SOUTH ASIA: NEIGHBOURS, NEIGHBOURHOODS AND INDIAN SECURITY
Geo-strategically, South Asian sub-continent with India being the largest nation measured on the various parameters of growth and development, has a chequered profile since time immemorial. The history of South-Asia reminds us of a Snake-Ladder game, with every step towards the peace process unfortunately leads us to new centrifugal configurations threatening peace and stability in the region. Added to this, the developments in the post-Cold War era marked by the nuclearization of South-Asia and the tragedy of 9/11 has altered the South-Asian security system, redefining and reinterpreting the security concerns in the region. Keeping in the mind, mainly the Indo-Pak historical trajectories of conflict and cooperation in the region, this chapter examines India's security and strategic policy within the conceptual and practical perspectives developed over the past decades. It analyses Indian security concerns in the South Asian region since 1947 from idealistic to realistic paradigm.

Despite common cultural elements, the region has yet to attain any semblance of unity in diversity. The unending tension between India and Pakistan has made the region as one of the most volatile regions of the world. The most potent threats to the national security of India in the environment to South Asia emenates from the complex interplay of domestic, regional and international factors, displayed in the form of Islamic extremism, ethnic conflict, communal fundamentalism, Maoist agitation and terrorist insurgency etc.

The chapter goes on to examine India's security and strategic concerns at its implementation level, alongwith scrutinizing the validity of the old traditional security and defence doctrines. Compared to the rest of the world, the South Asian region has unexpected levels of poverty, human deprivations, population pressure and environmental degradation. At the same time India cannot referred to be a mute spectator over ever-mounting
insurgencies, cross-border drug-trafficking, arms smuggling and intra-regional conflicts fomented by religious fundamentalist and anti-social elements. The challenge India faces therefore is to balance the regional security considerations that could bring about sustainable peace in the region. A friendly posture within pragmatic parameters in tune with national security interests should be interwove in India's regional policies.

**Indo-Pak Relations : A Snake-Ladder Game :**

The immediate neighbour state in the front was termed as *ari* (enemy) stated by Kautilya, a great Indian political thinker of 400 B.C. This terminology is valid in the fullest sense even today in the case of Indo-Pak relations. History of Indo-Pak relation depicts a Snake Ladder Game. Every step towards the game foreign relation between the two countries ultimately becomes the victim of poisonous prejudice and skepticism inspite of a good start. The legacy of communal antagonism, mistrust, suspicion and insecurity which originated before partition did not subside with the creation of India and Pakistan as two distinct nations.

Partition of India was accompanied by unfortunate problematic circumstances related to the division of assets and liabilities, demarcation of boundaries both of land and water and basically the feeling of suspicion and distrust which got aggravated following partition.\(^1\) The communal riots and large scale migration of both sides widen the differences between the two communities and the two countries.\(^2\) This Muslim, Hindu and Sikh hostility precipitated in from of orgy of carnage and savagery that consumed tens and thousands of life and loss of property on both sides. Instead of joining together in celebration of this great victory over European colonialism, the people of South-Asia witnessed a genocide imbued with hatred and conflict. This was communal issue and the two countries failed to accomodate diversities, which went on to influence the
course of relations between the two. Moreover the political system which the two countries chose, also led to a gulf between the two. Pakistan always looked at India as Hindu India, ignoring altogether its secular character, while the existence of Islamic state of Pakistan was bound to raise some misgivings in the Indian circle.

The political power was transferred to the leaders who had undergone a long period of confrontation, strife and struggle. The memories of the cruelty hovered on the minds of the new statesmen of the country. The events preceding partition has coloured their views responsible for putting different policy goals by the leaders of Pakistan. The suggestions offered by Lt. Gen. (Retd.) Nishat Ahmed of Pakistan on Jammu & Kashmir was revealing. He said "my sincere suggestion to our neighbour is that they cannot keep a people subjugated permanently through the use of force.. India needs to rethink as to the future that holds for it in Kashmir with Punjab. The two situations are totally different. In the long run the Punjab solution will not work, you may suppress a people's quest for freedom through brutal use of force temporarily but it will not alter the nature of Muslim communities differences with you."

What Ahmed suggested further was enough to reveal the mindset of those responsible to decide the destiny of a neighbour. He said that such a traumatic surgery (Partition) was unlikely to heal without complications and the British left India and Pakistan to deal with the consequences of this enormous and hastily carried out operation which resulted in the death of half a million to 1 million people and another 2 million were forced to migrate. This seriously poisoned the relation between the two sides at the very outset and it would have taken two people decades of peaceful living together to overcome the trauma. But the bilateral relations became more acrimonious due to the award of Gurdaspur to India by the Boundary Commission. This enables India to move its forces into Kashmir and
resulted into the first Indo-Pak War within a few months of India and Pakistan gaining their independence.\(^8\)

There are also people and organizations in Pakistan who have a dream to unfurl the Pakistan Flag on the Red Fort at Delhi. General Gazi had promised during one of the general elections that if the Islam Jamuri Ittehad (IJI) led by him was returned to power, its government would unfurl the Pakistani Flag at the Red Fort in New Delhi. The Leader of the Opposition in the Senate Khursid Ahmed who was also the Naib Amir of Jamaat-e-Islami to have expressed the similar sentiments.\(^9\) This psyche of a large section of people of Pakistan has also not allowed their leaders to develop and maintain good relations with India. Historically Pakistan since its birth took upon herself the role of "protector" of Islam and Muslims. They have exploited this factor in the field of International Politics. Indeed they left no stone untouched in making India feel that Muslims living in India are not getting a fair deal.

Therefore, whenever communal disturbances occur in India, Pakistan always tries to establish that minorities, particularly Muslims are not safe in "Hindu India". Pakistan’s proclivity to assume the role of guardianship is respect to Hindu-Muslim is one of the major irritants between India and Pakistan.\(^10\)

The issue of Kashmir has also proved to be constant irritant between the two countries. During UN-General Assembly debate in 1966 the Indian spokesman remarked that Kashmir was but a symptom of a deep malaise in their neighbourly relations.\(^11\)

Infact till today Pakistan has not accepted the accession of Jammu & Kashmir to Indian Union. Once Jinnah told a deputation of the J & K Muslim Conference that "Kashmir is in my pocket" because he had thought that Kashmir being a Muslim majority state would opt for
This mindset of Pakistan has not changed at all and the leadership of Pakistan while changing their language and strategy on J & K at different point of time want to see dreams of Jinnah fulfilled.

