CHAPTER VIII

SCIENTIFIC, EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES
Scientific, educational and cultural relations also do not play less role in maintaining friendly and normal relations. The discussion of these relations has been, therefore, given due importance in this chapter. India and Bangladesh have signed various scientific, educational and cultural agreements. Both the countries have attached great importance to the scientific and technical co-operation on the basis of the principles of respect for sovereignty, territorial integrity, non-interference in internal affairs of each other, equality and mutual benefit.

The history of India's such relations with Bangladesh indeed goes back to the distant past. The study of India's cultural relation with Bangladesh (then East Bengal) in the past was an academic task that had long been overdue. The peoples of both the countries have been acquainted with each other from time immemorial and have lived along the shores of the same sea, the Bay of Bengal, which led to a considerable amount of cultural and commercial exchange.

Culture is the manifestation of the totality of experience of a people, handed down over generation. Like India, Bangladesh is the proud possessor of a rich and ancient cultural heritage. The civilizations of the Aryans, Dravidis, Mauryyas, etc. had contributed the cultural heritages of both the two countries.
Of course, during these periods, these two countries were under the same umbrella. In their social behaviour and community life, centred around places of worship and in the manner of expressing their art forms, these civilisations gave diction to a style and language that we apprehend and appreciate. The exhibits of pre-Aryans culture would certainly give us some glimpses of the past glory of India and Bangladesh (then East Bengal and East Pakistan). 1

As both the countries constituted the former common British-colony from about the middle of the eighteenth century up to the middle of the present century, so India and Bangladesh could share many common ideals and aspirations. Both belong to the so-called Third World. We face similar problems of poverty and social injustices. Both the countries were endeavouring to overcome the handicaps of their colonial past. Our quest for development, especially of rural areas, is similar. Both have to take great strides to catch up with the advancement made in the realms of science and technology. And we have to achieve this while preserving our independence of action and solidarity of objectives. Of course, the nature of exploitation of both the countries are something different. As India got its independence in 1947 as an independent sovereign state, but Bangladesh (then East Pakistan) retained as a part of Pakistan since 1947 up to 1971. And during this period the West Pakistanis from all sides had exploited the East Pakistanis.

1. New Dimensions of India’s Foreign Policy, A.B. Vajpayee, pp. 218-219.
So, the people of the East Bengal have the bitter experience of exploitation for a long period.

India established diplomatic ties with Bangladesh in the very year of her emerging as an independent sovereign state and the two countries had developed contacts on political, cultural, scientific and commercial planes in an attempt to strengthen further the friendly and cordial relations between them.

A broad framework has been planned developing cooperation between the two countries in political, economic and cultural fields. In the cultural field, the two countries have consolidated and expanded cooperation between them in scientific, educational and technological fields; and in particular, to promote the further development of ties and contacts between them in the field of science, art, literature, education, public health, press, radio, television, cinema, tourism and sports.

Bangladesh and India have agreed in principle to cooperate in accomplishing the tasks in the field of flood control, irrigation and power development in the Ganga-Brahmaputra basin to the mutual advantage of the two countries. This was decided after the talks of Mr. B.M. Abbas, the then Adviser to the Prime Minister of Bangladesh and the then Indian Minister for Power and Irrigation, Mr. K.L. Rao and other officials. This showed how just after liberation of Bangladesh both the countries came closer to chalk out projects of mutual and prospective advantages.

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The 25-year Treaty of Friendship, Co-operation and Peace between the two countries was signed in Dacca on 19 March, 1972. The signatories of the treaty were late two Prime Ministers of both the countries, Indira Gandhi and Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. This treaty was another bond of relation between the two countries. And on the same day a Joint Declaration of the Prime Ministers of India and Bangladesh was released on 19 March, 1972 at Dacca.

