Chapter – II

SOUTH ASIAN CRISIS: OPTIONS FOR INDIA

South Asia today constitutes a distinct international sub-system. Its entire area was under British colonial subjugation and naturally it hardly played any role in global politics prior to Second World War but with the liquidation of British colonialism in this part of the world, one could foresee a number of permutations and combinations in international politics. Until that war, five great powers namely; Great Britain, France, Germany, Australia, Hungary and Russia were dominating the show.

In the post war period, as a result of the great ideological divide between the capitalist world and the communists, the cold war overshadowed the horizons of the world. Every political development or interaction was measured through a coloured glass of power politics. It was in such a distorted world order that the newly emergent nations of Asia, Africa and Latin America, had to find out a role for themselves. Instead of individually trying to influence the course of world politics, these small or medium powers, decided to interact with the outside world in a cluster. Even the political and socio-economic relations amongst them were given a significant momentum through some regional forums like the European Economic Community (EEC), Organization of African Unity (OAU), Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN), Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC). South Asian Association of Regional Cooperation (SAARC), which is the latest of such groupings. All these are primarily regional experiments for solving the mutual socio-economic or politico-security problems.¹

Most of the South Asian states are ex-colonial societies and have yet to resolve the problems of national identity and statehood. The thrust of the anti-colonial struggle was to get rid of the aliens and thus little thought was
given to the problem of developing a genuine national consciousness and cohesiveness: linguistic, tribal, ethnic and religious differences were overlooked with a mistaken assumption that all forms of particularism with the sole exception of nationalism were archaic, had no relevance to a modern society and would disappear with the end of colonialism. It was only after the advent of independence that they realized that the so called transfer of power was merely the transfer of government machinery from colonial rulers to the indigenous elite. There was little national consensus about the nature and character of the post-colonial state.

In South Asia, most of the periphery conflicts that emerged have roots in demands asserted by smaller ethnic groups against the dominant ethnic group controlling the center. Ethnic diversity by itself does not necessarily generate ethnic conflicts. In societies where various ethnic groups feel socially, economically and politically contended there is lesser room for vulnerability to conflicts emerging from ethnicity. Problems arise when a particular ethnic community develops a sense of deprivation and discrimination either perceived and/or real regarding social, cultural, linguistic, economic and political opportunities as a distinct group competing for access to limited resources and opportunities available. Failure of the state to accommodate these demands and aspirations of a particular ethnic group produces disaffection, which eventually leads to articulation of political demands ranging from local political economy to secession.

The relevance of language in the intra-regional relations in South Asia lies in the fact that two major states (India and Pakistan) are essentially multilingual. Besides, a number of languages are either spoken or understood in more than one country in the region. For instance, Urdu is spoken by a large number of North Indians and by a considerable number of people in South India especially in the areas of old princely state of
Hyderabad. In Pakistan it is recognized as the official language. Bengali is the official language of Bangladesh and is one of the regional languages in India. Nepali the official language of Nepal is largely spoken in Darjeeling district of West Bengal in India. Tamil one of the regional languages in India, has been recognized also in Sri Lanka as a second language. So, on the whole, one notices a unique feature in this region, where international boundaries do not necessarily coincide with the linguistic boundaries. Moreover, one hardly notices the co-relation of any religion to a particular linguistic group.³

Because of the overlapping of some languages in the South Asian states, one often notices concern of the leaders of one nation for the recognition and uplift of a particular language in the neighbouring country, provided that it is also largely spoken or used as an official language in their own country. Obviously it has a negative impact in the intra-regional relations in South Asia.

The factors, which design the setting of South Asian countries can be classified as “push factors” and “pull factors”. The “push factors” encompass the colonial legacy, the problem of immigrants, religion and language. Under the external factors which are otherwise known as the “pull factors” are the basic goals and interests of major global powers in the South Asian region, particular among which are the policies of great powers like USA, Soviet Union and China.

Almost all the South Asian nations like India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka had to experience the rigours impact of British colonialism. More or less the economy of South Asia became an appendage of British economy. Even the peripheral land locked states like Afghanistan and Nepal, which apparently enjoyed a certain amount of political autonomy, were heavily dependent on British imperial power for their economic survival, because their lifeline was controlled by the latter.⁴
A major offshoot of British imperialism in South Asia was the growing bitterness and distrust between the core-nation India and other peripheral nations, especially Pakistan, Bangladesh and Nepal. Therefore, after independence, most of these nations planned their economies and trade patterns in isolation from one another. Because of such an unnatural diversion of the intra-regional trade in South Asia, the external economic relations of the regional states have become more or less competitive at the global level and quite negligible at the regional level.

The “Push factors” that shape the foreign policies of different South Asian countries is the diplomacy of trans-regional powers. South Asia is characterized by a low level of political integration economic development and collective self-reliance in defence. With the end of the imperial rule the processes of social and economic unrest became manifest and contributed to the sprouting of the perpetual problem of insecurity in the region. Internal turmoil, inherent contradictions and separatist strains within the region rendered it susceptible to the influences of external powers. Economic and political instability as a rule, not as an exception, invite subversive activities by outside powers. Their task is made easier when the ruling elites themselves fall into the booby traps of provocateurs in the hope of winning favours from them. In fact the new leaders in the quest of restructuring their societies aroused the socio-economic expectations and aspiration of their peoples.  

As far as the policy postures of extra-regional powers are concerned they cannot be identical but are in fact divergent due to their varied national interests, which are mainly determined by their military capabilities, resource priorities, commitments and geopolitical needs. Geographically, the US is at the farthest distance, while the USSR and China are proximate to the region but Beijing has a relative advantage over both Moscow and Washington. China considers its security stakes to be much greater than
those of the US and USSR. Without exaggeration, the US-Soviet rivalry and Soviet-American-Chinese influence building process in the region have tended to deepen conflicts within the region. As a result, the pre-independence’s strategic and spiritual unity has been shattered.

Along with the socio-economic factors as already mentioned, the socio-cultural factors like religion and language, play no less an important role in the shaping of intra-regional relations in South Asia. South Asia is a unique region in the sense that it provides a platform for a wide variety of religions and languages. Several religions and languages in the region invariably cut across the territorial boundaries of the nation – states. They have therefore, naturally become important factors in the shaping of foreign policies of the respective states and especially in projecting their outlook towards their South Asian neighbours.\(^6\)

There is no denying the fact the “strikingly different social values, institutions and patterns of behaviour” of different nations in South Asia are rooted in their diverse religious traditions.\(^7\)

While analyzing the relevance of religion in the intra-regional relations in South Asia its three aspects have been focussed. These are: (i) Religion as a great ideal; (ii) Religion as a national identity and (iii) Religion as a communal irritant. Broadly speaking, one cannot dispute such an analysis. As a matter of fact a great amount of tension in the intra-regional affairs of South Asia has occurred because of the lack of realization on the part of the ruling elites of this region on the grounds that religion is a great ideal, a nationalist symbol and also a communal irritant.\(^8\)

In a nutshell, while summing up the relevance of religion in the intra-regional relations in South Asia, the following scenario emerges. Instead of playing a unifying role in this region its role has primarily been destructive. Instead of drawing the people of neighbouring nations together, it has taken them apart by fomenting tensions and antagonism.
Crucial Factors in Interstate Relations in South Asia

The attainment of political independence by the peoples of South Asia in the late 40s opened a realistic way to the solution of their problems and to bringing about economic and social progress. But the rallying of the newly independent states on a common platform of independence, peace and progress was exactly what imperialism, above all US imperialism, was against, since this ran counter to its plans for political and economic world domination.9

This is why, from the very beginning of independence, the countries of South Asia have found themselves being the victims of a course pursued by the imperialist circles aimed at stirring up the regional hotbeds of tension, sowing disunity and creating conflict situations.

South Asia is facing an increasingly mounting pressure from the crisis in state and nation building. The region consists of multi-ethnic, multi-lingual, multi-cultural and multi-racial entities. It is besieged by many ethnic conflicts both old and new. The task of nation building has proved to be one of the most intractable problems and lies at the root of much of the political turmoil in many parts of the region. In most cases the conflict arises from lack of consensus in the ruling elites and diverse ethnic groups regarding the ideals of the state.

The constant inflow of economic migrants or influx of refugees due to internal conflict has brought about a significant shift in the ethnic composition in different areas of most of the South Asian states resulting in the alienation of the local population and sharpening of local tensions and also causing inter-state tensions. This is witnessed in northeast India, Sindh (Pakistan), Bhutan, Nepal and Bangladesh. The sharing and management of water resources, both within and between the South Asian states, have created problems having bearings on the internal as well as external security of these states.10 We would now analyze the position of major players in the region:
(a) Pakistan

The State of Pakistan that came into existence in 1947 was the expression of a particular historical experience— that of the Indian Muslims. Even its disintegration in 1971 was also a product of that experience. Elsewhere in India Islam remained a conqueror’s religion. But in the delta lands of eastern Bengal, where Brahminical Hindu culture had never struck deep roots the native inhabitants were peacefully converted to the faith of their Muslim rulers during the first three centuries after the Afghan-Turkish conquerors entered Bengal at the beginning of the thirteenth century. This popular conversion to Islam under a Muslim aristocracy whose origins and affinities lay outside Bengal established the necessary condition of the Muslim civil war in Pakistan in 1971 out of which has now emerged the new state of Bangladesh.¹¹

Pakistan is also a multi-ethnic, multi-lingual and multi-cultural state. The country has been facing strong ethno-national and ethno-regional movements ever since it came into being. Major ethnic groups of Pakistan are: Punjabis 68%, Sindhis 13%, Pathans 8.5%, Urdu speaking 7.6% and Baluchis 2.5%.¹² Ethno-nationalism remains a formidable danger to Pakistan’s security “politicalized ethnic consciousness may be found today among Muhajirs, Sindhis, Pakhtuns, Baluchis, Saraikis and even Punjabis”. In fact, Pakistan’s politics has been punctured by “failures to establish a modus vivendi among its ethnically varied citizens and also among its elites” As a consequence, it has experienced virtually all varieties of internal conflicts, i.e., tribal insurgencies ethnic and sectarian struggles, civil war, secession, border conflicts, irredentism and conventional war.

At present, ethnic conflict in Sindh seems most intractable. Sindh is the most ethnically diverse of Pakistan’s four provinces, both, due to international transfer of peoples into the province during and subsequent to partition in 1947, and domestic internal migration since 1947. The 1981 census disclosed that
Sindh province had a population of 193 million of whom, 10.6 million (5.7%) are indigenous Sindhis; 4.6 million (24.1%) Urdu speaking Mohajirs; over 2 million (10.6%) Punjabis; 1.1 million (6%) Baluchis and 0.7 million (3.6%) Pathans. Besides, there are about one million illegal Bengali migrants, mainly living in Karachi. As most of the migrants have settled in the urban areas of the province, the native Sindhi’s have become a minority in Sindh’s two largest cities, Karachi and Hyderabad.

The native Sindhi population fears that the influx of Urdu speaking refugees would not only marginalize them politically and economically but would also undermine their language and culture. The ethnic conflict is largely a result of political and economic disequilibrium between Sindhis and Mohajirs and other migrants such as Pakhtuns, Punjabis, Baluchis and Afghans. The “sons of the soil” believe they have been dispossessed by the new immigrants, and also have been reduced to a minority in their own province. The discrepancy between disproportionately over-representation of Muhajirs and under representation of Sindhis in Pakistan’s civil and military bureaucracies and business elite lies in the root of the problem.

Ethnic tension in Pakistan has reinforced center-periphery conflict and accentuated intra-regional discord. The imbalance between the power, the population and the economic potential of Punjab and those of the smaller provinces, has made ethnic politics and regionalism unavoidable issues. It has not only influenced the center-province but also inter-province relations and the process of nation building itself. The federal bureaucracy and the armed forces are dominated by Punjabi-Pukhtoon elites, which has been greatly resented to by the smaller ethnic groups like, Sindhis, Baluch and Muhajirs. The officers and the rank and file of the armed forces are mainly Punjabis and Pukhtoons, the former generally believed to be nearly 70% and the latter 25% to 30%. It should be underlined that Pukhtoons over a period have been co-opted in the nation building process. Presently, in the senior civil bureaucracy, the Punjabis
and Pukhtoons have a disproportionately high representation, and the Urdu speaking group, a one time dominant fraction, still retains a disproportionately large presence. On the other hand Sindhis, despite some recent appointments to high positions, are still under-represented. The Baluchs are also under-represented and being a small group may have little influence even if given a proportional share in power.