J&K became an integral part of the Indian Union in 1947 through final accession in accordance to the legal framework determined by the British Parliament for the independence of the Indian subcontinent. But Pakistan refused to accept the accession of J&K and considered that it was based on fraud and violence. Pakistan continues to look upon the issue as the core of India's relations with Pakistan. This is manifested by Pakistan's pronouncements and its repeated aggression against India. Pakistan's attempt in 1947 to capture J&K using military force was successfully resisted by the Kashmiris with the support of Indian army but Pakistan could hold a portion under its occupation. Again in 1965 Pakistan's attempt to capitalize on local disturbance to foster insurgency led to war with India, ending with Tashkent Declaration of 1965. Once again in 1971 such attempts led to Pakistan's defeat and loss of its eastern wing and creation of Independent Bangladesh.

In complete contravention of Tashkent Declaration of 1965 and the Shimla Agreement of 1972, signed after two wars, Pakistan which still aspires to wrest J&K by force, changed its strategy and embarked on a programme of sponsoring terrorism in the state. Since 1989 with over 20,000 people killed, continues its proxy war against India. Even after the Kashmiris voted for democracy, elected their own government in 1996 and signalling their disenchantment with terrorist violence in 2004, Pakistan has not given up its policy of trying to disrupt the free democratic policy of J&K. Disappointed with the response of the Kashmiris to its calls for a "holy" war in J&K, Pakistan has taken recourse to sending in battle hardened Pakistani, Afghans and other mercenaries who have distinguished themselves only by drenching the soil with the blood of the
very people whose interests they claim to champion in the name of religion.\textsuperscript{14}

The period of 1989-90 was marked by the targeted killing of government officials, media personnel, members of judiciary, minority Kashmir Pandit (Hindu) community and Kashmiri Muslims who dared to question the terror tactics and excesses of the terrorists. One immediate effect between January and April 1990 was the resignation of the duly elected state government, the massive exodus of nearly 2,50,000 Kashmir Pandits find over 50,000 Kashmiri Muslim from the valley with the Pandits settling in refugee camps in Jammu, Delhi and other cities in India.\textsuperscript{15}

Infact, for two and half decades, a period that saw both military and civilian governments, Pakistan favoured \textit{Jehad} (holy war) as an instrument of foreign policy, Pakistani newspapers at least the English media are full of commentaries on the "Bleed India" strategy adopted by Islamabad in the last 12 years. Some of the writings are so candid that India needs to no longer harp on evidence on the ground. A commentary on the dilemma faced by Pakistan, in the English daily \textit{The Nation} by M.A. Niazi, best illustrated the point. It says: "Pakistan had followed a policy of "bleed India" and of engaging its forces there, by all out support for the indigenous Kashmir freedom struggle or Jehad. This was one of the reasons given for abandoning the Taliban to preserve the Kashmir policy. India made that impossible by the threats of going to war in six months."\textsuperscript{16} Hijacking of Indian Airlines Flight IC-814 by terrorists for hostages’ deal of Kandahar in December 1999 also exposed Pakistan thoroughly. What is abundantly clear is that the hijacking carried out by five professionally trained desperadoes almost all of them the Pakistani nationals, was a Harkat-ul-Mujahideen operation in which the Pakistani state had collusive hand. Such a fear of terrorism seemed designed to serve several objectives.
The first and largely symbolic, objective was to humiliate the Indian state, demonstrate its softness and helplessness in the face of low-intensity terrorism in the guerilla mode. The second was to raise the level of Indian and international concerns over the Kashmir issue and also to raise the cost to Indian of holding on to its part of J&K in the face of international alienation and Pakistan aided extremism and terrorism.\textsuperscript{17}

In 1999 over 1,000 Pakistan based militants and Pakistani regulars crossed the line of control into the Kargil area and seized Indian army outposts in a surprise attack.\textsuperscript{18} The Indian army regrouped, driving the Pakistani forces back. As the Indians attacked, Pakistan prepared its intermediate to range missiles for nuclear strikes, perhaps to deter Indians from attacking Pakistani territory. The US diplomacy helped persuade Pakistanis to pull its troops out of India and temporarily head off the full scale war.\textsuperscript{19} Months later, General Pervez Musharraf, widely held to be the architect of the Kargil offensive deposed Nawaz Sharif. Tensions mounted again in December 2001, when five militants attacked the Indian Parliament forcing India to post its army along the Line of Control (LoC). Pakistan responded massing it forces and under international pressure, announcing a crack down on Islamic militants infiltrating from Pakistan to Kashmir.\textsuperscript{20}

Even in this prevailing situation leaders of both the countries were found engaged in Confidence Building -Measures (CBMs). With the coming to power of the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) government of Manmohan Singh, India-Pakistan relations have once again got off to a good start. The meeting between Manmohan Singh and Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf on September 24, 2004 in New York has given cause for optimism. Singh told the media that the Pakistani leader spoke with great sincerity and wanted to correct the notion that he was a man with a “unifocal vision”. He added that during the talks both of them wanted
“across of the board progress on issues”. He described the outcome of the talks as "very good”. He further said that his meeting with Musharraf was "a significant step forward” as well as "historic in more ways than one". The Indian Prime Minister went on to add that the joint statement issued after his talks with the Pakistani President committed the two countries "to advance beyond what was agreed to in the January 6, 2004 statement both in terms of discussing CBMs as well as moving to discuss complex issues relating 10 the state of J&K. 21

Earlier also on many occasions history has witnessed a good start-off relationship between India and Pakistan. Even in the recent past, Gujral and Vajpayee governments of India had adopted a set of confidence-building measures. Lahore Declaration of 1997, Vajpayee visit to Minar-e-Pakistan and "bus-diplomacy" were directed towards the goal of CBMs. These steps were also considered significant during that point of time. And at a press conference in Lahore, Vajpayee had also said that his visit was “brief” but "substantive."22 But these steps became victims of prejudice, hate and mistrust and in place of good will and friendly relations earned Kargil war from Pak side in 1999.23 Having moved to the brink of war in 2002-03, the two countries once again had to step back to make peace and a new start to resolve their differences. July 2001 Agra summit is a testimony to this fact. Indian Foreign Secretary Shashank and his Pakistani Counterpart Riaz Khokar agreed to step back to 1998 and pick up the threads from the composite dialogue in February 2004 interrupted by the Kargil war. These peace initiatives by both the countries were once again to construct the road map for the composite dialogue.24

