CHAPTER II

*** REVIEW OF LITERATURE ***
Review of Literature

The current study uses both primary as well as secondary sources. Primary sources include mainly publications of different governmental like ministries of national governments and different intergovernmental agencies like United Nations and World Bank. An attempt has been made in this chapter to survey the available literature on the current area of research. Some selected literature has been surveyed in this chapter and the list is not exhaustive. The review of literature is arranged under different themes.

Transportation in South Asia with Special Reference to India’s North East and Bangladesh


Ninth chapter of this book ‘Development of Inland Water Transport in the GBM Region’ is relevant for our study. Here GBM region means Ganga-Brahmaputra-Meghna basin. The author at first has analysed the potential of inland waterways transport system in Bangladesh, Nepal and India. The hindrances to successful operationalisation of the inland waterways have also been dealt with. In later part of the chapter, the author has discussed about regional cooperation in inland water transport system. It has also been suggested that the inland waterways transport sector in GBM region should be coordinated by an regional organization.


This book deals with border trade between the North Eastern India and its neighbouring countries including Bangladesh, Nepal and Myanmar.
under different sections. Fourth section of the book deals exclusively with the border trade with the North East India and Bangladesh. Under second section of the book, Dulal Bhuyan has written an article titled 'Infrastructure Improvement for Enhancement of Border Trade in North Eastern India: Policy Perspective and Issues' in which he has discussed in brief the trade between these two regions in the past. He further suggested developing transport infrastructure in order to achieve the potentials of the border trade to a greater extent. M. K. Mero in his article ‘Exports from North Eastern Region: Potential and Problems’ has emphasized that lack of infrastructure, particularly good road communication has been the major hindrance to the exports from the region.


In this paper the authors at first analysed some of the major theories regarding transport infrastructure and regional development. Then they have examined the different economic indicators of Bangladesh and its bordering states of India and showed the complementarities of both. The authors have gone into the details of transport infrastructure of both regions under study. In the concluding part of the paper they have suggested some policy measures to both the governments. They have suggested that there should be a common transport policy in the region to reduce regional inequalities in various physical and social infrastructures ultimately raising the standard of live of the people of the region.


This paper goes into details of inland transport facility in Assam. It also takes into account of the pre-independence period and how the waterways
have been developed till date. Some data about the quality of goods transported by the waterways are also given which will be helpful for our study. This also analyses the multi-modal transport including roads, railways and waterways. Finally the author has prescribed some suggestion both at the policy and ground level.


In this book two articles are important for our purpose. One is 'Trade and Transit' by Mustafizur Rahman and another 'Transport Coordination' by P. N. Mehrotra. In his article Mehrotra has analysed in detail about the transport infrastructure of Bangladesh and North East India. Later he has described the present transport linkages in South Asia Growth Quadrangle region. Further he has suggested actions on a priority basis. In this he has also analysed the prospect for inland waterways transport network for the economic integration of the region.


The seventh chapter titled 'Transport Infrastructure: Present Status and Potential for Cooperation' is relevant for our study. This chapter at first gives detail analysis of transport infrastructure profile of South Asia. Then it points out the potential for infrastructure cooperation among South Asian countries. Then it analyses regional initiative of SAARC in this sector.

After analyzing cooperation in transport elsewhere in Asia, e.g., ESCAP region, ASEAN, Greater Mekong Sub-region etc., the author has given rationale for transport cooperation between Bangladesh and its neighbours especially India. He has established complementarities of resources between India and Bangladesh. He also has suggested that the Chittagong can be developed as a ‘transport hub’ for this region and the steps taken by the Bangladeshi government in this direction have been pointed out. He has also pointed out the problems of integrating railways and inland waterways of the two countries and pleaded that both the country can overcome this by mutual cooperation.


