Chapter V

INDO-BANGLADESH BORDER MANAGEMENT AND INDIA’S NATIONAL SECURITY: POLITICO-MILITARY DYNAMICS
This chapter deals with the politico-military challenges of the Indo-Bangladesh border management and India’s national security. Politically motivated conflicts, violence and possible military challenges can be taken as politico-military threats to the national security of India. These challenges have been categorised as the subversive movements—terrorism, insurgency and other separatist movements—, proliferation of small arms and light weapons in North-East India, growing Islamic fundamentalism and religious parties in Bangladesh and the fast-growing of Madrassas across the Indo-Bangladesh border.

**Terrorism in the Northeastern Region**

The terrorist movements going on in Northeastern Region of India is one of the major concerns for the Indo-Bangladesh border management and to the national security of India. According to the Group of Ministers’ Report Bangladesh’s regular army, BDR, and intelligence agency with the support of ISI (Inter Service Intelligence) has been motivating and supporting terrorism and, aiding insurgency and giving shelter to their leaders. It is also believed, that Pakistan and China have been providing all kinds of possible helps and logistic support to these terrorists (GMR 2001).

India has been fighting with terrorism over the past half a century. Since independence, the eastern states have been under the spell of terrorist activities. India has claimed from time to time that these terrorists have been supported by foreign countries like Bangladesh, Pakistan and China. India has been fighting terrorism through the traditional approach i.e., with weaponry and military personnel so far (Bhaumik 2007; Sengupta and Singh 2004). However, the traditional method of preventive defense now proved a great failure (Nag 2002). According to some scholars, India has lost to militant groups operating in its far-flung North-East. The growing Islamisation of the region and the terrorist attacks in the recent times provide enough reasons for India to start paying closer attention to its Northeastern border. Stratford Wisconsin News, an American media,\(^1\) has provided its report relating to the growing nexus between India’s Northeastern insurgent outfits and militant Islamist groups that regularly cross India’s extremely porous border with Bangladesh. India is now under a new threat from religious

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\(^1\) Stratford Wisconsin News Media of America is involved in a project on anti-terrorist movements.
fundamentalists fuelled by Pakistan's ISI to make Northeastern India a volatile region in the continent. The recent developments in Northeastern region have witnessed the Pakistani agency has engaging itself scores of its operatives in the region and sponsoring a number of indigenous armed groups has come as a shocking revelation for India.

As far as the Indo-Bangladesh border region is concerned the northeastern region is the worst affected with terrorism. The number of violence and conflicts in the North-East has never been documented in the official records of India. Though the number of violent incidents during the year 2006 has remained the same during the year 2005, the number of civilian casualties has reduced to 21.3% (from 393 to 309). The July 1999 arrest of the ISI agent Gauri Salim Ahmed alias Abdul Habib, a Bangladeshi national, along with three others in Assam, revealed many untold stories of the ISI designs in this region. Hailing from Muzaffarnagar and blind from birth, Salim Ahmad is considered the most dreaded and committed ISI follower. Maulana Hafiz, another dreaded ISI agent from Kupwara region of Jammu & Kashmir was also arrested. Their mission raised concern for India as they intended to handover a large quantity of RDX to the Assamese insurgents as well as to other underground outfits of North-East to facilitate disruption on the eve of Independence Day Celebrations, Lok Sabha Election, etc.

During interrogation, in 2002, Gauri Salim Ahmad divulged that fake passports were used for going to Pakistan from Dhaka (Pandey 2002). Another terrorist named Quasim who hails from Dhaka is also responsible for this job. After the big arrests of four key ISI agents, 33 others were arrested from various parts of Assam. In fact, in the country as a whole, around hundred ISI agents are in various jails. But still, the number of arrested agents would not be more than 25 percent of the total. In terms of modules (the word used for one group of ISI activists for particular mission), 13 have been smashed so far all over the country. Two of these modules were operational in Assam with the active cooperation of Muslim fundamentalists. Reportedly, to execute the operations, ISI has organized about 24 active Islamic fundamentalist groups in Bangladesh, Nepal and India who have been trained on the pattern of Laskar-e-Toiba and Taliban Militia.

For Pakistan's intelligence agencies, especially ISI, the legacy of the independent war has been a built-in network of agents within the Jamaat and its affiliates who can be utilized to exploit India along its 2,500-mile border with Bangladesh. In addition to
supporting tribal separatist groups in North-East India, the ISI uses Bangladesh territory as a base for helping Islamic extremists inside India. After the July 11 train bombings in Bombay, a top Indian police official, KP Raghuvanshi, said that his key suspects “have connections with groups in Nepal and Bangladesh, which are directly or indirectly connected to Pakistan.” A State Department report cited evidence that one of the Jamaat’s main allies, the Harakat ul-Jihad-i-Islami, whose base is believed to be in Pakistan, “maintains contact with Al-Qaeda in Afghanistan.” Bangladesh Harakat leader Fazlul Rahman was one of the six signatories of Osama bin Laden’s first declaration of holy war against the United States, on 23rd February 1998. Since the October 2002 Bali bombings which led to repression of Al-Qaeda, it is believed that some of its Indonesian and Malaysian cells have shifted their operations to the Bangladesh side of the border (Harrison 2006: A15).

The Assam police arrested one ISI operative who was later identified as SM Alam alias Mujibullah Alam alias Asfi Alam. Hailing from Ajampur village under Uttara police station in Dhaka, Bangladesh, Alam has been recognized as an important functionary of the ISI in-charge of Assam and the North-East. The police said that Alam was a member of Jamat-e-Islami and Chatra Shibir of Bangladesh and joined the Pakistan-based Harkat-ul-Mujahideen in 1993. He has also underwent training in Pakistan occupied Kashmir (PoK). Later, he joined Jamat-ul-Mujahideen in 2005 and afterward he was recruited by the ISI and soon shifted his base to the restive North-East in 2006. What alarming was Alam’s confessed that 24 militant outfits in the region had maintained communication with the ISI network (Thakuria 2008)?

A divisive and sharply polarized polity in Bangladesh would be the ideal breeding ground for more terror which was evident in the serial blasts in Bangladesh in 2005. According to some Indian analysts’ version of the story that some Jamaat-i-Islami leaders in Bangladesh having links with Al-Qaeda and/or some Rohingyas or Assamese-Meghalaya Muslim separatist groups, said to have strong commitment to “Brihot” or greater Bangladesh, have been terrorizing Bangladesh. This group of terrorists, according to the theory, were trained and armed by Al-Qaeda in Afghanistan and CHTs. The group known as Harkat-ul-Jihad-al-Islamiya, having 15,000 trained guerrillas, have links with Jamaat-i-Islami of Bangladesh (Hashmi).
There is an increasing concern among analysts that Bangladesh territory might serve as a base from which both South and Southeast Asian terrorists could regroup. There have been reports that up to 150 Taliban and Al-Qaeda fighters fled to Bangladesh from Afghanistan in December 2001 aboard the MV Mecca, which reportedly sailed from Karachi to Chittagong (Perry 2003). This was evidently not the beginning of Al-Qaeda connections with Bangladesh. Long before Al-Qaeda had reportedly recruited Burmese Muslims, known as the Rohingyas, from refugee camps in southeastern Bangladesh to fight in Afghanistan, Kashmir and Chechnya (Abuza 2003: 174). An Al-Qaeda affiliate, Harkat-ul-Jihad-al-Islami (HuJI) was founded by Osama bin Laden associate Fazlul Rahman (Abuza 2003: 174). Rahman joined bin Laden's World Islamic Front for the Jihad against the Jews and the Crusaders in 1998 (Abuza 2003: 174). HuJI has recruited nearly 15,000 members mostly from hundreds of Madrassas around Bangladesh, many of which are led by veterans of the “jihad”. The organization is thought to have at least six camps in Bangladesh as well as ties to militants in Pakistan (Agrawal 1996: 133-34). The small Islamic Oikya Jote party a coalition partner in the Bangladesh National Party led government is reported to have connections with HuJI (Lintner 2001; Lintner 2002). It is also reported that French intelligence led to the arrest of 16 Bangladeshis on 4th December 2003 in Bolivia for allegedly planning to hijack a plane to attack the United States of America. Eleven Bangladeshis were also arrested in Saudi Arabia on August 14, 2003 on suspicion of planning a terrorist act (Kumar 2003).

