ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

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The entire study has been structured in the following ways:

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Statement of the problem

North-East India that comprises of eight states today namely; Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura is relevant both strategically as well as economically from the perspective of Indian foreign policy. The region shares territorial contiguity and cultural, ethnic, linguistic commonalities with South Asian neighbours- Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal in particular. For example, the region shares 98% of its border with Bangladesh adjoining with Assam, Meghalaya, Mizoram and Tripura. Bhutan borders with Assam, Arunachal Pradesh and Sikkim. Nepal is adjoined to Sikkim.

The North-East region, thus, serves as a gateway for India’s foreign policy towards South Asia in particular and East and South East Asia in general. It is in this context that the North East India becomes relevant for India’s foreign policy towards SAARC, India’s Look East Policy, Bay of Bengal Initiative and Mekong Delta Initiative. The political, security, social and economic developments in the North East have wider and decisive repercussions for India’s relations with the countries of South, East and South East Asia.

At the same time the direction, dynamics and dimensions of India’s foreign policy towards South, East and South East Asia determine the parameters of political, security, social and economic developments in the region of North East India. Thus while North East India integrates India’s foreign policy with our neighboring countries and economic associations and groupings like SAARC and ASEAN, our foreign policy, on the other hand, provides immense economic, investment and commercial opportunities for the region and the people of North East India having a great bearing on people’s economic and social conditions with a far reaching impact on politico-security scenario of the region.

India’s foreign policy’s approach to integrate the North East region with our neighbours does pose various challenges on account of illegal migration, drug trafficking, illegal trade, trade in narcotics and arms trafficking and insurgency related problems impacting decisively the political and security scenario of the region in particular and socio-economic and cultural fabric of the people of the region in general and thus threatening India’s security and strategic interests.
Thus security of the North-East India determines the security of India as the region is so strategically located. It is in this context that the study of India’s Foreign Policy towards South Asia occupies an important place from the prospective of the North-East India.

The social root causes of the domestic problem create and disturb national peace and security. It is relevant to foresee the real social causes in the region. Before the British, none of the empires in India were interested in as well as found it difficult to control the remote and hilly North-Eastern areas. Consequently, the region had enjoyed a long history of independence in socio-political and self-sufficiency in economy. Since the people of North-East differ basically in racial, cultural, ethnic and religious aspects from that of India, they have been suspicious about Indians.

Moreover, the policy of the British to keep these people away from the rest of India created separatist tendency among these tribal people. That is why soon after India`s independence North-East region become the hot bed of insurgency causing serious problem to India`s national integration. The militant groups began to use the neighbouring countries of India as their organizational bases and obtained enough moral and material support from the countries who have been inimical to India`s progress and prosperity. Thus North-East is a burning region. In several ways, it is one of South Asia`s most disturbed region. The challenge of and to North-East has several dimensions.

All the states and ethnic groups cannot be seen as one single politico-economic unit. For instance, the Nagas possessed a completely different history, social and political lineage. However, with the passage of time, the States of Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Mizoram, Tripura, Nagaland and Meghalaya began to be identified as a single geographic unit and socio-economic identity. The political process and administrative convenience has come to legitimize this ‘region as north-east India’.

The concept of north-east India and as a homogenous entity and the regional reorganization of this multi-ethnic setting has done colossal damage in social, political and economic parameters. in evolution of the policy for the region, the policy makers should have paid greater attention to the fact that the region has immense geo-political diversity as well as strategic significance. It is bound by four countries of Bhutan, Bangladesh, China and Myanmar.
The region geopolitically shares a large frontier with Bangladesh and receives a large number of political and social refugees from Myanmar, Tibet and Chittagong hill tracks of Bangladesh. The people of the region see themselves as different and call rest part of India as ‘mainland’. Many of them belong to the Mongoloid stock and are close to the people of South-East Asia and China.

Though India boasts for ‘unity in diversity’, but, this diversity obsessed with security treats this diversity as a threat. According to expert, this region is also seen a zone of buffer against China.

The region has a major obstacle to investment in the form of inner line permit that prevents even Indians from entering Nagaland, Mizoram and Arunachal Pradesh.

The region exhibits certain common problems like drug trafficking, immigration problems, ethnic turmoil and insurgency. There are also immense inter-regional differences in ethno-social issues and political aspirations. Different stages of socio-economic growth and development are discernible in the valley. Illegal migration has completely changed the geo-politics of Assam with about 60 Assembly Constituencies (out of 120) now being controlled by Muslims. In some areas, Muslim population is as high as 70% (Dhubri). ULFA leaders who started their movement against illegal immigration have been given shelter in Bangladesh.

The report of Pakistan’s ISI directly supporting various insurgent groups of North-East is creating modules of fundamentalist Muslims all over Assam with a view to using them at an opportune time against the national interest of our country by vitiating security scenario in the region. Other objectives of ISI include promoting indiscriminate violence in the State by providing active support to local militant outfits, supply of explosives and sophisticated arms to various terrorist groups, sabotage of oil pipelines and other installations.

The insurgents groups in Tripura, Nagaland, Arunachal Pradesh and Manipur continue to get patronage and support from Bangladesh. Logistic support for insurgent leaders and their family members is arranged in Dhaka and Sylhet.

The most significant factor has been collaboration among various insurgent groups of the North-East aided and abetted by Bangladesh.
The linkage between Maoists operating in ‘Siliguri corridor’ and insurgent groups of North-East is another worrying factor. This is a narrow corridor, only 25 Kms wide providing road and rail access to North-East. Efforts by ISI/Maoist in collaboration with other insurgent groups to infest this area can lead to serious repercussions for the whole of India and particularly for the North-East.

Perhaps ULFA is the only separatist organization which has so far withstood all forms of punitive action. While the Bhutan action has upset the ULFA, it has not succeeded in breaking the movement. Its leaders continue to get shelter in Dhaka and guide the movement from there. To find out long-term solutions in the North East, approaches have to be made that involve individuals as well as communities working together for everyone’s benefit. Fundamentally, it is a question of empowering people to fashion their own destiny.

It is in this context that India’s relations with South Asian neighbours assume significance. A cordial relationship with South Asian neighbors will create favourable economic, political, and security environment in the region. This will have positive impact on security and developmental scenario in the North-East in particular.

Today, it is seen that the security related problems in the North-East generally emanate from the neighboring countries and a good relationship with them will improve the security scenario in the North-East.

Moreover, a cordial relationship with South Asian neighbors will brighten the prospect of SAARC and will have a positive spill-over effect on the North-East as the region would be benefited from the enhanced trade and commerce with neighboring South Asian countries.

The success of India’s foreign policy towards South Asia would depend on the nature of security scenario in the North-East as the region would play an important role as a gateway for India’s foreign policy towards South Asia.
Objectives of the study

I. To examine the linkage between foreign policy and nation security particularly in the context of India’s foreign policy towards South Asia and its impact on the political, security, economic and social developments in the region of North East India.

II. To conceptualize and analyze the evolution of India’s Foreign Policy towards its South Asian neighbours country wise analysis of constraints both internal and external and challenges in the normalization of relations.