However, the later developments in Indo-Pak relations can be explained in the context of perceived threat to the peace arising out of the nuclear capabilities acquired by both the countries (India and Pakistan) after 1989 and also in the backdrop of Kargil war of 1999 and terrorist
attack of September 11 2001 on America and also on Indian Parliament in December 2001. These incidents compelled USA to pressurize Pakistan to adopt a tough stand against terrorism. Under such pressure from Washington, Musharraf ordered a crackdown against Al-Qaeda elements said to be in hiding in tribal areas bordering Afghanistan. Pakistan physically handed over 500 odd members of the Al-Qaeda and Taliban, who were caught in crackdown across Pakistan He banned a number of sectarian and fundamentalists groups reputed to have links with terrorist groups and have agreed to a ceasefire with India. His announcement that Islamabad no longer insisted on a United Nations-resolution on Kashmir was also an important development.25 Tough going of Pak against terrorist and Jehadi elements in Pakistan which were earlier getting all kind of support from political military establishment of Pak was certainly a new and welcome development.

This new development provided space for a new chapter of CBMs between the two neighbours. For the first time in the history of relations between the two countries Pakistan initiated a unilateral ceasefire on November 26, 2003. After initial hiccups Islamabad accepted all the confidence building measures proposed by New Delhi including the ones related to a bus service between Muzaffarabad, the capital of Pakistan Occupied Kashmir (PoK) and Srinagar and the revival of the ferry service between Karachi and Mumbai and the train link between Sindh and Rajasthan. On the economic front, Pakistan spearheaded the campaign for the adoption of the South Asia Free Trade Agreement (SAFTA) and actively engaged in convincing a reluctant Bangladesh to endorse the framework perhaps with an eye on the SAARC summit. Hardliners in Pakistan were unhappy over the government's stance on SAFTA and saw it as a major reversal of its earlier position of having no trade with India until the Kashmir issue was resolved. Whatever be the motives, Pakistan moved
at a peace no one had dreamt of before.\textsuperscript{26} Infact in the post-September 11 era, there was a growing worry among political parties, the intelligentsia and civil society that after Iraq it could be Pakistan's turn especially in view of its status as a nuclear weapon state. The common refrain was that it would be wiser to make peace with India than provide an excuse to the US and its allies to intervene in the internal affairs of the country. Ever since the Pakistani government decided to change its policy on Afghanistan within days of the American President George Bush’s statement that "either you are with us or them," there was a furious debate in a section of Pakistani civil society on the need to rethink seriously the Kashmir policy.\textsuperscript{27}

It is against this backdrop that one would have to evaluate the shift in nuance on the Kashmir issue made by Musharraf in his interview to Reuters. Pervez, Hoodbhoy, a nuclear physicist at a Quaid-e-Azam University in Islamabad and a peace activist, was all praise for the pragmatism of Musharraf while talking about Pakistan’s willingness to look beyond the UN resolutions on Kashmir in the quest for a solution.\textsuperscript{28} “It is true that plebiscite was indeed the solution mutually agreed upon in 1948 and that India had reneged on a solemn commitment. But the passage of five decades and drastically changed geo-political circumstances demand a reappraisal. Today, plebiscite is no longer the obvious way of deter mining the wishes of the people of J&K. For example, it clearly excludes a major section of Kashmiris who would opt for independence today but which in 1948, may not have wanted it .. More frightening it the likelihood of a plebiscite igniting communal passion leading to horrific Gujarat style bloodbaths across the subcontinent. Moreover, at a practical level there is no agency including the UN, which is able and willing to implement a task that all nations (except Pakistan) see impossibly difficult. Therefore to insist on the plebiscite is the surest way of guaranteeing that a
bloody stand-off continues", he writes in *Chowk* an Internet magazine dedicated to the promotion of peace between India and Pakistan. In effect, this move of Musharraf was mean to be a preparatory stage in which inflamed nerves were soothed and the high-pitched, decades-old rhetoric gets toned down. While the division of Kashmir is unfortunate it is better to accept this reality rather than live with endless suffering that has consumed nearly 90,000 lives since 1987. Hoodbhoy argued.

Mushahid Hussain, former Information Minister of Pakistan also asserted that the dialogue process would not be derailed. Hussain besides being Secretary General of the ruling Pakistan Muslim League is a member of the Senate and Chairs the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Upper House. He said that the people of Pakistan had endorsed the peace process. As an illustration he mentioned the effusive welcome given to the Indian Cricket team in three different parts of Pakistan. US Secretary of State Colin Powell had also expressed the hope during his visit in March 2004 that "the spirit that we have seem, in the last few days affects the whole comprehensive dialogue process between the two countries." Out of the developments as explained above, India-US relations have been exceptionally warm in recent past these can be said as perhaps the best ever. The US was initially unhappy with India's decision to back out from dispatching troops to Iraq. Even then the armies of both the countries have been holding joint military exercises regularly. The last joint exercise between the air forces of the two countries was held in February 2004 in India. The improvement, through the Next Steps in Strategic Partnership with India, which includes expanded bilateral cooperation in civilian nuclear activities, civilian space programmes and trade in high technology, is being seen as a sign of further closeness. However, severe US restrictions are still in force on the of dual use technologies to India. They were imposed on India following India’s first nuclear test in 1974.
But the warm feeling developed in the above backdrop between U.S. and India had to experience cold wave due to some developments arising out of the decisions of the US. These developments also had adverse effects on Indo-Pak relations.