According to the intelligence sources the Rohingya Solidarity Organization (RSO), on the other hand, is the largest organization representing the over 120,000 Rohingyas in Bangladesh. The number of Rohingyas varies depending on the level of pressure they are under in their homelands in Burma. The Rohingya also speak the same language as Bangladeshis from the Chittagong area. These “destitute and stateless people” have proved to be a “fertile ground” for recruitment to various militant Islamist groups. The RSO has reportedly received support from the Jamaat-e-Islami in Bangladesh (Lintner 2004). Though, the report has been clearly denied and rejected by the Bangladesh government as baseless allegations against Bangladesh.

It is also reported that Al-Qaida, Rohingyas and fundamentalist elements in Bangladesh have formed a close nexus (The Sentinel 2002; The Time 2002). The nexus,
as has been predicted, grew stronger after US action in Afghanistan when about 150 Al-
Qaida fleeing terrorists took shelter in Bangladesh. What is more alarming, as sources
say, is the patronage given to them by Bangladesh authorities. To monitor the spread of
the Al-Qaida network in Bangladesh, the CIA set up a new five-man base in Dhaka
(Perry 2002). Movement of Al-Qaida members in Cox Bazar area of Bangladesh, which
is already fertile with Rohingyas, is a serious matter for India. It is estimated that there
are about 22,000 Rohingyas refugees in Bangladesh who are staying in camps and nearly
double in number are estimated to be staying out side. It is also claimed Cox Bazar is a
fast-growing major transit haven for terrorists due to its strategic location near the sea,
CHTs and Myanmar. It gives terrorists a wider option to move in multiple directions. It is
also reported that there are five terrorist camps functioning in the Cox Bazar.
Unfortunately, this has been predicted by some intelligence agencies that this nexus is
also been used against India’s North-East region.

There are also reports, based on information derived from the interrogation of Jemaah
Islamiya (JI) leader Hambali, who was arrested in Thailand in August 2003, which
indicates that he had made a decision to shift JI elements to Bangladesh in response to the
counter-terrorist operations in Southeast Asia. It is also believed that key JI operative
Zulkifi Marzuki may already be in Bangladesh (Lyall 2003). The decision to move
operations to the west is also evident in the arrest of 13 Malaysians and six Indonesians,
including Hambali’s brother Rusman Gunawan, in Pakistan in September 2003. Some
Bangladeshis have been among those arrested in Pakistan on suspicion of being linked to
terrorist organizations (Xinhua News Agency 2003). Some analysts have speculated that
JI militants, thought to be from Malaysia and Singapore, would not have made it to
southeastern Bangladesh without some degree of tacit agreement from the DGFI of
Bangladesh which is thought to have close ties with ISI (Lintner 2004). It is also thought
that Fazlul Rahman’s Rohingya Solidarity Organization, which is based in southeast
Bangladesh, has also established ties with JI (Abuza 2003). However, it is very difficult
to prove these reports as true and strategically linked.

Despite these apparent developments within Bangladesh, visiting US Secretary of
State Colin Powell told his Dhaka audience in June 2003 that “Bangladesh has been a
strong supporter in the war against terrorism because their enlightened policy is that
terrorism ... affects us all (Powell 2003).” The Government of Bangladesh denied that Bangladesh has become a safe-haven for Islamic militants, such as the Taliban or Al-Qaeda (Associated Press 2002). The Bangladesh government also denied allegations made by Indian Deputy Prime Minister Mr. Advani that Bangladesh had aided Pakistan’s Inter-Services Intelligence and Al-Qaeda elements (Xinhua News Agency 2002). It has also been reported that the Bangladesh Rifles and police have captured weapons during anti-terrorist operations in the southeastern border region with Burma in August-September 2003 (BCR 2003).

**Insurgency Movements in North-East India and Bangladesh Involvement**

India’s North-East region, which comprises seven states, is a home to more than 200 tribes and ethnic groups and is circled by China, Bhutan, Bangladesh and Myanmar. The region has been racked by separatist and tribal insurgencies since independence (Kumar 2005). With the independence of India and the creation of international borders with eastern neighbours like East Pakistan/Bangladesh, Tibet/China, Burma/Myanmar, Nepal, and Bhutan India’s North-East region has emerged as a separate geopolitical entity. The region is connected unsteadily with the so-called Indian mainland by a narrow (about 21 kilometers wide) Siliguri-Corridor popularly known as the Chicken Neck (Philips and Wainwright 1970; Chatterji 1999: 185-242). The region has historically been one of the world’s greatest migratory routes, cutting across such countries as Tibet/China, Nepal, Burma/Myanmar, Thailand, and East Bengal/Bangladesh. As a result, according to cultural historians, the region has provided a veritable meeting ground of many races and communities throughout history (BCR 2003).

Though immigration remains at the heart of most of the conflicts in the region, the transformation of these conflicts into insurgencies, particularly in Nagaland, Manipur, Assam, and Tripura, coincides with a radical reinterpretation of their respective histories in which the India is considered an “external agent,” and often a “colonial power (Agrawal 1996).” Such insurgent groups as the Naga National Council (NNC), National Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN)/Nagalim, Mizo National Front (MNF), United National Liberation Front (UNLF) of Assam seem to be in accord on this point, but with differences in their respective understandings of “external” and “colonial (Dasgupta
1997; Bhaumik 2004; Hussain 2006: 345-370)." For some, including United National Front of Asom (ULFA), the state’s colonial character is only incidental to it’s externally, with the implication that transfer of state power to the “people of Assam” would end colonialism.

There were several other groups who have started a revolution to get freedom from the Union of India. These include groups like Muslim United Tigers of Assam (MULTA), Muslim United Liberation Front of Assam (MULFA), Peoples Liberation Front (PLF), Islamic Liberation Tigers Force (ILTF), Muslim Liberation Militia of Assam (MLMA), Minority Volunteer Force (MVF), Mujahid Vahini and Jubo Command. The intents and purposes of these newly formed organisations are very much clear. The arrest of one militant named Kiranuddin at Pathar Kandi in Assam in 1999 has led to the sensational disclosure that there is a plan hatched by Muslim fundamentalists Pakistan and Bangladesh to constitute a Muslim state comprising the districts of Nagaon, Hojai, Haila Kandi & Karimganj etc. Such bizarre plans should not be taken lightly (Pandey 2006). The conflict dynamics as well as the complex rebel equations have contributed to keeping India’s North-East on the boil.

According to Indian intelligence agencies, terrorist training camps in Bangladesh training North-East insurgents get patronage and protection from both the Bangladesh army and Bangladesh Rifles (BDR). Most of the important camps are in Dhaka, Chittagong, Sherpur, Moulvi Bazar, Netrakona, Sunamganj district and Cox Bazar. Intelligence sources put the figure of terrorist training camps in Bangladesh as 130 (43 of them are of the National Liberation Front of Tripura, (NLFT)). There are several joint camps’ that involve the NSCN (I-M), NSCN (K), ULFA, National Democratic Front of Bodo Land (NDFB), NLFT, All Tripura Tiger Force (ATTF), People’s Liberation Army (PLA) and UNLF.