The attitude and policy of the dominant elite in Pakistan has remained unchanged even after the loss of East Pakistan in 1971. After 1971 ethnic movements developed in Baluchistan and Sindh. Like Bengalis, Baluchis, Sindhis and Muhajirs have risen in complaint against mistreatment or neglect by the federal government, or inadequate access to political power and to economic and cultural resources. Adding to Pakistan’s problem is a “new and aggressive sense of reverse discrimination and chauvinism that is growing in Punjab”. The sharing of waters and the construction of multipurpose Kalabagh dam over the river Indus has also triggered provincial chauvinism and belligerence, splitting up the country across the political divide along the provincial loyalties. Both Sindh and the NWFP are opposing the project tooth and nail. Baluchistan is also unhappy with the amount of royalty it is receiving for its natural gas.

The problems relating to refugees, rural poverty and proliferation of small arms and drugs have only radicalized local ethnic and sectarian tensions in the country. The large scale inter-province migration mainly from Punjab and NWFP to Sindh and international migration such as influx of 3.5 million Afghan refugees (about 1.55 million continue to live even after Soviet withdrawal). About one million Bengali immigrants largely concentrated in Karachi has disturbed the existing demographic character of the cities and towns bordering Afghanistan and cities of Peshawar, Quetta and Karachi.

The Afghan refugees have a deep impact on Pakistan’s politics and society. These refugees affiliated to various Mujahideen groups have developed
contacts with Pakistan’s political and religious organizations. The connection has become a source of supply of weapons to religious and political parties enabling them to establish militant wings of their respective parties.

In recent years Islamism in Pakistan has acquired a new face. Religio-political groups and their existence is not a new phenomenon in Pakistan. They have been existing and playing a role in social and political life since 1947. What is certainly new is their political activism, in some cases militancy, and most importantly their rapid expansion in the country. Currently, there are 58 registered religious political parties and 24 armed religious militias. Similarly, deeni madrasas (religious schools) have also been in existence for centuries but what is new, is their proliferation, sectarian overtones, expansion in support base and diverse and ambiguous sources of funding.

The madrasas developed into sanctuaries of religious zealots and political power. The factional religious leaders began to encourage some form of military training; therefore jihad was portrayed as a tool to achieve a higher goal for the glory of Islam, and was thus propounded as a legitimate concept to wage war against infidels. According to Ahmed Rashid, during 1947 and 1975, about 870 new madrasas were set up. He points out that in 1976-90, 1700 new madrasas emerged, most of them were established in 1977-78. John L. Cooley in his book “Unholy Wars, Afghanistan, America and International Terrorism” has given graphic details of how the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) of the US and the Inter-Services Intelligence Agency in Pakistan developed a nexus with the religious groups to sustained military and political war in Afghanistan. This nexus was built around the concept of Islamic Jihad against the ‘infidel’ Soviet forces.

For decades Pakistani generals and politicians raised the spectre of Islamic fundamentalism to elicit western support for their regimes. The alleged is the reason why the military, under President Pervaiz Musharraf, helped MMA
(Mutahidha-Majlis-i-Aamal) win power in North-West Frontier Pro
fact the country’s rulers cultivated the militants as a vital foreign policy tool.\textsuperscript{19}

(b) India

India stands at the center of the South Asian region, both location wise and area wise. The population of India had crossed 1 billion by the time of the census 2001 and it was over 77 percent of the total population of the region. The annual exponential growth rate of population during the period 1991-2001 was around 21.3. The life expectancy at birth is estimated to be 62.3 years during 2000-01. In 1990, the crude birth rate per thousand was 26.4 and crude death rate per thousand was estimated to be 69. The percentage of literacy rate was 65.38 in 2000-01. The density of population per sq.km. is around 324 according to the census 2001 in the country.\textsuperscript{20}

India is an agriculture-based country nearly 31 percent of the GDP in 2001, while the share of industry is 30 percent; the manufacturing sector alone contributes nearly 20 per cent in 2001.

Historians often divide Indian history into three distinct periods; Hindu, Muslim, and British. Each of these periods has left its impact on the culture and socio-political structure of the country, leading to a composite culture enriched by these diverse sources.\textsuperscript{21}

In South Asia, India is the largest and most heterogeneous state. It is a multi-ethnic, multi-lingual, multi-religious and multi-cultural society. Autonomy and separatist demands have been raised from time to time, but somehow they have been managed, some times satisfactorily, some times not so satisfactorily. According to Myron Weiner, there are four types of minorities in India. Linguistic, religious, caste and tribal. These can be further divided among the dimensions: whether minorities have a conception of a territorial homeland; the extent of the sense of cohesion within the community, and whether the community regards itself as a disadvantaged or as an achieving minority.\textsuperscript{22}
India’s difficulties in nation-building, economic development, and political stability have been strongly influenced by a host of complex factors. Of these most prominent are its geographic setting and its socio-cultural history. India is the largest state on the South Asian subcontinent. One-third the size of the United States — about 1,127,000 square miles. It is a country of great distances. From Himalayan Mountains in the north to the Indian Ocean in the south is 2,000 miles and 1,700 miles from the western border with Pakistan to the eastern border with Burma.23

India’s internal weaknesses have long been regarded as its distinguishing quality. In the 1950s American policy makers viewed Indian domestic politics as a critical battleground in the larger war against communism. As a result, India ‘had’ to be built up to withstand the threat from the Soviet Union and communist China.24 The British impact however, was not uniform throughout India.

In the nation building and modernization process, the unevenness of the British impact created problems for the elites in the post independence period. India is an ancient civilization but a new nation; therefore, the values and attitudes of its citizens, the nature of its political culture, and its political processes are influenced by both, its traditional past and its contemporary experience.

Given the enormous complexity of the Indian socio-cultural structure, it is not surprising that Indian political values and norms of behaviour have often given contradictory signals. Various surveys suggest that these values are in fact becoming increasingly integrated into the personality structure of the newer generations of the population.25

Broadly speaking ethnic demands in India can be divided into four categories. The first group contains all those demands which are located in the border region and which have, at some point of time or the other, exhibited strong secessionist impulses. The separatist movements have been witnessed in
northeast India, Indian Punjab and previously in Tamil Nadu where vernacular leaders aspired for a separate sovereign state of Dravidistan. The case of Indian held Kashmir (IHK) is entirely different because it is internationally recognized as a disputed Territory.26

At present several separatist groups are operating in the Northeastern region of India, such as National Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCL) in Nagaland, the People’s Liberation Army (PLA) in Manipur, the United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA) and Bodo Security Force (BSF) and Bodo Liberation Tiger Force (BLTF) for the creation of Bodoland in Assam, and the Tripura National Volunteers (TNV) in Tripura. India accuses Pakistan and Bangladesh for helping the separatists and dissidents in the northeast India. India also alleges that narco-terrorism is a big business in the northeast in which Pakistan’s Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) and Liberation Tigers of Tamil Ealam (LTTE) of Sri Lanka are involved.27

The second category consists of all these demands, which are not secessionist but are in favour of more autonomy, which can be possible, through the creation of more states in the Indian union. The agitation for Uttrakhand in Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand in Bihar, Gorkhaland in West Bengal, Vidarbha in Maharashtra, and Bodoland in Assam is for the creation of separate states within the Indian Union. The reorganization of states in 1956 partitioned Punjab, Assam, Madras and Bombay on linguistic lines, therefore, demands for the creation of more states continued to crop up from time to time. The third category includes demands of more autonomy within the states to manage their local and developmental affairs. The agitation of Gorkhas of West Bengal, Bodos of Assam, Jharkhandis of Bihar, and Tribals of the northeast and other parts of the country fall in this category.

In 1953, the government was forced to create a separate state of Andhra Pradesh for Telugu speaking people following the long drawn agitation and death of Potti Sriramulu after a hunger strike of 50 days.28
The fourth category pertains to demands on religious and caste basis and are purported by communities and groups who generally feel deprived and disadvantaged. This is evident from the communal conflict between Hindus and Muslims, which has grown alarmingly during the past one-decade or so.

It is a fact that many of those who witnessed the growth of Hindu radical forces in the years around the Second World War were already convinced of the Sangh's fascist outlook. There is no need to mention the already well-known opinion of Nehru, who right from the beginning, had pointed at these organizations as communalist and fascist. Less well known is the fact that, as shown by a confidential report circulated by the congress most probably at the time of the first ban of the RSS (Rashtriya Swayamsewak Sangh), after Gandhi's assassination, the similarity between the character of the RSS and that of fascist organizations was already taken for granted. The incident of 28th February 2002 in Gujrat and the consequences thereupon accused, put a black spot on Indian socio-cultural fabric. All evidence suggests that what happened there was an ethnic cleansing.

The politics of communalism along Hindu-Muslim divide has led to potentially serious internal security problems in India. Although the 83% Hindu majority and the 12% Muslim minority communities are fragmented along class, caste, sectarian, linguistic, socio-cultural, regional and ideological lines, distinct Muslim and Hindu Communal identities have emerged due to historical, political and economic factors. The problem took a new dimension in the 1980s with the rise of militant Hindu nationalism manifested in the movement for liberation of Ram Janambhoomi, claimed that Babri mosque was built at that site.

A prominent Indian strategist, K. Sunderji has indicated that in the coming years internal threats to India will loom large than ever before, and the most extreme danger would be possible break-up of the country. He identified several factors that could work towards the break-up.
The problem of illegal migration, ever since the partition, has complicated not only the process of nation building in various parts of India but also created security threats from within having implications for external security.

According to an estimate, in 1992, the number of migratory refugees in India was nearly 4000,000 (4 million), including Sri Lankan Tamils, Tibetans, Bangladeshi Chakmas, Nepali refugees from Bhutan and over 11,000 Afghan refugees assisted by UNHCR (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees). On August 29, 1994, the Government of India stated that a total of 323,182 refugees were then residing in India. These figures do not take into account the refugees assisted by the UNHCR. The biggest refugee community is, however, that of Sri Lankan Tamils, mainly living in the state of Tamil Nadu.

Regarding the problem of resource development, sharing and management of water, India is facing a major controversy about a large scale infrastructure project in Gujarat, the Narmada valley project which threatens to dislocate a large number of tribals in order to provide the peasants with irrigation water. Another dispute involving the state of Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, and Kerala relates to the utilization of Cauvery river's water. One of the major issues in the Akali agitation in Punjab was that of fairer allocation to Punjab of the waters of Ravi, Sutlej and Beas, including control over canal head works and hydroelectric installations based on them.

The refugees and illegal migrants have an impact on the maintenance of internal socio-political questions especially in the northeast India and have aggravated ethnic tensions there. In Assam, aliens (as they are called there) constitute 40% of the state population. The Assamese caste Hindus fear that they will lose power to migrants. The migration to Assam was primarily due to economic reasons. Congress party tried to create its vote bank and thus gave them the voting rights. The All Assam Students Union (AASU) began agitation
in the early seventies to have a stricter check on the border to stop Bangladeshis from crossing into Assam. The AASU gave birth to Assam Gana Parishad (AGP), a political party which later came into power in Assam.\(^3^4\)

The line between terrorism and insurgency, also called “Wars of Liberation” is blurred in India, whether it is Kashmir or North East, terrorism and insurgencies are metrically mixed.

What we are witnessing in Jammu and Kashmir (J & K) is a mixture of terrorism, incipient insurgency and proxy war – all rolled into one.

An acceptable definition of terrorism has never been formulated. “The problem for observers is that every one knows what terrorism is until they attempt to define it”.\(^3^5\) And yet, terrorism defines itself, through certain features – its finger prints. The very first feature is obvious it has to inspire terror through violence and blood shed. The ‘War’ may be against the state but it is the people who have to suffer, the state, after all, is a mythical entity.\(^3^6\)

The trans-national angle of terrorist support structures needs to be kept in mind. Even as the Sikh community’s support for terrorism was waning in Punjab, organizations like the International Sikh Youth Federation (ISYF), the Khalistan Council led by Jagjit Singh Chauhan in UK, and the World Sikh Organization (WSO) headed by Gurmit Singh Anlakh in USA were leading the anti-Indian lobbies abroad and urging the youth there to come to Punjab and take up the fight against the state. Many did come from England and Canada. Every terrorist organization here, whether it was the Damdami Taksal or Babbar Khalsa, had a wing abroad that was a committed as any in Punjab during the heyday of terrorism.\(^3^7\)

What is remarkable between terrorist and insurgent groups is their networking. They all gang up, provide each other help, strengthen a weak outfit with arms and ammunition. The links may be tenuous, but the left extremists have in the past met up with JKLF, LTTE and insurgents in the North East.
This is not the place to go into the unique features of the North-east the two hundred – odd tribes that inhabit these seven states; the immense linguistic diversity; the history of isolation under British, the sudden transformation of certain communities from animism to Christianity, and from a primitive economy straight into the modern world. More prominent is that, the northeast has only 22-kilometer border with the rest of India while it has a 4500 KM international border. Lack of communication – rail, roads has reinforced separate identities.38

(c) Bangladesh

Bangladesh became independent from Pakistan as a result of civil war in 1971, the action was seen by many as the logical division of two disparate wings of a country united only by Islam, mutual concern about India and – partly facetiously – the routes of Pakistan International Airlines, but divided by language and social customs.

