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Foreword

National Defence College (NDC) is one of the leading educational institutions in Bangladesh conducting research on contemporary issues of national security and development. NDC E-JOURNAL is a double-blind peer reviewed academic and professional journal launched in 2020. The journal aims to be one of the leading journals of the country and the region for its contributions in the field of security and development.

We view this publication as an academic and professional platform for comprehensive, in-depth discourse on a range of topics related to defence, security, development, leadership, strategy and policy, international relation, public policy and governance, management, war studies and social science. The journal aims to establish a theoretical framework for the fields and enrich the discourses elsewhere in the world with studies relating to the disciplines and original as well as innovative research and review articles are always appreciated here.

I am happy that we are going to publish the third issue of NDC E-Journal. I am hopeful that the papers included in this journal covering varied range of topics would be of great interest to the academia, researchers and the ordinary readers as well. The journal will be a source of essential, content-rich, accessible information, and knowledge for researchers and readers interested in security and development.

I congratulate all authors who contributed to the current issue of NDC E-Journal. I appreciate and acknowledge the hard work of editorial board to publish this journal online. I wish every success of NDC E-Journal.



**Lieutenant General Md Akbar Hossain, SBP, BSP, SUP (BAR),
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The Editor in Chief's Note

The NDC E-JOURNAL is a double-blind peer reviewed academic and professional journal that offers a unique chance to discuss, debate, and comment on national and international security and development issues, not only from the traditional perspective but also from the non-traditional spectrum. The articles are selected through a rigorous process of blind review to ensure epistemic value, high standard, and originality to debates and discourses on a diverse range of topics.

We strive to maintain high standards regarding our journal's management, credibility, and outreach with the continuous assistance of an experienced and intellectually vibrant Editorial Board, Editorial Advisors of global repute, a respectable and animated International Advisory Board comprised of revered academicians and eminent personalities, and a dedicated Editorial team comprising Section and Language editors.

We rely on our international network of authors, advisory boards, academia, NDC faculty, reviewers, and readers to help in identifying and exploring new areas of security and strategic studies scholarship. Hence, the submissions to the journal have seen significant growth and reach over the year. With such a broad base of support, we are going to publish the second issue of NDC E-Journal. This second volume has included scholarly and original articles focusing on foreign policy, United Nations peace keeping operations, nationalism, military intelligence, strategic leadership, national security outlook, post-Covid security paradoxes, military technological development and reviews.

I would like to express my gratitude to the Chief Patron, the Editorial Advisors, the International Advisory Board and the Editorial Team for their invaluable support. We are excited to continue working with all of you to make the NDC E-JOURNAL a success. For the upcoming volume, we anticipate receiving additional evidence-based, intriguingly inquisitive, and analytical articles. We welcome submissions as well as inputs from the journal's authors, readers, and reviewers.



Rear Admiral Mohammad Shahjahan, NBP, NPP, BCGMS, ndc, psc
Editor in Chief
NDC E-JOURNAL

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INTERFAITH RELATIONS IN BANGLADESH: CAUSES AND SECURITY IMPLICATIONS

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Abstract: Bangladesh, a country of around 180 million people, has a cluster of religions, races, cultures and ethnicities. Though the country is a Muslim majority one, it consists of people of other religious beliefs or faiths including Hinduism, Christianity, Buddhism and Animism etc. Although Bangladesh enjoys relatively peaceful coexistence of diverse religious groups, the coexistence of different religious groups has been at times disturbed by different communal conflicts which often raise question of the interfaith relations in Bangladesh. This study aims at exploring the causes and security implications of recent (between 2000 and 2014) conflicts on the interfaith status of Bangladesh in light of religious, political and economic motives associated with the persecutions of the religious minorities. As a part of the case-study based qualitative exploration, notable historical interfaith conflicts and events of the sub-continent are studied to find out any potential pattern, if any, these persecutions follow. The study finds that socio-economic, and political motives often play a pivotal role in igniting conflicts among different religious groups which often turns into interfaith issues as religion gets played in the conflict as a divisive issue. The study also finds that interfaith conflicts have both short and long term socio-economic and security implications which have both national and international significance.

Keywords: *Interfaith Relations; Religious Conflicts; Security Implications; Political and Economic motives*

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INTRODUCTION

The State shall not discriminate against any citizen on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth. - *The Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh 1972.*

Bangladesh, a country of around 170 million people, has a cluster of religion, race, culture and ethnicity. According to the data from 2022 census, around

91.04% of the population are Muslims, around 7.95% are Hindus, the largest of the minorities, and the rest consists of Christians, Buddhists, and other ethnic religion believers (Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, 2022). Bangladesh enjoys relatively peaceful existence among followers of each of the religions. Such coexistence of religiously diverse community can be termed as “Interfaith Relation” where Interfaith’ can be defined as ‘relating to or involving different relations or members of different religion’ (Oxford Dictionary, n.d.).

Despite a relatively peaceful nature, the coexistence of different religious and ethnic groups has at times been disrupted by different communal conflicts. Such communal conflicts or persecutions have historical traces even before the birth of the country. Bangladesh, being a part of the Indian-subcontinent, which is an inhabiting place for diverse groups of people with different ethnicity, religion, race and castes etc., time to time witnesses communal or religious violence. According to Ain O Salish Kendra (ASK, 2016) annual report, persecution on religious minorities witnesses an enhanced number of incidents, including killing and vandalization. Although the motivations for incidents may vary, the implications of such incidents on the religious minorities follow similar patterns, creating tension among interfaith groups. The persecutions on the religious minorities create anxiety and discomfort which may threaten the social peaceful and harmonious coexistence of these social groups in Bangladesh (Office of the High Commissioner United Nations Human Rights, 2015).

While some studies have been conducted on the overarching dynamics of interfaith relations, dialogues, and communal conflicts in the sub-continent, very little credible research is available on interfaith relations in Bangladesh and to look into the affairs from a holistic perspective which will include identification of the underlying motivation of notable interfaith conflicts and exploration of the socio-economic, political and security implications of the same for Bangladesh.

A stereotypical thought has been developed that persecution on the minorities are levelled to be religiously motivated which may disguise the main reasons of persecutions. Thus, it is important to study the motives of persecutions from an objective view to better analyse each event. As persecutions entail multidimensional impacts, it is also necessary to outline plausible implications of persecutions on religious minorities from social, political and security perspectives.

In quest of such attempt, previous religious persecutions are studied to find out the existence of non-religious motives like political or economic. Analysing the motives will create evidence on potential reasons behind persecutions on religious minorities in Bangladesh and assist in better understanding of any such future incidents. This work will also be important to foster the existing interfaith relations among different groups of the society.

OBJECTIVE AND SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The study aims at (i) identifying the state of interfaith relations in Bangladesh, (ii) identifying the presence of religious, political and economic motives in the persecutions on religious minorities in Bangladesh, and (iii) identifying the possible entailed implications of such events on society, politics and security of Bangladesh. In pursuit of the research objectives, the study aims at exploring answers to following research questions: (a) What is the current state of interfaith relations in Bangladesh? (b) What are the dominant motives behind religious persecutions in Bangladesh? (c) What are the social, political and security implications associated with these religious persecutions?

While the study takes important and relevant historical events into consideration, the study primarily focuses on major interfaith conflicts which took place in between 2000 to 2014. This timeframe is chosen to cover different political regimes and governments and explore interfaith relations across the timeline. The study also looks into notable regional events to better understand the events in study from a broader perspective. However, the study is not an exhaustive assessment of all interfaith conflicts in Bangladesh and thus, have some limitations in generalizing the finding. Non-availability of necessary and reliable information, non-cooperation of key interviewees, and lack of access to primary data and dependence of secondary sources for data collection are some of the limitations of this study. Besides, further quantitative analysis on the same can be done for further validating the findings of this research.

METHODOLOGY

Considering the nature of the study, “Qualitative” research methodology, one of the most useful approaches to be used in many different academic disciplines, traditionally in the social sciences (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005) has been followed for this research to gather in-depth understanding of the existence of non-religious motives behind the persecutions on religious minorities. An explanatory case study is used to explore causation in order to find underlying principles which in this case are very important to study the reasons or causes of recent persecutions on the religious minorities as well as the entailing implication of those events (Jon & Greene, 2003). Besides, case study method is also useful to analyse “persons, events, decisions, periods, projects, policies, institutions, or other systems” (Thomas, 2011).

Data used in this research is collected from both primary and secondary sources. Primary sources include visiting the places where the persecutions took place as well as conducting interview of the victims over there. Case study-based research often “*relies on interviewing, observing, and document analysis*” (Denzin and Lincoln, 25). Expert interviews have also been conducted to collect insights of relevant field experts on interfaith issues. Newspaper articles, reports, research

papers and websites have also been consulted as a part of the data collection process.

For analysing data, a combination of qualitative methods has been used which include case-oriented understanding, secondary readings, conversation analysis, and sequential analysis of events etc. As this study incorporate the interview and opinions of the KIs as well as interview of the victims or witness of persecutions, conversation analysis gave opportunity to accumulate that information into the research.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Social identity is a significant part of an individual's self-concept derived from perceived membership in a relevant social group (Turner & Oakes, 1986) which provides a sense of belongingness and togetherness. In all their multifarious expressions and dimensions, the world's religions answer the individual's need for a sense of locatedness - socially, sometimes geographically, cosmologically, temporally, and metaphysically (Seul, 1999). Such belongingness to particular group means that each group differentiates among themselves and create comfort zone for each group. Thus, the social groups are created and religion and ethnicity have always been major criteria for human's social identity and segregations. The peculiar ability of religion to serve the human identity impulse thus may partially explain why inter-group conflict so frequently occurs along religious fault lines (Seul, 1999). On the other hand, Nguyen puts a more contemporary notion, bringing nation-state philosophy, and argues that there are connections between religion and ethnic conflicts; '...the religious composition of the population affects the likelihood of ethnic conflict within a nation-state' (Nguyen, 2008).

Historically, there have been many inter-group or inter-religion or communal conflicts where religion played an important role which are often termed as religious war. Such notable wars include the Muslim conquests (7th to 19th centuries) and the Christian military excursions against the Muslim conquests, including the Crusades (11th to 13th centuries) etc. If recent time conflicts are taken into consideration, some can be notable including, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and the Second Sudanese Civil War etc. Charles Phillips and Alan Axelrod in their Encyclopedia of War has documented 1763 wars over all of which 123 (7%) have been classified to involve a religious conflict (Phillips & Axelrod, 2004). This indicates that a misconception of war is directly involved with religion and for religious motives.

Some scholars questioned the existing believe of religion being the sole catalyst for initiating or continuing conflicts and come up with fascinating insights. William T Cavanaugh is one of them, who in his book "Myth of Religious Violence" said "religious wars" is a largely "Western dichotomy", arguing that all wars that are classed as "religious" have secular (economic or political)

ramifications (Cavanaugh, 2009). However, this notion has also been criticised by some atheists and secular humanists who consistently make the argument that religion is the primary cause of violence and war throughout the history of mankind (Schumacher, 2014). Sam Harris, one of the notable authorities among the modern-day atheist says in his book “The End of Faith: Religion, Terror, and the Future of Reason” that faith and religion are “the most prolific source of violence in our history” (Harris, 2005).

Form a regional perspective, religion has always been a major component of identity of the people of the Indian Subcontinent. Prehistorically, it is claimed that this subcontinent was Hindu dominated, then Muslims from Central Asia came and preached Islam. Under the dominance of British, Christianity was promoted among the mass population. Besides, these religions, India is also the birthplace of other religions including Buddhism, Jainism, and Sikhism etc.

This region has witnessed many conflicts or persecutions that are said to have direct linkage with religion. However, interesting thoughts have been shared by historian Dr. Mubarak Ali, who claimed in his lecture on ‘Religious Tolerance in the Indian Subcontinent’ that ‘...what was once, the land of Sufi’s, the notion of ‘intolerance’ was introduced as a by-product of British imperialism’ (Ali, 2014). It also points fingers at the British theory of administration ‘Divide and Rule’ which is a process of gaining and maintaining power by breaking up larger concentrations of power into pieces.

However, the Socialist Party of Great Britain (n.d.) holds a different point of view, where they do agree that such division created a weaker India, saying that British invaders of India did not create Moslem-Hindu rivalry but they certainly made use of what they found. A divided India was a weak India Socialist Party of Great Britain (n.d.). This also gives a hint towards non-religious motives of such religious conflicts or segregations.

It may be noted that the term religious conflict in Bangladesh is often generalised as conflict between Hindus and Muslims. However, historical events show that there are several notable events where other religious groups, especially the minorities, are also victims of religious persecutions.

For instance, conflict between Hindus and Christians in India has been noted in the recent past as number of persecutions has increased as identified in the report of Human Rights Watch titled ‘Anti-Christian Violence on the Rise in India’. The nature of persecution included killings of priests, the raping of nuns, and the physical destruction of Christian institutions, schools, churches, colleges, and cemeteries which are somewhat similar to persecutions committed over other minority groups. There had been claims that thousands of Christians were also forced to convert to Hinduism (Human Rights Watch, 1999). Smita Narula says "Christians are the new scapegoat in India's political battles." Interesting enough that even in the same report, it is said that these persecutions are masked and used to achieve political and economic gain; the

report says, "...the exploitation of communal differences to mask political and economic motives underlying the attacks" (Human Rights Watch, 1999). Following the 2008 Kandhamal violence in Orissa against the Christian minority, Vatican raised its concern over the attack and called for a need to foster non-violence values among different religious groups' followers (Reuters, 2008).

While the conflict between the Muslims and the Buddhist are very rare, one notable incident happened in 2000's, the desecration of the Quran in a village in Kargil and subsequent clashes between groups of Muslims and Buddhists in Leh and Kargil town, Ladakh. Even though the conflict seems to be initiated due to religious reasons Sikand argues that religion is not sole motivating factors. He says, "The underlying causes of the simmering conflict in Ladakh are thus largely political and economic, and not religious as such, although this is how it has been sought to be presented (Sikand, 2006).

These events not just illustrate the nature of different conflicts but also raise pertinent question on the underlying motivation of the apparent religious conflict. Concerns over the disguised motivation of the religious conflicts have been raised by notable researchers such as Imtiaz Ahmad, Paul Brass, Ashutosh Varshney, Steven Wilkinson.

Social Scientist Imtiaz Ahmed argues that the political and economic factors lead to communal violence. He suggests that Hindu-Muslim violence needs to be viewed as an extension of general social conflict which includes inter as well as intra communal riots, caste violence and other forms of sectional upheavals. The emphasis placed on Hindu-Muslim conflict in case of social and communal violence comes but naturally considering the huge impact the various riots between the two communities have had on the Indian polity and society. Professor Imtiaz has also suggested future sociologist and political scientists to be aware of categorising communities as monolithic blocks.

Wilkinson (2003) provides statistical evidence to indicate proximity to an election and increase in the likelihood of a riot. Factors such as economic competition, Muslim population and percentage of refugees from Pakistan are not numerically significant in explaining the occurrence of a Hindu-Muslim riot even though computation shows that as the Hindu-Muslim balance of a town reaches 50-50, the possibility of a riot goes up a few notches (Wilkinson, 2003). Wilkinson has also identified that in a bi-polar state party system creates a potentially vulnerable situation for the minorities.

He has also tracked a linkage between party competition and ethnic violence claiming that high level of electoral competition and increase in swing voters can potentially reduce ethnic violence. He has reproduced an equation in the context of India which can be replicated for other countries (Wilkinson, 2003).

Party competition (↑) + Muslim swing votes (↑) = (↓) Levels of violence

Party competition (↓) + Muslim swing votes (↓) = (↑) Levels of violence

Scholars like Tambiah have also noted that processions often degenerate into rioting as a result of the manipulation to bring about some form of mobilisation in their favour.

Ashutosh Varshney provides a different interpretation of the issue and argues that the conflict between Hindus and Muslims is the terrible outcome of the absence of civic ties across communities. He also added that a multi-ethnic society with few interconnections across ethnic boundaries is very vulnerable to ethnic disorders and violence (Varshney, 2002). Varshney also asserts that Hindu-Muslim conflict is particularly an urban phenomenon and is concentrated in certain states and cities and termed them as 'riot-prone'.

Paul Brass, however takes a very straight forward step terming the communal riots as organised and produced by a network of known persons in the city or town. He compares a riot to a 'staged drama' (Brass, 2003). Brass defines these persons, while engaging in business, politics and cultural-religious organisations, as always willing and able to translate rumours and general discourses into local mobilisation. But Brass does not rule out the influence of historic relationship between Hindus and Muslims, thus he emphasises the broader cultural and psychological explanations of how the history or Hindu-Muslim enmity has, over time, produced a rich archive of mythical knowledge of 'the other' (Brass, 2003).

In the context of Bangladesh, which is a secular country from the very beginning, puts special attention to ensure freedom of individuals to practice of faith. However, the attacks and persecutions of religious minorities continue (Shakil, 2013). Shakil added that religious minorities being the part of bottom of the social hierarchy, have the least political recourse for which they witness discrimination and sometimes violence from the Muslim majority. But he has pointed his view towards religion saying that it (Islam) rejects such violence and it seems to be a serious misunderstanding and misinterpretation of Islam (Shakil, 2013).

Similar to Nguyen (2008), Amena A. Mohsin argues, "The Hindu-Muslim divide has been constructed and is being played upon and exploited by the political elites of the country most effectively and almost in a routinised manner for their own benefits in the name of "nation" and "state" (Mohsin, 2002). She also indicates the influential role played by the Partition of British India along religious lines (i.e., Hindu-Muslim) and the subsequent emergence of two nation-states turned out to be ominous for the religious minorities of the two states.

Apart from the political intentions to communal conflicts in Bangladesh, Abul Barakat (2000) has identified the existence of economic factors related to such persecution. Barakat in his research work 'Inquiry into Causes and Consequences of Deprivation of Hindu Minorities in Bangladesh through the Vested Property Act' have demonstrated that 925,050 Hindu households (40% of Hindu families in Bangladesh) were affected by the Enemy Property Act or known as the Vested Property Act. He added that Hindu households incurred a total loss of approximately 1.64 million acres (6,640 km²) due to the discriminatory act.

The issues of religion, politics and security became inter twined in South Asia (Mohsin, 2002). The conflict has had devastating effects on inter-group relationships. Apart from the loss of lives and property, it has profound influence on residential relationships, leading to new trends in the polarisation of communities (Fukshiwé, 2010).

Malitza has very specifically identified the social implications of religious persecutions saying, “weakens states common identity, which had controlled the centrifugal action of different identities. Consequently, a cultural conflict is erupted because culture is considered to be the totality of the values, beliefs, traditions and heritage that confer an identity on each individual. In its potential for explosive violence, culture could be compared to a nuclear reactor. A chain reaction would be started when a moderating influence of heavy water (a common project or authority) is removed. When the conflict reaches on certain intensity, a certain temperature, then violence is erupted. Violence can quickly destroy relationship between groups. Violence has generally been conceptualized as a degree of conflict rather than as a form of conflict. It is not a quantitative degree of conflict but a qualitative form with its own dynamics” (Mircea, 2001).

It can be assumed that economic threats are supposed to be associated with persecutions but Dr. Pickup and Dr. Goodwin argues the other way saying that feelings of economic threat did not increase. Public perceptions of individual economic threat (i.e., fears that individuals’ own economic prospects will worsen) did not increase after the riots. Similarly, public perceptions of collective economic threat (i.e., fears that the national economy will worsen) did not increase after the riots. This provides evidence that people were not primarily concerned about the economic impacts of the riots (Mark & Matthew, 2011).

The physical security of the minorities is almost always closely linked to the vulnerability of the minority women, since they become easy targets of sexual harassment of the dominant community. It is little wonder, therefore, that any member of the minority community will first think of sending their sisters and daughters to safety (Guhathakurta, n.d.).

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES OF THE INDIAN SUBCONTINENT

Despite a relatively peaceful coexistence among the followers of these religions, interfaith relations have often been disrupted by conflicts among religious groups in the Indian subcontinent.

Gujarat witnessed a dreadful religious violence in 2002 centering the Muslim involvement in burning a train filled with Hindu pilgrims. The train was ignited on 27 February 2002 causing the deaths of 57 Hindu people including women and children (Jaffrelot, 2003). Agitated Hindu, blaming Muslims for the train-casualty, in retaliation started rampage, rape and killing for more than two months. During the riot, it is estimated that over 2,000 people, mostly Muslim were killed (Mishra, 2012), some 20,000 Muslim residents and business establishments were completely destroyed (New York Times, 2014). While the Gujrat riot has been associated the Godhra train burning, the causes of the fire remain largely disputed (Metcalf, 2012). Some had suggested that the attack on the train was a planned incident, the narrative has been challenged by many suggesting that several inquiries found that the incident to be an accident rather than being a planned conspiracy (Nussbaum, 2008). There has also been question regarding the role of law enforcement agencies, political leaders and the media which some believe have worsened the already aggravated situation (Prasun, 2006).

In the communal riot, as per official sources, the death toll was 790 Muslims and 254 Hindus while 223 more were reportedly missing (BBC, 2005). But some independent sources claimed that more than 2,000 Muslims were killed in bloody communal riot (Mishra, 2012). It is estimated that Muslim owned 100,000 houses, 1,100 hotels, 15,000 businesses, 3,000 handcarts and 5,000 vehicles were completely devastated (Davies and Gloria, 2005). About 125,000 displaced Muslims were obliged to move into relief camps (Jaffrelot, 2003).

Babri Mosque Communal Riot of 1992 is often considered as one of the worst religious violence in the Indian-subcontinent since the partition of 1947. In December 1992, over 1.5 million (Tally, 2002) Hindu Karsevaks (volunteers) gathered at the site of the Babri Mosque with a view to reclaiming the land known as Ram Janmabhoomi. A large number of Karsevaks on 6 December 1992 set upon 16th century mosque with sledgehammers, grappling hooks and axes and within a few hours, the mosque was entirely demolished (New York Times, 2014). The Muslim community around India became infuriated following the destruction of historical mosque. Concurrently, the Muslim community brought out protest processions in some states of India leading several months long communal riot between Hindu and Muslim communities.

Several months' long bloody communal violence commencing from December 1992 took the lives of minimum 2,000 people, most of whom were Muslims. During the riot the estimated property damage was \$3.6 billion (Steven I, 2006).

The riot is widely considered as major factors behind the 1993 Mumbai bombings, causing at least 257 deaths (Babri Masjid bloody aftermath, 2011).

A terrible anti-Sikhs communal riot was spread out in India after the assassination of Indira Gandhi by her Sikh bodyguards on 31 October 1984. The riot ensued in Delhi and more than 3,000 Sikhs were brutally killed there (Bedi, 2009). The wave of anti-Sikhs uprising erupted unrestrainedly throughout the country causing the massacres of more than 8,000 innocent Sikhs people (Pandey, 2013). Several investigation reports including the report of Central Bureau of Investigation, the main Indian investigating agency, revealed that the organised violence was patronised by the political leaders while law enforcement agencies played indifferent role to restrain the agitated mob. Rajiv Gandhi who became Prime Minister after his mother's assassination attempted to rationalize the violence saying "when a big tree falls, the earth shakes" (Baweja, 2009). The official sources of Indian government claimed 2,700 deaths in the three-day (1-3 November) riot. The Congress led government didn't take appropriate measure to stop the violence consequently more than 20,000 people had to flee away from the Delhi city (Sharma & Shankar, 2013).

In 1964, a communal riot broke out between the Muslim and the Hindu communities in East Pakistan which is linked to the alleged theft of Prophet's hair. The hair was then found not an authentic one rather an artificial one. According to Bhattacharyya, approximately, 200-300 Bengali Hindus were killed at the Launce Ghat and around 300 Hindus were either killed or injured at Mongla port by Muslims (Bhattacharyya, 1987). The persecution also took place in Dhaka. Rayerbazar area was one of the most affected one, where minority Hindus lived, were attacked by the Bihari Muslims from Mohammadpur and the Noakhali Muslims from the Hazaribagh tanneries. According to Das, 96 Bengali Hindus were killed in the massacre. Many women were raped and many young girls were abducted (Das, 2010), and thousands of Hindu refugees fled to India to avoid persecution (Huda, 2009).

Apparently, it may be concluded that the main contributing factor for this riot was the religious sentiment of the Muslims in the East Pakistan. However, this has also been questioned, saying '...The Ayub government patronized this riot with the aim to divert the anti-government sentiments of the people'(Albd.org, n.d.). When the exodus started, the Hindus had no other option but to leave their properties and flee to India. Their assets were subsequently misappropriated by vested quarters of the Muslim leadership (Ray, 2005).

FINDINGS

While exploring the events of religious persecution during 2000-2014, it was noticed that the major persecutions took place somewhat on and right after the

elections where the alleged political affiliation of the minorities were considered to be one of the primary motives of religious persecutions.

For instance, following the 8th National Parliamentary Election on 1 October 2001, supporters of the winning political party had reported to have attacked the Hindu minorities because of their perceived support for the opposition party during the election. Reports indicate that the worst affected areas have been in Barisal, Bhola, parts of Pirojpur, Khulna, Satkhira, Gopalganj, Bagerhat, Jessore, Comilla and Narsingdi. Fear of backlash created a severe atmosphere of tension in the village. Several hundred Hindu villagers left for fear of being attacked and Hindu children would not attend schools. Hundreds of Hindu families have fled across the border into India because they have been attacked or threatened. According to Agence France-Presse of 29 October 2001 they have either ended up in camps or gone to their distant relatives (Amnesty International, 2001).

Some other significant incidents include attack on Hindus of Basantapur village on 08 May 2002, attack on two Christian villages Foiljona and Kadamtoli in Pabna, attack on Hindu minority community living Laxmipur village at Moulvibazar district on 20 April 2002, where religious minorities were subject to persecution by the religious majority as an aftermath of the election and for their presumed political preferences.

While the nature of persecution on the religious minorities has weakened the interfaith relations among different religious groups, the presence of non-religious motives in many of the religious persecutions on minorities is very evident. For example: persecutions after the election in October 2001, has direct relationship with election and thus politics. As most of the newspapers and international media have emphasised that the minorities have been attacked as they have voted or supported the then opposition. In other cases, it is recognisable, that the minorities are attacked and threatened so that the attackers can achieve economic benefit or political advantage or in some cases beastly satisfaction.

A similar pattern has also been witnessed during the 10th parliamentary election in 2014. One notable incident is the Abhaynagar violence which took place on the election day on 5 January 2014. Malopara under Prembagan Union of Abhaynagar (Jessore district) is a small village where lives about 107 Hindu families. Although majority of the Prembagan union is predominantly supporter of the opposition party but Malopara village people ideologically support the ruling party. However, the interview reveals that peace and harmony existed there, and there were exchanges of greetings during various festivals.

Around 250 activists of the opposition party, armed with sharp weapons and sticks attacked the Hindu inhabited Malopara village, where they vandalised more than 30 houses and set another 10 on fire (The Daily Star, 2014). The

violence of Abhaynagar shares some similar characteristics as previous persecutions that took place during and after the 8th Parliamentary Election in 2001. However, this event has also unfolded the possible role of both inter and intra political party conflicts in causing the persecutions of the minority groups.

The inter party reason for the attack on the Malopara people was to punish their participation in the election and supporting a candidate other than the opposition party. Their participation has been a particular problem since the opposition party envisaged to boycott the election all together and resist throughout the country. On the other hand, interview reveals an existence of intra-party conflict which stems from the re-demarcation of the constituency of Jessore – 4 prior to the election. Such re-demarcation has put one potential candidate an advantage over the other and interview suggests that the disadvantaged candidate may have a role to play in inciting the violence. The interview claims are further substantiated by report by Asian Human Rights Commission that the disadvantaged potential candidate held an election campaign meeting at Sundali Primary School ground adjacent to Chapatala village and allegedly threatened Hindu families with dire consequences if he were to lose the election to his Hindu counterpart (Asian Human Rights Commission, 2014). It is critical to highlight that the interviews have mentioned that the interfaith relations between Hindu and Muslims at Abhaynagar was very strong until the election time.

Contrary to these incidents, Ramu violence indicates different dynamics to religious conflicts in Bangladesh. The 2012 Ramu violence refers to a series of attacks on Buddhist monasteries, shrines, and houses of Buddhist inhabitants in Ramu Upazila in Cox's Bazar District by local Muslim mobs on the midnight past 29 September 2012. The mobs destroyed 22 Buddhist temples and monasteries and 50 houses in reaction to a tagging of an image depicting the desecration of holy Quran on the timeline of a fake Facebook account under the Buddhist male name Uttam Kumar Barua. Precisely, an image depicting the desecration of holy Quran was posted on the wall of Uttam Kumar Barua's Facebook profile by an unidentified person using a pseudonym. The violence later spread to Ukhia Upazila in Cox's Bazar District and Patiya Upazila in Chittagong District where Buddhist monasteries and Hindu temples were targeted for attacks (abc news, 2012). An estimated 25,000 Muslims participated in the violence directed at Buddhists and Hindus and over 300 people were arrested in connection to the attacks (bignewnetwork.com, 2012).

Torun Borua, one of the interviewees of the Ramu incident, provided insight about the timeline of the persecution that occurred on 29 September 2012. He, like other interviewees agreed to the allegation that, a defamed picture of Holy Quran was found on the Facebook page of Uttam Barua. However, he added that he was tagged by someone else with a pseudo name, which is also mentioned in mainstream media as well (Anam, 2012). Interestingly, he mentioned that the actual event took place on 18 September 2014, and Uttam

Barua requested Faroque and Alief to remove the image from his account. However, instead of removing the image, they played a vital role in circulating the issue among others. These events raise multiple questions regarding the delayed occurrence of the violence as well as involvement of other important players like Rohingya Solidarity Organization (RSO) or local politicians.

