CHAPTER - VI

THE SEPTEMBER 11 AND ITS FALL OUT ON INDIA-ASEAN RELATIONS

On September the 11th, enemies of freedom committed an act of war against our country. Americans have known wars -- but for the past 136 years, they have been wars on foreign soil, except for one Sunday in 1941. Americans have known the casualties of war -- but not at the center of a great city on a peaceful morning. Americans have known surprise attacks - - but never before on thousands of civilians. All of this was brought upon us in a single day -- and night fell on a different world, a world where freedom itself is under attack...Our war on terror begins with al Qaeda, but it does not end there. It will not end until every terrorist group of global reach has been found, stopped, and defeated (Bush, 2001: Internet Source).

Today, the distinction between domestic and foreign affairs is diminishing. In a globalized world, events beyond America’s borders have a greater impact inside them. Our society must be open to people, ideas, and goods from across the globe. The characteristics we most cherish—our freedom, our cities, our systems of movement, and modern life—are vulnerable to terrorism. This vulnerability will persist long after we bring to those responsible for the September 11 attacks. As time passes, individuals may gain access to means of destruction that until now could be wielded only by armies, fleets, and squadrons. This is a new condition of life. We will adjust to it and thrive—in spite of it (The National Security Strategy of the United States of America, 2002: Internet Source).

INTRODUCTION

It is useful as well as insightful in our view to begin this chapter with a brief reference to, and reflection on, the above mentioned epigraphs. The terrorist attacks of 11 September, 2001 were an unprecedented attack on two symbols of globalization and American power. Those killed in the attack were citizens from 86 different states. The expression of sympathy for the United States in the days after the attacks was unprecedented and extraordinary. A resolution was passed by the United Nations Security Council asking all states to deny terrorists safe harbor and suppress all possible sources of terrorist financing. Even states like Iraq, Iran and Syria vociferously condemned the attacks. The US ultimatum to the Taliban in Afghanistan to turn over the Al Qaeda leaders...
responsible for organizing the criminal attacks received a good deal of international support.

The attacks were immediately made meaningful by the Bush administration by Americanizing the event and analogizing it to Pearl Harbor, as shown in the first epigraph above. President Bush pronounced that the “deadly attacks which were carried out yesterday against our country were more than acts of terror. They were acts of war...Freedom and democracy are under attack. This will be a monumental struggle of good versus evil. But good will prevail” (Bush, 12 September 2001; see whitehouse.gov to read the full remarks). Such designations and descriptions had the following implications: America owned the event and would dictate the response: “we will rally the world,” Bush declared. The attacks were war not terrorism. America was attacked but so also were the universal concepts America was automatically assumed to represent (the standard confusion of America with universal values that characterizes US geopolitical culture). It was a struggle of good versus evil.

The events of 11 September 2001 and the Bali bombing of 12 October 2002 have pinpointed so-called ‘Islamic terrorism’, which has tended to be conflated with Islam. The bomb attacks on Bali in 2002 made it clear that it was not only the West which was vulnerable to terrorist attacks. In December 2001, a plot to attack people in Singapore by a terrorist group called Jemaah Islamiyah was foiled. Terrorism poses a serious threat to the political and economic well being of India and Southeast Asia (Neville, 2004: Internet Source; Gunaratna, 2002).

The mere fact that three ASEAN member states, namely Indonesia, Malaysia and Brunei, have Muslim majorities, combined with the fact that India has the second largest Muslim population in the world, should draw our critical attention to not only the underlying geopolitical discourse of ‘clash of civilizations’ thesis of Samuel Huntington, but also to the likely fall out of 11 of September on India-ASEAN relations. This chapter will examine the emerging trends in the so-called war(s) against ‘global’ terrorism, as well as the degree to which the policies and perceptions of India and ASEAN countries converge or diverge on related issues.
TERRORIST GROUPS ACTIVE IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

Malaysia and Indonesia are Muslim-majority countries. Indonesia has a population of about 228 million and out of that 87% are Muslims which is the largest Muslim population in the world. Malaysia has a total population of about 23 million and 60% of the population is Muslim (Kadir. 2004: Internet Source).

Traditionally, Islam in Southeast Asia has been characterized by moderation and pluralism. This is rooted in the fact that religions as varied as Hinduism, Buddhism and Christianity and Islam have been co-existing here. All governments in Southeast Asia are secular and the radical version of Islam in the region is an extra-regional influence, especially Middle East. The percentage of Muslims in favour of establishing strict Muslim regimes is very less. There has been no example of militant Islam in Southeast Asia. Islam in Southeast Asia, unlike in Middle East, has been involved in the development of civil society and democracy. The chances of any Southeast Asian country thus becoming a theological state are very rare. Since 1970s, Islamic fundamentalism began to take place and it is only after 1990s that it became so prominent geopolitically. Post- September 11 times present a state of dilemma for the Southeast Asian countries. Having a big Muslim population, Southeast Asian countries are not in favour of supporting the West-led global war on terrorism (Abuza, 2003; Gunaratna: Internet Source).

Desker (2002: Internet Source) argues that transnational Al-Qaeda network and terrorism is going to be one of the most important threats in the region in near future. Islam is not homogenous in Southeast Asia as various sects and communities are included under this religion in Southeast Asian region. There are people who believe in multi-religious, multi-cultural societies and there are others who believe in reviving the old Islamic society. Lastly, there are terrorist groups who radically want to establish a new Muslim state linking all the territories in the region with Muslim majorities (Ibid.).

There are a number of reasons as to why Al Qaeda is becoming more and more interested in Southeast Asia. Firstly, most of the Southeast Asia countries are politically weak, except Malaysia and Singapore. On the other hand, terrorists have access to greater resources and are better equipped. Such an advantage makes it quite easy for terrorists to plan and operate attacks in these countries (Abuza, 2003). Secondly, there
are a number of factors that make Southeast Asia ‘countries of convenience’. Many
governments in Southeast Asia are corrupt. Most of the Southeast Asian countries have
relaxed immigration procedures and easy access to visas because of tourism flows and
related policies. Also, there are financial linkages and clandestine dealings between
Southeast Asia and Middle East. In addition to this, there is a proliferation of weapons in
Southeast Asia. All Southeast Asian countries, except Brunei and Laos, are involved in
manufacturing small arms and ammunition. Lastly, Indonesia and the southern
Philippines are politically unstable and the central governments lack control over them
(Abuza, 2002).

The majority of Muslims in Southeast Asia do not attend madrasas but they
attend prayers at the mosques and more and more children are being educated in Islamic
schools and are undergoing Arabic education. In addition to local madrasas, the
madrasas in Pakistan and other Middle Eastern countries are appealing to Malaysians
and Indonesians. Such education promise some kind of a status to them in addition to
cheap education and some clerical jobs in mosques and sharia courts (Abuza, 2002).
Lastly, Taliban’s collapse in Afghanistan made Al Qaeda diversify its bases to other
countries and Southeast Asia is one of them (Abuza, 2003).