III. To examine the factors responsible for the emergence of SAARC relevance its challenges; people of the region, the future prospect, India’s rise in SAARC and benefit for the country.

IV. To analyse the problems (political, economic, social, ethnic, cultural) of North East region and contextualize them vis-à-vis India’s relations with its neighbours.

V. To examine the relevance of Foreign Policy towards South Asia for the North Eastern region for its socio-political stability, its economic development and its security.

VI. To examine the relevance of India’s Look East policy for its South Asia neighbours as it would work as a gateway via North East to South and South East Asia.

Significance/Relevance of the Study

1. It is an attempt to examine India’s Foreign Policy in the context of North East India.

2. The nature, course and direction of India’s Foreign Policy towards South Asia determine and have noticeable impact on social, economic, political and security parameters in the North East India.

3. The study is relevant in the context of new/recent post cold war developments taking place in world politics.

4. The findings of the study provide necessary inputs for the policy-makers particularly those dealing with the aspects of economic development and security related issues concerning the North East.
5. The research would be a guide to the future researchers in particular and particularly for those students and scholars working and specializing in the area of South Asia region and investigating into the security paradigm of the North East India.

**Hypothesis**

The course, content and contour of India’s Foreign Policy towards South Asia would determine the nature of political stability, economic development and security perspectives in the North East and Northeast India holds key to success of India’s foreign policy towards the neighbouring countries of South, East and Southeast Asia.

**Methodology**

The research is based on historical, analytical and descriptive methods using both primary and secondary sources. The data are collected primarily through review of literature available on the area. Field survey based on random sampling and through questionnaire method was conducted with the sample size relating to the adjoining areas of the North East and South Asia countries.

**Review of Literature**

*Anindya Batabyal, (2006) in the article on “Balancing China in Asia: A Realist Assessment of India’s Look East Strategy” in *China Report* writes about balancing China in Asia through India’s look east policy. The author argues that India’s look east policy will have great bearing on politics of Asia and the world. India’s Look East Policy would determine the pace of development in the region. The development will bring political stability, social security and peace in the region. China plays important role for the success and otherwise of India’s Look East Policy towards the region in particular.*

*Bhupinder Brar, (2003), in his article on “SAARC: If Functionalism Has Failed, Will Realism Work?” in *South Asian Survey* analyses the factors and constraints for the failure of SAARC in achieving the objectives like poverty alleviation, raising the standard of living of the people of the*
region and promotion of mutual understanding through trade and commerce between and among the
member nations.

Brar in his work stresses on the role of SAARC and its success and failure. The SAARC plays the
vital role and its achievements. According to him SAARC was conceived to play important role in
strengthening relations among the member states and bringing socio-economic development in the
region. Cooperation is the source of development for the nations of the region and checks and
balances the tension and conflict and brings lasting regional security.

* Bimal Prasad (1999) in his article on “Prospects for Greater Cooperation in South Asia: The
Political Dimensions” in the edited book The Dynamics of South Asia Regional Cooperation and
SAARC argues for the prospect of greater cooperation in South Asia. He also mentions and highlights
about the political dimension of regional cooperation and the role of India’s foreign policy for
promoting cooperative and friendly relations among the nations of South Asia. He further argues that
the political dimension of relations determines social, economic and security prospects in the region.

According to Bimal Prasad India’s foreign policy is a major determinant for peace and progress in the
region. The political scenario depends on the regional cooperation in trade and social relations. The
free trade relations would promote and pave the social development in the future. India is the model
and key player for the regional development and security. Regional security also determines
development and freedom from terrorism in the region.

Cooperative Denuclearisation? in the edited wok Challenges to India’s Foreign Policy in the New
Era writes about the growing nuclear danger in the region. He emphasizes that the need of the hour is
for mutual understanding and join hands for denuclearization for South Asian nations in general. The
nuclear weapons do not bring the lasting solution rather it creates tension and conflict.

Banerjee also discusses about the future of the nuclear power states which is dangerous for the whole
nations in particular for the nations of the South Asia. The prospect of peace and development in
South Asia depends on cooperation and mutual relations among the nations of the region.
Nuclearisation hampers the confidence and trust and creates fear psychosis among the nation-state. Moreover, it is also at the cost of socio-economic development. On the other hand the nations invest valuable resources of economy in nuclear development on competition.

*Kanti Bajpai (1999), in his article “Security and SAARC”, in the edited work *The Dynamics of South Asia Regional Cooperation and SAARC*, Eds Eric Gonsalves and Nancy Jetly, analyses the importance of regional cooperation for the security in the region. Regional cooperation through SAARC would be able to develop confidence amongst the nations of the region and would bring sustainable peace in South Asia.

Bajpai also points out causes of instability in the region namely poverty, communal disharmony, and terrorism. The SAARC’s initiative can control insecurity in the region.

Regional cooperation would bring lasting security rather than war and tension amongst the nations of the SAARC. The formation of SAARC shows the resolve of the member countries to live and develop in the atmosphere of mutual trust and harmony.

*Kenneth Mcpherson (1998) in his article “Trade and Traders in the Bay of Bengal: Fifteenth to Nineteenth Centuries”, in the book *Politics and Trade in the Indian Ocean World: Essays in Honour of Ashim Das Gupta* writes about the prospect of trade in South Asia in particular and Indian Ocean in general. The articles examine the impact of such economic and commercial cooperation on the neighbouring nations. Trade and Traders have the role to play in bringing prosperity to the economy of the nations of the region.

According to Kenneth Mcpherson trade would determine economic power and political strength of the nations. The countries in South Asia need to have a good cooperation for the future prospect. He discusses the economic position from the Fifteenth to Nineteenth Centuries in particular of Bay of Bengal and South Asia in general.

*M.S. Rajan (1993) in the article “India’s Foreign Policy under Nehru”, in Studies on India’s Foreign Policy writes about India’s foreign policy and its role in the 20th century. Further, stressing on the topic *India’s Foreign Policy under Nehru* Rajan states that India played a significant role in world
politics under the leadership of Nehru. The study not only focuses on India but also reflects on India’s relations with the neighbouring states.

India’s foreign policy determines social, economic and political development of the region. It emphasizes that security is important for nation building both in present as well as future. Confidence building with neighbouring nations is essential and becomes the ingredient part of our foreign policy. Rajan points out that foreign policy is the backbone of the nation’s strength. The good role of and a dynamic foreign policy could progress and grow as well as compete with other nation’s in particular. Foreign policy is the essence for prospect of the nation and the people in particular.

According to the M.S. Rajan foreign policy paves the way for development and relations with neighbouring states. He also describes the socio-economic and political scenario of India and its impact on foreign policy.

*Mahendra P. Lama (2001), in the article “Investments in South Asia: Issues, Constraints and Opportunities” in the edited book South Asia 2010: Challenges & Opportunities analyses the role of economic cooperation to fight the challenges and constraints of the region and also its would impact on the South Asian nations as a whole. Through economic cooperation is the only chance and way to compete and free from developed nations.

