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| Research Director-3 (In Charge) | 88-02-9347984      | salahuddinahmed@biiss.org |

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1/46, Old Elephant Road, Eskaton, Dhaka-1000, Bangladesh  
Phone : (880-2) PABX: 9353808, 9336287, 8315808, Ext. 136  
Fax : 8312625, e-mail: [po@biiss.org](mailto:po@biiss.org), website: [www.biiss.org](http://www.biiss.org)

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*Mahfuz Kabir***FOUR DECADES OF BANGLADESH-SOUTH KOREA RELATIONS:  
ECONOMIC DIMENSIONS****Abstract**

South Korea has been a significant trading and development partner of Bangladesh for quite long time. This year both the countries are celebrating the fortieth anniversary of their bilateral relations. Bangladesh imports considerable volume of raw materials and intermediate goods along with capital and consumer items from South Korea. Currently, Bangladesh is getting significant amount of development assistance, and investment from the country. This paper analyses the economic aspects of bilateral relations, viz. commodity-specific trade, investment from South Korea by sector, and trend and salient features of official development assistance by category from Bangladesh perspective. The paper reveals that there is a substantial unrealised potential of export to South Korea, which should be tapped through institutional measures but sensitive sectors like textiles and apparels should be kept aside to derive desired benefits from bilateral free trade area. There is also scope for Bangladesh to attract South Korean grants for financing development projects and strengthen cooperation in industrial development, science and technology, and human resource development.

**1. Introduction**

The Republic of Korea, popularly known as South Korea, is a trusted friend and development partner of Bangladesh for long. This year both the countries are celebrating the anniversary of their diplomatic relations of four decades. South Korea extended significant cooperation and support to Bangladesh since early-1970s. A strong development partner of Bangladesh, South Korea opened its embassy in Dhaka in early-1975, more than a year after the establishment of the diplomatic relations in 1973. Bangladesh-South Korea cooperation covers a wide range of areas that include, among others, trade, investment, infrastructure development, human resource development, and science and technology. It has emerged to be an important potential destination of manpower export of Bangladesh.

This paper intends to analyse the economic dimensions of Bangladesh-South Korea relations of the last four decades and suggests way forward for strengthening the economic relations drawing lessons from the past. In doing so, the paper has been organised as follows. After this brief prelude, section 2 describes the country characteristics including major aspects in the economic arena. Section 3 analyses

**Mahfuz Kabir**, PhD is Senior Research Fellow at Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies (BISS), Dhaka. His e-mail address is: mahfuzkabir@yahoo.com

the performance of trade and investment with special focus on commodity-specific bilateral trade and Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) from South Korea. Section 4 presents the other areas of bilateral economic relations that mostly cover development assistance from South Korea. The untapped trade potential has been discussed in section 5 while policy recommendations for strengthening bilateral economic relations have been suggested in section 6. Finally, concluding remarks have been made.

## 2. Major Economic Aspects

Bangladesh is amongst the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) that performed impressively over the last two decades through remarkable economic growth, reducing poverty (head count ratio of about 58 per cent to 31.5 per cent) and achieving significant progress in socio-economic indicators. It was also successful in overcoming 'Malthusian catastrophe' literally over the last four decades as its population doubled while food production tripled, attaining near self-reliance in food production.<sup>1</sup> It is now aiming to become 'middle income' country by 2021 according to 'Vision 2021' of the present government through attaining double-digit growth and considerable progress in economic and social sectors.<sup>2</sup>

Bangladesh has undergone substantial changes in economic policies in the 1980s and 1990s and experienced an increased degree of integration with the global economy.<sup>3</sup> Still, the country is characterised by one of the least liberal trade policy regimes in the world in terms of Trade Tariff Restrictiveness Index (TTRI), leading to low trade integration amongst regional countries. The recent Most Favoured Nation (MFN) simple applied average tariff is high. The tariff overhang is very high, which demonstrates its reluctance to bind the trade policy regime at rates close to the MFN applied rates. The non-tariff measures frequency ratio is higher than that of Bhutan and Thailand, but much lower than that of India. The country's governance indicators are generally poor.

Textile and clothing industry is a crucial part of Bangladesh's manufacturing sector and contributes most of the export earning of the country. The Readymade Garments (RMG) industry of the country alone comprised of 4 per cent of the gross

<sup>1</sup> M. Kabir and R. Salim, "Bangladesh: Market Overview", in *Encyclopaedia of Emerging Markets*, New York: Gale Publishing (forthcoming), 2013.

<sup>2</sup> General Economics Division, *Outline Perspective Plan of Bangladesh 2010-2021: Making Vision 2021 a Reality*, Dhaka : Ministry of Planning, Government of Bangladesh, 2010.

<sup>3</sup> See, for example, R. Salim, "Economic Liberalization and Productivity Growth: Further Evidence from Bangladesh", *Oxford Development Studies*, Vol. 31, No. 1, 2003, pp. 85-98; R. Jenkins and K. Sen, "International Trade and Manufacturing Employment in the South: Four Country Case Studies", *Oxford Development Studies*, Vol. 34, No. 3, 2006, pp. 299-322; and M. Kabir, *Trade Response to Preferential Liberalization: Evidence from Some Emerging Asian Countries*, Germany: Lambert Academic Publishing, 2010.

domestic product (GDP) of the economy back in 1991-92 which increased over the last two decades by a spectacular 11 percentage points and currently stands at 13 per cent of the GDP. Export earnings from this sector increased from 59 to 77 per cent during this period.<sup>4</sup>