Apart from the religious sentiment, Ramu violence indicates the existence of other non-religious motives which may cause the violence including political motives.

The first question is why Uttam Kumar Barua and others were purposefully tagged in the picture at the first place by an anonymous person. Some interpreted that 'tagging' of the picture in the account of a Buddhist youth was part of the plan.

The second question is regarding the outburst itself. Generally, conflict arising for interfaith issues is a spontaneous response or outburst of the people for being hurt religiously. In Ramu incident, the persecution took place on 29 September 2012 with a gap of eleven days. It logically means that the incident did not stimulate Faroque and Alief instantly, which does not match with previous incidents on religious persecution. Such belated response also raises question whether the whole attack on the Buddhist community was meticulously organised which will then also explain the accumulation of huge protesters of around 25,000 within hours in a relatively remote place like Ramu.

According to the probe body, a meeting was held on September 28, 2012 at Tofail Ahmed's (Upazila Chairman of Nahkanchari and a relative of Moktadir Alief) residence a day before the actual violence took place (The Daily Star, 2014).

Lastly, the interviews show interesting facts on the presence of religious sentiment as a reason for this persecution. The participants were asked about the possible motives of attacking the Buddhists, and all of them shared that the persecution included participation of whole range of Muslim community across all major political parties (The Daily Star, 2012). The role of the law enforcement agencies was questioned by some (The Daily Star, 2012).

The events that happened during the time frame of 2001-2014, caused multidimensional impacts. They can largely be categorized into social, political and security implications. While economic impacts are also significant, it has not been the focus on the study.

Such persecutions created a deep sense of uncertainty, social tension and social distrust among different social groups. Vandalism of houses and shops had affected the victims economically. Forceful seizure of land or properties had made many minorities to migrate to other countries especially to India. As a result of these persecutions, people were scared to move and do their normal day to day activities. People were also afraid to send their children to school as

they were anxious about security. Sexual violence against women of minorities had a traumatising effect on the mind and life of the victims and their families. Many of the victims sought freedom by committing suicide. Ramu incident has also drawn international interest mostly in a negative way, defaming the image of Bangladesh. More than 100 monks in Burma have demonstrated in front of Bangladesh Embassy to protest attacks against Buddhist temples (The Scotsman, n.d.).

In a democratic country like Bangladesh, everyone is given the right to support any political party they want. However, these persecutions that were brought about on and after the general election might have marginalized the minority groups to express their political views. Besides, a long-term distrust might have been built on the political system of Bangladesh where government, to some extent, could not protect the rights of each group.

As the interviews have revealed, insecurity and panic had led many to flee from their home. Children could not attend their classes due to security issues (Dhaka Tribune 2015). Women were afraid in getting raped by the miscreants. Such individual insecurity caused a national level insecurity among the general people particularly among the members of other minority groups. Forced migration in the neighboring country may also cause inter-country security issues.

DISCUSSION

Experts have also very specifically termed the interfaith relations in Bangladesh to be very strong compared to the neighboring country. Major Shamsul Arefin said ‘...interfaith relations in Bangladesh are very strong in comparison to India’. A similar comment was given by Professor Imtiaz Ahmed, ‘... We share our diverse culture, language, dress, food and everything unlike any other part of the world. Perhaps no modern state can handle multi-dimensional challenges of faiths. But Bangladesh is reasonably doing well’.

The interviewees of the persecution in Abhaynagar and Ramu have also shared similar thing stating that relationship among different religious groups in those particular areas had always been very peaceful and cordial. Tarun Barua, like other interviewees, has specifically mentioned that the Buddhist community of Ramu was living harmoniously side by side with Muslims for last several generations. Shree Mohon Kumar Sharker, General Secretary, Radha Krishna Mandir, Malopara, Chapatola, Abhaynagar also stated that the Muslim elites and political leaders used to maintain very congenial relation with them and often shared joy of religious festivals.

In almost all the cases, there was existence of non-religious motives which can imply that the persecutions were influenced by non-religious reasons. However, non-religious motives do not rule out the existence of religious reasons. Some

of the identified non-religious motives include political hatred and pressure, illegal grab of lands, robbery, rape and sexual violence etc.

Political Hatred

Majority of the persecutions that took place in between 2001-2014 are somehow related to politics and elections, except for the Ramu violence. The minorities are often persecuted for their perceived alliance towards a certain political party.

Specific Pattern

Increase in persecutions on the minorities during or after the election period also matches with Wilkinson's claim that proximity to an election sharply increases the likelihood of a riot or violence and shows specific pattern of events.

Bi-Polarity of the Political System

Wilkinson's model of the relationship between party competition and increase or decreases of swing voters among the minorities can explain some of the phenomena. If these two variables are taken into consideration, according to the model of Wilkinson, levels of persecution should increase, like the way we are witnessing trend of persecutions on the minorities.

Party competition (↓) + Minority swing votes (↓) = (↑) Levels of violence

Intra-party Issues

Religious political parties are alleged to be responsible for the violence of Abhaynagar, however, the existence of intra party conflict probably oiled the fire and turned it into a religious persecution as many political analysts think so.

Illegal Land Grabbing

Land grabbing is probably the most significant economic reason that has been motivating many religious persecutions. For example, the houses of Dulal Debnath and Jitendra Debnath were attacked on 20 April 2002 at Moulavibazar and their lands were forcefully captured.

Looting and Robbery

Many of the persecutions included vandalism on the property of the minority groups which are followed by looting and robbery. For example, on 9 May 2002 the property of the "Ashram" has been looted and taken away by the attackers. The Abhaynagar event was not an exception from looting and robbery.

Kidnap and Sexual Violence

In many cases, the female representatives of religious minority groups were kidnapped, tortured and raped by the miscreants, which is one of the reasons for religious persecutions.

Plotted Violence

The Ramu incident provides evidence for multiple non-religious motives. The timeline for the arson is very significant as the persecution occurred 11 days

later than the defamation of holy Quran which may imply that even though the outbreak could have happened earlier, they took time to prepare and attack deliberately. Abhaynagar incident may be given highlighting preparation of arson like cycle disc. All these possibilities also restate the view of Brass who perceives the communal riots or religious violence as ‘Staged Drama’ (Brass, 2003).

Persecutions on the religious minorities also have overarching impacts on the societal harmony, security and politics. The major implications include loss of lives and injuries, vandalism and loss of properties, forced migration, disturbance in daily life and education, social hatred, social insecurity, threat to national security and so on.

Loss of Lives and Injuries

Loss of lives, injuries, and post persecution trauma are some common impacts of the arsons against the religious minorities. Representatives of the minorities are often beaten, tortured, body parts amputated or even killed during the persecutions. Women are the poor victim of such persecutions as they are often tortured and raped brutally.

Vandalism and Loss of Property

Vandalism is the most common form during any persecutions. For example, the Abhaynagar incident included vandalism like destroying the houses and shops of the Hindus, looting valuable materials etc. Previous persecutions like the attack on the Christians on 26-27 February 2002, had witnessed massive vandalism by the attackers who are usually armed.

Forced Migration

In many cases, the Hindus are forced to migrate to neighboring countries for safety. Religious persecutions may force many other to migrate as Mr. Subrato Sharker was saying “Maybe we have to leave for India for survival but we do not want to do that. We cannot leave our generations’ home and property for no good reason.”

Hindrance to Normal Life

Persecutions create social tension among the victims which directly hinders the normal social life. In many cases victims are forced to take shelter in different area for safety. For example, during the post electoral persecutions of 2001, Ziodhara village was attacked where several hundred Hindu villagers left for fear of being attacked and Hindu children would not attend schools.

Social Insecurity

Persecutions create a sense of insecurity among the victims and in the neighboring area. Such raise of social insecurity is prevalent in all the persecutions. For example, the 2012 Ramu violence had created immense insecurity for the Buddhist community of Bangladesh.

National Security

Persecutions on the minorities can raise regional tension which may ultimately turn into a national security concern. In case of Bangladesh, persecutions on the minorities have drawn the attention of neighboring countries. The 2012 Ramu violence has brought about some national level security issues. On the other hand, persecution on the Rohingya was also alleged to be one of the motivating factors for the Ramu incident. Thus, the persecutions bring insecurity not only to individual level but also to national and regional level.

CONCLUSION

Persecutions on the religious minorities are often generalised to be taken place due to interfaith conflict and differences. However, this study proves that the traditional interfaith relation in Bangladesh is very strong where communities of different beliefs and faiths coexist in a peaceful and harmonious manner. As compared to the neighboring country like India and Pakistan, Bangladesh has been able to maintain healthy interfaith relations. However, from time to time, people belonging to the majority religious group, Islam, have attacked the minorities with different motives. This study contradicts with the common perception on persecutions on the religious minorities that religious difference is not the sole motivating factor in plotting these persecutions. As a part of the scope of this study, it investigated the existence of different political, social and economic reasons from non-subjective point of view considering the historical perspective and different time frames. The study finds that persecutions on the minorities are politically or economically motivated rather than sole religious reasons. Many of the persecutions are planned and plotted with wit to serve non-religious purposes. Persecutions often follow a pattern in different timeframe indicating the possible likelihood of repetition in the future, i.e. during or after national election. Grabbing land and properties is the most common economic motivating factor.

Actions create impacts. Each of the persecutions can bring about short term and long-term implications on Bangladesh's social, political and security aspects. Attack on the minority groups basically questions the fundamentals of the country as stated in the constitution. Arsons and attacks not only shake the long build social harmony but also decay the future coexistence of diverse groups in Bangladesh as such violence ignites social distrust and insecurity among the social groups. Religious persecutions threaten the national security and international relations of the country. Criticism and condemnation of the neighboring countries and international community are pointing fingers regarding Bangladesh's capability in preserving the rights of the minorities. Besides, relationship with the neighboring country may face difficulties as a result of such persecutions.

Prosperity of the country will depend a lot on stable social structure and peaceful and harmonious existence of the diverse group. Deepening general understanding among interfaith groups is half of creating a harmonious society where stopping the persecutions on the minorities is the complimenting half. If both are achieved, a prosperous inclusive Bangladesh can come into reality.

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THE SKIP ZONE OF DEFENCE DIPLOMACY: THE SOUTH ASIAN PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract: The South Asian defence diplomacy spectrum distinctly falls short of expectation in conflict prevention. Some of the regional countries display ‘smoking gun’ evidence blaming to each other, often increasing mistrust. The nuclear neighbours India-Pakistan’s archrivalry and inimical attitude are the prime hurdles in flourishing defence diplomacy in the region. Apart from Kashmir Conflict, Sino-Indian border conflict, Rohingya crises, and turbulent Afghan crisis are the most complex agenda on the defence-diplomatic table. There is no option, but to foster and nurture strategic and moralistic trust in bilateral and multilateral relations amongst the countries of South Asia. They should craft the activities carefully and explore issues of common interests. Disaster management, search and rescue operation, counter insurgency operation, anti-drug drive, anti-terrorism operations, anti-trafficking of human, PKO, pandemic management etc. are the untapped potential sectors of defence diplomacy of the region. South Asian countries need to take a leap of faith and put forth trust even at the cost of risk. Mistrusted partners need opportunity to display that they are reliable and trustworthy. Strategic trust and fair political commitment in a form of defence diplomacy still may kindle light of hope at the end of the long dark tunnel of South Asia.

Keywords: *Defence Diplomacy, Realpolitik Orientation, Strategic Trust and Confidence, Thucydides Trappe, Disarmament of Mind, and Political Control of Armed Forces*

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INTRODUCTION

Sri Lanka drew unremitting attention whereof its Armed Forces played a truly professional and diplomatic role rescuing the nation from dire political crisis.¹

¹ *The unprecedented Sri Lankan crises (2022) in Sri Lanka were a politic - economic deadlock owing to the power struggle between President Gotabaya Rajapaksa and the people of Sri Lanka. It was further aggravated by the anti-government protests and demonstrations by the public due to the economic crisis in the country.*

India and China withdrew troops from heavily contested military sites in the high hills of Western Himalayas.² In a similar scenario, India and Pakistan signed an agreement of ceasefire on 25 February 2021 agreeing to stop firing to each other at disputed high mountains of Kashmir.³ The breakthroughs were the sigh of relief and the outcome of an incessant defence diplomatic persuasion between military commanders and diplomats from the nuclear armed neighbours. The 'Pagong Tso Accord' and the 'Director General of Military Operation' level diplomatic efforts defused border tension but could do nothing to the Sino-Indian conflict over 2,200 miles long border dispute and longstanding Kashmir Conflict. The Indo-Pak subcontinent, the heart of South Asia, is also sitting in the heart of the VUCA (Vulnerable, Uncertainty, Complex and Ambiguity) world. The geographical frame of South Asia is bounded by Indian Ocean (IO), Himalayas and Afghanistan. The Arabian Sea borders Pakistan and India to the west, the Bay of Bengal borders Bangladesh and India to the east. Modern definition of South Asia consists of the countries of Afghanistan, India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bhutan, and the Maldives. It is a region defined in both geographical and ethno-cultural terms. Diplomacy is intensely and exponentially related to geo-politics, as such, the subject inevitably demands a critical analysis on the neighbouring countries and regions. The spillover effect of countries like China and Myanmar, and regions like Indochina and Indo-Pacific will come into often discussion of diplomacy.

The realpolitik orientation of defence diplomacy in the Post-Cold War era which is incessantly exercised by many of the western democratic countries radiate light of hope in conflict prevention, albeit the picture appears uncanny in South Asia. The defence diplomacy seems fell into a 'Skip Zone' or 'Zone of Silence'.⁴ The island countries; Sri Lanka and the Maldives, impoverished landlocked countries; Nepal and Bhutan, and archrival India and Pakistan are entangled into multifaceted diplomatic strains. Again, Nepal and Bhutan are being sandwiched between their giant neighbours; India and China, add another dimension of diplomatic challenge into the region. Bangladesh's geostrategic location is too significant to the world and regional powers. On western front, Afghanistan, the live volcano of power politics has been struggling through a deadly consequence, keeping South Asian region on red alert, and defence diplomacy at bay! The broader spectrum of defence diplomacy of South Asia also represents a paradoxical narrative. The cooperative activity is directed at the strategic and moralistic trust in one hand, and on the other hand, it pursues hidden national interest. With such unscrupulous and complex feature, South Asia displays an ominous front of defence diplomacy owing to the archrivalry

² On 11 February 2021, Indian Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said in the parliament, "our sustained talks with China have led to an agreement on disengagement at the North and South banks of the Pangong Lake".

³ This agreement was penned at Director General of Military Operations (military diplomates) level.

⁴ A skip zone, also called a 'silent zone' or 'zone of silence', is a region, where a radio transmission cannot be received. The term used as title of the subject as it has similar inefficacy of defence diplomacy in South Asia.

between India and Pakistan, disputing Sino-Indian border, and extra-regional influence of the global powers, especially, China. The paper endeavors to geopolitically analyze the defence diplomatic dynamics of South Asia, the design and typical features, prime and sensible impediments and ways forward for efficiency of defence diplomacy in South Asia.

THE GEOPOLITICS AND DEFENCE - DIPLOMATIC DESIGN OF SOUTH ASIA

The stereo-typed defence diplomacy experienced a paradigm shift in the Post-Cold War era. Western democratic countries have been exercising defence diplomacy as the peacetime cooperative use of armed forces, and related infrastructure as a tool of foreign policy and security policy.⁵ Geopolitically, it is imperative to analyze the strategic dynamics of South Asia before embarking into the subject. Sir Mortimer Durand drawn Afghanistan-Pakistan border has been a perennial source of conflict since its inception.⁶ Pakistan did not remiss the opportunity and has been trying to interfere into internal politics with the overwhelming influence of the Pathans across the border. It explored ancient connection and legacy of ethno-cultural influence throughout. Soviet's invasion into Afghanistan in 1979, embroiled the geopolitics of South Asia once again, and India extended diplomatic support to Moscow. Pakistan was prompt to help the U.S and Saudi Arabia to arm, train and pay for the Mujahedeen to fight the USSR. Afghanistan, appearing at the muddle of overlapping and conflicting interests of the regional and international power politics and also unfolding an era of uncertainty and instability. The U.S led coalition forces withdrawal triggered a race for influence amongst regional and international powers from Turkey to China. Turkey got involved into the Afghan gamut, seeking to exploit any potential opportunities to engage with regional countries like; Pakistan, Iran, Russia, and China.⁷ Taliban's ascendancy in power likely to trigger refugee influx into the neighbouring countries. It is feared to confront a surge of drug, human trafficking, and terrorist activity in South Asia.

Geographically, Pakistan repleted with security challenges having India in the east and Afghanistan in the west. The maritime front always poses unpredictable issues particularly on the coastal waters - stretched from Persian Gulf in the west and IO in the east. With the contested waters, Pakistan comprehends to evolve two-edged defensive strategy of countering the challenge, and project credible deterrence to keep the threat at bay. Security

5 The masterpiece on defence diplomacy written by Andrew Cottey and Anthony Forster is "Reshaping Defence Diplomacy, New Roles for Defence Cooperation and Assistance".

6 Sir Mortimer Durand drew the Afghanistan – Pakistan border in 1893 and was annulled by Afghanistan Government in 1949.

7 Turkey has been providing security of the Kabul airport after the U.S withdrawal with a view to showing NATO its value as a major-Muslim member state by establishing relations with and exerting some influence on the Taliban regime. Turkey also hosts some 120,000–600,000 Afghan refugees.

analysts suggest, two-fold approaches: firstly; indigenization - prompting industrial level production of the relevant weapons, ammunitions and equipment, and secondly; acquisition of advanced military hardware and technology from western countries. To address these military objectives, defence diplomacy appears as a prudent means for engaging those desired countries with advanced military hardware.

The Al Qaeda's leader Osama bin Laden was located in a military garrison town of Pakistan.⁸ Since then, the U.S considered this act as perfidy and carried out special operation to kill Osama bin Laden. This killing mission was a breach of sovereignty, which tantamounted humiliation to the military and government of Pakistan. The argument of the U.S went on, "if you don't know he is there, you are incompetent; if did you are complicit".⁹ The political and security alignment between Pakistan and the U.S plunged into a deep sea, and Pakistan's choice of potential partners has become significantly narrowed down. At this juncture of nerve-racking pressure, Pakistan had to revise and redirect its defence-diplomatic alignment towards China.

India initiated its defence diplomacy in South Asia in consonance with the 'Look East' policy to focus upon its eastern sealines and secure its strategic interest in the IO area. Apart from containment strategy for China and Pakistan, the defence diplomacy of India has not made notable progress because of its bureaucratic and political inertia, and absence of strategic culture. India psychologically feels, a vast geographic area for its diplomacy, but appropriate apparatus has not been developed to explore the national interests. In 2011, K. Sankar Bajpai, the then chairmen of India's National Security Advisory Board said, "the instruments of state action have become dysfunctional India's strategic interest extends from the Suez to Shanghai..... But we have neither the manpower nor the strategic thinking to handle these challenges". Harsh critique even opined, "though British left India in 1947, it has not even outgrown the British legacy". At this juncture, India's strategic interests in South Asia and Southeast Asia trigger the urgency to have a clear-cut policy for defence diplomacy.

Nepal, a landlocked and typically sandwiched country between powerful neighbours, somehow manages and augments its vital national interest. Historically, Nepal has been experiencing a peculiar relationship with these countries with mixed feelings of cordiality, tension, and manifold threats. In this oscillated manoeuvre, defence diplomacy played a vital role as a subset of foreign policy. Nepal's constitution stipulated its foreign policy goal is 'to enhance the dignity of the nation by safeguarding sovereignty, territorial

⁸ *Al Qaeda founder Osama bin Laden was identified in a hideout at Abbottabad, Pakistan on 02 May 2011.*

⁹ *The Former U. S Secretary of State Colin Powell anguished Pakistan on discovering Osama bin Laden's presence in Pakistan.*

integrity, independence, and promoting the economic wellbeing and prosperity of Nepal'.¹⁰ King Prithvi Narayan Shah, the founder of Nepal mentioned that the country as a 'yam' between two stones, and he underscored the need of maintaining friendship with China and Britain diplomatically. Nepal supported British East India Company to suppress the 'Sepoy Mutiny' and aptly drew the British sympathy to enhance Nepal's national security. As a bounty, the British (Raj) observed a policy of strict non-interference in the internal matters of Nepal. In another move, a tripartite treaty signed by India, Nepal, and Britain in November 1947, in which, both Britain and India were permitted to recruit Gurkhas for their armies. In return, India agreed to meet the defence requirements of Nepalese Army. Nepal also capitalized this diplomatic tie and changed its foreign policy as required to protect the national independence and sovereignty. Even, when the bilateral relation between India and Nepal reached at the lowest ebb, still they continued the defence- diplomatic impetus. Amid the economic blockade imposed upon Nepal in 2015, the Chief of Army Staff (COAS) visited India and could convince the Indian political leaders, which prompted lifting of the economic blockade. It was regarded as a great defence-diplomatic hour of the contesting neighbours.¹¹ The unique reciprocal awarding of honorary COAS between India and Nepal is another diplomatic architecture of India - Nepal defence-diplomatic relation.

Bhutan, a kingdom on Himalaya's eastern fringe, is known as monasteries fortresses and a dramatic landscape. China Pictorial, a Chinese magazine, published a map showing Bhutan within China's border in 1958. The Tashogdu, the National Assembly of Bhutan vehemently protested the matter and requested India to take up the issue with China on Bhutan's behalf. The Indo-Bhutanese Treaty, 1949 stipulated that India does not interfere in the internal administration of Bhutan, when the later agreed to be guided by the Government of India for the issues of the external relations.¹² The Armed Forces of Bhutan consists of Royal Bhutan Army, Royal Bodyguards and Royal Bhutan Police. Being a landlocked country, it does not have navy and air force. In recent years, India helped Bhutan in developing its military through donations and training. Presently, Bhutan has 8,000 personnel in its army. The King of Bhutan is the Supreme Commander of Royal Bhutan Army.

Centering the 70th Anniversary of Sri Lanka Air Force, air chiefs of India, Bangladesh, Commander of the U.S Pacific Air Force, and Chinese Defence

10 Nepal's Constitution Preamble - "We, the people of Nepal, in exercise of the sovereign powers inherent in us embracing the sovereign right of the people and the right to autonomy and self-rule, by maintaining Nepal's independence, sovereignty, geographical integrity, national unity, freedom, and dignity."

11 The 2015 Nepal blockade, which began on 23 September 2015, was an economic and humanitarian crisis, severely affected Nepal and its economy. India has denied the allegations, stating the supply shortages have been imposed by Madhesbi protesters within Nepal.

12 India-Bhutan Agreement, 1949 determined India is responsible for Bhutan's military training, arm supplies and air defence.

Minister visited Sri Lanka.¹³ It seemed to be a crucial use of Sri Lankan defence diplomacy to augment and strengthen its national interest. Building the image of Sri Lanka Armed Forces in post conflict context is a priority agenda of this island country.¹⁴ Experts opine, dovetailing defence diplomacy with public diplomacy would foster the national interests of Sri Lanka in a multi-dimensional approach. Amid the image crisis, Sri Lanka ventured for the 'public diplomacy', encompassing its Armed Forces contribution in reconstruction and rehabilitation efforts. It includes infrastructure development, livelihood assistance, and even encouraging children education.¹⁵ One of the major challenges - otherwise a patent vacuum, Sri Lanka needs to fill in the post conflict scenario is to abreast foreign audience of what its Armed Forces are doing in terms of peacebuilding. This rehabilitation package at home, well regarded as defence diplomacy has started convincing the target audience in Sri Lanka's favour. The civil-military partnership practiced at General Sir John Kotelawala Defence University (KDU) is another benchmark initiative of Sri Lankan defence-diplomatic initiative.¹⁶ The small island nation re-shaped its defence diplomatic orientation towards civil-military cooperation. The post conflict era agenda include disaster management programme, participation in the UN Peacekeeping operation (PKO), security dialogue, and even organizing reality shows and contests like 'Ranaviru Real Star' etc. to promote its Armed Forces image leaving aside their arms and ammunitions. The renewed interest of the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (QSD) also known as the QUAD, looks to consolidate its presence and firm position in South Asia.¹⁷ On the contrary, China is eagerly expecting Sri Lanka on its way to One Belt One Road (OBOR) initiative. Standing at the strategic crossroad, Sri Lanka's location is quite significant, as it sits in the middle of the IO. Sri Lanka cautiously notes that it is not the only country focused for the purpose. A smart response to the call and attending it before others is the most challenging dilemma now on the defence-diplomatic table of Sri Lanka.

In 2022, Sri Lanka passed through a wide-spread concern of military intervention in politics and finally it had a sigh of relief with its Armed Forces dynamic diplomatic role. The Sri Lankan Armed Forces has been enjoying enormous power in Sri Lanka, but never openly intervened and dictated the politicians. It maintained a balance between the government and opposition

13 Sri Lanka Air Force was founded in 1951, and it had even played a major role throughout the Sri Lankan civil war.

14 The Sri Lankan Armed Forces levelled with the stigma of genocide and not free from harsh critique.

15 The Sri Lankan Army implemented projects to renovate more than 6,000 houses and constructed nearby 7,000 new housing units in the conflict-hit Northern region. Sri Lanka's initiation of the Galle Dialogue (2010) and the Defence Seminar of 2011 were the considerable achievements of its defence diplomacy.

16 General Sir John Kotelawala Defence University (KDU) was established in 1981, and subsequently it was elevated to university status in 1988, empowering it to award Bachelors' and Postgraduate degrees in Defence Studies.

17 The QUAD is a strategic dialogue between the U.S, India, Japan, and Australia that is maintained by talks between member countries. It was initiated in 2007 by Japan.

supporters when the President Gotabaya Rajapaksa fled away in an air force plane. Despite having close connections to the government, the Armed Forces of Sri Lanka did not openly come to the aid of the Rajapaksa regime. The military was deployed in the capital city and order was given to shoot on sight by the president. But the military did not use its power to quell the demonstrators. The Chief of Defence Staff and the Commander of the Army General Shavendra Silva, refuted the allegations that the Armed Forces was poised to shoot at the public to provoke them. Prime Minister Mahindra Rajapaksa was rescued by the military only when his residence was attacked by the protesters on 10 May, 2022. In such a political impasse, General Shavendra Silva appealing all Sri Lankans to support the Armed Forces and police to ensure that peace has been maintained in the country mentioning that it was an opportunity of resolving the crisis in peaceful manner. The top official of defence ministry, Kamal Guarantee said in a press conference, “None of our officers have a desire to take over the government. It has never happened in our country and it is not easy to do it here.” In fine, the professional and matured handling of the situation by the Sri Lankan Armed Forces received loud appreciation adding laurels to defence diplomacy.

Bangladesh has been drawing unremitting attention for its multidimensional socio-economic development trajectory. Bangladesh Armed Forces, which was born during the Liberation War, has been performing with high note and loud appreciation. At the nascent stage, it successfully fought a full-blown insurgency (1977-1997) and achieved its military objective through the politically directed Counter Insurgency Operation (CIO) in the Chattogram Hill Tracts. Military history records this CIO as one of the few successful CIOs of the world. Active participation in the Gulf War of 1990, intense PKO, and innumerable disaster management operations at home and abroad received worldwide recognition and appreciation. Accepting and subsequent sheltering of 1.1 million Forcibly Displaced Myanmar National (FDMN) and managing this huge and unprecedented human disaster by Bangladesh have been once again applauded by the world community.¹⁸ Bangladesh Armed Forces’ pro-people and positive engagement has earned an extraordinary international reputation with political and diplomatic mileage. They have glorified the country on the global stage through their brilliant participation in PKO in which, Bangladesh is a brand name and often secures the top position of the Troops Contributing Countries.¹⁹ The US Army General Charles A. Flynn said: “The Bangladesh Army is known for its leadership globally because of its contributions to UN peacekeeping operations. Its peacekeeping campus and training center are not just known within the region, they are known internationally. There are many, many things that the US Army and so many

18 Myanmar forcefully pushed 1.1 million Rohingyas inside Bangladesh territory on August 25-26, 2017.

19 Bangladesh is the highest TCC with (7373) Peacekeepers as on 25 January 26, 2023. It participated in 54 PKO in 40 countries.

other armies can learn from the experiences of Bangladeshi Army in their international and global commitment to humanitarian assistance, disaster relief, and peacekeeping operations.”²⁰

Acknowledgment and loud appreciation have once again proved that Bangladesh Armed Forces are the potential and exponential tool of defence diplomacy of Bangladesh. In the recent times, Bangladesh underscores the need of triggering defence diplomacy to pursue its national interest. The great and gala event of Bangladesh’s defence diplomacy has been revolving around the Indo-Pacific region. The region is spotlighted as the world’s economic and strategic center of gravity and the IO is viewed as the epicenter of important geo-strategic play. Bangladesh, historically, has been part of ancient Indo-Pacific connectivity. The Indo-Pacific region comprising around 40 nations covers more than half of the earth’s surface, accommodating 60% of the world’s population contributing 60% of global GDP and two-thirds of current global growth. By 2030, the overwhelming majority (90%) of the 2.4 billion new members will be entering the global economy. Seven of the world’s 10 largest armies are in the region where border disputes and sovereignty concerns are headline events. The 46th Indo-Pacific Armies Management Seminar (IPAMS)-2022, was co-hosted by Bangladesh Army and US Army Pacific (USARPAC) in Dhaka.²¹ IPAMS-2022 was one of the largest military diplomatic platforms for land forces in the region which was a conference for the senior military leadership of Indo-Pacific regional ground forces to exchange views and opinions on peace and stability. IPAMS- 2022 was participated by senior officers of the military forces of 24 countries. The theme was “Possibilities and Challenges for Maintaining Peace and Security in the Indo-Pacific Region with especial focus on robust peacekeeping, women empowerment, and land power in regional cooperation. Other broad issues were peacekeeping operations, humanitarian assistance, disaster relief, leadership development, countering transnational crime, and empowering women. While addressing the opening ceremony of the seminar, the Honourable Prime Minister of Bangladesh, Sheikh Hasian said, “The IPAMS can create a sense of friendship and warmth so that peace and stability prevail in the region.” Charles A. Flynn, Commanding General of the U.S. Army Pacific, assured that the US will cooperate with Bangladesh and other Indo-pacific countries to ensure the security of this important region.