According to Mahendra P. Lama the investments must come from South Asia itself rather than depending on developed nations. The region nations would progress and develop when there is an investment amongst the nations. The imbalance in socio-economic development must be overcome through economic and investment cooperation within South Asia nations. Moreover, it is a great opportunity for South Asia for investment and economic cooperation for immediate and future’s prospects of the region.

*Mustafizur Rahman (1998) in his article on “Bangladesh-India Bilateral Trade: Current Trends, New Perspectives, New Challenges” in BIJSS Journal, writes about trade prospects between India and Bangladesh. Trade according to him will play the most important role in nation building on one hand and confidence building on the other hand. The nations develop and progress when there are good trade relations with other nations.
Mustafizur Rahman highlights the needs for development and progress and also challenges in trade relations between India and Bangladesh. Imbalance in trade relations hampers the nation in the long run. It is not only a loss of economy but also of political strength.

He also discusses the current trade relations as well as future prospects for both the nations of India and Bangladesh.

*Narottam Gaan (2006), on “Environmental Security in South Asia”, in Challenges to India’s Foreign Policy in the New Era highlights the necessity and importance of environmental security for South Asia in particular and the world in general.

Gaan further highlights the importance to protect and conserve the environment for achieving environmental security with the cooperative efforts of the nations and people of the region to develop in sustainable way. Environmental security is key to both social and economic development directly and indirectly. He also highlights the challenges for environment security in South Asia.

According to Gaan the loss of environmental security would affect South Asia as well as the whole world at large. Besides, he also puts emphasis on the role of policy makers of the region to promote environmental security for economic development and for raising the standard of living of the people.

*Partha S. Ghosh, (2003) in his article “Challenges and Opportunities: India’s Foreign Policy in the 1990s”, in the edited book South Asia After the Cold War International Perspectives analyses the great challenges for India’s foreign policy in the contemporary world order. He writes that India’s foreign policy has to determine and make a policy for the welfare and sustainable development of the people.

Ghosh highlights the challenges and wise opportunity to play a role of in her foreign policy. This could facilitate and determine the global scenario in social and political prospects.

*Poonam Barua (2006) in her article on ‘Economic Diplomacy in South Asia’ in South Asian Survey writes that economic diplomacy can serve to open avenues for testing new tacks for business relationships that can deliver a peace dividend and help in reducing political tensions and security risks
in the region. She argues that economic diplomacy can serve in opening new windows of opportunity for building national, regional and global relationships between countries and their people.

*Rajat Ganguly and Ian Macduff (2003) in their book *Ethnic Conflict & Secessionism in South and Southeast Asia* explore the flaws and contradictions in the process of post-colonial nation building in many countries of South and Southeast Asia as highlighted by the intractable and continuing phenomenon of ethnic conflict. The authors focus on the political alienation, the disturbed social matrix and the economic deprivations that are most often at the root of these ethnic and secessionist movements in the region. The book provides a deep analysis of and insight into the state-society and civil-military aspects of such conflicts and the process through which they have become intractable and entrenched and how they both affect and are affected by national, regional and global developments. The authors also provide the options available for managing and ultimately resolving ethnic conflicts in each country of the region.

*Romesh Bhattacharji (2009) in his article “Road to progress” in *Frontline* highlights China’s relations with India. Progress in relations between the two neighbours would herald peace, stability and development in the South Asian region. these goals could be achieved only when India and China come together with a common purpose of building trust and confidence among the people of two countries overcoming the barrier of suspicion, prejudice and mistrust.

*S.D. Chamola, (2006), in the article “Economic Co-operation in the SAARC Region: Potential, Constraints and Policies” in the edited book *Challenges to India’s Foreign Policy in the New Era* analyses the potential and constraints for economic co-operation in the SAARC region. He highlights the potential for economic prosperity through cooperation amongst the nations of the region.

Chamola analyses the constraints for the SAARC on one hand and on the other hand he also discusses the scope for economic cooperation among the member nations for social, economic, cultural and political development.

The author further advocates that SAARC would function as a model for development of the region and it is in this context that Northeast occupies a strategic position in India’s foreign policy towards South Asia.
*Sanjib Baruah (2009) *Beyond Counter-insurgency* provides penetrating insights into the conflicts prevailing in the Northeast region and analyses them at three levels: structural determinants like poverty and underdevelopment; the nature and politics of the postcolonial state and the agency of multiple actors with diverse motives. The author argues that neither a development nor a military approach can achieve peace in the region. Only concerted efforts to establish rule of law, a system of accountability and faith in the institutions of governance can break the cycle of violence. Between the apparent impossibility of peace through ‘reconciliation’ and victory through repression or terror, the book envisions the possibility of an open, more inclusive future.

Sanjib Baruah (2005) in the article on “Beyond Durable Disorder: Northeast India and the Look East Policy,” in *Durable Disorder: Understanding the Politics of Northeast India* writes about the political uncertainty in Northeast India. The author analyses ‘the political meaning and significance of prolonged low –intensity conflicts in Northeast India’. The author further argues that if peace and development are to be brought to the region, India’s foreign policy needs to be reoriented and restructured towards South and Southeast Asia.

*Sanjib Baruah (2001) in *India against Itself* argues that human rights abuses by security forces and insurgents, ethnic violence, and steady slide towards liberal democracy are largely due to India’s formally federal but actually centralized government structure. The book traces the history of subnationalisms and cultural politics in Northeast India.

*Shelton U Kodikara (1993) in the edited book *External Compulsions of South Asian Politics* explores the interactions of domestic politics and foreign policy in the South Asian states and the larger question of the impact of the international environment on the region. The book further explores the impact of inter-state problems and conflicts on the overall security scenario of the region taking particular examples of conflicts between India and Pakistan, India and Sri Lanka, and India and Nepal.

Suresh Dhanda, and Rajinder Punia (April 2007), write on “SAFTA: Problems and Prospects”, in *Third Concept* highlighting the need for promoting free trade among the members of the SAARC for lasting peace, prosperity and progress in the region.
They analyse the role of India in making SAFTA operational for promoting trade and regional cooperation in the region.

According to Suresh Dhanda and Rajinder Punia SAFTA is key to promoting trade among the South Asia nations. They further dwell upon the relations among the member states and future of SAFTA and SAARC.

*Urmila Phadnis (1989) in her book *Ethnicity and Nation-building in South Asia* opines that the phenomenon of ethnicity is an intrinsic component of the socio-political reality of multi-ethnic states in south Asia as it is in most countries of the world. She examines the diverse impulses which reinforce ethnic specificities in multi-ethnic societies and the adequacy of institutional arrangements to cope with the pulls and pressures of interethnic competition for a stake in the system. The book provides a critical appraisal of various theoretical approaches to the study of ethnicity and nation-building; delineation of the ethnic composition of the South Asian region and the structures of the states in each country of the region for the energy.

*Vandana Asthana, (1999), in her book India's Foreign Policy and Subcontinental Politics, writes about the strategic importance of India’s neighbourhood for its national security and the role of foreign policy for building a comprehensive, congenial and cooperative socio-economic relations with the nations of the region and their people. Further, it stresses the importance of the foreign policy in building a strong South Asian region for playing a decisive role in the global politics.