**Table 1: Major Trade and Economic Indicators<sup>5</sup>**

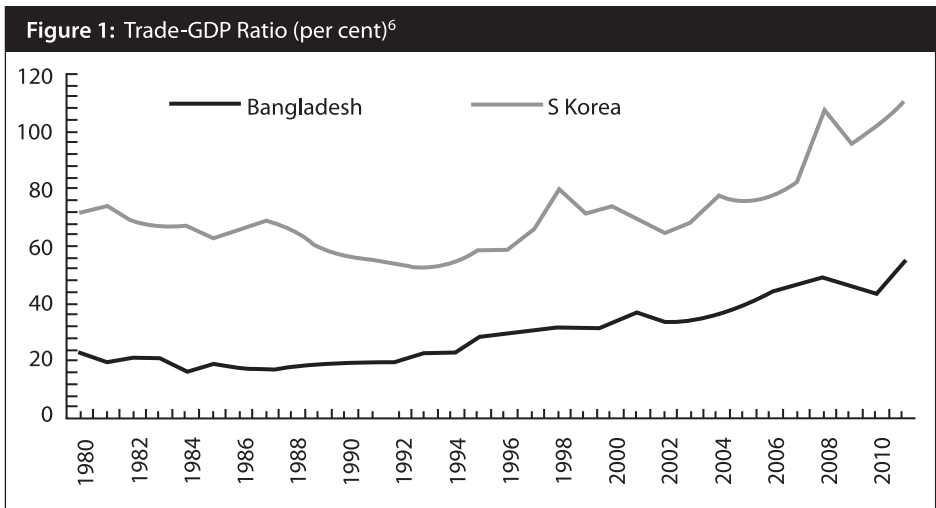
| Indicators  | Bangladesh | South Korea |
|---|------------|-------------|
| GDP (nominal, billion US\$)*                            | 114        | 1,116       |
| GDP per capita (nominal, US\$)*                         | 701        | 22,424      |
| Share in world trade (%)                                | 0.11       | 2.67        |
| Trade per capita (US\$)*                                | 352        | 24,727      |
| Trade policy rank (out of 125)                          | 97         | 83          |
| External environment rank (out of 125)                  | 72         | 109         |
| Institutional environment rank (out of 183)             | 119        | 19          |
| Trade facilitation rank (out of 155)                    | 79         | 23          |
| Trade outcome rank (out of 157)                         | 23         | 91          |
| Tariff Trade Restrictiveness Index (MFN applied tariff) | 11.3       | 8.2         |
| MFN applied tariff-simple average (%)                   | 14.8       | 12.2        |
| Applied tariff-trade weighted average (%)               | 13.6       | 7.1         |
| Import duties (% of imports)                            | 15.7**     | 2.0         |
| Tariff overhang (MFN bound minus MFN applied rate, %)   | 153.3      | 4.4         |
| Anti-dumping initiations                                | 0.0        | 5.0         |
| MFN zero-duty exports (% of total exports)              | 7.9        | 45.6        |

\* 2011, \*\* 2001-04, and the rest indicators are based on 2008 data.

From almost similar socio-economic performance back in early 1960s, South Korea has emerged as an 'Asian Tiger' in early 1990s, in just three decades. It speaks volume about the country's developmental ambition to become East Asian economic powerhouse. Its GDP crossed US\$1trillion in 2011 with a per capita GDP of US\$22,424. It entered the elite club, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in 1996. It is amongst the countries highly integrated with the world economy, with per capita trade of US\$24,727.

<sup>4</sup> Bangladesh Bank, available at <http://www.bangladesh-bank.org>, accessed on 02 December 2012.

<sup>5</sup> Based on World Development Indicators and World Trade Indicators 2009/10, available at <http://www.worldbank.org>, accessed on 16 February 2013.



After the East Asian crisis, trade of South Korea has opened up further to world trade. Despite many liberalisation measures, some protectionism still continues to protect domestic industries. The country's MFN TTRI for overall trade has somewhat decreased in the past few years to 8.2 per cent. South Korea's protection level is higher than the 3.7 per cent average TTRI (all goods) for high-income countries while it is 3.9 per cent among OECD high-income countries. The simple average of the MFN applied tariff rate now stands at 12.2 per cent, which is above the 5.7 per cent average tariff of its income group counterparts, while it is very close to that of Bangladesh. During the 1995-2008 period, Korea emerged to be the 9<sup>th</sup> most frequent initiator of anti-dumping investigations (108) in the world. The MFN zero-duty export was 45.6 per cent of total exports in 2008, which was only 7.9 per cent in Bangladesh. It clearly helped South Korea to become highly integrated with regional as well as world economy.

Given the overall economic performance, trade regime and integration with the world economy of the two countries, the next section describes bilateral relations in key economic areas.

### 3. Trade, Investment and Manpower Export

#### 3.1 *Bilateral Trade*

Bangladesh-South Korea bilateral trade has reached US\$1.76 billion in 2011-12. From a meagre US\$22.86 million in 2005, exports to South Korea became US\$209.7 million in 2011-12, which implies 136 per cent growth per year. In terms of volume,

<sup>6</sup> Based on World Development Indicators, *op.cit.*

imports also increased considerably by the same period from US\$446 million into as high as US\$1,551 million, with the annual average growth rate of 41 per cent.

The bilateral trade as the share of total trade with the world shows a growing trend. It was 6.82 per cent in 2000, which reached 9.44 per cent in 2011-12. It indicates that the Bangladesh economy is becoming gradually more integrated with the South Korean economy. Moreover, Bangladesh is increasingly opting for South Korea as its major import source.