Terrorism and its offshoots are spreading rapidly from Southeast Asia to the rest of
the world and Southeast Asia is emerging as a new hub in the network of terrorism. If the
global war against terrorism is to be won, Southeast Asia will have to play a very
significant role. India, another victim of terrorism, and Southeast Asian countries will
have to work out cooperative strategies on this front (Raman, 2005: Internet Source).

The radical Islamist groups in Southeast Asia, especially those in the Philippines,
Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand and Singapore are supposed to have ties with the Al
Qaeda. Since September 2001, the United States has been deeply concerned with them.
The final Report of the ‘National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United
States’ (Manyin, Chanlett-Avery, Niksch, Cronin, and Vaughn, 2004: Internet Source)
argues that Southeast Asia has been a base for Al Qaeda operations in the past and this is
likely to continue in future. The Report also argues that Al Qaeda has penetrated this
region for about last fifteen years and they have been training, financing and supporting
the local Islamic groups. This cooperation has taken the form of ad hoc arrangements of
convenience such as helping acquire weapons. The most important Islamic militant
group active in Southeast Asia is Jemaah Islamiyah (JI). It is spread over Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, the Philippines, Australia, Thailand, and Pakistan. Many analysts initially were of the view that Jemaah Islamiyah was Al Qaeda’s Southeast Asian affiliate. But of late, it has become clear that the two are quite distinct entities. However, the fact of the matter remains that the two have concurrent motives (Ibid.) Al Qaeda is becoming more and more active in Southeast Asia after September 11 attacks. The following section talks briefly about various terrorist organizations active in Southeast Asia.

Al Qaeda

Al Qaeda cells are present in the Philippines, Indonesia and Malaysia. There is enough evidence to prove the links between Al Qaeda and radical Islamic movements in Southeast Asia, for example, Abu Sayyaf in the Philippines, Malaysian radicals and militant Indonesian Islamic organizations (see Rabasa, 2005: Internet Source; Frost, Rann, and Chin: Internet Source). Indonesia has two highly active radical Islamic organizations, Lashkar Jihad and the Defenders of Islam Front. These groups have been identified by the United States as posing a serious threat to its security (Rabasa, 2005: Internet Source). In November 1994, a Pakistani-born Al Qaeda member, Ramzi Yousef, tried bombing a Philippines Airlines flight from Manila to Tokyo. He also planned serial bombings in February 1995 which were foiled. Another Al-Qaeda activist, Indonesian by birth, Fathur Rohman al-Ghozi, carried out five bombings in Manila on 30 December 2000 (Frost, Rann, and Chin: Internet Source).

On 20 August 2007, fifteen Al Qaeda activists were arrested in Moreh town in Manipur. Ten of them were from Myanmar and five from Bangladesh. All of them had invalid documents. They were carrying with them Thai work permit (Raman, 2007a: Internet Source). Such incidents are a pointer in the direction of increasing activities of Al Qaeda in South Asia and Southeast Asia.

There are domestic terrorists and international terrorists operating in Southeast Asia. The international terrorists’ main target is the United States. Jemaah Islamiya (JI) is one of them. Domestic terrorist organizations are more inward looking and claim that their key purpose is to safeguard the interests of Muslims within a particular country. However, after September 11, the distinction between international and domestic
terrorists is getting blurred. The processes of Islamization and globalization have led to the mergence of the two in various ways (Kadir, 2002: Internet Source).

There is evidence to prove Al Qaeda’s presence in Myanmar also, though the presence is limited. The largest Al Qaeda cell in Southeast Asia is in Myanmar. However, Al Qaeda in Myanmar targets South Asia rather than Southeast Asia (Abuza, 2002).

**Abu Sayyaf**

Abu Sayyaf is the smallest and the most violent Islamic terrorist group in southern Philippines. It was founded in 1991 as the splinter group of Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MNLF). Abu Sayyaf engages in kidnappings, bombings and extortion from wealthy businessmen. The group supports its terrorist activities through piracy, robbery and ransom money. The United States has been much active in dealing with the problem of terrorism in the Philippines. It has been providing financial, legal and technological help to the Philippines (The Philippines and Terrorism, 2004: Internet Source).

**Front Pembela Islam**

Front Pembela Islam (FPI – Islamic Defenders Front) was formed in 1998 in the Philippines. It is involved in carrying out raids on bars, massage parlours and night clubs (Kuppuswamy, 2005: Internet Source).

**Lashkar Jihad**

Lashkar Jihad (LJ) was established as a paramilitary wing of Forum Komunikasi Ahlus Sunnah wal Jammah (Communications Forum of the Followers of the Sunnah) in Jakarta in 2000. LJ has a three-pronged objective which consists of social work, Muslim education and a security mission. It is said to be receiving the support of certain sections of the armed forces of Indonesia (Kuppuswamy, 2005: Internet Source).

**Jemaah Islamiya (JI)**

Jemaah Islamiya (JI) literally means Islamic community. It was founded in 1993-94 by Abdullah Sungkar. The main aim of this organization is to form an Islamic state comprising Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore and Brunei and southern parts of Thailand.
and the Philippines (Kuppuswamy, 2005: Internet Source; Singh, 2002). It has been active in supporting the September 11 attacks and in plotting some other attacks on Western targets, including the Bali attacks in October 2002.

Jemaah Islamiya (JI) developed as the most dangerous terrorist group in Southeast Asia after it started working in alliance with Al Qaeda in 1980s. There are three JI factions operating in Southeast Asia—political (Yogjakarta-centric), radical (solo-centric), and terrorist (Malaysia-centric). However, all converge at a common objective that Islamic state should be established in Indonesia and all of Southeast Asia (Gunaratna b: Internet Source).

**Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF)**

MILF has been responsible for bombing Christian churches in Mindanao. In the Philippines, a new Islamic movement, Rajah Solaiman Movement (RSM) also known as HARAKA, is operating which is said to be linked to Al Qaeda. This group is also involved in converting Christians into Muslims and sending them abroad for terrorist training (Almonte, 2006).

It denies links with Al Qaeda but according to Philippine intelligence, MILF’s links with Al Qaeda go back to 1980s when MILF sent about thousand fighters to Afghanistan. In 1993, Al Qaeda sent Ramzi Yusuf, who had organized the car bombing of the World Trade Centre in the United States in 1993, to the Philippines to teach the Abu Sayaf terrorists how to use sophisticated high explosives. In January 1995, Philippine intelligence was the first to foil the Al Qaeda operations in Southeast Asia. But some time later, Al Qaeda had started running a training camp inside MILF’s camp by Abubakar. There is a high level of probability that MILF accepted financial aid, weapons and training from the Al Qaeda (Ibid.).

**New People’s Army (NPA)**

The New People’s Army (NPA) was declared to be a terrorist organization by the United States’ government in August 2002. It is a military wing of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP). The NPA is opposed to US military presence in the Philippines (Frost, Rann and Chin: Internet Source).
Islamic Defenders' Front

Another prominent terrorist group in Indonesia is the Islamic Defenders’ Front. This group is involved in attacking night clubs and so called other dens of ‘immorality’. They are known for attacking discotheques and breaking bottles full of booze (Ricklefs, 2002: Internet Source).