The daunting achievement of Bangladesh defence diplomacy was focused upon the FDMN issue. A delegation of IPAMS- 2022 consisting of top military officials from 24 countries, including the U.S, Canada, Australia, Japan,

20 The US Army General Charles A. Flynn made this statement in the opening session of the 46th IPAMS in Dhaka on 12-15 September, 2022.

21 The IPAMS is a U.S. Army Pacific (USARPAC) initiated conference aimed at facilitating and enhancing interactions among the armies of the Indo-Pacific region.

Indonesia, India, China, and Vietnam, visited the FDMN camps at Cox's Bazar. The FDMN expressed their desire to go back to their home country of Myanmar's Rakhine State and not to any third country. The team sensed and developed a clear perception of the gravity of the refugee crises and the need for their repatriation to Myanmar. Immediate after the seminar, some of the participating countries expressed their desire to accept a little number of FDMN in their countries including the US. In fact, this conference ushered a unique opportunity for Bangladesh to connect with the world's militaries to foster partnerships and cooperative relationships in bilateral, regional and global issues. Bangladesh has stipulated defence diplomacy as one of the pillars of its National Defence Policy.²² Centering Golden Jubilee of independence and the birth centenary of the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, Bangladesh Navy organized a milestone defence diplomatic event of ever first International Fleet Review (IRF) at Cox's Bazar.²³ The four-day IFR-2022 was colourful with the participation of navies and maritime organisations from 28 countries including the USA, UK, Germany, Italy, Saudi Arabia, India, China, Korea, Indonesia, Turkey, the Netherlands and the host Bangladesh. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina formally inaugurated the IFR. The IFR served as an ideal platform for world navies to showcase their prowess, naval diplomacy, goodwill and cooperation in the international arena. Mere appreciation, recognition, connectivity, and policy framing will not be purposefully useful because; these vibrant efforts were not carefully knitted with the causes of the national interest. Again, sometimes, ripe benefit of achievements was not duly focused referring security grounds. The unstructured Bangladesh defence diplomacy without dovetailing into national diplomacy is unable to tape the potentials of national interest.

The Maldives occupies a critical strategic position in South Asia, gradually drawing attention of the regional and world powers. The signing of a defence agreement with the U.S in September 2020 was a landmark event in the Indo-Pacific region. This tie was duly welcomed by India, which views the Maldives as a strategic friend in its IO backyard. Both India and the Maldives used to enjoy friendly ties and their geographic proximity has been featured with political trust, economic cooperation, and coherent diplomatic relation. Their relationship has a sharp bend between 2013-2018 when former Maldivian President Abdullah Yameen Abdul Gayoom leaned towards China.²⁴ China views the Maldives as a key to its Maritime Silk Route project in the IO, as it has already acquired Hambantota port in Sri Lanka and Djibouti - the 'Horn of Africa'. Bringing in an extra regional power into South Asian political periphery triggered significant geopolitical anxiety. The QUAD members clapped for this

²² *Three pillars of Bangladesh's Defence Policy are; Deterrence, Defence Diplomacy, and Defeat Hostile Design.*

²³ *The IFR – 2022 was held at Inani Sea beach, Cox's Bazar on 06-09 December 2022.*

²⁴ *Abdullah Yameen Abdul Gayoom leaned towards China to throttle his country's democratic policy. His strategic direction sitting at IO raised eyebrows of New Delhi.*

agreement, as it could curve extra-territorial influence of China in South Asia's maritime boundary. Solih's Government came into power in 2018, quickly reverted to 'India First' policy, and enhanced defence and strategic cooperation with India.²⁵

India promptly embraced the Pro-Indian move of president Solih and signed couple of agreements to further strengthen and invigorate the traditionally strong and friendly relations. India even offered US \$ 800 million line of credit, and budgetary support to pay off partial Chinese investment in the Maldives.²⁶ In 2019, both countries signed another agreement on sharing 'White Shipping' information between Indian Navy and the Maldives National Defence Force.²⁷ India gifted a patrol vessel to the Maldives and jointly inaugurated the Composite Training Facility of the Maldives National Defence Force. They also established Coastal Surveillance Radar System by remote link. The Maldives resumed India, Sri Lanka, and Maldives National Security Advisor level tripartite talk in 2019.²⁸ The constructivists argue that the shared ideas shaped up mutual understanding between India and Maldives, embedding strategic trust and mutual confidence. Skeptical view suggests that the Maldivians may always re-establish closer tie with China if any of the future governments drift from the 'India First' strategy. In defence-diplomatic prism, the Maldives can influence regional power dynamics involving both India and China on the vast waters of IO.

WHY AND HOW SOUTH ASIAN DEFENCE DIPLOMACY IS IN A SKIP ZONE?

The ultra-complex geopolitical frame of South Asia represents an ominous and frustrating black cloud and never had a silver line around it. During the corona debacle, India only accepted few ambulances as support from the 'Edi Foundation' of Pakistan.²⁹ India and Pakistan usually do not engage in defence diplomacy in any meaningful form. The bone of contentions and prime hurdles in flourishing defence diplomacy in South Asia are:

25 Soon after the September 2018 election, Solih's Government's quickly shifted to 'India First' policy even with the liabilities of \$3 billion Chinese loan.

26 Indian US\$ 800 million line of credit includes 1000 education scholarships over 5 years from 2018. US\$ 100 million for connectivity projects.

27 Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Maldivian President Ibrahim Mohamed Solih jointly inaugurated a Coastal Surveillance Radar System (CSRS) built by India, and a composite training facility of the Maldives National Defence Force on 08 June 2019.

28 The National Security Advisor (NSA) level talk initiated in 2011 in Maldives. This trilateral meeting has served as an effective platform for cooperation among IO countries. It had been stalled for 6 years because of the worsening India - Maldives relations during president Mamun Gaydom's term.

29 The 'Edi Foundation' is the largest Ambulance Service of the world. The foundation is a non-profit social welfare organization was founded by Abdul Sattar Edhi in 1951.

● **India and Pakistan are at Loggerhead.** ‘Modern Pakistan and India were borne in fire; next time the fire could kill them.’³⁰ Neither India nor Pakistan wants the other one around.³¹ They already fought four major wars and innumerable skirmishes. India views Pakistan as impoverished, volatile, and splintering, while India considers itself as an emerging world power with growing economy. Leaving aside the bone of contentions, India and Pakistan both wishfully harbours following similarities:

- None except and expect other around.
- Despite Kashmiris’ strong desire of independence, both India and Pakistan dream to have control on it, agreeing the fact - they cannot have it.
- The conspicuous geostrategic issues dictate Pakistan will involve itself in Afghanistan, so will India.

Differences between them are many and ocean apart. Being ostracized by the U.S, Pakistan tilted towards China heavily. In 2015, both China and Pakistan agreed a \$46 billion MoU for building a superhighway of roads, railway, and pipelines running 1,800 miles from Gwader to Xinjiang.³² This China-Pakistan economic corridor will offer China a direct access to IO and beyond, in which India is awe-shocked and threatened at point blank.

● **Fixed Mindset.** A fixed mindset of civilian bureaucratic control on the military matters spoils the diplomatic objectives. Citing example from Indian military intervention into Sri Lanka, known as ‘Operation Pawan’, Ved Malik highly criticized this fixed mindset.³³ He opined that the constant attitude of the political masters to keep the military leadership out of the loop of strategic decision making, and yet using military power, has been the prime hurdle to Indian defence diplomacy. On the contrary, the Pakistan Army highly controls its states’ diplomacy. Centering the Kashmir crisis, both countries dangerously concluded that there cannot be any settlement on Kashmir. Similar fixed mindset also upsets India in handling the neighboring countries diplomatically, especially Nepal, Bhutan, and the Maldives with a wide expectation of subservient demand.

³⁰ Tim Marshall, *Prisoners of Geography*, Pp - 192.

³¹ *The Thucydides Trap* is a term popularized by American political scientist Graham T. Allison to describe an apparent tendency towards war when an emerging power threatens to displace an existing great power as a regional or international hegemon.

³² China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is a collection of infrastructure projects that are under construction throughout Pakistan since 2013. The value of CPEC projects rosed to worth \$62 billion as of 2020.

³³ ‘Operation Pawan’ was the codename assigned to the Indian PKO Force to take control of Jaffna from the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE).

● **Realpolitik Orientation of Defence Diplomacy.** The liberal defence diplomacy looks for the following objectives:

- Dispel hostility, build, and maintain trust.
- Assist in the development of democratically accountable armed forces.
- Contribute towards conflict prevention and resolution.

The realpolitik orientation of defence diplomacy contests with all-above objectives. In the lanes of the South Asian defence diplomacy, India is less likely to accept anything from Bhutan, but continue with 'India First' policy. So is the untold case for Nepal, and the Maldives. Geostrategic Afghan front is always highly contested ground for both India and Pakistan as determined by geography.³⁴

● **Thucydides Trap.** American political scientist Graham T. Allison describes 'Thucydides Trap' as an apparent tendency towards war.³⁵ In South Asian influence dynamics, emergence of QUAD, and extraterritorial influence of China on the waters of the Pacific and the IO have tremendous impact in power politics of South Asia. The economic conflict and contest between India and China have become an open secret issue. Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bhutan, and the Maldives are the countries, where both India and China having spiral and conflicting interests. On the western boundary, the turbulent Afghanistan is another front, where India and Pakistan are head on for their respective strategic interests. The South Asia, a hotspot of world power politics, conforms and confirms Thucydides gospel, "right, as the world goes, is only in question between equals in power, while the stronger do what they can and the weaker suffer what they must".

● **Double Standard Defence Diplomacy.** The former Maldivian President Yameen's favoritism towards China and dispatching naval fleet in South Asians territorial waters in 2018 raised tension in the region.³⁶ Chinese Foreign Ministry attempted to justify its behaviour by saying, "what is happening inside the Maldives is the internal affairs of the country." On the eastern front, the tough enemies India and China at Sino-Indian border are tightlipped in Rohingya issue, because of their geoeconomics in Myanmar. India has a heavy investment in Myanmar.³⁷ China is even heavier, and the highest Foreign Direct Investor in

³⁴ *Afghanistan is now at the climax of its turbulence after the re-in of Talibans.*

³⁵ *This term is primarily used to focus upon the multidimensional conflict between the U.S and China.*

³⁶ *Reuters reported that a Chinese fleet composing of eleven destroyers sailed into the east IO, amid a constitutional crisis in the Maldives in February 2018 embroiled the strategic stabilization of the region.*

³⁷ *Indian embassy in Yangon reports on 03 February 2021 that currently, there are about 100 Indian companies in Myanmar with investments over 1.2 billion.*

Myanmar.³⁸ This transpicuous double standard role is patently observed in South Asia, posing tough hurdle in flourishing defence diplomacy in the region.

● **Labyrinth of Afghanistan.** To thwart each other, both India and Pakistan desire to shape the government and politics of Afghanistan to their liking. Soviet's invasion in Afghanistan in 1979 was diplomatically supported by India. And Pakistan was too quick to support Mujahedeen to fight the Red Army. In so doing, Pakistan may explore the situation in Afghanistan to alleviate domestic pressure to retaliate over Kashmir through proxy operations in Kashmir. OBOR - the Chinese dream roadmap is routed through central Asia depends on durable stability in Afghanistan. China is eager to protect its investment in the region, especially, along China-Pakistan economic corridor. China's another concern about Tibet-led Afghanistan may become a safe sanctuary for Uyghur separatists and the East Turkestan Movement (ETM) likely to destabilize the region of Xinjiang.³⁹ Russia's influence in Afghanistan, by and large, is aligned with China and Pakistan. The Russo-China understanding over OBOR and South Asia, Pakistan appears as an important partner keeping India at bay! India already invested \$ three billion in aid and reconstruction activities in Afghanistan and now need to prepare for tumultuous times. The Salma Dam (Afghan-India Friendship dam) in western Afghanistan on the Hari River was struck in August 2021.⁴⁰ India withdrew 50 diplomats and security personnel from its consulate in Kandahar. Terror groups inimical to India like Laskhar-a-Toiba and Joish-e-Mohammad may take advantage and heighten level of insurgency in Jammu and Kashmir. The Pro-Taliban situation in Pakistan is growing stronger. The dynamics of India-U. S-Iran relation is in a critical condition. For instance, 'Chabahar Port' located off the Gulf of Oman in Iran's south-eastern province of Sistani-Baluchistan is regarded as lifeline of Afghanistan to reinvigorate its trade and commerce. India too needs it for its access, a major obstacle for critical trade between Afghanistan and India. The political roadmap and a sustained solution to Afghanistan without a national consensus seems to be a remote possibility in Afghanistan.

WAYS FORWARD – THE FREQUENCY ADJUSTMENT

The defence diplomacy activities in South Asia does not show light of hope in conflict resolution. The untapped potentials even were not duly focused

38 China has been one of the largest sources of FDI for Myanmar which reached USD 21 billion as of March 2020.

39 The ETM is a political movement that seeks the independence of East Turkestan, a large and sparsely-populated region in Northwest China. It is the homeland for the Uyghur people. The region is currently administered as a province-level subdivision of China.

40 The 'Salma Dam', is a hydroelectric and irrigation dam project located on the Hari River in Chishti Sharif District of Herat Province in Western Afghanistan. Afghan Government named it as Afghan-India Friendship Dam in a gesture of gratitude to strengthen relations between the two countries.

for exploring the corporate interest of the countries except a few bilateral issues. A threadbare analysis and evaluation suggest following means for effective defence diplomacy in the region:

- **Strategic Trust and Fair Political Commitment.** It works like a magic wand; reassuring model of how armed forces can protect the national interest without fighting each other. Bilateral de-targeting agreement, proposals for improved notification of conflict, and greater mutual transparency would foster strategic trust. To bag asymmetric benefits, both India and Pakistan need to engage in one-on-one direct military engagement (peace talk). Strong political will stands as a precondition to buildup strategic trust and confidence. Neighbouring countries should feel and contemplated security assurance, and insurance from their mighty neighbours. Landlocked Nepal and Bhutan should be able to exercise their sovereign power without neighbours' unscrupulous interference.

- **Stabilizing Afghanistan Turmoil.** Withdrawal of the U.S troops from Afghanistan and re-in of Taliban made Afghanistan one of the hottest spot of the world, heading towards a deadly and ominous end. Pakistan is confronting an unprecedented challenge in it. Fighting a war was tough for Taliban, but winning the narrative is the toughest agenda of Pakistan. The Pakistan COAS and senior military official's visits in Afghanistan before Taliban's victory could not bring viable solution. Meanwhile, fencing Pakistan-Afghan border was questioned by the Afghans. In the Iranian front, the mushroom growth of various terrorist groups, especially 'Desh Khorasan' brought both Iran and Pakistan in a closer loop to fight the notorious terrorist groups.⁴¹ Pakistan's former COAS General Qamar Javel Bajwa's meeting with Iranian President Ruhani and signing military and defence cooperation with Tehran was a bold initiative. Centering the Afghan crisis, Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) appears as a vibrant organization to counter QUAD. In its last summit, Chinese President Xi Jinping announced the commencement of procedures to grant Iran full membership in the SCO. Iran's ascension to SCO was widely seen to be a vital strategic move for South Asian defence diplomacy.⁴²

- **Redirecting Defence - diplomatic Orientation.** The conventional defence diplomacy with hidden objective of states has been producing deep frustration in South Asia. The realpolitik diplomatic agenda hardly could break through the complex issues. The states focus only on the stated objectives, but never disclose the hidden ones. In recent days, Sri Lankans speak and think of the

⁴¹ *Islamic State Khorasan (IS-K) is the Islamic State's Central Asian province and remains active three years after its inception. The Islamic State announced its expansion to the Khorasan region in 2015, which historically encompasses parts of modern-day Iran, Central Asia, Afghanistan, and Pakistan.*

⁴² *The SCO Founded in 2001, is a security bloc led by the strongest countries on the Eurasian continent, Russia and China. It aims to set a strong precedent of cooperation between the Central Asian states and other regional actors to counter QUAD.*

non-alignment foreign policy.⁴³ The former President Gotabaya Rajapaksa announced, 'Sri Lankan neutrality', which was different from non-alignment and a new foreign policy concept for the country. Sri Lanka pledged to follow a neutral foreign policy with no affiliations to any particular country or power bloc." The oven-fresh alignment with neutrality, Sri Lanka necessitates to draw a pushback policy towards the U.S and China. On the contrary, India desires to have its influence over Sri Lanka. Similar kind of intention also prevails in countries like the Maldives, Nepal, and Bhutan. This kind of policy shift leaves behind a strong hurdle for flourishing the defence diplomacy in the region.

● **Free from the Paws of Constructivism.** The constructivism view directs shaping and reshaping the inter-state relationship upsetting the pre-existing norms and understanding. The traditional Maldives and India regional partnership may be strengthening to closer ties as the Maldives by choice has reverted to 'India First' policy immediate after President Solih came into power in November 2018. Sidelining former Maldivian President Abdulla Yameen Abdul Gayoom's pro-China policy, Solih's 'India First' policy triggered a defence diplomatic package deal for the Maldives. The defence agreement between the U.S and the Maldives in 2020, and couple of agreements were signed between India and the Maldives involving \$ two billion deal. Agreement on 'White Shipping Information', training activities to build the capability of the Maldives National Defence Force, resuming of India-Sri Lanka-Maldives National Security Advisor level talk etc. were the notable defence-diplomatic growth in India-Maldives relation. With a positive nod, the Maldives promised to remain sensitive to India's security and strategic concern.⁴⁴

● **Political Control of the Armed Forces.** Most of the South Asian countries are heavily influenced or backed by their respective armed forces. Depoliticizing of military and establishing political control over the military is the pre-condition of successful defence diplomacy. It refers to unambiguous chain of command, strict control of higher defence organization, provisioning of crystal-clear security policy, defence budgeting, and strict accountability of the military towards political masters. Functionally, Pakistan Army has an overwhelming influence and control over Pakistan. It functionally hinders Pakistan's political masters to negotiate strategic Kashmir issue with Indian counterpart. On the contrary, Indian Armed Forces has a little or no space in the decision-making process of the geostrategic matters. Harry S. Truman, the 33rd President of US issued the executive order Number 9877 stipulating functions of the Armed

⁴³ Former President Gotabaya Rajapaksa made this declaration in September 2020, at the United National General Assembly."

⁴⁴ The most noticeable difference between neutrality and non-alignment is that the former is well defined status under International Law. The Hague Conventions of 1899 and 1907 stipulates strong military connotation and forbids neutrals from aiding any party in a shooting war.

Forces on 26 July 1947. The first and foremost mission of the Armed Forces are:

- To support and defend the constitution of the US against all enemies, foreign and domestic.
- To maintain by timely and effective military action, the security of the US, its possessions and areas vital to its interest.
- To uphold and advance the national policies and interest of the US.

The US enjoys an enviable and unbroken record of civilian control of the Armed Forces. It upholds the constitution and are accountable to the nation through the President and the legislature-reflecting a robust institutional character. The relationship came under tremendous strain during US former President Donald Trump. Donald Trump appointed General Mark Milley, the then Chief of Army Staff, as the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) against the advice of his Defence Secretary. During the turmoil, General Milley's response to Trump was truly professional. "Mr. President, our Army is here to serve you. Because, you are the "Commander in Chief", and Mr. President you are going to be making the decisions. I am going to give you an honest answer and as long as they (the decisions) are legal, I will support it." Virtually, this relationship guides the conduct of both vital organs of a state. General Qamar Javed Bajwa, the former Chief of Army Staff, Pakistan in his farewell speech criticized anti-military narratives and urged upon political leadership to set aside to move forward for nation's sake. He said, "A major reason for this (harsh critique) is the Army's interference in politics for the last 70 years which is unconstitutional. The Pakistan Army has decided that it would never interfere in any political matter. I assure you we are strictly adamant on this and will remain so."⁴⁵

● **Rule of Law, Justice and Human Rights.** Armed Forces respect, absolute submission towards civil-political authorities is badly needed in the South Asian countries. The Tatmadaw subdued every aspect of rule of law, justice, and abused brutally the democratic system. Push in of 1.1 million FDMN inside Bangladesh was a state organized atrocity, and unprecedented human right's violation that led to an ethnic cleansing. It is even branded as a gruesome and state-sponsored war crime showing thumb at the democratically elected government of Aung San Suki.⁴⁶ The NLD Government had no option but to dance with the tune of the Tatmadaw. Desperate efforts of Bangladesh and its defence diplomacy could not kindle light of hope at the end of long dark tunnel!

⁴⁵ General Qamar Javed Bajwa , the former Chief of Army Staff , Pakistan Army made this comment during his final address at the Defence and Martyrs day ceremony , held in the General Headquarters, Rawalpindi on 06 September, 2022.

⁴⁶ Myanmar's Military (Tatmadaw) seized control of the country, detained the country's de facto leader Aung San Suu Kyi, and declared a state of emergency on 01 February 2021.

The finest tool of defence diplomacy is useless in such a militarily overwhelmed state mechanism.

● **Military to Military Direct Communication.** Direct military communication was found very effective. Sino-Indian border conflict in 2020 - 2021 and Indo-Pak border conflicts were settled by the military diplomats at operation level. The latest conflict on Sino-Indian border was surfaced on 09 December 2022, near Tawang in the northeastern state of Arunachal Pradesh, where soldiers sustained heavy injuries.⁴⁷ Military commanders of both sides settled the issue in accordance with structured defence diplomacy. Bangladesh, Myanmar, India, Pakistan, and China arrange bilateral meetings at operational, tactical, and even sub-tactical levels and explore good dividend in their border management system. Archrival India and Pakistan may weigh out defence-diplomatic parlance by one-on-one direct military communication. There is heap of successes in their credit. This needs to be placed at the military strategic table and spoken in a language they do realize and understand.

● **Regional Security Platforms.** In Southeast Asia, there are several effective military platforms like ASEAN Chiefs of Army Multilateral Meeting (ACAMM), ASEAN Chiefs of Defence Force Informal meeting (ACDFIM) and the ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting (ADMM). These multilateral arrangements around ASEAN have strengthened the regional security arrangement and augmented defence-diplomacy in a prosperous way. Vis-à-vis, the picture of South Asia is not encouraging. The Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multisectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) constitutes five South Asian countries namely - Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal and Sri Lanka. Militaries of BIMSTEC countries arranged a weeklong antiterror exercise in Pune.⁴⁸ It focused on boosting inter-operability amongst the member states and exchanging best practices to contain and lower the terrorist activities in the region. ‘Shantir Ogrosena’ a 10-days multilateral military exercise was participated by four countries of the region namely - Bangladesh, Bhutan, India and Sri Lanka having the observers from the U.S, UK, Turkey and Saudi Arabia.⁴⁹ The objective of this exercise was to strengthen defence cooperation and enhance inter-operability amongst neighbouring countries for ensuring effective PKO. Interesting to note, the prevailing defence diplomatic platforms do not constitute with all the member countries of South Asia. SAARC could be one of the viable platforms if revived for diplomacy. Otherwise, keeping some countries aside, the regional defence diplomacy will be a nose driven initiative in South Asia.

⁴⁷ Indian media reported around 20 Indian soldiers and much higher on Chinese side were injured.

⁴⁸ In a first initiative, militaries of BFMSTEC members organized this week-long exercise in Pune, India in September 2018.

⁴⁹ “Shantir Ogrosena” - a multinational exercise was organized in Bangladesh on 4-12 April 2021.

● **Long Term and Creative Investment.** Successful records of defence diplomacy calls for a long-term investment. Decadelong mistrust between India and Pakistan, Sino-Indian border conflict etc. are the longstanding issues. Australia made long-term investment in 1960s -70s in the East Asian countries, and reaped benefits long afterwards in East Timor in 1999.⁵⁰ The conflicting issues of South Asia demand innovation and creativity in defence diplomacy. Again, Australia, after its benchmark achievement in East Timor, resorted to creative defence diplomacy in manifold implications. South Asian complex issues, perhaps need to be crafted on the following key considerations:

- Hardcore issues like ‘Kashmir Conflict’ should be addressed with political and strategic trust and confidence with a promise that no one will fire a single round to each other. It is to be viewed and treated as a political conflict. However, defence diplomacy may have a patent and prudent role as a soft power.
- Without promoting military transparency, mutual trust, confidence, and disarmament of mind, the hardcore issues cannot be resolved.
- Identifying the grounds of common interest like fighting terrorism, drug, and human trafficking, exploring offshore resources, enhancing both bilateral and multilateral connectivity, visit at strategic level leadership, and other military and security cooperation to foster congenial regional environment.
- Socialization amongst militaries of South Asia should be carried forward for corporate and security interest of the respective countries. Mutual exchange of training, multinational exercise even games and sports competition etc. will pay heavy dividend in shaping the proactive defence diplomacy in the region.

● **Civil Society Engagement.** The engagement of the civil society in South Asia’s defence diplomacy is likely to be an instrumental initiative. This engagement includes research on conflict resolution, think-tanks observation, advocacy, and defence media etc. Southeast Asia is quite vibrant on the security dialogue, seminar, and symposium. The Shang ri la dialogue is one of the iconic and flagship platforms, provides an outstanding diplomatic platform of the world. The South Asian region yet to launch some effective security forum for the purpose.

⁵⁰ *Australia made long term investment in Thailand in 1952. Thailand was the first country to support Australia in East Timor. Professor Blaxland said, “had it not been for the decades of defence investment in the bilateral relationship, the East Timor would not be a success.”*

● **Disarmament of Mind.** Proponent of this concept and the architect of the British Defence Diplomacy George Robertson opined that without disarmament of mind military issues are impossible to settle down. There must be new sense of urgency in the process of defence diplomacy to realize the goal of moving to a common security understanding. Robertson argues that both India and Pakistan should sign the CTBT for their security insurance.⁵¹ Disarmament of mind only leads to a policy of minimum deterrence. The commitment to minimum deterrence will usher agreements on ‘No First Strike’ of nuclear weapon, de-targeting, greater mutual military cooperation etc. In fine, such measures can foster an environment of strategic trust and confidence.

● **Silverline around Blackcloud.** Amid frustration in South-Asian defence-diplomatic environ, Dushanbe Security Summit radiated hope of ray in regional security situation.⁵² India and China signed an agreement extending cooperation for mutual benefits. Sino-Indian border conflict of 2020 was followed by a marked improvement. Following the visit of the Chinese former Foreign Minister Wang Yi in Delhi, the Indian Foreign Minister Subrahmanyam Jaisankar was quite laud in his statement, “the Sino-Indian bilateral relation is quite warm since the border conflict of June 2020, and the military commanders are doing too well”. In response to the concern expressed by the US Pacific Commander General Charles Flynn’s visit, India remained tight-lipped indicating India’s intent in furthering congenial bilateral relation with China.⁵³ Sino-Indian relation finds following concern of India in market economy:

- India’s medium and small industries are largely dependent on China.
- Chinese defence budget is four times larger than India.⁵⁴
- Seagoing 55% Indian goods reach to the world market through South-China Sea and Malacca Straits.

Above reasons appear strongly insisting India and China to maintain a healthy bilateral relation. In so doing, defence diplomacy plays a pivotal role. The Dushanbe also held a two days meeting on Afghanistan.⁵⁵ Representatives from China, India, Iran, Russia Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, and Kyrgyzstan discussed the issues of Afghanistan’s security, economy, governance, politics, and humanitarian assistance. Afghanistan’s absence though was a harsh critique, yet it yielded tangible expectation on regional security of South Asia.

⁵¹ Robertson suggested that both India and Pakistan should sign CTBT for their respective national interest.

⁵² The Security Conference was held at Kokchi Somon, Dushanbe, Republic of Tajikistan on 06-09 June, 2022.

⁵³ Pacific Commander General Charles Flynn paid his visit in India on 08 June 2022. He expressed concern and said that some defence infra being set up by China near its border with India was alarming.

⁵⁴ Stockholm International Peace Research Institution reports that Chinese defence budget of 2021 was 293 US \$ billion and Indian’s one is 76 US \$ billion.

⁵⁵ The Regional Security Summit on Afghanistan was held in Dushanbe on 26 - 27 May 2022.

CONCLUSION

The South Asian defence diplomacy distinctly falls short of a promising future in conflict prevention. Some of the regional countries display ‘smoking gun’ evidence blaming to each other, and often increasing mistrust. The nuclear neighbours India-Pakistan’s archrivalry and inimical attitude are the prime hurdles in flourishing defence diplomacy in the region. India-China border dispute, Kashmir Conflict and turbulent Afghan crisis are the most complex agenda on the defence diplomatic table. Aforesaid countries compete in show of force, swaggering, and secrecy, when engaging in defence diplomacy activities leaving aside its typical cooperative aspects. This paradox of defence diplomacy deepening mistrust between India-Pakistan and India-China relations. On the other hand, island countries Sri Lanka and the Maldives, typically landlocked country Nepal and Bhutan have been struggling, rather oscillating to augment and maintain their respective national core values and interests. In fine, the overall picture of South Asian geopolitics represents an uncanny and hopeless canvass.