Art. 5 of the treaty of Friendship, Co-operation and Peace says, "the high contracting parties shall continue to strengthen and widen their mutually advantageous and all round co-operation in the economic, scientific and technical fields. The two countries shall develop mutual co-operation in the field of trade, transport and communications between them on the basis of the principles of equality, mutual benefit and the most favoured nation principle". Art. 6 says, "high contracting parties further agree to make joint studies and take joint action in the field of flood-control, river basin development and the development of hydro-electric power and irrigation." And Art. 7 reads, "the high contracting parties shall promote relations in the field of art, literature, education, culture, sports and health."¹

After several rounds of discussions regarding the various aspects, the two Prime Ministers released a joint declaration which touched upon various aspects of their relation.

The joint declaration agreed that the officials of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Defence, Planning Commissions dealing with economic, commercial, cultural and technical affairs of the two Governments should meet at least once every six months.\(^1\) And to carry out a comprehensive survey of the river system shared by the two countries in the field of flood-control, a JRC (Joint River Commission) would be set up comprising of experts of both the countries. Experts of the two countries were directed to formulate detailed proposals on advance flood-warnings, flood forecasting, study of flood-control and irrigation projects on the major river systems and to examine the feasibility of linking the power grids of Bangladesh with the adjoining areas of India, from which both the countries would be benefited.\(^2\)

Keeping in view the important role that science and technology play in accelerating economic and social development, the experts and officials of the two Governments would consult and exchange information on:

1. Peaceful uses of nuclear energy,
2. Technological and scientific research for industrial development,
3. Utilization of future space research for communication purposes.

Besides, conscious of the close historical and cultural affinities between the peoples of India and Bangladesh, concrete steps have been taken by the appropriate agencies of the two

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governments to strengthen cultural relations between the two countries. Again in this joint declaration, a proposal was accepted to undertake immediate discussions for the signing of a bilateral agreement on cultural, scientific and technological co-operation.  

To promote science and technology, both the countries co-operated with each other. On June 10, 1972, India and Bangladesh agreed in New Delhi to co-operate in the peaceful uses of atomic energy and space research. The agreement was reached at a meeting between the Education Ministers of the two countries. A press release stated that India would share experience in educational planning, re-organisation and reconstruction with Bangladesh who proposed to set up a commission for remoulding her system of education. On 5 December, 1972, India and Bangladesh issued a joint communique expressing their confidence that the two countries would continue to co-operate in the near future.

On January, 1973, India and Bangladesh established a Joint Power Board to maintain co-ordination between the two countries for the most effective use of their power systems and energy resources. On August 27, 1973, India and Bangladesh had signed a five-year agreement in Dacca on co-operation on peaceful uses of atomic energy and scientific research. The concluded agreement provided for exchange of information between the two countries on atomic research and literature published by the two Energy Commissions. Scientists of both the countries would get research and training facilities in Atomic research laboratories.


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The year 1973 did not end merely with the expression of fine sentiments. Some concrete steps were taken to cement the bonds of friendship. The two countries moved on the path of progress and prosperity, the then Bangladesh High Commissioner in India, Dr. A.R. Mallick, told this in a get-together arranged by the Indo-Bangladesh Youth Association, in New Delhi.

He praised the organisers of the Indo-Bangladesh Youth Association for their work under the guidance of its President Mr. Shyamasundar Mohapatra, in bringing the younger generations of India and Bangladesh together.

During the liberation war, the Pakistani armies damaged the educational institutions. The destruction caused to the education sector was estimated at Taka 135 crores. So, a number of organisations from foreign countries came forward to help rehabilitate the education sector. The Bangladesh Sahayak Samiti of Calcutta University donated Taka 50,000 to help the students who served in the 'Mukti Bahini'.

The Bangladesh Sahayak Samiti in India donated through the Indian High Commission in Bangladesh, Taka 27 Lakhs for procurement of science and laboratory equipments. Science equipments worth Taka 15 Lakhs reached Bangladesh and these science equipments were distributed by the Bangladesh Government to 200 non-government colleges.