According to some observers (Ibid.), Indonesia is fast emerging as a hub of terrorists in Southeast Asia. Over the last 5-6 years, Islam in Southeast Asia, particularly in Indonesia, has changed. During 1996-2002 violence between Christians and Muslims in Ambon increased in which more than 6000 people lost their lives. As a result, various new violent Islamic groups came up. Lashkar- Jihad (the Holy War Paramilitary) is the most significant. The declared objective of these groups has been to launch and lead Jihad against Christians in Ambon. After September 11, a number of young Indonesian volunteers went to Afghanistan to defend the Taliban and Al-Qaeda against the expected attack from the United States.

SOUTHEAST ASIAN RESPONSE TO 9/11 ATTACKS

Different Southeast Asian countries view the United States’ war against terrorism differently. Of all the Southeast Asian countries, Singapore and Phillipines have been fully supportive of American efforts of fighting terrorism (Acharya, 2003: Internet Source; 2002). Singapore has not been home to any terrorist groups but some Jemaah Islamiya members were arrested in Singapore. The Philippines is also of the view that the American support can help it in checkmating the increasing Chinese influence in the South China Sea. Initially, Manila was a bit hesitant to go along the United States, but finally, it accepted all the American help and became a partner in US-led war against terrorism. Malaysia and the United States have also signed some agreements to fight terrorism together. But Malaysia has also been careful in pointing out that finally it should fight its own war on terrorism. Indonesia does not have a pro-America policy and does not support the latter in its war against terrorism. Even the moderate Muslims feel that the Indonesian government should not support the United States in war on terrorism. When JI’s spiritual leader, Abu Bakar Bashir was arrested by the government, it was not appreciated by even the moderate Muslims of Indonesia. Thailand too has not been very

Collectively, ASEAN was sympathetic towards the United States. The member countries identified terrorism with Muslim radicalism. ASEAN members have been involved in anti-terror initiatives long before 9/11. In 1997, ASEAN members signed the ASEAN Declaration on Transnational Crime. In 1998, Manila Declaration on the Prevention and Control of Transnational Crime was signed. In 1999, ASEAN members launched the ASEAN Plan of Action to Combat Transnational Crime. After September 11, ASEAN Declaration on Joint Action to Counter Terrorism in 2001 was the first agreement signed among ASEAN members against terrorism. In 2002, ASEAN members adopted the Joint Communique of the Special ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Terrorism (Banlaoi, 2005: Internet Source).

SOUTHEAST ASIA AS THE ‘SECOND FRONT’

Geopolitics, as pointed out by us in chapter one of this thesis, is about the performance of political acts, the specifications of friends and enemies, the designations of spaces as theirs and ours, and maintaining the distinctions between hostile and friendly places and peoples (O Thuathail, 1996). It can be argued here that September 11 created a whole lot of new categories and designations of places. Southeast Asia has come to be mapped differently on the world map after September 11 and the Bali bombings in 2002.

For the United States, Southeast Asia has emerged as the ‘Second Front’ in the wake of 9/11 attacks (see Lio and Seng, 2006: Internet Source; Gershman, 2005; Acharya, 2003: Internet Source; 2002; Gunaratna, 2002). A secret FBI report called Malaysia ‘a primary operational launching pad’ for September 11 attacks. This also implies that Al Qaeda is now focussing on Southeast Asian region after Afghanistan. The report indicated that the United States might have to target Southeast Asia in view of the geographical spread of terrorist bases all over, thus designating it as the second front in the post-September 11 times. The region is said to be having all the necessary ingredients in place that eminently qualify it to be called as the ‘Second Front’. Indonesia, Malaysia, and Brunei are all Muslim-dominated countries. Political Islam, as pointed out above, has been on rise in Indonesia after the fall of Suharto in 1998. A
number of terrorist attacks have been plotted after mid-1990s though most of them failed to materialize. (see Gershman, 2005; Acharya, 2003: Internet Source; 2002).

However, Gershman (2005) argues that Southeast Asia could not meet the fate of Afghanistan because all these countries are more or less democratic. Moreover, state-sponsored terrorism in these countries is not a threat for the United States. He further argues that instead of military involvement in Southeast Asia, the United States should adopt an approach of supporting the civilian-controlled efforts aimed at dealing with the problems of combating piracy, money laundering and such crimes. By doing this, the problem of terrorism can be tackled. In addition to this, the United States should make all possible efforts to strengthen the weak governments of states like Indonesia and the Philippines. The United States should cooperate in the regional efforts to improve the economic, political and social conditions (Ibid.).

Neville (2004: Internet Source) also feels that Southeast Asia is not sheltering terrorists more than the rest of the world and is thus, not becoming a ‘second front’. More than pro-Islamic feelings, most of the terrorist groups in Southeast Asia have anti-Americanism as their driving force.

Southeast Asia was sidelined in the American scheme of things after the end of the Cold War. However, after September 11, United States’ engagement with Southeast Asia increased drastically. In addition to being a ‘second front’, it continues to be perceived by some American experts as important for the United States for the purposes of overflight and access rights for its military deployments in the Gulf. During America’s war against Afghanistan, the United States found the overflight rights through Southeast Asia, rather than through Europe, far more convenient. It should be noted that despite various geopolitical imaginations of threats and dangers, the United States’ engagement with Southeast Asia is rather restricted. Strategically, South Asia, Middle East, Central Asia and Northeast Asia still hold priority for the United States (Acharya, 2003: Internet Source).

SOUTHEAST ASIA ON HUNTINGTON’S ‘CLASH OF CIVILIZATIONS’ MAP

Samuel P. Huntington (1997) has argued in his much celebrated thesis of the ‘Clash of Civilizations’ that after the end of the Cold War, the dividing lines for groupings all over
the world are not ideological, political or economic, rather cultural. Unlike the ideological divide of the Cold War, ‘Self’ is defined in relation to ancestry, religion, history, values, customs, language and institutions of the ‘Other’. Huntington (1997: 21) remarks, “We know who we are only when we know who we are not and often only when we know whom we are against”:

Huntington (Ibid.) argues that there are eight contemporary civilizations. These are: Sinic, Japanese, Hindu, Islamic, Orthodox, Latin American and African (see Figure 20).

Figure 20: The World of Civilizations: Post-1990


Inter- civilizational conflicts, according to him, can take two forms. At the micro level, the faultlines occur at the borders of the neighboring states belonging to different civilizations. To quote Huntington, “Faultline conflicts are particularly prevalent between Muslims and non-Muslims” (Ibid.: 208). At the macro level, mainly conflicts occur among major states of different civilizations. To quote Huntington (Ibid.: 20),

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The balance of power among civilizations is shifting: the West is declining in relative influence; Asian civilizations are expanding their economic, military, and political strength; Islam is exploding demographically with destabilizing consequences for Muslim countries and their neighbors; and non-Western civilizations generally are reaffirming the value of their own cultures.