Bangladesh is largely formed by the delta of two of the world’s major river systems, the Ganges (called Padma in Bangladesh) and Brahmaputra (Jamuna). The interlacing streams that cover most of Bangladesh provide the country with a valuable network for boat transport of people and goods, but they can be both a blessing and a curse during the flood season.

The principal crops are rice and jute both of which require substantial amounts of water, but the market for this fiber is not growing.39

The majority of the people are Bengalis. A number of tribal groups remain within Bangladesh. Although they constitute only about 1% of the population, they are important for the political problems they have caused.40

Bangladesh has 86.6% Muslim population. The balance of the population is mostly Hindu (12.1%), with small Christian (0.3%), Buddhist (0.6%), and animist groups.41
Bangladesh suffered like Pakistan from terrible identity crises from the very outset of its creation. The internal colonialism pursued by the rulers of Islamabad in undivided Pakistan, East Bengal in spite of providing a large chunk of foreign exchange, continued to languish in poverty. Even after the new state emerged on the global arena its ruling elites had to face the insurmountable challenge of eradicating poverty, malnutrition etc.

Looking at the crucial role-played by the armed forces in a large number of developing countries in general and that of Bangladesh in particular, one tends to believe that democracy in these countries is either guided or controlled, some charismatic leaders either from the civil or military continue to rule their respective countries by adopting some authoritarian measures. They often violate the normal democratic norms even while getting elected by the people. The army is often treated as a guardian and liberator of the people.

As a complement to the above proposition Wittfogel’s theory of “Oriental Despotism” suggests that most of the Asian States being primarily agricultural in nature lack a well-organized and systematic administrative machinery.⁴²

The predominantly Bengali speaking Muslims (83%) and Hindus (16%), of Bangladesh, is experiencing ethnic conflict with Buddhist/Christian Chakma tribals in Chittagong Hill Tracks (CHT) that constitute only one percent of the population.⁴³ The tribals are ethnically allied to the Mongoloid race and differ much from the rest of the Bengali majority of the country. Since 1975, Shanti Bahini has launched an armed struggle to establish a separate homeland in CHT, bordering India and Myanmar. The conflict has not only jeopardized nation building process but has also created sources of insecurity for Bangladesh with cross border ramifications. Bangladesh alleges that India is stoking the Chakma unrest in the CHT, and that Shanti Bahini is getting Indian help.⁴⁴ The Chakma insurgency is a manifestation of the scale of problems that the country is facing.
Besides Chakma unrest, Bangladesh is facing intermittent influx of Muslim Rohingya refugees from Arakan region of Mayanmar, which has threatened both the internal and external security of the state. Bangladesh is a land scarce developing country with the highest density of population and with second lowest per capita income in the world.

(d) Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka stands out totally in a different category of the developing countries as one examines the nature and sources of crisis of governance that includes systematic instability manifested in the adopting of four constitutions in less than half a century. Further it is also a state highly ethnicized and shaken by interstate conflict, which has contributed to militarization of the state.

Sri Lanka was among the first countries in South Asia which got self government in internal affairs and universal adult suffrage under the Donoughmore constitution of 1931. The country was not politically prepared for self government. The Donoughmore Constitution was enacted essentially to be operative in a political environment devoid of a viable party system, even though some political parties had come up. Prominent among those were parties like the ‘Ceylon National Congress, the Sinhala Mahasabha, Lanka Sama Samaja Party’, and the Tamil Congress, of course.

Since no consensus could materialise among the parties so all the political powers were given to the British Governor. Both the National Congress and Sinhala Mahasabha later merged to form the ‘United National Party (UNP). The UNP leadership belonged to the westernized elite who had little understanding of their society and little appreciation of the established parliamentary values and usages.

In this regard, having obtained independence in a soft way in Feb. 1948, the Sri Lanka ruling elite made the transition from colonialism to independence smooth and easy. The old colonial administration and political institutions,
however, remained practically unchanged except that white skins made way for browns at the upper strata of the bureaucratic pyramid.

When the 1947 Soulbury constitution was promulgated, it neglected some democratic principles and also the interests of the minority communities. The 1942 constitution failed to fulfil the aspirations of the people. Parliamentary system with a unitary form of Government provided by the constitution was to function with out fundamental rights. However, in the post independence era it became a debatable issue between the two ethnic groups of Sri Lanka – Tamils and Sinhalese. Thus, the 1947 constitution adopted the multiple safeguards against some established democratic norms. These safeguards were used as a guise through which a powerful elite could maintain status quo. Thus Soulbury Constitution lacked perspectives that would guide the nation building strategies in free Sri Lanka.

Republican constitution of 1972 cemented more the centralization of power rather to care for different ethnic groups. It changed the official name of the country from Ceylon to Sri Lanka (Sinhala name) and provided a very special place for Buddhism.

Despite the constant agitation of Tamil Political parties, the 1972 constitution enshrined the expectations of Sinhalese Buddhist nationalists without single concession to the Tamil speaking community. These changes could not be popular among the Tamils. Their feelings of alienation and anger with the government were intensified. Tamil representatives took no part in the discussions and debates; therefore, they did not accept the final product. All the Tamil parties decided to protest against the constitution.

In 1977, the UNP headed by J.R. Jayawardene, was voted into office with an unprecedented five sixth majority in elections held under a democratic parliamentary system.

Thus, if the 1972 constitution under Mrs. Bandaranaike turned out to provide in effect a prime Ministerial government, the 1978 constitution
promulgated under Jayawardene turned out to be Gaullist in nature. The 1978 constitution provides autocratic powers to the President.

So far as the Tamil aspirations are concerned there was no qualitative change in the constitution of 1978. Sri Lanka remained a Unitary State (Art.2) Buddhism, continued to enjoy the constitutional status (Art. 9), and Sinhala remained the official language of the Island (Art. 18, 12, and 24). The new constitution too did not provide for devolution or decentralization of powers.

The Tamil-Sinhala conflict has led to a prolonged armed conflict between the army, security forces and militant Tamil outfits.

Meanwhile, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) led by Velupillai Prabhakaran emerged as the most formidable faction among the other militant groups, which are Tamil Eelam Liberation Organization (TELO), People’s Liberation Organization of Tamil Eelam (PLOTE), Eelam People’s Revolutionary Liberation Front (EPRLF), Eelam National Liberation Front (ENLF) and Eelam Revolutionary Organization of Students (EROS). Thus the process of constitutional manipulation eroded the confidence of the people in the system of governance and they began to question the legitimacy of the rulers to continue in power.

Instead of granting significant concessions to assuage Tamil feelings the Sinhalase majority government became more provocative. Subsequently, in May-June 1987, then President Jayawardene launched a full scale military initiative against the Tamils in which thousands of innocent Tamil civilians here gunned down by the solidiers. At this juncture, at least, 1,50,000 Tamils fled to India after the nightmare. The repercussions of the Sri Lankan situation transgressed the Sri Lankan boundaries.

Two aspects of Srilankan society and polity have been significant: a special relationship between Sinhalese and Buddhists, and fear of domination by Tamils who draw their ethnic linkage to India. The minority complex
among the Sinhalese compelled them to follow a cultural nationalism which has ultimately drawn the country into a vortex of deep ethnic conflict.\textsuperscript{51}

The problem of Muslim minority has also come up in Sri Lanka. The Muslims are confronting both Sinhalese and Tamils.

(e) Bhutan

The Bhutanese Sangrila of peaceful hill Kingdom was conveniently left to itself by the world, and even by her immediate neighbours till 1980's. By 1990, the Bhutanese scenario was turning eventful. Ethnic demands, arrests, demonstrations, trials, convictions, police actions, assault, arson, loot and all resulting into a full-blown ethnic conflict.

There is a conflict between two ethnic groups, the Bhutanese of Tibetan origin who inhibit northern Bhutan and happen to be ruling elite, and the Bhutanese of Nepali origin who resided in South-western Bhutan. They are Nepali Hindu immigrants and form a distinct linguistic and cultural group.

In Bhutan, the recent ethnic upsurge has taken the shape of a political movement led by the Nepali migrants of the southern Bhutan demanding democratization of the polity and abolishment of monarchy. The ethnic conflict in Bhutan is rooted in the fear among Drukpas to their cultural identity from immigrant Nepalese.

They are apprehensive of their marginalisation by Nepalese immigrants, which happened in the case of Lepchas in Sikkim. Consequently, the Bhutani rulers have tried to bring the Nepalese under the fold of Drukpa culture by imposing a code of cultural conduct. They have also tried to control the economic resources of southern Bhutan.\textsuperscript{52} Thus, the growing ethno-Nepali nationalism in the kingdom is considered by the Bhutanese as the threat to their national identity, integrity and security.\textsuperscript{53}

The signs of ethnic conflict emerged in 1989 when Bhutan under its newly introduced policies, resolved to preserve its indigenous culture and took
several actions, including the expulsion of several thousands of Indians who had been long term, if not exactly legal, residents of Bhutan. In Bhutan many ethnic Nepalese were illegally migrating over a period of decades into Bhutan. The Drukpa government of Bhutan prohibited Nepali migration in 1988. The census of 1988 created such a legal situation for the Nepalese that they had no other alternative but to leave Bhutan.\textsuperscript{54}

The ethnic Nepalese on the other hand have strongly resented against the cultural hegemony of the Drukpas on the one hand and discriminatory economic policies against them on the other.

The repressive measures followed by Bhutan government resulted in fleeing away of thousands of Nepalese, thereby creating a new category of refugees, and adversely affecting Bhutan-Nepal relations.\textsuperscript{55} The net result is that southern Bhutan has come in the grip of violence and terrorism in recent years. They have also demanded citizenship rights and political and economic rights.

(f) Nepal

Nepal is a multi-ethnic and multilingual mini state of the Himalayan region. The Shah Kings of Nepal founded the Nepalese society on the basis of Hindu caste hierarchies. The upper layer of these caste Brahmins and Kshatriyas – began to dominate socio-economic and power structure.

The indigenous people who constitute majority of the population are of Tibetan origin with a considerable Hindu mixture and the plains or Terai people, who are in minority, are mostly of Indian origin and speak Indian languages. Both these groups are subdivided into many ethnic groups.

The indigenous people were concentrated in the hill region, therefore, regional identity also became an important factor in their ascendance to power. Although efforts were made to bring various tribal groups within the fold of Hinduism, they were not given a share in power and economic privileges
The Indian settlers of the Terai region were also deprived of these privileges despite their caste and religious affinities within the hill people. This happened because they were considered as outsiders, people not representing the hill culture.

Nepal's national unity and integrity is strained by a simmering conflict between majority hill people and the minority Terai people. The authoritarian nature of the panchayat regime, which lasted for about thirty years, only a subdued ethnic feeling was observed within the regional (Tarai) and hill communities. Nepali language developing over at least seven centuries has been considered a major component of Nepalese nationalism even though it was opposed by some Terai groups in the 1950s.  

After 1950, Terai people began to assert for their rights and proper share in the politico bureaucratic structure. During the 1950s, Terai people raised the citizenship and language issues. Most infrastructure activities in the Terai region are attracting peoples from different directions including from across the border. Though Terai people are highly unlikely to demand integration of Terai into India, their grievances have often been raised by the Indian government souring relations between the two countries.  

The Nepalese government tried to bring Terai people within the fold of Nepalisation process by imposing upon them Nepali language, etc. On the other hand they encouraged migration from hill areas to Terai with a view to controlling economic resources of Terai. The people of Terai region have strongly reacted against the discriminatory policies of the government.