*Security, peace and economic development could become a reality when countries of the region would come together and learn to coexist in a peaceful and cooperative manner. It is in this context that India’s role assumes significance in cementing ties between the nations of the region. This in return will have positive impact on political and security scenario of the region and would bring desired socio-economic change in the region.*

*Vivek Chibber (2006) writes in The Journal of Critical Asian Studies on the topic On the Decline of Class Analysis in South Asia that cooperation and mutual understanding are prerequisites to building confidence and trust among the nations of the region. The confidence building is basic to decline in*
mistrust and non cooperation among the nations. The peace, security and stability in the region depend on cooperation and mutual relations based on trust.

Vivek Chibber highlights the decline of class in South Asia. The future depends on the social development among the region states. India’s foreign policy must aim at building mutual trust among the nations of South Asia.

**Articles**


Chapter 1

South Asia: An Introduction

South Asia, consisting of the huge subcontinent of India, includes Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bhutan, Maldives as well as the nation of India itself. In spite of differences in physical appearance, complexion, stature, and other ethnological features, the people of the entire region of South Asia are unified by a common cultural and ethical outlook; a wealth of ancient textual literature in Sanskrit, Prakrit, and regional languages is a major unifying factor: Music and dance, rituals, customs, modes of worship, and literary ideals are similar throughout the subcontinent, even though the region has been divided into kaleidoscopic political patterns through the centuries.

The close interrelationship of the various peoples of South Asia may be traced in their epics, as in the Ramayana and the Mahabharata. Kinship between the gods and heroes of regions far distant from each other is evident, and the place names themselves often evoke common sources. Moreover, there have been continual attempts to impose a political unity over the region. In the 3rd century BC, for example, the emperor Asoka had almost the entire region under his sway; in the 11th century AD, Rajendra I Cola conquered almost the whole of India and a good portion of Southeast Asia; and the
Great Mughal Akbar again achieved this in the 16th century. Though the expansion and attenuation of boundary lines, the bringing together or pulling apart politically of whole regions, have characterized all of South Asian history, the culture has remained essentially one.

The geography of the region encouraged a common adoration of mountains and rivers. The great Himalayas, which form the northern boundary, are the loftiest of mountains and are conceived to be the embodiment of nobility, the abode of immaculate snow, and the symbol of a cultural ideal. Similarly, the great rivers such as the Brahmaputra and the Indus are regarded as the mothers of their respective regions, assuring prosperity through their perennial supply of water.

The association of lakes and spring with water sprites and sylvan fairies, called nagas and yaksas, is common throughout the region. Karkota, the name of an early dynasty, itself signifies naga worship in Kashmir. Sculptures of nagas and yaksas found in widespread sites suggest a common spirit of adoration, as do sculptures, printings, temples, and religious texts that for centuries were immaculate intonation. The same classical dance is seen in sculpture in Gandhara in Pakistan, in Bharhut in the north and in Amaravati in the south.

The relation of the various arts to each other is very close in South Asia, where proficiency in several arts is necessary for specialization in any one. Thus, it is believed that without a good knowledge of dance there can be no proficiency in sculpture, for dance, like painting or sculpture is a depiction of the entire world.¹

South Asia is thus a cultural region consisting of India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Afghanistan, Nepal, Sikkim, and Bhutan on the mainland, and Ceylon and the Maldives in the Indian Ocean. The region had an estimated population of 754 million or 20% of the world’s total.²

Chapter II

India’s Foreign Policy towards South Asia: An Overview

“Whatever policy we may lay down, the art of conducting foreign affairs of a country lies in finding out what is most advantageous to the country. We may talk about international goodwill and mean what we say. We may talk about peace and freedom and earnestly mean what we say. But in the ultimate analysis, Government functions for the good of a country it governs and no Government dare do anything which in the short or long run is manifestly to the disadvantage of the country.”

Jawaharlal Nehru

India’s policy has not been some sudden bright inspiration of an individual but a gradual growth evolving from even before independence. The inevitable line that we took subsequently has followed that thinking as a matter of course.

The Indian National Congress, the main organization embodying that movement, showed interest in matters relating to foreign policy right from its birth in 1885. At first quite limited, this interest gradually became wider in line with the corresponding widening of its general political outlook, till a time arrived when there was hardly an international issue on which the Congress did not express its views. Thus by the time India achieved independence there had developed a distinct, Indian outlook on world affairs, and this became the foundation of India’s foreign policy. Needless to add, in the growth of this Indian outlook Jawaharlal Nehru himself played the most notable role, particularly during the last and the most creative phase of its evolution, from 1927 to 1947.

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4 Ibid, p 481.
5 Ibid, p 482.
Meaning of Foreign Policy

*Foreign Policy:* A policy regulating a particular country’s relations with other states and people in the international arena.  

The foreign policy is the sum total of the principles, the interests and objectives which a state formulates in conducting its relations with other states. 

The foreign policy principles mean the codes of right conduct, which are considered desirable in themselves, such as adherence to treaties and non-interference in the internal affairs of other states. Like interests are what a state considers, in general terms, essential for its survival and development: such as territorial integrity, improvement of living standards, and maintenance of a free way of life. The objectives are more or less precisely delimited interests, formulated in the circumstances in which the relations with another state are conducted.

*Foreign Relations:* The external relations of a country, part of the general complex of international relations.

Foreign relations are the actions that a state resorts to in pursuance of the foreign policy formulated, such as declaration of war, conclusion of peace, the signing of a treaty, giving or accepting aid, recognition of a state, establishment of diplomatic relations, and carrying on negotiations.

The Glimpse of India’s Foreign Policy

The art of conducting the foreign affairs of a country lies in finding out what is most advantageous to the country. It may talk about international goodwill and mean what it says. It may talk about peace and freedom and earnestly mean what it says. But in the ultimate analysis, a government functions for the good of the country it governs and no government dare do anything which in the short or long run is manifestly to the disadvantage of that country.

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7 A. Appadorai, (1981) Domestic Roots of India’s Foreign Policy, published by R. Dayal, Oxford University Press 2/11 Ansari Road, Daryaganj, New Delhi 110002
8 Ibid, pp 6-7.
9 Ibid, p 220
The interest of peace is more important, because if war comes everyone suffers, so that in the long-distance view, self-interest may itself demand a policy of cooperation with other nations, goodwill for other nations, as indeed it does demand.

India’s interests lie in the context of world cooperation and world peace, in as far as world peace can be preserved.  

Chapter III

SAARC: Its Evolution, Objectives, Constraints/Challenges and prospects

Evolution of SAARC

The South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation was formed under Article 52 of the United Nations’ Charter providing existence of regional arrangements or agencies for dealing with such matters, relating to the maintenance of international peace and security with the purpose and principles of UN charter.