However, there are critics who argue that the thesis does not hold good for present day world order. Erdem (2002: Internet Source) argues that September 11 incident does not fit into the ‘clash of civilizations’ paradigm. There is enough evidence to show this. The United States led ‘war against terrorism’ in Afghanistan has been supported by some Muslim countries like Turkey. Also, anti-Americanism is not an issue only with the Muslim countries. Ethnic conflicts in various parts of the world do reveal that cultural and religious factors are important in today’s world, nevertheless, these are not the primary factors for conflicts between countries (Ibid.).

Acharya (2002) also feels that September 11 did not prove Huntington’s ‘Clash of Civilizations’ thesis correct. Huntington is said to have remarked in his response to September 11 attacks that the Clash of Civilizations thesis proved to be right as the reaction to the colossal tragedy was more or less on civilizational lines. He said in an interview published in Newsweek (2001-2002), “Reactions to September 11 and the American response were strictly along civilization lines”. However, Acharya argues that most of the governments of the Islamic nations were critical of these attacks. Pakistan, an Islamic state, was the first one to offer military help to the United States. The response in other words was no so much on civilizational lines, as it was along national lines. 9/11 brought countries, irrespective of their varying religious majorities, on the common side of the United States to fight terrorism, be it Indonesia, India, Thailand or the Philippines. Acharya (2002) remarks,

From Hindu India to Muslim Indonesia, from Buddhist Thailand to Catholic Philippines, the response of governments was the same. Asked to choose between the US and the terrorists, they overwhelmingly sided with Washington. They did so despite reservations about the US support for Israel, concerns about civilian causalities in the Afghanistan war, and misgivings about US military and economic dominance of the world. And they chose this course despite the Bush administration’s decision to give short shrift to multilateralism and coalition-building.
Such a response clearly shows the importance of national interest and security rather than civilizational or religious ties. Acharya also argues that September 11 and the international response to it is more of a clash within (Islam) civilization rather than clash among civilizations. All through the Islamic world, the civil society did not show much support towards the United States as compared to their governments, be it, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Indonesia. People in some cases showed antipathy for their governments for having supported the United States (Ibid.).

**MAPPING SOUTHEAST ASIA ON ‘PENTAGON’S NEW MAP’**


Barnett divides the world (see Figure 21) into ‘The Non-Integrating Map’ and ‘The Functioning Core’ (Ibid.:154-55). ‘The Gap’ consists of the Caribbean, Central America, South America (except for Brazil, Uruguay, Argentina and Chile), Africa (except South Africa), the Middle East, the Balkans, Bulgaria, Romania, Moldova, Armenia, the Central Asian republics, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Kashmir, Nepal, Bangladesh, Muslim provinces of Western China, and all of Southeast Asia. The rest of the world is ‘the Functioning Core’. The core is less interfered by American military and is globally connected (Barnett, 2004).

As far as South East Asia is concerned, Barnet believes that, “America will end up exporting security on that scale not just to Central Asia, but also to Middle East, Africa, the Caribbean Rim, and -- yes -- even Southeast Asia, a place where we swore we’d never return to after loosing Vietnam” (cited in Sparke, 2005:278).
It can be argued, that according to the imaginative geographies of *Pentagon’s New Map*, most of South East Asia falls within the Gap and thus awaits geo-strategies that have the license to control and alter the political-economic geographies of the region. The countries lying between the two are called the ‘seam states’ (Ibid.:188-89). The position of these states is very precarious. The Gap is full of various kinds of dangers, for example, terrorism, drugs, diseases, etc. and the ‘Functioning Core’ tries to suppress these threats into the ‘seam states’. These seam states are: Mexico, Brazil, South Africa, Morocco, Turkey, Pakistan, Thailand, Malaysia, the Philippines, and Indonesia. Barnett includes most of Southeast Asia within the category of ‘seam states’ (Barnett, 2004; 2003: Internet Source).

Show me where globalization is thick with network connectivity, financial transactions, liberal media flows, and collective security and I will show you regions featuring stable governments, rising standards of living, and more deaths by suicide than murder. These parts of the world I call the Functioning Core, or Core. But show me where globalization is thinning or plain absent, and I will show you regions plagued by politically repressive regimes, widespread poverty and disease, routine mass murder and —most important—the chronic conflicts that incubate the next generation of global terrorists. These parts of the world I call the Non-Integrating Gap, or the Gap (Barnett, 2003: 174-175).

Barnett argues that Osama bin Laden and Al Qaeda are the products of the Non-Integrating Gap. “A country’s potential to warrant a US military response is inversely related to its globalization connectivity”, he proclaims. Al Qaeda was based earlier in Sudan and then in Afghanistan. This is because these two countries have been completely untouched by globalization and hence, disconnected.

Show me a part of the world that is insecure in its peace and I will show you a strong or growing ties between local militaries and US military. Show me regions where major war is inconceivable and I will show you permanent US military bases and long-term military alliances. Show me the strongest investment relationships in the global economy and I will show you two post-war military occupations that remade Europe and Japan following World War II.

The Cold War divide of military and civil is over in the post-September 11 period. The military exists for the protection of the economic class. Good economics holds the key to good and stable politics (Barnett, 2004; Thomas P Barnett’s Barnett’s Interview: Internet Source).

After the end of World War II, the United States has sent its military forces for about 150 times and Barnett argues that all these areas have been the least connected to the global economy. All the civil wars, ethnic cleansings, genocides, children lured into combat activities, drug exports, UN peacekeeping, and all the terrorist networks are prevalent in these regions. Ten years from now, globalization will be dominated equally by countries like China, India, Brazil and the European Union, and not just the United States as is today (Stefen, 2004: Internet Source).
Barnett’s thesis is most illustrative of a neo-liberal geopolitics in the making, which carries significant implications for India-ASEAN relations. In neoliberal geopolitics, as described at length by Susan Roberts, Anna Secor and Matthew Sparke (2003: 888-89), inter-imperial rivalry, the Monroe Doctrine, and the ideas about hemispheric control are being overshadowed by a new seductive global vision of almost infinite openness and interdependency. In contrast to the Cold War era, danger is no longer visualised or approached as something that should be contained at a disconnected distance. Now, by way of a complete counterpoint, danger is itself being defined as disconnection from the global (globalising) system.

SECURITY IMPERATIVES IN SOUTHEAST ASIA IN THE POST-COLD WAR ERA

Besides the end of the Cold War, the events of 9/11 have dramatically transformed the security landscapes in Southeast Asia. Once the United States got deeply involved, rather entrenched, in counter-terrorism activities after 9/11 all over the world, the strategic location of Southeast Asia on the “US Commanders Map of the World” assumed a new set of meanings (see Figure 22).

Figure 22: US Commanders Map of the World
Source: http://defenselink.mil/specials/unifiedcommand/
This gave a chance for the regional and extra-regional powers to take active interest in this region. Southeast Asia is a part of the Asia-Pacific region and security of Southeast Asia is deeply affected by the transformed geopolitical situation in the region. The security parameters of Southeast Asia are further expanded by what is happening in Northeast Asia, China, and the United States (see Naidu, 2005b; Acharya, 2003: Internet Source).