**Table 2: Bangladesh's Trade with South Korea (Million US\$)<sup>7</sup>**

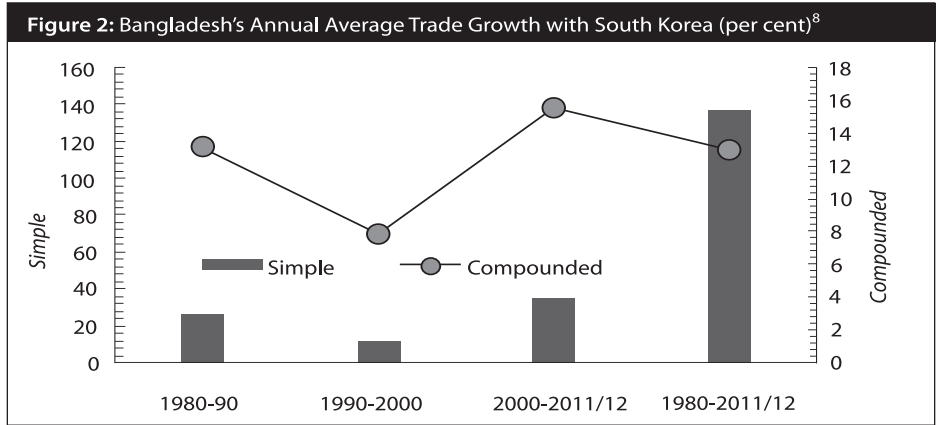
|                       | 1980     | 1990     | 2000      | 2005      | 2011-12   |
|-----------------------|----------|----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Exports               | 10.44    | 1.18     | 11.53     | 22.86     | 209.71    |
| Imports               | 30.16    | 156.06   | 347.78    | 446.16    | 1,550.70  |
| Total                 | 40.6     | 157.24   | 359.31    | 469.02    | 1,760.41  |
| Export to the World   | 790.22   | 1,670.50 | 5,589.58  | 8,494.40  | 24,210.70 |
| Import from the World | 2,610.56 | 3,656.09 | 9,000.78  | 13,850.90 | 31,329.40 |
| Trade with World      | 3,400.78 | 5,326.59 | 14,590.36 | 22,345.30 | 55,540.10 |
| % of Total Trade      | 1.87     | 3.6      | 6.82      | 9.26      | 9.44      |
| Trade Deficit         | -19.72   | -154.88  | -336.25   | -423.3    | -1,340.99 |

While annual average trade growth rates provide fluctuating figures, the compounded annual growth rates (CAGR) demonstrate much smoothened trend of bilateral trade calculated as follows:

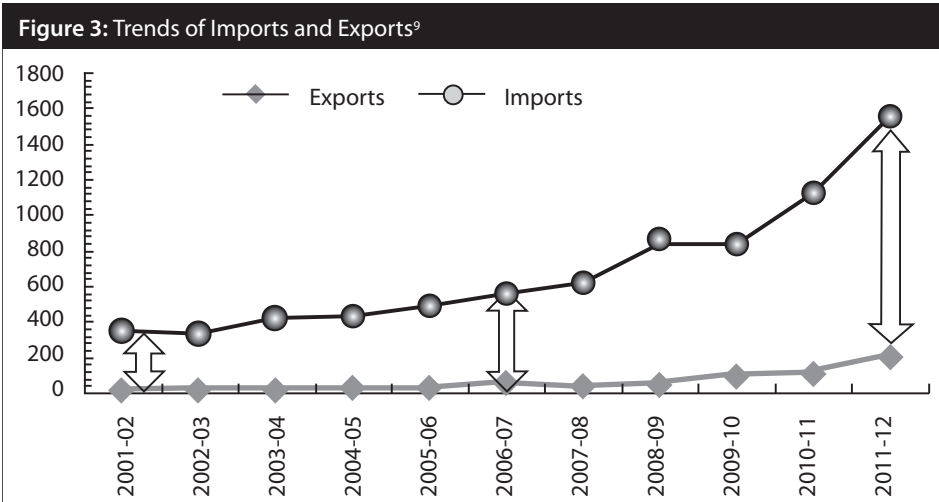
$$CAGR(t_0, t_n) = \left[ \frac{V(t_n)}{V(t_0)} \right]^{\frac{1}{(t_n - t_0)}} - 1 \quad (1)$$

where  $V(t_0)$  = start value,  $V(t_n)$  = end value,  $t_0$  = start year, and  $t_n$  = end year.

<sup>7</sup> Based on the data of International Monetary Fund, *Direction of Trade Statistics*, available at [www.imf.org](http://www.imf.org), accessed on 02 January 2010; Export Promotion Bureau of Bangladesh, *Export Statistics* of 2011-12, Dhaka, 2012; and Bangladesh Bank, *Import Payments* 2011-12, Statistics Department, Dhaka, Bangladesh Bank, 2012a.