Amid deep frustration, defence diplomacy may still reinforce existing mutual cooperation. However, if the relation between neighbours is of rivalry or enmity, defence diplomacy alone will not beam rays of hope. India-Bangladesh conflicting bilateral issues are benign, but India-Pakistan bilateral issues are the toughest having no hope for settlement! There is no option but to foster and nurture strategic and moralistic trust in bilateral and multilateral relations amongst the countries of South Asia. They should craft the activities carefully, where defence diplomacy would be an exponential and prudent instrument to play with. Issues of common interests like; disaster management, Search and Rescue operation, counter insurgency, antidrug drive, antiterrorism operations, antihuman trafficking, and PKO etc. are the untapped potential sectors of defence diplomacy in the region. These windows of opportunities demand an explicit consensus that the primary consideration should be the most efficient use of resources rather than interest-based politicking. Sadly, and oddly enough, Indian Covid debacle offered a unique opportunity of defence diplomacy. Vaccine production and sharing among the regional countries was a wide opportunity to respond the call. In fine, South Asian countries need to take a leap of faith and put forth trust even at the cost of risk. Mistrusted partners need opportunity to display that they are reliable and trustworthy. Still, defence diplomacy is one of the most viable and effective instruments to score the goal in South Asia.

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ENERGY SECURITY AND GEOPOLITICS: BANGLADESH PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract: Energy and geopolitics are intertwined where the Energy Security is a complex notion. In addition to the perspective of 4As (affordability, accessibility, acceptability and availability), Energy Security is currently also evaluated through the viewpoints of *Sovereignty, Resilience and Robustness of the system* where geopolitics is inherently related. Therefore, the research aims to critically comprehend the correlation of Energy Security and Geopolitics from Bangladesh Perspective with a view to outlining an apt geopolitical approach towards the enhancement of Energy Security. The critical analyses on 'energy scenario' (including outlook-2041), 'energy-geopolitics' and 'energy-politics' from global and regional perspectives yield the appropriate geopolitical approach for Bangladesh. The 'Tunnel and Vulnerability Model of Vital Energy System' (VES) has been developed in order to determine geopolitical risks and vulnerabilities therein. The 'Energy System Analysis' reveals three types of Energy Actors Bangladesh has, i.e., *Source, Supplier and Infrastructure*, and their ability to influence geopolitically. In the domain of geopolitics, the Belt Road Initiative (BRI), Quad led Indo Pacific Strategy (IPS), volatile Middle-East, Regional Opportunities and Realities, Asia Centric Global Geopolitics etc. made a *tightrope walk situation* for Bangladesh. In this context, Bangladesh should *avoid* the strategy of 'Bandwagoning', rather follow the strategy of 'Balancing and Rebalancing' and 'Multi-collaboration'. An apt geopolitical approach based on the Pillar of 'Resources', 'Energy Actors' and 'Geopolitics' would enhance the Energy Security of Bangladesh. Formulation of National Security Policy/Strategy is *sine qua non* where energy should be *securitised* at the earliest and integrated within the *National Security Paradigm*.

Keywords: *Sovereignty, Resilience and Robustness of VES, Energy-Geopolitics, Energy-politics, Energy Actors, Strategy of Bandwagoning, Balancing and Rebalancing, Multi-collaboration*

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INTRODUCTION

Quest for energy is as old as the civilization. State/ Nation around the globe continues to strive with its all means to achieve the security of energy for its

development and wellbeing. International Energy Agency (IEA) defines Energy Security (ES) as ‘the uninterrupted physical availability of energy at a price which is affordable’. With the sustained GDP growth for a couple of decades, Bangladesh (BD) is being graduated from Least Developed Country (LDC) to Developing country and aspires to become Least developed country by 2041. The energy and secondary energy, i.e. electricity (power) consumption have been increasing at 8% and 10% annually. Power generation increased significantly with the question of governance of energy sector, affordability and acceptability of means. Therefore, ES has also to be viewed from the perspective of 4As (affordability, availability, accessibility and acceptability). The energy sector of Bangladesh is primarily import oriented which is subjected to both global and regional geopolitics. Energy became the major flashpoint in the Ukraine War 2022, both in terms of security of energy and High Value Strategic Targets (HVST). BD is struggling to keep minimum supply of Primary Energy (PE) due to the war of geopolitical influence.

The contemporary world defines ES from different perspectives, in addition to perspectives of 4As (affordability, availability, accessibility and acceptability). Key focus remains on the low vulnerabilities and manageable risks to the national Vital Energy System (VES) too. Reduction of the vulnerability to the VES pivot around perspective of Resilience, Sovereignty and Robustness of the total energy system of the country. There are both direct and indirect geopolitical influence from the perspective of Sovereignty, Resilience and Robustness of VES. The geopolitics of current century is Asia Centric. The Chinese geopolitical theory, ‘String of Pearls’ in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) and ‘Belt Road Initiative’ (BRI) etc. are now challenging the USA and Western interests in the globe. The Strategic Scanning over the ES shows critical geopolitical challenges on the discourse on BRI vis-à-vis ‘Free and Open Indo Pacific’ (FOIP) (e.g. IPS, Quad) too. Both the factors of China and India have enormous influences over BD where energy is not spared. Arguably, BD is at the crossroad of geopolitical dilemma over BRI vs. FOIP (IPS led by Quad) and facing Tightrope Walk situation.

On another account, unlike many parts of the world, the South Asia (SA) Region couldn’t achieve much in Regional Energy (both primary and secondary) Cooperation due to geopolitical issues and Indian doctrine of bilateralism. In addition, hope of hydrocarbon exploration from the Bay of Bengal (BoB) is overshadowed due to fall of oil market (likely to continue for coming days), resulting in the lack of interest of IOCs, non-ratification of delimited maritime boundaries by both India and Myanmar and ever increasing securitisation of the Bay etc. Altogether, the energy sector and national VES are likely to be more intrinsically connected with both regional and global geopolitical issues, where apt geopolitical approach for the ES of BD is sine qua non. This would not only enhance the ES of BD, but also strengthen the ability of geopolitical negotiation and tapping the geopolitical opportunities.

Review of the Literature and Research Gap

A comprehensive study on wide range of references available at National Defence College (NDC) Library (including e-Library), Defence Services Command and Staff College (DSCSC) Library, research works previously conducted by the course members of National Defence Course & Armed Forces War Course, and views of the professors from different universities were consulted. A good volume of government policy documents on the power & energy sector of BD including related National Perspective Plan, and Roadmap on the Power & Energy Sector etc. had also been consulted. In addition, many reviews, reports and analysis etc. on power & energy sector had been studied. The fundamental considerations / themes of energy and geopolitics from BD perspective are appended below:

Energy Resources Analysis. The current and projected resources analysis are the prerequisites for attainment of ES. Annual Data Book 2018-19, BD Power Development Board (BPDB) gives the data of current and projected future power production scenario, but not energy resource analysis. In addition, BD Petroleum Exploration and Production Company (BAPEX) Limited's Annual Report 2017, USAID-SARI/Energy Programme, Related data of World Bank etc. JICA, Final Report on PSMP -2016 were consulted in depth. All these confirm that energy sector is import orientated and there are geopolitical concerns therein.

Global Geopolitical Scenario vis-à-vis ES of Bangladesh. International media Al Jazeera broadcasted four episodes in April, 2013, i.e. 'The Secret of Seven Sisters: Desert Strom (Episode -1/4), The Black El Dorado (Episode -2/4), The Dancing Bear (Episode -3/4) and A Time for Lies (Episode -4/4)'. The epicentre of theses documentaries show how geopolitics of the globe moved around the control of fossil fuel resources. The creation of New World Order, Sykes-Picot Agreement, Role of NATO, the Carter Doctrine, establishment of USCENTCOM & later USAFRICOM etc. strongly suggest that the fossil fuel plays an important role in the global geopolitics. Seminar on 'Geopolitics of Energy Roundtable' organized by Daniel Morgan¹, strongly deduces that energy is one of the key elements of National Policy (both foreign and domestic) for the countries like USA, UK and EU. There are more studies on the energy - geopolitics correlations centring ME, Africa and even SE Asia. Nevertheless, very few studies are available about SA and BD in particular.

Energy-Security Paradox from National Interest Perspective. Energy and energy related politics have been the dominating factors for years in the globe. European Union (especially Central and Western European countries) remains handicapped to the Russian energy for years despite of having overwhelming security arrangement (i.e. NATO). Our neighbour, Nepal had suffered three

¹ *Graduate School of National Security*

blockade from energy supplies over the issue of her geopolitics. The concept ES is underway to be changed to energy independence in coming days.

Concept of ES vis-à-vis VES. Cherp & Jewell in their article ‘The Concept of Energy Security: Beyond the Four As’ published in ‘Energy Policy’ (Cherp, edited, p.330-332) narrates a comprehensive ES concept. The concept pivots around the vulnerability of National VES through the perspective of Sovereignty, Resilience and Robustness. The intrinsic relation of ES and geopolitics is vivid through the critical analysis.

Concepts of Geopolitics and ES. Yergin, Daniel (2011) publishes ‘The Quest: Energy, Security, and Remaking of Modern World’ narrates the relations of geopolitical concepts to the ES throughout the history. He shows how energy defines the changes of modern world and trends of developing. The author also discussed on the sufficiency of energy, the cost of energy, the protection of energy system and the impact of climate policy on the energy area. On another account, Austvik, Ole Gunnar² outlined the relation of ‘Energy and Geopolitics’ through the concept of ‘Security of Supply’ & ‘Security of Demand’ and Domestic & Foreign Policy Response.

Energy as the Part of National Security and Tools to Reshaping Geopolitics. The author, Yergin Daniel shows how the geopolitics are shifting with the changes of energy sources, method of production & transportation of energy in his book, ‘The New Map: Energy, Climate, and Clash of Nations’. He also defined energy as a part of National Security and how the abundance of energy can be played as the power tools in dynamic geopolitical landscape. Yergin narrates the different geopolitical issues related to energy by describing new ‘Energy Maps’ of the USA, Russia, China, and ME followed by a Roadmap. He wraps the book with ‘Climate Map’ focusing energy.

Critical Findings on Literature Review. Energy and Geopolitics are closely entwined which has been the focus of current studies. In this context, summary of the critical observations on the literature reviewed are appended below:

BD is suffering from scarcity of PE and likely to continue until the discovery of new sources either inland or in maritime area.

Domestic Gas has been the backbone both of our PE source and fuel to the power sector. The imported LNG which is purchased from international market (mainly from ME Asia) at international price is replacing the role of gas gradually, and subjected to geopolitics.

² Article, ‘Concepts of Geopolitics and Energy Security’ in ‘The International Association of Energy Economic (IAEE)’ Forum, 2nd Quarter 2018.

India is the critical energy actor for BD, where regional energy cooperation pivots around India. Over dependence on India, sub-regional energy cooperation through Indian doctrine of bilateralism etc. are few geopolitical concerns for BD. Huge potentials of Hydropower of both Nepal and Bhutan can be tapped in under sub-regional arrangement in win-win proportion.

BD depends on ME Asia for its PE sources, where the region remains either under political turmoil or in conflict. The current geopolitical competency of BD in order to materialise her interests in the region may be challenged now and in future.

ES should be viewed from both the perspective of 4As and Sovereignty, Resilience and Robustness of the National VES, which have geopolitical variables therein.

Energy has been one dominating factors of geopolitics since long both at regional and global level. The vast review of the literatures suggest that BD lacks in studying the insight of issues and consequently, found weak in playing its geopolitical strengths and guarding the vulnerabilities.

Research Gap

ES almost covers every sector of a modern state. Every country exerts all its national powers to enhance her ES. The geopolitical approach towards the boosting of ES may be one of the key aspects for BD. Therefore, the research gap is explained in Figure 1.



Figure 1: Research Gap

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Questions and Objectives

Table 1: Research Questions and Objectives

Type	Questions	Objectives
Primary/ Broad	What may be the apt geopolitical approach from BD Perspective with a view to enhancing ES of BD?	To critically comprehend the correlations of ES and geopolitics from BD perspective with a view to outlining the apt geopolitical approach of BD towards the enhancement of ES
Secondary	<p>What is the energy scenario including the future provisioning of energy resources towards the attainment of ES?</p> <p>How is the energy and geopolitics intertwined from global perspective and impacts the ES of BD thereupon?</p> <p>What are the energy politics from both global and regional strategic context from BD perspective and how these geopolitical dynamics play in the ES of BD?</p> <p>What should be the appropriate geopolitical approach from BD perspective in order to enhancing ES of BD? (Primary Question)</p>	<p>To critically analyse the 'energy- geopolitics' relation from global perspective with a view to ascertaining its impact on ES for BD.</p> <p>To critically analyse and reveal energy politics from both global and regional strategic context with a view to identifying geopolitical dynamics towards the attainment of ES of BD.</p> <p>To outline the appropriate geopolitical approach from BD perspective in order to enhance the ES of the country. (Primary Objective)</p>

Research Hypothesis and Variables

Table 2: Research Variables and Hypothesis

Research Variables	Hypothesis
<p>Independent Variable. Apt Geopolitical Approach of BD</p> <p>Dependent Variable. ES of BD</p> <p>Intervening Variable. Correlation of <i>Geopolitics and Energy</i> from BD Perspective in the global and regional geopolitical context</p>	An apt geopolitical approach focusing energy from BD perspective would enhance ES of BD

Conceptual Framework

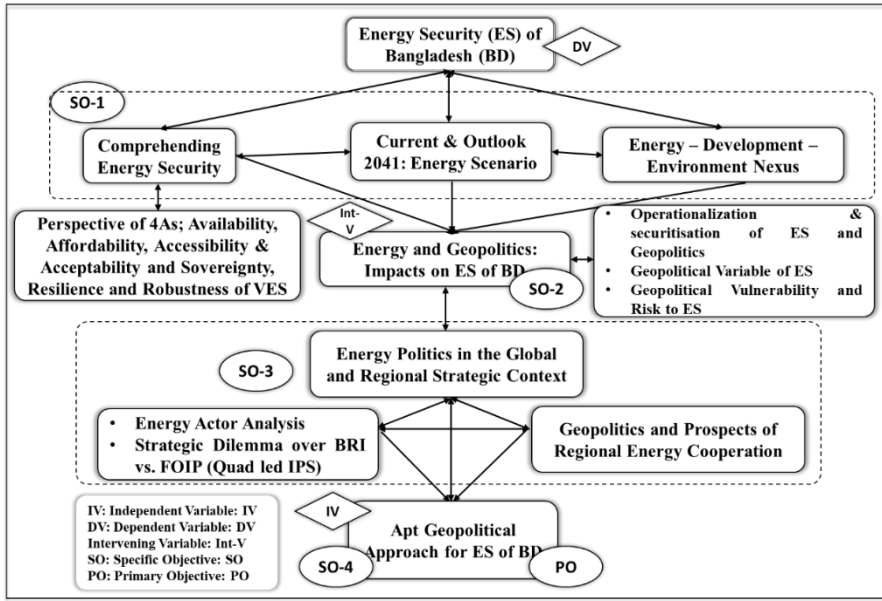


Figure 2: Conceptual Framework of the Research

Assumptions/ Limitations

Table 3: Assumptions/ Limitations

Assumptions	Limitations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Present diplomatic relations of BD with the regional and extra-regional countries will broadly remain same (the <i>status quo</i>) or improve upon 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The data available on various energy resources do vary from source to source, even within the government quarters. The study focuses on selected dimensions of energy sector and cannot cover the whole gamut of the energy sector. Access to confidential documents of government may compel to open sources and necessary deductions may be deduced in order to fill up the gaps accordingly. Since the subject encompasses technical discourse with regards to energy related data & data analysis. And at the same time, geopolitical issues & dynamics can be dealt with either by Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) or by scholars, therefore general survey may not be effective for this research. Rather, interviews, KII, FDG, critical analysis on documents & documentaries would be more effective to pursue the objectives of the research

Analytical Approach

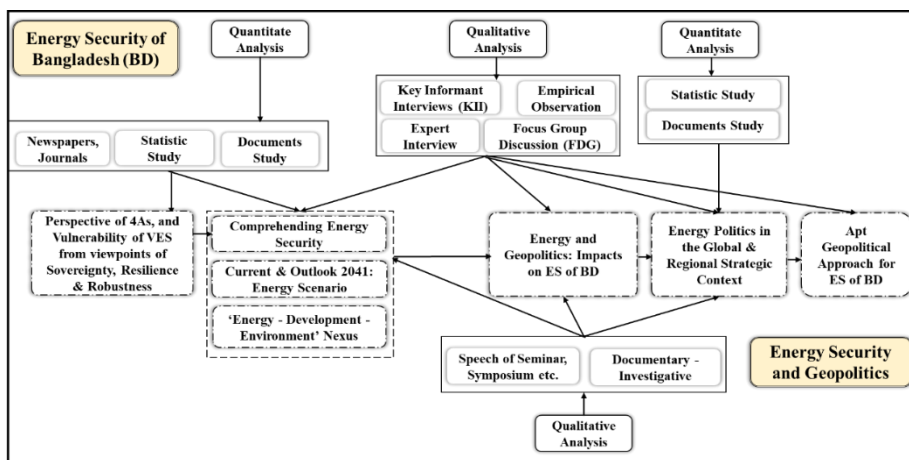


Figure 3: *Analytical Approach of the Research*

Other Keys of Research Methodology

Methodological Approach. This is descriptive research with cross-sectional type design. For the purpose of research, a mixed-method approach (combination of quantitative and qualitative research) has been followed based on numerous sources of information.

Sources of Data. For the purpose of research, data and information were collected for using in both quantitative (numerical) and qualitative (narrative) methodologies.

Primary Data. Primary data was collected through structured/ semi-structured interviews. The population for the survey encompassed SMEs working at different government, non-government establishments/ universities, retired professionals either or both on energy and/ or geopolitics.

Secondary Data. A wide range of secondary data (books, publications, articles, journals, periodicals and newspapers) available in internet, either in official websites, or in academic websites were also consulted.

Key Research Tools

Interview of SMEs of different universities, BUET (both serving and retired) and related government official both serving and retired.

Secondary literature review of related research papers / publications and review of government documents.

Personal and empirical observation was applied whenever necessary. Getting access to information at different quarters of government offices and eminent persons had been explored as necessary.

Rationale for Method Applied. The research entailed collection of a huge amount of data and information from various sources on various issues. Quantitative method allows substantiating the data collected. On the other hand, qualitative method allows the researcher to identify the rationale of various unconfirmed data collected which might not give any concrete result. The issue being very highly--technical and complex in nature, expert’s opinions was sought to validate information.

DATA ANALYSIS PLAN

Data Editing. All the data were processed and verified thoroughly to confirm their reliability.

Processing Technique. All data collected were verified depending upon their reliability. Thereafter, consultation with the experts through interview specific issues was further validated before presenting them in the research as a valid data.

Energy Scenario of BD: Current and outlook -2041

Comprehending Energy and Energy Security - BD Perspective

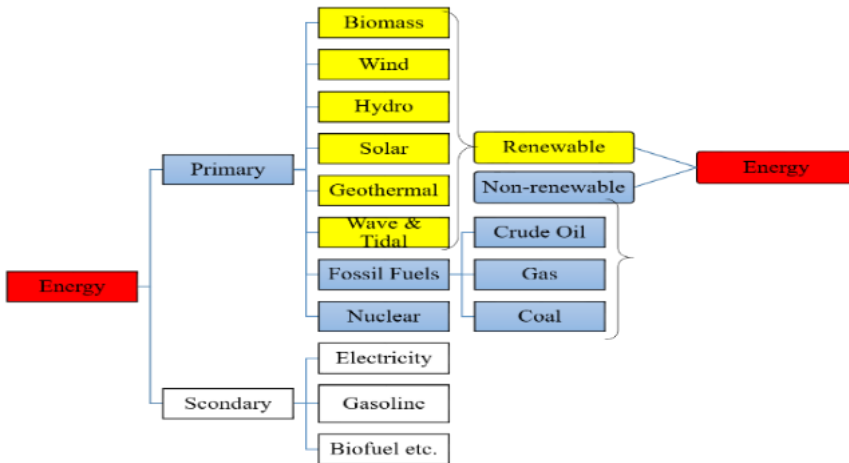
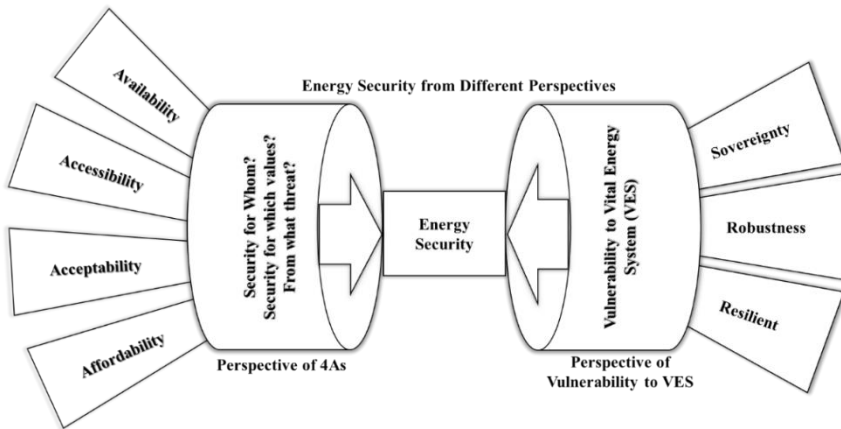


Figure 4: Types of Energy

Energy and Its Type. Energy is classified as Primary Energy³ (PE) and Secondary Energy (SE) according to the sources. Classifying energy into Renewable and Non-renewable is also effective in order to comprehending the ES for a country. Figure 5 shows a comprehensive classification of energy sources which opens the discourses of the energy scenario for BD.

Figure 5: Comprehensive Understanding of Energy Security



Source: Author, in view of Cherp & Jewell, 2014

ES: Critical Approach of Understanding. ES studies have expanded from their classical beginning then went through the 1970s' oil crisis and currently encompasses various dynamics of energy sectors and getting increasingly diverse issue. The '4As'⁴ perspectives of ES are frequently applied as the starting point of contemporary ES studies. When perspectives of '4As' are processed through the questions of 'security for whom?', 'security for which values?', and 'from what threat?', then few critical aspects emerged (Cherp & Jewell, Art. 2014). In addition, the prime issue of vulnerability of the National VES from the perspectives of Sovereignty, Robustness and Resilience of the system getting more relevant in the contemporary ES paradigm.

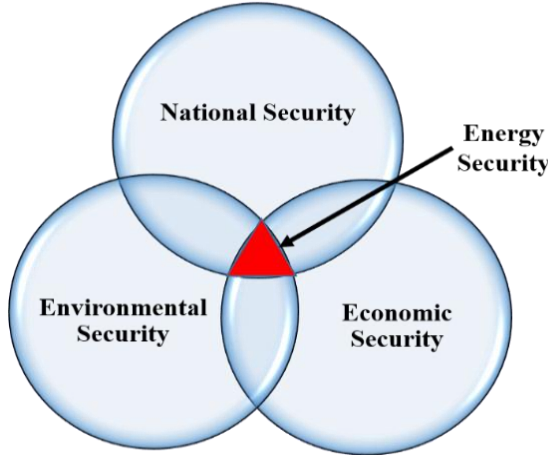
ES in the Nexus of 'Environment - Economics - National Security'. ES is where environmental, economic and national securities converge. ES represents an endeavour of the extremely important national and economic security paradigm. Most of the developed countries have integrated 'Energy' with their respective 'National Security Policy/Strategy (NSP/S)' where geopolitics

³ PE sources are directly captured from the nature, e.g. kinetic energy in wind, radiant energy in sunlight, nuclear energy in atoms, fossil fuels etc., where SE sources are those transformed from PE, e.g. electricity, gasoline etc.

⁴ Affordability, Accessibility, Acceptability and Availability

inherently built-in. At the same time, Energy is an essential part of the Economic Security of respective countries or region.

Figure 6: ES in ‘National - Economics - Environmental’ Security Nexus



Source: Author, in light of AQES (<https://www.state.nj.us/dep/aqes/energysecurity.html>)

ENERGY SCENARIO OF BANGLADESH

Table 4: Energy Mix in Power Generation from 2013 - Jan 2019

Fuel Based Capacity of Electricity Generation (%)	2013	2015	2018	Jan 2019	Trends – Author’s Analysis	Findings
	2.25	1.99	1.44	1.29	Gradual descent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One, lion share of resources – fossil fuel and imported • Two, the prospects of RE sources are not/ will not be prioritised • Three, import of electricity only from India • Four, coal will dominate
Hydro	64.5	62.77	60.89	57.5	Moderate descent	
Gas	19.22	20.44	21.58	22.73	Slight ascent	
Furness Oil	6.69	8.29	8.65	8.87	Slight ascent	
Coal	2.45	2.17	3.28	2.95	Yet to ascent	
Renewable	-	-	0.02	0.13	Insignificant	
Import	4.9	4.34	4.14	6.63	Gradual ascent	
Total Generation Capacity (MW)	10213	11534	15953	17764	-	

Source: Power Division, BD and Author Analysis

Energy Mix⁵ – BD. The Energy Mix of BD has heavily been depended on domestic natural gas since 1990. Table 4 shows the fuel (energy) mix from 2013

⁵ ‘The range of energy sources of a region refers to the combination of the various primary energy sources used to meet energy needs in a given geographic region’. At: <https://www.planete-energies.com/en/medias/close/what-energy-mix>

to January 2019 with trends and findings. However, three mega coal based power plants at Payra, Matarbari and Rampal will significantly increase the coal share in power generation. At the same time, nuclear power plant at Roopur and direct import of electricity will be significant in power generation too.

A CRITICAL ANALYSIS ON ENERGY SOURCES – BD

Table 5: Critical Analysis of Energy Sources of BD

Energy Source	Critical Analysis	Comments/ Findings
Natural Gas – The Prime Mover	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • About 53% of gas has already been consumed (Annual Report 2018, EMRD, p.2) • Sharp depletion of gas production since 2016 • LNG is considered to be the suitable option to replace gas - technology and competency viewpoints 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Heavy reliance on LNG import till discovery of gas in inland and offshore
Coal Scenario – Import Dependency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The projection of coal use in energy mix will be 30-33% of total power generation by 2041 • These major coal based power plants are being installed jointly with China, Japan and India • Most of the coals will be imported from Australia, South Africa, Indonesia and India • Over dependency on imported coal without maximising the use of domestic coal is also a great concern 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Import dependency – subjected to international market price, geo-economics and energy politics
LNG – A New Hope with High Price	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gas/LNG based generation capacity is projected to be higher compared to coal-based capacity • The entry of the USA as the LNG exporter is likely to keep the LNG market competitive and stable • Cost of power generation from LNG will remain much higher than what BD used to generate from domestic gas • Required infrastructures development in terms investment and technology 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Affordability at user end likely to be stressed further ○ Subjected to geo-economics too.
Oil (Petroleum) – The Black Gold	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 22% commercial energy supply in the country • Locally produced gas condensate shares only 6% of total liquid fuel BD imports about 1.2 MMT of crude oil along with 5.5 MMT (approx.) of refined petroleum products per annum • Sector-wise consumption transport - 49.40%, power - 26.94%, agriculture - 15.70%, industry - 4.86%, domestic - 2.26% and others - 0.85%. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Almost fully import oriented ○ Heavy reliance on ME
RE Sector - Hope or Dismay?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The potential sources - Solar, Wind, Biomass, Mini-hydro, Tidal Wave, River Current and Waste to Electricity • The RE Policy 2008, plans to achieve RE share 5% and 10% of the total generation capacity by 2015 and 2020 respectively • Beyond 2020, Government intends to keep 10% RE till 2041, although not predetermined in the existing policy (Revisiting PSMP 2016, 2018, p.57) • Unfortunately, the goals to achieve in RE sector is falling short 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Technology, space, climate & weather remain as the key factors ○ Least vulnerable to energy politics
Imported Power – India, the Lone Exporter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cross border energy trade since October 2013 • Currently 1,496 MW and will be 3,500-8,500 MW by 2031, and 9,000MW by 2041 (Hydrocarbon Unit, MPEMR, 2019, p. 24) that is nearly 15% of total fuel mix Suggested not to exceed 10% of all supply capacity in order to avoid sudden shock of supply interruption (JICA, p. 63) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Power (electricity) import continue to ascent yielding geopolitical risks and vulnerabilities
BD Energy into Nuclear Power	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1st + 2nd Unit of Roopur 1200MW + 1200MW by 2024 and 2025 (Hydrocarbon Unit, MPEMR, 2019, p. 30) • Concern over repatriation of Nuclear Waste, Safety vis-à-vis Russian technology, endangering the biggest river the Padma, population density etc. • Plans to install 3rd and 4th Unit in Roopur and 5th and 6th Unit in SW part of BD 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ One of the costliest project of BD ○ Russian monopoly likely to continue

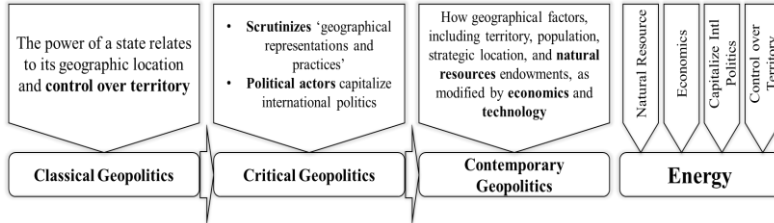
Source: Author Compilation and Analysis

The energy sector of BD is import oriented. Table 5 provides critical analysis of each energy source including key findings.

Energy and Geopolitics: Impacts on Energy Security of BD

Operationalization of Energy Security and Geopolitics

Figure 7: Energy and Geopolitics: Perceived over Time



Source: Author

Geopolitics: Classical to Contemporary and ES. Swedish political scientist Rudolf Kjellén (1864-1922) first floated the idea of geopolitics, which later developed the perspective of ‘Classical Geopolitics’⁶. The concept of Contemporary Geopolitics evolved through Critical Geopolitics with a wide variety of ideas (Figure 7), where Natural Resources, Economics, Capitalising International Politics and Control of Territory remain common (Kuss, Art, 2017, p. 1).