After the end of the Cold War, Southeast Asian security challenges were internal, for instance, domestic instability, South China Sea disputes, and intra-regional disputes like border disputes between Indonesia and Malaysia, between Singapore and Malaysia. However, almost all of these disputes have been settled in the recent times and particularly after September 11, the nature of security challenges has changed. The major security challenge facing Southeast Asia, as pointed out earlier, is trans-national terrorism (Acharya, 2003: Internet Source).

**Changing Definition of Security in Post-9/11**

September 11 has transformed US-Southeast Asian geopolitical-strategic equations to a considerable extent. Some US analysts have compared Abu Sayyaf, a rebel group of southern Philippines, to Taliban. Malaysia’s cautious and calculated support for the US-lead war on terrorism has contributed towards improving the previously cold relations between the two countries. The United States has also been supporting the efforts of Indonesian state to fight against the threat of terrorism in Southeast Asia (Acharya, 2003: Internet Source).

The United States has been providing Southeast Asian intelligence agencies vital information on local radical Islamic groups who send their members to Afghanistan for training. The United States also encouraged ASEAN countries to improve cooperation among themselves as well as with America on terrorism related issues. America has come out openly in its efforts to counter terrorism by giving military help to the Philippines. This help has been both financial and in terms of human resources (De Castro: Internet Source).

Despite overall positive trends in cooperation between the United States and Southeast Asian countries, there are still broad divergences in their perceptions and
responses to terrorism. Southeast Asian countries have not been supportive of America’s invasion of Iraq. They feel that the Iraq issue is a distraction from the main issue of fight against terrorism. Moreover, some of these countries feel that if the war on Iraq is meant to check the weapons of mass destruction, then such interventions should be applicable to North Korea as well. North Korea is said to be in possession of more advanced nukes than Iraq (Acharya, 2003: Internet Source).

The ARF has also been active in adopting counter-terrorism measures. With the help of the United States, the ARF has taken certain important initiatives for detecting and curtailing the flow of the funds to and from the terrorist groups. In July 2002, the ARF adopted a declaration regarding freezing the assets of terrorists; cooperation on exchange of information. The ARF has also founded an Inter-sessional Group on counter-terrorism and transnational Crime (Annual Security Outlook, 2005: Internet Source).

In their effort to check terrorism, centres such as Southeast Asia Regional Center for Counterterrorism (SEARCCT) in Malaysia and the U.S.-Thailand International Law Enforcement Academy (ILEA) in Bangkok, and Australian-Indonesian Jakarta Center for Law Enforcement Cooperation (JCLEC) have been involved in providing counter terrorism training to law enforcement officers throughout the region (Ibid.).

War on Terrorism: American Hegemony, Empire, and Alliances

John Agnew (2003) argues that ‘hegemony’ and ‘empire’ are not synonyms in the American context though they are often used interchangeably. After the end of the World War two, the United States began extending its empire through NATO and through international institutions such as UN, IMF, and the World Bank. Hegemony is different from empire in the sense that the latter is more of a territorial organization. Secondly, hegemony does not depend upon coercive means rather it rewards or persuades the subordinates.

The United States is militarily superior to other countries. According to Agnew (2005) as the United States is increasingly becoming successful in remaking the world in its own geopolitical image and vision, it is fast loosing its distinctive place at the centre of the world political-economic order. Yet, the commitment of the United States’
military to global domination is beyond doubt. The United States has an estimated 752 installations in as many as 140 countries around the world and 2.7 million active and reserve personnel, of whom 4,00,000 were operating overseas in 2004 (Smith, 2005). The United States military budget of 2004-2005 was around U.S. $536 billion, including Homeland Security and the Department of Energy, but excluding the cost of Iraqi construction. And, of course, the United States can boast of the only military in the history of the world to possess a planet-spanning command structure (Barnett, 2004).

Agnew (Ibid.) further argues that America’s dominance in the present-day world can be called hegemony rather than an empire. The American hegemony is based on soft power of global economy, global enforcement of norms of conduct, and intervention on behalf of human rights. After Second World War, America’s geopolitical position has been based on hegemony through dominant economic institutions.

In the wake of 9/11, the United States has been working with the G-8 initiative, ‘G-8 Counter Terrorism Group’, for countering terrorism. America has frozen about $US 200 million in terrorist assets in Southeast Asia. Also, the United States is constantly on the look out for Al Qaeda and its supporters like Jehmaah Islamiya in Indonesia and other terrorist groups in Southeast Asia (G-8 Statement on Strengthening the UN’s Counter-Terrorism Program Statement on Strengthening the UN’s Counter-Terrorism Program, 2006: Internet Source).

In its National Strategy for Combating Terrorism (2003: Internet Source), the United States has put forward its plans to fight the threat of terrorism. The key argument here is that formation of alliances is an important dimension of counterterrorism. The United States has strengthened its relations with Russia, Syria, and Uzbekistan. The United States believes that alliance system can provide better ways and means of generating and sharing intelligence as well as conducting counterinsurgency operations and putting pressure on the states sponsoring terrorism. The United States 9/11 Commission Report (2004: Internet Source) says,
Our enemy is twofold: al Qaeda, a stateless network of terrorists that struck us on 9/11; and a critical ideological movement in the Islamic world, inspired in part by al Qaeda, which has spawned terrorist groups and violence across the globe. The first enemy is weakened, but continues to pose a grave threat. The second enemy is gathering, and will menace Americans and American interests long after Osama bin Laden and his cohorts are killed or captured. Thus, our strategy must match our means to two ends: dismantling the al Qaeda network and prevailing in the longer term over the ideology that gives rise to Islamist ideology. Islam is not the enemy. It is not synonymous with terror. Nor does Islam teach terror. America and its friends oppose a perversion of Islam, not the great world itself.

The report argues that America’s counterterrorism strategy is based on international cooperation. The threat of terrorism should be addressed in various multilateral fora (Byman, 2006). Traditional bilateral alliances are not enough to deal with the problem of terrorism. New partnerships among nations are required. In the light of this statement one could argue that terrorism provides a lot of scope for both India and Southeast Asia to come closer and work together. Whereas post-1998 nuclear blasts India had been somewhat isolated in the world community, September 11 has helped break that isolation for India and open new possibilities for forging new partnerships and alliancess (Acharya, 2006).

The following section deals with the joint efforts that have been made so far by India and ASEAN after 9/11 or should be made in the times to come.

INDIA-ASEAN RELATIONS AFTER 9/11

As mentioned earlier, ASEAN has been a victim of terrorism for a long time now. The ugly face of terrorism has raised its head time and again in different places. South Asia has also long been affected by the problem of terrorism and India continues to be a major target of Al Qaeda-linked terrorist organizations (Devare, 2005). Cities like Hyderabad, Bombay, New Delhi and Bangalore have been attacked by the terrorists.