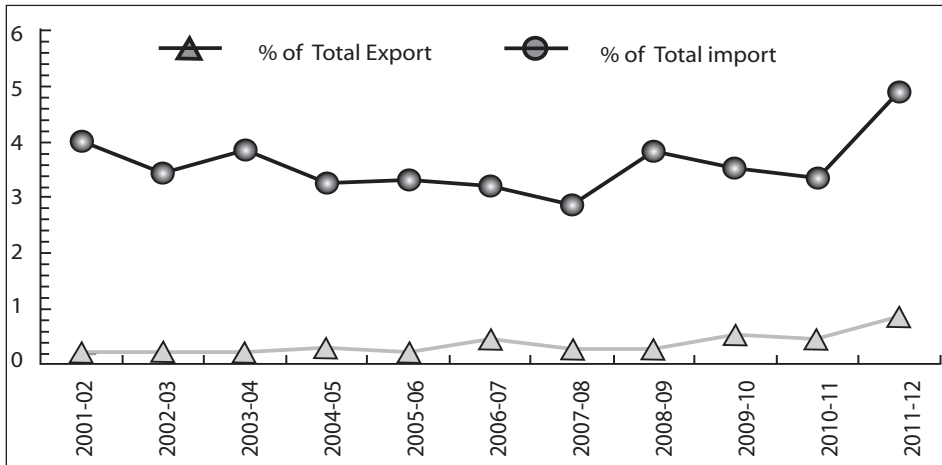


The CAGR figure shows that during the last thirty years or so the bilateral trade grew at 12.9 per cent per annum. However, even though the earlier trend shows higher growth in the period 1980-90, it dampened in 1990-00 period. Conversely, it again demonstrated a steadily increasing growth in 2000s onward even after dampening the volatility of trade (Figure 2).



<sup>8</sup> Ibid.





South Korea occupied the 3<sup>rd</sup> position as import source of Bangladesh in 2011-12, with US\$1,550.7 million. It was the 20<sup>th</sup> export destination in the same year, with US\$209.71 million. However, trade gap has been mounting. Bangladesh also witnessed significant flow of FDI, both 100 per cent and joint venture, which are employment intensive in nature. It is also becoming an important source of remittance albeit of small annual manpower export. Moreover, South Korea provides considerable foreign assistance, which is mostly in terms of loan.

In spite of recent impressive performance, South Korea remains a minor export destination of Bangladesh with only 0.87 per cent of total exports in 2011-12 and less than 0.5 per cent in most of the times (Table 3). In 2011-12, South Korea has superseded many developed countries to become the third highest import source of Bangladesh (around 4.9 per cent of total imports) surpassing Japan, Singapore and Hong Kong. However, the trade gap has been mounting increasingly disfavours Bangladesh given the fact that the country has become unable to bridge this huge trade gap with its short export list.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

| Table 3: Bangladesh's Major Trading Partners by Share in Total Trade (per cent) <sup>10</sup> |       |         |           |        |           |        |            |        |          |        |       |
|---|-------|---------|-----------|--------|-----------|--------|------------|--------|----------|--------|-------|
|   | China | India   | Singapore | Japan  | Hong Kong | Taiwan | S Korea    | USA    | Malaysia | Others | Total |
| IMPORTS   |       |         |           |        |           |        |            |        |          |        |       |
| 2001-02   | 10.28 | 11.93   | 10.20     | 7.67   | 5.16      | 3.65   | 4.05       | 3.06   | 1.70     | 42.30  | 100   |
| 2002-03   | 9.71  | 14.06   | 10.35     | 6.26   | 4.48      | 3.40   | 3.45       | 2.31   | 1.75     | 44.22  | 100   |
| 2003-04   | 10.99 | 14.69   | 8.36      | 5.06   | 3.97      | 3.46   | 3.85       | 2.07   | 2.34     | 45.21  | 100   |
| 2004-05   | 12.49 | 15.44   | 6.75      | 4.25   | 4.30      | 3.34   | 3.24       | 2.50   | 2.10     | 45.58  | 100   |
| 2005-06   | 14.10 | 12.67   | 5.76      | 4.41   | 4.25      | 3.21   | 3.32       | 2.34   | 2.05     | 47.90  | 100   |
| 2006-07   | 14.99 | 13.22   | 6.03      | 4.02   | 4.35      | 2.76   | 3.22       | 2.21   | 1.95     | 47.25  | 100   |
| 2007-08   | 14.50 | 15.69   | 5.89      | 3.85   | 3.80      | 2.21   | 2.87       | 2.27   | 2.09     | 46.85  | 100   |
| 2008-09   | 15.34 | 12.72   | 7.86      | 4.51   | 3.78      | 2.21   | 3.84       | 2.05   | 3.12     | 44.57  | 100   |
| 2009-10   | 16.09 | 13.54   | 6.53      | 4.41   | 3.32      | 2.28   | 3.53       | 1.98   | 5.19     | 43.13  | 100   |
| 2010-11   | 17.58 | 13.57   | 3.84      | 3.89   | 2.31      | 2.17   | 3.34       | 2.01   | 5.23     | 46.05  | 100   |
| 2011-12   | 20.50 | 15.10   | 4.70      | 4.60   | 1.90      | 2.40   | 4.90       | 2.30   | 4.40     | 39.20  | 100   |
| EXPORTS   |       |         |           |        |           |        |            |        |          |        |       |
|   | USA   | Germany | UK        | France | Belgium   | Italy  | Netherland | Canada | S Korea  | Others | Total |
| 2001-02   | 37.07 | 11.38   | 10.82     | 6.91   | 3.53      | 4.38   | 4.73       | 1.84   | 0.22     | 19.12  | 100   |
| 2002-03   | 32.91 | 12.53   | 11.89     | 6.39   | 4.42      | 3.96   | 4.24       | 2.60   | 0.23     | 20.83  | 100   |
| 2003-04   | 25.87 | 17.08   | 11.81     | 7.27   | 4.30      | 4.16   | 3.82       | 3.74   | 0.25     | 21.70  | 100   |
| 2004-05   | 27.87 | 15.64   | 10.90     | 7.24   | 3.76      | 4.27   | 3.37       | 3.87   | 0.30     | 22.78  | 100   |
| 2005-06   | 28.79 | 16.76   | 9.96      | 6.44   | 3.41      | 4.04   | 3.11       | 3.86   | 0.21     | 23.42  | 100   |
| 2006-07   | 28.26 | 16.06   | 9.64      | 6.01   | 3.58      | 4.23   | 3.77       | 3.75   | 0.45     | 24.25  | 100   |
| 2007-08   | 25.45 | 15.41   | 9.74      | 6.75   | 3.46      | 4.10   | 4.63       | 3.78   | 0.27     | 26.41  | 100   |
| 2008-09   | 26.03 | 14.58   | 9.64      | 6.62   | 2.63      | 3.95   | 6.24       | 4.26   | 0.29     | 25.76  | 100   |
| 2009-10   | 24.38 | 13.50   | 9.31      | 6.33   | 2.41      | 3.85   | 6.28       | 4.12   | 0.56     | 29.26  | 100   |
| 2010-11   | 22.28 | 15.00   | 9.01      | 6.71   | 2.91      | 3.78   | 4.83       | 4.34   | 0.47     | 30.69  | 100   |
| 2011-12   | 21.07 | 15.24   | 10.10     | 5.70   | 3.06      | 4.04   | 2.68       | 4.10   | 0.87     | 33.14  | 100   |