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With the aid of India, the education system of Bangladesh was rehabilitated as early as possible. The two Governments tried to explore all possible avenues for exchanging power resources for the benefit of the two countries. For that purpose, a two-day meeting of Indo-Bangladesh joint power coordination board concluded its deliberation on 29 December, 1973, and decided to set up a two joint-working groups to prepare the feasibility report for exchanging power-resources between the two countries. Moreover, the two countries already decided in principle to exchange electricity power supplies to their rural areas. This showed how the two countries had collaborated for their power supplies. India believed that an effective way of achieving peaceful and friendly co-operation was through economic and commercial co-operation and technical collaboration. In pursuance of this principle, India undertook a number of initiatives to establish economic and technical collaboration/co-operation with Bangladesh. Of course, India's collaboration was not only with Bangladesh but also with many other developing countries of the world. India also evinced interest in the activities of international organisations like the Colombo Plan, Economic Commission for Asia and Far East (ECAFE) and Special Commonwealth African Assistance Plan (SCAFF).

The visit of the then Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Mujibur Rahman to India from 12-16 May, 1974, showed another bend of their relations. During this visit the two Prime Ministers reviewed the commercial relations and economic and technical co-operation between the two countries. Again the then Indian
Late V.V. Giri arrived Daqpa on 15 June, 1974 with a five day tour. For economic and social progress Giri said, "India and Bangladesh have established areas of co-operation and shared institution. Our co-operative endeavours in the sphere of development, commerce, transport and communications, cultural exchange, science and technology, have made a good beginning." He said, that India was happy at this co-operation because the people of India were convinced that it was for the benefit of both the peoples of India and Bangladesh. India's assistance in the field of science technology and industry to Bangladesh was admirable which aimed at securing economic and social justice in conformity with the ideals of democracy.

To foster mutual understanding and co-operation, the two countries signed a Cultural Agreement on 27 September, 1974, for two years outlining a comprehensive exchange programme between the two countries in the fields of education, culture, information and sports. Under the protocol, both the countries have agreed to exchange books, visits by cultural troops and sports men, academicians, professors between the two countries. It also envisaged exchange of exhibition of books, paintings and other art objects. The Government of India had offered 100 scholarships and fellowships for Bangladesh nationals every year, for higher studies and research in India. India agreed to send eminent musicians and Choreographers for short terms to train Bangladesh students in classical music and dance.

1. (a) India and Foreign Review, 1 July, 1974, P. 5;
   (b) Bangladesh News, 1 December, 1974.

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The two countries agreed to encourage collaboration between the learned societies, universities and research institutions to promote closer cooperation. Both countries agreed to participate in film festivals held in each other's country.

Bangladesh also offered scholarships for Indian nationals in specific fields.

For elaborate discussions, the cultural-relation could be divided into the following:

(a) Art and culture, (b) Science and Higher Education, (c) Education, (d) Information and Press, (e) Radio and Television, (f) Physical Education, (g) Financial Terms and (h) General provisions.

Regarding the point (h) it would be mentioned here that the two sides would inform each other state's working programme; foreign language knowledge and subjects of lectures to be given by members of each group provided by the two countries.

As a bond of cultural-ties, Bangladesh had participated in the International Film Festival held in New Delhi from December 30, 1974 to January 12, 1975. A three-member delegation, led by Managing Director of Film Development Corporation of Bangladesh, Mr. S.N. Hasim, came to Delhi in connection with the festival. Other members of the team were actor and director Hasan Imam and film star Bobita.1

Again, paintings of twenty Bangladeshi artists were exhibited at the World Art Exhibition, organised by the Lalitkala Acadami in New Delhi. Twenty-seven paintings of these artists representing a broad spectrum of the art movement in Bangladesh were on exhibition. Annual Islam, a leading painter of Bangladesh, attended the inauguration of the Triennale. Moreover, under the auspices of Bangladesh High Commission in New Delhi, two one-act plays were staged at the Gandhi Memorial Hall on 14 February, 1975. 21 February was regarded as the "Martyr Day" in Bangladesh for those who gave their lives for their language and culture. People of India also observed this "Martyr Day" in different parts of India to pay homage to the martyrs of Bangladesh who gave their lives for their language and culture. On this occasion, cultural programmes and seminars were organised. Bangladesh artists Mr. Sohrab Hussain, Mrs. Arati Dhar and Mrs. Niva Hamid presented Nasrul songs, folk-songs and Tagore songs. A cultural organisation, Bichitra, organised a function on 21 February to observe the day. Again, under the auspices of All India Indo-Bangladesh Youth Association, a function was held in Delhi on 22 February, 1975. Bangladesh artists had also participated at a function in Bombay on 23 February, 1975, which was organised by Indo-Bangladesh Friendship Society.