Sarma in his paper titled “Inland Water Transport in Assam” has given a detail account of the development of the inland water transport system in Assam. His paper is divided into three parts. The first part deals with history of water transport development till the British annexed the region. In this part he has described how the Koch and the Ahoms had developed this mode of transport for their economic activities. Boat building was then one of the most profit making industry. This remained to be a big industry till the David Scot of East India Company started operating steam boats in waters of Assam. The second part of the paper deals with the development during the British rule and the third part deals with the developments after the partition of the sub-continent. After this Sarma sees greater
prospects for inland water transport if proper initiative is taken by the government.


South Asian countries are passing through various structural adjustment programmes. Without proper infrastructures, no country, or economic bloc can succeed in a world where regional cooperation has become an instrument for creating competitive edge over other regional blocs. This paper by De and Ghosh tries to find out the role played by infrastructure facilities in economic development across South Asian countries. The findings are statistically very significant to warrant major changes in future regional policies in order to remove rising regional disparities in both infrastructure and income. This also has a strong bearing on the success of poverty removal policies. The authors have calculated various indexes to find out the relation between Infrastructure and regional income.


This is one of the recent documents released by World Bank. It was released in May 2007. Inland Water Transport (IWT) in Bangladesh has been dealt with in detailed manner. After analysing the present and past IWT projects in Bangladesh, it goes into the economic analysis of the IWT sector. This also includes the transport demand analysis in Bangladesh. Further, it describes the institutional arrangements and sectoral finance and the issues like private sector participation. In the ninth chapter of the study, cross-border IWT between India and Bangladesh has been
analysed. According to this study, IWT can compete with the rail and road transport systems of this region if it can be utilised properly. This is because of the fact that Road traffic is penalized by the regulatory framework, which requires that goods are transshipped between Bangladeshi and Indian vehicles since neither of the two countries allow foreign trucks to enter their national territory. Rail traffic was hampered by the difference in rail gauges between the West and East rail networks. The report finds that there is a strong agreement within the Government that IWT is a key contributor to poverty reduction in rural areas and to economic growth in the country and new business opportunities exist such as development of container transport between Dhaka and Chittagong or between India and Bangladesh, and further expansion of existing programs such as dredging, ferry services, port management and operations by the private sector.

**Economic Development in India’s North East with Special Reference to Transport**

Planning Commission (Govt. of India) – *Transforming the North East: Tackling Backlogs in Basic Minimum services and Infrastructural Needs*, 1997.

This is the High Level Commission Report to the Prime Minister, which is also known as Shukla Commission Report in 1997. This report examines the gap in important sectors of Infrastructure development in the North Eastern region, specially in power, communication, railway, roads, education, agriculture, etc. This report suggests policies, programmes and requirement of funds to improve infrastructural needs of the North Eastern region. This report also takes into account the international linkages and transit/transshipment arrangements with Bangladesh, Myanmar and Bhutan. Among other aspects, this report has separate
sections on railways, highways, civil aviation, inland water transport and transport policy.


This work is perhaps one of the most comprehensive one as far as the North East India’s economy is concerned. Besides other aspects, this book has two chapters, which are of immense importance for our study. Fifth chapter titled ‘Linking North East with Dynamic Asia’ tells us that integrating the economy of the North East with the bordering countries will help the economy of this region to boom and will help to make the sub-regional cooperation a ground reality. In the next chapter ‘Surrounding Economies of the North East Region’, Prof. Sachdeva has analysed the economy of Myanmar, Bangladesh, Bhutan and bordering provinces of China.


This paper by Alokesh Barua tries to examine why Assam failed to respond positively to the opportunities for growth unfolded by the forces of colonialism since the mid-nineteenth century and why a massive scale of investment and trade could not play the role of an engine of growth for the region given the fact that Assam contributed 90 percent of the India’s total tea exports. The paper finds that the interest of East India Company was to exploit the rich natural resources of the region. The little infrastructural development undertaken by the British was mainly for maximisation of their interest in the region. Now East Asian countries are
emerging as India's major trading partners. This may be seen as consistent with respect to the Look East Policy of India. Therefore, India's North East has become the centre from the last decade or so. It has the potential to become a hub or a bridge between India and South East Asia. In a greater sense it can be a bridge between South Asia and South East Asia. The paper concludes that increased regional and international trade can shape the future destiny of India's North East by providing scope for industrialisation and growth. This need greater investment in the infrastructure, both in physical and social infrastructure.


