articleshow/76923020.cms?utm_source=contentofinterest&utm_medium=text&utm_campaign=cpps, accessed on 20.09.2022.
- “India and Bangladesh Partner on Two Rail Projects”, **Railway Technology**, 26th August, 2022.
- “India and Bangladesh sign pact for better rail connection”, **NewsGate Press Network**, 25th August, 2022.

- “India Bangladesh finalise draft pact on coastal shipping” **Business Standard**, 24 April 2015, file:///C:/Users/abc/Desktop/Coastal%20agreement/India,%20Bangladesh%20finalise%20draft%20pact%20on%20coastal%20shipping%20_%20Business%20Standard%20News.htm, accessed on 11th October, 2022.
- “India begins work on bridge linking northeast to Chittagong”, **TripuraInfoways**, 13 June 2016.
- “India begins work on bridge linking northeast to Chittagong”, **TripuraInfoways**, 13 June 2016.
- “India, Bangladesh agree inland water transit contract auto renewal”, <http://www.thehindubusinessline.com/news/international/india-bangladesh-agree-inland-water-transit-auto-renewal/article7138068.ece>, accessed on 2nd October, 2022.
- “India, Bangladesh sign first water sharing pact in 25 years”, **The Economics Times**, 07.09.2022. also available at https://economictimes.indiatimes.com//news/india/india-bangladesh-sign-first-water-sharing-pact-in-25-years/articleshow/94035253.cms?utm_source=contentofinterest&utm_medium=text&utm_campaign=cppst, accessed on 06.10.2022
- “India, Russia, Bangladesh sign tripartite pact for civil nuclear cooperation”, **The Economic Times**, 1st March, 2018.
- “India-Bangladesh ‘Bandhan Express’ train services resume”, **The Economic Times**,
- “India-Bangladesh Connectivity: Possibilities and Challenges,”Part 1,Obser Research Foundation(ORF),P-19.<https://www.orfonline.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/IndiaBangladesh.pdf>, accessed on 10.06.2022.
- “India-Bangladesh Connectivity: Possibilities and Challenges,”Part 1, Obser Research Foundation(ORF),p.p-26-27.<https://www.orfonline.org/wpcontent/uploads/2015/06/IndiaBangladesh.pdf>, accessed on 10.06.2022.
- “India-Bangladesh Connectivity: Possibilities and Challenges,”Part 1,Obser Research Foundation(ORF),P-22.<https://www.orfonline.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/IndiaBangladesh.pdf>, accessed on 10.06.2022.

“India-Bangladesh Friendship Pipeline could be inaugurated next year: Harsh Vardhan Shringla”, **The Hindu**, 16th December, 2021.

“India-Bangladesh Friendship Pipeline project to be completed this year.” **The Daily Star**, 20th September, 2022. Also available at <https://www.thedailystar.net/news/bangladesh/development/news/india-bangladesh-friendship-pipeline-project-be-completed-year-3123736> accessed on 12.10.2022.

“India-Bangladesh joint military exercise Sampriti culminates in Jashore”, **All India Radio News**, 16th June, 2022

“India-funded science block of Bangladesh college inaugurated,” **ENEWS TIMES**, 14th July, 2020, also available at <https://www.ewenstime.in/enews/india-funded-science-block-of-bangladesh-college-inaugurated-281.html>

“Islamist Parties Stage Demo to Support Kashmiris,” **Dhaka Tribune**, 30 August 2019, <https://www.dhakatribune.com/bangladesh/dhaka/2019/08/30/islamist-parties-protest-kashmir-situation> Accessed on 30.07.2022

“Kolkata-Dhaka-Tripura bus to roll out soon”, <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/Kolkata-Dhaka-Tripura-bus-to-roll-out-soon/articleshow/47365287.cms>, accessed on 22nd August, 2022.

“Maitri Diwas’ to be celebrated in 18 countries on 6 December to commemorate India Bangladesh friendship” Rajesh Jha, Dhaka, D.D News, 03.12.2021.

“Multi-nation Milan naval exercise concludes in Visakhapatnam”, **The Times of India**, 5th March, 2022.

“Naval exercise MILAN concludes in Visakhapatnam”, **The Hindu**, 5th March, 2022.

“No IS Existence in Bangladesh: Home Minister,” **The Daily Star**, 6th May 2019, <https://www.thedailystar.net/country/no-islamic-state-is-existence-in-bangladesh-home-minister-1739569> Accessed on 30.07.2022

“Non-lethal Strategy Effective but Smugglers Emboldened on India-Bangladesh Border,” **Daily Excelsior**, 20th July 2019, <https://www.dailyexcelsior.com/non-lethal-strategy-effective-but-smugglers-emboldened-on-india-bangladesh-border/>