India’s terrorism-related concerns with reference to Southeast Asia began way back in 1981. It was at this time that many Sikh terrorists from Canada, the United States entered the Indian territories through Bangkok and Kathmandu. Late 1980 onwards, smugglers from Thailand, Laos and Cambodia became important source of sale of arms
and ammunition to both the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Elam (LTTE) and the Indian insurgents in northeast. During early 1990s, Pakistan’s ISI started using Thai territory for anti-Indian activities (Raman, 2005: Internet Source). Also, the Hum, the LeT, the TJ and the HUJI (B) have been involved in Jihadi terrorism in Southeast Asia as well as in India. Such developments make the Indian establishment fearful that there is a possibility of these terrorist groups using Southeast Asian territory against India. India has been the biggest victim of terrorism in the Asian region and, therefore, has a vital stake in seeking and sustaining greater cooperation with Southeast Asian countries, both at governmental and non-governmental levels (Ibid.).

It has been pointed out by some observers (Prabhakar, 2004), that India’s growing strategic ties with Southeast Asia, the United States, the United Kingdom, France and other West European countries, and India’s cooperation in the ‘Operation Enduring Freedom’ could invite attacks from terrorist groups operating in Southeast Asia. Also, naval warships and other vessels of these countries to and from the Indian ports could be targets for these groups, and could lead to ‘Naval Jihad’. India and Southeast Asia should therefore work on a comprehensive counter-terrorism policy dealing with international terrorism and its linkages (Prabhakar, 2004).

Southeast Asia has come to believe in the importance of alliances and regional cooperation in fighting international terrorism. The ASEAN regional forum (ARF) has organized many workshops for security cooperation on combating terrorism. The topics discussed in these workshops are financial measures, border control and immigration, and security for air travel and major international events. These workshops have also been trying to develop some international standards on how to identify and put an end to terrorist financing and money laundering. One of the most promising signs that Asian states are getting serious about counter-terrorist collaboration was a three-day Singapore gathering in early June 2002 of defense ministers from Southeast Asia, the United States, China, Japan, India, and Russia along with legislators, academic experts, and European defense officials (Simon: Internet Source).

In addition to the threat posed by different terrorist groups, there is another dimension of transnational terrorism, which demands and deserves serious and systematic attention of India and ASEAN, that is, maritime terrorism. It is to this important dimension that we turn next.
MARITIME TERRORISM

As argued in chapter four, maritime terrorism is an important aspect of transnational, de-territorialized threats today. Terrorist involving maritime assets are not unprecedented. As argued in chapter four, the first ever incident of maritime terrorism happened in 1985 when an Italian cruise liner, Achille Lauro, was hijacked by the Palestinian terrorists in the Egyptian territorial waters. However, in recent years, as Acharya and Withana (2008: 2003) put it,

There has been a growing concern about the possibility of a ‘maritime spectacular’ by terrorist groups across the world. This concern is particularly strengthened as assets n land or in the sky are becoming increasingly difficult to target by the terrorists especially after September 11. Moreover, there are fears that terrorists could team up with pirates to hijack a commercial vessel or a cruise liner and use it as a floating bomb to ram against a maritime target to cause widespread death and destruction or sink a big ship at a choking point on a sea lane to disrupt global trade and commerce. At a broader spectrum, the possibility of Al Qaeda and/or its associate groups smuggling a crude nuclear or radiological device into a hijacked ship or loading the same into a container and setting it off in a port city, shipping lane or waterways has also emerged as one of the possible doomsday scenarios.

However, despite the fairly obvious vulnerability of maritime assets to attacks, the maritime domain was not considered an attractive target by the terrorist organizations. For example, of all the international terrorist incidents over the last three decades, only two percent of the attacks involved maritime assets (Richardson, 2004). Most terrorist groups have little experience with the marine environment with the exception of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) in Sri Lanka (see Trelawny, 2005; Raymond, 2005: Internet Source). According to Acharya and Withana (2008), the number of groups with a maritime terrorist capability is few. The best known are Provisional Irish Republic Army (PIRA), the LTTE (as already mentioned), Al Qaeda, the Contras, the Palestinian Groups (Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) and Hamas), Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) in the Philippines and Gerakan Aceh Merdeka (GAM) in Indonesia. However, the groups vary in terms of their intention and capabilities to launch maritime attacks (Ibid.).
The presence of Al Qaeda in Southeast Asia makes Southeast Asia prone to maritime terrorist attacks. Al Qaeda understands what it means to disrupt the maritime trade in the region by attacking ships and the kind of repercussions it will have on world economy. Al Qaeda has already attacked USS Cole in 2000 and the French tanker Limburg in 2002 as mentioned in chapter four. Al Qaeda is also trained in attacking the ships from below by diving. In addition to this, there has been an attack on the Dewi Madrim, a chemical tanker, that was robbed by the terrorists in an attempt to learn how to attack sea in future (Banlaoi, 2005: Internet Source).

9/11 attacks created anxiety in the United States regarding similar attacks on maritime targets. The kind of terrorist activities that could happen at sea are: terrorists hijacking of oil and gas tankers and exploding them at crucial choke points such as the Malacca Straits, thus blocking the energy supply. In addition to this, terrorist activities could include terrorists smuggling weapon of mass destruction material such as radiological waste or lethal chemicals or even biological weapons in a container and having it exploded through a cellular phone as soon as the vessel carrying the container reaches a major port. Lastly, there could be a situation when terrorists attack a nuclear establishment or an oil refinery or off shore oil platforms (Raman, 2005: Internet Source).

A number of measures have been envisaged to counter the problem of maritime terrorism. These include ensuring physical security in the seas. The United States came out with the Homeland Security Act and the Container Security Initiative (CSI) after 9/11. The Homeland Security Act empowers the United States to inspect any ship approaching her ports 500 miles from the shore with regard to its cargo. CSI provides for a layered screening system that would extend the American borders outwards to ports from which American imports originate. Singapore was the first port in Asia to subscribe to this in 2002. Malaysia acceded to it in 2003 (Devare, 2006).

Another platform involved in maritime cooperation is the Western Pacific Naval Symposium (WPNS) which was founded in 1998. It comprises the ASEAN countries and India along with other member and observer members of the ARF. Initially the WPNS was involved only in discussing maritime issues and provided information regarding the same to the naval officers for a better understanding of the maritime issues. But gradually, the forum has been actively involved in shore and sea exercises. There is
another initiative called the Regional Maritime Security Initiative (RMSI) which aims at tackling the maritime threats. It is an informal gathering and is not a result of any treaty or an alliance. Besides all these measures, much needs to be done for better maritime security. The Defence Minister of Singapore remarked at the ARF ‘Confidence Building Measure Conference on Regional Cooperation in Maritime Security in 2005 that the issue of maritime threats can be solved with the primary participation of the littoral countries but other non-littoral countries are equally important in this regard (Ho, 2005).

Operation MALSINDO came up as a result of the US concerns over sea lane security in the Malacca Straits and was a response to the US effort of RMSI in the Malacca Straits. It has 17 members and the navy of each country patrols the territorial waters of its respective country (Ho, 2007).

The Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI)

The United States has recently implemented its ‘Proliferation Security Initiative’ (PSI), calling upon the ‘like-minded states’ to join the programme of ship-boarding and information sharing, with the aim of combating the proliferation of nuclear weapons among so-called ‘rogue states’ (Sakhuja and Forbes, 2005). President George W. Bush announced the ‘Proliferation Security Initiative’, a counter-proliferation programme geared to the suppression of the traffic in unconventional weapons (often called ‘weapons of mass destruction’ or ‘WMDs’) on 31 May 2003. In September 2003, the states then participating in PSI meetings (the United States, Australia, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Spain, and the United Kingdom) set out the ‘Interdiction Principles for the Proliferation Security Initiative’. The key objective of the PSI Principles was to ensure more coordination in impeding and stopping ocean shipments of WMDs, delivery systems, and related materials “to and from states and non-state actors of proliferation concern.” The PSI Principles included a system of interdicting suspect vessels in any part of the world ocean.

According to some analysts (Song, 2007), the Bush administration’s decision to announce the PSI in May 2003, against the backdrop of a noticeable shift in U.S. WMD-related policy, was driven by two key policy motives. First, there was the serious concern over the increasing proliferation of WMD and the geopolitical resolve to take further necessary steps to stop the flow of WMD, in particular, from North Korea. Second, a
growing sense of frustration after December 2002 when Spain, alerted by the U.S. intelligence service, seized a shipment of 15 Scud missiles headed from North Korea to Yemen, but later was forced to permit the shipment to continue due to the lack of authority under international law to detain the vessel carrying the missiles. On 31 May 2003, Bush stated in Krakow, Poland:

> [w]hen weapons of mass destruction or their components are in transit, we must have the means and authority to seize them. So today I announce a new effort to fight proliferation called the Proliferation Security Initiative. The United States and a number of our close allies, including Poland, have begun working on new agreements to search planes and ships carrying suspect cargo and to seize illegal weapons or missile technologies. Over time, we will extend this partnership as broadly as possible to keep the world’s most destructive weapons away from our shores and out of the hands of our common enemies. (cited in Song, 2007)

From the point of view of the United States, India might be an ideal partner in controlling the proliferation of the WMD and the means to deliver them in and around the Indian Ocean. “Given Pakistan’s nuclear proliferation, it would be in India’s interest to join the Proliferation Security Initiative. In addition, with the Indian navy sitting astride the Indian Ocean sea-lanes of communication, India’s joining the Initiative would have military and political significance in that it would broaden the base of the nonproliferation coalition” (Ibid.: 112). While India has not put its cards on the table, since the launching of the PSI in May 2003, it appears that India has been examining both the legal and the geopolitical implications of the Initiative (Chaturvedi, 2007). India, it appears, would like to and make an assessment within the larger context of India’s Nonproliferation Policy and its long-standing commitment to preventing the spread of WMD, but retaining at all costs her autonomy in the international system (Ibid.).

The then U.S. Secretary of State Collin Powell during his visit to New Delhi in March 2004, is said to have persuaded India to join the PSI. In early April 2004, senior officials of both the countries explored the possibility of Indian participation in the PSI and of joining the Nuclear Suppliers Group. It is unlikely that India would not take into account the reaction of a number of Asian states that oppose the Initiative (including
China, Iran, Indonesia, and Malaysia), in case of her joining the same. In addition, as pointed out above, it is far from being clear whether the interdiction of third-country ships on the high seas is legal under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).

In June 2005, India and the United States signed a 10-year defence framework agreement to enhance their defence relationship (www.indianembassy.org/press_release/2005/June/31.htm.) and the very next month they issued a Joint Statement resolving to establish a ‘global partnership’ through increased cooperation on economic issues, on energy and the environment, on democracy and development, on nonproliferation and security, and on high-technology and space. However, there was no mention of India’s participation in the PSI (or otherwise) in either of the two documents. In September 2005, Robert G. Joseph, the Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security, is reported to have said (in the course of a hearing held by the House Committee on International Relations) that through ongoing nonproliferation dialogue the United States and India have discussed, among other things, steps that would lead to India’s endorsement of the PSI Statement of Interdiction Principles. Joseph also mentioned India’s resolve to refrain from the transfer of WMD-related technologies to states that do not have them and to support efforts to limit their spread. The Bush administration, it has been pointed out by some analysts (Song, 2007), has exerted the pressure on India to joint the PSI. The House of Representatives, on July 26, 2006, overwhelmingly approved “the United States and India Nuclear Cooperation Promotion Act of 2006,” in which securing India’s full participation in the PSI and its formal commitment to the Statement of Interdiction Principles are mentioned as part of the policies of the United States with respect to South Asia (Ibid.). The U.S. Senate is of the same view regarding India’s participation in the PSI.

The US claim that PSI principles are full consistent with national legal authorities and, with relevant international law and frameworks has been challanged by many (Vijayalakshmi, 2008). Timothy Perry (2006), for example, has examined at some length the neoconservative cartographic anxieties of Bush administration underlying the literal text of the PSI. His argument is that the manner in which the United States might be forced by the neoconservative intellectuals of statecraft in Bush administration to utilise the PSI in practice could not only blur the jurisdictional boundaries between the ocean
zones, but seriously undermine the customary international law of the sea. Some countries also fear that under the aegis of the PSI some countries which are not favourably disposed to the PSI might be targeted and punished in some form by the Bush administration.

According to K.P. Vijayalakshmi (2008: 349), “The PSI has figured in Indo-US strategic talks since its inception in May 2003. There was a lot of media hype regarding the US putting pressure on India to join the PSI. It has always been emphasized by the US that India should become an active member of PSI and also play a role of ‘regional policeman’...India has been engaging itself in making an assessment on the possible benefits and risks of joining PSI.”

In the post-September 11 scenario, the United States has seen India as an important strategic partner. Both India and the United States have chosen to call the partnership between the two as ‘natural alliance’ (Cohen, 2001). The following statement clearly shows the growing proximity of India and the United States in their fight against terrorism jointly. To quote from the Joint Statement of US-India Defence Policy Group,

The strategic situation in the world has changed dramatically in recent years. Global terrorism, state sponsors of terrorism, and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction are the key threats to international peace and security. The U.S. and India are drawn together in an effort to deal with these new circumstances. As a result, President Bush and Prime Minister Vajpayee have re-defined the U.S-India relationship: democracy, common principles, and shared interest are the foundation of our new strategic partnership (2003: Internet Source).

The United States has also started perceiving India as a strategic partner owing to India’s location, which is surrounded by radical Islamic elements in South, East and Southeast Asia. On the other hand, India also finds that one of the major geopolitical advantages of coming closer to the US would be that New Delhi would be in a better position to influence the US policy on the long-standing problem of trans-border terrorism in South Asia, especially the role of Pakistan (see Weeks, 2003; Winner, 2003).
IMPACT OF 9/11 ON CHINA’S FOREIGN POLICY

China has been actively participating in the war against terrorism. It has set up bilateral anti-terrorism consultation mechanisms with the United States, Russia, Pakistan and India. At the regional level, China has been involved in anti-terror efforts through the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and APEC. The SCO is involved in fighting against ethnic separatism, religious extremism, and international terrorism. China is also cooperating with ASEAN against terrorism. China is cooperating with ASEAN law enforcement agencies within ASEAN 10+1 and ASEAN 10+3. At the global level, China is party to as many as ten anti-terrorism conventions (Jinying, 2004).