It was established on 8th December, 1985 after about four and half years of its preparation. The basic aim of the Association is to accelerate the process of economic and social development in member countries through joint action in the agreed areas of cooperation. The region of SAARC lies in the South Himalayas surrounded by Hindu Kush mountains. The idea of regional cooperation in South Asia was first initiated by late President Zia- Ur- Rehman of Bangladesh who visited Nepal, India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka during 1977-78 to explore the possibilities of regional economic cooperation among the SAARC Countries. He proposed for the collective self-reliance in a common quest for peace and development of all these countries. In May 1980, he issued a formal call for SAARC Regional Cooperation. His call received a positive response from all the SAARC countries. Hence,

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consultations at official level were carried out for the proposed cooperation. These preliminary exchanges brought out clearly that regional cooperation should on the hand, reflect the spirit of mutual trust, understanding and sympathetic appreciation of the political inspiration existing among the countries of the region, and on the other hand, such cooperation should be based in respect of the principles of sovereignty equality, territorial integrity, non-interference in internal affairs of other nations and mutual benefit.  

The first meeting of the foreign secretaries of the seven countries, viz., Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka, was held in Colombo (Sri Lanka) in April 1981 for regional cooperation. It was agreed that regional cooperation should be based on mutual trust, understanding and sympathetic appreciation of the national aspirations of all the countries of the SAARC region. It led to the identification of five broad areas, for regional cooperation viz., Agriculture, Rural Development, Telecommunications, Meteorology, and Health and population activities.

India since her freedom from foreign rule has always been keenly interested and deeply committed to regional cooperation for the solution of common problems in various fields viz. the cultural, economic political ones. Jawaharlal Nehru the great leader and first prime minister of India stresses for unity and solidarity of Asia in his speeches and writing repeatedly. On 7th September, 1946 in his very first ever broadcast to the nation, Jawaharlal Nehru said, “We are of Asia and the people of Asia are nearer and closer to us than other. India is so situated that she is pivot of Western, Southern and South-East Asia”. Similarly, on another occasion Nehru reiterated the same “When we talk of Asia, remember that India, not because of any ambition of hers, but because of the force of circumstances, because of geography, because of history and because of many other things, inevitably has to play a very important part in Asia… Even if you think in terms of regional organizations in Asia… you have to keep in touch with the other regions. And whatever regions you may in mind, the importance of India cannot be ignored.

Further, Nehru for the maintenance of an atmosphere of cordiality and cooperation in Asian relations conference in New Delhi emphasized the fact that countries of Asia have to meet together on an equal basis in a common task and endeavour. He said that “It is fitting that India should play her part in this

14 Ibid. pp 634- 636.
15 Ibid. pp 634- 636
new phase of Asian Development”. Nehru had an opinion and hoped that some permanent Asian Institute for the study of common problems and to bring about closer relations emerging perhaps as a school of Asian studies. While leaving the conference he said

**Principles**

a. Cooperation within the framework of the Association is based on respect for the principles of sovereign equality, territorial integrity, political independence, non-interference in the internal affairs of other states and mutual benefit.

b. Such cooperation is to complement and not to substitute bilateral or multilateral cooperation.

c. Such cooperation should be consistent with bilateral and multilateral obligations of the member states.

d. Decisions at all levels in SAARC are taken on the basis of unanimity.

e. Bilateral and contentious issues are excluded from its deliberations.  

**Objectives**

The objectives, principles and general provisions, as mentioned in the SAARC Charter, are as follows:

i. To promote the welfare of the peoples of South Asia and to improve their quality of life;

ii. To accelerate economic growth, social progress and cultural development in the region and to provide all individuals the opportunity to live in dignity and to realise their full potentials;

iii. To promote and strengthen collective self-reliance among the countries of South Asia;

iv. To contribute to mutual trust, understanding and appreciation of one another's problems;

v. To promote active collaboration and mutual assistance in the economic, social, cultural, technical and scientific fields;

vi. To strengthen cooperation with other developing countries;

vii. To strengthen cooperation among themselves in international forums on matters of common interests; and

viii. To cooperate with international and regional organizations with similar aims and purposes.

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16 “South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC),” http://actrav.itcilo.org/actrav-english/telearn/global/ilo/blokit/saarc.htm#OBJECTIVES,
Chapter IV

North East India: Social, Political, Economic and Security Perspectives

An Introduction of North East India

North-East India is essentially the creation of the British. Before 1947, the whole of North-East India, excluding Manipur and Tripura was Assam. However, immediately after independence fissiparous forces lead to the dismemberment of greater Assam resulting in the formation of seven North-Eastern sisters, namely Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland and Tripura have been dealt with. Geographically, this region is almost isolated from the rest of India. North-East is strategically important and is girdled by Tibet, Bhutan, China, Myanmar (formerly Burma) and Bangladesh. It is linked to the rest of the country by a narrow corridor in West Bengal. 17

The North East region of India occupies strategic geopolitical situation due to its international boundaries with Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, Myanmar and Nepal. The region earlier comprised the states of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Tripura, popularly known as the ‘Seven Sisters.’ Recently, the State of Sikkim also come under the umbrella of this region owing to its proximity to the area and somewhat similar type of developmental and other problems. 18

The term “North east Frontier” connotes with reference to present day, British India something entirely different from what it did with regard to the Mughal Empire of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. While it is now applicable to the hilly region lying to the north and east of Sadiya, which commands the route to China, it meant in the Mughal age the Mongoloid states of Koch Bihar, Kamrup and Assam, which bordered serially on the province of Bengal in the north-east. 19

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Chapter V

Relevance of India’s Foreign Policy for North East region: Political, economic and security

“Partnership with Asean is an essential component of our Look East policy. This is reflected in trade, investment and institutional linkages.” Manmohan Singh, Prime Minister of India.\(^{20}\)

“We believe that a prosperous, stable and democratic Bangladesh is in the interest of both countries and the entire region.” S.M. Krishna, External Affairs Minister

“We require much better communication between India and China and no misunderstanding of each other’s actions and motives.” Shivshankar Menon, National Security Adviser

In South Asia the concepts and issues of sovereignty, territory, national security, citizenship and political loyalty are concepts rooted in the region.\(^{21}\)

Indeed, it is in pernicious form, demanding not only the loyalty and obligation of the individual citizen but also of the whole community. This kind of social activities would be termed as political contract by the margins and also a separatist or anti social element working within the nations in South Asia.\(^{22}\)

South Asia is a fetishism of territorial borders which has been particularly creating border wars between India and Pakistan, India and China threatening each others stability and security in the border and region in general.\(^{23}\)

A number of public policy, defence strategies and quasi-theoretical categories, of political, social and security issue is needed for the whole region of South Asia.\(^{24}\)

South Asia unlike many other regions of the world is slow in the development of economic and political integration and regional cooperation. Theoretical point of view it looks for development and outline possible strategies that change and bring about strategies in regional cooperation.\(^{25}\)

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\(^{20}\) *Times of India*, Friday, Guwahati, November 18, 2011.
\(^{21}\) A. Appadorai (1981) *“Introductory”,* Domestic Roots of India’s Foreign Policy, published by R.Dayal, Oxford University Press 2/11 Ansari Road, Daryaganj, New Delhi 110002.
\(^{22}\) Ibid.
\(^{23}\) Ibid.
\(^{24}\) Ibid.
\(^{25}\) Ibid.
India’s Foreign Policy towards South Asia

Jawaharlal Nehru the first Indian Prime Minister in his book, *The Discovery of India*, in 1944: prophetically says, The Pacific is likely to take the place of the Atlantic in the future as the nerve center of the world. Though not directly a Pacific state, India will inevitably exercise an important influence there. India will also develop as the center of economic and political activity in the Indian Ocean area, in South–East Asia, right up to the Middle East. Her position gives an economic and strategic importance in a part of the world which is going to develop in the future. Further, Nehru wrote, India will have to play a very great part in security problems of Asia and the Indian Ocean, more especially of the Middle East and South-East Asia.  