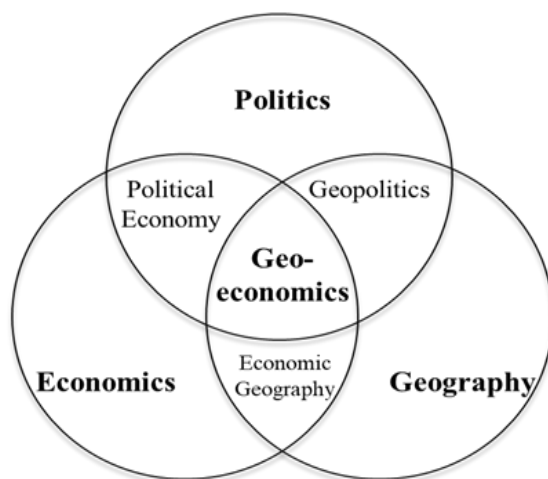
- Geo-strategy is about the exercise of power over particularly critical spaces on the Earth's surface
- Crafting a political presence over the international system
- Aimed at enhancing one's security and prosperity
- US Military Commands across the globe are established in order to achieving both US objective(s) and ensuring national interest(s). The USCETCOM, a theatre level Unified Combat Command of the USA was also created in 1983 in order to secure its national interests in the region
- The Carter Doctrine of the USA was introduced in 1980 with a view to securing the vital interests of the USA in the ME and Prussian Gulf
- The Chinese geopolitical theory, ‘String of Pearls’ in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) and ‘Belt Road Initiative’ (BRI) etc. are new dynamics of Chines geopolitics

Source:

1. <http://europeangeostrategy.ideason europe.eu/2010/03/14/think-again-european-geostrategy/>
2. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Carter-Doctrine>
3. <https://www.centcom.mil/>
4. <https://www.quora.com/What-is-the-String-of-Pearls-theory-1>

⁶ The line of thought was predominantly coined by Alfred Thayer Mahan (1840-1917), Halford Mackinder (1861-1947) and Karl Haushofer (1869-1946), and evolved in the 19th and 20th centuries in Europe and the United States.

Figure 8: Politics – Geography – Geo-economics Nexus



Source: Odintsov, Art, p.3

Securitizing Energy and Linking with Geopolitics. ES is a strategic issue for two main reasons (Metais. Art, 2013, p.7-8). Firstly, it is at the core of the way of living of modern societies and has played a crucial role in their evolution. Secondly, energy also becomes a security issue because it is undergoing a process of ‘securitisation’. The 1973’s oil crisis and the subsequent OPEC oil embargo put the economic models of several Western countries at risk and triggered strategic reflexions around energy supplies. In the realm of geo-economics, it has been calculated, for “one percentage point of economic growth, PE consumption increases by 0.5 point” (Metais. Art, 2013, p.8). Considering the fact that development is based on economic growth, and it is not surprising that energy has come to the forefront of geopolitics, geo-economics and geo-strategic issues.

Energy Politics behind the Curtain of Geopolitics. The key variable of ‘Sykes-Picot Agreement’ was the oil of ME Asia and other geopolitical including geo-economics dynamics over ME Asia. Al Jazeera broadcasted a series of documentaries starting from April 2013, namely, ‘The Secret of Seven Sisters: Desert Strom⁷ (Episode -1/4), The Black El Dorado (Episode -2/4), The Dancing Bear (Episode -3/4) and A Time for Lies (Episode -4/4)’. The epicentre of these documentaries show how geopolitics of the globe moved around the control of fossil fuel resources around the globe. Countries around the world have suffered with wars, conflicts, Low Intensity Conflict, crippled etc. due to ‘Resource Curse’, i.e. specially the petroleum.

⁷ <https://www.aljazeera.com/program/featured-documentaries/2013/4/26/the-secret-of-the-seven-sisters>

Geopolitical Variables of ES: BD Perspective

Table 6: Sources of Energy and Areas of Geopolitical Hinges

Type of Fuel/ Power	Source	Areas of Geopolitical Hinges
Coal	Domestic	Joint Venture with China
	India, Indonesia, Australia and South Africa	Likely from India primarily due to contractual arrangement for Rampal Power Plant and very high demand of coal, though plans from Indonesia, South Africa and Australia.
LNG	Qatar, Oman and Spot Market	Qatargas and Oman Trading International (OTI) – long term agreement and Vitol Asia Pte Ltd - for Spot Marketing.
	^India, *Malaysia	^Land Indian Private Company, H-Energy (e.g. LNG procurement, pipeline development) NWPGL, Power Division, MoU reached, agreement yet to be reached. *BD-Malaysia MoU, July 13, 2021
Petroleum	KSA and Abu Dhabi	Saudi Arabian Oil Company (Saudi Aramco) and Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (Andoc).
Electricity	India	1160MW and Cross-border Energy Imports will 3,500~8,500 MW by 2031, and 9,000MW by 2041.
	Nepal, through India	500MW – plan is finalised.
Nuclear	Russia	Atomstroyexport (ASE), Russia State Owned

Source: Author

BD Energy Sources Analysis – Geopolitical Perspective. The key areas, i.e., energy source according to the energy mix and major infrastructures of energy sector of BD need to be analysed from geopolitical perspective. Table 6 shows each type of energy sources of BD and the geopolitical hinge areas with respect to the countries of supply.

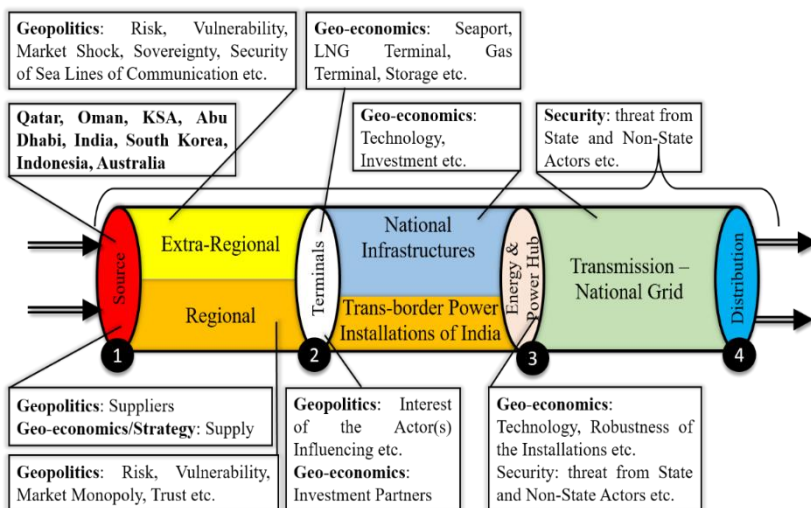
Table 7: Major Energy Infrastructures of BD and Scope of Geopolitics

Major Energy/ Power Infra	Peak Capacity/ Status	Points for Geopolitics/ Geo-Economics
LNG Terminal	State Owned	Tokyo Gas as consultant for Matarbari LNG Terminal. 12 Companies showed interest.
Matarbari Power Plant	2x600 = 1200MW (Coal)	JICA funded - different portions by different companies of Japan. Coal: Indonesia, Australia and South Africa
Rampal Power Plant	1320MW (Coal)	BIFPCL (Bangladesh India Friendship Power Company Limited) which is 50:50 joint venture between India's State owned National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC). Coal: Likely from India due to high demand of coal
Payra Power Plant	1320MW (Coal)	NWPGL, BD and China National Machinery Import and Export Corporation (CMC), China Coal: Indonesia, China, and Australia
LPG Plant, Chittagong	Largest in BD	BPC and Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL) had an MOU in April 2016 for a future LPG plant in Chittagong
Ashugonj Power Station	1627MW (of number of units)	Since 1966

Source: Author

Major Energy Infrastructures⁸: Geo-economics Dynamics. Finance, technology and capacity to build such mega infrastructures demand both geopolitical influence and support from other geopolitical equations. Table 7 shows the major energy infrastructures of BD and scope of geopolitics to play by the actors.

Figure 9: Tunnel Model of Energy System of BD and



Source: Author

Tunnel Model of Energy System of BD. The total energy system of BD has been modelled as a tunnel through 4 nodal points, i.e. Sources, Terminals, Energy & Power Hub and Distribution. Nodal Point -1 describes the choice or option for the suppliers may be affected by geopolitical dynamics, where price and manipulation of pricing sometimes depend on geo-economic relation between/ among the countries. Nodal Point -1 & 2 are connected through the zones of Regional and Extra-Regional complex environment. The Nodal Point -2 is dominated by different geo-economic variables e.g. Seaport, LNG Terminal, Gas Terminal, LPG Plant, Storage Facilities, Technology, Investment, and Interest of the Actor for influencing other LOEs etc. Technology, investment and correlation of other geopolitical affairs are the major concern in the Nodal Point 3. Through the transmission (national grid) of energy & power, the system ends with the distribution, i.e. Nodal Point -4. From security perspective, the whole system has the risk of both conventional and unconventional threats from both State and Non-state actors.

⁸ Energy infrastructures having the capacity to produce more than 1000MW of electricity and energy facilities those will act as the pump-house to the total energy system of the country are considered as the 'Major Energy Infrastructures'

Table 8: Vulnerability of VES from Sovereignty, Resilience and Robustness Perspectives

Perspective of Energy Security/ Layers of Protection	Sovereignty	Resilience	Robustness
Threats	• Malevolent Exercise of Market Power	• Regulatory Changes • Market Volatility	• Resources Depletion • Demand Outgrowing Supply
	• Political Embargoes	• Variations of Climate	• Extreme Natural Events
	• Sabotage and Terrorist Attacks	• Technology Changes • Other Unextend Changes	• Failure of Energy Infrastructures
	• Switching to Domestic Fuels		• Switching to More Abundant Resources
Risk Minimization	• Trusted Suppliers		• Adopting Safer Technology
	• Political and Economic Control of Energy System		• Upgrading/ Renewal of Infrastructures
	• Protection of Infrastructures		
Specific Responses	• Emergency Stocks		
		• Resilient Design (decentralized etc.)	
		• Infrastructure Redundancies	
		• Spare Capacity	
		• Diversity of Suppliers and Supply Routes • Competitive Energy Market	
Generic Responses	• Lower Energy Intensity		Indicators
	• Diversity of Energy Options		Direct Geopolitical Influence
	• Research and Development		Indirect Geopolitical Influence
	• Information		

Source: Author (in view of A.Cherp, J.Jewell/Energy Policy 75 (2014) 415–421)

Vulnerability Model of VES of BD. In addition to the ES from the perspective of 4As⁹, ES is currently viewed from Sovereignty¹⁰, Resilience¹¹ and Robustness¹² perspectives of the VES. Then, threats are identified against each perspective, which are followed by risk minimisation steps/measures. Specific and generic response are then drawn in order to eliminate threats as far as poss. The direct and indirect geopolitical influence over any cell are marked in red and

⁹ *Affordability, Accessibility, Acceptability and Availability*

¹⁰ *Sovereignty* is focused on protection from disruptions originating from intentional actions of various actors (such as unfriendly political powers and overly powerful market agents). Sovereignty implies the ability to control the behaviour of energy systems and is often linked to much-discuss “energy independence.” (Cherp, p. 330)

¹¹ *Resilience* is focused on protection from disruptions originating from less predictable factors of any nature, such as political instability, game-changing innovations, or extreme weather events. (Cherp, p. 330)

¹² *Robustness* is focused on protection from disruptions originating from predictable and “objective” natural, technical, and economic factors such as resource scarcity, rapid rise of demand, aging of infrastructure, or rising energy prices. (Cherp, p. 330)

yellow respectively in Table 8. The national VES of BD has both direct and indirect geopolitical threats, where risk mitigation, specific and generic responses are also identified from geopolitical involvement perspective.

Energy Politics and Regional Energy Cooperation - An Analysis

Energy Actor Analysis from BD Perspective

Table 9: Energy Actor for BD - Energy System Analysis

Energy Actors	Type of Actor	Energy Commodity	Infrastructure Actors	Analysis
India	Source, Infrastructure and Supplier	Power import, coal [^] , LNG (land based)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rampal Power Plant • LPG Plant* 	^ Reasonable due to very high demand and analysis on Global Coal Market * Much information yet to be publicised
China	Infrastructure	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Payra Power Plant • Domestic Coal Extraction 	Coal based from major to minor power plants
Japan	Infrastructure	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Matarbai Power Plant • Deep Seaport • LNG Terminal 	
KSA and Abu Dhabi	Supplier	Petroleum	-	-
Qatar and Oman	Supplier	LNG	-	MoU with Malaysia signed, July 21
Russia	Source, Infrastructure and Supplier	Nuclear Power	Roopur Nuclear Power Plants	BD plans have 4 th Unit + two more at elsewhere
Australia, Indonesia and RSA	Supplier	Coal	-	-
International Suppliers	Supplier	LNG	-	-

Source: Author

Energy Sources and Energy Actors – BD’s Viewpoints. The Energy Mix analysis from geopolitical perspective reveals that BD has three types of Energy Actors from energy system perspective, i.e. Source, Infrastructure and Supplier Actor. Table 1.8 reveals that India turns out to be the most imperative Energy Actor for BD, who will play major role as sources of energy, development of major energy infrastructures and supply of energy commodity. Due to obvious and technical reasons, Russia will dominate current and future nuclear power sector of BD. Japan, historically, being the most trustworthy donor and development partner of BD, has become major Energy Infrastructure Actor. Chinese involvement in energy infrastructures and domestic coal extraction is likely to be enhanced in coming days. Historically, BD imports petroleum from ME (KSA and Abu Dhabi) and likely to continue in foreseeable future too. Both Qatar and Oman have tuned out to be Supplier Actor of LNG, and Malaysia will also be the supplier of LNG. Indonesia, Australia and RSA and India will become major supplier of coal. BD, again has to play with significant numbers of International Companies for the supply of LNG at the moment and likely to do more in coming days. In addition, developing country like BD, who has very high dependency on overseas resources, needs to both identify and exercise own relation with other global energy actors too.

Table 10: ME – BD Relations from ES Perspective of BD

Energy Actor & Type	Other Geopolitical Factors	Geopolitical Influenced Upon by	What It Means to BD	Analysis
KSA: Supplier of Petroleum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Major destination of BD expatriate (highest) BD signed Saudi Led Coalition for Yemen BD is committed for safeguarding the Islamic Holiest Sites 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> USA influences the most India holds good relations – KSA's stance against India is very unlikely 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Historically the main supplier of Petroleum On the of crisis USA can influence KSA KSA is likely to prefer India than BD or stand aside 	BD expatriate issue favours KSA and KSA may use it as tools to achieve other objective (if needed)
UAE: Supplier of Petroleum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Major destination of BD expatriate (3rd) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Similar to KSA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Similar to KSA 	
Qatar: Supplier of LNG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Major destination of BD expatriate (7th) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strained relation with KSA, despite having military base of USA Influenced by Iran in many issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can be treated as a Reliable Source 	Balanced relation with BD
Oman: Supplier of LNG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Major destination of BD expatriate (4th) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Known to be negotiator in ME Both Iran and KSA have influence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can be treated as a Reliable Source 	Balanced relation with BD
Potential: Iran, Kuwait	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BD Army involvement in Kuwait Development Works Iran – BD relations is historical (Eastern Oil Refinery was constructed with the help of Iran) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> USA influence over Kuwait is overwhelming USA-Iran: close enmity Iran-China: Closing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Iran can be a potential source of LNG, upon relaxation of economic embargo Kuwait can an alternative sources of petroleum 	

Source: Author

ME - BD Relations and ES of BD. BD and Countries of ME have historical relations, which are outlined by three lines, i.e., BD is a member of OIC, countries of ME are the main destinations of Bangladeshi expatriates and import of petroleum and LNG. Being a non-Arab country, position of BD in OIC is not influential, rather illegal expatriates in the Arab World put BD in back-foot in the negotiating table. The detailed analysis on Energy Actors of ME for BD in Table 10 shows the geopolitical factors and external geopolitical influencing aspects over these actors and related likely consequences over ES of BD.

Table 11: Sino - India - BD: Factor of Influence Matrix

Actor	Influence on India/ China by BD	Influencing Factors of Relations	Influence on BD by India/ China	Actor	
India China	Moderate	Culture, Language & Religion	High	Bangladesh	
	Nil		Low		
	Low		High		
	Low	Political	Moderate to High		
	Low to Moderate		High		
	Low to Moderate	Economy	High		
	Nil to low		Trade		High - Moderate
	Nil		Infrastructures		High
	Nil		Finance		Low to Moderate
	Nil		Moderate to High		
	Low	Security	High		
	Low		High		
	Low	Information including Media	High		
	Low		Moderate		
	High	Informal (people to people)	High		
Low		Moderate			

Source: Author

India and China Factor: Impacts on BD ES. Geo-strategically BD is one of most important actors to India. Table 11 explains how both India and China have the ability to influence BD in different LOEs and vice versa. The question is; what it matters to ES of BD. Setting the vision, making the decision and energy governance etc. are political subjects irrespective of different sectors of BD. On another account, as the Sino-India competition/ confrontation rises over a wide varieties of issues, geo-strategic importance of BD rises to China. Chines approach to influence other country, region or globe is spearheaded by her economic power, followed by her geopolitical objectives, which are vivid in BD too.

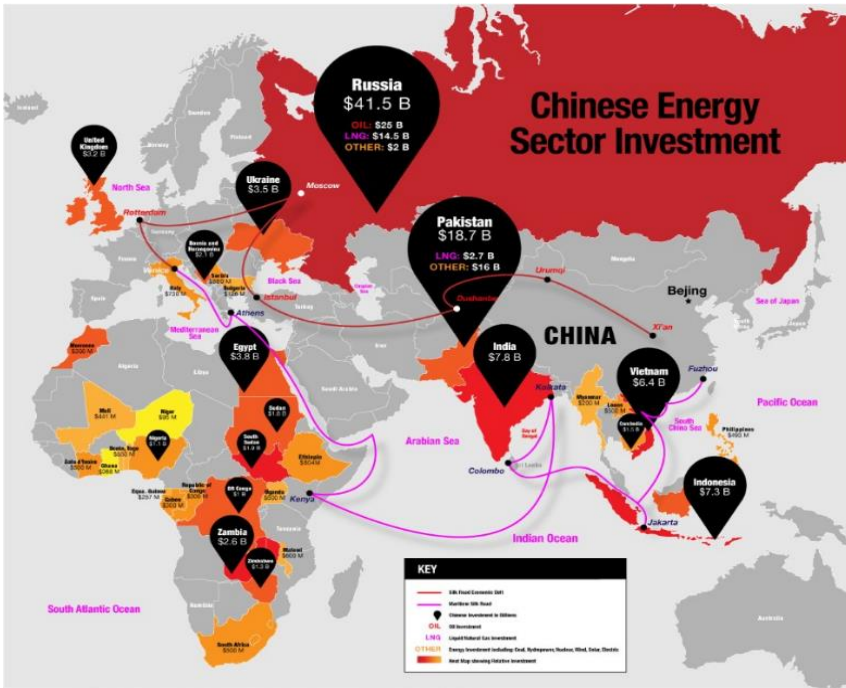
Balancing and Rebalancing: BRI and IPS (Quad) – Competition & Conflict

- The BoB connects global economic powers, i.e. China \$14.723 T, India \$2.623 T and ASEAN Combined 2.5 T (Source: WB)
- Proximity (acts almost as the gateway) to world’s busiest maritime chock point, i.e. the *Strait of Malacca*
- The Sea Line of Communications (SLOCs) for global power like China, regional power like India through the BoB
- Potential hydrocarbon reserves brought the BoB at the geopolitical frontline and fault-lines
- Interest of the USA in the BoB is historical and enhanced in recent years due to the rise of China and ‘Asia Pivot’ policy.
- Japan’s interest in the Bay is also reckonable; Japan is the initiator of FOIP (Quad led IPS)
- Ever increasing militarisation in and around the BoB signifies its security dimension
- The BoB lies on the fault-line between the Geopolitical Competition, Confrontation and Conflict between BRI and FOIP (Quad led IPS)

- BD has a long coastline of 710 km with an average tidal variation of 2m to 5m and can generate more than 327MW of electricity from St Marine, Cox's Bazar, Jahaizzer Char East & West, Charchanga, Khepupara and Hiron Point (**MIST, Art, p.7**)
- Using an array of 5104 wind turbines in a near shore wind farm at coastal zones of BD, 1855MW of power generation is possible. By 2020, it was possible to produce power more than 10% of the total power demand from RE sources (**Saifullah, Art, p.93**)
- Both the SLOCs of BD, east and west bound are running through the BoB. Since the most of the energy resources are import oriented, therefore, free and secured movement through the Bay is utmost importance both as the lifeline and energy line of the country.
- The BoB is only opening for BD towards the outside world. All the terminals for LNG, LPG, warehouse for coal and even country's lone oil refinery etc. are located along the coastline of BD.
- Three of major power generation plants, Matarbari, Payra and Rampal (connected through River Pashur though) are along the coastline of BD

The Bay of Bengal (BoB): Geopolitics and Energy Prospects. The geopolitical (including geo-strategic) importance of the BoB is increasing in manifold, especially in the dimensions of Economic, Political, Energy and Connectivity (Kabir, Art, p.205). However, the BoB from ES of BD perspective has both prospects and challenges. The maritime boundaries among BD, India and Myanmar were delimited through verdict of ITLOS in 2012, though both India and Myanmar are yet to ratify. Consequently, both Myanmar and India, in addition to warning IOCs about the consequence of their investments, have also protested not to award the offshore blocks without resolving the issue of boundary (The Daily Star, August 02, 2008). In this context, any future exploration of hydrocarbon in the BoB by BD will not be unhindered and many geopolitical issues may arise. Other significances of the BoB from ES viewpoint are explained in Textbox.

Figure 10: Chinese Energy Investment and BRI



Source: <https://chinapower.csis.org/china-belt-and-road-initiative/>

BRI: Geo-economics and Energy Equation. Flag-shipping the geo-economics, China has long and far-reaching geopolitical objectives, where BRI acts both means and ways. Energy remains as an important focus area of BRI and mentioned frequently in the ‘Vision Document’. In connection to this, China promised about \$40B investment in BD. An amount of \$24.45B was in bilateral assistance for infrastructure projects and \$13.6B in joint ventures and \$20 B in loan agreements was committed (CPD, 19 November 2020). In 2016, BD and China signed eight projects costing more than \$9.45B financed by China, e.g. Padma Bridge rail link worth \$3.3B, the power plant in Payra worth \$1.9B, digital connectivity worth \$1B, and power grid network strengthening project worth \$1.32B (CPD, BD).

FOIP to Quad: The Geopolitics and Energy Equation. FOIP, draws from the "Arc of Freedom and Prosperity" idea which Japan elucidating it as Peace, Stability, and Freedom of Navigation are inseparable in the Pacific from the Indian Ocean. However, the major Actors of FOIP have divergence in key elements and initiatives/ objectives, except ‘contain China geopolitically, geo-economically and geo-strategically’. Geo-strategic location of BD opens the

windows for strategic opportunities, risks, vulnerability and challenges. In addition, the major actors of the FOIP/ IPS/ Quad, i.e. India, Japan and Australia are the key Energy Actors for BD. At the same time, both India and the USA have the high degree of geopolitical influence over BD.

Tightrope Walk Situation- Strategic Option for BD? Through the strategic scanning, it can be said that BD is at the crossroad of geopolitical dilemma over the issue of FOIP (Quad led IPS) and BRI. What should be the apt Strategy for BD in this geopolitical dilemma, i.e. Strategy of ‘Balancing & Rebalancing’, ‘Bandwagoning’, ‘Multi-collaboration’ or something different is the soaring question. Definitely, ES should be one of the underpinning key factors for BD in determining the strategy. All the Energy Actors, less China and Russia are either party to or aligned with the FOIP initiative. Though, the USA is not an Energy Actor for BD, yet its geopolitical influence over BD is very high. India, being the most important Energy Actor for BD, has the ability to influence BD significantly. The Supplier Actors like, RSA, KSA, Qatar, Abu Dhabi, Malaysia and Indonesia are likely to remain free and fair with the supply of energy resources to BD, despite predicted geopolitical power play. Australia, another Supplier Actor might play with the supply of energy resources, with the twist & turn of the Sino-Australia relation. In addition to the investment under BRI, China started acting as an alternative to global financial institutions, e.g. WB, IMF, ADB etc. for many developing countries, including BD. Arguably, China is becoming the most important geo-economic Actor for BD and flexing its geopolitical will slowly and carefully (The Daily Star, 11 May 2021), yet firm.

Energy: Element of Ukraine War 2022 and Fallout Effect. The Ukraine War shows the very intrinsic and complex relation of energy with war of geopolitical influence. Energy became one of the most important and critical elements of war both prior and during the prosecution of war. The global energy paradigm changed dramatically, so is the global geopolitical relations. It affects every element of geo-economics and geo-strategy across the whole globe, including significant change in global financial system. BD finds unprecedented challenges both in geopolitics and its energy security. Despite the increment of PE over 42% in August 2022¹³, ES of BD looms grey to dark. Limited diversification in energy mix, overreliance on limited energy actors (suppliers), lack in understanding & application of geopolitical equations of energy etc. made the VES of BD vulnerable.

¹³ <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-62519139>

Regional Energy Prospects and Challenges

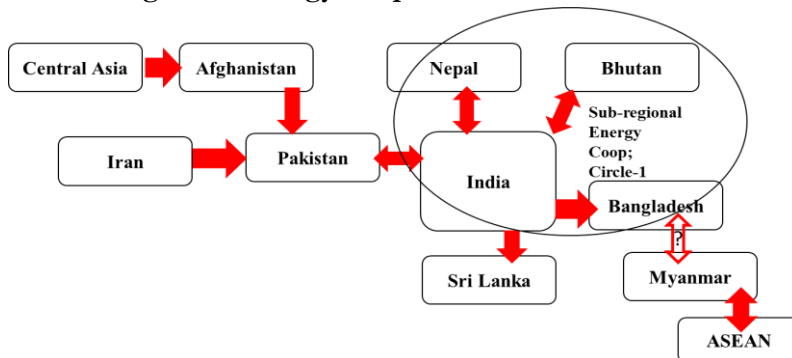
Table 12: Prospects of Energy Cooperation: SA

SA Country	Hydropower (GW)		Coal (Mil Ton) - Reserve	Gas (Tfc) - Reserve	Export to/through	Analysis
	Potential	Tapped				
India	150.00	^31.45%	90,085	39	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1,496, 450, 3MW to BD, Nepal and Myanmar respectively Working on a plan to develop an under-sea cable for trade with Sri Lanka 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Due to substantial reserve of Coal and Potential of Hydropower, India will continue to dominate SA energy export/ import No country of SA can bypass India in energy import/ export due to India's geographic location
Bhutan	30.00	6%	2	-	1200MW (70% of total generation) to India	Huge hydropower potential to export at Sub-regional level
Nepal	83.00	<1%	-	-	-	Huge hydropower potential to export at Sub-regional level
Pakistan	59.00	11%	17,550	33	250 & 500MW power import set with India	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tapping optimal hydropower potential need geopolitical exercise with India Acts as the connector of Central Asia-SA (CASA) Energy Coop
Maldives	-	-	-	-	-	-
Bangladesh	0.33	100%	884	8	-	Highly depended on India either direct or via import
Sri Lanka	2.00	^70%	-	-	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ^ 40% of Total Generation Moving towards Wind, and Solar Power
Afghanistan	25	^39%	440	15	Imports from Iran, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ^ 39% of Total Generation CASA -1000 Project; aligned with Central Asia and Iran on Energy

Source: Author (from different source)

Regional Energy Potential and Prospects. The region has the prospect of cross-border electricity trade of 60GW by 2045. Table 4.4 provides an account of energy cooperation prospects of SA with analysis. The hydropower potentials of Bhutan and Nepal can be tapped into the regional power grid in win-win negotiation. For instance, power demand of BD reduces by 6000MW in winter from summer, whereas both Nepal and Bhutan need more power in winter.

Figure 11: Energy Cooperation Schematic: SA



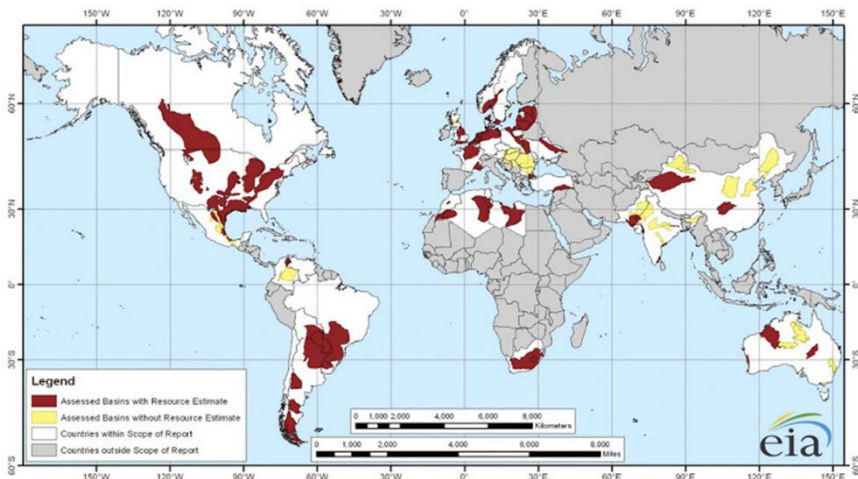
Source: Author Construct (in light of Gulati, 2014, <http://www.sarkaritel.com/tag/saarc/>)

Geopolitical Hinges and Hunch – Regional Energy Cooperation: BD Perspective. India enjoys monopoly over the energy sector of both landlocked Nepal and Bhutan. Despite, Bhutan enjoys special relation with India, yet it can't exercise its foreign policy independently so to the energy export. BD had been trying to invest in energy (especially in hydroelectricity projects) in both Nepal and Bhutan, which couldn't be materialised over the non-confirmation of transmission of power through Indian land. The Indian 'doctrine of bilateralism' overshadows the energy prospects of BBIN energy cooperation.