This book is a product of extensive research work undertaken by Professor Jalad Baran Ganguly, a well-known economist, whose first-hand knowledge of the region is unassailable. This perceptive and thoughtful study covers the period of colonial rule especially in Assam as also to a lesser degree in Manipur and Tripura, witnessing far-reaching changes in political and socio-economic spheres of the area. The impact on economic of the two world wars and the great depression of 1930's, and of the large-scale immigration of population causing, demographic changes has been critically examined in this work. In Chapter 12 titled "Development of Economic Infrastructure and Industry; Economic Depression of 1930's and Problem of Unemployment" Ganguly has described the then transport infrastructure of the North Eastern region. His description of inland waterways in that period inspires us to develop the waterways of the region for the economic development of the region. The waterways in Assam at that point of time made it less dependant on the road network of the region. He has also analysed the development of road in the region and also the trans-national roads for economic activities. The most
prominent among them being the Stillwell road, running from Ledo in Assam to Bhamo in Myanmar and there from, to Yunan Province of China, covering a distance of 1,043 miles. Ganguly in his work have described the inception of the railway system in the region. The first railway company named the Assam Railways and Trading Company was formed in 1881 which took up the work of laying Dibru-Sadiya rail line. The first rail line was opened in 1982 from Dibrugarh Steamer Ghat to Jaipur Road. In 1885 two small state railways – one in Jorhat subdivision (32 miles) and a second connecting Theriaghat with Companyganj were stared. The later line had to be closed down after the earthquake of 1897. One railway company privately owned started a railway transport service from Tezpur to Balipara (20 miles) on the north bank of Brahmaputra. The biggest railway company, the Assam-Bengal State Railway began its operation in 1905. It connected Chittagong port with different places in Assam. This line passed through the district of Tipperah, Sylhey and Cachar. From Cachar across the North Cachar Hills it Linked Lumding and ran up to a point on the Dibru-Sadiya Railway. This section was connected with Guwahati by a branch line which took off from Lumding. The hill section of this railway, that covered a distance of 113 miles containing 24 tunnels, 7 covered ways and 74 major bridges, the longest being 650 feet and the highest 113 feet above the river bed. This project had many difficulties both logistic and engineering due to difficult terrain. After going through this chapter we can feel how well organized and well managed was the transport system in the region at that time. The arrangements then can give some input for the present initiative by the government to improve the infrastructure of the region.

North East India: A Systematic Geography by Bhattacharyya is a study which provides a comprehensive geographical account of the whole region. The volume is having 22 chapters. In the 12th chapter the author has analysed transport and communication of the region in a historical perspective. Bhattacharyya has given account of both pre and post partition period. During the medieval period, Boats were the important vehicles for the common man and river served as roads and highways in the plains of North-East India. Brahmaputra served as the main artery in the communication system of the Brahmaputra valley. The principal lines of road construction by Britishers which provided direct route between important centres were the south trunk road from Goalpara to Saikhowaghat, Guwahati-Shillong road, Amingaon-Hajo road, North Guwahati-Barpeta road, North Guwahati-Tezpur road, Dimapur-Kohima-Imphal road with its extension to Tamu (on Indo-Myanmar border) and Makum-Leshapani road connecting Stilwell road to China. The author has described how the transport (road, rail and waterways) link was disturbed due to partition in 1947.