It is from these insurgent groups, that ATTF and ULFA cadres operates from camps in Khagrachari and Satchari in Habiganj districts. An NDFB-NSCN (I-M) training center exists at Alikhadam in Bandarban district. While ULFA has 24 camps, mostly in Dhaka, Sylhet, Khagrachari, Moulvi Bazar, and the CHTs, the ULFA’s camps are located mostly in CHT and Khagrachari. The ATTF is active in Moulvi Bazar, Habiganj and Commilla. The evidence is based on electronic and technical intelligence. It is also reported that ISI
operates in collusion with Dhaka's Directorate General of Forces Intelligence (DGFI). The report further states that ISI-DGFI collaboration runs nearly seventeen camps in Dhaka.

Mainly outfits like the ULFA and NSCN-IM have exploited the porous border to procure arms and ammunitions. According to the sources Bangladesh is being served as a place for currency conversion, and movement of finance out of the country. During the 1990s, the NSCN-IM succeeded in securing fresh support from Pakistan's ISI. According to confessions of a captured 'finance secretary' of the NSCN-IM, in between 1993-94, Pakistani diplomats handed over more than one million US dollars to the NSCN-IM. With these funds, the group has been able to purchase large quantities of Chinese rifles, machine guns, mortar and explosives from black markets in South East Asia and Bangladesh (Nepram 2002: 154).

The NLFT, according to Indian intelligence, on the other hand, has also set up a number of camps in the CHTs Sylhet, Maulvi Bazar, Habiganj and Comilla areas. Its headquarters is located at Sajak, a camp in the Khagrachari district of Bangladesh. This camp is also used by the NLFT to procure and store arms from Cox bazaar port in southeastern Bangladesh. Most of the camps are located near the Tripura-Bangladesh border. For example, the Tailongbasti transit camp located in Maulovi Bazar district under the Kamalganj police station limits is two kms northwest of the Indo-Bangladesh border in Kamalpur. The Niralpunji camp is located two kms southeast of the Indo-Bangladesh border in Moulavi Bazar district under Kamalganj police station and is used for operations in the Srimangal town. As report says a transit house has been set up by NLFT in the Sripu area of Cox Bazar for procurement of arms from this port town.

During a Director General (DG)-level talks between BSF and BDR held between October 28 and November 2, 2002, in New Delhi, the DG, BSF had handed over a list of 99 training camps of insurgent groups operating in India's northeast to the DG, BDR requesting that action be taken against these. The list included 25 camps of the National Liberation Front of Tripura (NLFT), 20 of the All Tripura Tiger Force (ATTF), 18 of the National Socialist Council of Nagaland-Isak Moivah (NSCN-I-M), 17 of the United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA), 10 camps run by the People's Liberation Army (PLA), 2 by the National Democratic Front of Bodoland (NDFB), 2 by the Muslim
United Liberation Tigers of Assam (MULTA), 3 by the Achik National Volunteer Council (ANVC) of Meghalaya, 1 by the Chakkma National Liberation Front (CNLF) and 1 run by the Dima Halim Daogah (DHD). During the meeting, India also handed over a list of 86 Indian insurgents arrested by Bangladesh security agencies and police over different periods of time (Singh 2002).

Meanwhile, there has been a marginal improvement in the levels of militancy in the North-East. While 715 people died in 2005, 627 people were killed in militancy-related violence during 2006. Nevertheless, certain States of the region have shown remarkable signs of recovery in recent years. Tripura, once considered to be one of the most violent States of the country, recorded 59 insurgency-related fatalities in 2006, down from 75 in 2005 and from a peak of 514 in 2000. Tripura is “carving out a success story in the troubled setting of India’s Northeast, as its Police force reorganizes radically to evolve a counter-insurgency strategy that has left entrenched militant groups in a disarray.” Building on a “model of a police-led response to terrorism, which saw the country’s most dramatic victory over this modern scourge in Punjab in the early 1990s, Tripura’s Police, under the leadership of its Chief, GM’Srivastava, has reversed the trajectory of insurgent violence and, crucially, mobilisation... despite continued and vigorous support provided to the insurgent groups by Bangladesh, and the safe haven each of these outfits has been provided in that country (ICM 2007).”

However, the arguments of security agencies, intelligence sources, the local police along with strategic analysts and politicians on behalf of India regarding the Bangladesh and its authorities are involved in all kinds of anti-Indian movement and helping or facilitating Indian insurgency movement, though it has never been proved or clarified fully. There is no such hard core evidence available against such allegations. There are also certain reasons for which these indigenous subversive movements are going on in different parts of India. Due to the provision in the constitution, the representative system of all the states in the union government and the policy-making mechanism is not sounded well which creates underdevelopment in certain pockets of tribal areas around the country which brought disappointment and dissatisfaction among local people against the system that promotes separatist movements in the region. They believe this is the only to bargain for their rights with the system and the union government. These separatist
insurgent groups need certain safe place to operate and the border region is the best place for them. The geographical location, porous nature of the border and the uniqueness of the border region has made congenial climate for them to survive and grow faster. There are also several other subversive groups operating across the borders. And due to the coincident of similar interests and common ways and means they have made up a very strong network among them. This situation is unfortunately politicized by the local politicians for their own voting politics. The local security forces and the local police are the means to facilitate the nexus to connect among the subversive groups, security forces and the politicians have made the whole issue a more complex one.

As far as a country like Bangladesh is involve in the entire issue could be in a way as some strategists in Bangladesh and India argues as taken the way of bargaining with India as taking advantage of the situation. There is also another fact that the intelligence and secret agencies as independent intelligent agencies with enormous men and machinery power often play a deadly game among them to make the other side defeat. It has also been argued by several independent scholars that the separatist/insurgency movement going on in the northeastern region is India’s indigenous creation out of its politico-economic reasons.

Madrasas on Indo-Bangla Border Disrupting the Management Task and Posing a Serious Threat to National Security of India

According to the data and facts provided by intelligence and security agencies, mushrooming of Seminaries like Mosques and Madrassas in the Indo-Bangladesh border region and their network are disrupting the management task as the nerve center and safe roof for all the subversive movements in the region. These Seminaries are growing up very fast in almost all the Border States and border districts on both the side of border. In Indian side these institutions are developing largely in Assam and West Bengal. Mainly in the areas of Assam’s Dhubri, Barpeta, Bangaingaon district along with Cooch Behar district of West Bengal. The scenario has been seen changing every day on the border area. This is mainly responsible for smuggling and huge infiltration from Bangladesh. Along with smuggling the women trafficking racket is extra active. According to the Central Intelligence sources of India there are 741 Mosques and 187 Madrassas existing

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in Dhubri alone up to September 2005 and definitely the total number has been increased since September 2005 to December 2008. There is a similar situation existing in some other districts like Naugoan, North Lakhimpur, Kokrajhar and Nalbari (Pal 2007: 1135).

According to the State Minister for the Minority Commission, Government of West Bengal, Mohammed Selim, over 1,300 unrecognized seminars are functioning in West Bengal while the number of recognized Madrassas is only 507. A majority of these Madrassas are located in Murshidabad, Nadia, North 24-Parganas, Malda and West Dinajpur (The Tribune 2002). The Sentinel, a local newspaper of Assam, argues the Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP), while revealing the findings of its extensive survey carried out in the border areas, said that anti-India activities were going on in full swing in several Madrassas and mosques located along the international border in Assam and Tripura. This is close on the heels of the BSF expressing its concern over the mushroom growth of Madrassas along the Indo-Bangla border in Dhubri and Karimganj sectors. The 64-member ABVP survey team, comprising representatives from as many as 22 States of the country, saw at least 519 Madrassas and Mosques which are allegedly being run with funds from abroad, the student body said (SR 2007). However, the authenticity and transparency of the facts given in the report itself is questionable.