- “Non-lethal Weapons to Continue at the Indo-Bangladesh Border: BSF DG,” **The Economic Times**, 3rd August 2014, <https://m.economictimes.com/news/politics-and-nation/non-lethal-weapons-to-continue-at-indo-bangla-border-bsf-dg/articleshow/39540403.cms> Accessed on 30.07.2022
- “NRC will not Impact Bangladesh: Modi tells Hasina,” **The Economic Times**, 28th September 2019.
- “Numaligarh Refinery Limited to complete construction of India-Bangladesh Friendship Pipeline by end of year” **The Economic Times**, 19th September, 2022.
- “Parcel train takes chillies to Bangladesh, creates history” Times of India, July 13, 2020.
- “PM Inaugurates ‘Maitri Setu’ between India and Bangladesh”, Press Information Bureau, Prime Minister’s Office, Government of India, 9th March, 2021, Delhi.
- “PM Modi Assured Sheikh Hasina India won’t Deport NRC-excluded People to Bangladesh,” **News18.com**, 5th October 2019, <https://www.news18.com/news/india/pm-modi-assured-sheikh-hasina-india-wont-deport-nrc-excluded-people-to-bangladesh-1900203.html> ,Accessed on 30.07.2022
- “Political Boundaries Should Not Become Physical Barriers for Trade: Bangladesh PM Sheikh Hasina”, Financial Express, 9th March, 2021.
- “Radicalisation Threat on the Rise: CTTC,” **The Daily Star**, 11 December 2019, <https://www.thedailystar.net/city/news/radicalisation-threat-the-rise-cttc-1838785> Accessed on 30.07.2022
- “Rupsha Rail Bridge in Khulna completed under India’s LOC”, *New Age, Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha* , Dhaka , Published on, July 03, 2022. <https://www.newagebd.net/article/174981/rupsha-rail-bridge-in-khulna-completed-under-indias-loc>, accessed on 29.08.2022.
- “Sagarmala’ concept and implementation towards blue revolution,” press information bureau, 27th March, 2015.
- “SC Strikes Down IMDT Act as Unconstitutional,” **The Economic Times**, 13 July 2005, <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/sc-strikes-down-imdt-act-as-unconstitutional/articleshow/1168803.cms>, Accessed on 30.07.2022.

“Second Addendum on Protocol on Inland Water Transit and Trade between India and Bangladesh, 2020”, Press Information Bureau, Ministry of Port, Shipping and Waterways, Government of India, Delhi, 20th May, 2020.

“Shared List of 125 Suspects: Terror Outfit JMB Trying to ‘Spread its Tentacles’ Across India, Says NIA Chief,” **News18.com**, 14 October 2019, <https://www.news18.com/news/india/terror-outfit-jmb-trying-to-spread-its-tentacles-across-india-says-nia-chief-2344781.html> Accessed on 30.07.2022

“Strengthening Trade Along the Dhaka–Kolkata Route for a Prosperous and Integrated South Asia”, Asian Development Bank, December 2021, p. 15.

“Strengthening Trade Along the Dhaka–Kolkata Route for a Prosperous and Integrated South Asia”, no. 20, p. 7

“The A to Z of Coastal economic Zone”, **Decan Chronicles**, 17th February, 2016.

“There is no Reliable Figure on the Exact Number of Illegal Immigrants from Bangladesh in India,” Sanjeev Tripathi, “Illegal Immigration from Bangladesh to India: Toward a Comprehensive Solution,” **Carnegie India**, 29 June 2016, <https://carnegieindia.org/2016/06/29/illegal-immigration-from-bangladesh-to-india-toward-comprehensive-solution-pub-63931>, Accessed on 30.07.2022

“Third Indo-Bangla bus service to be inaugurated by PM Modi”, **Nagaland Post**, 25th May, 2015.

“Thousands Protest Against Delhi Violence,” **New Age**, 28 February 2020, <https://www.newagebd.net/article/100773/thousands-protest-against-delhi-violence> Accessed on 30.07.2022

“Trial run of Dhaka- Guwahati bus service”, **The Hindu**, 23rd May, 2015.

Tojo Jose, ‘Reliance to construct Rs 19000 crore power project in Bangladesh’ **Indian Economy**, New Delhi, June 6, 2015, available at <http://www.indianeconomy.net/post/278/reliance-to-construct-rs-19000-crore-power-pr/> accessed on 10.04.2018

‘Tripura-Chittagong sea port bridge to be funded by Centre’, **The Times of India**, 29 April 2016, <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/agartala/Tripura-Chittagong-sea-port-bridge-to-be-funded-by-Centre/articleshow/52037052.cms>. accessed on 09.10.2022.

'Tripura-Chittagong sea port bridge to be funded by Centre', **The Times of India**, 29 April 2016, <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/agartala/Tripura-Chittagong-sea-port-bridge-to-be-funded-by-Centre/articleshow/52037052.cms>. accessed on 09.10.2022.

'Tripura's shipments via Bangladesh river seaports get huge boost: Cabinet approves India Bangladesh agreement on Coastal Shipping', **Tripura Infoways**, 29th May, 2016 <http://www.tripurainfoway.com/newsdetails/TN/28446/tripura-s-shipments-via-bangladesh-river-seaports-gethuge-boost-cabinet-approves-india-bangladesh-agreement-on-coastalshipping>.

Tuhin S. Adhikari, "Khulna-Darshana Double Rail Track: Half of Project Period Gone for Nothing", **The Daily Star**, 23rd September, 2020.