<sup>10</sup> Author's calculation based on Ministry of Finance, 2012; Bangladesh Bank, 2012a; and Export Promotion Bureau of Bangladesh, 2012, *op.cit.*

As mentioned above, Bangladesh maintains a small basket of exports to South Korea. Unlike other most of the developed country destinations, as high as 35.07 per cent of export receipts are coming from raw hides and skins (other than fur skins) and leather (HS code 41), followed by woven garments (29.22 per cent). These two contribute nearly two-thirds of the country's export to South Korea. Knitwear is also in the list of top three, but its export share is considerably low — only about 9 per cent of total exports. However, only ten commodities at HS-2 code contribute more than 97 per cent to the total export basket, ranging from minerals, food items, footwear, tobacco, and toys besides textiles and clothing, and raw leather.

**Table 4: Exports Items: HS-2 Code (2011-12)<sup>11</sup>**

| Sl               | Items   | US\$        | %      |
|------------------|---|-------------|--------|
| 1                | 41: Raw hides and skins (other than fur skins) and leather    | 73,538,266  | 35.07  |
| 2                | 62: Articles of apparel, accessories, not knit or crochet     | 61,266,658  | 29.22  |
| 3                | 61: Articles of apparel, accessories, knit or crochet         | 18,745,851  | 8.94   |
| 4                | 74: Copper and articles thereof                               | 15,838,865  | 7.55   |
| 5                | 53: Vegetable textile fibres n.e.s., paper yarn, woven fabric | 9,587,657   | 4.57   |
| 6                | 64: Footwear, gaiters and the like, parts thereof             | 9,254,907   | 4.41   |
| 7                | 27: Mineral fuels, oils, distillation products, etc.          | 6,387,267   | 3.05   |
| 8                | 63: Other made textile articles, sets, worn clothing, etc.    | 5,418,843   | 2.58   |
| 9                | 24: Tobacco and manufactured tobacco substitutes              | 3,132,251   | 1.49   |
| 10               | 94: Toys, games, sports requisites                            | 978,255     | 0.47   |
|                  | Others  | 5,558,470   | 2.65   |
| Total (50 items) |   | 209,707,288 | 100.00 |

At the highly disaggregated level (HS-8 code), it is revealed that only 20 products comprise more than 84 per cent of the total export volume. Like the above, tanned or crust hides and skins of bovine (HS 41044900) earns about 34 per cent of the total exports, followed by woven garments (men's or boys' jackets and blazers) and copper waste and scrap, which are together more than half of the total export receipts. This clearly indicates very high concentration of few items that may make the exports vulnerable to shocks in some top products.

**Table 5: Exports Items: HS-8 Code (2011-12)<sup>12</sup>**

| Sl | Items   | US\$       | %     |
|----|---|------------|-------|
| 1  | 41044900: Tanned or crust hides & skins of bovine (including buffalo) | 71,158,384 | 33.93 |
| 2  | 62033300: Men's or boys' jackets & blazers, not knitted or crocheted  | 24,562,052 | 11.71 |

<sup>11</sup> Export Promotion Bureau of Bangladesh, 2012, *op.cit.*

|                   |  |             |        |
|-------------------|--|-------------|--------|
| 3                 | 74040000: Copper waste & scrap   | 15,458,755  | 7.37   |
| 4                 | 62034200: Men's or boys' trousers, bib & brace overalls, breeches & shorts       | 10,344,327  | 4.93   |
| 5                 | 61091000: T-shirts, singlets & other vests, knitted or crocheted, of cotton.     | 8,741,943   | 4.17   |
| 6                 | 27090000: Petroleum oils & oils obtained from bituminous minerals, crude.        | 6,387,248   | 3.05   |
| 7                 | 63062200: Tents of synthetic fibres  | 4,754,848   | 2.27   |
| 8                 | 64041900: Footwear, (excluding sports footwear), with outer soles of rubber      | 4,515,405   | 2.15   |
| 9                 | 64039900: Footwear With Rubber... Soles, Leather Upp                             | 3,887,947   | 1.85   |
| 10                | 24012000: Unmanufactured tobacco, partly or wholly stemmed/stripped              | 3,132,251   | 1.49   |
| 11                | 53031000: Jute and other textile bast fibres, raw or retted                      | 3,065,454   | 1.46   |
| 12                | 53039000: Jute & other textile bast fibres, other than raw or retted             | 2,802,866   | 1.34   |
| 13                | 62043300: Women's or girls' jackets & blazers, not knitted or crocheted          | 2,625,816   | 1.25   |
| 14                | 62034900: Men's or boys' trousers, bib & brace overalls, breeches & shorts       | 2,524,968   | 1.20   |
| 15                | 62019300: Men's or boys' anoraks (including ski-jackets), wind-cheaters, jackets | 2,426,693   | 1.16   |
| 16                | 62052000: Men's or boys' shirts, not knitted or crocheted, of cotton             | 2,174,978   | 1.04   |
| 17                | 61109000: Jerseys, pullovers, cardigans, waist-coats & similar                   | 2,161,504   | 1.03   |
| 18                | 62031900: Men's or boys' suits, not knitted or crocheted, of textile             | 2,080,427   | 0.99   |
| 19                | 61102000: Jerseys, pullovers, cardigans, waist-coats & similar articles          | 2,047,364   | 0.98   |
| 20                | 41079900: Other, including sides other than full grains, or grain splits leather | 1,879,366   | 0.90   |
|                   | Others   | 32,974,691  | 15.72  |
| Total (278 items) |  | 209,707,288 | 100.00 |