After the terrorist attack at the American Centre in Kolkata on January 22, 2002 (USIS 2002), West Bengal Chief Minister Buddhadev Bhattacharya hit out at the Madrassas for functioning as breeding ground for terrorism at the behest of the ISI and DGFI (The Pioneer 2002). The IB report has also identified 208 Madrassas and 458 Mosques in ten districts on the Indo-Nepal and Indo-Bangla borders. The growth has been highest in Malda district, where 172 Mosques and 55 Madrassas have been identified, followed by North Dinajpur, Murshidabad, Jalpaiguri, Cooch Behar, South Dinajpur, North 24-Parganas, Nadia, Darjeeling and South 24-Parganas. According to the IB document, in nearly all the cases, the Mosques and Madrassas have come up with funds from the Jeddah-based Islamic Development Bank. Bangladesh has more than 6,500 Madrassas at the secondary, intermediate, and higher levels with about 1,462,500 students and 130,000 teachers (Haqqani 2002; Ahmed 1987: 321-49).

According to intelligence Agencies, funds for these Madrassas are coming from Pakistan, Muslim countries in Middle East, Central Asia, West Asia and also from some
African countries *(The Tribune 2002)*. Most of these seminaries are reportedly unrecognized and students are 'taught fanaticism' and to 'fight for the cause of the Muslim fraternity against people of other religions', the intelligence report revealed. On February 1, 2002, Police cracked down in Murshidabad district on two such unauthorized *Madrassas* in the border area of Barua village, where approximately 700 students, mostly Bangladeshis, attended regular classes under the supervision of two *maulvis* (priests) and 19 teachers. It was also discovered another such *Madrassa*, “Al Madarsatus Salafia Dar-Ul”, in an isolated island on the Padma River near Rajsahi district of Bangladesh (Gupta 2002). These *Madrassas* and their network are such powerful and strong that these anti-national elements can move across the border without any kind of interruption.

**Proliferation of Small Arms in North-East India and the Involvement of Bangladesh**

The proliferation of small arms and explosives in North-East India has long been associated with the movement of insurgencies. While it is true that intra and interstate conflicts are responsible for illicit trafficking of small arms, it is also being recognized that this is not just a military problem, but also has a socio-economic and political dimensions. Nowhere is the problem more acute than in the case of North-East where the proliferation of small arms and explosives has become inseparable in the political and social lives (Husain 2002). North-East India being one of the regions has been traditionally identified as end users for small arms and light weapons, while Bangladesh is known as the major transit route. With the growing terrorism, fundamentalism and corruption along with political instability in Bangladesh, arms traders have found new safe-haven in this country. The fact that the number of small arms both in Bangladesh and North-East India has increased that explains the rising demand for small arms (Husain 2002).

Many parts of South Asia particular the Northeastern Region of India can be termed a fragmented society that is run on guns and drugs. There is a frightening influx of small arms and narcotic drugs in the region. As reports says, armed by China, Pakistan, Burmese rebels and other state and criminal groups based in South East Asia and outside, the inventory of the insurgent groups have gone up tremendously over the years. In Assam alone, a total of 729 weapons were seized from the ULFA between 1993 and July
And in the entire North-East India, a total of 928 weapons were seized 13 (Kartha 1999).

The North-East region has also become the biggest market for spreading of small arms and light weapons to other parts of India. Dimapur, Nagaland’s main commercial centre, the headquarters of the militant outfit NSCN (I-M) is also the crime hub of the North-East. It’s the underbelly of the region that supplies everything from stolen vehicles to arms and ammunition to the rest of the country. NDTV had earlier reported how arms and ammunition were being smuggled out of the Army’s 3 Corp HQ based in Dimapur (Rao 1999). Even dynamites and explosives meant for the Border Roads Organisation were sold to civilians. Now, UPDS, the Karbi militant outfit from Assam told NDTV how easy it is to buy AK series rifles or M-16s there (The Assam Tribune 2005). “In Nagaland every house has arms. Arms from there go to mainland India. Arms are available in Nagaland whether licensed or unlicensed. If you have one license they have three arms, arms can be bought for Rs 10,000,” said Tunghlongnoda, Publicity Secretary and Home Secretary, United People’s Democratic Solidarity (UPDS). “Procuring arms in Nagaland is as easy as procuring paan in Assam. Individuals are supplying arms and ammo to civilian arms dealers. One AK ammo is lost by a jawan they cut Rs 20 from his salary but he will get Rs 200,” he added (Kartha 1999; Banerjee and Muggah 2002: 49-61).

The ‘small war weapons’ mainly consists of weapons such as AK-47, M-16, G-3, weapons that are used by a cross section of insurgent groups located in Philippines’ Mindanao Island, to Kashmir and North-East India to the Chechen rebels (Kartha 1999; Banerjee and Muggah 2002: 49-61). These ‘war weapons’ are known in common jargon as ‘Small Arms’. There is a large quantity of modern and sophisticated small arms including AK-47s and M-16s in circulation in the North-East Region, and generally in the hands of these insurgent groups and other non-state actors. Many believe that unless these insurgent groups resort to smuggling and drug trafficking, they could not have mobilised resources for purchase of weapons and maintenance of their cadres. In order to substantiate this latter contention examples are provided of the links between extraterritorial forces and insurgent groups. As a Times of India report indicated “ULFA received arms training from Kachin Liberation Army which operates from Myanmar and later from both factions of NSCN. They have been in contact with the Bangladeshi Army,
their secret service DGFI, Pakistan’s ISI and the LTTE.” It is believed that a subnationalist movement led by the ULFA gets at least 10-15% of its funds from the illegal narcotics trade. There are probably 13 routes can be identified into the North East India (Hussain).

The small arms—handguns, pistols, AK47s, Uzis and the like—were only being dumped not only into the North-East and Jammu and Kashmir, a study undertaken by British NGO Oxfam, along with Amnesty International and the International Network on Small Arms (IANSA), throws up new facts: that the bulk of illegal arms makes its way into Bihar, Chhattisgarh, UP, Jharkhand, Orissa and Madhya Pradesh. Naturally, this means it makes its way to the underworld, the dacoits and the Naxalites. A part of it is diverted into the hands of insurgents in J&K and the North-East. The report expresses serious concerns about the easy accessibility of small and lethal arms and their unhindered use across North East and Central India (VijAurora 2006).

Proliferation of small arms and entry of explosives from Bangladesh and Myanmar has always been a biggest concern. There is a well furnished network at work, so delivery is not a problem. According to Tungthlongnoda, Publicity Secretary and Home, Secretary, UPDS, “In Southeast Asia arms market is in Chiangmai in Thailand. From there it comes to Burma and Bangladesh and then there are so many people who can bring it inside. Arms dealers bring it inside India there are dealers and sub-dealers, if you want it in Delhi they deliver it there as well. AK series and M-16s are the most available arms in North-East.” And while the trade flourishes, police say they cannot do much. As S Talukdar, Inspector Railway Police says

“Even officers sell ammunition there. Actually there no one abides by the law, so Dimapur can do anything. They are not afraid of the law. Even the officers indulge in these things (Kartha 1995; Boutwell, Klare and Reed 1995).”

The evidence suggests that many terrorist groups combine their movement with narcotics trafficking, which provides significant financiers for terrorism in parts of the North-East. The development of their complex networks helps to sustain this trade. According to The Sentinel (2002) the tri-junction of the Indian, Bangladeshi and Myanmarese border near Lawangtlai in Southern Mizoram is a virtual free port for the biggest concentration of clandestine arms in South Asia. Weapons from Russian
Kalashnikovs to Chinese AK-47s, American M-16s to German HK-33s are easily available in this market. It has become very important due to its proximity to Cox’s Bazaar as one of the biggest arms’ junction in the region (GTBAB 2000).