Vessel carrying food grains sails from Patna to Pandu in Assam', News Service Division- All India Radio, 6th March, 2022.

Staff Reporter, 'Wider Access to Bangla Goods', **The Telegraph**, Kolkata, January 12, 2010.

Subhash Narayan, "Brahmaputra G Connected with Ganga via Indo Bangladesh Protocol Route", **Mint**, 6th March, 2022.

A detailed account of the migration from East Bengal and the reasons for it are described in the Census of India, 1931, Vol. 3, Assam, Calcutta: Government of India, Central Publications Branch, 1932.

Ahmed Emajuddin, "Constitutional Amendments," **Banglapedia Online**, 2015, http://en.banglapedia.org/.index.php?title=Constitutional_Amendments, accessed on 10.08.2022

Anderson, J. (2001). Theorizing state borders: Politics/Economics and democracy in capitalism. *Electronic Working Paper Series*, WP 01, Centre for International Borders Research (CIBR), Queen's University Belfast. www.qub.ac.uk/cibr Accessed on 30.07.2022, concept notes on sagar mala project working paper (pdf), ministry of shipping, government of india, accessed on 29.10.2022.

Connecting South Asia and Southeast Asia: A Bangladesh Country Study, Mustafizur Rahman, Khondaker Golam Moazzem, Mehruna Islam Chowdhury, and Farzana Sehrin, ADBI Working Paper Series, September 2014.

Deliberation of P. K.H. Singh, Minister of DoNER, Northeast Council, Government of India at Guwahati, BCIM Stakeholders' Meeting on 18-19 June 2014.

Devanjana Nag, 'Indo-Bangladesh Protocol on Inland Water Transit and Trade to improve trading between two nations; details', *Financial Express*, 5 February 2021.

Dipanjan Roy Choudhury, "Kashmir India's Internal Matter: Bangladesh Foreign Minister tells Pak FM," **The Economic Times**, 5 September 2019, http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/articleshow/70999929.cms?from=mdr&utm_source=contentofinterest&utm_medium=text&utm_campaign=cppst Accessed on 30.07.2022

Doing Business 2020—Comparing Business Regulation in 190 Economies, World Bank, 2020, p. 8

Estimated Time of Completion (ETC) commonly used to denote the date and time at which a ship is expected to complete its cargo operations.

Faisal Mahmud, "Bangladesh's Ruling 'Secular' Awami League Strengthens Ties with Islamist Parties," **Asia Times**, 7 December 2018; <https://www.asiatimes.com/2018/12/article/bangladeshs-ruling-secular-awami-league-strengthens-ties-with-islamist-parties/> Accessed on 30.07.2022

Faisal Mahmud, "Death Toll Rising on the India-Bangladesh Border," **Asia Times**, 14th January 2020, <https://asiatimes.com/2020/01/death-toll-rising-on-the-india-bangladesh-border/> Accessed on 30.07.2022

Jaynath Jacob, 'Violence, deaths and snub greet Pranab in Dhaka', **Hindustan Times**, Kolkata, 3rd March, 2013.

Kazi Montu, "Farakka Dispute", **Economic and Political weekly**, Vol-15, No-27, July-5, 1980, p-1133.

Landport Authority of India (LPAI).. Annual Report 2019-20. Department of Border Management, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India, 2020.

Sikkim's merger with the Indian Union in 1975 caused for a severe tension to a particular class of Bangladeshi people. They were claiming that too much dependence upon India might bring the same implication in the fate of Bangladesh. For details See Bhumitra Chakma, "South Asia's Realist Fascination and the Alternatives," **Contemporary Security Policy**, vol. 30, no. 3, (2009), p- 404.

Shahnawaz A. Mantoo, india-bangladesh relationship (1975-1990), **Journal of South Asian Studies**, ISSN: 2307-4000 (Online), 2308-7846(print), <http://www.escijournals.net/JSAS>, accessed on 10.08.2022.

Shaista Tabassum, "Indo Bangladesh Treaty on Farakka Barage and International Law Application" **Pakistan Horizen**, Vol 56, No 3, July 2003, pp 54-56

Geeta Mohan, "Bangladesh Foreign Minister Cancels India Visit amid Concerns over Citizenship Bill," **India Today**, 12th December 2019, <https://www.indiatoday.in/india/story/bangladesh-foreign-minister-abdul-momen-cancels-india-visit-over-citizenship-bill-1627721-2019-12-12>, Accessed on 30.07.2022.

<https://archive.dhakatribune.com/world/south-asia/2021/07/24/54-of-medical-tourists-to-india-are-bangladeshis-data-show>, also "54% of medical tourists to India are Bangladeshis, data shows", **Dhaka Tribune**, 24th July, 2021

General Aurora's (the chief of the Indian Eastern Command in 1971) interview, published in the Weekly Bichitra, 13th December 1991, p. 31.

Hoque, Kazi Ebadul, "Sayem, Justice Abu Sadat Mohammad," **Banglapedia Online**, 2015, http://en.banglapedia.org/index.php?title=Sayem,_Justice_Abusadat_Mohammad, accessed on 25.08.2022 .