Energy Transformation/ Transition and ES of BD

Overall, the global energy transformation is characterized primarily by a rapid growth of renewables (in particular solar and wind). However, the energy transformation/ transition will be driven by technological advancement in either discovering new reserve or extraction of fuel such as the 'Shale Revolution'¹⁴. The technology has propelled the US to become the world's largest oil producer in 2018, ahead of Saudi Arabia and Russia (Yergin, 2020, p.378) and the U.S. government's Energy Information Administration predicts that by 2035, 46% of the US's natural gas supply will come from Shale Gas. The USA achieved 'Energy Independence' in 2019 and became the world's leading LNG exporter. These achievements mean a lot to both global energy market and geopolitics related to energy. Consequently, the Global Shale Basin

Figure 12: Global Shale Basin



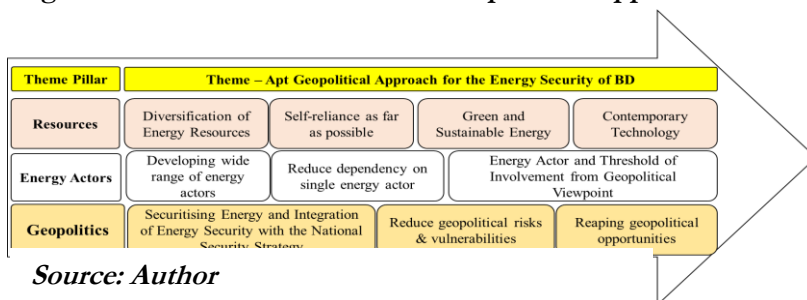
Source: US Energy Information Administration @
<https://www.strausscenter.org/energy-and-security-proiect/the-u-s-shale-revolution/>

¹⁴ The 'Shale Revolution' refers to the combination of hydraulic fracturing and horizontal drilling. Horizontal drilling taps multiple zones containing shale oil (Yergin, 2020, p.378)

will definitely change global energy map.

Apt Geopolitical Approach for Energy Security of Bangladesh The Geopolitical Approach for Energy Security of BD

Figure 13: Schematic of Theme of Geopolitical Approach for ES



Theme of the Geopolitical Approach. The approach developed on three Pillars, i.e., Resources, Energy Actors and Geopolitics. The ‘Pillar of Resources’ focuses diversification of energy resources towards self-reliance as far as possible integrating green & sustainable energy with contemporary technology. The ‘Pillar of Energy Actors’ concentrates on developing wide range of energy actors, reducing of dependency on single energy actor, and through determining the threshold limits of energy actor’s involvement in energy sector of BD. The ‘Pillar of Geopolitics’ ponders on integration of ES into NSP/S, Reduction of Geopolitical Risks & Vulnerabilities and Reaping the Geopolitical Opportunities.

Basic Ingredients of Energy Security and Geopolitical Approach

Table 13: Propose Energy Mix 2041 from Geopolitical Perspective

Energy Resource (Fuel Type)	% of Contribution, 2041		Remarks
	PSMP 2016	Proposed	
Coal	32	25	Import: RSA, Indonesia, Australia, India, Spot Market etc.
Gas/ LNG	43	40	Qatar, Oman, Spot Market
Liquid Fuel	2	2	KSA, Abu Dhabi
Import from India	15.65	10	India
Import from Nepal & Bhutan (hydropower)	-	5	Invest and import through India (tri-party arrangement)
Nuclear	7	7	Russia
Hydro	0.35	0.35	Own
RE (Solar and Wind)	-	10.65	Own
Total	100	100	

Source: Author

Diversification of Energy Mix of BD. Since, BD has little choice in diversification of fuel type, therefore, BD has to look for diversification and pool of energy suppliers. Following the global trends and climate issue, BD shouldn't rely on coal based power more than a quarter of total fuel mix. LNG is booming commodity in energy market and likely to remain stable as the USA entered as the LNG exporter. BD should produce 10% plus RE (wind and solar) in order to reduce the cross border power import dependency at the threshold limit. At the same, BD should invest and import hydropower from Nepal and Bhutan in order to reaping the cross seasonal peak power demand of BD vis-à-vis Nepal & Bhutan.

Energy Governances – Human Development Index (HDI), Per Capita Energy Consumption (PCEC) and GDP. There are concerns over energy & power sector governance in terms of transparency, requirement, subsidies vis-à-vis unit price, Quick Rental (QR) and Rapid QR power plants etc. Unlike GDP growth, other factors/indexes of development (i.e. investment) didn't grow/elevate at par with the power generation capacity of the country. Considering the fact that the ideal power generation reserve margin for most countries is 10-20%; the excess capacity in BD is a mismatch with the demand, for being "overly fatty" so to say. Overall energy governance of BD is significantly poor to serious.

Geopolitical Approach of Security and ES

Securitization of Energy and National Security Strategy. Energy had been integrated with the National Security for almost all developed countries, including India. As BD aspires to become a developed nation by 2041, the issue of energy has to be processed through securitisation¹⁵ first and then, to be integrated within the paradigm of national security. National Committee Security Affairs (NCSA) should take the lead role in processing of securitising energy.

Energy Politics and Energy Actors: BD Perspective. It can be argued that India is turning out to be critical energy actor for BD as it alone will have either influence or control roughly over one quarter (25%) of total power generation and energy¹⁶. Consequently, India has/will have opportunity to play energy politics for negotiating other geopolitical issues, e.g. joining Quad, limiting BD from BRI involvement, geo-economic leverage for the development of her NE

¹⁵ *Securitization in international relations and national politics is the process of state actors transforming subjects from regular political issues into matters of "security": thus enabling extraordinary means to be used in the name of security.*

¹⁶ *Through 15% of electricity through cross border arrangement, 1320MW from Rampal, exporting of LNG both through land and sea, LPG terminal at Chittagong for BD & NE region of India, supply of refined petroleum from Assam and Siliguri etc. at <https://www.thedailystar.net/business/news/india-bangladesh-exploring-proposal-cross-border-refined-lng-pipeline-2058121>*

states, use of strategic seaports of BD etc. Concerns remain about the Chinese BRI investments in terms of financial terms & conditions, debt trap (?) etc. On another account, BD has to establish additional LOEs with the countries of ME other than import of petroleum and expatriates to enhance geopolitical leverage. Iran (on relaxation of sanction), Kuwait, Angola, Brunei, Malaysia etc. countries should be explored for supply of Petroleum and LNG. More coal exporting countries, e.g. Mozambique, China, and Philippines etc. should be under study for absorbing market shock and volatility.

‘Geopolitics and VES’ from Perspective of Sovereignty, Resilience and Robustness. In order to minimise the risk to national VES, BD should look for trusted suppliers, enhance political & economic control over VES, switching to more abundant resources, adopting safer technologies and create appropriate protection of the energy infrastructures. The main theme is to making the national VES sovereign as maximum as possible in terms of energy resources either by fuel types or by supply. The system should also be resilient enough to absorb geopolitical shocks in terms of market volatility and change in technology and, finally, should be robust enough in terms of diversity of resources, infrastructures, safer technology etc.

Geopolitics and Security – Energy System Tunnel Model. The ‘Tunnel Model of Energy System of BD’ identifies geopolitical risks, vulnerability and challenges therein. Specific geopolitical/ geo-economics/ geo-strategic and security risks and vulnerabilities are identified in the Node (1 to 4) and between the Nodes. The Tunnel Model of Energy System of BD should be an important consideration during the formulation of NSP/S.

Geopolitical Approach for Energy in the Strategic Contexts: BD Viewpoint

Regional Strategic Context and Energy Cooperation. The Indian ‘Doctrine of Bilateralism’ put specific constraints to BD’s aspiration of reaping cross seasonal advantages of hydropower exchange with Nepal and Bhutan. Despite all, BD should operate its geographical advantages to become sub-regional (BBIN) trade and commerce hub. This would in turn provide BD geopolitical strength in sub-regional energy cooperation. The approach of BD should be to invest and import/export in hydropower sector of Nepal and Bhutan. On other account, India would be one of the right choices for the transfer of solar power technology, since India produces the cheapest solar power in the globe. Myanmar may also be approached for gas and hydropower import keeping aside the Rohingya issue.

‘BD’s Tightrope Walk’ Situation: Strategic Competition and Conflict of BRI and FOIP (Quad Led IPS). For whatever strategy that BD adopts, energy

would be an important dimension to it. Therefore, BD shouldn't allow energy to be played as geopolitical handicap, rather, should try to strive maximum out of the situation. In that, technology transfer, especially in RE (solar and wind) and tuning BD as the sub-regional hub of trade & commerce would be the feasible steps. Simultaneously, BD should determine the threshold limit (10% or 25% or 33% etc. of total energy & power) for energy dependency on any energy actor. Therefore, a continuous study on contemporary geopolitics, energy politics, energy technology, trends etc. is sine qua non in order to diversify the options and enhance security of energy for BD.

Chart 1: Hierarchy of Security Framework



Source: Author

The Hierarchy of National Security and Policies. The NSP/S is the apex document in the Hierarchy of Security Framework under which several essential national policies are formulated. Despite having NCSA and related ministries, BD is yet to formulate NSP/S. Consequently, horizon scanning, developing strategic context with related geopolitics etc. are either missing or inadequately dealt with. The NSP/S is the fundamental document of the state, which provides necessary guidance to all subsequent policies in terms of vision including objectives, evolving strategic context, strategy (function of ways and means), inter-ministerial responsibilities etc. (Mahfuz, Interview, 2021). In fact, energy is a vast and wide issue and is to be secured through ‘Whole of State’ approach.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Asia centric geopolitics, rise of China, BRI vs. Quad led IPS, securitisation of the BoB etc. made geopolitics more important to ES for BD than before, where BD has to develop its own geopolitical approach towards the enhancement of ES. In this regards, following recommendations are drawn accordingly:

BD should diversify its Energy Actors with the moderation of Energy Mix. Over reliance on Coal is likely to be challenged from global climate viewpoint. Plus, a threshold limit should also be worked by MPEMR for each Energy Actor in order to minimising the geopolitical risk/ vulnerability.

Energy should be securitised through appropriate process and should be integrated to NSP/S. The NSP/S being the apex document in the Hierarchy of Security Framework, should be formulated as the earliest in order to attaining sustainable ES for BD.

Geopolitical Approach towards the enhancement of ES for BD may be developed by NCSA on the Pillar of Resources, Energy Actors and Geopolitics. In the 'Tightrope Walk' geopolitical situation over BRI vs. Quad led IPS, BD should avoid the strategy of 'Bandwagoning', rather should follow the strategy of 'Balancing and Rebalancing' and 'Multi-collaboration' from ES perspective.

CONCLUSION

The complex notion of ES used to be viewed from the perspectives of 4As¹⁷ and through the questions of, 'security for whom?', 'security for which values?', and 'from what threat?' That brings the question of vulnerability of the VES from the viewpoints of Sovereignty, Resilience and Robustness of the system. ES is also viewed at the common place of the Nexus of 'Environment-Economic-National Security'. The study of ES in the Nexus of 'Development-Environment' shows, ECPC is going to rise sharply with the rise of HDI and higher GDP growth.

In the realm of geo-strategy, energy remains at the central stage through the ages of Classical, Critical and Contemporary Geopolitics. Securitisation of energy became inevitable, where most of the developed countries made ES as the inherent part of respective NSP/S. Even, energy politics had been played even behind the curtain of Geopolitics. Sykes-Picot Agreement, role of giant IOCs in the geopolitics, concept of Petrodollar, Resource Curse etc. remain effective energy politics behind the curtain of geopolitics. The energy sector of BD is import oriented and has inherent geopolitical risks and challenges, where, the Tunnel Model of Energy System of BD and Vulnerability Model of VES of BD unveils geopolitical risks, vulnerabilities in the dimension of security, geo-strategy and geo-economics.

Three types of energy actors are identified through the Energy System Analysis, e.g. Source, Supplier, and Infrastructure. India is the most imperative Energy Actor for BD, holding share in Source, Supply and Infrastructure, whereas both Japan and China are involved in infrastructure domain. BD-ME relations are critical on the issue of energy, expats and religious affinity. Geo-strategically, BD is one of the most critical actors to India due to multiple reasons. The rise of China, Sino-India confronting relation, strategic competition and confrontation of US-China etc. made BD geopolitically important to China as well. Altogether,

¹⁷ *Affordability, accessibility, availability and acceptability*

both China and India have significant ability to influence BD in domains of Politics, Economics, Security, Information etc.

The BoB connects global three economic powers¹⁸ located at the gateway to Malacca Straits and holds numbers of SLOCs of China, India, BD and Myanmar bound. In addition, rise of China, US led Asia Pivot policy and potential hydrocarbon reserve etc. brought the BoB at the geopolitical forefronts with the security dimension more volatile and disruptive. Energy remains as key to all Chinese strategic accesses¹⁹ to the Indian Ocean. Chinese investment pattern also testifies the Chinese interest in energy sector of BD²⁰. On the other hand, Quad led IPS lacks in unified objectivity within the core actors, except containment of China. Row over the possibility of BD to join/aligning with Quad and Chinese reaction are manifestation of geopolitical dilemma of BD. In fact, BD finds herself on the Tightrope Situation over BRI vs. Quad led IPS.

Circle-1 (BBIN) of SA has the potential of energy cooperation for BD by exploring BD vis-à-vis Nepal and Bhutan cross-seasonal energy requirement. India is the lone electricity exporter to BD and the amount will reach to 9000MW (15% of total demand) by 2041. Despite BD-Myanmar strain relation, BD should explore opportunity and engage with Myanmar in energy trade, taking geopolitical equations of China-Myanmar relation.

The apt geopolitical approach for ES of BD is developed on three pillars, i.e. 'Pillar of Resources', 'Pillar of Energy Actors' and 'Pillar of Geopolitics'. The energy mix of BD needs to be revised by reducing critical dependency on single energy actor and enhancing RE to grater extend. There has to be a threshold limit of involvement of every energy actor, and that's to be worked by concerned ministry. Energy Governance is another key aspects of ES of BD. 'HDI-PCEC-GDP Nexus' need continuous revision with special consideration of Covid-19 Pandemic consequences and energy transformation/transition of global energy map.

The NSP/S is the apex document in the Hierarchy of Security Framework, without which attainment of sustainable ES is unrealistic. Energy and national VES are subjected to physical and virtual threats in all domains (land, sea, air and cyberspace) from both traditional and non-traditional threats. The primary idea is of making the national VES sovereign as maximum as possible in terms of both energy resources and type, system should be resilient to absorb geopolitical shocks in terms of market volatility, and change in technology, system should be robust enough in terms of diversity of resources, infrastructures, safer technology etc.

¹⁸ China \$14.723T, India \$2.623T and ASEAN combined \$2.5T

¹⁹ Through Sittve of Myanmar, CPEC through Pakistan and through Chabahar of Iran under BRI.

²⁰ The power plant in Payra worth \$1.9B, power grid network strengthening project worth \$1.32B (of so far rolled out \$9.45B) and domestic coal exploration with associated power plant

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ENHANCING ETHICS IN THE PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION SYSTEM IN BANGLADESH

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Abstract: The scope of the research is confined within the schools of primary, secondary and higher secondary levels of Bangladesh. Domains of ethics are selected based on focused group discussions with teachers, parents and students. The ethical state of different institutions was evaluated based on a ground visit to the schools, and interview with teachers, parents and students. Certain numbers of inhibiting factors were identified through interviews, ground survey and visits. In this paper, it has been asserted that a comprehensive approach needs to be taken for enhancing ethics in the education system of Bangladesh. Ethics in the learning contents, ethics in the school environment, role of teachers, role of society and role of state have been figured out deliberately. Since, this is an affair which needs a long-term persistent effort, as such concerted efforts need to be taken by all the stakeholders to get the desired output in the long run. Improving learning content in relation to ethical values at different levels, preparing teachers in the teachers' training schools and colleges for their task to become role model to the students, emphasis on co-curricular activities and practice of ethics at school environment are few of the significant works to be done. Schools/ colleges need to work concertedly with parents for enhancing ethics to the students. Schools should be made a place of pride for the students, teachers and parents. Social, electronic and print media need to be used as force multiplier for making positive changes in the affairs of moral and ethical development of students. Efforts to be taken for nurturing children's idealism to become forward looking, positive, patriotic and progressive person imbued with the spirit of liberation war.

Keywords: *Schools of Primary Levels; Schools of Secondary Levels; Schools of Higher Secondary Levels; Education System*

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INTRODUCTION

Ethics has a very important place in all areas of life. Ethical conduct and behavior take time to be established as it need to be internalized within our character over time. Besides, in the current age of technology where everything is available on the internet, ethical issues and ethics in education are becoming major concerns and very important than ever before. On the other hand, education is any act or

experience that has a determining effect on the mind, character or ability of an individual. There is no denying of the fact that ethical conduct has a strong correlation with education. Therefore, it can also be said that in education, ethics has a very important and effective role. In order to turn a student into an ethical decision-maker in every sphere of his life, ethics should be included in the education system right from the beginning. Despite the articulation of the importance of moral values and ethics in the purpose of education by the Education Commissions over the years, its reflection was not very much vivid in the educational institutions. Frequent leakage of question papers before public examinations and the running after it by the students depict the ethical departure of the group of people and the students. It is more or less vivid that the deviation of education from the ethics and morality has taken place over the years in both the educational institutions and the society. Thus, it is very much time worthy and necessary to work out the modalities of including ethics in the education system of Bangladesh. However, the focus of the study was limited to the education system at primary and secondary levels including higher secondary level as the foundation of ethics is likely to be instilled at these levels.

Instilling true ethical values to the students at all levels are undoubtedly a difficult task. The complete grooming up process that takes place at home and educational institution will certainly influence to formulate the solid ethical foundation. Ethics in Education involves exploring different views and beliefs, considering ethical dilemmas and the process of ethical decision-making by an individual so that he conducts ethically during studentship and later in his respective professional arena. Perhaps the inclusion of ethics in education right from the early stage might be the solution to the stated problem.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

For the purpose of study, an extensive review of relevant literatures has been conducted. Good number of books, articles, précis and internet sites were consulted. Many countries in the world have incorporated ethics and values in their national education system. Moral education in China expresses ideology and thought process of political masters. It can also be termed as political indoctrination (Maosen, 2006). This is regarded as important as academic education and physical education. In case of Japan, the contents of moral education lessons are divided in four broad heads which are; about the self, about relationship with other people, about relationship with nature and sublime things and finally about groups and society.

Olsthoorn (2011) argued that despite the diminishing role of honor in society at large, it continues to have a role in society. He also argued that few of the virtues like moral courage can actually be developed by education. On the other hand, Fotion and Elfstorm (1986) in their study explained how values at the intuitive level of thinking examine ethical questions at the critical level of

thinking. Both of them agreed that ethical education allows critical reasoning to happen, and thus can be developed and sustained through formal education.

Ethical values are always sacrosanct. There is hardly any difference evident in the ethical values of different religions. Scholars have analyzed requirement of ethical values since the inception of human civilization. Depending on the nature of the job and assignment, ethical values warrant different standard. Maximum literatures as mentioned above highlighted the importance of ethical values but the way of effective inculcation through education was not much explored. Therefore, it is very much necessary to study the subject of ethical development for the students of different levels with a view to promoting ethical values amongst students.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this research are:

- To provide an overview of the state of ethics in different educational institutions at primary and secondary levels.
- To find out the impediments for enhancing ethics at these levels.
- To formulate methods for enhancing ethics in the education system of Bangladesh at primary and secondary levels.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Primary Question. How to enhance ethics in the education system of Bangladesh at primary and secondary levels?

Secondary Questions.

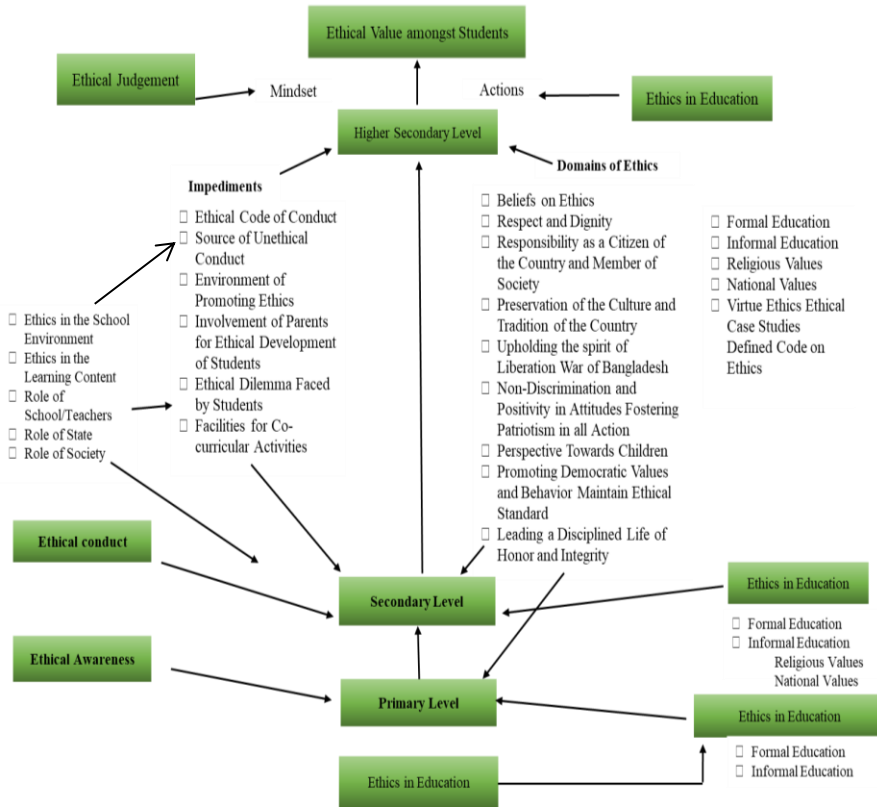
- What is the state of ethics in different educational institutions at primary and secondary levels?
- What are the impediments for enhancing ethics at these levels?
- What are the methods for enhancing ethics in the education curriculum?

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study has been carried out by using both qualitative and quantitative approaches. In order to ascertain present ethical state of institutions at primary and secondary level, number of statistics on ethical understanding have been collected. For the sake of efficiency, data has been collected separately from primary level, secondary level including higher secondary level and teachers' training/ development level. As secondary source of data a good number of books, publications and electronic articles have been exhaustively consulted. Details of sample size are given as under:

- Students at different levels: 30 (Primary, Secondary and Higher Secondary: 10 each from 10 different institutions of all levels)
- Principals, Headmasters and Teachers (including Teachers' Training College): 30 (Primary, Secondary and Higher Secondary 10 each)
- Parents: 20

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK



ETHICS IN THE EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS INCLUDING LEARNING CONTENTS: AN OVERVIEW

In order to find out the content and environment related to ethics, it would be necessary to work out some of the domains of ethics, which will be used as the reflection or indicator to visualize ethical state of the institution.

DOMAINS OF ETHICS IN EDUCATION AT PRIMARY AND SECONDARY LEVELS

A student is drawn from their family, community, culture, religion etc. So certain basic beliefs and attitudes are consciously or subconsciously instilled in them. These, basically, constitute the anchor system that influences subsequent judgment and decisions about values and ethics. The educational institutions are truly a common platform to synchronize the ethical understanding of these diverse students. It is true that ethics cannot remain as abstract ideas only but have to be followed by actions always. So, the domains are selected based on discussions and study through which the ethical perceptions can be measured. After exhaustive discussions with good number of teachers and principals of schools and colleges and detailed study (FGD, Teachers 2018), the following domains are proposed as basis for defining issues of ethics:

Beliefs on Ethics. Purposefulness in life, honesty and integrity in personal conduct, being upright, self-esteem, being truthful, compassion and empathy for others, appreciating and participating in creative activities, commitment to fairness are few important factors of this domain.

Respect and Dignity. Respect for diversities including all citizens particularly the elders, respecting differences, believe in human rights and dignity for all are the crux of this domain.

Responsibility as a Citizen of the Country and Member of Society. Abiding by the laws of the country, society, schools and colleges, regarding diversities in the society and upholding social obligation to the underprivileged people especially those with different needs are the important parameters of this domain.

Preservation of the Culture and Tradition of the Country. Respect for own cultures and traditions, preservation of it, respect for other cultures and traditions are the important issues of this domain.

Upholding the Spirit of Liberation War of Bangladesh. Knowing the true history of our liberation war, understanding the true spirit of liberation war, believing in the basic values of our nation and constitution, patriotism and nationalism in line with the spirit of our liberation war are the basic issues of this domain.

Non-Discrimination and Positivity in Attitudes. Gender equality, positivity in attitude, nondiscrimination, preventing gender barriers in personal, social, economic and social roles, gender mainstreaming in art, culture and creative spheres are the important parameters of this domain.

Fostering Patriotism in all Actions. Education at all levels should always focus

on instilling patriotism in the minds of all students. It should be reflected equally both in actions and mindset at all spheres of life.

Perspective towards Children. Societal obligation to children, respect for children's right, protection of children from all sorts of unfair treatment and giving the children conscious hearing are the few important issues of this domain.

Promoting Democratic Values and Behavior. Absolute inclusiveness in all affairs, freedom of faith, belief, speech and opinion, rule of law, promoting democratic practices and behaviors, respect of rights and needs of minorities in the society are the few important issues of this domain.

Maintain Ethical Standard and Values. Being involved individually and collectively to maintain and uphold ethical values in all the actions are the core issues of this domain.

Leading a Disciplined Life of Honor and Integrity. A student should always lead a life of honor and integrity whether he is being observed or not. It has to be instilled in a way that it is done without any kind of influences what so ever.

ANALYSIS

General Understanding of Ethics. Majority of the respondents responded that being honest and truthful is the core issue of ethics. No student talked about upholding the spirit of liberation war, preservation of history, fostering patriotism while defining ethics. Detail findings is given as under:



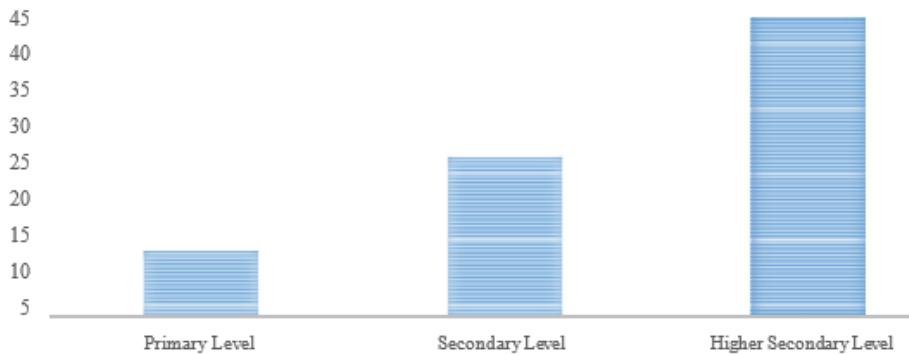
Source: Author's Field Survey (n = 30)

Domains of Ethics in the Schools. Observation in the school environment provides picture in the context of practicing and observance of ethics. Classes of different schools were observed for few days to see the adherence of ethical values by the students/ teachers/ staffs. Detailed analyses are given in subsequent paragraphs.

Spirit of Liberation War in Education. Liberation war is truly a unique episode of the history of Bangladesh. It involves the highest level of movements of long 24 years including language movement, six-point Bengali nationalist movement of 1966, mass uprising of 1969 and many more. Bangladesh's independence was earned by the killing of 3 million martyrs, abuse of 2 lakhs women within 9 months' period of liberation war. Young generations in schools and colleges must know the true history of our independence and also practice the spirit of our liberation war in the day-to-day activities.

In an answer of the question to the teachers and parents about the things to do in an effort to upheld the spirit of our liberation war, different opinions have come up which are given as under:

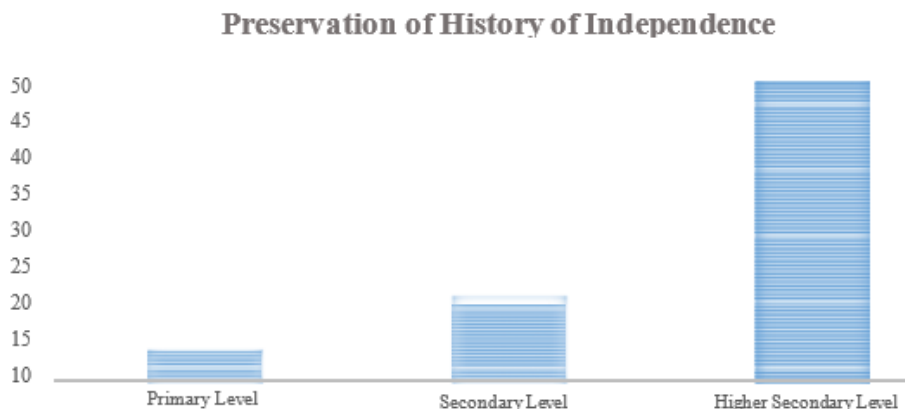
Knowledge on the History of Liberation War



Source: Author's Field Survey (n = 30)

- Few opine that learning should start at primary level so that these very young students can feel and realize the struggle that the nation faced and accordingly they can hold the spirit of liberation war in their life time.
- Celebration of national days like Independence Day, Victory Day, and Martyrs' Day should be done with due respect and enthusiasm. It should not only remain limited to laying floral wreaths on martyr's grave but also include detailed program including cultural program, discussion, seminar etc.