Under such circumstances, small arms continue to proliferate in many parts of North-East India. According to Binalakhmi Nepram, an expert in this field, 57 types of small arms has been identified which have flooded North-East India over the last several years. The origins of these weapons have been traced to various countries namely China, Pakistan, Belgium, Thailand, Russia, United States of America, United Kingdom, Czechoslovakia, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Myanmar and of late, Israel. The worst is various young people have taken up the path of gun and violence resulting in death, decay and destruction in various fields—socially, politically and economically (Turner and Nepram 2004; Nepram 2004).

The official sources in India maintain that terrorists and insurgents are using the porous border between India and Bangladesh as a route for importing sophisticated weapons from other countries through Bangladesh. Union Minister of State for Home, ID Swami, has said in the Rajya Sabha that Thailand, Myanmar and Bangladesh are the countries from and through which illegal flow of arms to the northeastern states is going on (Swami 2001). National highway 39, runs through Delhi and Atari, has become a haven for many groups who forcibly collect ‘patriotic task’ from the residents (WLB 2002). National highway 36, which runs through Guwahati, Shillong and Silchar, is also mostly controlled by the insurgents. Available evidence suggests that many terrorist groups combine their movements with narcotics trafficking, which provides significant financier for terrorism in parts of the North-East (EDM 2000).

These groups have also developed complex networks to sustain this trade. The tri-junction of Indian, Bangladeshi and Myanmar’s border near Lawangtlai in southern Mizoram is a virtual free port for the biggest concentration of clandestine arms in South Asia. Weapons from Russian Kalashnikovs to Chinese AK-47s, American M-16s to German HK-33s are easily available in this market. The place is important because of its proximity to Cox Bazar in Bangladesh, one of the biggest arms’ markets in South Asia. For the instances in January 2004 and once again in April 2004 big arms consignments were caught in Chittagogn area where the Bangladeshi Government officials were
involved (The Hindu 2004). The worst is the phenomena of Gun Wars and Drug Deaths has laid blockade to many parts of North-East India since long. There are over 57 armed rebel groups making it one of South Asia’s most disturbed regions. The narrative of proxy wars and insurgencies in North-East India is also the narrative of small arms influx and narcotics as weapons of all types and narcotic drugs are pumped into the region to fight protracted little wars (Sivard and Lumpe 1996).

Growing Fundamentalism and Religious Parties in Bangladesh and Threat to India’s National Security

According to Bertil Lintner, an American scholar, Islamic fundamentalism is on the rise in Bangladesh and the groups identified with or espousing the cause of radical Islamic trends have brought havoc to the country. Far from being a marginal and sporadic element, these extremist groups have grown in strength and reach to the extent where they are able to mobilize and motivate people towards their notorious interest (Lintner 2002). The conventional wisdom has been to place the growing level of violence and intolerance at the doorstep of the ruling BNP and its four-party coalition government. The massive victory of Khaleda Zia in the October 2001 Jatiya Sangsad (Bangladesh parliament) elections was often seen as the beginning of the current wave of fundamentalism and militancy. While militant acts have increased since then, it is argued here that the problem has deeper roots and that all political forces in the country, including the Awami League, have been responsible for the present situation.

The BNP made an alliance with Islamic political parties, Jamaat-i-Islami, Jatiya (National) Party, and Islami Oikya Jot (IOJ) (Islamic National United Front), and returned to power in 2001 (Lintner 2002). On August 21, 2004, a grenade attack on an Awami party rally in Dhaka aimed at its leadership, left 22 dead and over 200 wounded. Sheikh Hasina Wajed was not hurt. In October 2006, there were street clashes in Dhaka between supporters of the BNP coalition and the Awami League (Datta 2004: 459-463). In January 2007 another state of emergency was declared, elections were postponed, and yet another Caretaker Government, this time backed by the military, came to power. In Bangladesh, as in Pakistan, religious parties rarely have received more than 15% of the vote in any election, yet the major parties feel they need them to form political alliances.
In the October 2001 elections, Jamaat became Bangladesh’s third largest party, with 17 seats in the parliament and two ministers in the coalition government (Sengupta 2007; Hagerty 2008: 177-183). It is committed towards its only goal of an Islamic state that will come slowly.

The worry for India, according to the intelligence sources, is that these fundamentalists in Bangladesh motivating and biasing poor people on the name of enemy to Islam. They have been motivating and mobilizing people against India and supporting the anti-Indian elements. There is also report that they have been sponsoring terrorism against India and supporting insurgency movements in North-East India. After coming to power in 2001, these fundamentalists backed by some religious parties, have become more active and more powerful. They have been openly arguing that the government should support and give shelter to Indian insurgent groups and their leaders in Bangladesh soil. In the time of general election in Bangladesh and Border States of India they have been staging attacks on security forces and also civilians to motivate people and derailed the election process (Mishra; Tourangbam 2008). The frequent border conflict and cross-firing between BSF and BDR and particularly the Pyrdwah incident of 2001 argued was absolutely politically motivated where 17 BSF jawans were tortured and brutally killed in the dark by the BDR. However, India retaliated in a diplomatic way because it was said the attack was staged by the BNP supporters who are known as anti-Indian and pro-Pakistanis to motivate people towards their party. These fundamentalists are growing more powerful day by day and influencing the political system and the policy-making mechanism keenly and motivating government for anti-Indian policy formulation and to destabilize the Indo-Bangla border which deeply affecting the management process (Das 2008; 367-388).

Military Threats from Bangladesh to India’s National Security

The military threat to Indo-Bangladesh border and to India’s National Security is based on speculations. There is no probable direct military threat from Bangladesh to India. Bangladesh is a small country in comparison with India in physical size, economy, military or defence. Bangladesh never attempted to attack India, since its emergence but before 1971 as a part of Pakistan, India was attacked many times. However, there is still
some kind of military interference by Bangladesh directly or indirectly. There are some reasons which indicates for such kind of activities by Bangladesh like frequent border conflict between BSF and BDR, Bangladesh's very close relations with big countries and their clear interferences in the region, Bangladesh’s building of nuclear with the help and assistance by the enemy countries of India like China and Pakistan and Iran, South Arabia and USA and China’s growing influence in the politico-economic affairs of the region, and lastly the deadly game played by the intelligence agencies of those countries.

**Bangladesh’s Defence Arrangements with Enemy Countries of India and its impact on Border Management and National Security**

Bangladesh’s close relationships in general and defence arrangements particular with enemy countries of India like Pakistan and China (both are as nuclear weapon states and with whom India have already fought several wars and even lost one) along with Iran, South Arabia and finally with the United States of America has brought so much worry and headache for India. These arrangements are directly and indirectly threats the Indo-Bangla border in general and India’s national security in particular. Though direct military invasion from Bangladesh or from above mentioned countries using Bangladesh is unreal still not impossible. There is always a fear of military interference on border affairs or supporting, motivating and assisting subversive groups and their movements operating through the border against India to unstable the international border and internal security is very much predictable.

The geostrategic setting also justifies and further strengthens the doubt and predicts for danger. Bangladesh is surrounded by India almost entirely on three sides except for a small but significant border of 172 miles with Myanmar in the southeast. The Bay of Bengal, with shared coastline with India and Myanmar, bounds the south. Significantly, one of the strategic Indian Marine outposts, the Andaman & Nicobar Islands that is developing to be an important military base is about 300 miles south of Bangladesh’s prime seaport of Chittagong. And in the north, Bangladesh is separated from the Himalayan Kingdoms of Nepal and Bhutan by a strip (Shiliguri Corridor) of Indian territory. The Shiliguri Corridor is a crucial determinant importance in regional geostrategy and plays a very significant part in the national security. The Bay of Bengal is
fast turning into a hotbed of rivalry involving India, China and USA. Secondly, the strategic rivalry between India and China has grown up high in the region. On the other hand, competing to the India and US established nuclear and military cooperation Russia and China have moved closer. Making the things worsen Bangladesh has been trying to get the chance being closer to both China and US (Hussein 2006).