WEBLIOGRAPHY

www.Google.com

www.hcidhak.org/fornight/20130315_eng.pdf,

www.Jstore.com

www.Mea.gov.in

www.thefinancialexpress-bd.com

www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/bangladesh/pm-ahmed.htm,

[http:// Historypak.com/democratic-action-committee/](http://Historypak.com/democratic-action-committee/), accessed on 04.03.2022

<https://archive.pib.gov.in/documents/rlink/2016/apr/p201641402.pdf>, accessed on 29.10.2022.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/energy/oil-gas/india-gets-first-us-lng-shipment-at-dabhol/articleshow/63547215.cms>, accessed on 29.10.2022.

https://iccesd.com/proc_2018/Papers/r_p4212.pdf, accessed on 19.09.2022.

<https://indianexpress.com/photos/lifestyle-gallery/the-45th-kolkata-international-book-fair-begins-7799384/> accessed on 10.10.2022.

<https://newsonair.gov.in/Main-News-Details.aspx?id=441615>, accessed on 20.10.2022.

<https://talecup.com/bangladesh-to-have-3-billion-gas-set-up-by-reliance/>, accessed on 10.04.2018.

<https://www.bangladesh.com/blog/rabindra-and-nazrul-jayanti-celebrations/> accessed on 20.10.2022.

<https://www.theholidaystory.com/bangladesh-book-fair-kolkata-mohor-kunja-park/> accessed on 10.10.2022.

Human Rights Watch. (2010, December 9). ‘Trigger happy’: Excessive use of force by Indian troops at the Bangladesh border. [https://www.hrw.org/ report/2010/12/09/trigger-happy/excessive-use-force-indian-troops-bangladeshborder](https://www.hrw.org/report/2010/12/09/trigger-happy/excessive-use-force-indian-troops-bangladeshborder), Accessed on 30.07.2022

India & Bangladesh land boundary agreement. New Delhi: Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India (2011). https://www.mea.gov.in/Uploads/PublicationDocs/24529_LBA_MEA_Booklet_final.pdf Accessed on 30.07.2022

Website of the High Commission of India, Dhaka, Bangladesh, brief on bilateral relations 30th March, 2022.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/world/south-asia/india-will-bear-80-cost-dredging-work-meghna-river-bangladesh-side-tripura-cm>, accessed on 30.08.2022.

www.scribd.com/doc/9554465/bilateral-relations-between-india-and-Bangladesh.

[http://bsbk.portal.gov.bd/sites/default/files/files/bsbk.portal.gov.bd/page/1da6d5ad_5287_4dc7_8146_0326260b1894/overview%20\(Sep'16\).pdf](http://bsbk.portal.gov.bd/sites/default/files/files/bsbk.portal.gov.bd/page/1da6d5ad_5287_4dc7_8146_0326260b1894/overview%20(Sep'16).pdf), accessed on 06.10.2022.

http://en.banglapedia.org/index.php?title=Constitutional_Amendments, accessed on 10.08.2022.

<http://meaindia.nic.in/speech/2007/12/01ss03.htm>

http://news.bbc.co.uk/onthisday/hi/dates/stories/may/30/newsid_4401000/4401129.stm, accessed on 10.08.2022.

http://pib.nic.in/newsite/Print_Release.aspx?relid=130487, accessed on 11th October, 2022.

<Http://www.bdnews24com/details.php?id=219917&cid=2>.

<Http://www.bdnews24com/details.php?id=219917&cid=2>, accessed on 10.04.2018.

http://www.claws.in/working-paper_L-MMK.pdf

<http://www.hcidhaka.org/pdf/Political%20and%20Economic%20relations.pdf>,

<http://www.hcidhaka.org/pdf/Political%20and%20Economic%20relations.pdf>.

<http://www.hcidhaka.org/PRDetails.php?id=4>,

http://www.idsa.in/idsacomments/InternationalReactionsParliamentaryElections_rbhattacharjee_280114,

<Http://www.idsa.in/strategicanalysis/AttackonsheikhHasina-sdutta-0704>,

<http://www.indiaindymedia.org/en/2003/01/2730.html>.

http://www.ipcs.org/pdf_file/issue/SR177-Forecasts-Bangladesh-Delwar.pdf, accessed on 13.04.2016.

http://www.ipcs.org/pdf_file/issue/SR177-Forecasts-Bangladesh-Delwar.pdf,

http://www.ipcs.org/pdf_file/issue/SR177-Forecasts-Bangladesh-Delwar.pdf,

http://www.ipcs.org/pdf_files/issue/sr97.pdf,

<http://www.londoni.co/index.php/history-of-bangladesh?id=5>,

<http://www.londoni.co/index.php/history-of-bangladesh?id=5>,

<http://www.londoni.co/index.php/history-of-bangladesh?id=5>, accessed on 12.02.2018.