Demand for regional autonomy and 'Terai for Teraiwalas' have often been raised. In hill areas on the other hand, there has been resentment against the Indian migrants, particularly the Marwaris who have a strong hold over the Nepalese economy.  

The Mongoloid ethnic groups have also begun to assert recently. Their major discontent has been against Brahmin Chettri domination and Hindu
character of the Nepalese state. In recent years a number of political organizations of Mongolians such as Organization of Mongol People, Nepal Rashtriya Janta Party, Nepal Janta Party etc., have come into existence. Nepal Janjati Maha Sangh has been strongly reacting to the suppressions of tribal groups. Various ethnic groups like Magar, Linbu, Rai, Kiranti etc have raised voices for their autonomous regions like Limbuwan, Magarantik, Kiratvan etc.

Nepal is also experiencing a two-way international migration straining its relations with most of its neighbouring countries while Nepali speaking people have been coming from north-eastern India, Bhutan and Burma, the Nepalese have migrated into Sikkim, a state of India, north eastern India, West Bengal and Bhutan. The Diaspora of all types of Nepalese extending from Bangladesh to Burma and the northern part of India with a heavy concentration in the north east is very large – somewhere ten to fifteen million. The citizenship rights of this group are very tenuous and controversial and have caused tensions with Bhutan and India. The influx of Bhutan refugees into Terai region has further deteriorated the problem of internal migration.

(g) Maldives

Maldives is largely a homogenous state in the region with one religion Islam and one language, Divehi; the micro-state comprises mainly Muslims of Arab descent and have only small Hindu Tamil and Buddhist Sinhali minorities. The micro-island has not experienced any ethnic strife as yet.

INDIA’S PURSUIT OF BILATERAL DIPLOMACY

Geographically, South Asia is bounded on the north by the Pamir Knot and the great chain of mountains, which flow out, from it – the Himalayas, Karakorum, Hindukush – and in the south, by the Indian ocean. Historically, from the earliest times, the people of this region have been intimately linked by race, culture religion and some times, by political allegiance.
As a consequence of geography and history, every country in South Asia is intimately connected with India. The same ethnic and religious groups to which their peoples belong are also found in India, which is a vast and heterogenous country. Marital ties overlap at all levels of society. Social organizations and styles of managing the environment are similar between each South Asian country and it’s nearest equivalent in India. For example, between Nagaland and northern Burma, West Bengal and Bangladesh, Kerala and Sri Lanka. For better or for worse, this intermingling of peoples, cultures and religions imparts a familial quality to inter state relations in South Asia.

National identity is as important to each South Asian country as self identification is to the members of one family. Sensitivity on the issues increases in direct proportion to proximity with India.

Identity problems are well defined in Nepal and Bangladesh, as in Pakistan. Having contributed to and drawn from the wide river of Indian civilization, these countries underline contradistinctions from India as they build their modern nations and participate in the international system. Nepalis who were educated in India, married in India, and who often own property in India, are frequently anti-Indian in international politics.

Some of Bangladesh’s identity problems arise from the fact that most of its inhabitants are both Bengali and Muslim. Opposition to Mujib and many failings was naturally against India which bolstered him a fact well recognized by Indira Gandhi problems of national identity among India’s neighbours are matched by India’s failure during the period under review, to consolidate its own national identity as a secular, socialist democracy.

Cultural ties could be and were used by Indian diplomats to cultivate goodwill. New Delhi’s celebration of the 2,500th anniversary of the birth of Gautam Buddha (1956) was the most striking example.
The Indian High Commission in Dacca published as a non-political journal, Bharat Vichitra, catering to the cultural mainstream in Bangladesh. Its voluntary subscription reached 25000 by 1980.\textsuperscript{61}

South Asia can surely be regarded as a region where the benefits of democratic peace would be more than desirable. South Asia's image as a region of chronic instability was only to be seconded by U.S. President Clinton's remarks in March 2000 that the line of control (LOC) in Kashmir is the most dangerous place in the world.\textsuperscript{62} Besides the well known conventional and nuclear security risks, South Asia is also among the poorest and least developed regions in the world according to international social and economic indicators.

During most of the 1990s, South Asia was the biggest democratic region after the transition from authoritarian rule in Pakistan, Nepal and Bangladesh. Moreover, South Asia is the only region where western political institutions go hand in hand with a variety of non-western civilizations and where religion plays an active role in current politics. The only forms of Hindu and Islamic democracies are to be found in Nepal and Bangladesh, and Buddhism received a foremost place in the Sri Lanka constitution.

All democratic governments in South Asia have to cope with violent conflicts that threaten the integrity of their statehood showing the failure of democratic institutions to deal with these challenges. Unfortunately, democratic governance is also not positively correlated with the rule of law or positive human development.

The relations with India are an important part of the bilateral relations and the domestic debate not only in Pakistan but also in Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Nepal.

Regional relations in South Asia are still dominated by India's security concerns on the one hand and the apprehensions of her smaller neighbours against it on the other.
India’s negative image in the neighbouring countries due to various bilateral conflicts persisted even after their democratic transition. The far-reaching changes that India undertook in her regional policy with the Gujral Doctrine in the mid 1990’s did not seem to have altered the perceptions of India as a regional hegemon.

The remarks of one Bangladeshi home minister Altaf Hussain Choudhury in march 2002 about India’s still expansionist designs can be regarded as representative for the perception of many intellectuals and political decision makers in the neighbouring countries.63

The most dominant players in South Asia and their relationship vis-à-vis India can be summarized here under certain subheadings.

**India-Pakistan : Bilateral Ties**

Relations between any two sovereign states, especially those between India and Pakistan which are bound together for centuries by common history, cultural heritage and above all by inter-dependence of economy, could have become a model for good neighbourly relations. That this did not happen after India and Pakistan came into being in 1947, after the British rulers had to hand over power to the people of these two countries, is in itself quite a disturbing fact of history. On the contrary what had happened is that Indo-Pak relations have never been on an even keel except for a short period after Simla Agreement had been signed in 1971.64

Before the advent of British rule, there was no trace of the type of the Hindu Muslim conflicts that followed it. There were wars between states which might have had Hindu or Muslim rulers; but these wars at no time took on a Hindu-Muslim complexion. It will not be incorrect to say that Hindu-Muslim division and conflicts were the direct product of the British policy of “divide and rule”.
Nonetheless, the truth remains that till the goal of physically splitting India into India and Pakistan was achieved, the British rulers used every instrument to drive a wedge between the Hindus and Muslims. After 1947, the same policy acquired the new garb of fomenting Indo-Pak tensions – an extension of the old policy in the new situation.

The compulsions, both economic and geo-political, continue to operate even now, though the United States has assumed the major role for itself. Whenever these compulsions become acutely pressing – either concurrently, as whole, or in part – the stage is set for Indo-Pak tensions, which on occasions escalates into open confrontation such as 1947, 1965 and 1971.65

In every escalation there was a specific scale of importance of the “stimulating factors” such as the dispute over Kashmir in 1947 and in 1965 and liberation of Bangladesh in 1971. But the range of the confrontation did not go beyond the framework of Indo-Pak conflicts. The conflict over Kashmir has been complicated by the interference of Britain and the United States.

New wedges were driven between South Asian States in the 50s when the United States, guided by the thesis of John Foster Dulles – the US Secretary of State – on the “amorality” of the non-aligned doctrine, openly began working to surround India with a ring of hostile regimes. One of the best ways to achieve this aim was to strengthen Pakistan’s military machine. Under the Mutual Defence Assistance Agreement signed by the USA and Pakistan in May 195466 the United States undertook to supply Pakistan with weapons, military equipment and materials, and to send its military advisers there.

In September 1954, Pakistan joined the treaty of South east Asia’s defence that formalized the formation of the SEATO military bloc and in September 1955 became a party to the Baghdad Pact (called CENTO after 1959) Pakistan’s ruling circles agreed to allow the country’s territory, airfields and sea ports to be used, under certain circumstances, by the armed forces of the parties to the aggressive military grouping.67
A flow of supplies of American arms enabled Pakistan to build a powerful military machine which was used to launch aggression against India in 1965 and again, in 1971.

Other sources of friction between India and Pakistan may be subdivided under five sections, viz; Pakistan’s acceptance of western alliance; Sino-Pak agreement and the transfer of Pak-occupied Indian territory to China, the canal waters dispute; and the Kashmir issue; and the last but not the least, the important problem of Indo-Pak border dispute.68

About the first two, reference has already been made. It should be noted here that although Pakistan continues to receive western patronization, she left SEATO on 8th November 1978, in a huff. Subsequently Pakistan left CENTO also and in 1979, she was welcomed by India as a member of the Non-Aligned Movement. The canal water dispute was somehow resolved through an agreement in 1948 (Indus Water Treaty), but still remains alive as a crucial factor on the face of Baglahar power project.

India-Pakistan bilateral relations continue to show a downward trend. Pakistan’s sustained efforts to internationalize Kashmir issue, its unabated support to subversion and terrorism directed against India, its intransigence on the issue of resumption of a bilateral dialogue with India, and its persistent negative approach have vitiated the atmosphere and prevented a meaningful progress in bilateral relations. In addition to training, equipping, funding, and guiding militants, Pakistan has stepped up its transborder terrorism by inducting mercenaries from third countries into Jammu and Kashmir.69 India has strongly urged Pakistan to conduct inter-state relations as a responsible member of the international community and to eschew the threat of terrorism held against India.

The Kashmir conflict saw a new escalation of violence during the 1990s with the number of victims going up steadily.70 Internationally, Pakistan tries desperately to gain support from the Islamic world. It paints a lurid picture of
happenings in Kashmir before OIC (Organization of Islamic Countries). (Pakistan does all the drafting for the OIC – its command over the English Language, such as it helps?) The Hizbs and the Lashkars and the Harkats of the valley get taken in. State sponsorship of terrorism/militancy has been a strong component of Pakistan’s foreign policy right from the days of the October 1947 intrusion into the valley by the marauding tribal raiders, to the infiltration in 1965, Code named operation Gibraltar by Ayub Khan, and now Kargil in 1999, where a mix of Jihadis with members of the NLI (North Light Infantry), were made to occupy the heights in Kargil.

The Kargil war of summer 1999 deserves special attention. The nuclear factor was already a threat before the tests of 1998 as the crisis of 1990 illustrated. The nuclear tests of 1998 demonstrated the will of both democratic governments in India and Pakistan to pursue the military logic to achieve their foreign policy goals.

The debate about policy options available to India to counter Pakistan sponsored terror against this country has once again sharpened with several ominous developments taking place in the region. These include the gruesome massacre of numerous Indians including 22 Army personnel at Kaluchak in Jammu, a series of missile tests conducted by Pakistan, heavy shelling by Pakistan forces along the India – Pakistan border, Pakistan’s reported decision to shift some of its forces deployed along Pakistan-Afghanistan borders to the eastern side bordering India, the killing of a moderate and peace – inclined Kashmiri leader, Abdul Gani Lone, and President Pervaiz Mushraf’s address of 27th May 2002, in which he simply declined Pakistan’s involvement in cross border terrorism in India and appealed the global community to ask “India to move towards normalization of relations” with his country.

India has described this statement as “mere verbal denials” about Pakistan’s ‘lethal export of terrorism’ and in India the domestic pressure increases to a frequency of great depth that the government of India should take the decisive action against Pakistan.
Though Pakistan is yet to unveil a concrete nuclear doctrine its arguments for nuclear weapon provide some insight into the Pakistani thinking on the subject.\textsuperscript{75} The Indian threat is described as a single most pervading factor that has dominated the Pakistani security landscape.\textsuperscript{76} Explaining the importance of nuclear capability and its significance to Pakistan’s national security, Gen. Mirza Aslam Beg, former Chief of Army Staff wrote, “to give up the nuclear capability would tantamount to committing a national suicide. To acquire this capability is totally in congruence with our defence requirements”.\textsuperscript{77}

According to Pakistani Security analyst’s nuclear weapons have a greater deterrence value. There exists a belief that conventional war was prevented both in 1987 and 1990 due to nuclear factor.\textsuperscript{78} According to him, “apart from providing a strategic deterrent against India’s superiority in conventional forces and size, it will also act as potential equalizer in political parleys with India”.\textsuperscript{79}

The arguments in favour of nuclear option for Pakistan are interlinked with the India’s nuclear capability as well as providing protection to Pakistan’s covert operation in Kashmir. Such views are articulated by K.M. Arif, retired Vice Chief of the Army staff, and Munir Ahmad Khan who was the former Chairman of Pakistan Atomic Commission.\textsuperscript{80} Both of them believe that India’s nuclear capability is a threat to Pakistan’s security and Pakistan’s nuclear option is for a defensive purpose to forestall nuclear blackmail and hegemony of India. Former Army Chief Mirza Aslam Beg said in a seminar on 2 April 1994 in Karachi that, in spite of having superiority in conventional weapons; India couldn’t attack Pakistan because of the fear of nuclear retaliation.\textsuperscript{81}

“Adoption of no-first use concept on the part of Pakistan would make non-sense of the concept of nuclear deterrence”, stated some nuclear analysts.\textsuperscript{82} According Pakistani security analysts deterrence had worked during the India-Pakistan crisis in 1987 and 1990. According to them deterrence factor of the
nuclear weapons also worked during the Kargil conflict confining the war to a limited conflict.