South Asia is a fetishism of territorial borders which has been particularly creating border wars between India and Pakistan, India and China threatening each others stability and security in the border and region in general. 

A number of public policy, defence strategies and quasi-theoretical categories, of political, social and security issue is needed for the whole region of South Asia.

South Asia unlike many other regions of the world is slow in the development of economic and political integration and regional cooperation. Theoretical point of view it looks for development and outline possible strategies that change and bring about strategies in regional cooperation.

Firstly, review the concept of ‘Regional Security Complex’ and ‘Regional Security Communities’. Secondly, it would look at the current situation in South Asia in view of the determination of ‘Regional Security Community’. Finally, the policy could advance towards the goal of creating such a Regional Security Community.

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25 Ibid.
27 Ibid.
28 Ibid.
29 Ibid.
30 Ibid.
Analysis of India’s Foreign Policy for North East region

S. Sankaranarayanan, the then Governor of Nagaland, while answering to a question said that the ‘Look East Policy’ in his perspective means development. Meanwhile further adding to that he said: ‘without peace, no development, no development, no peace.’

Professor Lama highlighted the importance of Indian foreign policy for peace, development, prosperity and security of the North East region. Further, Professor Lama also pointed out the current issues prevailing in South Asia and its impact on India’s foreign policy and North East India.

Dr. Namrata Goswami of IDSA in her interview said the ground reality for Government of India is it is not doing much for ‘Look East Policy’. Goswami expressed her view that through land cooperation Myanmar (Burma) could link India’s northeast with the neighbouring countries. Further, she opined fast economic vibrancy and greater investment could solve the insurgency problems in the North East India.

Goswami also referred about possibility of trade in Mon areas of Nagaland which borders Myanmar. She also viewed that political corruption and extortion along the National Highways in North East India lead to conflict and hamper the efforts for linking North East region with the neighbouring countries of Myanmar and Bangladesh.

Goswami also pointed out that ‘The more open, the better.’ Answering the questions in her interview on Southeast Asia she wanted North East India to come up both on economic, political and trade fronts. Further, she also expressed that road infrastructure and connectivity is needed for the North East region. Apart from that North East Council (NEC) must have a better coordination for development, she added.

Dr. Pankaj Jha in his interview said infrastructure should be included in Planning Commission and should involve in planning better for the North East region. Road and electricity must developed in the...

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31 Interview with S. Sankaranarayanan, the Governor of Nagaland on 25th April, 2008 at Raj Bhawan, Kohima.
32 Interview with Mahendra P. Lama, Professor of School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi and presently Vice Chancellor of Sikkim University at JNU on 29th April, 2007 and Sikkim University, Gangtok on 19th September, 2008.
33 Interview with Dr. Namrata Goswami, Associate Fellow, Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses, New Delhi on 17th February, 2010.
North East. He also observed that the people of North East are different and unique, explaining the meaning that market, tourism and tourist centred activities can spring up provided there is good educational set up culturing and nurturing development.

Jha also have a view that timber and wood can be got from Myanmar and finished goods could be exported to Thailand. Thailand is a good market for North East India, he added.

Jha was also optimistic that Nagaland has the potential for floriculture.  

Dr. Udai Bhanu Singh in his interview highlighted that Southeast Asia consists of ten Asian countries and four North East states bordering Myanmar that are all effected by Look East Policy.

Singh also suggested for better road, air and communication linkage with South and Southeast Asia.

Insecurity in North East India can be overcome when developmental issues are taken care of, Singh added.  

Dr. Partha S. Ghosh, Professor of School of International Studies, Centre for South, Central, Southeast Asian & Southeast Pacific Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi in his interview analyzed India’s politics towards neighbouring countries with particular reference to India’s North East. Ghosh while explaining India’s policy towards neighbours like China, Myanmar and Nepal, said United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA) hideouts in Bhutan have an internal and external security impacts. Ghosh in his interview said regional politics influences foreign policy. Further, he referred to North East India lack of influence in Parliament on foreign policy and decision making. Members of Parliament from North East India, Ghosh said, make no noise in the Parliament.  

Dr. Sreeradha Datta in her interview said North East is an important area for India and Asia. The North East not only is important for developing relations with the neighbouring countries like Myanmar and Bangladesh but also to reach out whole of Asia. India’s economic policy is concentrating on ‘Look East Policy’ and North East is a new corridor for trade, she added.

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24 Interview with Dr. Pankaj Jha Associate Fellow, Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses, New Delhi on 17th February, 2010.
25 Interview with Dr. Udai Bhanu Singh, Research Officer, Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses, New Delhi on 22nd February, 2010.
36 Interview with Dr. Partha S. Ghosh, Professor of School of International Studies, Centre for South, Central, Southeast Asian & Southeast Pacific Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi on 26th February, 2010.
Datta also pointed that North East is relevant and important for India’s foreign policy as in general being territorially bordering with neighbouring countries.\textsuperscript{37}

Dr. Mahbub Ullah stresses the legacy of Jawaharlal Nehru and its influences on in India’s foreign policy making towards Laos, China, Thailand, Cambodia, Indonesia etc.

Dr Ullah pointed out that geography, history, culture and psychological factors work as a bridge between India and its neighbouring countries and have great potential in impacting India’s “look east policy.” He talked about many commonalities between India and Bangladesh. He also touched upon the irritants in relations between the two nations governed by psychological factors and fear of India dominating the region.

Dr. Mahbub Ullah said that India is facing the twin challenges of national integration and conflicts on account of identity politics.

He said diplomacy is the only answer to solve problems between India and Bangladesh. The nature of relations between the two will have a great bearing upon peace, security and development in the North East region.

Ullah expressed his view how India is tackling the insurgency problems their own country. Adding to that integration and nationality arises within Indian country.

Dr Mahbub Ullah also have an opinion that diplomacy relations found in three kinds like warm, correct and cool.\textsuperscript{38}

Dr Delwar Hossain, Professor and Chair of International Relations, Dhaka University, Bangladesh in his interview said India and Bangladesh enjoy good relations and have relevance for studies in both the countries and particularly North East India as it has integral boundary with Bangladesh.

\textsuperscript{37} Interview with Dr. Sreeradha Datta, Research Fellow, Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses, New Delhi on 26\textsuperscript{th} February, 2010.