<http://www.mea.gov.in/bilateral->

[documents.htm?dtl/25346/Joint_Declaration_between_Bangladesh_and_India_during_Visit_of_Prime_Minister_of_India_to_Bangladesh_quot_N](http://www.mea.gov.in/bilateral-documents.htm?dtl/25346/Joint_Declaration_between_Bangladesh_and_India_during_Visit_of_Prime_Minister_of_India_to_Bangladesh_quot_N), accessed on 10.04.2016.

http://www.mea.gov.in/bilateraldocuments.htm?dtl/25346/Joint_Declaration_between_Bangladesh_and_India_during_Visit_of_Prime_Minister_of_India_to_Bangladesh_quot_N, accessed on 10.04.2016.

http://www.mea.gov.in/bilateraldocuments.htm?dtl/25346/Joint_Declaration_between_Bangladesh_and_India_during_Visit_of_Prime_Minister_of_India_to_Bangladesh_quot_N,

[Http://www.mea.gov.in/image/pdf/india-bangladesh-relation-04-05-2012-press-release.pdf](http://www.mea.gov.in/image/pdf/india-bangladesh-relation-04-05-2012-press-release.pdf),

<http://www.mea.gov.in/images/pdf/india-bangladesh-relations-04-05-2012-press-release.pdf>

[Http://www.mea.gov.in/mystart.php?42439](http://www.mea.gov.in/mystart.php?42439).

[Http://www.mea.gov.in/mystart.php?42439](http://www.mea.gov.in/mystart.php?42439).accessed on 10.04.2018.

<http://www.meaindia.nic.in/speech/2007/02/19ss02.htm> ,

<http://www.Muhammadyunus.org/index.php/media/in-the-media/113-lok-sabha-spaker-chatterjee-arrives-i-dhaka> ,.

<http://www.newagebd.com/2006/mar/29/open.html>,

http://www.north24parganas.gov.in/sites/default/files/document/immersion_of_durga_idols.pdf, accessed on 20.10.2022.

http://www.north24parganas.gov.in/sites/default/files/document/immersion_of_durga_idols.pdf, accessed on 20.10.2022.

[http://www.Sushma Swaraj's visit to Bangladesh_ A new beginning _ Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses.html](http://www.Sushma_Swaraj's_visit_to_Bangladesh_A_new_beginning_Institute_for_Defence_Studies_and_Analyses.html),

[http://www.Sushma Swaraj's visit to Bangladesh_ A new beginning _ Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses.html](http://www.Sushma_Swaraj's_visit_to_Bangladesh_A_new_beginning_Institute_for_Defence_Studies_and_Analyses.html), accessed on 01.04.2016.

<http://www.thaindian.com/newsportal/uncategorized/illegal-immigrants -from bangladesh-biggest-threat -jaiswal100191607.html>.

<http://www.thedailystar.net/country/khulna-kolkata-test-bus-service-starts-today-1277467>,
accessed on 29.10.2022

<Http://www.thehindu.com/opinion/op-ed/what-india-needs-to-do/article6148762.ece>,

<http://www.theindependentbd.com/printversion/details/155567>, accessed on 20.07.2022.

<http://www.theindianeconomy.com/new/the-gujral.doctrine>

http://zeenews.india.com/business/news/companies/reliance-power-adani-to-invest-5-billion-in-bangladesh-power-plants_128216.html,

http://zeenews.india.com/business/news/companies/reliance-power-adani-to-invest-5-billion-in-bangladesh-power-plants_128216.html, accessed on 10.04.2018.

<http://www.bdnews24.com/Bangladesh/2013/03/03/pranab-mukherjee-in-dhaka>.

<http://www.bdnews24.com/Bangladesh/2013/03/03/pranab-mukherjee-in-dhaka>,accessed on
08.04.2016.

<http://www.bdnews24.com/Bangladesh/2013/03/03/pranab-mukherjee-in-dhaka>,accessed on
08.04.2016

<https://bangladeshpost.net/posts/special-progs-to-celebrate-birth-anniv-of-tagore-nazrul-85009#:~:text=The%20161st%20birthday%20of%20Nobel,Islam%20is%20on%20,ac>
cessed on 20.10.2022

<https://bdnews24.com/bangladesh/2016/08/30/kolkata-khulna-bus-service-begins>. accessed
on 29.10.2022

<https://cuts-citee.org/pdf/guiding-statement-trosa.pdf> (December,2021),accessed on
20.08.2022.

<https://ddnews.gov.in/international/maitri-diwas%E2%80%99-be-celebrated-18-countries-6-december-commemorate-india-bangladesh>, accessed on 10.08.2022.

<https://dhakadailyphoto.blogspot.in/2006/11/partition-of-bengal-1905-and-its.html>,accessed
on 22.07.2022.

<https://diplomacybeyond.com/the-energy-at-the-vanguard-of-bangladesh-india-ties/> accessed
on 10.10.2022.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/transportation/railways/projects-worth-rs-44-6k-crore-underway-for-rail-connectivity-to-ports/articleshow/67113107.cms>, accessed on 29.10.2022.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/india/india-bangladesh-jointly-celebrate-birth-anniversary-of-tagore-nazrul-in-china/articleshow/92161491.cms?from=mdr> accessed on 20.10.2022.