Apart from Kashmir issue, the history of Indo-Pak relations centers round border disputes and attempts to solve it.

Terrorism poses the most serious threat to Indian territorial integrity and internal security. Terrorist attacks are becoming increasingly lethal, and they now aim to kill maximum number of people. This trend reflects the changing motivations of terrorist groups, and easy availability of sophisticated weapons; around the world. Many terrorist groups are in a position to use biological, radiological or nuclear weapons.

Thus the Jihadi groups became their first line of defence, and India was kept militarily engaged in a proxy war without the Pakistan army getting directly involved. New Delhi on its part just chose to absorb for more than a decade the pain from Islamabad’s strategy of bleeding it through a thousand cuts. This convinced Pakistan that India would not retaliate against it for supporting cross-border terrorism and that it had a free hand in fomenting violence across the border in Jammu & Kashmir and take it to high value targets, like 13 December 2001 Indian Parliament attack and like targets in the rest of the country.

But the attack on the parliament house obliged India into moving towards confronting the source of the threat once and for all, as the attack on Parliament, 13 Dec. 2001 came after Pakistan’s repeated betrayal of several peace initiatives by the Vajpayee administration. Thus, for instance, when Prime Minister A.B.Vajpayee, took a bold and imaginative step of visiting Lahore for inaugurating the New Delhi-Lahore bus service, Pakistan rebuffed this initiative through its Kargil perfidy in 1999. When he took another bold peace initiative by implementing a unilateral ceasefire in Kashmir in the Islamic holy month of Ramazan in Nov. 2000 and later on invited President Mushrafi for talks in the historical town of Agra in July 2001, Islamabad once
again replied these peace initiatives by engineering attacks on Jammu and Kashmir State Assembly on 1 October, the Indian Parliament House in 13 December 2001, the Rughunath temple in February and the Kaluchak massacre in May 2002.  

It may be noted that whether India likes it or not, the international community concerned about the situation in Kashmir. The worries that the Indo-Pakistan tension could escalate into a nuclear one continue to rive those policies towards the subcontinent since India lags behind Pakistan for the propaganda stakes on the international stage and the recent communal carnage in Gujrat has eroded its image as a tolerant and secular nation.

Pakistan’s military is so deeply committed to a proxy war in Kashmir and is so convinced that India has no answer to it, that it is almost inconceivable that it will allow India to call its bluff and get away with it. On the other hand, India’s military thinkers seem convinced that Pakistan’s response will not be nuclear. This rock solid belief in each country that the other is bluffing is the root cause of the threat of nuclear war in South Asia.

India and Sri Lanka

The strategic location of Srilanka influences the Indo-Sri Lankan relations. Sri Lanka is located at the Southern tip of the Indian peninsula. A Palk Strait which is not wider than 20 miles in certain places. Disparity of size-India is 50 times of Ceylon in size.

Pandit Nehru, as early as 1945, had pointed out of the ethnic, linguistic and cultural unity of India and Sri Lanka and supported the formation of a close Union as an autonomous unit of the Indian federation. All these had created some misgivings in Sri Lanka. Later on, Pandit Nehru himself in a special message to the Sri Lankan government repudiated any such suggestion and said that India did not wish to interfere with the Island’s sovereignty and assured them of Indian goodwill and peaceful intentions, towards Sri Lanka. Since then, almost all the Prime Ministers, have assured them that India had no
intention to harm her sovereignty and territorial integrity, yet Sri Lankan politicians always create the fear psychosis of the danger from the big neighbour.

India and Sri Lanka have been members of the Common Wealth and also been members of the non-aligned movement, South Asian State Conference; both of them took a common view on many international issues including disarmament and regional military pacts. This does not mean that there were no differences on various issues.

Apart from the question of people of Indian origin the first issue, which cropped up between the two countries was the question of possession of Island of Kachcha Thivu in Palk Strait.

Indo-Sri Lankan relations got strained when China attacked India in October, 1962 and Ceylon did not criticize the attack and failed to brand China as an aggressor Sri Lanka’s role as a peace-maker in the Sino-Indian conflict was motivated by her sincere desire to prevent the continuation of hostilities between the two countries.

Following this Sri Lanka entered into a maritime agreement with China. Sri Lanka gave China the Most Favoured Nation status and provided facilities to Chinese Warships, knowing fully well that it was against Indian interests.

In March 1971, insurgency occurred almost all over Sri Lanka. American Embassy was attacked, ¼ of police was killed. Emergency was declared on 16 March, 1971. Mrs. Bandaranaike in a broadcast to the nation stated certain points including an appeal to many countries for help. India responded favourably.

In return during Indo-Pak conflict of 1971, Sri Lankan government granted air passage to Pakistan through Colombo. Even Sri Lanka opposes the
recognition of Bangladesh as an independent state. These events did affect Indo-Srilankan relations but not very seriously.

In 1950's there was hardly any problem between India and Sri Lanka except the question of granting of citizenship to the people of Indian origin, mostly Tamils. Though the Sinhala-Tamil conflict in Sri Lanka was going on for the last 30 years, yet India was not directly involved in it.

In July 1983, riots for the first time involved India in Sinhala-Tamil conflict. The then Prime Minister of India, Mrs. Indira Gandhi told the Sri Lankan President that the problem of Tamils was a matter, in which India could not be treated just another country It is matter which concerns both India and Sri Lanka. She made it clear that India supported the territorial integrity of its neighbour, Sri Lanka, and believed in the policy of non-intervention in its domestic affairs.

Since July 1983 riots, Sri Lanka's foreign policy has been taking shape in such a way that it can not be called friendly towards India. The Indian foreign minister visited Sri Lanka after July riots and within 3 days of his return Sri Lanka government made request for military assistance to the USA, the UK, Pakistan and Bangladesh though, this report was later on contradicted by Sri Lanka, but British Foreign office confirmed that such requests have been made by Sri Lanka government.

The Sri Lankan government has adopted such a line in foreign policy, which directly affects security in this area and particularly security of India. The Revival of Defence treaty with UK, the Trincomalee Tank Farm Deal, expansion of scope of the voice of America Sri Lanka's collaboration with Isreali Special Air Services (SAS) and many such steps are creating disharmonious relationship between India and Sri Lanka.

Sri Lanka's geopolitical location was important factor that compelled India's anxiety over any destabilizing development in the Island. Sri Lanka sought help from Israel and Pakistan in its fighting against the Tamil militants.
The Israeli secret service MOSSAD gave counter insurgency training to Sri Lanka’s security forces and Pakistan readily responded with arms and military training for the Island’s army. China, South Africa, Singapore and Malaysia were the other countries, which supplied arms to Sri Lanka. To counter these trends India developed her doctrine of regional security. India has no intention of intervention in internal conflicts of any South Asian country and strongly opposes intervention by any country in the internal affairs of any other. India will not tolerate external interventions in a conflict situation in any South Asian country if the intervention has any implicit anti-Indian orientations, analyzed Bhabani Sen Gupta.93

The bomb blast in a crowded Colombo market killed many civilians. The Jayawardene government was asked to resign. Jayawardene opted for military solution and military action was initiated in Jaffna peninsula to wipe out terrorist element in May 1987.94 The government of India warned the Sri Lanka government that India would not remain an indifferent spectator to the plight of Tamils in Jaffna. The Indian government ran for the humanitarian aid but the Sri Lankan government refused.

It is obvious that Sri Lanka’s geopolitical location is an important factor that compels India’s anxiety over any destabilizing development in the Island. Indian role in Sri Lanka’s ethnic conflict and changed regional policy needs to be understood in this perspective from the point of view of India’s security. K.M. Pannikar had advocated the strategic unity of India, Burma and Sri Lanka, which is one of the prerequisites to a realistic policy of Indian defence.95

India-Nepal: Relationship and Regional Security

The Himalayan Kingdom of Nepal is a small country the size of the state of Illinois. Sandwiched between its two giant neighbours, the People’s Republic of China and India, It is land locked and thus has access to the sea only through Indian Territory. Linked with both China and India by all-weather
motorable roads, Nepal today occupies a strategic position in the Southern subcontinent.  

Nepal achieved its territorial consolidation in the eighteenth century under a dynamic Gorkha King Prithvi Raj Narayan Shah, who organized the Nepali army along western times. In the 1814 war with the British rulers of India, Nepal not only suffered a defeat but also lost considerable territory to British India. It is only after 1947 Nepal emerged from its seclusion and became active in regional politics.

The ethnic compositions of Nepal’s population and its cultural heritage have been deeply influenced by India and Tibet, two of its immediate neighbours. Its population is divided into two predominant racial groups, Caucasoid and Mongoloid.

Indo-Nepal relations have generally been on even-keel, minor irritants now and then notwithstanding. It is because of historical geographical economic and socio-cultural factors. There are hardly any two countries in the world that share more commonalties than Nepal and India do.

The occupation of Tibet by China in 1950 aroused the sensitivity of India about her own security, as there is no natural barrier between India and Nepal. Thus, threat perception of India increased because in some Chinese maps Nepal was shown as Chinese territory as early as 1939 and Mao Zedong had said that Nepal was the dependent state of China. In fact the Chinese had regarded Tibet as palm and Nepal, Bhutan, Sikkim, Laddakh and NEFA as five fingers of Tibet. With such a background it is but natural for India to be deeply concerned with the security of Nepal as its own security.

Nepal’s India policy from 1947 to 1950 was exclusively aimed at winning over the Indian governments sympathy for the Rana rule. To achieve this aim, the Rana’s repeatedly pleaded with New Delhi which resulted in the Treaty of Peace and Friendship in 1950. The Treaty of Peace and Friendship is still the cornerstone of Indo-Nepal relations, which some Indian Scholars refer
to as almost “defence pact” between the two countries. While accepting the complete independence and sovereignty of Nepal, India also sought to bind Nepal down to its own strategic and foreign policy needs more than ever before, since Nepal has been taking of the unequal nature of the Treaty and wants to review it.

Nepal and India, therefore, generally agree to talk over the Treaty provisions. When, for example, the then Nepalese Prime Minister, G.P. Koirala, came to New Delhi on 31 July 2000, exactly 50 years after the signing of the Treaty, Prime Ministers of both the countries directed their Foreign Secretaries to undertake a review of all issues pertaining to the 1950 Treaty.

Another issue that needs scrutiny pertains to the Indo-Nepal border. India and Nepal share 1760 km. open border. One of the present day border problems, which bedevil the relations between India and Nepal, pertains to a small stretch of land in far west of Nepal - over looking China. Situated at the tri-junction, Kalapani is claimed by Nepal as its territory while India maintains as Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) outpost there since 1962 and claims sovereignty over it. This is a nice slope of the Mahakali tributary in Dracula. Both India and Nepal are claiming the territory on the ground of map and border demarcation evidences, though minor, the dispute remains a thorn in the flesh of bilateral relations.

The open border between India and Nepal, which characterizes the special relationship between the two countries has of late, taken a new dimension affecting the security situation in the region. Certain levels of smuggling and criminal activities were always there. But now the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) of Pakistan not only uses Nepal as conduit for its infiltration into India, but also uses its territory as safe haven and recruiting ground. The porous nature of the border enables ISI agents to slip into India with ease and along with arms, explosives and counterfeit Indian currency. There is a feeling in some quarters in India that Nepal is not doing enough to
curb the ISI activities on its soil in spite of its official commitment to do. The feeling was buttressed by the hijacking of the Indian Airline’s plane in December 1999.\textsuperscript{101}

**India-Bangladesh**

Ever since the emergence of Bangladesh in the political map of South Asia, its relations with neighbouring India has most of the time remained fragile. No doubt, till the late Mujibur-Rehman ruled the country, he saw to it that Indo-Bangladesh relations in spite of occasional irritants, must be stabilized at any cost. In fact, because of his personal and warm relationship with Mrs. Indira Gandhi, many of the misconceptions between the two nations, were pushed to the background.\textsuperscript{102}

With the dramatic exit of Sheikh Mujib from the political scene of Bangladesh, the short-term benefits derived from the Pakistani factor in Indo-Bangla relations no more remained in force. The late Prime Minister Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto clearly understood this real politic in the sub continental drama and lost no time to recognize the new regime led by Khondkar Mostaque Ahmed. Zia-ur-Rahman, the Strongman in Post-Mujib phase launched his political career with an anti-Indian plank. There was a dramatic U-turn in Pak-Bangla relations.