Like the previous study, this study was also published by the World Bank in May 2007. Although this report does not deal exclusively in IWT sector, it identifies the rationale and the potential for the upgradation of the existing routes and development of new routes. It identifies 399 kms of inland water transport route which are not part of the National Waterways 2 of India but have high potentials for the traffic. The report also finds out
some of the major issues for the development of IWT in India’s North East including technical and institutional. As the government of India has renewed its interest to develop the IWT route in the region, it is expected that NW-2 can develop into a well-functioning waterway with adequate infrastructure in a time frame of 8 to 10 years. The development of NW-2 and of waterways in the tributary rivers would enhance the opportunities for economic growth and employment and would accelerate the development of the hinterland.

Transport Infrastructure in Bangladesh


Prof. Rasheed in this article has analysed the transport sector in Bangladesh in a detailed manner including road, railways, inland waterways and seaport. Then he has analysed the geographical location of Bangladesh in South Asia and its importance as far as the potential transport linkages are concerned. He has suggested that linking of roads with the neighbouring countries especially with India’s North Eastern states and West Bengal. He has also pointed out the major trans-national waterways to be operationalised for the benefit of the people of the region. His vision goes beyond South Asia and he talked of linking with ASEAN countries. He has discussed the benefits of transport sector coordination between India, Bangladesh, Myanmar and other neighbouring countries once the Trans-Asian Highway and Trans-Asian Railway project are completed.
Review of Literature


In this article the author has analysed the present condition of the transport infrastructure in the South Asia Growth Quadrangle (SAGQ) region. Some statistics about the movement of goods from some of the prominent check posts and ports are also given. The author has described the problems in different border-crossing points in Bangladesh. He has also analysed the rails, roads, inland waterways and air transport of the SAARC region.


Published in the year 2002, this study gives an insight into the performance and potential of Chittagong port of Bangladesh. As this port plays a prominent role in Bangladesh economy in general and the external sector in particular, the study on Chittagong port is important for our purpose. This study also list out the factors causing poor performance like lack of developed inland transport system and logistics; complex customs and port clearance procedure; ministry’s control and interference; bureaucratic decision making process at the port; etc. This study also discusses about the need for private participation and suggests the strategies to be followed. It has been strongly recommended that the Chittagong Port Authority should be given complete autonomy including financial autonomy as soon as possible.
Bilateral and Multilateral Cooperation


In this article the author has pointed out the potentials of the North-Eastern India; its natural resources, its industrial policies and hydropower. Investment incentives in this region have been dealt with. This article also talked of Tripura-Bangladesh Bus service and how this will develop a greater confidence between the two countries both at the governmental as well as the civil society level.


After discussing about the infrastructure development in other growth triangles in Asia, Khan discuss the infrastructural profile of the SAGQ subregion. This paper describes the inter-governmental as well as donor agencies initiatives for greater integration of the region for economic activities. After discussing the transport profile of SAQG countries namely Bangladesh, Bhutan, North East India and Nepal the author analyses the trade flow among these countries. After that the author tries to identify the possible transport routes which if properly developed will boost the trade in particular and economic interaction in general among the countries of the region. The author has identified five corridors on the basis of origin-destination traffic flow. These are a) Dhaka-Southeast (Chittagong); b) Dhaka-Northeast (Sylhet); c) Dhaka-Northwest (Dinajpur/Rangpur/Rajshahi); d) Dhaka-Khulna; and e) Khulna-Northwest. Asian Highway routes have been discussed briefly. Facilitation measure and institutional infrastructure is as important as the building of
roads and railways. Unless these trade facilitation measures were streamlined nothing can go on a positive direction. So the author also highlights this in his paper. He also described various international conventions related to the international transport. Management of the transportation system is very much important. Here comes the role of the private players. In author’s view care should be taken while involving the private players into this sector. In his words, “care should be taken so that monopoly is not simply replaced by private monopoly”.