\textsuperscript{38} Interview with Dr Mahbub Ullah, Professor and Chairman, Department of Development Studies, Dhaka University, Bangladesh on 11\textsuperscript{th} August, 2010.
Hossain said India helped Bangladesh during partition from Pakistan in 1971 and helped become independent state in the time of Indira Gandhi’s prime ministership of India. The support of Bangladesh in 1971 was great for the country, he added. Hossain also pointed about the positive and negative aspects in relations between two countries relations like water sharing, trade relations, militancy problem and border issue.

Further, he stressed that the relationship between the two countries determine the prospect of peace and development in South Asia nations and particularly the success of South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC).

According to Hossain opinion the relationship between countries is marked by ups and downs. And this depends on the regime of the country’s approach on foreign policy issues.

Mistrust, apprehension arouse from the elite people instead of the common, general people, Hossain added. North East India had good historical relations with Bangladesh, he added. Transit issues create problems between the two countries. Hossain also suggested mutual understanding to be maintained between the two countries.

Hossain also recalled of India’s complaints towards Bangladesh on insurgency and terrorism issue. However, Hossain believed that Bangladesh government would not support such anti-social activities. To create an environment by building trust, confidence and more understanding between the two governments would be a major requirement.

Further, Hossain while explaining the history of India and Bangladesh said that during the time of Mughal and Ashoka empire and during the British rule both the countries lived together. He also suggested that there must be deeper relation among South Asian nations in general to harbor and maintain an atmosphere of unity.

India is very important for South Asia. Moreover, India has a distinct culture among the region.

Hossain also added that India would benefit in any collaboration with Bangladesh by sharing each other’s wealth and burdens which would essentially function to promote and develop cultural, social and political relations.
Realisation of this is in need from both India and Bangladesh. The relationship and benefit in any matter regarding India and Bangladesh would also benefit North East at the same time, Hossain added.

North East India is a strategic point for India and Bangladesh, he said. North East India- Bangladesh vice versa relations are important for each other and for India.

The type of country’s regime perception may lead to hostility despite the good relations that the public share, Hossain added.

Delwar Hossain also clarified that people of Bangladesh are busy for their own livelihood rather than taking interests in global political issues.

In the year 1977 agreement on equitable sharing of water between India and Bangladesh was a noble work.

Meanwhile, during the interview of the Professor Delwar Hossain, I asked for his suggestion to reduce/eliminate mistrust and building confidence among the people of the two countries. Hossain pointed that mistrusts have to be reduced/eliminated from elite and the government level because general public do not arouse such problem. Moreover, India has a greater responsibility for building trust. Interaction also plays a vital role at the official as well as non-official levels. In addition, cultural exchange and students’ delegation and dialogue are the mechanism for strengthening relations between both the countries.

North East India is important for India and Bangladesh relations. North East India has to establish wider relations, mutual understanding as a result of the geographical proximity of India with Bangladesh, Hossain maintained.

Above all, Hossain also stated that the people of Bangladesh are fond of India’s films and television channels.

On 16th August during another interview, Hossain commented on the philosophy of Bangladesh’s foreign policy. Hossain said Bangladesh is committed to regional and global peace, diplomatic and mutual development, international law and cooperation. Friendship to all without enmity or malice. He also appreciated the ‘Look East Policy’. Viewing the problem of overpopulation Hussain added that
Bangladesh needs support on trade and technology thus emphasizing on the importance of interdependence among countries.\textsuperscript{39}

Professor M. Shahiduzzama in his interview suggested for open contact, travel, trade for both the countries of India and Bangladesh to be introduced. Easier accessibility should be provided by the government instead of border security restrictions. Shahiduzzama added absence of insurgency problems could facilitate progress and development for both the countries in every aspect. The scope of exchange of journalists and student delegation must be provided by both the countries. Adding that, tourism facility was also required to improve relations between two countries of India and Bangladesh.\textsuperscript{40}

Professor Rebecca Haque in her interview says the need for both countries like India and Bangladesh is to give better contact and good opportunity to transit. Absence of contact among the people would lead to suspicion between the two countries. This is how the government should give more opportunity to the people for communication and contact particularly in the border areas, Haque added. Stressing on the fact, she said that human beings are social in nature, communication is very essential for countries sharing boundary with each other.\textsuperscript{41}

Dr. Akmal Hussain, Professor of International Relations, Dhaka University, Bangladesh in his interview said India is important for Bangladesh having 4,095 kms bordering to their country. Besides, if India wants it can connect North East from the heart of their country to Bangladesh which would be a much shorter route consuming less time and expense.

According to Akmal Hussain imbalance in trade relations between India and Bangladesh would be solved if Bangladesh’s trade is opened by the government of India formally and informally to the seven sisters of North East India states. Hussain also suggested an autonomy for direct link to North East with Bangladesh both tariff and non-tariff. The relations with North East should be strengthened

\textsuperscript{39} Interview with Dr Delwar Hossain, Professor and Chair of International Relations, Dhaka University, Dhaka, Bangladesh on 11\textsuperscript{th} & 16\textsuperscript{th} August, 2010.

\textsuperscript{40} Interview with Professor M. Shahiduzzama, Department of International Relations, Dhaka University, Dhaka, Bangladesh on 12\textsuperscript{th} August, 2010.

\textsuperscript{41} Interview with Professor Rebecca Haque, Chair of English Department, Dhaka University, Dhaka, Bangladesh on 12\textsuperscript{th} August, 2010.
that would mutually benefit all. Hussain further added that he also recalled the past event between India and China’s hostile relations when Bangladesh was a strategic place.

India’s project at Palatana (Tripura) transporting material by using the water route in Bangladesh started on 13th August, 2010. Apart from that one billion $ loan to Bangladesh, announced by Finance Minister of India, Pranab Mukerjee on 5th August, 2010 was of good significance between the two countries.

Akmal Hussain viewed that India has to give commitment to Bangladesh to address the genuine grievance of Bangladesh regarding the water issue. There are 54 rivers originating from India. He also cautioned that when the rivers are diverted it would cripple the economy of Bangladesh. Further, he also stated that the role of Border Security Forces (BSF) of India was a tricky issue raising questions of mistrust and suspicion.

India being a big nation has to be open by providing means of accessibility to North Eastern part of India.

Insurgence groups like United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA) getting shelter in Bangladesh was an internal problem for India. He also suggested that more economic generation and political freedom would solve such kind of problems.

A.Z. Phizo Naga freedom movement leader boarded to fly (Air) from Dhaka to London. Zaramthanga former Chief Minister of Mizoram and also leader of Mizo National Front were sheltered in Bangladesh which were cordial gestures towards India by their government, Hussain said.

Above all, bilateral relations depend on the regime of the government, he added. Stating that a policy of non-interference, non-allignment and anti-racism should be delegated for peaceful co-existence.  

Interview with Professor Ghulam Murshid, British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), London at Asiatic Society of Bangladesh, Dhaka quoted that Bengali intellectuals of Bangladesh want relationship with India. Besides, a huge population of Muslims totaling to 85% of the country’s population, its national policies are close to Islamic countries. The foreign policy of Bangladesh is on

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42 Interview with Dr. Akmal Hussain, Professor of International Relations, Dhaka University, Dhaka, Bangladesh on 14th & 16th August, 2010.
the verge of confusion going nowhere, he added. There is a tendency to be neutral in international politics being a poor economic nation. Further, he also clarified that Bangladesh has to depend on India not being capable to fight with foreign nation. Besides, army people are the most privilege as 13% of the economy spends on it. Murshid opined that a peaceful and harmonial state does not require military force at the cost of nation’s economy.