The decision of the Bush administration to grant Pakistan the status of a Major Non-NATO Ally (MNNA) obviously came as a surprise to the Indian establishment, which felt that the Bush administration has gone back on certain assurances. Some were even disturbed by the US waiver of the existing sanctions on Pakistan imposed purportedly on the larger interests of democracy. Theoretically an enhancement of military cooperation with the US on accounts of MNNA status was to be a big boon to Pakistan.\(^{32}\) The invoking of Pressler Amendment against Pakistan in 1999, consequently due to the evidence of its acquiring nuclear weapons capability led to a ban on all military sales to Pakistan and the termination of US Pakistan defence cooperation. A ban was imposed on the training of Pakistani military officers in the exchange of visits by military officers were curtailed, equipment in pipeline (F-16s, three naval aircraft and so on) were frozen and a ban was imposed even on the supply of spare parts for equipment sold to Pakistan before 1990. Pakistan ceased to be eligible for concessional military supplies. There was an unannounced ban on exchange of visits by scientists working in the nuclear and military establishments Advisories were issued to all US educational institutions and research laboratories to exercise care and caution against Pakistani scientists seeking admissions or invitations in respect of subject relating to nuclear and missile development. But things changed after Pakistan’s elevation in to a MNNA status. Here it is important to note that Pakistan has been one of the closest allies of Washington since the early 1950s having been part of American military groupings such as the South East
Asian Treaty Organisation (SEATO) and the Central Treaty Organisation (CENTO).  

India’s security policy vis-à-vis Pakistan broadly seems to focus on maintaining conventional and non-conventional deterrence capabilities, and on supporting international efforts to monitor Pakistani nuclear weapons. There is a consensus that war is not an option. In so far as the proxy war in J & K is concerned, majority opinion regards that the best external policy option is domestic policy. While some steps have been taken, the Government of India should step up the momentum to resolve the J & K autonomy issue at an date. The recommendation of the J & K state Autonomy Committee (1999) could be a starting point for expediting negotiations with mainstream Kashmiri political parties, as has been demonstrated in recent past by the moves of UPA Government.

Contrary to earlier attitudes of denial, there is a growing perception that Pakistan faces a serious threat from Islamic fundamentalism and associated terrorism. India cannot, therefore, benefit from portraying Pakistan only as the perpetrator and India as the victim. India needs to encourage Pakistan to view terrorism as a collective danger to both countries. This will also improve India’s image with the Pakistani business and middle class. In this context, India should continue to press for greater sharing of information and transparency from the Pakistani establishment, including its armed forces, to address the threat.

However, India today stands “strategically diminished” as a result of flawed foreign policy formulations especially in last seven years. Two Indian PMs of different political dispensations allowed themselves to submit to US strategic dictates of adopting unrealistic and somewhat appeasement policies towards Pakistan even when India was being subjected to incessant Pakistan-sponsored proxy war and terrorist attacks.
no longer confined to Kashmir, but also to heartland India. India’s strong retaliatory policies as an imperative of India’s national security were stymied by US pressures because of its Afghanistan considerations and Pakistan weighing more heavily than India in US strategic calculus. India should dispense with the Pakistan-centric South Asian foreign policies, as American interlocutors suggests, Pakistan even under a combination of a rabid Mullah-cum-Pakistan Army dictatorship cannot pose more military threats to India than it has. Let us take care of Pakistani’s stability and India should concentrate more on the rest of South Asia.

**Relations With Smaller Neighbours:**

Historically, since independence India has struggled to maintain a balanced place in the world as an old civilization and a new nation in hostile neighbourhood. Approach towards the neighbourhood countries has been encapsulated into the agenda of promoting the cause of developing nations. In this context according to some observers, despite sound policy formulations India has been consistently strategically deficit in terms of safeguarding India's national security interests vis-a-vis its neighbouring nations. It has been said that the idealistic and morally driven non-alignment foreign policy devoid of a strategic vision during the Cold War years was a heavy millstone that robbed India of a vibrant foreign policy in securing national interests in South-Asia.

The latest glaring example of India's “strategic deficit” manoeuvre by India while voting against Sri-Lanka on the US-inspired UN Resolution on Human Rights violations and war crimes in Sri-Lanka's war against LTTE which was an armed militia engaged in a war against Sri-Lanka. Moreover India's strategic stature has been of late diminished for the reasons of political survival of the condition Government in New Delhi.
as is perceived as caving-in to the domestic political pressures in terms of its foreign policy formulations related to Bangladesh and Sri-Lanka.

Bangladesh is of crucial strategic significance to India and out of India's strategic partnerships the Bangladesh-India Strategic Partnership should be an over-riding strategic imperative of India's foreign policy in South-Asia. From the points of view of our territorial integrity and security as well as economic and energy security, Bangladesh is a very important power on our eastern border. Geographically it dominates our lines of communication with the northeast, a valuable source of oil and other commodity resources for the rest of India. The Machiavellian minds that delineated the territories into India and Pakistan at the time of Partition, ensured that northeast is connected to the rest of India by a narrow corridor, hemmed in by three nations. Of these Bangladesh on the south is the biggest. In military terms, the entire corridor is within artillery range from any of the three countries, notably from the northwestern salient of Bangladesh. The entire southern border of most of the northeastern region has Bangladesh on the southern border. This part of the border is easy to cross and any meaningful border control requires the cooperation of the two countries. Bangladesh also suffers from this vulnerability with India dominating its entire land border on all sides except for 197 km in remote southeast corner bordering Myanmar. So both India and Bangladesh will always have over riding territorial security considerations in their relationship. This by itself becomes a major imperative for building friendly and equitable relations between the two countries. And it is not the responsibility of only one country.

To hasten the freedom for the country, our founding fathers had accepted the partition of India and the creation of the two wings of Pakistan. The idea of Pakistan was mooted originally in the erstwhile East Pakistan, the present day Bangladesh. Bangladeshis have a strong sense of
Bangla nationality in addition to the unity of identity that is part of the very concept of Islam. It had been a part of Pakistan for over two decades, where schoolbooks have been doctored to show India and Hindus as historical enemies of Pakistan and Muslims. Entire generations have been fed on these fictions. So there is a historical element still surviving there which continues to perceive India's relations with Bangladesh only in terms of Hindu-Muslim equation, despite India having more Muslims as citizens, living in amity with other religionists, than these two countries. Bangladesh as a new nation has a greater sense of insecurity further kindled by external agencies as well as radical Islamic elements. In India also we have sections of population, which view relations between these two breakaway products of partition, in terms of Hindu-Muslim antagonism, which aggravates the sense of insecurity.