**Uma Subramanian and John Arnold – Forging Subregional Links in Transportation and Logistics in South Asia, 2001.**

This work is one of the most relevant for our study. This is published by the World Bank. This book is divided into six chapters. In the first chapter, the authors have described the economic profile of the South Asian Subregion (Eastern and North Eastern India, Bangladesh, Nepal and Bhutan) and the need for subregional economic cooperation especially trade. They pointed out that lack of proper infrastructure in the region is the main factor that hinders the intra-regional trade and economic cooperation. In the second chapter, the authors have shown how logistics cost is high due to national policies and lack of proper infrastructure. In the next chapter, different trade routes and their evaluation have been done. In the fourth chapter, the authors have advocated for the improved public-private partnership in the south Asian transport and logistics. In last two chapters, they have discussed policy reforms and regional capacity building.


This book by Verghese points out various intricacies of geo-politics of Asia in general and India in particular. Its fifth chapter ‘Emerging Asian Land
Bridge Architecture' is of great help for our study. In this chapter Verghese has described the potentials of the North East India. He has discussed the South Asian Growth Quadrangle (SAGQ) and trade and transit facilities between India and Bangladesh. Then he has elaborated the Trans-Asian Highway and its advantages in somewhat detailed manner. This has a direct relationship with our study as this highway runs through Bangladesh and North East India besides other countries of Asia.


In this article the author has pointed out some of the political factors which hindered close cooperation between the two countries in transport sector. The 1965 crisis caused discontinuation of rail links, which were not addressed till date even after the creation of Bangladesh in 1971. She has also pointed out the Protocol on Inland Water Transit and Trade of 1972 were not implemented. After establishment of a sustainable transportation links, this can be extended to other countries in the region especially Nepal and Bhutan.


This paper finds that the scale of intra-regional infrastructure disparity in BIMST-EC is quite significant resulting in wider scope for stronger economic interdependence in the region. After introducing the region the author tries to explore the economic and social dynamics of the BIMST-EC region. Here De compares the different macroeconomic indicators of the member countries of the group namely Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Thailand. Then he goes further in explaining the economic and social infrastructure endowments in BIMST-
EC. In the next section of the paper De has described the trade interdependence among the BIMST-EC countries. It is found that the intra-regional total trade of BIMST-EC countries had increased to US$ 11.50 billion 2001, which was 80% higher compared to 1995. Further imports of Bangladesh, Nepal, and Myanmar are increasingly becoming dependent on other BIMST-EC members, namely India and Thailand, while India and Thailand have also registered rising imports from other BIMST-EC members. His analysis found that India is a major exporter in the region. Out of total amount of US$ 5.45 billion intra-BIMST-EC export, India exported US$ 2.76 billion in 2001. Next to it was Thailand. After analysing the trade interdependence among the member countries, De describes the transport interdependence among the member countries. The paper concludes that although at present there is limited interdependence among BIMST-EC members in terms of intra-regional trade, a stronger and desirable intra-regional trade is contingent upon improved transport network among BIMST-EC countries. De finds that railways can play a positive role in integrating BIMST-EC which will promote bulk movement among the member countries. To meet the future challenges arising out of the increasing trade interdependence, BIMST-EC countries need to develop regional transportation and transit network that offers efficient transportation options and low ‘transaction costs’ that are competitive with those found elsewhere.

Sobhan, Rahman eds. (2002), *Bangladesh-India Relations: Perspectives from Civil Society Dialogues*, Dhaka: UPL.

This is a volume edited by Rahman Sobhan from number of civil society dialogue held in Dhaka and New Delhi from 1995 to 2001 organised by Centre for Policy Dialogue. This volume stress upon the need for adequate infrastructural development at the border points where actual trade is
going on between India and Bangladesh. The present system of transhipment is very time consuming affair contributing to corruption and such delays should be minimised. Further allowing vehicle transit, for the traffic originating from Nepal and Bhutan besides India, Bangladesh can earn considerable revenue from both North-South and East-West communications with India, Nepal and Bhutan at all points. The volume also recommends that the infrastructural capabilities should be jointly developed by India and Bangladesh. India, for example, would be willing to invest in the upgrading of the railway system from Akhaura to Chittagong and also in upgrading of the Chittagong port facilities. By strengthening some of the transport route in India’s North East and Bangladesh, the region can cater to needs of the regional traffic of South and South East Asia.