With the background of the geostrategic settings the military pacts and agreements of those countries with Bangladesh gives a real picture of how Bangladesh could be a military threat to India. Bangladesh has military understandings/arrangements with Pakistan, China and United States. In a 2002 visit to Bangladesh, Pakistani president Pervez Musharraf signed numerous bilateral agreements including defence (MWB 2002). Both the countries have expressed the desire to further strengthen bilateral cooperation between the two major Muslim nations in South Asia particularly in the defence sector. In 2006 the Chief of Naval Staff, Bangladesh Navy, Rear Admiral M Hasan Ali Khan and Senior Federal Minister for Defence Rao Sikandar Iqbal met in Rawalpindi Pakistani and sign an agreement on defence cooperation between both the countries (BPD 2006). In 2008, Pakistan offered to share nuclear technology with Bangladesh and aid in the construction of the latter’s first nuclear power plant (PNT 2008). On the other hand, China and Bangladesh signed a Defence Co-operation Agreement during the visit of Bangladesh Prime Minister, Begum Khaleda Zia December 23 to 27, 2002 (Kapila 2003). Finally, Bangladesh US defence cooperation starts with Bangladesh received a remittance of $ 400,000 from the US services Headquarters for buying weapons in 1983 (Chowdhury 1993: 118). This relation further strengthens during the time of Gulf War and developed by the visit of Chief of the US Armed Forces General Dennis Joe Reimol, in April 1998 (BIISS 1998: 2). However the real agreement signed in 1998 US proposed Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) agreement to Bangladesh (SOFA 2007).

Firstly, Pakistan, the sole enemy country, is being fighting directly and indirectly with India since 1947, the partition of the subcontinent. The defeat in 1971 war and emergence of Bangladesh along with the Kashmir issue made Pakistan to coming closer to Bangladesh to create problem for India. The close bilateral relations between Bangladesh and Pakistan started just after assassination of sheikh Mujib-ur Rahman in 1975 and became more intimate in 2001 by Khaleda Zia after she come to power in the general
election. She is very popularly known as a hardcore radical and orthodox Islamist and pro-Pakistani. All the anti-Indian activities through Bangladesh soil have been grown up as growing Islamic fundamentalism in Bangladesh, terrorism and insurgency in North-East India. According to the central intelligence agencies of India, Bangladesh being instructed by Pakistan through their intelligence and secret agencies (ISI and DGFI) is supporting and assisting all the subversive movements going on against India in the soil of India and Bangladesh. These terrorists and insurgents with the help, assistance and instruction from ISI-DGFI can target any place, any institution and any civilian in North-East and other parts of India. This has also been proved the border conflict going on Indo-Bangla border between BSF and BDR is mostly politically and strategically guided by ISI and DGFI. The 2001 Pyrdwah incident was absolutely worst example of politically strategic guided attack on BSF by BDR.

Secondly, the influence of China, on the other hand, moves very fast and aggressively towards South Asia mostly against India. In every field, political and economic, China has been competing and threatening India. The foreign policy of China towards South Asia and her strong presence in Bangladesh indicates her aggressiveness towards India and its national security. The recent development in Sino-Bangladesh relations brought so many headaches for India strategically. India feels there is a threat from Bangladesh through China’s presence in the region. It is argued by some scholars that if Pakistan is providing men and guidance to anti-Indian elements China is providing money and materials (sophisticate big and small arms) to make that mission and strategy a successful one. Billions of dollar and arms are been dumping into North-East India through the routes of Bangladesh has made the region absolutely unstable and a zone of conflict, violence and war.

Thirdly, Bangladesh’s relation with countries like Iran, South Arabia and some Muslim countries of Middle East, Central and West Asia and Africa are also indirectly feeds to the threats of India’s national security. Being Muslim countries they have been helping and sending assistances and funding institutions are dedicated for the spreading of orthodox and radical Islamic spirits in Bangladesh. It has been proved that all the institutions working in Bangladesh soil against India are being funded by Islamic countries of the above mentioned regions. The Seminaries like Mosques and Madrassas
working and growing fast on Indo-Bangladesh border area across the border is being used for training and setting up training camps for terrorists and insurgents and also buying weapons for them.

Fourthly, the country could be a threat indirectly is USA. The presence of USA in the region has basically two reasons viz., one is for capturing the vast South Asian market and the second is to establish a military base in the region. The growing market of South Asia has been attracted every nation in the world towards it. The presence of China and Chinese goods has given a strong competition to the presence of America and American goods. Second reason is keeping a vigil eye on growing Indian and Chinese economy and the development of their recent close relationships. Third reason in a big way is to restraint the moving of communism towards South Asia along with the Central and West Asian movements. For these above mentioned reasons USA is deeply involved in the political and economic affairs of South Asian countries giving Billions of Dollars every year to along with Bangladesh.

Finally, the assurance for assistance of these countries to Bangladesh in her plan to develop a nuclear power plant brings the indication of a dangerous threat to India. According to strategic analysts Pakistan, China and Iran have given strong and reliable assurance to help Bangladesh monetarily, materially and technologically to establish the nuclear power plant. However, there is a chance Bangladesh coming under pressure of fundamentalist and religious parties could develop nuclear weapons. The worry is if these weapons will fall in the hands of terrorists, insurgents or fundamentalists then they can bring enormous destruction and India would be the worst affected one.

**Development of Nuclear in Bangladesh and Probable threat to India’s National Security**

Along with the defence arrangements and assurance of arms transfer the recent worst development issue of nuclear energy in Bangladesh has put India in double worry. Bangladesh last few years has started building nuclear, although it argues the programme is for a power plant. The fear increased when China, Pakistan and Iran came forward to help Bangladesh to build her new nuclear power plant. Bangladesh currently operates three small research reactors but still has hopes to build the Roonpur nuclear power plant
at Ishwardi in Pabna but lacks the funds to do so (BBNPP 2007). They are seeking soft loans and help from China and in April 2005 signed a nuclear cooperation agreement with them (China and Pakistan) (Aneja 2006). Bangladesh’s emergency government the country needs a nuclear power plant to meet her electricity shortages. The International Atomic Energy Commission (IAEC) has also approved the government plan to set up a nuclear power plant (Kumar 2007; Nalapat 2007).

As argued by Bangladesh, it has been facing massive electricity shortages that have hit its booming textile industry, with generation of 3,000 megawatts at peak times still 2,000 megawatts short of actual demand (Miyan and Richards 2004; Nishant 2001: 80-99). Last year, violence over power cuts in a northern Bangladesh town left at least 20 people dead in clashes between police and farmers who had demanded increased power supply for irrigation. Bangladeshi Minister of Power, Energy and Natural Resources, Tapan Chowdhury, said Bangladesh is looking for cooperation from states possessing the technology for production of electricity from nuclear power plants. He said that Bangladesh’s limited natural gas resources will run out by 2012, so it is necessary for the country to substitute a suitable fuel for gas (The Daily Star 2007; BICNES 2008). The country’s military-backed government, which took over the power in January 2007, has made up the mind to tackle the power crisis as one of its top priorities. The World Bank in July last year estimated that Bangladesh needed 10 billion dollars in investment for its electricity supply in the next decade. But the chief IAEA, El Baradei, warned that up to 30 countries could have the technology to develop the nuclear bomb and in a very short time the funniest part is Bangladesh (ElBaradei 2006).