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On August 5, 1975, India agreed to collaborate with Bangladesh in setting up the first atomic reactor for Bangladesh, which would be completed in about three years.

After the assassination of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman on August 15, 1975, there continued a trickle of refugees from Bangladesh into India. These included not only minorities and political supporters of Sheikh Mujib, but also writers, journalists, poets, etc. who protested against Bangladesh regime.

However, during Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's era, Indo-Bangladesh cooperation in trade, scientific, cultural and educational fields was in high spirit.

Of course, the new Bangladesh Government had reiterated its desire to maintain relationship of friendship and cooperation in trade, scientific, cultural and educational fields with India. But the political atmosphere in Bangladesh was not favourable in the new situation. Another coup on November 3, 1975 overthrew the old regime of Khandakar Mushtaque Ahmed. And on 6 November, 1975, Justice A.S.M. Sayem took over as President of Bangladesh. This new Government of Bangladesh also conveyed its desire to maintain friendly relations with India. A two-member high-level delegation from Bangladesh consisting of Justice Abdul Sattar(leader) and F.S. Tabarek Hossain arrived in New Delhi on 5 December, 1975 to discuss further development of relations between the two countries.

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After the talk, a joint statement was issued in which India reaffirmed her policy of friendship and cooperation between the two countries. The Bangladesh side reaffirmed her government's desire to maintain and strengthen the traditional ties of friendship and cooperation between the two countries.  

However, from August, 1975 onwards, the internal situation of Bangladesh on political, economic, social and cultural fronts presents a gloomy picture. After the August 1975 turmoil, anti-Indian propaganda started in Bangladesh. The Bangladesh press played a major role in this regard. But the Bangladesh Government did not take any concrete steps to check the anti-Indian propaganda started by the press and other agencies. Even after the December talk between the two countries, anti-Indian propaganda continued.

Informal relations in educational field has had its roots in history. There are various reasons of their common bonds in educational field. As for example, the Bengali language is common to the whole area comprised by the Indian state of West Bengal and Bangladesh. In terms of literature, there is strong sense of solidarity between West Bengal of India and East Bengal (now Bangladesh). Many of the Bengali writers who have established themselves in Calcutta have their roots in Bangladesh. So, there existed educational as well as cultural ties between India and Bangladesh from the past. There is a similar emotional and cultural convergence in such realms as music, fine art, etc. This means that both parts of Bengal share an identity, an identity which also differentiates them from other regions of the sub-continent.

Ethnically, Bangladesh is quite homogeneous, since 98 per cent of the people are Bengalees and speak the same language.

The long record of peaceful contact, cultural interaction and spiritual communion between the peoples of Bangladesh and India, form a golden chapter in the history of this region. The people of India have shared through centuries a common cultural heritage which has served as the corner-stone of their national ethos and has left deep imprints on their national personalities. These bonds are real and living to-day and are reflected in the outlook to the life of Indian people, in their philosophy, and in their approach to international issues. This heritage has been retained by the people of India and Bangladesh despite the political, cultural and psychological impact of the forces of colonialism.

Both the countries have emerged out of the colonial era with their own national personalities. Both the countries have made their efforts to have optimum use of their own natural resources by harnessing modern science and technology. The two countries not only share the same geographical region but also have close-relevance in ethos and national experience.

In December 1972, India and Bangladesh signed a Cultural Co-operation Agreement.