This study by Rahman Sobhan focuses on the importance of integrating the transport infrastructure of Asia as an essential element in promoting greater economic integration within and between South and East Asia. The study focuses on the transport infrastructure of Bangladesh, North East India, Myanmar, Thailand and Yunnan Province of China (BYIMT). After analysing the historical linkages among these regions, Sobhan examines the gaps in the transport network as well as the importance of improved facilitation of transport movements across national borders. The study reviews the broader issue of economic cooperation within Asia and the economic implications of integration of the transport infrastructure to this process. The study suggest that there is a great potential in this region and to tap that potential we need to have a integrated transport system in place like the silk route in the ancient times. The study further conclude that due
to the strategic location of Bangladesh, it can become a transport hub between South Asia and South East Asia. The initiative taken up by the UNESCAP through Asian Land Transport and Infrastructure Development (ALTID) programme has been widely discussed throughout this book. Most important aspects of Asian Highway and the Trans Asian Railway have been dealt with in different chapters.


This paper argues that the scale of intra-regional infrastructure disparity in BIMST-EC is quite significant resulting in wider scope for stronger economic interdependence in the region. After establishing the fact that there are trade interdependence among the BIMST-EC countries, he makes a case for well coordinated transport infrastructure need for the current and future trade which can reduce the transaction cost. The paper concludes that a stronger and desirable intra-regional trade is contingent upon improved transport network among BIMST-EC countries. De advocates for harmonization of technical standards such as truck size and weight regulations, transport rules and regulations etc, lesser border inspection except strategic areas and simplification of documentation and clearance procedure among others.


Lama in his paper has paid particular attention to the potential constructive interaction between Bangladesh and India’s North East. The paper tells that there are significant fears in Bangladesh that the enhancement of such transport link would simply facilitate the Indian
movement of arms and ammunition, undermining Bangladesh sovereignty and “crushing the freedom movement in North East India”. In contrast, it was argued, the Inland Waterways agreement has seen river traffic rise to 1.3 lakh a year, a potential model for much greater and mutually beneficial land-based trade. It was argued that highway development in both China and India offered Bangladesh opportunities to participate in rapidly rising regional trade which participating in the Asian highway network would accelerate, to Bangladesh’s own great advantage. It was noted that India-China trade is expected to grow still further when the Chinese project to complete the link over the Nathu La Pass into Sikkim is completed this year. For Bangladesh to realise this potential it needs greatly improved access through India’s North East.


This paper makes the case for an initiative by the South Asian countries towards greater economic integration among their respective economies, and highlights the important role that the integration of their transport infrastructure can play in promoting such integration. Rahmatullah in this paper has pointed out the rationale for greater economic integration among the South Asian Countries. For that integration of transport infrastructure is a pre-requisite. The author has mentioned how the transport system in the eastern South Asia was integrated before the partition of the subcontinent. Rahmatullah also have discussed the integrated system of transport else where in Asia and beyond. After analysing the present situation of transport system in the South Asian countries, the author has concluded that the integration of the South Asian
transport network would involve considerable re-integration of the existing infrastructure which would require the minimum commitment of economic resources. Mutual consent and consultation is required among the South Asian countries.


Rasheed after studying the transport system of Bangladesh and India comes to the following conclusions. Cross-border transport links between Bangladesh and India could be one of the first steps toward wide regional cooperation in transport. It is important that cross-border linkage is addressed as an independent item for co-operation, and not tagged with any non-linkage issues as a bargaining instrument. The rational for regional transport co-operation should be based on economic merits through cost benefit assessment, and should be devoid of politically motivated predilections. Inefficient management, inadequate maintenance, corruption and non-uniformity in gauge standards in Bangladesh remains a serious bottleneck for any progress in the railway mode of cross border connection. Security and strategic issue in cross-border transport linkage could be worked out through modalities in respect to customs clearance regulations, security checks, personnel and carrier involvement, and agreement on the nature of goods transported.