Professor Murshid viewed that Bangladesh has the fear that India would dominate. Thus, they try to utilize anti-India activities among Muslim community in Bangladesh. To balance the fear of Anti-India was a campaign started opposite Islamic nationalism. To pursue anti India Bangladesh relied on help from Pakistan and China which were against India’s favour. 43

Professor Sirajul Islam answering to the question expressing his personal feeling and concern for foreign policy said that being a citizen of Bangladesh, on the perspectives of geography, economy, and small defence unlike a big country India is challenging. Stressing to that it cannot be too ambitious in its role on world’s foreign policy. Comparing Bangladesh to a small bird, he cited an example of Myanmar as successful in internal matters. Likewise internal human rights, economy, qualities of life are most essential. Islam also has a view to follow big state leadership.

Switzerland does not have any army. Navy coast guard is to free the coast from criminal activities preventing smuggling. Similarly, air force is there for quick supply in times of crisis like disaster. Bangladesh should aspire a global role to recommend it and should be satisfied with supportive neighbouring countries. 44

Professor Sajahan Miah, Managing Editor, Banglapedia Trust, Asiatic Society of Bangladesh, Dhaka, Bangladesh on 16th August, 2010 in his chamber said India sent army to Bangladesh in 1971 not to doubt India’s support for their country. Being a small country Bangladesh should be more accommodative and friendly. He opined that foreign policy should be beneficial. Bangladesh has a huge market for India. Therefore, for keeping a good relationship a lot depends on good relationship in political power. According to Sajahan Miah improving relationship between the two countries would

43 Interview with Professor Ghulam Murshid, British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), London at Asiatic Society of Bangladesh, Dhaka on 16th August, 2010.
44 Interviewed with Professor Sirajul Islam, President of Asiatic Society of Bangladesh, Dhaka on 16th August, 2010.
not cause any loss or harm. Instead war and terrorism would take away all freedom and profit from both countries.  

Chapter VI
Conclusion: Findings and Suggestions

Asia is the largest continent of the world and South Asia, one of the four sub-regions of the continent, generally consists of eight nations namely India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Republic of the Maldives and Afghanistan. With a total of 1.4 billion inhabitants, these countries represent about 22% of the world population, but only 2% of the world GNP.

South Asia presents a picture of bewildering and daunting diversity of heterogeneity. Schism of every kind such as national boundaries, religion, ethnicity and language, are apparent. India represents as the largest democracy of the world while Pakistan has been the place of dictatorship. Two of its members like Sri Lanka and Nepal are torn by internal racial and political strife. Bangladesh has recent origin and the country is struggling hard for its economic survival and prosperity. Maldives is the smallest territory among these eight states.

These states were the British colonial rule for decades where they shared almost common administrative pattern and cherished common desire to be independent of the colonial rule. It was India, which first became independent in 1947 and Pakistan as an integral part of India emerged as a sovereign state after India’s a partition in the same year. Bangladesh, which was known as the East Pakistan before its independent its independent status, emerged as an independent state in 1971 after successful revolution against the government of dictatorial Pakistan.

India being the largest among them have been successfully managing democratic pattern of the government, but other states of South Asia are still struggling hard for democratic system of

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45 Interview with Professor Sajahan Miah, Managing Editor, Banglapedia Trust, Asiatic Society of Bangladesh, Dhaka, Bangladesh on 16th August, 2010.
government. No doubt, Pakistan claims itself as a democratic state, but its history shows that
democracy never got deep root in Pakistan.

Despite much similarity in geographical, cultural, religious and linguistic conditions these countries
hardly tried to come together and form mutual and association for their economic development. It is
only after formation of South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation on 8th December, 1985,
which may be termed as historic move for regional cooperation in South Asia, the seven countries of
South Asia formed themselves into a regional cooperative organisation to promote common economic,
social and cultural development.

Since then, the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) has been meeting
regularly at many governmental levels and maintained active intra-regional cooperative attitude on all
fronts of development, despite geographical tension between two prominent members i.e., India and
Pakistan. A brief description of its geographical area and location, kind of government/ political
system, population, language, religion and economic scenario is mentioned below.

**Findings of the study**

The study establishes the linkage between foreign policy and national security. The national security is
determined by the direction of the foreign policy that a nation tries to develop. This is true particularly
in the context of India’s foreign policy towards its neighbouring countries of South Asia and the
security of Northeast India.

India’s relations with South Asian neighbours such as Bangladesh, Bhutan and Nepal have determined
the socio-economic and politico-security parameters in India’s northeast as the region (northeast India)
shares territorial/geographical contiguity, ethnic and cultural commonality and more importantly
historical antecedents.

The evolution of SAARC has provided a great opportunity to link the region of Northeast India with
South Asian neighbours through India’s foreign policy. The success of regional cooperation will
ensure social, economic and political security in Northeast India thus laying down the parameters of
comprehensive security architecture in the region based on human and economic security.
The study shows that the social and political turmoil in the northeast region has direct linkage with the prevailing social, economic, political and security scenario in our neighbouring countries. The problems of insurgency, sub-nationalist, separatist and secessionist movements, drug trafficking, arms pedalling and nacro-terrorism derive ideological, political, financial and military support and sustenance from our neighbouring countries sharing borders with the northeast region.

Whenever India’s relations with the neighbouring countries both at bilateral and multilateral levels have been cooperative and cordial, it had positive and favourable impact on security architecture of the northeast region. The recent developments in the northeast region particularly talks between Government of India and United Liberation Front of Asom (ULFA) prove this point.

The study further establishes the geo-strategic importance of the northeast region for the success of India’s foreign policy towards South Asia, East Asia and Southeast Asia. India’s foreign policy approaches such as good neighbourliness through SAARC, Look East Policy and Bay of Bengal initiatives cannot take off and succeed without a conducive and congenial socio-economic and politico-security order in the Northeast India.

The study thus establishes the hypothesis that the course, content and contour of India’s foreign policy towards South Asia would determine the nature of political stability, economic development and security perspectives in the northeast India and Northeast India holds key to success of India’s foreign policy towards the neighbouring countries of South, East and Southeast Asia.

**Suggestions**

As our former Prime Minister Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee had remarked ‘We can change our friends and enemies but not our neighbours’, we have to follow this dictum while framing foreign policy parameters and principles.

Similarly our foreign policy makers should keep the strategic significance and relevance of Northeast India into consideration while building ties with the South, East and Southeast neighbours.
Northeast India should not only be used as serving the political, security, strategic, economic and commercial interests of India but should be treated as the central and equal partner in the pursuit of progress while building relations with the neighbouring countries. Only then a politically stable and economically sustainable Northeast India would emerge ensuring a comprehensive and sustainable security paradigm both within the region and outside.
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