Preservation of History of Independence. It has been found that only very few schools at higher secondary level have made some efforts for the preservation of history related to our independence. At primary level, it is almost nonexistent. However, at secondary level, nominal efforts were found in regards to preservation of history of independence. Details of the survey result is shown underneath:



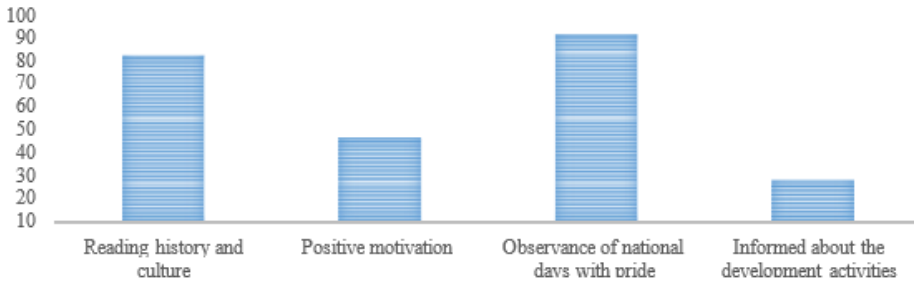
Source: Author's Field Surve (n = 30)

On the other hand, majority of the respondents opine that lack of preservation of history resulted in a serious gap between our liberation war and the young students. However, they have suggested few actions to be taken at institutions of all levels:

- Students must realize the true spirit that liberation is the root of our existence, present condition, development etc.
- Effort should be taken at the institutions of all levels to preserve true history of our independence.
- Schools and colleges must organize periodical programs including discussions, cultural programs, seminars, etc. based on the history of our liberation war and independence so as to attract young minds about it.
- At the same time, students must also possess adequate knowledge about the anti-liberation forces because history will remain incomplete without it.

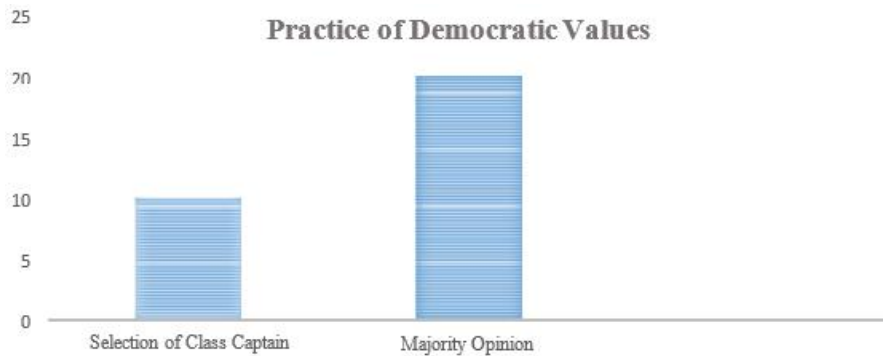
Fostering Patriotism in all Actions. Patriotism in all actions certainly helps students to build a sense of own identity. Students will feel that they have a responsibility and purpose in society and in the country. On the other hand, it helps build own character also. However, in a question on the ways to develop patriotism amongst young students, different opinions came up as shown in the figure:

Fostering Patriotism in All Actions



Source: Author's Field Survey (n = 30)

Promoting Democratic Values and Practices. It has been observed that democratic norms, values and behavior are not much practiced in the classroom. Majority of the students responded that during selection of class captain or taking any major decisions, opinion of the majority students is not taken at maximum time. Details of the survey is shown below:



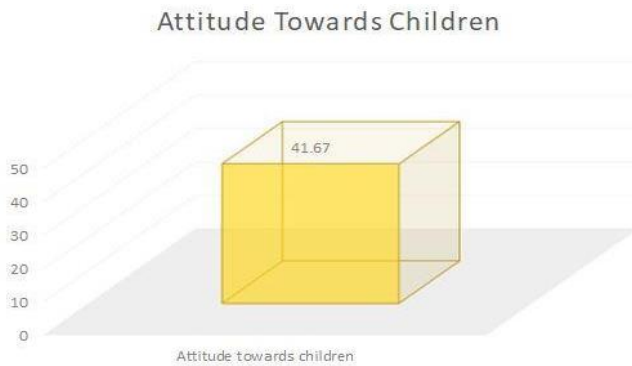
Source: Author's Field Survey (n = 30)

Preservation of Culture and Tradition. Culture is an integral part of our country and it gives our identity as a nation. It is particularly important in this age of globalization where culture is in serious threat from external pressure. Observation in different schools revealed instances of observance and preservation of culture in case of only national days like Pohela Baisakhi, Eid Day, and Language Martyrs' Day only. In a question to the parents and teachers on the ways to preserve our culture and traditions, different opinions came up which are given as under:

- Adequate practice of cultural activities at schools/colleges
- Enrichment of Bengali language and literature
- Preservation of important documents of historical importance in the school library especially related to our liberation war

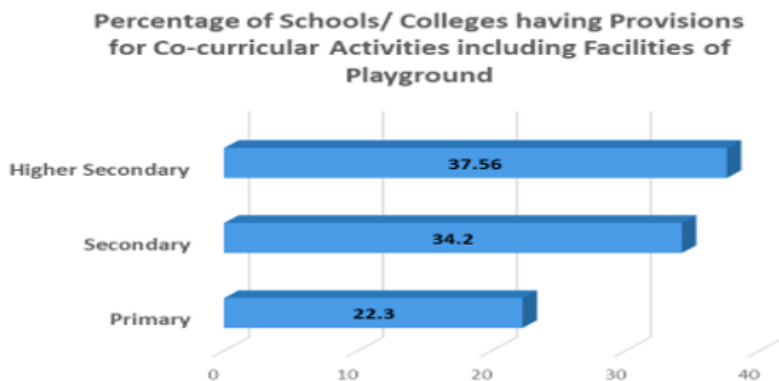
Leading a Disciplined Life of Honor and Integrity. Discipline not only helps to become a perfect person but also makes a man focused on reaching his/her goals of life. School observation revealed existence of some disciplinary enforcement mechanism but it is strongly felt that there is a need to strengthen the efforts both in terms of enforcement and motivation.

Perspective towards Children. Teachers and the staffs must respect the children and their rights in terms of giving quality and inclusive education. Teachers must show utmost caring attitude, genuine respect to the students' diversity, sincerity in deliberation and kindness towards the children. However, on a question to parents about the attitude of teachers towards students in the classroom, mixed opinion came up. About 47% respondent believe that teacher's attitude towards children is positive in terms of delivering inclusive and quality education.

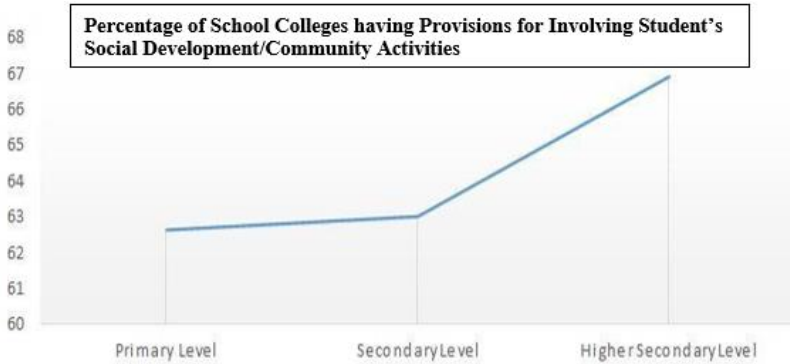


Source: Author's Field Survey (n = 30)

Miscellaneous Issues on Ethics. 37.56 % respondent opined that there are provisions of co-curricular activities including playgrounds in Higher Secondary level whereas 34.2% opined that it is available in secondary and 22.3% in primary level.



Source: Author's Field Survey (n = 30)



Source: Author's Field Survey (n = 30)

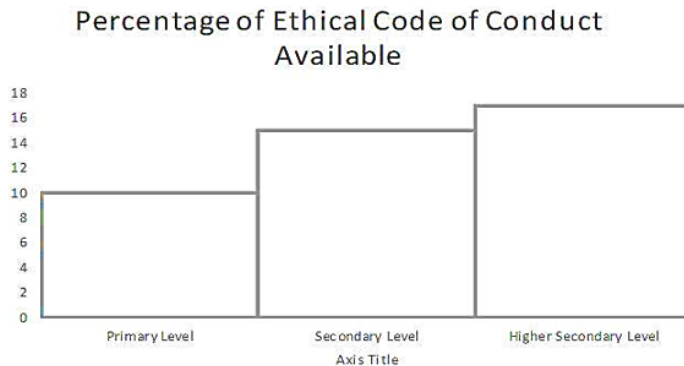
There are a very few numbers of schools in primary and secondary level having the provisions for students' social development and community activities. However, this percentage has a sharp increase in case of higher secondary level as shown in Figure.

It has been found that being honest and truthful is the core issue of ethics as per the opinions of majority of the respondents. However, few opines that being cooperative and supportive to friends and others, behaving in acceptable manner, respecting others, upholding the spirit of liberation war, preservation of history, fostering patriotism are also important issues of ethics.

IMPEDIMENTS OF DESIRED ETHICAL DEVELOPMENT OF STUDENTS

According to the ground survey, certain inhibiting factors were identified towards ethical development of students which are enumerated as under:

Absence of Ethical Code of Conduct. Details of the survey is as under:



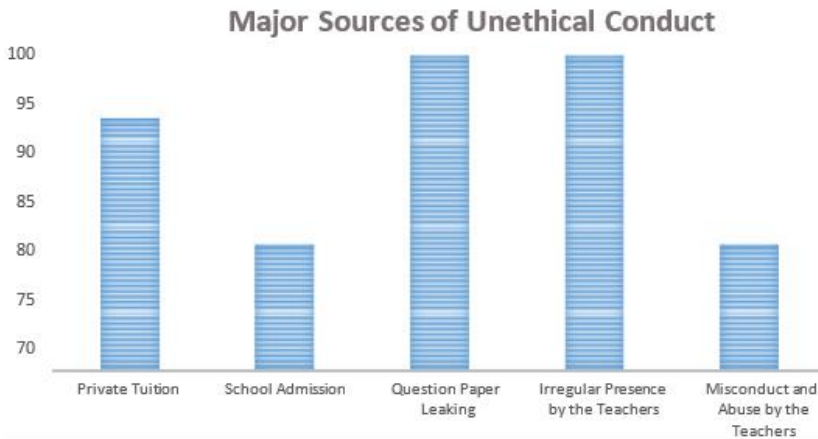
Source: Author's Field Survey (n = 30)

It is evident from the Figure that majority of the respondents opine that very insignificant amount of primary level schools has ethical code of conduct. However, in case of secondary and higher secondary level, there are more schools/colleges having ethical code of conduct in different forms.

It is felt and realized by the teachers and staffs that Ethical Code of Conduct has a positive impact on the professional conduct and behavior of all concerned. It can also serve as a tool for enhancing transparency and accountability of all teachers and staffs. However, in an answer to the question on the ways to implement of Ethical Code of Conduct in the schools of all level, respondents expressed diverse views which are given as under:

- In majority of the cases, Ethical Code of Conduct is not available. However, even if it is available, there is no proper enforcement mechanism of the Code.
- The Ethical Code of Conduct must be made part of academic curriculum of the teachers in the 'Teachers' Training Schools/ Colleges.
- Majority of the respondents opine that conduct in the school examinations, leaking question papers of different examinations, school admissions, private tuitions, presence of the teachers in the school/colleges regularly and timely presence are few of the important issues to be included in the Ethical Code of Conduct.

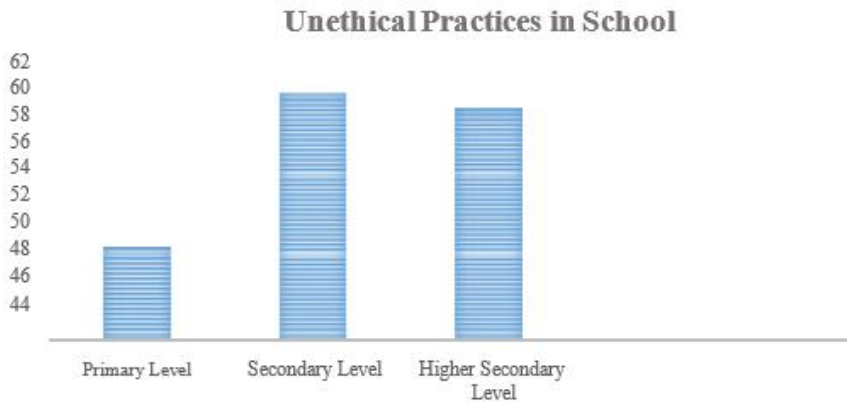
Unethical Conduct Prevailing in the Institutions. Details of the survey is as under:



Source: Author's Field Survey (n = 30)

Despite repeated serious instructions from the government, there is still cases of leaking of question papers including public examinations. Teachers must act as role model to the students. If the discipline of the teachers is not proper, it is never expected that the discipline of the students will be of expected standard.

Some of the major unethical practices prevailing in the schools are promoting poor students to higher classes, favoritism in marking, manipulation in result, malpractices in public examinations, teachers resorting to private tuitions etc.



Source: Author's Field Survey (n = 30)

Non-Involvement of Parents for Ethical Development of Students.

Involvement of parents is one of the most important issues for desired ethical development of students. Majority of the parents agree that parents play a significant part not only in the academic success but also in the ethical development of the students. However, in a question on how to develop teachers-parents' cooperation for ethical development of students, different opinions came up which are given as under:

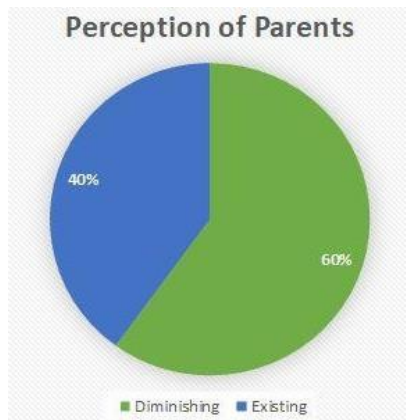
- Teachers-parents' involvement for ethical development of students must be based on trust and confidence. Efforts need to be taken by the management and teachers to enhance mutual trust and confidence so that confidence-based cooperation leads to desired ethical development of students.
- Frequent meeting with the parents to be organized by the school authority so that parents can develop an effective cooperation-based relationship with the teachers.

Ethical Dilemma Faced by the Students. Ethical dilemma is considered a problem where a student faces two possibilities neither of which is overwhelmingly acceptable. It has been observed with grave concern that students do not have any theoretical knowledge on the subject but on and off they are facing these consequences. As they do not have any knowledge on how to deal with this ethically, so they resort to the solution which apparently seems to be beneficial to them. On a question on how to deal with ethical dilemmas faced regularly by a student on a day-to-day basis, the parents and the teachers gave some important opinions:

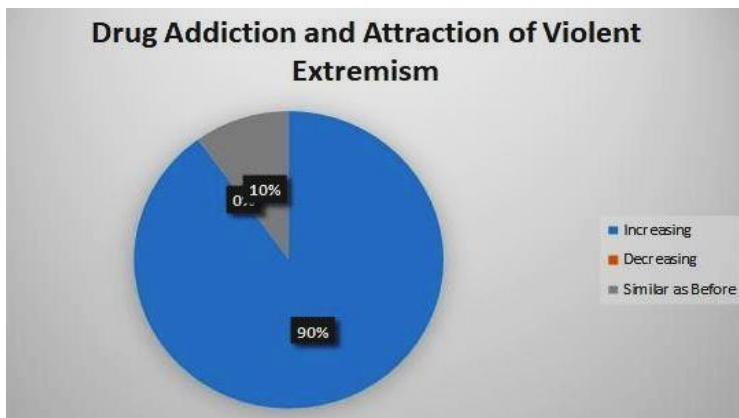
- Theoretical knowledge to be delivered to all the students on how to deal with ethical dilemmas. Lessons must be imparted to them on the issue of cognitive dissonance faced by the students.
- Ethical climate and environment have to be created in the entire school premises in a way that the cases of ethical departures come up as isolated cases only.
- At the same time, arrangement has to be made to give award to the good ethical performers so that all students are encouraged.

PERCEPTION OF PARENTS

According to ground survey 60% of the parents believe that the ethics is diminishing day by day. Furthermore, most of them (90%) believe that drug addiction and attraction of violent extremism is on rise as presented in the following figure.



Source: Author's Field Survey (n = 30)

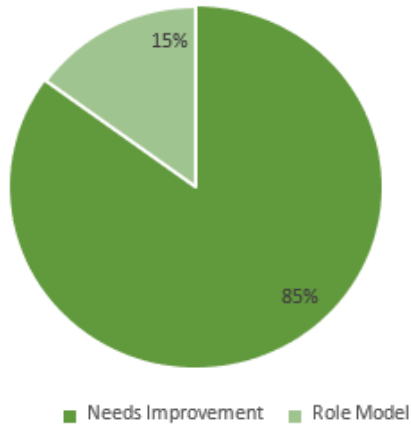


Source: Author's Field Survey (n = 30)

IMAGE OF TEACHERS NOT AS A ROLE MODEL

According to ground survey 85% of the respondents believe that the students are not currently considering the teachers as the role model.

Image of Teachers as Role Model



Source: Author's Field Survey (n = 30)

Information Technology Advancement. Bangladesh, in the last decades, has made significant progress concerning technology. Cell phones and internets are now a source of both information and disinformation in the sense that it affects the ethical upbringing of the students. It is also causing reduced social interactions for the students, that increases tendency of self-centricity.

Globalization. In a global world, we constantly encounter cultures and values that are often incompatible with our ones. Students tend to pick those cultures that are in other way harming their upbringing. Such a globalized culture has caused friable ethical values, declining respect for seniors etc.

WAYS OF INCLUSION OF ETHICS IN THE EDUCATION SYSTEM

ETHICS IN THE LEARNING CONTENTS

Inclusion of ethics in learning contents is very much discussed and widely recognized problem. This was also vividly expressed during the ground survey from all the stakeholders. The job is to help the students by giving them the opportunity to form their ethical judgment and reasoning about what is ethical or

wrong. Providing opportunities to develop and practice reasoning capabilities in the school is the most prevalent challenge. Recognizing ethical dilemmas and way out should be the focus point to address at the school levels. There is a need to emphasize more on application of ethics in life rather than possessing only theoretical knowledge. Following efforts that can be taken are:

- Improving learning content and including topics related to ethics and values. In-depth learning to instill ethics at foundation level need to be emphasized.
- Including the topics related to our independence and liberation war in the curriculum.
- More emphasis to be given on co-curricular activities to broaden students' learning.
- Restructuring in students' learning to get them away from memorizing and attract towards innovative application-oriented learning.
- Content of learning material in respect to history, culture, liberation war and patriotism should be included with due importance and it must be represented appropriately.

ETHICS IN THE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

Implementation of Code of Ethics. Majority of the respondents opines that there is serious need to have a defined code of ethics for institutions which will become the way of life. Ethical code can guide each member of the institutions at the point of ethical dilemmas.

Upholding the Spirit of Liberation War. True spirit of liberation war like opposing unethical activities, practice honesty and democratic norms should be practiced in all activities in school/college etc. History of independence to be preserved in a very befitting manner so that students are frequently exposed to attain adequate knowledge on that.

Stopping Unethical Practices. Some of the major unethical practices prevailing in the schools are promoting poor students to higher classes, favoritism in marking, manipulation in result, malpractices in public examinations etc. Besides, questions paper leaking, humiliating students, absenteeism, irregularity are also prominent unethical practices. Efforts need to be taken both by motivation and coercive measures so that these types of unethical practices are reduced at any cost.

Making School as a Place of Pride. There are some schools found possessing very unacceptable environment and facilities, which are not suitable for promoting ethics in educational environment. These include arrangement of

appropriate sanitation, hygiene, co-curricular activities etc. A school should be a place of pride for any community in respect to all physical facilities and cleanliness as well.

Maintaining Ethical Environment in School. Maintaining ethical environment in the school is considered to be the most challenging affair. Possible unethical conduct/ practices may result in conflicting situation amongst the teachers and other staffs. It may affect the academic environment very seriously. These in turn affect the minds of the young generation as they consider teachers as their role model. Proper motivation to the teachers by the appropriate authority and strict enforcement by the management is the prerequisite to maintain ethical environment in the school.

School and Parents in Congruence. Teachers and parents need to have a sustainable and strong collaboration for promoting ethical values in the minds of young students. School needs to figure out ways and means to develop cooperative relation and sustainable mechanism to promote ethics to the students.

Democratic Upbringing in the School. Effort may be taken to impart both theoretical and practical knowledge on the basic subject of democratic norms and practices. Selection of Class Captain and other Prefects may be done through a process following democratic norms.

Practicing Ethics in School. It is very much important to create adequate opportunities for the students to practice all the domains of ethics mentioned in the paper. Besides, students must be given opportunities to develop their reasoning capabilities on moral issues and figure out the ways to recognize and address moral dilemmas of life. Few other activities in this regard may be highlighted as under:

- Reviewing learning content of moral and ethical issues addressing practical issues of ethics rather than theoretical instructions.
- Efforts may be taken for ensuring such practices in the classroom, school, home and the community involving students and teachers.
- Efforts may be taken to create ethical environment in the school where every individual and stakeholders including teachers, students and staffs has a role to play.
- Fear free environment need to be created so that students can ventilate their points, discuss without hesitation.

Role of Teachers. Teachers must refrain from all the unethical practices. They must behave as per the defined ethical code of conducts. They must refrain themselves from unethical conduct like leaking of question papers, absenteeism,

private tuition, malpractices during school admission etc. However, the matter of fact is that the teachers/mentors must follow the ethics/ideals of life like honesty, sincerity, punctuality, truthfulness, devotion, dedication etc.

Role of Society. Majority of the respondents opined that those values and ethics are very important in social life. As such, society needs to play its role for instilling ethics amongst the young minds.

Role of State. Different discussions with stakeholders figured out the role of state in promoting values and ethics amongst the students. Social media has enormous power and influence over students and mass people. Efforts to be taken to use both social and electronic media to publicize the efforts to uphold the spirit of liberation war in the form of depicting true history, periodical discussions, seminars etc.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Inclusion of true ethical values within young students of primary, secondary and higher secondary levels are undoubtedly a difficult task. It is envisaged that ethical development of students requires a continual systematic program of understanding, learning and thereby reinforcement of the standard of conduct.

A comprehensive approach needs to be taken for including ethics in the education system of Bangladesh. Ethics in the learning contents, ethics in the school environment, role of teachers, role of society and role of state have been figured out deliberately. There is a need to emphasize more on application of ethics in life rather than possessing only theoretical knowledge. It must involve opportunities for appropriate application in the classroom and the society involving students. A school should be a place of pride for any community in respect to all physical facilities, cleanliness etc. Proper motivation to the teachers by the appropriate authority and strict enforcement by the management is the prerequisite to maintain ethical environment in the school. Teachers must act as role model to the students so that they can follow them and develop character accordingly.

The paper finally recommends the following immediate measures to be adopted:

- Learning contents need to be improved in relation to the defined ethical domains at different levels.
- Teachers need to be trained in the Teachers Training Schools and Colleges with a view to inculcate appropriate and desired standard to become role model for the students.

- Social, electronic and print media need to be used as force multiplier for bringing positive changes in the affairs of moral and ethical development of students.

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AN EXPLORATION OF CIVIL-MILITARY COORDINATION ARCHITECTURE IN DISASTER MANAGEMENT OF BANGLADESH: WAYS FORWARD

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Abstract: Bangladesh is a disaster-ravaged country. Since its independence, the country has experienced several deadliest disasters. Despite all such calamities, the country has established itself as a role model in disaster risk reduction and management in the world. Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief (MoDMR) along with other stakeholders has taken different efforts in this regard. The military as one of the important stakeholders has always stood beside the nation. A good number of regularity framework allows military participation in disaster management too. It has been observed that no agreeable coordination mechanism between civil and military exist at the functional level. Every disaster is managed with a makeshift arrangement between civil and military. Disaster management modality in a multi-stakeholder environment is not very clear in the regularity framework specially in Standing Order on Disaster (SOD). Disaster Incident Management Team (DIMIT) is one of such concepts indicated in SOD without any details. Therefore, the broad objective of the research was to develop a common civil-military response coordination architecture during any mega-disaster in Bangladesh. It was exploratory research using both qualitative and quantitative methods. The non-probability sample size comprised both civil and military communities. Opinions of practitioners and scholars both from home and abroad were collected. International practices of Centre for Excellence in Disaster Management (CFE-DM) USA, ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on Disaster Management (AHA) Indonesia, Regional Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Response Coordination Centre (RHCC) Singapore have also been studied. After analysing all survey data, detailed model of DIMIT has been suggested in this dissertation. The model has been retained simply by keeping present practice in mind. The concept is likely to provide better effectiveness in the overall coordination framework between civil and military in disaster management of Bangladesh.

Keywords: *SOD; DIMIT; Multi-stakeholders' Environment; Civil-Military Response Coordination Architecture; International Disaster Practices*

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INTRODUCTION

Bangladesh stands as the seventh riskiest natural disaster-prone country in the world as per the World Risk Index calculated by the United Nations University Institute for Environment and Human Security. Environmental disasters like tropical cyclones, storm surges, floods, tornadoes, and droughts ravage the country almost every year. Since Independence, the country is devastated by severe cyclones of varying intensities. A strong earthquake affecting a major urban center like Dhaka, Chottogram, or Sylhet may result in damage and destructions of massive proportions and may have disastrous consequences for the entire nation (*Earthquake Contingency Plan for Dhaka City Corporation, 2009, p.10*). MoDMR is the lead ministry of Government to manage any kind of disaster. Bangladesh Armed Forces like any other professional armed forces have always responded to the call of the nation during any disaster. Over the years, Bangladesh Armed Forces through Armed Forces Division (AFD) has developed a professional working environment with MoDMR and other ministries of the Government. AFD is the coordinating headquarters for all three services i.e., Army, Navy, and Air Force. It is observed that there are differences in the overall approach of civilian and military. Presently, every army formation maintains three different kinds of teams named Heavy, Medium, and Light Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) Team. Based on the severity of the disaster, the Formation considers which team from these three different categories will respond to the requirement. On the other hand, local government somehow conceptualizes DIMIT in managing any kind of disaster. Therefore, the military will not be able to play a very effective role once they are called to operate within the DIMIT concept. Such difficulties are observed during the annual disaster-related exercise in Bangladesh named Disaster Response Exercise and Exchange (DREE). Almost all the academics and practitioners in disaster management have opined during DREE for a common approach between civilian and military in disaster management. The researcher, being the organizer of three consecutive DREE from the year 2017 and also an organizer of the first ever international disaster-related exercise in a foreign country named Coordinated Response (COORES) 19, has developed workable knowledge and experience about the disaster response mechanism of Bangladesh. COORES 19 was held in Singapore where the researcher as focal point officer of AFD played a pivotal role in formulating the concept and conducting the exercise. As an ex-disaster focal point officer of AFD, the researcher had also experienced civil-military approaches in many other national and international forums. While performing his classical role in different appointments, the researcher has keenly observed varied approaches followed in disaster management by the civilian and military authority in Bangladesh. To bring synergy in the overall national disaster management effort of Bangladesh, it's imperative to synchronize the disaster management model of civilians and military. Therefore, the problem for the research is identified as 'An Exploration of Civil-Military Coordination Architecture in Disaster Management of Bangladesh: Ways Forward'. Existing variations in the overall approach by civil

and military as major argument of the research has suggested a common response mechanism for both civil and military in disaster management at functional level. The model is likely to bring synergy to the overall disaster management effort in Bangladesh.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Literature purely dedicated to the subject is not much available. However, books, articles, and papers available on the regularity framework of Bangladesh have been explored. Existing documents related to different military policies on disaster management have also been studied. As such, the research gave the opportunity to collect more primary data and conduct exploratory research on the subject. Disaster Management Act provides the legal basis for the participation of the Armed Forces in disaster management efforts (*Bangladesh Gazette additional copy, 2012, p.1*). National Disaster Management Policy allows forming separate disaster management units comprising all security and law enforcement agencies in order to respond to disaster management and emergency response (*Bangladesh Gazette additional copy, 2015, p.1*). National Disaster Management Plan gives out the strategic goals that need to be achieved within a specific time frame (*National Plan for Disaster Management 2016-2020, 2017, p.1*). Standing Order on Disaster (SOD) delineates the duties and responsibilities to be performed by each stakeholder including the armed forces (*SOD, 2019, p.1*). National Emergency Operation Centre (NEOC) structure has been divided into three different levels i.e. Policy/Advisory Level, Operational Level, and Routine Functional Level. Like other wings and cells, a function-based approach has been adopted in Operation Wing (*NEOC Concept Note, Draft Version3, 2018*). Post Disaster Dead Body Management Instruction 2016 is prepared to find out appropriate modalities of burial procedures for dead bodies following any major disaster. (*Post Disaster Dead Body Management Instruction, 2016, p.1*). National Debris Management Guideline suggests debris response and recovery management at all levels (*National Debris Management Guideline of Bangladesh, 2015, p.1*). Comprehensive Guideline for Armed Forces in disaster management by AFD is an accumulation of both civil and military documents. Chapter 11 of the book has highlighted DIMT without any grouping (*Sobdoshoily, 2019, p.1*). Bangladesh Multinational Coordination Centre (MNCC) Standing Operating Procedure (SOP) of AFD is a premier document in the field of international disaster management (*Sobdoshoily, 2019, p.1*). Earthquake Contingency Plan for Armed Forces identified the intended actions to be taken by AFD in response to a damaging earthquake (*Earthquake Contingency Plan of Armed Forces, 2009, p.1*). The earthquake contingency plan for AFD has divided Dhaka City into eight sectors (*Earthquake Contingency Plan of Dhaka City by Armed Forces, 2010, p.5*).