In The Acorn’s view, nuclear power presents an opportunity for countries to solve their energy problems; provided of course that adequate systemic, legal and international safeguards are put in place to address environmental, health, security and weapons proliferation concerns. So there should be nothing wrong Bangladesh seeking Chinese, Pakistan and Iran’s assistance to set up a nuclear power plant to address its energy requirements. The most striking part about the Bangladesh nuclear agreements are that it is more about politics than about economics. For Bangladesh, an alternative to the much-politicised international gas pipeline linking Myanmar and Bangladesh to India strengthens its negotiating hand. Furthermore, the deal allows Bangladesh to engage in
that age-old trick of counterbalancing bigger powers, by playing the China and Pakistan
card against India (The Acorn 2005).

Meanwhile, Bangladeshi Atomic Energy Commission (BAEC) has already confirmed
that a football-shaped package recovered by the country’s police near its northern town of
Patnitala contains semi-processed uranium. This material can be used for making a “dirty
bomb” or charging up conventional explosives to cause extensive damage. Indian
intelligence officials fear that the package had apparently reached Bangladesh via West
Bengal and had been stored in a safe place by an Islamic radical group with close links
with Al-Qaida (Chakrabarti 2003). The arrest of four activists of the Jamait-ul-
Mujahideen, a new Islamic radical group, particularly active in northern Bangladesh,
which is dangerously close to the borders of India, has sent alarm bells ringing. The
Bangladeshi police arrested these men in Puiya village of Naogaon later. Bangladesh’s
internal intelligence agency (DGFI), told NDTV that the package came from two Indian
nationals who had crossed the border just south of Balurghat in West Bengal’s South
Dinajpur (The Acorn 2005).

However, Bangladesh is also a signatory of CTBT and NPT along with hundreds of
other countries against non-proliferation of nuclear weapon and nuclear materials. But,
the worry is about the closer relationship with China, Pakistan and Iran and their strong
assurance and commitment to assist her in monetarily and materially to establish the
plant. The world knows these countries are very popular for proliferate of nuclear fissile
materials illegally throughout world. Pakistan already admitted openly about sending of
uranium enrich to North Korea and Iran. China is well-known for her helping to anti-
Indian elements and to Pakistan in her building of nuclear weapon since 1962 after the
Indo-China war. And nowadays all the small and especially Muslim countries all over
world are going for nuclear to make parity with big democratic and economically wealthy
countries. Therefore there is a big chance of Bangladesh would develop nuclear weapon
secretly and all the recent developments indicates in that way. Meanwhile, Bangladesh
like other small South Asian countries is politically and economically unstable and the
subversive groups and their movements are growing faster. They are also enjoying
political power being coming to the parliament and forming coalition government with
big parties. If by chance these nuclear weapons or nuclear fissile materials like uranium
falls into the hands of terrorists, insurgents, fundamentalists or left wing extremists they can destroy the whole world spreading it through their well-furnished world-wide networks across the world. Therefore Bangladesh’s close relationship with the above mentioned countries threats indirectly and directly to the border management and national security of India.

**Intelligence Agencies and its Impacts on National Security**

Many scholars and security experts have argued that the conflicts and subversive movements going on in two countries sharing a common border that often creates misunderstanding between two countries could be a game playing by intelligence agencies of both the countries. In the case of India and Bangladesh the clash is in between RAW (Research & Analysis Wing) and DGFI (Directorate General of Forces Intelligence) respectively.

According to Indian intelligence agencies, Bangladesh’s DGFI and ISI collaboration has been very active in India’s northeastern region conducting operations attacking security forces, government officials even the civilians. DGF-ISI has been motivating, supporting and assisting the rebels of North-East region the insurgent groups to fight against Indian government for separation and freedom. According to Lt. Gen. KS Jamwal, general officer commanding-in-chief, Eastern Command, DGFI’s activities in India are on the rise, with support from terror outfits in the North-East. ULFA, NSCN, ATTF, MNF and some other insurgent groups have been assisted and sponsored by ISI-DGFI since long. Lt. Gen. Jamwal said where 32 army personnel were awarded Sena Medals, three of them posthumously. DGFI is trying to turn its plan of establishing a sovereign Islamic state in the North-East into reality. According to reports from central intelligence agencies, the aim of ISI and DGFI is to create an independent Islamistan, comprising Assam, Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh, Tripura and the districts of Malda, Murshidabad, South Dinajpur, North Dinajpur, Jalpaiguri and Cooch Behar in West Bengal (Bhattacharya 2008).

Similarly, according to Bangladesh secrete agency, the DGFI, Indian intelligence outfit RAW is deeply involved in the problem of CHTs of Bangladesh. The Chakma guerrillas had closely assisted RAW operatives. They were assisted during and after the
liberation war of Bangladesh. The Chakmas, after the change of government in 1975, contacted the RAW. The Chakmas offered to infiltrate among the Mizo rebels and pass on information to the Indian government in lieu of asylum. This offer was accepted. In 1975, the RAW was instructed to assist the Chakma rebels with arms, supplies, bases and training. Training was conducted in the border camps in Tripura but specialized training was imparted at Chakrata near Dehra Doon (Abedin 2008). In 1976, the Shanti Bahini launched its first attack on the Bangladesh force. The RAW was involved in training rebels of Chakma tribes and Shanti Bahini to carry out subversive activities in Bangladesh (Haque 1981: 188-202).

The most interesting thing is each government has to depend upon their intelligence/secrete agencies to gather information about the moves of another or adversarial country. Therefore, there very much chances of providing misinformation about another country. It could be for incapable to get the right information or it could be for egoistic antagonism between agencies or some time due to coming under enormous pressure of government and political parties.

**BSF and BDR Conflict Disrupting Management**

Border conflict between BSF and BDR on Indo-Bangla border is the most irritant issue not only in managing the border control task but also between the India-Bangladesh relations. The firing and raid by BSF and some time by BDR is frequent in the border area. They have been targeting not only the security men but also the poor villagers who are been depending on the cultivation land near to the border area for their livelihood. The border conflict by BSF and BDR reached at its worsening stage in April 2001 with brutally tortured killing of 16 BSF men by BDR in the Tripura sector of village Pyrdiwhah (the Pictures, No. 2 and 4). The conflict and killing is not the only thing happening on the border out of the conflict. Terrorism, smuggling, trafficking and illegal trade have become a very easy and profitable business for both the BSF and BDR. The most worried thing is that the conflict is no more a security affair it has become a political issue for political parties of both India and Bangladesh. Even the 2001 incident is argued was a pure politically motivated movement by BDR due to the general election ahead in Bangladesh.
The border conflict between BSF and BDR is happening probably due to some misunderstanding persisting regarding some of enclaves and adverse possession lands in both the side of the border is creating all kinds of problems (Bhatnagar 2005; Schendel 2002: 115-147). The border conflict started immediately after the partition of the British-India in 1947 with creation of another country Pakistan. The reason is the way it partitioned and the method through which the border was created that not only divided nations but also put half of Pakistan in an awkward position of two parts in two sides of India which brings several misunderstanding between security forces of both the side. The border conflict started along with the border dispute in certain areas on India-East Pakistan border. There were four major disputes on Indo-East Pakistan border (two on the East Pakistan-West Bengal border and two on the East Pakistan-Assam border). The actual disputes in present day relates to just a four mile area involving certain villages in Comila-Tripura Sector known as Putnigaon, Karkhana, Bor-Putnigaon, Lathitila and Dumabari and the Muhuri River Belonia sector. They are located at the Cooch Behar Sylhet sector of the Assam-Bangladesh border. The Radcliffe Boundary Commission did not cover the border of 550 miles between Tripura and Sylhet (Jamwal 2004: 5-36). There were conflicting claims over the issue on the southern tip of Tripura. But the worst conflict was the Pyrdiwalh incident of 2001.