But very soon Zia’s regime realised the situation of the subcontinent. In his search for legitimacy, the late Zia had no other option but to placate New Delhi. Fortunately for him the Janata Government was vigorously pursuing the so-called policy of positive bilateralism’. With the result in November 1977, the much-publicized Farakha Agreement was signed between India and Bangladesh. The late Zia-ur-Rahman also championed the cause of regional co-operation in South Asia.\textsuperscript{103}

Unfortunately, Bangladesh saw another coup against General Zia-ur-Rahman who was elected president in February 1979. The aforementioned coup took place on the 30\textsuperscript{th} of May, 1981, when Zia-ur-Rahman was at
Chittagong wherein the circuit house he was killed by Maj. General Manjur.\textsuperscript{104} The anarchy and confusion led another General, General Ershad to grab power and declare himself President of Bangladesh on 11\textsuperscript{th} of December, 1982. He continued Marshal Law, imposed a new in 1985 in the new regime.

The movement to restore democracy was launched by Awami League President Mujib’s daughter, Sheikh Hasina Wajed and Mrs. Khalida Zia, who now became one of the leaders of Nationalist Party, along with other parties, and forced Ershad to agree to hold elections and to restore democracy in Bangladesh.

The administrators of Bangladesh were not reconciled to the present Farakka arrangement under which 40,000 cusecs of water are to be discharged into the Hooghly. Dacca expressed its desire to internationalize the Farrakka issue by placing the whole question before the United Nations Organization. India, however, suggested bilateral negotiations and peaceful solution.\textsuperscript{105}

India’s relations with Bangladesh are complicated by the latter’s turbulent politics, its location, and the concern that other states might gain a foothold to India’s disadvantage.\textsuperscript{106}

Despite Bangladesh’s strategic and ideological importance, relations with India have not been smooth. Like Nepal and Sri Lanka, Bangladesh feels it is taken for granted by New Delhi. If resents the proconsular style of some Indian officials and feels overwhelmed by India’s vast economic capabilities. Senior Bangladeshi civil servants, diplomats, and army officers remember the "Pakistan days" when they were part of a larger and strategically important state.

Until recently Delhi has resisted Bangladesh’s attempts to be part of any larger international framework that might impinge upon its own regional dominance. This is especially true in the case of managing river waters that flow from India to Bangladesh, Bangladesh draws its water supply from two
great rivers, the Ganges and the Brahmaputra, which are, therefore, vital for its very existence.

Since mid 1990s there emerged another phase of bilateral relationship between the two countries, that eventually led to signing of Ganga Waters Treaty of 1996 and developments leading to the repatriation of Chakma refugees from Indian state of Tripura. This certainly marks a new beginning from the good and cordial relationship, particularly when one side calls it a “big achievement” and the other a “landmark” in India Bangladesh ties.

Because of the great increase in social violence and separatist movements in India’s northeast, as well as conflict along India’s border with Burma, Bangladesh’s location and geography have also assumed strategic importance.

Because of social and cultural ties, the domestic ethnic politics of one state often resonates in the other. Furthermore, because Bangladesh is overwhelmingly Muslim, Indian strategists fear that it might harbour extremist and anti-Hindu, anti Indian groups, possibly with support from Pakistan. The United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA) has been the latest group to benefit from this Pakistani design to destabilize India. However, the present Bangladeshi government has often reiterated its resolve not to give any assistance to such groups but it is yet to nab Bangladeshi conduits to bring this problem to an end.

New Delhi still worries that outsiders will become involved in Bangladesh’s affairs. There have been frequent newspaper accounts of Pakistani intelligence operations mounted from Bangladesh and of activities of radical anti-Indian and anti-Hindu Islamic groups, New Delhi is also concerned about possible American assistance to the Bangladesh Army. The latter has been very active in international peacekeeping operations and American officials have considered such aid to enhance Bangladesh’s capabilities. The worry for Indian strategists is not that this will encourage an attack from the
miniscule within Bangladeshis, but that it might tilt the political balance within Bangladesh. Given the army’s record of political involvement in the past and coup attempts as recently as 1998, this is not an unreasonable concern.

**India and Bhutan**

India’s relations with Bhutan have remained cordial over the years. There are only two issues which merit consideration from India’s security point of view. The first is the use of Bhutanese territory by Indian militant and insurgent groups belonging to India’s north-east region such as the ULFA and Bodo militants of Assam over the past three years or so these groups have set up operations in Southern Bhutan which offers them a safe haven in the event of pressure from Indian security forces. While India is encouraging the Bhutan to launch joint military operations against the militant groups, the latter has been reluctant to do so.\(^{112}\)

The Bhutanese government has been unable to persuade the militants to leave Bhutan and has been reluctant to take military action against ULFA. The other issue of concern has been the ongoing differences between Nepal and Bhutan over the Southern Bhutanese Refugee issue.

In 1949 the ten article treaty replacing the 1910 treaty, signed by Bhutan and India, confirmed the treaty obligations of the two nations; that is Bhutan accepted Indian advice on foreign affairs and India pledged not to interfere in Bhutan’s internal affairs. In short, India and Bhutan, each faced with threats from the People’s Republic of China.\(^{113}\)

**TERRORISM AND INTERSTATE RELATIONS IN SOUTH ASIA**

Words and attitudes wrap around meaning especially when there is some difficulty in distinguishing ‘a terrorist’ from ‘a guerrilla’ or from ‘freedom fighter’. With these three, they contrast each other in their recourse to violence.

- the terrorist targets civilians
- the guerrilla goes for military personnel and facilities.
- The freedom fighter conducts a campaign to liberate his people from dictatorial oppression, gross discrimination, or the grip of an occupying power.

What distinguishes the terrorist from others is not the extent of violence, it is the choice of target and mode of activity, whether guerrilla or freedom fighter, if violence is used against innocent civilians then you are most certainly a terrorist. No end can justify such means.

The Tamil Tigers, fighting savagely in Sri Lanka for their independence, are regarded as terrorists rather than as a liberating force because they destroy villages and assassinate political figure heads. When Chechen 'rebels' fighting for their national autonomy, spring violence upon Moscow, they are bunted as terrorists, if at home in Chechnya they sabotage Russian military bases they are lauded by their fellows as brave patriots.

Difficulties, though, remain short of an acceptable international definition of terrorism. In reality, any state can sign a declaration against terrorism without needing to put obligations into full practice. States, party to a convention, tend to define the phenomenon of terrorism in different ways.

Since New York's traumatic 9/11 there has been a great deal of international effort to put what is understood to be unacceptable terrorism at the very top of the agenda. The United Nations system of specialized agencies and programmes is continually devising a draft of counter-terrorist measures to supplement those of the 1960s and 1970s. Now there are 12 anti-terrorism treaties and just as many conventions compelling all 189 supporting nations to work together against aiding, supporting, harbouring, organising and sponsoring terrorists.

Whatever be the reasons or the ground realities for terrorism, such as; socio-economic deprivation, ethno-political aspirations, ideological inspirations, suppression or oppression of weaker sections or communities etc; the fact is that terrorism has now assumed a true transnational dimension and
has all the potential and prospect of being globalised in all senses of the term. No wonder, therefore, experts say that terrorism is "widespread geographically, and diverse, ideologically". 117

The latest victim of transnational terrorism would seem to be the hitherto tranquil Himalayan kingdom of Bhutan. The bomb blast on November 7, 1998, at Changlimiltran Stadium in the capital city of Thimpu is worrying the authorities a lot. They link this incident with the series of small terrorist type activities which began in the late 80s in the southern parts of the country, to the problem of mass migration detected at the last national census.

After the end of cold war, a serious problem affecting a large number of countries of the world, irrespective of their size, religion or ideology, is terrorism. Terrorism has created social and political disorder, chaos and instability in countries and deprived its victims of basic human rights. Though, there is unanimity among the countries suffering from the menace to control it, there is no sign of the end of terrorism. 118 It is well recognized that no single country can control it, not even the super power, America.

Terrorists, now a global community, are part of our world no matter which part of it we inhabit. India, the U.S., Canada almost all the Latin American countries, Ireland, Britain, France, Germany, Spain, Italy, Turkey, Lebanon, Egypt, Jordan, Myanmar, Thailand, Malaysia, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Indonesia, and Japan have had a taste of it in the last two decades. 119 The number of countries in which terrorist incidents have taken place have increased. The South Asia is the worst affected area in Asia.

Terrorism in South Asia is as old as history, nay, even mythology. In the Ramayana epic, which is read and revered all over South and South-East Asia, perhaps the abduction of Sita by the Lankan king Rawana by luring her to the glitter of a golden deer was an act of terrorism. And so also was the burning of Ravana's "Golden Lanka" by the monkey god, Hanuman as an act of retaliation. The political consequences of Ravana's first act of terrorism led a
war between his state Lanka and the refugee king of Ayodhya, Lord Rama resulting in the elimination of Ravana and destruction of his Lanka. On substantive aspects such mythological tales can as well be compared with forms of terrorism in the modern world, including the "Post-9/11 war against global terrorism".

In South Asia, states have consciously and persistently used force as an instrument of strategic and foreign policies towards other states. In doing so, terror as a method and a consequence of the use of force has been sought to be justified.

In the South Asian situation between India and Pakistan, significance of terrorism is critical and decisive in conditioning inter-state relations.

Terrorism and its political consequences have directly and visibly affected inter-state relations in South Asia. Particularly so, when force has been made an instrument of conscious state policy and the resulting terrorist violence has been rationalised. Such terrorism has vitiated interstate relations and brought about a drift and acrimony in neighbourhood interactions. In situations where terrorism has affected states negatively, in a similar manner, it has also brought the neighbours together, to cooperate in common interest.

In the western region of South Asia, namely, Afghanistan, Central Asia, Pakistan, Jammu and Kashmir, Islamic fundamentalist groups are operating at a large scale. They terrorize to achieve their political objectives. The appearance of this form of Islamic fundamentalism in South Asia is a comparatively recent but significant development, because it has come about through American assistance to various obscurantist groups operating in Afghanistan.

The assertion of a medieval Islamic personality and the emergence of transnational terrorism in its wake is the most disturbing development in the regions because Islamic terrorist organizations have a formidable global reach. In South Asia fundamentalists can create destabilization, conflicts and chaos. Afghanistan and Pakistan have become the main launching pads for militant
Islam. Transnational terrorist groups have been launched into Kashmir, Xinjiang and Tajikistan since 1992.

Pakistan intensified its efforts to induct mercenaries into Kashmir to carry out sabotage killings and attacks on security forces. The Pak-sponsored mercenaries have been employing the local Hizbul Mujahideen cadres for securing hideouts logistics and also to act as local guides in their terrorist operations. Pakistan, however, has denied direct links with these groups.

In Southern region of South Asia, the ethnic differences between the Sinhalese and Tamils turned into violent conflict in which terrorism played a dominant role from 1983 onwards. Widespread ethnic riots aggravated the situation. The army and police, largely Sinhalese in composition, played a partisan role forcing the Tamils to organize their own defence. The LTTE (Liberal Tamil Tigers Eelam) eventually converted Jaffna into a string fortress and ran a parallel government in the Tamil dominated areas of northern and eastern Sri Lanka. The LTTE’s most spectacular terrorist attack in 1997 was a truck bombing directed at the newly opened Colombo World Trade Center on 15 October.123

Insurgencies and tribal conflicts have been endemic in the eastern region of South Asia. The international borders are highly porous and insurgents can move across them with ease. Indo-Mongoloid ethnic stock is dominant in the entire region and most tribes of India, Myanmar and Bangladesh have close cultural and ethnic affinities. The Himalayan kingdom of Bhutan, north of the Indian state of Assam, is also used by insurgents to escape from the security forces, who cannot pursue them across the international borders.