Since then, two such protocols—each effective for two years—were signed up to 1974. But some sort of a state of "low profile" prevailed in the sphere of cultural relations between the two countries since 1976. Mutual exchanges in cultural sphere were carried out on adhoc basis.

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The visit of the Bangladesh President Ziaur Rahman on 19 December, 1977 to India was supposed to strengthen the relations between India and Bangladesh. He had two rounds of talk with Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi which covered "wide ranging aspects of various bilateral and regional matters" of mutual interest and concern. Accordingly, the two countries would continue to co-operate at various international forums. The Statesman wrote that President Rahman's visit would "lay a genuine desire to restore the rapport that once existed between the two countries."\(^1\)

India and Bangladesh had set up a South Asian Forum for regional co-operation and to intensify efforts for greater collaboration in economic, commercial, scientific and technological fields. The visit of Indian Prime Minister Mr. Desai in the month of April, 1979 to Bangladesh, stressed the need to increase and diversify bilateral trade and had decided to improve infrastructural facilities and co-operate more closely in education, culture, information and science and technology with particular development to the Solar energy.\(^2\) As close-neighbours, there was much scope for increased co-operation in these fields. Both sides explained the difficulties they faced and it was agreed that efforts should be intensified to find a mutually acceptable solution as early as possible. India and Bangladesh also signed a programme of cultural and academic exchanges shortly between the two countries.

\(^1\) The Statesman (ed.), "Investing in good will", 24 December, 1977;
\(^2\) Foreign Affairs Record, Vol. XXV, No. 4, April, 1979, pp.78-79
India and Bangladesh had signed in Dacca in 1988, a cultural protocol for regular exchange of mutual ideas in science, education and other fields of social activity. During past few years, prominent Indian intellectuals, politicians, musicians and dancers have visited Bangladesh from time to time. These visits have been reciprocated by distinguished Indian leaders and intellectuals and scholars. The Bangladeshis pay regard to our poet Rabindranath Tagore. At a time, Rabindranath Tagore was inspired by the beautiful scenery of East Bengal (now Bangladesh). Similarly poets, philosophers and artists of Bangladesh, who have won world-wide acclaim for their thoughtful and sensitive interpretations of human life and its problems, are known and respected in our country, particularly in music and literary circles. As a sign of interest that we have in our cultures, some cultural organisations have been organised. And by establishing cultural organisations by both these countries, we can pave the way for greater cultural co-operation and exchanges and further strengthening of the friendly relations between the two countries.

Bangladesh scholars have taken deep interest in India's History and culture. This interest in Indology is not new. Manuscripts of original works in Sanskrit were studied by Bangladesh scholars from the very olden times. The distinguished scholars and poets of India were respected equally in Bangladesh also with their own scholars and poets.1

1. New Dimensions of India's Foreign Policy; Author - A.B. Vajpayee, pp. 223-223.
As Bangladesh stands at the middle of West Bengal and north-eastern region of Indian sub-continent, so the streams of history flowing across the faces of this newly independent state of Bangladesh. Not only Bangladesh but also India represents a synthesis of cultures. Although we do not stand at the crossroads of continents, the genius of India has been assimilated.

Culture and standards of social well-being of India have influenced Bangladesh and Indian thought and civilisation have gradually percolated to the remotest corners of Bangladesh. Moreover, it has been mentioned in the previous pages that the culture of West Bengal of India intermingled with that of Bangladesh as their spoken language is Bengali.

Bangladesh can be regarded as the home of many antiquities. Even now the valley of Bangladesh was never regarded as outside India's sphere of influence; all forces, cultural or political, seem to have affected it. Dacca, the present capital of Bangladesh did not stand in strict isolation and in every period of history, it has intimate relations with India. This was because of geographical proximity and cultural affinities of India with Bangladesh.

\(^1\) New Dimensions of India's Foreign Policy, Author A.B. Vajpayee.
GLIMPSES OF ANCIENT AND MEDIAEVAL INDIAN LITERATURE IN BANGLADESH LITERATURE.