Some of the projects that are contemplated as part of our ‘look east’ policy like India-Bangladesh-Myanmar pipeline, the India-Myanmar-Thailand road link project and India's river transit through Bangladesh have strong energy and economic security contents. The internal insurgency movements in northeast have economic backwardness as a major cause. All these projects are essential for the development of northeast as they open the eastern gateway to the whole ASEAN region. Many of these projects require Bangladesh's participation or involvement. And these projects can be inclusive of Bangladesh and immensely benefit it as well. Unfortunately, narrow considerations have clouded Bangladesh's perceptions on this.

In the pursuance of India's national interest and India as the larger neighbour it becomes incumbent for India to respect the political and strategic sensibilities of Bangladesh and of these Bangladesh political leaders who espouse similar stakes on India. Lack of foresight and anticipated foreign policy planning led to the recent disaster of West-
Bengal Chief Minister dropping out of the PM's visit to Bangladesh and stalling of the Teesta river water sharing negotiations. Further persistence in this trend can lend to irreparable foreign policy losses on our vital eastern flank.

Sri-Lanka comes into prominence on two counts. The first has been outsourcing of Indian foreign policy to Washington while succumbing to US pressures giving the impression of being typecasted as a mere camp follower of US policies. Second time depicts a prime example where Indian national security considerations are set aside and a foreign policy formulation is adopted because if it had not been done so the DMK in Tamil Nadu would have withdrawn from the ruling coalition in New Delhi. The resultant strategic loss to India can be guaged from the fact that both of India's military adversaries have been intent on weaning away Bangladesh and Sri Lanka from friendly postures towards India. Notably both Pakistan and China stood by Sri-Lanka's side against the United States on the Human Rights violation UN Resolution.

This trend subsists even to Nepal and Maldives in recent times. Nepal as a strategic buffer-state shielding hundreds of kilometres of India's northern peripheries from Chinese strategic presence was gifted away by India's flawed foreign policies arising from perceptional misreading of Nepal's domestic political dynamics. The Nepalese Maoists courtesy India's "strategic deficit" foreign policy, were facilitated and handed on an Indian plate to emerge as a dominant actor in Nepal's political dynamics, something which they could not achieve in ten years of armed conflict against the Nepalese State. In the process, China was by default allowed to have a substantial presence in Nepal and more crucially on India's doorsteps opposite Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand besides West Bengal.
Strategically, China and Pakistan have gained in Maldives where an Indian foreign policy callously oblivious to India's strategic interest allowed the India friendly President Nauheed to be displaced by a dubious civil coup. India had years back indulged in a military intervention in the Maldives to secure its national interest. Now that India is much stronger, there was no earthly reason as to why Maldives was allowed to slip away from India's strategic influence.

In the last five years or so, India's foreign policy in South-Asia, under American prodding has led Indian think-tank to get obsessed with Pakistan. It is high time that India's foreign policy planners ignore Pakistan from then strategic calculus and should concentrate in a focus manner to improve and enhance its relationships with Afghanistan Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Sri-Lanka, Myanmar and the Maldives. The political stability of these countries is more critical for a South-Asian security environment than pandering to an inflated egoist state like militarized Pakistan.

From the national security analysis point of view of India-Afghanistan has been main beading ground for terrorist mercenaries operating in J & K. As long as remnants of Taliban actively collaborate with Pakistan is drug-trafficking and illicit trade in arms, India’s security will be directly affected. It is important of India to restore its traditionally close ties with Afghanistan with a pro India leadership there. India’s Afghan policy would also benefit from consultation with Iran, CAS, Russia and US.

As far as Sri Lanka is concerned, even in post-civil war phase today, still in its threat perception the only threat it perceives is from India. Sri Lanka’s security interest has been and shall be to counter-balance Indian either by having very good relations with China or USA or both. In the past, it has skilfully utilised SAARC forum for its benefit as well as for
anti-Indian diplomacy. India’s state in the stability in the island nation is very crucial for ensuring India’s security in the India ocean. India’s foreign and military policies should aim to maintain territorial integrity and sovereignty of Sri Lanka and ensure that the just aspirations of Tamils in Sri Lanka are met.

Today, in addition to drugs and refugees, India is threatened by Myanmar’s security link and defence cooperation with China. Opening of the Morch-Tamu border in Manipur and joint military operations ‘OP GOLDEN BIRD’ are steps in right direction. Formulating neighbourly economic trade and defence policies with Myanmar, India should simultaneously use the diplomatic means for accelerating the democratisation-pace in that country, for a democratic Myanmar is more likely to be favourably disposed towards India. At a minimum, India must emerge as a counter weight to China herein.

In democratic Nepal of today, India has to ensure that China does not extend itself therein beyond an acceptable level even when Sino-India relations improve. Since Nepal is so dependant on India economically, India has to play its role in such a way that Nepal find it beneficial to have political coordination with India. India should diplomatically ensure that Nepal may not be used as centre of anti-India activities sponsored both by Pakistan and Chinese intelligence agencies. As a buffer state, Nepal hold immense significance in security policy of India.

Bhutan’s security interest is to develop economically without too much dependence on India. India has special, stable and working relationship. The monarchy in Bhutan has recently reorganised its National Assembly and carried out a census and prepared electoral rolls for its citizens to deter from harnessing fissiparous tendencies amongst the society. India has to continue to play its part as hitherto for and ensure that
its territory be not used as safe haven by insurgent groups operating in the North-East.

Finally, Bangladesh views India as a big brother, aiming to destabilise it, and wishing to bully it. The installation of democratically elected government since last nine years and the recent accord on Ganga Water sharing has not changed this threat perception. Challenge before India is establish such a relationship with Bangladesh that it could discard emotive confrontational anti-Indian attitude. Due to better economic conditions, large number of people has been illegally migrating to India. This is aided and abetted by Bangladeshi authorities. Such demographic invasion has great potential of destabilising India socially and politically. Hence, it must be checked.