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*

Unlike export combination, import items are more diversified as top ten items (HS-2 level) contribute about 76 per cent. Here, the raw materials, intermediate goods and capital machineries are most of the items of imports, which include iron and steel (25.1 per cent), followed by ships, boats and floating structures (14.7 per cent), paper and plastic items (13.7 per cent), boilers and machinery (5.7 per cent), and other minerals in the top items. It is important to note that the imported items play crucial role in Bangladesh's manufacturing sector, domestic value addition and export to the critical export destinations.

**Table 6: Imports Items: HS-2 Code (2011-12)<sup>13</sup>**

| Sl               | Items  | Million US\$ | %      |
|------------------|--|--------------|--------|
| 1                | Iron and steel   | 389.00       | 25.1   |
| 2                | Ships, boats and floating structures                                 | 227.33       | 14.7   |
| 3                | Paper and paperboard, articles of paper                              | 115.98       | 7.5    |
| 4                | Plastics and articles thereof  | 96.57        | 6.2    |
| 5                | Salt, sulphur, earths and stone, plastering materials, lime & cement | 91.86        | 5.9    |
| 6                | Boilers, machinery and mechanical appliances                         | 88.09        | 5.7    |
| 7                | Zinc and articles thereof  | 87.30        | 5.6    |
| 8                | Electrical machinery and equipment                                   | 36.41        | 2.3    |
| 9                | Cotton (all types), cotton yarn / thread and cotton fabrics          | 28.48        | 1.8    |
| 10               | Organic chemicals  | 22.02        | 1.4    |
|                  | Others   | 367.66       | 23.7   |
| Total (50 items) |  | 1,550.70     | 100.00 |

### 3.2 Investment from South Korea

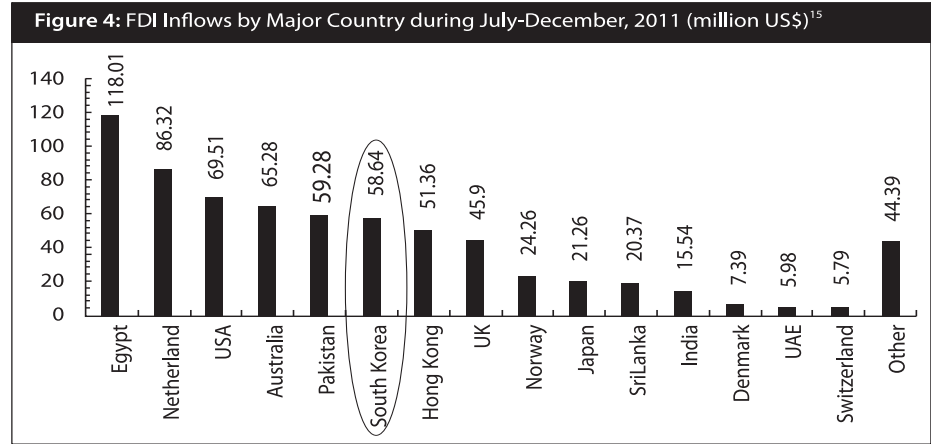
South Korea already invested considerably in the Export Processing Zones (EPZs), energy, RMG industry and infrastructure development sectors in Bangladesh. Now it is interested to increase its volume of investment in infrastructure, energy, RMG, textile and Information and Communication Technology (ICT). However, the new areas of investment include jute, leather, ICT and textiles.

Very recently, telecommunications and electronics giant Samsung group has expressed high interest to invest in Bangladesh for manufacturing Smart Phone in the country through setting up a factory. This investment is likely to generate employment for 50,000 people, which would also enhance consumers' welfare through bringing opportunity to export cell phone handsets and other accessories worth around US\$ 1 billion per annum.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Bangladesh Bank, 2012a, op.cit.

South Korean Trade-Investment Promotion Agency (KOTRA) opened its office in Dhaka in 1978 since there was a strong demand for the promotion of trade and investment. South Korean entrepreneurs came to the country to set up garment factories in the late-1970s under Multi-Fibre Agreement (MFA) which provided unique opportunity to Bangladesh to establish RMG industry in order to export to the critical Western market. The boom of Bangladesh's RMG industry that mostly drives its economy is due to initial training from Korean Daewoo Corporation back in 1979.

