PREFACE

South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation is a relatively new entry in a bunch of regional organizations. It's nature and objectives differ from those regional organizations, which came into existence after the end of the second World War. This difference from the old regional organizations has given an individual entity and identity to the SAARC. Thus it's impact on its creators (Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka) and on the world politics was and is something different from that of the other regional organizations. SAARC is directly related to the government and welfare of the society of the member states. It cooperates and coordinates with nations, regional and international organizations in the matters of welfare of SAARC region-society. SAARC's inter-action with the Govt. of its member states and particularly with the Ministry of External Affairs has invoked a deep curiosity in the researcher and there onwards the researcher under took the study of SAARC which involved the researcher more and more in studying the fine aspects of the relationship between the SAARC and India's Foreign Policy and ultimately led the researcher to undertake this research work.

South Asia, the land of ancient surviving civilization is in the grip of political and social turmoil. This land was under the British domain till the second world war. Many forces brought about the changes in this land but the affinity among its people remained in their sub-conscious mind and therefore the South Asian society divided by the international borders into many states but their history and culture bound them together. The heritage of Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Nepali, Bhutanhi and Sinhalis is one and the same. Today their national boundaries divide them but if we study the ethnic and linguistic aspects of these states we find they are correlated with each other. Bengali is national language of Bangladesh and it is one of the national
languages of India. Urdu is national language of Pakistan and it is one of the principal languages of India.

The influence of British Political system and the dominance of English language on the member states of SAARC is seen in the structuring and functioning of the SAARC. British rules and regulation enacted during British Raj in the 4 member states are included in their respective constitutions and implemented in reality.

Ever increasing importance of regional organizations in the world politics led South Asian states to safeguard the interest and upgrade their standard of living made the conscious leaders of the South Asian States to establish the SAARC. SAARC undertook the action plans to eradicate illiteracy and poverty of the region and improve the medical, communication and other such facilities which help them to enhance their standard of living. The aims and objectives of the SAARC made it something distinguish from other regional organizations which worked in the spheres of defense or economic upgradation of the member states but SAARC has given priority to social welfare activities and thus it is more humanitarian than any other regional organization in the world. This humanitarian aspect of the SAARC linked it with the United Nations and India. This humanitarian aspect is a key factor around which the impact of SAARC on its member states and particularly on India offers an opportunity to study them in 'an impact of the SAARC on India's foreign policy.' Other impacts of the SAARC such as economical, political, diplomatic, educational, scientific, ethnic etc. are studied in the context of humanitarian and social studies. This is a new phenomena which shifted the aims and objectives of regional organization from militarily, economic, industrial centres to the social and humanitarian centres. This shift in the centres of operation makes the SAARC as a new path-setter to work for the welfare of its member
states and the humanity at large. This led the researcher to undertake this research work.

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( Vidya S. Raut )