September 11 has adversely affected China’s perceptions, policies and actions in Southeast Asia and the United States. After September 11 Southeast Asia has become even more prone to major power rivalries. China feels that the key American intentions in Southeast Asia are not to fight terrorism but to contain China’s growing influence. As mentioned in the previous chapter, China is making efforts to engage Southeast Asian countries more and more through economic diplomacy (Banlaoi, 2003).

China has had its own advantages and disadvantages of September 11 attacks. Malik (2002: Internet Source) argues that China has been affected by September 11 rather profoundly. In response to the terrorist attacks, the United States launched its counteroffensive and increased its presence in the periphery of China. This has raised alarms for China. Moreover, India and Japan are evolving as great powers (Malik, 2002: Internet Source). China is no doubt supportive of America’s efforts to counter terrorism and is cooperating on this front. However, China does not agree entirely with the ways in which the Bush administration is going about ‘winning’ the war against terrorism.

As far as Southeast Asia is concerned, China differs with the approach adopted by the United States. For China, America’s dealing with the issue of terrorism in Southeast Asia is Zenus-faced. As mentioned in the previous chapter, China is heavily dependent on the Straits of Malacca for its energy supplies. Considering this, China has to ensure the safety of sea-lanes of communications. In addition to this, China and Southeast Asia share a lot many common interests as again mentioned in the previous chapter. China appreciates American attempts to check the threat of terrorism. On the
other hand, China fears that the United States might try to incline Southeast Asia towards itself, pulling it away from China (Roy, 2006: Internet Source). China feels that the United States might also try to expand and enlarge its economic and geopolitical interests under the pretext of war on terrorism (Ibid.; Malik, 2002: Internet Source).

Views of China and the United States do not converge on the issue of WMD proliferation and missile defence. In addition to this, Beijing feels that the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) has been completely sidelined in the war against terrorism. China has been active in Central Asia through SCO for its energy security needs. After September 11, the United States has been involved in cultivating unilateral relations with Central Asian Republics, thus, sideling the role of China in the region. India and Japan are becoming increasingly important globally after September 11 and this appears to be bothering China a great deal (Ibid.).

However, after 9/11, China has moderated its anti-America impulses and is making efforts to work in collaboration with the United States. China has signed most of the international conventions on opposing terrorism, including the ‘International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism’. Chinese officials regularly consult the US officials on the issue of freezing assets linked to terrorist groups. China also appears inclined to support the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) provided it is carried in accordance with the due provisions of international law (Roy, 2006: Internet Source).

CONCLUSION

The ‘Global War on Terrorism’ is in progress and continues to derive its strength and legitimacy from the following geopolitical reasoning/script preferred by the United States of America under the Bush administration: 9/11 attacks should be interpreted as a ‘declaration of war’ by the uncivilized ‘evil-doers’ against an America representing universal values. In the dominant geopolitical discourse emanating from Washington, the ultimate objective of the US lead war against terrorism is to rid the world of evil through a responsible and resolute answer to the barbarian act. The first formal statement of this terror geopolitics was President Bush’s address to the joint session of Congress nine days after the attacks, in which, he seemed to echo the language of the Truman
Doctrine: “Every nation, in every region, now has a decision to make. Either you are with us, or you are with the terrorists. From this day forward, any nation that continues to harbour or support terrorism will be regarded by the United States as a hostile regime.”

The chapter made an attempt to argue and illustrate that the events of 11 September have set in motion a rethinking of the military priorities in Washington. Thomas Barnett’s ‘New Pentagon Map’ reveals a redrawing of the spatial categories and the reinvention of a whole new generation of threats and dangers through a whole new region of potential danger (the so-called Non-Integrating Gap) where a third of world’s population lives outside the reach of globalization. What is currently unfolding in Asia and beyond is a neo-liberal geopolitics that pulls together various strands of realism and liberalism in ways hitherto considered unthinkable. Thomas Barnett, by partitioning the ‘Globe’ into Functional Core and Gap, makes an attempt to collapse the mega complexity of the entire world into white (tame) and black (wild) zones.

We have argued in this chapter that the events of September 11 have no doubt posed a serious challenge before humanity (or the so-called international community) and it is equally beyond doubt that an appropriate response to the threat of terrorism calls for truly multilateral cooperation at the global, regional, and sub-regional levels. The unfortunate events have cast their dark shadow on India-ASEAN relations as well and given rise to imperative for new geopolitical alignments and strategic alliances.

Of particular concern to both India and Southeast Asian countries is the potential threat from maritime terrorism; a complex phenomena with wide-ranging implications. Al Qaeda’s maritime fleet, the group’s intention as well as the capability to target maritime assets is well known and documented. Terrorist groups with maritime capabilities dominate the littorals of the Indian Ocean rim and are now in the process of widening their presence and refining their profile of operations. How this would translate into sea-lane security and shipping safety would be interesting to observe in the coming years in the region. What is beyond any measure of doubt is the necessity on the part of India and the rest of South and South East Asia to cooperate.

It was noted in this chapter that post-9/11, the US has pioneered a major security initiative called the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI), which is a policy of pre-
emptive interdiction on high seas. We have argued that even though the PSI looks like a pragmatic policy solution to the security threats posed by the proliferation, its legal ramifications and considerations must be examined along with an assessment of possible alternatives and policy options. A neo-liberal geopolitics, as articulated by Thomas Barnett, by placing the ‘South East Asian Rimland’ with the ‘volatile’ Gap in general and encircling Indonesia as a ‘Flash Point’ in particular, provides, consciously or unconsciously, a justification for an aggressive pursuit of Proliferation Security Initiative.

Comprehensive maritime security in the Indian Ocean region, we had concluded in the previous chapter, calls for pro-active partnerships and co-operation in diverse fields including multimodal transportation and logistic services among all users of the Straits of Malacca, including the governments and the corporate world. Whereas the key message that seems to emerge loud and clear from this chapter is that as the violence and chaos in Afghanistan and Iraq powerfully indicate, the seductions of militarism need to be resisted by insisting that real people live in the imagined so-called gap/wild zones, people who might be better served by political action and diplomatic-peaceful resolution of conflicts. Peace comes by peaceful means rather than the extension of war (especially the war against terrorism) as the fundamental social relationship of our time. Failure to co-operate through multilateral networks is likely to facilitate the neo-liberal-imperial constructions of ‘vacuums’ and ‘disconnections’ in the Indian Ocean region and provide at the same time pseudo-scientific justifications for ‘interventions’ of various kinds by the hegemonic forces and impulses. India and ASEAN have to be at the forefront of diplomatic initiatives (including naval diplomacy) that prevent such scenarios from happening.