According to Bangladesh government, ever since the liberation of Bangladesh (erstwhile East Pakistan) by Indian forces in 1971, Indian forces have occupied a small sliver of land along their border near the village of Pyrdiwalh. On April 18, troops of the Bangladeshi Rifles (border troops) occupied the disputed village. In the fighting that

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2 "There are 111 Indian enclaves (17,158 acres) within Bangladesh and 51 Bangladeshi enclaves (7,110.02 acres) in India."6 Thirty-four tracts of Indian land are under the adverse possession of Bangladesh and 40 pieces of Bangladeshi land are in India’s adverse possession.

3 Those were (i) between Rajshahi district (East-Pakistan) and Murshidabad (West-Bengal); (ii) between the point on the Ganga River where the channel of the Mathabhanga took off and the northern most point where the channel met the boundary between the Thanas of Daulat Pur (East Pakistan) and Karim Pur (India); (iii) concerned to the Patharia Hill Reserve Forest; and (iv) arose from the changing course of the Kusiyara River, Pakistan and Assam. For detail see Decisions of The Indo-Pakistan Boundary Disputes Tribunal headed by the Hon’ble Lord Justice Algot Bagge, Govt. of India, 1958.
followed, Bangladesh claims that 15 members of India’s border forces, the BSF were killed, along with several of the attacking soldiers. However, India claims a far lower death toll (BBC News 2002).

Indian sources reported that this followed a weekend incident in which 20 Indian troops were taken hostage when Bangladesh seized a frontier outpost in the village of Pyrdiwah. Bangladesh also claimed the village as within its territory (South Asia Nuclear Dialogue 2001). Indian forces eventually responded and retook the village. Between 10,000 and 20,000 villagers living in the area fled the fighting, with at least 17 suffering wounds. The combat remained limited to the border troops of the respective nations, though mortars were used in addition to automatic weapons fire. Several villages were destroyed or heavily damaged in the fighting. The quick intervention of Indian and Bangladesh governments intervened and defused the tension. Further the Indian and Bangladeshi government started the border talks in March 2002 to solve the border problem (MEA 2002).

Bangladesh insists that Indian forces launched an early morning attack on their posts in the frontier district of Kurigram which lies on the border with Indian state of Assam, on the morning of Wednesday 18 April 2001 (Das 2008: 367-388) (The Tribune 2001). Fresh clashes erupted along the India-Bangladesh border, just hours after both sides voiced regret for the recent killings, though by midnight of April 20 firing had again fallen silent. The article also revised upwards the number of Indian civilians who fled the region to 6,000, and stated that Indian government officials were attempting to convince villagers to return to their homes (South Asia Nuclear Dialogue 2001).

According to scholars with expertise in the matter, there are certain reasons of conflict between BSF and BDR. Those are as the failure of 1972 Indo-Bangladesh Peace and Friendship Treat; The unfruitfulness of Indo-Bangladesh Land Boundary Agreement of 1974; Differences on accepting the Border Guidelines and even the Joint Border Guidelines; Meaningless border talks between BSF and BDR officials; Powerlessness of the Joint Boundary Working Group; Unique nature of border; Frequent Removing of border Pillars; Cultivation up to the Zero Line of the border; High powerful cross-border nexus between, Subversive element, security personnel and politicians; High prevailing of corruption in border officials from both the side; Selfish and egoistic nature of some
border officials; and last but not the least, politicization of the border issues by politicians in both the side of India and Bangladesh.

All the above mentioned reasons together, insisting and encouraging conflicts on the Indo-Bangladesh border and causing severe damages to life and property and also disrupting the management task which often making congenial climate for anti-national and anti-social elements to become active in the region. The border tension is generally a security related issue for every country for which no judiciary or common people or even media is allowed to investigate the reasons. The recent outcome of some incidents of fake-encounters in some border areas of India is creating doubts in the mind of people regarding the transparency in border security forces. But this kind of border conflicts by BDR on Indo-Bangladesh border could be one of the major military threats to the border management and the national security of India.

**Cross-Border Nexus, Networks and Indo-Bangladesh Border Management**

According to common definitions of organized crime in criminological literature defining traits of organized crime are the use of extreme violence, corruption of public officials, including law enforcement and judicial officers, penetration of the legitimate economy (e.g. through money-laundering) and interference in the political process. These elements are not only incorporated in national anti-mafia laws in some countries, including the USA and Italy but also used as operational definitions by the European police community through the so-called Falcone checklist and even in south Asian countries including India and its Northeastern region (Finckenauer and Waring 1998; Levi 2002; Sanderson 2004: 49-61).

If comparing official police-based information on garden variety crimes as burglary or street robbery seems no longer feasible there remains little room for optimism regarding the comparison of police-based information on more complex crimes. At the global level it is to be expected that the number of police-recorded cases of organized crime correlates inversely with the seriousness of the problem. Where organized crime rules, few of such cases will ever be investigated, let alone brought before a court. Statistics on drug seizures can illustrate the point. Seizures of drugs by police or custom authorities in the border region and in the Border states are likely to reflect law enforcement priorities and professional capacities rather than the global flow of drugs. In the field of complex

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crimes, statistics of police-recorded or court-recorded crimes are a source of desinformation. (Firestone 1993; Dishman 2001: 197-220, 43-58)⁴

In India the northeastern region is prone to such kind of criminal activities. In August 2001, BSF seized 225kg of “semi-processed” uranium from two suspected terrorists in Balurghat, northern West Bengal along the India-Bangladesh border. The uranium was in a leather pouch marked “Made in USSR” and indicating 1984 as the year of manufacture. The uranium was likely smuggled across the Bangladeshi border. Indian intelligence agencies suspect that agents of Pakistan’s ISI were involved, and that the uranium was bound for Muslim fighters in the disputed regions of Jammu and Kashmir (Times of India 2001; FBIS Document 2001).

The connections between organized crime and terrorism may extend beyond the region. Organized crime in South Asia covers a wide range of activities, including drug and weapons trafficking, prostitution, contract killings, extortion, kidnapping, money laundering, and hawala—a practice involving an underground network of financiers who receive funds in one country and arrange for an associate in another country to pay the recipient. These business arenas and the interests of terrorist groups provide intersections where the two can cooperate, all the more so because both groups often operate in areas where law enforcement is weak and it is easy to corrupt officials.

These criminal networks are particularly strong in large urban centers and commercial areas, such as Mumbai and Karachi. Information regarding organized crime operations is more abundant in India than in Pakistan, largely because of limited press coverage and research in Pakistan. Political sensitivities in Pakistan regarding the connections of the government to organized crime and militant groups hinder research, and journalists are pressured to avoid approaching the topic. The Wall Street Journal’s Daniel Pearl was kidnapped and killed in Karachi while researching the connections between Pakistan’s militant groups and organized crime in 2002. Given the marked lack of data regarding crime in Pakistan, much of the data presented here reflects trends in Indian organized crime (Levy 2003) (TMK 2003). However, as the groups overlap in their business interests, this data is reflective of trends across South Asia.

⁴ A very useful work on the “transformation” issue completed in the pre-September 11 time frame and Information also collected during multiple discussions in 2002-2003.
Over the past decade, South Asia has suffered from numerous terrorist attacks coordinated by a combination of individuals from both terrorist and criminal groups. Organized crime was consistently involved in some aspect of the attacks. All three cases set forth below involved organized crime and terrorist groups working cooperatively, and all three highlight the methods and opportunities the two networks utilize. The case of Dawood Ibrahim and the 1993 Mumbai Bombings illustrates how a criminal leader used his extensive criminal networks and finances to launch one of the largest terrorist attacks in Indian history, having become radicalized in response to attacks on Muslims (Sanderson 2004; Picarelli and Shelley; Williams 2002: 49-61). The case of Aftab Ansari describes how a criminal involved in kidnapping assisted in financing the 9/11 attacks through his terror connections. The Purulia arms-drop case suggests that criminals do not need to be ideologically inclined to assist terrorist groups; cooperation is often purely a business relationship (Mohammad 1998).