<https://en.prothomalo.com/business/transshipment-indian-goods-laden-ship-arrives-at-chattogram-port>, accessed on 28.08.2022.

<https://historypak.com/lahore-resolution-1940/>, accessed on 12.07.2018.

<https://iccr.tripod.com/aboutus.htm> accessed on 10.10.2022.

<https://indianexpress.com/article/india/india-hands-over-10-broad-gauge-locomotives-to-bangladesh-6526629/>, accessed on 28.10.2022.

<https://indianrailways.gov.in/railwayboard/> accessed on 12.10.2022.

<https://indianrailways.gov.in/railwayboard/>, accessed on 16.10.2022.

https://mea.gov.in/Portal/ForeignRelation/Bangladesh_September_2017_en.pdf, accessed on 10.10.2022.

https://mea.gov.in/Portal/ForeignRelation/Bangladesh_September_2017_en.pdf, accessed on 10.10.2022.

https://mea.gov.in/Portal/ForeignRelation/India_Bangladesh_March_2021.pdf, accessed on 19.08.2022.

https://mea.gov.in/press-releases.htm?dtl/33595/Prime_Minister_to_inaugurate_Maitri_Setu_between_India_and_Bangladesh, accessed on 29.09.2022.

https://nbr.gov.bd/uploads/publications/LSC_Book_PDF_comp.pdf, accessed on 06.10.2022.

<https://newsonair.com/2021/12/06/india-bangladesh-maitri-diwas-a-much-deeper-connotation/#:~:text=Ten%20days%20before%20the%20liberation,Bangladesh%20on%2006%20December%201971.>, accessed on 10.08.2022.

<https://newsonair.com/2021/12/06/india-bangladesh-maitri-diwas-a-much-deeper-connotation/#:~:text=Ten%20days%20before%20the%20liberation,Bangladesh%20on%2006%20December%201971.>, accessed on 10.08.2022.

<https://newsonair.com/2022/07/25/india-bangladesh-discuss-liberalisation-of-visa-procedures/> accessed on 10.10.2022.

<https://newsonair.gov.in/Main-News-Details.aspx?id=441615>, accessed on 20.10.2022.

<https://newsonair.gov.in/News?title=53rd-Capacity-Building-programme-in-Field-Administration-for-Civil-Servants-of-Bangladesh-inaugurated-at-Mussoorie&id=449197> accessed on 16.10.2022.

<https://newsonair.gov.in/News?title=Bangladesh-PM-Sheikh-Hasina-confers-Bangabandhu-Sheikh-Mujibur-Rahman-Scholarship-on-Indian-students-in-New-Delhi&id=4473>, accessed on 10.10.2022.

<https://newsonair.gov.in/News?title=India-Bangladesh--joint-military-exercise-Sampriti-culminates-in-Jashore&id=442796>, accessed on 20.10.2022.

<https://newsonair.gov.in/News?title=SBI-to-run-Indian-Visa-Centres-in-Bangladesh-for-two-more-years&id=445822>, accessed on 10.10.2022.

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseIframePage.aspx?PRID=1741647>, accessed on 18.08.2022.

<https://pib.gov.in/Pressreleaseshare.aspx?PRID=1587180>, accessed on 16.10.2022.

<https://pib.gov.in/Pressreleaseshare.aspx?PRID=1830026>, accessed on 18.08.2022.

<https://pib.gov.in/Pressreleaseshare.aspx?PRID=1830026>, accessed on 12.08.2022

<https://sagarmala.gov.in/>, accessed on 29.10.2022.

<https://sagarmala.gov.in/about-sagarmala/vision-objectives>, accessed on 29.10.2022.

<https://sagarmala.gov.in/sites/default/files/MIV%202030%20Report.pdf> accessed on 20.08.2022.

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/india-bangladesh-train-services-resume-after-two-years-officials/articleshow/91871668.cms>, accessed on 10.08.2022.

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/religion/festivals/pohela-boishakh-2022-today-know-everything-about-bengali-new-year/articleshow/90858525.cms>, accessed on 20.10.2022.

<https://tourism.gov.in/sites/default/files/2020-04/Final%20Report%20on%20Visit%20of%20Nationals%20of%20Bangladesh%20to%20India.pdf>, accessed on 20.08.2022.

<https://www.anandabazar.com/west-bengal/24-parganas/durga-puja-2022-puja-committees-are-losing-interest-on-idol-immersion-at-ichamati-river/cid/1375059>, accessed on 20.10.2022.

<https://www.aninews.in/news/world/asia/indian-high-commission-thanks-bangladesh-for-extending-support-to-india-in-fight-against-covid-1920210429155625/> accessed on 10.10.2022

https://www.business-standard.com/article/news-ani/cultural-ties-bind-india-bangladesh-together-pm-modi-118052500657_1.html, accessed on 20.10.2022.

https://www.business-standard.com/article/news-ians/decision-on-guwahati-dhaka-bus-service-during-modi-s-bangladesh-visit-115052501085_1.html accessed on 29.10.2022.

<https://www.dailypioneer.com/2022/india/hasina-announces-mujib-scholarship-for-indian-martyrs-of-1971-b---desh-war.html>, accessed on 18.10.2022.