**Internal Security:**

While the probability of the major military conflict has always been low, the main security challenge for India has been internal security, with threats emanating mainly from religious radicalism, Maoism and populist parochialism, which increasingly culminates in often and again has culminated in violence and terrorism. (See Appendix VIII) Although there has been no foolproof defence against such threats, India must give the highest priority to tackling them effectively. In this context external policy has a critical role as the principal internal security threats are linked to enduring systemic and natural vulnerabilities of the wider region within which India is located. External dimensions of these threats include international ideological linkages, cross-border support to insurgent and terrorist groups, and financial flows to them through NGOs as also illegal channels. Securing effective cooperation from neighbouring states particularly Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Myanmar and the Gulf therefore becomes necessary.
As the MEA report exemplifies, the first priority of India has been to orient policy to an extended time frame making an objective assessment of the challenges, as also of the resources and behaviour of inimical forces. Such a strategy has sought to capitalize on the weaknesses of the adversarial powers instead of countering their strengths. In the past decade also India has went on to make cooperation in counter-terrorism and counter-insurgency including intelligence and coordinated joint operations, a non negotiable agenda with neighbouring countries. Where they proved recalcitrant and continued to support subversive and terrorist activities as has been the case with Pakistan, India has not hesitated in taking recourse to the options of aggressive and coercive diplomacy and exerting the available range of multilateral pressures to secure compliance, thus communicating the message that such hostile activities cannot be sustained without significant, economic, diplomatic and political cost.

Pakistan is a special case where irredentism over Kashmir complicates sub-conventional threats to India's security. For more than sixty years Kashmir has had emotive resonance, particularly among its foreign and security establishments and Kashmiri migrants. A techno-economic view is that Pakistan can never have water security until it gains control over the Indus and its tributaries in Kashmir. For Army, there is an element stemming from revanchism against India for the 1947 ignominy. Paradoxically, it is the Army which is capable of making a sober professional assessment of Pakistan's chances of altering the Kashmir status-quo militarily and is not likely to risk the future of Pakistan over Kashmir, especially after the Kargil imbroglio. This does not prevent successive Pakistani government's from continuing low intensity wars and using Jehadis as instrument of state policy against India. It has been said that the Army, particularly the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) has allowed them to function and equipped, trained and provided them overall political
and strategic guidance. However, some favourable trends are emerging. First, the negative impact of Jehadi groups on Pakistan's own internal security, including spread of weapons, terrorism, drugs and social tension is beginning to tell in the wake of terror trail started by the Lal-Masjid incident, and occupation of the Swat Valley by the Taliban. Jehadis have not hesitated to pit themselves against the Army and even attempted assassination of Benazir Bhutto, the ex PM of Pakistan. Second, the concentration of Islamic militants in the NWFP, particularly the FATA and Balochistan is increasingly tying down the Army in military operations in what can acquire a Pashtun versus Punjabi overtone within the Army. This leaves them with fewer options to encourage Jehadi terrorism on their eastern flank and to back it up with supporting military postures. The Army's embroilment in the Western region's has created additional ground for reviewing it's support to Anti-Jehadi groups. Third, the harder US attitude as reflected in its policy statement and the Kerry-Lugar Bill, making Pakistan clearly accountable for the Jehadi terrorism emanating from its soil. India, unlike the US, has few immediate levers, to help the process alone but can in the longer term use public diplomacy to highlight the downside of the proxy war, while offering incentives in the other sectors such as non aggressive military postures and softening across the Line of Control of encourage Pakistani action against the Jehadis.

Experts feel that the best external policy option is domestic policy. India should move purposively to resolve the J & K Azaadi issue at an early date. The recommendation of the Jammu and Kashmir State Autonomy Committee (1999) could be a starting point for expediting negotiations with mainstream Kashmir political parties. From the India's point of view, there should be no major problem as the core interests defence, foreign affairs and communications-will remain central subjects. The instrumentality of the Governor and the financial dependence on the
centre will ensure that the state govt. remains within certain parameters. Autonomy will go a long way in stabilizing the J & K situation and taking the wind out of the Pakistan's sails. So will improve connectivity, as exemplified by the railway project to link J & K to the rest of India, which needs to be expeditiously completed.

The origins of Jehadi terrorism in Bangladesh are somewhat different. The Jamaat-i-Islami, and the Al-shams and Al-Badr groups, unleashed by the Government of Pakistan to put down the uprising in 1971, has spawned many other Islamic groups and students, organizations. Islamic militancy resurfaced with General Ziya-Ur-Rehman, who allowed the return of the exiled Bangladeshi chief Golum Azam, and set up the Directorate General of Forces Intelligence (DGFI), along the lines of the Pakistani ISI. According to an estimate, about 15,000 Bangladeshi mujahids fought against the Soviet backed regime in Afghanistan and were instrumental in linking Bangladeshi Islamic terror groups with Al-Qaeda. The subsequent return of about 10,000 mujahids resulted in the rising graph not only of terrorist violence within Bangladesh, but also training and operations against India which roped in Indian Muslims, Jamaat-e-Islami, Ahle-Hadith, Tablighi-Jamaat, Harakat-ul-Jihad-i-Islami (HUJI) and the branches of Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), Jaish-e-Mohammad and Al-Badr have linkages in Pakistan and India and are a networked capability for Terrorism for India.

Bangladesh has come under western pressure to check the activities of radical Islamic groups and to deny sanctuary to terrorists from the other parts of the Islamic world. Although the government has unable to do this comprehensively, there are now signs of it cracking down and the radical with highly visible arrests and execution leading to the elimination of the few major organization like Bangla Bhai and restrictions on others. The change stance of the Government of Bangladesh towards
India represents an opportunity for extending the area of cooperation to the elimination of the remaining centres of training and recruitment for terror groups, including offshoots of Jamaat Politics. A related imperative is to discourage smuggling and 'hundi' remittances from illegal migrants as the controlling mafia has links to terror funding and violence.

Bangladesh had earlier been a century to insurgent groups of India's North-East, including the United Liberation of Asom (ULFA). It was alleged that the Pakistani ISI and Bangladeshi agencies such as the DGFI and the Director General of National Security and Intelligence collaborated in a strategy to support cross-border operations of such groups in order to keep India off-balance in the North-East. Historically, Pakistan-China's support to insurgency in Nagaland and Mizoram during the 1960s which was revived under military rule in Bangladesh from 1976 in form of (a) providing conduits for arms shipment, transit for insurgent leaders on false passport, and sanctuaries from training and transit camps; (b) facilitating business and fund raising activity by top insurgent leaders and (c) networking with other insurgent groups outside the North-Eastern region. The problem has got complicated due to Bangladesh's extended contiguity along the porous border of India's North-East.