Bangladesh is Korea's priority partner country when it comes to the development cooperation as it is the fourth largest recipient of Economic Development Cooperation Fund (EDCF) loan from Korea. Karnaphuli EPZ (KEPZ) in Chittagong, the first private EPZ in Bangladesh, expects to attract investment of US\$1.3 billion from South Korea when it becomes fully operational.



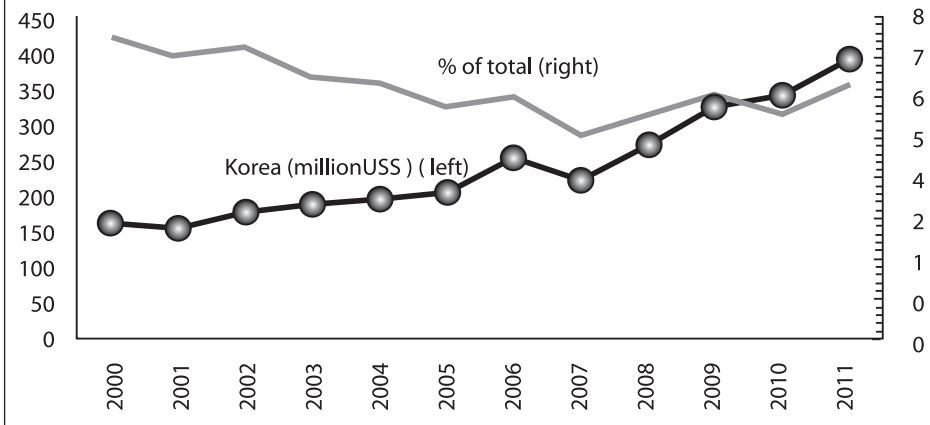
The stock of FDI from South Korea has been increasing steadily since early 2000s. From US\$162.23 million in end-2000, it increased to US\$390.24 million in end-2011. Thus, it grew at around 140 per cent and annually on average by 12.78 per cent. At end-December 2011, FDI inflow from South Korea was US\$58.64 million, which was the 6<sup>th</sup> among the top investing countries. FDI flow remains one of the highest, 6.32 per cent of total in end-2011. However, the share of South Korean FDI is slightly on the decline, from 7.5 per cent in 2000 to 6.32 per cent in 2011.

If we closely observe the sectoral configuration, there is huge concentration of FDI in very few sectors. For example, majority of FDI in July-December 2011 came to Textiles and Apparel (47 per cent) and Bank (43 per cent). A small proportion of FDI also came in leather and leather products (7 per cent) and power (3 per cent).

<sup>14</sup> Author's interview with an official of Samsung Group.

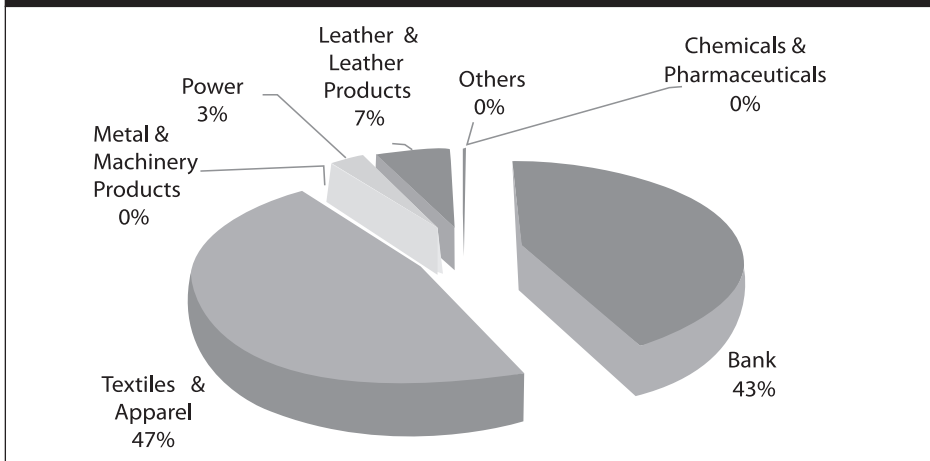
<sup>15</sup> Bangladesh Bank, *Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in Bangladesh: Survey Report July-December, 2011*, Dhaka, 2012b.

Figure 5: Stock of FDI from South Korea<sup>16</sup>



One of the major objectives of 'Vision 2021' and, therefore, the Sixth Five-Year Plan (2011-2015) of Bangladesh is to achieve inclusive or employment generating growth. And for that matter, the government is giving priority and facilities to Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) which are employment-intensive. Textiles and apparel sector is also labour-intensive in nature. We see that the largest FDI came in the latter sector, which is in line with the national vision.

Figure 6: FDI inflow by sector (July-December 2011)<sup>17</sup>



If the FDI inflow during 1977-2010 is considered, the 100 per cent FDI from South Korea was the 8<sup>th</sup> and joint venture was the 14<sup>th</sup> top in terms

<sup>16</sup> Calculation from Bangladesh Bank data, *ibid*.

of volume of investment. However, both 100 per cent and joint venture investments show that the investment-labour ratio is the lowest among the top investing countries, which clearly indicates that the investment from South Korea is the most employment-generating among the top investing countries.