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The research primarily focused to obtain the answer to the question “What are the differences which exist between civil and military disaster coordination

architecture in Bangladesh?” In doing so, it also sought the answer to the following secondary questions:

- What is the existing civil-military coordination system in the disaster response mechanism in Bangladesh?
- What are the disaster coordination architectures practiced by civil authorities?
- What is the disaster response mechanism prepared by the military at different levels?
- What are the gaps persisting between civil and military existing coordination architecture?
- What are the challenges of the existing civil-military coordination system in the disaster response mechanism in Bangladesh?
- How to coordinate both civil and military disaster response mechanisms in Bangladesh?

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Study Area and Target Population

Concerned civil and military disaster management stakeholders both at home and abroad were the target population of this research. SMEs of this research were from MoDMR, AFD, Military Headquarters, Dhaka University, Government Disaster-related organizations, NGOs, International NGOs, RHCC Singapore, AHA Centre Indonesia, and CFE-DM USA. Books and publications of these organizations were studied too.

Data Collection, Processes, and Presentation

Mixed methods were followed in the research. Both qualitative and quantitative data were collected. The sampling for the data collection was done using both probability and non-probability techniques. For collecting the view of general people ‘Stratified Sampling’ (probability sample) technique was used. For collecting the in-depth interview opinion, ‘Judgemental Quota Sampling’ was used. The sample size was 40. To collect primary data, in-depth interviews with different sets of questionnaires, face-to-face in-depth interviews with all respondents at home, and video conferences with overseas respondents were used. Total eight top subject matter experts i.e. the Minister and the Secretary of Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief, Principal Staff Officer of Armed Forces Division, , Engineer in Chief of Bangladesh Army, Professors of Dhaka University, Director General of Fire Service and Civil Defence, and UN Residential Coordinator Adviser in the disaster were interviewed. A questionnaire survey through email, courier services, and hard copies was conducted for quantitative data. Respondents from Government, Non-Government, NGOs, International NGOs and military were selected for questionnaire survey.

Secondary data was collected from different literature review both from civil and military. Regarding ethical approach in data collection, all respondents involved in the research have been notified in writing. The purpose of the study along with their opinions have been well endorsed by the researcher. However, all their opinions have not been presented in full in this paper. Important segments of their opinions have been referred to in the paper. Qualitative data was processed by taking paradoxical views on the same issue followed by the researcher's analysis where data presentation was done using quotations from note-taking points. Quantitative data were processed using MS Excel software where data presentation was done using statistical tools i.e. cross-tabulation, graphic representation, central tendency etc. Regarding the limitation of the research, much of the study on the subject was not available. There were many publications in the field of disaster management but not on the coordination architecture between civil and military. Both the sectors have made publications considering their classical role. Specific publication regarding the complementary role of the Armed Forces in disaster management is not very much available. Therefore, the research was carried out based on the primary data obtained during data collection both within civil and military environments. Academicians and practitioners were given special importance during the survey.

ASSESSMENT OF EXISTING DISASTER COORDINATION FRAMEWORK BETWEEN CIVIL AND MILITARY

SOD has focused more on the structural coordination aspect with emphasis on civil and military coordination architecture. As per SOD, out of 16 national committees, 11 committees have military representatives making a total of 69 percent. On the other hand, out of 18 local committees, 4 committees have military representatives making a total of 22 percent as shown in Figure 1.

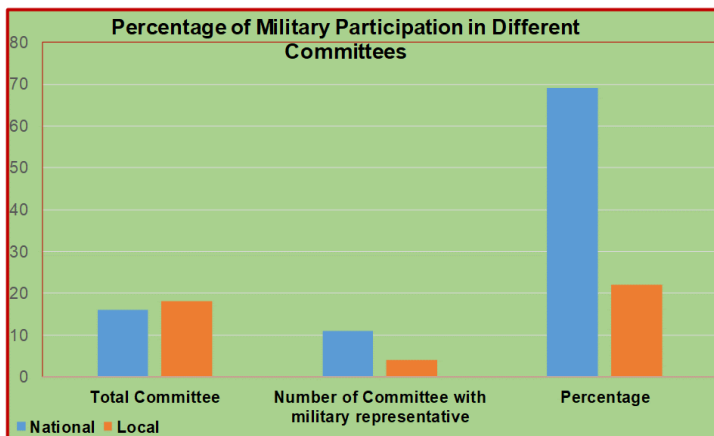


Figure 1: Presence of Military in different committees (SOD 2019)

An important concept indicated in SOD at the local level is DIMT as part of the Local Level Multi-Agency Incident Management System. The concept addresses the cluster-based or function-based approach where it will be formed taking stakeholders from different functional groups. If the military is an important stakeholder in disaster management at a functional level, DIMT needs to acknowledge military participation. There may be a situation where the military may have to take a lead role in entire disaster management like Rana Plaza. In such a situation, the military will not restrict only Search and Rescue Operations. The military will have to remain involved in medical, utility service, information sharing, debris management, and all other specialized fields of cooperation. Therefore, a well-thought-out common coordination platform will assist both civil and military to cooperate better during any disaster management.

Disaster practitioners on the ground feel that both civil and military have less knowledge of each other's core capabilities. Therefore, they fail to reap maximum benefit from one another. Due to the least possible interaction, they are always comfortable following their own model of managing any disaster. Military mostly conducts their training inside cantonment with self-understanding of disaster management. Irregular interactions with civilian counterparts keep them isolated from civil authority's management procedure of disaster. Importantly, the requirement of a common coordination framework is not felt by either of the groups during normal times. It results in a make-shift arrangement by both parties. As a result, the nonexistence of any agreed coordinating mechanism between civil and military is identified as the main gap in the literature review and primary data of the research. To address the gap, a well thought coordination platform for disaster management must exist with both civil and military authorities. There is a need to create a pipeline through which all the stakeholders' members will go through. It will pay a dividend during the time of real need, when coordination will be the prime requirement to act flawless, with the highest efficiency.

ISSUES AND CHALLENGES OF LIKELY COORDINATION ARCHITECTURE BETWEEN CIVIL AND MILITARY IN DISASTER MANAGEMENT

Ideally, the most effective disaster management would focus first on prevention, next on preparedness, and, lastly on relief (*Lal B. Suresh, K. Anitha & D. Vasavi, 2019, p.3*). An ad-hoc arrangement during any disaster may somehow serve the purpose but will remain invalid for any subsequent disaster due to the non-availability of any document. Therefore, such a model of cooperation needs to be thought of at the functional/operational level. It should be also supported by the policy issue for its sustenance and execution. Respondents including representatives from MoDMR have generated different ideas on civil-military coordination platforms that can be integrated into the existing concept of DIMT. It can be made functional following a cluster-based approach. Such an approach is present in

NEOC. The prerequisites of DIMT need to be analyzed in detail. Abiding by the existing law, the positive mindset of both civil and military are the two important prerequisites for formulating any coordination model. Both civil and military need to have a compromising attitude to come to a consensus regarding different roles to be played by each of the military and civil components in the model. The military should have knowledge of the civilian coordination mechanism of disaster management. Finally, both civil and military should feel the necessity of such kind of coordination model. Data collected on the prerequisite of DIMT is presented in Figure 2.

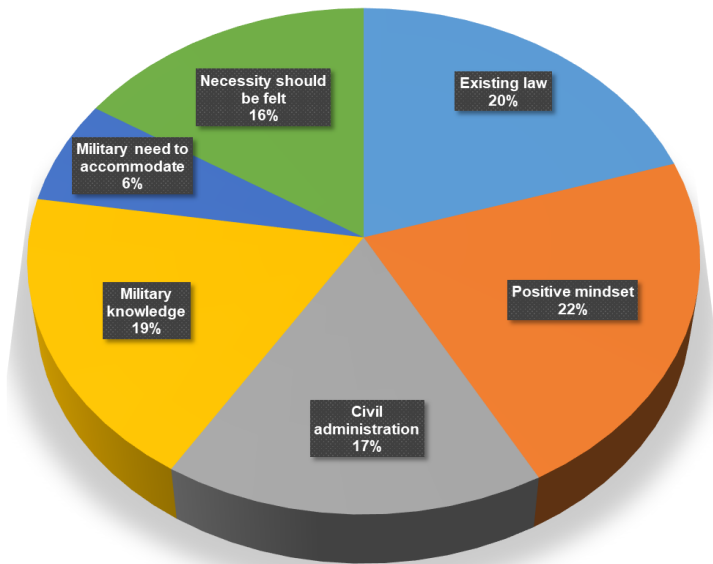


Figure 2: Prerequisite of DIMT (Questionnaire Survey)

Elements of DIMT are important aspects to look for. Out of many fields of cooperation, command and coordination arrangement needs to be well thought out. As per Iran Red Crescent Medical Journal 2020, "After Katrina Hurricane, the single command headquarter was posited due to the emergence of a large number of challenges regarding the civil and military forces' collaborations. To resolve the command problems in disasters, there are two solutions: (1) the existence of two civil and military commanders and coordination between them and (2) the existence of a single commander" (Araghizadeh H, Peyrari M, Shariffar S, Ahmadi Marzaleh M, 2020, p.21). While designing any new form of disaster coordination model for both civil and military, the easy orientation of the model should be kept in mind. It should not surface as an absolutely new pattern of cooperation framework. Over the years, disaster management practices as developed on the ground should melt easily in the new proposed model.

Diameter and level of DIMT are two important issues that need to be studied in detail. City Corporations operating DIMT need coordination with district administration. How many DIMTs will be established in one area will depend on the total area of the City Corporation. Military Brigade (*Brigade is less than division size force where almost 3 brigades make division-size force*) size force may look after one DIMT. Respondents mostly opined on City Corporation and Brigade Headquarters level as the most appropriate level of DIMT as shown in Figure 3.

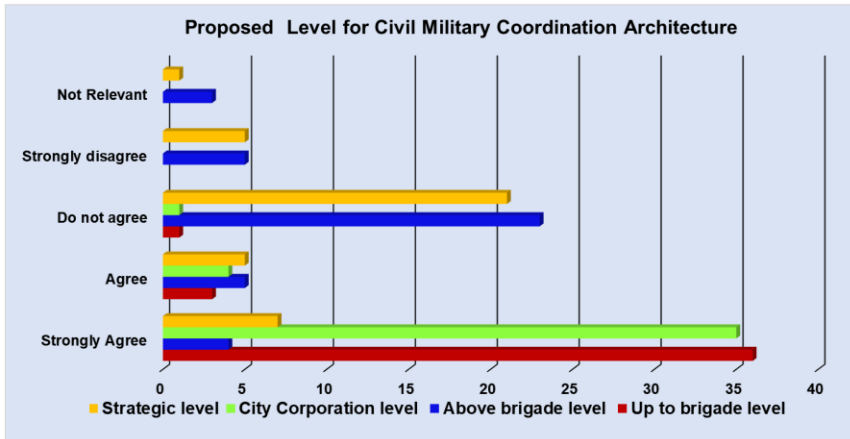


Figure 3: Proposed level of Civil-Military Coordination Architecture (Questionnaire Survey)

While working on the likely approaches of DIMT, mitigation measures against challenges need to be thought of. The regular exercise, publication, seminar, and periodic revision were identified by the respondents. Annual exercises and seminars, and symposiums were mostly preferred by the respondents as shown in Figure 4.

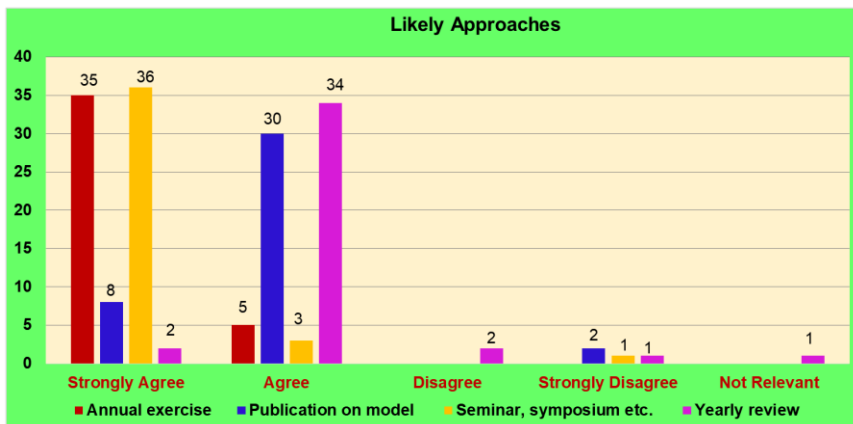


Figure 4: Likely approaches for introducing any new model (Questionnaire Survey)

International organizations recommend a function-based approach for such coordination architecture as shown in Figure 5. They have categorically explained two trends in disaster management where one is with the country's military and the other one is with the assistance of a foreign military. In every case, they suggest the participation of both civil and military as per their core capabilities. A clear avenue needs to be created where both civil and military can exhibit their capabilities while participating in disaster management. It is apparent that working out such a platform does not need to make new acts or regulations to operate. Existing acts and policies should be sufficient to support such kind of platform.

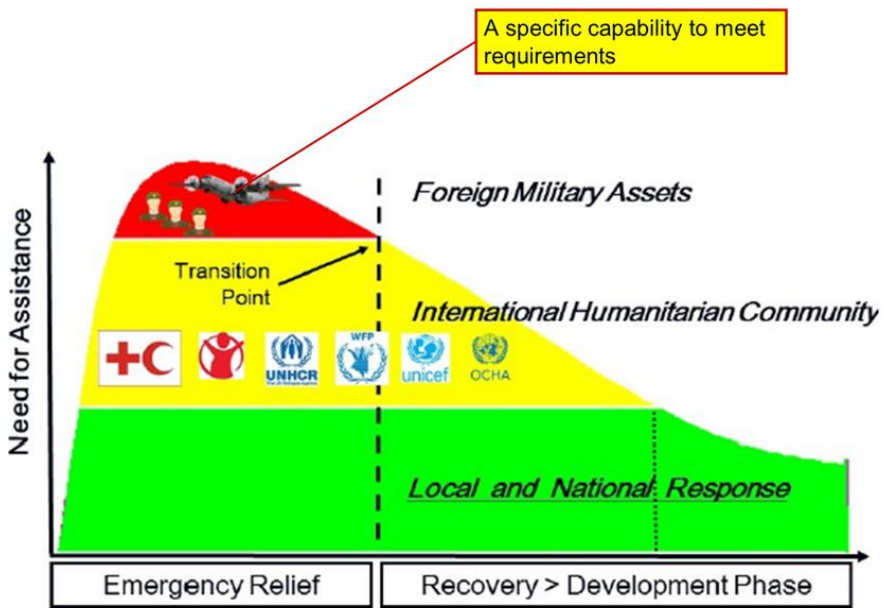


Figure 5: Philosophy of Foreign Assistance in Disaster Management (RHCC presentation slide)

PHILOSOPHICAL APPROACH CONSIDERING RESEARCH GAP OF THE STUDY

The followings are derived as part of the research gap based on questionnaire survey, in-depth interview, and study of different national and international practices along with a philosophical approach towards a solution:

- A well-accepted unique model/structure is absent in the coordination mechanism between civil and military.
- Existing DIMIT is very scanty and interpreted in isolation by both civil and military.
- Absolute new model won't be accepted by either civil or military.
- Detailed modalities of present DIMIT will assist both civil and military to coordinate further amongst each other.
- Command and control of DIMIT need careful consideration to avert any egoistic issue while operating on the ground.
- The integration procedure of the revised DIMIT is important to achieve the acceptance of both civil and military.

PROPOSED COORDINATION ARCHITECTURE BETWEEN CIVIL AND MILITARY IN DISASTER MANAGEMENT

The Mission of Proposed DIMIT in Disaster Management

The mission of the proposed DIMIT will be to allow the optimum utilization of both civil and military resources at functional level during any major disaster management.

Objectives of Proposed DIMIT in Disaster Management

- Functioning as a centre point of the managerial functions at the operational level during and post-disaster situations.
- Establishing an effective coordination mechanism amongst all responsible stakeholders and avoiding duplication of resources.
- Assigning responsibility based on the core competency of any organization.
- Collecting and sharing information related to the impacts of disaster.
- Providing an opportunity for participation of different major stakeholders in disaster management.
- Ensuring easy adaptation of the model by both civil and military.
- Provisioning available resources including international aid during disaster management.

Operational Concept of DIMIT

The establishment of DIMIT belongs to the domain of local administration. City Corporation or district administration will be in charge of DIMIT. The following points may be kept in mind while establishing DIMIT on ground:

- Prior to the activation of DIMIT, the host community of Bangladesh is likely to engage themselves in managing any disaster.
- Different types of stakeholders are also likely to reach the disaster sites prior to/during/after the engagement of local administration.
- Military is likely to augment overall disaster effort.
- Considering the overall size of the affected area, there may be a number of DIMITs required to manage any disaster.
- Considering the number of DIMITs, one coordinating headquarters will be required.
- Command and control of DIMIT will lean against the size of different forces involved in disaster management.
- International assistance may need to be integrated into the overall management of disaster.

Organizational Structure of DIMIT

Organizational Structure of DIMIT is at Figure 6. Number of DIMIT will vary basing on the size of disaster area.

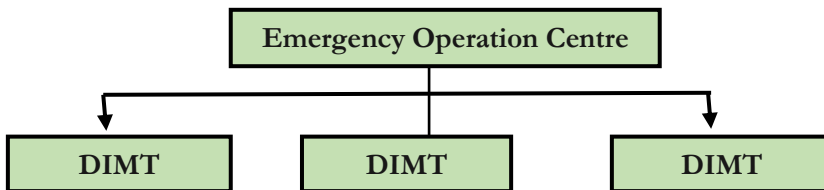


Figure 6: Organizational Structure of DIMIT (Researcher)

EOC

EOC will be in charge of all DIMITs. Considering the size of the area, the number of DIMITs will be established on ground. DIMITs will be managing mostly challenges on ground where EOC will be managing additional issues like financing and interaction with foreign assistance if required. EOC's main task will be to direct the resources joining in the disaster management operation. DIMIT will regroup the resources as per structure at Figure 7.

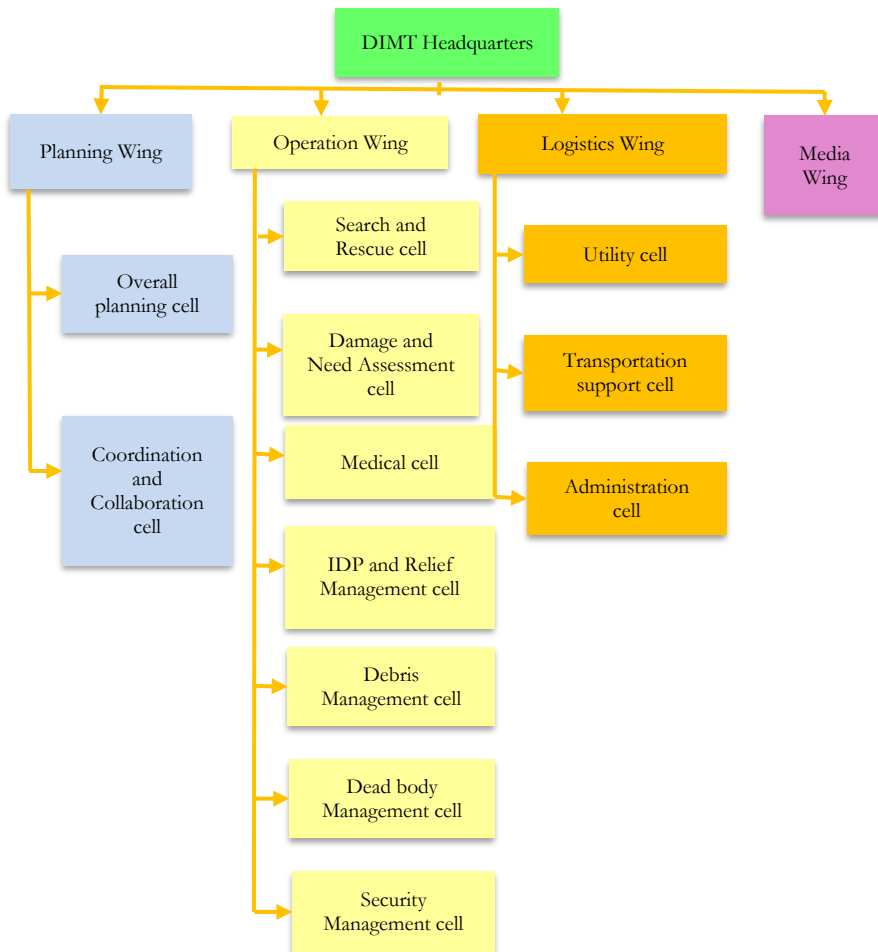


Figure 7: Detailed Organizational Structure of DIMT (Researcher)

DIMT Headquarters

DIMT Headquarters will act as the executive of DIMT. It will be led by appropriate authority from the civil sector. A military brigade-size force will be appropriate for one DIMT. It may have required staff to coordinate the activities of all the cells. It will focus on the following activities:

- Ensure quick distribution of resources amongst different cells after receiving from EOC.
- Synchronize all available efforts with the host community effort.
- Allow military efforts in coordination with other existing efforts.

- Provision of employing foreign resources if accepted by the Government.

Planning Wing

Planning Wing will focus more on future activities of DIMIT. They will continuously evaluate the overall activities of DIMIT and demand additional resources as required on the ground. It will also coordinate the activities of different cells. Detailed activities of the Planning Cell, Coordination, and Collaboration Cell of this wing may be as under:

Overall Planning Cell

Activities of the Overall Planning Cell may be as under:

- Assess the activities of different wings specially Operations Wing.
- Plan future activities that DIMIT needs to carry out as part of any ongoing disaster management.
- Distinguish activities from one stage to another in overall disaster management operation.
- Identify the assembly area of DIMIT where all the resources will be redistributed amongst different wings.

Coordination and Collaboration Cell

Activities of the Coordination and Collaboration Cell may be as under:

- Operate assembly area of Planning Wing.
- Coordinate and collaborate functions of different emergency management teams according to the severity and needs of the affected community.
- Receive all kinds of assistance including foreign assistance and distribute it amongst the cells as per the need of the cells.
- Collect the requirements of different cells and forward them to DIMIT Headquarters.

Operations Wing

Operations wing will be the core of DIMIT. The major part of DIMIT will be played by different cells of the Operations Wing. Employment of operational assets will be the sole authority of the Operations Wing. The Chief of Operations Wing will be responsible for the operational activities of DIMIT. He will ensure total operational activities of DIMIT through different cells Operations Wing. Specific tasks of different teams of Operations Wing may be as under:

Search and Rescue Cell

Activities of the Search and Rescue Cell may be as under:

- Plan an integrated search and rescue operation plan immediately after any disaster in coordination with damage and need assessment cell.
- Ensure all stakeholders of the search and rescue cell are aware of the overall plan.
- Coordinate available efforts of the host community with the DIMIT effort.
- Provide opportunities to all available stakeholders for optimum utilization of their own resources.
- Coordinate amongst different cells of Operations Wing.

Damage and Need Assessment Cell

Activities of Damage and Need Assessment Cell may be as under:

- Assess the damage to infrastructures, and lifeline services.
- Assess the death tolls/injured state due to disasters in coordination with the respective cell.
- Carry out need assessment continuously and send updated information to Operations Wing.

Medical Cell

Activities of Medical Cell may be as under:

- Prepare a medical plan for DIMIT.
- Ensure available medicines and first aid kits to provide immediate treatment.
- Provide counseling and psychosocial services for the affected and vulnerable women, children, elderly, and others living in the affected site.
- Arrange a special treatment for pregnant mothers, and children.
- Provide special support and treatment for people with disabilities.
- Take measures against outbreaks of diseases (communicable and non-communicable diseases) and collect data regarding health hazards during and post-disasters.
- Establish mobile hospital and clinical support for affected people.
- Arrange a hygiene management system for the affected people.

IDP and Relief Management Cell

Activities of the IDP and Relief management cell may be as under:

- Provide immediate emergency relief and IDP management supports in cooperation with other organizations.
- Collect the relief materials from the donor agencies.
- Arrange temporary shelter for the displaced people with food and water.
- Establish a water distribution management system during and post-disaster.
- Identify traumatized children, women, disabled and elderly people for necessary support.

Debris Management Cell

Activities of Debris management cell may be as under:

- Arrange transports like bulldozers, excavators, forklifts, trucks, operators, materials, and related supplies in coordination with the transportation support cell of the logistic wing.
- Select a suitable place for dumping debris.
- Monitor emergency disposal of debris materials so that new hazards can be avoided.
- Coordinate all available civil resources for debris clearance.

Dead Body Management Cell

Activities of Dead body management cell may be as under:

- Coordinate management of dead body in coordination with other concerned organizations like Anjuman Mofidul, Bangladesh Red Crescent Society, etc.
- Provide legal issues with the help of medical cells about identification and death certification.
- Provide technical support for the identification and documentation of dead bodies.
- Abide by the Government procedure for dead body management.

Security Management Cell

Activities of Security management Cell may be as under:

- Ensure security for people and properties during post-disaster situations.
- Ensure security during relief operations.
- Ensure quick mobilization of law enforcement agencies.
- Ensure security of IDP shelter so that the evacuated people can stay in a safe manner.
- Protect children and women from trafficking and other forms of sexual exploitation.
- Supervise work of law enforcement agencies on regular basis.
- Arrange security of Government property, institutions, and basic facilities related to life line services damaged in the disaster.
- Assist the local administration to stop theft and misuse of relief materials.

Logistics Wing

Logistics Wing will primarily look after resource sharing and management through its different teams. The prime focus of the wing will be to ensure an uninterrupted supply of resources with appropriate storage facilities. Specific tasks of different teams of Logistics Wing may be as under:

Utility Cell

Activities of Utility Cell may be as under:

- Coordinate activities of utility services.
- Ensure quick recovery of lifeline services.
- Prioritize services required in the affected site.
- Integrate available civil resources with Govt. services.

Transportation Support Cell

Activities of the Transportation Support Cell may be as under:

- Provide required transports to different wings.
- Maintain available transports of DIMIT.
- Establish required workshop for transports of DIMIT.
- Provision of fuel arrangement for available transports.

Administration Cell

Activities of the Administration Cell may be as under:

- Looks after the administration of DIMIT personnel and resources.
- Ensure required manpower of different wings and cells.

- Supply food and local hospitality to all members of DIMT.

Media Wing

Media is one of the vital aspects of any post-disaster management. Lack of information leads to inappropriate information and rumor. It should be able to present information concerning both civil and military. Specific tasks of the media wing may be as under:

- Maintain close coordination with both civil and military teams to present updates on disaster management.
- Verify information before giving it out to the media.
- Hold press briefing followed by press release after a certain period of interval.
- Monitor other media both national and international regarding any ongoing disaster management activities of respective DIMT.
- Provide timely update information to guard against any rumor.

Benefits of Proposed DIMT

The above model of DIMT is likely to have the following benefits:

- The proposed DIMT has similarities with the concept of NEOC.
- It will bring synergy to the overall activities on the ground due to commonality with the strategic structure of the Government.
- All participating organizations will be able to perform better due to the involvement of their higher headquarters in a similar kind of field at the strategic level.
- It will act as a guideline for both civil and military to prepare prior to any disaster.
- Civil and military will be able to identify their areas of preparation for future disaster management.
- The proposed DIMT will enhance local administration in managing any disaster on the ground.
- It has got similarities with the existing concept of DIMT practiced at AFD.
- Proposed DIMT will allow both civil and military to exert their optimum capability.

Ways to Integrate Proposed DIMT in National Arrangement

Based on the survey findings and the type of proposed model, the followings may be considered for effective integration of the model in the system:

- DIMIT may be explained in the regularity framework of disaster management in Bangladesh. More need to be discussed in SOD, specially, the structure of DIMIT and coordination modalities between civil and military forces.
- Different committees as per SOD may regularly discuss the proposed model so that they can implement the structure during the time of disaster.
- AFD may review their existing model of DIMIT and adapt to the proposed model of DIMIT for better coordination of disaster management.
- Military needs to study further the proposed model and prepare their manpower for effective utilization of resources.
- Regular workshops, seminars, and tabletop discussions on the proposed model may be arranged with concerned stakeholders so that better awareness is created.
- Annual exercises may be held with the concerned stakeholders.
- The resistive mind of both military and civilians need to be taken into consideration and required motivation may be arranged accordingly.
- A separate publication explaining the total concept of the proposed DIMIT will provide a textbook approach for new model implementation at the functional level.

CONCLUSION

Bangladesh holds commendable civil-military coordination in disaster management. The country's lead ministry MoDMR in coordination with AFD is managing different disasters very successfully. However, Bangladesh is yet to experience any catastrophic disaster in recent times. One Rana Plaza incident is exemplary to understand the strength of existing functional modalities. Through the research, the proposed model has been worked out to better manage any major disaster in the future. Respondents have appreciated the overall effort endorsing the nature of the present humanitarian coordination framework between civil and military. Almost everyone has opined not to bring out completely new modalities to manage disaster by civil and military. They have opted for some design that is supported by the existing regularity framework. Modification of DIMIT has surfaced as one of the plausible options in the research. An attempt has been made to reorganize the present DIMIT concept so that effective civil-military coordination can take place including foreign assistance in future days.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Initiatives may be taken by both civil and military to explain the necessity of a new coordination structure at the functional level.
- Seminars, tabletop discussions, and exercises like DREE may be arranged focusing on the concept of the proposed DIMIT. It will allow the participants to be educated more on the concept and be confident while operating on the ground as per the structure.
- The textbook approach may be followed while presenting suggested DIMIT. There may be dedicated publications on the proposed DIMIT at the Government level. Such publication will act as a reference for others including foreign nationals who will operate with the consent of the Government. It may be reviewed periodically so that any new suggestion can be incorporated into the concept and make it more resourceful for all stakeholders.

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