<https://www.deccanherald.com/national/india-resumes-helping-others-with-covid-19-aid-to-counter-china-sends-oxygen-to-bangladesh-indonesia-1012490.html>, accessed on 12.10.2022

<https://www.dhakatribune.com/bangladesh/2022/06/28/kolkata-khulna-dhaka-bus-service-resumes-after-two-years>, accessed on 25.10.2022.

https://www.fidh.org/IMG/pdf/20151209_bangladesh_odhikar_annual_hr_report_2014.pdf,

<https://www.getbengal.com/details/durga-immersion-watch-from-a-launch-at-taki-on-river-ichhamati>, accessed on 20.10.2022.

<https://www.google.com/search?q=PART+1+India-Bangladesh+Connectivity%3A+Possibilities+and+Challenges&oq=PART+1+India-Bangladesh+Connectivity%3A+Possibilities+and+Challenges&aqs=chrome..69i57.2978j0j7&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8>, accessed on 20.08.2021

<https://www.hindustantimes.com/cities/chandigarh-news/ambala-railway-division-sends-parcel-train-to-bangladesh-101624817948923.html>, accessed on 16.10.2022.

<https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/president-ram-nath-kovind-begins-3-day-visit-to-bangladesh-to-attend-50th-victory-day-celebrations-101639541783189.html>, accessed on 28.08.2022.

<https://www.hrw.org/report/2010/12/09/trigger-happy/excessive-use-force-indian-troops-bangladeshborder>, Accessed on 30.07.2022

<https://www.iccr.gov.in/indianculturalcenter/indira-gandhi-cultural-centre-dhaka-bangladesh>, accessed on 08.08.2022.

https://www.icwa.in/show_content.php?lang=1&level=1&ls_id=6030&lid=4125, accessed on 29.09.2022.

https://www.icwa.in/show_content.php?lang=1&level=1&ls_id=6030&lid=4125, accessed on 29.09.2022.

<https://www.livemint.com/news/india/indian-railways-sends-its-1st-ever-parcel-train-to-bangladesh-11594554536242.html>, accessed on 12.10.2022.

<https://www.mea.gov.in/pressreleases.htm?dtl/34603/State+Visit+of+the+President+of+India+to+Bangladesh+December+1517+2021>, accessed on 28.10.2022.

https://www.mea.gov.in/Uploads/PublicationDocs/23873_EXTERNAL_AFFAIR__Eng__AR_2013-14.pdf, accessed on 10.12.2018, Annual Report 2013-14 Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, New Delhi

https://www.mea.gov.in/Uploads/PublicationDocs/23873_EXTERNAL_AFFAIR__Eng__AR_2013-14.pdf, accessed on 10.12.2018, Annual Report 2013-14 Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, New Delhi

<https://www.mod.gov.in/sites/default/files/pre11.pdf>.accessed on 10.10.2022

<https://www.offshore-energy.biz/indias-first-fsru-arrives-at-h-energys-jaigarh-terminal/> accessed on 29.10.2022.

<https://www.orfonline.org/expert-speak/padma-multipurpose-bridge-project/>,accessedon 20.10.2022.

<https://www.orfonline.org/expert-speak/padma-multipurpose-bridge-project/>,accessedon 20.10.2022.

<https://www.orfonline.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/IndiaBangladesh.pdf>, accessed on 10.06.2022.

<https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1703457>, accessed on 19.08.2022.

<https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1703457>, accessed on 19.08.2022.

<https://www.psuconnect.in/news/railways-resume-train-services-between-india-bangladesh/32785/>, accessed on 08.09.2022

<https://www.risingbd.com/english/national/news/25037>, accessed on 29.10.2022.

<https://www.socialnews.xyz/2017/04/08/kolkata-khulna-dhaka-bus-drives-off-from-nabanna/>, accessed on 25.08.2022.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/news/bangladesh/news/bangladesh-day-marked-kolkata-book-fair-2975796> accessed on 10.12.2022.

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/india-to-handover-10-broad-gauge-locos-to-bangladesh/article32189638.ece>, accessed on 25.10.2022.

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/pm-modi-inaugurates-maitri-setu-between-india-and-bangladesh/article34026410.ece>, accessed on 09.10.2022.

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/pm-modi-inaugurates-maitri-setu-between-india-and-bangladesh/article34026410.ece>, accessed on 09.10.2022.

<https://www.thenewsgate.in/india-and-bangladesh-signs-pact-for-better-rail-connection/> accessed on 19.10.2022.

<https://www.thestatesman.com/bengal/mv-shejyoti-cargo-ship-sets-sail-for-bangladesh-under-mou-1502909506.html>, accessed on 28.08.2022.

<https://www.tour2india4health.com/en-bd/> accessed on 28.08.2022.

Ilkogretim Online - Elementary Education Online, 2020; Vol 19, Issue 4: p.p- 7136-7145
<http://ilkogretim-online.org>, accessed on 28.08.2022.