The present state of transport integration among SAARC countries is totally out of step with the global trends towards regionalisation. The
Review of Literature

South Asian countries need to make a decisive departure from the present situation in order to be fully integration into the ongoing globalisation process. After examining the current state of transportation in South Asia, Dr. Rahmatullah, describes the consequences of non-cooperation on the region. Citing the integrated transport system during the British period, he states that if Bangladesh permits India to access its ports, landlocked northeastern region of India will be highly benefited. In not doing so, Bangladesh is losing considerable foreign exchange which it would get from the related services. Due to the reluctance on the part of Bangladesh, India is implementing the Kaladan project with Myanmar. He further states that if Bangladesh is not integrating its transport system with the region, then system will be developed without Bangladesh. In that case Bangladesh will lose heavily. One of the immediate consequences is that the foreign investors will not look at Bangladesh as a favourable destination for investment.

Political and Security Issues


The north-eastern region has remained one of India’s soft underbellies. The external powers inimical to Indian have always taken a special interest in the region. The modus operandi of the external power is to utilize the ethnic, religious and linguistic diversities in the society of the region. The main objective in extending support to insurgent and other divisive activities is to dismember India along the fault lines. Since the region lies at the extreme periphery (poetical, economic and cultural), it has been considered as a soft target all along. Even if dismemberment is not possible, the purpose is at least to bleed the Indian military machine and its economy to the maximum possible extent that will considerably
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weaken the Indian state. This paper Gurudas Das attempts to assess the role of different external powers in destabilising the North-East. It pleads to remove the ambiguities in India's China's policy and to structure in independent of India's approach towards Pakistan. The involvement of Pakistani agencies in the affairs of the North-East also needs to be countered through diplomatic activism.


The main thrust of this paper is to bring out the role of regional economic cooperation in not only promoting regional economic prosperity but also enhancing regional stability and security. Quite often, it is witness that the attainment of maximum benefit from regional economic integration depends upon the degree of political commitment to such schemes. Fuller regional economic integration through core areas of cooperation in trade and investment inevitably requires a high degree of political cooperation among the concerned member countries. The paper also indicates that the conventional concept of security has now undergone fundamental change and it is incorporated in the security doctrine of the leading countries of the world. According to this paper the holistic concept of security includes, economic security, social security, legal security, water security, energy security, food security, technological security, environmental security, external security, internal security, control of crime, illegal arms trade, drug trafficking, cross border terrorism, reduction of money laundering and reduction in disparities of income, wealth and economic opportunities. Several of these areas of security, especially environmental, infrastructure development and energy sector making use of complementary regional energy resources, can best be tackled on
transborder basis using regional cooperation as a more effective instrument of policy making in place of individual national policy making. Further, the paper argues that the challenges posed by the complexities of forces of globalization facing all countries especially the least prepared developing countries can be better met through the adaptation of constructive regional approach.


The Indo-Bangladesh border, which came into existence after India’s partition in 1947, gave rise to many questions as to the interpretation and implementation of the boundary so drawn. An effort was made by the then government of India to solve the outstanding border disputes with erstwhile East Pakistan and the Nehru-Noon Accord was signed in 1958. While some of the disputes were solved, many continued to haunt even after Bangladesh came into existence. Jamwal looks at various dimensions of management of the Indo-Bangladesh border including, challenges to its management and, the internal political and security environment of Bangladesh and recommends measures to improve the border management.

From the review of literature, we find that a number of studies have been undertaken by various scholars, inter-governmental organisations and research institutes in related area. However, specific studies on connectivity between India’s North East and Bangladesh are rare. The current study attempts to explore this issue. This study also analyses the rationale and benefits of transport cooperation between India’s North East and Bangladesh. The political and security dimensions of the issues are missing in most of the studies. This study also looks into these issues.

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