The bonding between the ULFA, other insurgent entities of the Bodos Tripuris and Nagas on the one hand and HUJI (B) and other radical Islamic Elements on the other shows up through terror incidents in Assam. North-eastern insurgents have also been using Myanmar's territory for camps, arms procurement, and transit to Ruilly, a bustling centre for trade in arms and drugs in Yunnan. This is facilitated by ethnic contiguity along the border as also by the fact that the Government of Myanmar's writ does not run effectively there because of the lack of infrastructure and development. While the Government of Myanmar has expressed its intention to cooperate, there is a great deal of collusion between
Myanmar's military officers at the local level and insurgent groups. The latter, forewarned of Indian counter-insurgency operations, cross back into Myanmar only to return later. With India providing actionable intelligence, Myanmar has sporadically taken military actions in joint operations and even independently. However, the situation remains less than satisfactory.

Admittedly, the security threat from Islamic militancy cannot be laid solely at the doors of neighbouring countries. Even though India took pride in the supposed non-involvement of Indian Muslims in Al-Qaeda related to terrorist organizations and activities, the spate of terror bombings ranging from the 1993 Mumbai serial blasts to the Mumbai attacks in 2008 has exposed the development of terror cells, modules and full-fledged militant Islamic organization such as the Student Islamic Movement of India (SIMI), Deendar Anjuman, Al-Umma, Islamic Sevak Sangh (now converted to the People's Democratic Party), Indian Mujahedsin, Muslim United Liberation of Assam in addition to J & K – based Islamic Militant Organisations and others in terrorist-related activities does point to the emergence of Islamic Militancy as a major security threat in India.

India's external policy has tried to address the underlined factors of terrorism rather than mainly treating it as a security problem. This was implicitly enunciated by Prime Minister Manmohan Singh at Sharm-El-Sheikh in July 2009. Now it has been realized that Islamic militancy must not be allowed to grow and should be eliminated by taking on 'revivalist' schools in the ideological battle for the minds of muslims of India and abroad. The connectivities and the complexities of the emerging world makes it impossible for individual nations to develop independent capacities that would need all their internal security needs unilaterally. Multifaceted and multiple cooperative arrangements with a wider range of countries and international organizations is therefore required. For example, there are instances of strategic though not tactical convergence
between India and the US on preventing Islamic fundamentalist from gaining political power in Pakistan and Afghanistan and encouraging a shift towards moderate/modern Islam.

**India's Maritime Security : A Challenge :**

India is seventh largest country in the world with a land area of 3.2 million square kilometres, a land boundary of 15,000 kilometres, peninsular coastline of 7700 kilometres, 600 island territories and an Exclusive Economic Zone of 2.5 million square kilometres. Some of the island territories in the east are 1300 kilometres away from the mainland and virtually adjacent to India's ASEAN neighbours. India shares land borders with seven countries-including Bangladesh (4096 kms), China (3439 Kms), Pakistan (3325 Kms) and Myanmar (1643 kms) and maritime borders with five countries.

India's area of security interest clearly extends beyond the confines of the conventional geographical definition of South Asia, i.e. from the Persian Gulf to the Straits of Malacca across the Indian Ocean, including the Central Asian region in the North West, China in the North East and South East Asia.  

Unlike the other major oceans of the world, the Indian Ocean is bounded by landmasses. Flow of shipping into the Indian Ocean is impeded by many sensitive choke points. Indian Ocean can be accessed from the West only via the Cape of Good Hope; from the North via the Straits of Hormuz and the Persian Gulf; from the East via the Straits of Malacca, the Sunda and Lombok-Straits and the Ombai-Wetar-Straits. It is well known that oil is a critical factor in influencing the geo-political strategies of a nation, and any disturbance in its supply could have serious security ramifications. Major energy lifelines of the world, carrying 66% of the total world oil trade, pass in close proximity to India, thereby
placing a prime responsibility towards safety of this key energy flow. This can only be achieved by any state or non-state actors to destabilize the trade routes. India is a major maritime country in Asia with bluewater-capable Navy, commensurate with its responsibilities and commitments. Apart from the geo-strategic importance of the straits, the increased incidences of maritime crime are prompting several regional and intra-regional countries to discuss and move towards maritime security cooperation. The worldwide concern now seems to be about "maritime terrorism", which could take several forms. The most easily identifiable form of this may be what the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) has practised for long-sending an explosives-laden boat or a suicide squad to hit targets at sea or a port or the shore. According to security analysts, India's strategic location in the Indian Ocean puts it in a unique situation-it is vulnerable but can also be the cutting edge of regional and global security networks. After all, the Indian Ocean holds the "energy routes" linking oil and gas sources with their buyers-between West Asia and East Asia. Naval sources point to the vulnerability of oil tankers at the "choke points", particularly the Malacca Straits. Naval Chief Admiral Arun Prakash feels "from if, it has become a question of when" for India to take a lead role in the maritime domain, especially in the area of energy security. Deputy National security Vijay Nambair told a national seminar on Maritime Perspectives organised by the Calicut University that suicide bombing of maritime targets was an issue that needed to be addressed. A variety of acts of terrorism on the seas could be thought of targeting energy installations, hijacking passenger liners, and taking over vessels for smuggling operations.

The Indian Ocean is also strategically important. Sea and air routes run across it linking Europe, East Africa, Middle East, South and South east Asia, the far East, Australia and Oceania. The Indian Ocean,
"connecting" the Atlantic and Pacific oceans, is a major hub of sea communications (Third place in the world in the volume of sea shipping). The network of water ways is denser here than anywhere else in the world ocean. Air lines stretching over the Indian Ocean have also become significant. Their total length exceeds one million kilometres. Of the world’s 250 airports serving inter-continental air routes, about a third is in the Indian ocean countries.