In 1998, Lt General S.K. Sinha, who was Governor of Assam, had sent a report to the then President K.R. Narayanan. In the report, he wrote that the influx of illegal migrants is turning the lower Assam districts into a Muslim-majority region. Nitin A. Gokhle, “An Election Gimmick,” *Outlook*, 8 May 2001, <https://www.outlookindia.com/website/story/an-election-gimmick/211561> Accessed on 30.07.2022.

In December 2018, 25 Jamaat-e-Islami leaders contested the parliamentary election despite cancellation of the party's registration. Of them, 22 fought with BNP's electoral symbol "sheaf of paddy" and three as independent candidates. "25 Jamaat Men Stay in the Race," **The Daily Star**, 24 December 2018, <https://www.thedailystar.net/bangladesh-national-election-2018/25-jamaat-e-islami-candidate-valid-for-national-election-2018-1677853>. Accessed on 30.

'India to consider Bangladesh proposal for second Maitree train', BusinessStandard, 7 June 2015, http://www.business-standard.com/article/newsians/india-to-consider-bangladesh-proposal-for-second-maitree-train-115060700807_1.html. accessed on 08.09.2022.

India Tourism Statistics, 2022, <https://tourism.gov.in/sites/default/files/2022-09/India%20Tourism%20Statistics%202022%20%28English%29.pdf> accessed on 10.08.2022.

India, Bangladesh sign first water sharing pact in 25 years", **The Economics Times**, 07.09.2022. also available at https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/india/india-bangladesh-sign-first-water-sharing-pact-in-25-years/articleshow/94035253.cms?utm_source=contentofinterest&utm_medium=text&utm_campaign=cppst, accessed on 06.10.2022.

India, Bangladesh to recognise December 6 as 'Maitri Diwas', **Times Of India**, 27th March, 2021 also available at <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/india-bangladesh-to-recognise-december-6-as-maitri-diwas/articleshow/81727980.cms>, accessed on 10.08.2022.

India-Bangladesh Connectivity: Possibilities and Challenges (part-1), ORF, Also available at <https://www.google.com/search?q=PART+1+India-Bangladesh+Connectivity%3A+Possibilities+and+Challenges&oq=PART+1+India-Bangladesh+Connectivity%3A+Possibilities+and+Challenges&aqs=chrome..69i57j29j7j0j7&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8>, accessed on 20.08.2021

Protocol on Operation of Passenger Bus service between Kolkata and Agartala in India via Dhaka in Bangladesh', Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, New Delhi, 6th June 2015, <http://www.mofa.gov.bd/sites/default/files/Kolkata%20Agartala%20Protocol%20.pdf>. accessed on 10.06.2022.

Rahman Mohammad Mijanur, "Foreign policy under Ziaur Rahman", **The Daily Star** Online, May 2008, <https://www.thedailystar.net/news-detail-38950>, accessed on 10.08.2022.

Smruti S. Pattanaik, "Politics of Illegal Immigration and India Bangladesh Relations," **IDS** **Issue Brief**, 16th May 2014, https://idsa.in/issuebrief/PoliticsOfIllegalImmigration_sspattanaik_160514, Accessed on 30.07.2022

Summary Record of India-Bangladesh Meeting of the Joint Working Group on Trade held on 13-14 June 2013, Ministry of External affairs, Government of India, available at http://commerce.nic.in/trade/Joint_Statement_India_Bangladesh_13_14_June_2013.pdf, accessed on 11th October, 2021.

Swati Verma and Yathika Agarwal, 'Border Area Prosperity through Improved Connectivity: the Case of Northeast India' CUTS International, March, 2022.

The Citizenship Amendment Bill 2019, prsindia.org, accessed on 12th December 2019, http://prsindia.org/sites/default/files/bill_files/Citizenship%202019%20Bill%20Text.pdf

The process or activities by which a company adds value to an article, including production, marketing, and the provision of after-sales service.

'TripurabusesjoinKolkataDhakaAgartalaservice', IANS, 16th October, 2015, <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/Tripura-buses-join-KolkataDhakaAgartalaservice/articleshow/49415472.cms>. accessed on 10.06.2022.

Website of the High Commission of India, Dhaka Bangladesh, brief on road, rail and air www.crisisgroup.org/~media/flies/asia/south-asia/bangladesh/264-maping-bangladesh-s-political-crisis.pdf,

www.dw.com/en/bangladesh-political-turmoil-intensifies/a-181726225.

www.e-ir.info/2014/02/02/election-in-bangladesh-political-conflict-and-the-problem-of-credibility/

www.theindependentbd.com/index.php?option=com-content&view=article&jd=158310:warm-welcome-to-indian-president-in-dhaka, accessed on 08.04.2016.

www.theindependentbd.com/index.php?option=com-content&view=article&jd=158310:warmwelcome-to-indian-president-in-dhaka,
[www.mea.gov.in/photofeatures.htm?805/presidents+state+visit+to+bangladesh+marc
h+35+2013](http://www.mea.gov.in/photofeatures.htm?805/presidents+state+visit+to+bangladesh+marc+h+35+2013).

Siddhartha Naskar 30/11/2023

SIGNATURE OF THE SCHOLAR:

THE END