There are certain factors which have closely connected ancient and mediaeval India with Bangladesh (former East Bengal) literature. These are - (1) Geography, (2) Religion and Philosophy, (3) People and Society, (4) Political Structure.

Once upon a time, present West Pakistan and Bangladesh were under the same ruler for a long time. Later, the British Government ruled the whole of Indian sub-continent nearly for two hundred years as their colony. Truly speaking, there was no natural boundaries between the two countries. Especially, present Bangladesh was composed of East Bengal and Sylhet District of Assam. The same climate, soil, rivers, ports, islands, flora and fauna, etc. have intermingled in both the countries and enriched Bangladesh literature. Moreover, they were freely exchanging their commercial goods. Religion and Philosophy also did not play less importance in Bangladesh literature. The people of the north-eastern part of India intermingled with the people of Bangladesh in their language, culture, tradition, personal habit, food-habit, etc. Therefore, both the countries have shared many common ideals and aspirations on marriage, conjugal relations, science and art, administration, political ideology and philosophy and so forth.

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EDUCATIONAL CO-OPERATION:

The Government of India appointed the University Education Commission in 1948, under the Chairmanship of S. Radhakrishnan. Acting on the recommendations of this Commission, a University Grant Commission was constituted in 1953, and it was given an autonomous statutory status in 1956, by an Act of Parliament. The Government of India laid much emphasis on scientific and technical education. The Scientific Policy Resolution of the Government as placed before the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha on 13 March, 1958, recognised that the "dominant feature of the contemporary world is the intense cultivation of science on a large scale and its application to meet a country's requirement." Advancement of science and technology went on hand in hand. While an All-India Council for Technical Education was set up in 1946, scientific research under the state auspices has been mainly placed under the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), and the various national and regional laboratories or institutes set up under its control.¹

India's cultural heritage is such that she has much to offer Post graduate students from overseas who wish to study archeology, language and the humanities.²

². Ibid, p. 283.
SCIENTIFIC CO-OPERATION:

As regards scientific co-operation, the two countries have agreed to co-operate in the peaceful uses of atomic energy and space research on 10 June, 1972 in New Delhi. Again on 27 August, 1973, a treaty was signed between the two countries on atomic research and literature published by the two Atomic Energy Commission. Scientists of both the countries would get research and training facilities in atomic research laboratories in either country. And again after the visit of then Indian Prime Minister Morarji Desai, the two countries with other sides also agreed to establish joint ventures and co-operation in the field of science and technology with particular reference to the development of solar energy. In addition to the scientific collaboration between the two countries, encouragement for greater cooperation between Radio and T.V. organisations in each other's country has also been given. Both sides agreed to exchange programmes on cultural and scientific spheres which facilitated both the countries.

On August 5, 1975, India agreed to collaborate with Bangladesh in setting up the first atomic reactor for Bangladesh. Such a venture clearly indicated India's willingness to co-operate in the field of science and technology with Bangladesh.

Again an atomic energy research complex had been set up at a cost of more than Taka 350 million (35.7 crore) at Savar, 2.5 miles from Dacca. The proposed complex would have 10 advanced research institutes and centres with modern laboratory, library and other facilities to help optimum and peaceful utilisation

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of nuclear energy in Bangladesh. The complex would have a nuclear reactor for which a model was prepared by Bangladesh Scientists and technologists. The reactor would enable the complex to produce radioisotopes for use in agriculture and industries. The complex would also be capable of producing sophisticated electronic equipments.  

The Government of India’s programme of cultural activities in relation to foreign countries covered a wide field, the aim being to make India’s cultural heritage known to people of other countries, to develop a close understanding.

After independence in 1947, India gave necessary attention to cultural activities in general and relations with foreign countries in particular. Same was the case in Bangladesh also. Since the emergence of Bangladesh as an independent sovereign state in 1971, she has developed formal relations with some other countries of the world. As a close-neighbour, Bangladesh has established cultural-relations with India with whom she has already shared a common cultural heritage.