Northeast India comprises seven states. Most of them are insurgency-prone due to their inaccessibility and isolation from the natural mainstream. External support comes from Pakistan and China in the form of training and financial assistance. Insurgents from India frequently operate from bases in Myanmar, Bangladesh and Bhutan. The increased flow of arms in north east
India, the rise of Islamic fundamentalist groups in Bangladesh and the
dangerous potential of the situation in Myanmar, has the potential to generate
wide spread violence in the region. One could not also miscalculate the designs
of LTTE in Sri Lanka.\textsuperscript{124}

South Asia, over more than two decades, has been a scene of domestic
ethnic wars involving the big and small states. More internal conflicts have
occurred in recent times than inter-state wars. As against the five regular
military to military wars in the region since 1947, including the Kargil war, 42
wars of irregular type erupted besides a much larger number of armed conflicts
at a lower scale going down to terrorist acts. Such wars have distinguished
themselves in their intractability and internationalization.\textsuperscript{125}

In the management of internal conflicts the South Asian states
fundamentally face two elements of global dimension, viz., the
internationalization of internal conflict and procurement of arms by militant
groups from globally differed sources.

The first element, the internationalization of an internal conflict, is the
most formidable political factor that the South Asian States have to counter.
Extra regional states and international NGOs are the major actors in the field
through whom the ethnic groups which are challenging the state authority for
more autonomy or secession are escalating pressure on the state. To be more
specific, the western states like US, UK, France, Germany and Netherlands and
the UN on the one hand, the voluntary bodies like the Amnesty International,
Asia Watch and the European Human Rights Association are the major
Agencies through which the dissident groups articulate their cause and appeal
for action against State repression.\textsuperscript{126}

Given the western understanding and sensitivity to the human rights
abuse militant groups were able to muster considerable support to their cause in
Europe and America and also subject their state to external pressures for
redressal. It is a well-known fact that the National Human Rights Commission
in India owes its establishment to the western pressure during the Punjab and Kashmir secessionist movement.

What seems in the prevailing scenario of militancy in South Asian region is that the sovereignty of the state is defining and exercising its power to control the anti-state movements and their outfits is sought to be externally managed. Hence, the State is asked to allow foreign visiting groups into the disturbed areas, permit neutral human rights inquiries, appoint human rights commissions, etc. to address the militant’s cause. The bare truth is that widespread and uncontrolled proliferation of illicit arms around the world fuels the ongoing ethnic wars in South Asia.

Terrorism is an interstate problem in South Asia. Its threat to the region is multidimensional. It is a complex intermix of religious – separatist – communal overtones. Though, no state is free from terrorist activities, regional cooperation is not forthcoming to deal with it. This is because almost all the states seem to have consciously adopted the policy of supported extremist outfits against the neighbours. The South Asian states have not come forward to meet the challenge collectively as they used support to terrorism to pressurize neighbours. In the post cold war period terrorism assumed the form of Frankenstein as the global community is emphasizing respect for human rights to self determination leading to strengthening insurgency and autonomy movements of various types in South Asia. In South Asia, India has been the major victim of militancy and terrorism. Many groups, both within and outside the country, employ terrorist tactics championing their cause.

Sources of Religious Extremism in South Asia

South Asia has witnessed various types of terrorism. There are many religious ethnic and sectarian groups that are adopting violent and terrorist means and seeking to destabilize civil societies. In the recent past, Jehadi and extremist forces have become active in India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Nepal. They have also established closer links with the insurgent movements in the
northeastern parts of India. Other forms of terrorist activities were precipitated by Muslim and Hindu zealots in India. There are also revolutionary movements like Maoists and ethnic insurgencies led by the LTTE in Nepal and Sri Lanka, respectively.\textsuperscript{128}

The unique feature of terrorism in South Asia is the strong state support it receives. Almost all the South Asian states seem to officially sponsor and encourage terrorism as an instrument of state policy to pressurize others. Pakistan sponsored terrorism in Kashmir or, Bangladesh has encouraged and sheltered many groups from northeast India against the Indian government. Often, Bangladesh played a conduit to ISI supported activities against India. Similarly, India encouraged and supported Tamil militants in Sri Lanka by providing money and ammunition to LTTE cadres before the India Sri Lanka accord was signed. Even smaller states like Bhutan and Nepal are no exception. Nepal, increasingly faces Maoist insurgency. Bhutan faces a nexus between militant groups and Nepali refugees. Tensions between Bhutan and Nepal have been increasing on account of Nepal’s suspected support to the Nepalese in Bhutan.\textsuperscript{129}

Another feature of terrorism in South Asia is religion-fuelled terrorism practised by Jihad activity supported by the states in the region. Most of Jehadi groups made Pakistan as the centre for their activities and used hit and run tactics. Their activities are supported by both political and military leadership of Pakistan. In due course, the Jehadi elements spread their tentacles into neighbouring countries in raising similar organisations.\textsuperscript{130}

The origin of the so-called Islamic extremism can be traced back to various historical factors. A lot of misinterpretations exist over what happened a few centuries ago. The prophets of Islam or the Quran do not sanction violence or extremism in any form. Terrorism occurs because of various reasons. Similarly, no other religion advocates extremist views. But, whenever a rigidity of views exists, extremism follows. When people want to achieve
political power by the use of force, terrorism is born. The influence of the ‘Muslim Brotherhood’ idea spread through Syed Qutab of Egypt and Maulana Abul Alam Mouli of the previously unpartitioned India and subsequently, Pakistan and their extremely violent means of power, was justified to fight against non-believers. These were the people who affected a large number of people in South Asia and the contemporary fundamentalist movement started in the form of Jihad, as a violent form propagated by them. Various Pakistan based fundamentalist and extremist militant organizations unleashed political violence in the name of Jihad in Afghanistan and Kashmir through the 1980s. Religion was manipulated to achieve political ends, especially since, in the Indian subcontinent, religion holds almost an obsessive appeal for the common man, and can be easily used to sway the passions of people.

People responded to the Fatwa given by Osma bin Laden to eliminate radicals and civilian allies on the belief that every Muslim considers it his primary duty to fight against western elements, the corrupt indigenous Muslim societies.

Of late, religious extremism has emerged in India as well. Hatred against certain religious minorities is openly being propagated by certain radical Hindu organizations. Such religious fanaticism has repeatedly led to violence and similar reactions. It has not yet led to widespread terrorism but possibility of such an eventuality cannot be easily ignored. Until now, India has only witnessed ‘sponsored’ terrorism.

**Role of Pakistan in Abetting Terrorism in South Asia**

Pakistan has been the driving force of terrorism in South Asia. It supports, encourages and aids all types of miscreant elements in the name of the right to self-determination in Kashmir, Islam and Jihad. From the 1980s onwards Pakistan has become a base and transit point for outside operations for many Islamic groups.
Pakistan has never been able to accept Kashmir as a part of India. Having failed to resolve the issue through negotiations and war, Islamabad found a new way in the form of low-intensity conflict by training and encouraging militancy in Kashmir. It has been spreading the cult of militancy and terrorism to create ethnic and sectarian divide and communal backlash.

During General Zia's regime, Pakistan launched 'Operation Topac' which aims at proxy war against India. The main features of this operation were (a) initiate low-level insurgency (b) exert pressure along the line of control (LOC) by infiltrating mercenaries and special force to attack vital targets (c) using religion as a motivating and binding factor and giving a nudge to the Jihad.134

State sponsored terrorism took several hundred lives in Punjab when the insurgency broke out in 1980s. An analyst observed that "over the years, the ISI had stirred the Punjab insurrection arming and training Sikh extremists". Thereafter Pakistan has taken the ULFA men to the North-West, Frontier province (NWFP) where the worlds biggest open and illegal arms are sold.135

Having failed to realize the establishments of an independent Khalistan, Pakistan upgraded its policy towards Kashmir and changed tactics there in the 1990s. Islamabad recognized the effectiveness of cross-border terrorism in achieving its goal in Kashmir after the cold war. The post-cold war period has witnessed the rise and phenomenal growth of religion - fuelled terrorism in different parts of the world. The 11th September events have shown that terrorism runs in the veins of radical religious beliefs. Out of the 100 active terrorist groups, 64 are identified as religiously motivated.136 Most of these groups operate from South Asia to Central Asia through West Asia and from East Asia to South Asia to central Asia through West Asia and from East Asia to Southeast Asia some of these groups extend their operations to Africa, Europe and North America by collaborating with transnational criminal groups of gun runners, narcotics traffickers and smugglers.
Neighbours have quarreled and compromised in contemporary international relations. Examples can be multiplied, France and Germany, Iran and Iraq, India and its neighbours namely Nepal, Bangladesh Sri Lanka, Russia & China, China & Japan etc. The two neighbours India and Pakistan, however, are parts of one civilization represent the culture and history of the Indian subcontinent, but are always in a tug of war. They have been forced to divert their vast and valuable resources towards defence requirements retarding their most urgent social and economic development. Air Marshal (Retd.) Asghar Khan admitted that throughout its existence Pakistan 'fought four wars with India without clear objective.' Terrorism fuelled by religion took a new turn with Soviet intervention in Afghanistan. In its fight against the Soviet Union, Washington not only trained religiously influenced Mujahideen elements but also provided arms, economic aid and gave diplomatic support. During this period, an International Tabligh Jammait Convention was held in Illinois attracting over 6,000 Muslims from different parts of the world. Later on, the Jammait had run training camps for the Mujahidden of Afghanistan. During the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan, Pakistan collaborated with the U.S. and acted as a frontline state in supplying arms and training to the Mujahideen elements.

During the last 13 years Pakistan sponsored proxy war in the state of Jammu and Kashmir has created havoc of worst variety killing tens of thousands of innocent people including a large number of security forces and causing colossal damage to both public and private properties worth hundreds of crores. Pakistan has claimed that over 75,000 Kashmiris had been killed in the last 13 years. India holds that the total number of casualities is between 30,000 and 31,000 of these 2500 were the members of the security forces. Out of the total number of 28,000 Kashmiris killed, 9,800 were killed not by the security forces but by the militants, of these 1,180 were Hindus, but more than 8,600 were Muslims. It would not be out of place to mention that 11,800 militants were killed by security forces. Most distressingly, it needs to be
highlighted that Pakistan trained terrorist groups have remained actively engaged in systematic campaign of ethnic and religious cleansing in the state.\textsuperscript{143}

**Terrorism and Weapons of Mass Destruction**

With repeated occurrence of average terror attacks the impact seems to wear off over time and the urge for moving towards catastrophic terrorism gains predominance. The new “terrorists have a number of characteristics – including fanaticism, apocalyptic ideology and most frightening of all, desire to intimidate by mass murder.”\textsuperscript{144} In a competent work, Jessica stern analyzes the terrorists’ motivations to use unconventional weapons. Terrorism, she argues, is not a static phenomenon and new modes of terrorism have emerged with regularity. But terrorist groups are unlikely to resort to weapons of mass destruction (following the rational actor model) as they hope to influence policy and not to kill for its own sake. Still, the terrorists can be motivated to use unconventional weapons if they get insufficient attention from the press of governments if they become decreasingly receptive of their demands. They also innovate as countermeasures compel them to search for alternatives.\textsuperscript{145} The terrorists have used violence including bombing, kidnapping and hijacking – to promote their political agenda. If the agenda become vague, blurred and clearly not discernible, aims and goals become diffused; and the terrorists can use the weapons of mass destruction.

Over the last two decades, particularly after the end of the cold war, there is a free play of lethal weapons in the international society. As cold war structures and rationale for continued arming of client states disappeared, states declined in their territorial authority, borders became fragile old states splintered into new nations and arms manufacturers flouted international arms control regimes. Requisition of weapons by unorganized rebel groups and smugglers became an easy task. Light and small arms proliferation has emerged as the most dangerous phenomenon in the global civil society and
governments all over the world, including the UN, are seriously aware of this growing phenomenon but with least control. Most of these weapons are transferred through illegal means and diverted in a variety of ways.\textsuperscript{146}

Afghanistan is a classic example of the spread of light weapons. Arms supplied, procured and captured by the Afghan Mujahideen in their fight against the former Soviet Union forces flooded into the NWFP area of adjoining Pakistan. It is by now too well known and documented history that a large proportion of arms into this area were supplied by the US through the CIA in its counter offensive against the former Soviet Union. The CIA (Central Intelligence Agency) in turn pipelined an estimated $6 billion worth of arms from its own as well as other sources through Pakistan’s ISI which include the Kalashnikov variants, RPG-7 anti tank weapons and varieties of machine guns, SAMs and explosive weapons from sources other than the CIA supplied included weapons from China, Egypt, South Africa and Israel.\textsuperscript{147}

The great arms bazaar that transcends the Pak-Afghan border in the NWFP region is shopping centre for a varied number of customers who include embargoed states, rebel groups, private armies, drug peddlers and criminal gangsters whose choice of weapons, used by the Punjabi and later Kashmiri militants came from this area.\textsuperscript{148}

Even China is no exception to the phenomenon of small arms proliferation. In fact, China’s Pingyuan city in its southwest province of Yunnan bordering Myanmar and India’s NEFA region has reportedly become a semi-open arms bazaar.