The South-East Asian region has two of the World’s busiest shipping lanes. The first running from the Strait of Malacca across the Indian Ocean to Middle East and the other from the South China Sea to the Sea of Japan; the former having the highest density of shipping. Over 60,000 ships transit the Strait of Malacca annually, transporting 66% of the world’s oil, 50 percentage of the global container traffic and a third of its bulk cargo. Nature has also given India a long serrated coastline studded with nearly 200 harbours, big and small which support coastal as well as overseas trade. Off each coast we not only have extensive island territories, but also vast Exclusive Economic Zones which are like treasure-houses laden with unimaginable and as yet unexploited mineral wealth. Currently one-third of our hydrocarbons come from offshore fields which lie in the Bombay High and Krishna-Godavari Basin with oil prices moving relentlessly upwards (The recent dip notwithstanding), drilling to depths as much as 10 km under the ocean now appears economically viable. It is, therefore, quite likely that we may have fresh exploitable hydrocarbon reserves off the east coast and in the Andaman Sea.

Aside from actual threats and the need to enhance safety on the high seas, India’s growing share in global trade is by itself a strong reason for looking seriously at maritime security.\textsuperscript{40} Exports have doubled from 13 per cent of gross domestic product and are projected to climb to 40 percent by 2010 and 55 percent by 2020 at the current pace of growth. Even now,
about 70 percent of the 85 million tones of crude for the country are imported from West Asia and about 48,000 sq.km. of offshore area involved in oil exploration need to be protected. In addition, India is considering oil and gas pipelines, calling for a different system of security to protect them.

As we know that piracy at sea is not a new phenomenon but its emerging form, maritime terrorism’, has not been treated with as much seriousness as it should be. Piracy has been rampant in the North Indian Ocean region and in particular, in the waters off South East Asia and the South China Sea. In the first half of 2004, pirate attacks in Malacca and Singapore Straits have doubled from 15 to 27. More than 50 percent of all piracy incidents in 2003 occurred in South East Asia, mainly in Indonesian waters. Ships are now being physically hijacked, their crews set adrift or killed, the cargoes sold, and the vessel repainted and registered under a different name, owners and flag, to be used for criminal activities on a higher threshold such as smuggling of narcotics, arms and ammunitions.

In 2001, the American destroyer USS Cole was seriously damaged in Aden when a suicide craft exploded alongside. A similar attack on the US warship, by the Jemaah Islamia, was narrowly averted in Singapore through timely intelligence. Later, a French oil tanker, the MV Lindberg, was attacked by suicide craft off the coast of Yemen. In April 2004 Al-Qaeda craft attacked one of the oil terminal in Basra and two tankers. These acts of terror are much more sinister than acts of piracy and may see escalated dimensions in the years ahead. Large number of uninhabited islands which serve as sanctuaries and operation based for the pirates could serve for the terrorists tomorrow.

Post-9/11 scenario-building exercises have invariably included scenarios involving possible catastrophic acts of maritime terrorism. Four
of these possible scenarios are or should be major concern to national security managers. First, terrorists hijacking a huge oil or gas tanker and exploding it in mid-sea or in a major port in order to cause huge human, material and environmental damage, second, terrorists hijacking an oil or gas tanker or a bulk-carrier and exploding it or scuttling it in maritime choke-points such as the Malacca Strait in order to cause a major disruption of energy supplies and global trade. Third, 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. Fourth, sea-borne terrorists attacking a nuclear establishment or an oil refinery or off-shore oil platforms. Maritime counter-terrorism experts now look upon the Bay of Bengal and the Indian Ocean region as highly vulnerable, if not the most vulnerable, to such catastrophic acts of maritime terrorism. Amongst factors influencing their perceptions are:

- The wide networking of the Al Qaeda across this region—either through its own members or through surrogate Jihadi terrorist organizations, which are members or associates of the International Islami Front (IIF) for Jihad Against the Crusaders and the Jewish People formed by it in 1998.

- The long-known reputation of this area as the world’s leading producer and supplier of heroin from the Golden Triangle and the Golden Crescent and its recent emergence as a producer and supplier of synthetic drugs. Drug money, which was first allegedly used by the US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and Pakistan’s Inter Services Intelligence (ISI) for funding their operations against the Soviet troops in Afghanistan in the
1980s, has since become an important source of revenue of insurgent and terrorist organization Latin American and Asian.

- The continuing availability in this region in Pakistan as well as in Thailand, Laos and Cambodia of large quantities of arms and ammunition to anyone with the means to pay for them and with the capability for clandestine transport to areas of intended use.

- The presence in this region of transnational mafia groups such as the one headed by Karachi-based Dawood Ibrahim with vast financial resources, a capability for clandestine shipping and a willingness to place their resources and shipping at the disposal of the Al-Qaeda, Hizb-e-Islami and other Jihadi terrorist organizations operating across the region.

- The reputation of this area as one of the most piracy-prone in the world. Pirate attacks tripled between 1993 and 2008. The Piracy Reporting Centre of the International Maritime Bureau (IMB) stated in 2004 that most pirate attacks in that year occurred in Indonesian waters (70 of 251 reported attacks).47

The security environment at sea has changed dramatically since the end of the cold war. The probability that nation state would engage each other in direct conflict has receded and new threats have emerged which are difficult to identify and are not susceptible to conventional forms of deterrence. Fierce determination, born out of fanatic religious fundamentalism, and inexhaustible resources of money and arms, terrorists pose serious danger to peace and tranquility. Unlit recently, their activities have been largely confined to land but now there are clear signs that these will increasingly, be encountered at sea in the form of maritime terrorism.48 Stifling of terrorist activities on land is likely to lead to an
increase in maritime terrorism. Some of the essentials for maritime security are: establishing a coastal radar network, devices to identify fishing vessels and fishermen, resolution of border disputes, putting in place a vessel traffic management system in all ports, creating an integrated communication network, and regional coordination of maritime affairs. The beginning, experts say, will be the framing of a maritime policy and establishment of a maritime council or commission to take on all these responsibilities.

Footnote and References


4. Kuldip Nayar: *op. cit.*, pp. 64-100 also see Jaswinder Kumar: *op, cit.* p. 20, also see K.P. Gupta *op. cit.* p. 3.


6. Ibid.


8. Ibid., p. 120 also see N. Jayapalan : ‘Indo-Pakistan Relations’ in K.R. Gupta: *op. cit.* pp. 135-39.


23. Sukumar Murlidhnan: *op. cit*, pp 11-13


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27. Ibid


34. An informal value transfer system based on the performance and honour of a huge network of money brokers.