However, there are certain ways which cement the cultural relation between the countries. These are: (i) Exhibition of paintings and photographs in foreign countries, (ii) Visits of dancers and musicians abroad and similar visit by foreign artists to that particular country, (iii) Exchange of cultural delegations; and (iv) Award of scholarships to foreign students to study in their country.


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It is happy to note that all these ways have been adopted to develop cultural relations between India and Bangladesh, For the expansion of cultural activities with the foreign countries, External Relations Division was established in the Ministry of Scientific Research and Cultural Affairs which dealt with both the plan and implement the cultural activities programmes of the Government of India with foreign countries in collaborations with the Ministry of External Affairs.

Again at the unofficial level, The cultural activities programme is mainly the responsibility of the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) which was established in 1949, as an autonomous body, and was entirely financed by the Government of India. Further, as a member of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), the Government of India participates in the various programmes and activities of this organisation and thereby contributes her share to the promotion of the objects and purposes of UNESCO. The Indian National Commission for co-operation with UNESCO acts in an advisory capacity to the Government of India in matters relating relating to UNESCO.1

1. (a) A Reference Annual 1958, pp. 119 - 120;
(b) Thesis : Indo-British Relation 1950-1960, Dr. D.P. Sarooah.

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However, like India, Bangladesh also has rendered tremendous services to the cause of fruitful cultural exchanges between the two countries. The Government of Bangladesh decided to preserve information, statements, speeches, dramas, songs and commentaries broadcast over the Swadhin Bangla Betar Kendra (Independent Bangla Radio Centre) during the liberation war at the Dacca Museum. Thus, after liberation, the Government of Bangladesh gave much importance in the cultural field also.

Shahabuddin, a young artist of Bangladesh, was awarded the first prize for his paintings, "My Funeral" at the art exhibition which was held in Paris where 26 artists of Europe and Asia participated. This showed, how the Bangladeshi artist earned fame in art.

Distinguished Indian scholar-poet Rabindranath Tagore had left favourable impression on the minds of the people of East Bengal (now Bangladesh). They honour the great songs "Robindra Sangeet" and the Bangladeshi artists sing nicely and there is broadcast of "Robindra Sangeet" in the Bangladesh Radio Centre. Of course, the Indian artists also like to sing the "Nazrul-Geet" and All India Radio takes interest in this programme also.

The mother-tongue of Bangladeshis, Bengali is well-known to the people of north-eastern part of India. Bangladeshis also understand the language of north-eastern India. The petty Indian traders in the border areas come to contacts with Bangladesh traders in day-to-day life. Such contacts, though not legal, have also promoted a kind of social relation.

2. Ibid.
However, the first five years of independent Bangladesh (from 1971 up to 1975 August) evinced very cordial relations between the two countries in all aspects. During that period, both the Prime Ministers had mutual visits to their countries as a means of cordial relations. But this cordiality did not last long. During former President, Ziaur Rahman era in Bangladesh, the relations between the two countries were gradually strained specially in relation to some issues. It was natural because of changed attitude and policy of the new regime of President Zia-ur-Rahman.

Under the circumstances, the relations between the two countries could not be smooth and easy going. Following the Indo-Bangladesh Treaty of Co-operation, Friendship and Peace, 19 March, 1972, the two countries no doubt established mutually beneficial co-operation between them. The two countries pursued a cultural policy which ensured, in a regular fashion, give and take through exchange of students, scholars and teachers between the two countries.

In the scientific field, by reducing the disparities between the two countries, we can adopt a global approach to the exploitation of natural resources with the help of science and technology in the common interest of all mankind. After that then Indian Prime Minister, Morarji Desai's visit to Dacca, a number of Bangladesh experts have come to India and had fruitful discussions with their counterparts on such important matters as - oil and gas, coal, ferrous and non-ferrous metallurgy, irrigation, etc. The agreement on 27 September, 1974, in the fields of education, culture, information and sports has provided a valuable framework to co-ordinate activities and efforts. The Indo-Bangladesh joint Co-operation would also provide a sound basis for the Development of our co-operative relations in the spheres of economy, science and technology.