Besides India, Srilanka is another country, which suffers from a serious proliferation of illegal weapons procured by the Tamil militants from any available source in the world. It is an established fact that the Tamil groups were trained in several camps in India and were permitted to run their own camps.\textsuperscript{149}
Terrorism in India – Challenges

India, at the dawn of the new millenium is facing a gigantic threat emanating from terrorism. India is surrounded by not too friendly neighbours and, even after more than fifty years of independence, it still has unresolved land and maritime boundary disputes with its neighbours, beset with cross border smuggling of weapons, explosives and narcotics. Its international land border of 15,120 kms is shared on the east with Bangladesh (4,096 Km), China (3,917 Km) to the north, and Pakistan (3,310 Km.) to the north and west. It also borders Nepal (1,752 Km) Myanmar (1,458 Kms) and the Himalayan Kingdom of Bhutan (587 Kms) India’s 6,100 Km. long coastline and 1,400 km. of Island territories border Sri Lanka, Maldives, Indonesia, Thailand, Bangladesh, Pakistan and Myanmar. Besides disputed territory with China, the border with Pakistan is the most volatile with Kashmir, as only 200 Km. of its border is demarcated with the Line of Control (LOC) extending for 790 km. About 125 km. of its border is disputed with Bangladesh. With this backdrop of disputed borders with our neighbours, India faces problems of infiltration, migration, transborder smuggling and transnational crimes.¹⁵⁰

Pakistan poses the most serious threat to India today, which primarily emanates from terrorism. The terrorist movements in Punjab, if not completely wiped out, had been effectively controlled by state police and Para-military forces of the country. Discussing the terrorist’s new game plan to revive militancy in Punjab, P.C. Dogra, Director General of Police, Punjab, revealed (July, 1998) that over 4000 Punjabi youth, who illegally migrated to the west, came under the influence of Khalistani protagonists. They were being brain washed and sent to India through Nepal and Pakistan. According to him Khalistan Liberation Force (spearheaded from Canada, the U.K. and the U.S.) were active in Punjab and Delhi. A new outfit – the Kamagata Maru Dal of Khalistan based in Germany and U.K. had also come up. To some extent, the Babbar Khalsa was also active in Punjab.¹⁵¹
A substantial involvement of Pakistan and its ISI agency with the extended support of other pan-Islamic countries led to marked deterioration in the law and order situation. In India, the ISI has spread tentacles in majority of the sensitive states. The ISI operations in India involve North East insurgency, militancy in Punjab and Jammu & Kashmir, bomb blasts in Bombay in 1993 and in Coimbatore in 1998. Gujarat is a hunting ground for ISI.

The pan-Islamic groups such as "Harkat-ul-Ansar, Lashkar-e-Toiba, Markaz-Daawa-al-Arashad" had been collecting funds for jihad in Kashmir. ISI spends each month more than Rs. 25 million on terrorism in Kashmir. Violence and terrorism in Kashmir are the by-products of Jihad taught in Pakistan's unrecognised religious schools popularly known as madrassas. Most of these schools inculcate the spirit of jihad in their students. It was even reported that every madrassa has been supplied books on jihad and war front reports from Kashmir, Chechnya, etc. some of the students were even sent to the war front. The leadership of madrassas is opposed to any reform plans describing them as "against Islam". Any takeover of them by the State is also opposed on the ground that the madrassas are the supply line for jehad.

The mushrooming of madrassas and the size of jihad culture in Pakistan have their impact on the South Asian region. Pakistani political and military establishment forged an alliance with madrassas and jihadi elements in nurturing them and exporting terrorism in the name of Islam to the neighbouring states. The goals of Pakistani government and jihadi groups have become more or less similar. Lashkar's popularity has grown since its role in the Kargil conflict and sending suicide missions into Kashmir. Its annual gatherings draw thousands of new followers who would be willing to go to Kashmir to fight. Lashkar's parent organization, Markaz Dawa wal Irshad had a humble obscure beginning but had grown into a formidable force. In 1997, the group was running 30 schools with 5000 students geared towards producing Mujahidden to wage jihad. The head of the organization had said that 'jehad is carried out to establish the system of Allah in the world.'
A silent revolution has been taking place in Bangladesh that may disturb peace in the region and may create trouble for the region as well as beyond. The rise of Islamic fundamentalism, religious intolerance, militant Muslim group's linkages with international terrorist groups, a powerful military ties with militants and the mushrooming of madrassas, churning out militant and radical students are transforming the Bangladeshi society and the nation. The second half of the 1980s witnessed a phenomenal rise of madrassas and hundreds of Bangladeshi youth joined the mujahideen. According to an estimate there are roughly 64,000 madrassas in Bangladesh, most of which mushroomed only during the last decade. Most of these are funded by proselytizing Arab charity organizations as in Pakistan.\textsuperscript{156}

**Suicide Terrorism**

The suicide terrorism has assumed greater significance after attack on the US in September 2001. In South Asia, Sri Lanka and India (Kashmir) have been witnessing this phenomenon. In Sri Lanka, the Liberation of Tigers of Tamil Ealam (LTTE) began their suicide offensive in the late 1980s, whereas Kashmir has been witnessing suicide bombings and Fidayeen attacks after the Kargil war in 1998. Suicide terrorism, to a great extent is a post-1980 phenomenon. In the past there were a number of isolated incidents in which individuals had given-up their lives in committing terror acts but the major differences between them and the modern day suicide bombers is that the latter covers himself with acting as a human bomb, whereas the former were using bombs and other related weapons. Suicide terrorism was closely related to the Khomeni revolution in Iran. Hizbulah (Army of Allah), the first to carry out a suicide attack was a Shitii terrorist group, and had very close links with Iran.\textsuperscript{157}

Emile Durkheim, the first sociological thinker to propound a systematic and structural theory on suicide, lists three basic types of suicide, egoistic. Suicide, anomic suicide and altruistic suicide.\textsuperscript{158} The final category led individual to commit suicide due to over integration of himself with the
society, suicide terrorism falls in this category in which the individual feels that he is part of a whole. He believes that the 'self' has no relevance, if the whole is under threat. The individual gives his "self" so that his "whole" would survive.

Suicide terrorism in South Asia has manifested in two countries – Sri Lanka and India (Kashmir). The LTTE in Sri Lanka and the so-called Fidayeens in Kashmir are significant while talking about suicide terrorism in South Asia. India has also become vulnerable to Narco – Terrorism as it is placed between the two major narcotics growing centers of Asia – the Golden Crescent (GC) Pak-Afghan border comprising Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Iran and the Golden Triangle (GT) Myanmar-Thailand border comprising Myanmar, Thailand, and Laos. Nobody has a precise estimate of the quantum of money involved in the narcotics in the regard.

**Conflict Resolution and Building Peace in South Asia: India’s Role**

In 1998, India and Pakistan tested nuclear weapons and subsequently both governments emphasized that these weapons would form a key part of their national security policy. Other political, diplomatic, and military aspects became clear soon afterwards.

Nuclear weapons are unrelenting. Managing them has been a hard and costly task for the major nuclear weapon states. It has made building the bomb appears easy in comparison. History may show that managing the bomb is impossible in the political, military, institutional, and technological environment that prevails in South Asia. The proof may be tragedy beyond measures.159

Shortly after May 1998 nuclear test conducted by India, L.K. Advani, the then home minister in the BJP led coalition government, claimed: "India’s decisive step to become a nuclear weapon state has brought about a qualitative new state in India-Pakistan relations, particularly in finding a lasting solution to the Kashmir problem."160 Within three weeks Pakistan tested its own nuclear weapon and indeed brought about a qualitatively new state in India and
Pakistan relations. Indicative of this new state was the fact that barely a year later, in May 1999, India and Pakistan were involved in bitter fighting on mountains in the Kargil-Dras sector in Kashmir. According to one study, high level leaders on the two sides exchanged at least a dozen nuclear threats. Pakistan’s official internet page warned that Kashmir was a “nuclear flash point”.

The situation in Kashmir is different from the proxy wars fought between the US and the former Soviet Union during the cold war. The two adversaries fought those conflicts away from their vital territorial interests, and losses in battles never directly threatened their survival. In South Asia, geography does not allow such a possibility, and any conflict, no matter how small and confined, will always pit the two sides directly against each other. Backdrop of rivalry that one needs to work towards reducing the risk of war between India and Pakistan, and also find a model to manage their nuclear arsenals.

The prime objective of a national security doctrine is the preservation of the core values of the nation. In the conceptual framework there stands three core values for India’s security viz., democracy, secularism and federalism. Any erosion of any of these values, for whatever reason, erodes the legitimacy of the Indian nation - state and hence poses a threat to its security.

Pakistan adopted a different set of core values, emphasizing religion as the defining basis of national identity and ideology. This did not admit of equality of human beings as a key principle. To that extent, Jammu & Kashmir represents an ideological struggle between the core values adopted by India and Pakistan.

Bangladesh, born out of the resurgence of Bengali nationalism and a sense of discrimination by the western wing of Pakistan, inherited some of the contradictions as a state based on religion. At the same time, the fragility of
political institutions inherited from the earlier period has had its own negative impact on building of the nation state.

Sri Lanka adopted democratic values and norms, but secular values, which are an essential ingredient of democracy, receded into the background as ethnic divisions gained ground. The ultimate militarization of the ethnic conflict is now a matter of history. Nepal and Bhutan had remained independent even when the subcontinent was colonized. They have, as a consequence, inherited the advantage of a continuum of identity and the core values, although Nepal suffered somewhat when it was not able to adopt an adequately broad based political decision making framework for many years.\(^{167}\)

The fundamental contradictions characterize the core values and even the strategic interest of the states of South Asia. On the other hand, all countries of the region face common strategic challenge; that of ensuring rapid socio-economic development. The youth is particularly affected, and the manifestation comes in the shape of resort to violence to change the existing order. The major non-military challenges to security in South Asia revolve around drug trafficking, the proliferation and spread of small arms and light weapons, and trans-national terrorism. The absence of war for more than a quarter century has not translated into peace.

India has approached the exercise of confidence building with her neighbours with the following objectives:

1. To provide an assurance of non-aggressive intent;

2. To prevent any attempts at misrepresentation of regular activities for political ends;

3. To reduce the likely hood of escalation of tensions, and

4. To create an environment for reduction of weapons through negotiations.\(^{168}\)
The problem before India is that the regional environment has been nuclearised for more than three decades. The centrality of China in the nuclear question has continued to influence thinking and policy in India.

India provides identity to South Asia. There is no commonality of interests between post-independence Bangladesh and Pakistan, nothing binds them. There is very little that binds Sri Lanka with Bangladesh or Pakistan. There is very little that binds any of these states to South Asia or to Nepal, for that matter. It is India that provides the glue and is the centrepiece that binds the region as a whole and creates what we know as the Indian subcontinent or South Asia. Hence, the criticality of the experiments, political ideas, institutions and economic growth models that India employs and implements are critical in terms of the experience of the rest of the region, as well as shaping of the other countries of the region.169
References

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43. There are about 36 distinct Tribal groups. One third of them living CHT and the Largest being Chakma.


128. Ibid., pp. 183-83.

129. Ibid.

130. Ibid., pp. 183-84.


132. Ibid.


141. Ibid.

142. Ibid.


144. Anindyo J. Majumdar, Nuclear Terror, in, Om Prakash Mishra and Sucheta Ghosh, ed. Terrorism and Low intensity Conflict in South Asian Region, Manak Publications, New Delhi, 2003, p. 49.


158. Egoistic suicide: when an individual fails to integrate himself with his family and society he commits suicide.

Anomic suicide: Any breakdown of life due to unforeseen factors (anarchy) such as crisis related to industrial, financial and social aspects.