**Table 7: FDI and Employment by Top Countries (1977-2010)<sup>18</sup>**

| Country       | No of units | Investment (I) (US\$ million) | Employment (L) | I/L   |
|---------------|-------------|-------------------------------|----------------|-------|
| FDI (100%)    |             |                               |                |       |
| UAE           | 6           | 2,229.9                       | 6,513          | 0.342 |
| Saudi Arabia  | 4           | 1850.4                        | 2,154          | 0.859 |
| UK            | 45          | 952.0                         | 26,194         | 0.036 |
| USA           | 23          | 735.4                         | 3,881          | 0.189 |
| Netherlands   | 7           | 351.2                         | 595            | 0.590 |
| Egypt         | 2           | 177.2                         | 243            | 0.729 |
| Malaysia      | 7           | 162.0                         | 833            | 0.194 |
| South Korea   | 88          | 123.7                         | 46,089         | 0.003 |
| India         | 43          | 93.8                          | 7,982          | 0.012 |
| China         | 54          | 55.6                          | 7,071          | 0.008 |
| Top           | 10 279      | 6,731.20                      | 101,555        | 0.066 |
| Total         | 418         | 7,012.77                      | 141,957        | 0.049 |
| JOINT VENTURE |             |                               |                |       |
| Saudi Arabia  | 10          | 2275.7                        | 2,373          | 0.959 |
| Norway        | 5           | 1651.7                        | 2,525          | 0.654 |
| USA           | 95          | 1045.7                        | 18,857         | 0.055 |
| Japan         | 98          | 911.4                         | 14,108         | 0.065 |
| UK            | 111         | 687.7                         | 32,967         | 0.021 |
| Malaysia      | 37          | 569.5                         | 7,998          | 0.071 |
| Hong Kong     | 58          | 309.3                         | 13,329         | 0.023 |
| Singapore     | 57          | 294.2                         | 7,848          | 0.037 |
| France        | 19          | 274.4                         | 4,174          | 0.066 |
| Netherlands   | 37          | 228.5                         | 11,012         | 0.021 |
| UAE           | 22          | 223.9                         | 4,616          | 0.049 |
| Germany       | 44          | 200.3                         | 11,642         | 0.017 |
| China         | 93          | 188.2                         | 21,271         | 0.009 |
| South Korea   | 98          | 175.4                         | 21,222         | 0.008 |

<sup>17</sup> Based on Bangladesh Bank, 2012b, *op. cit.*

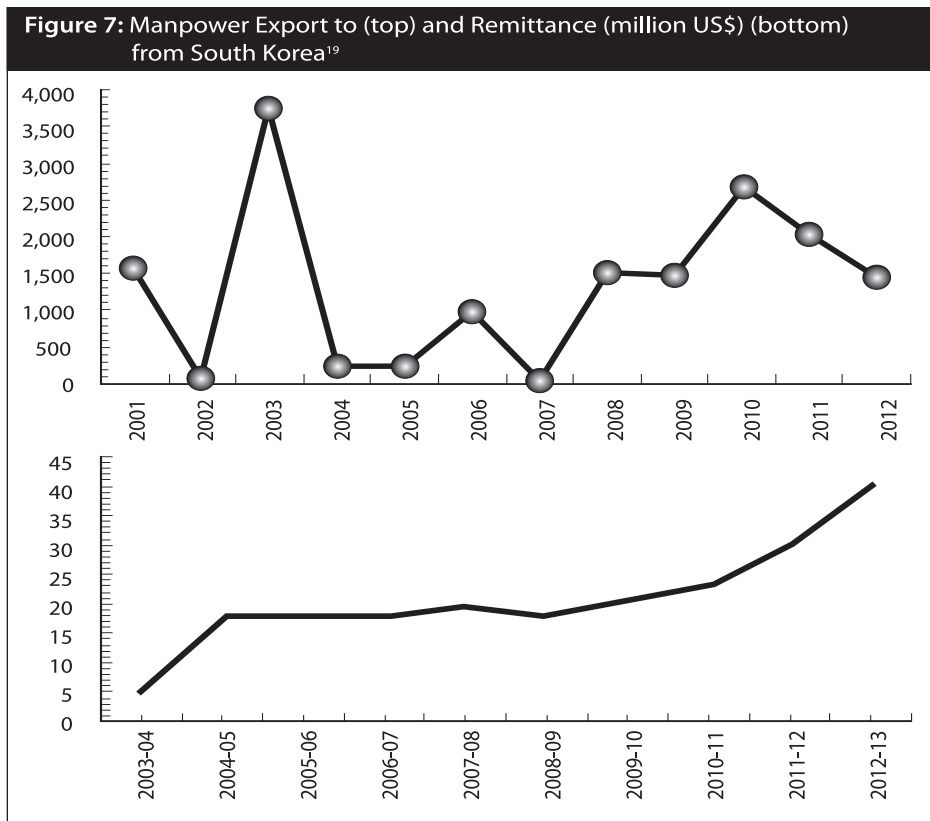
<sup>18</sup> Board of Investment, Foreign Direct Investment in Bangladesh (1971-2010), Dhaka, 2011.



|        |       |           |         |       |
|--------|-------|-----------|---------|-------|
| Top 14 | 784   | 9,035.8   | 173,942 | 0.052 |
| Total  | 1,179 | 10,172.47 | 259,207 | 0.039 |

### 3.3 Manpower Export

There is a growing trend of manpower export to South Korea. The country, however, requires more skilled and semi-skilled workers than low-skilled ones, which has resulted in comparatively low manpower export although the workers send considerable amount of foreign currency. Since Bangladesh already has government to government (G-2-G) agreement with the South Korean government, workers can be exported at low migration cost.



Between 1994 and 2012, a total of 27,581 workers have been exported to South Korea, which was 0.35 per cent of total manpower export. We can observe fluctuations in the yearly manpower export to this country. Nevertheless, the trend of

<sup>19</sup> Bangladesh Bank, *Economic Trends*, Dhaka, March 2013. In 2012-13, data are up to January 2013.

remittance from Korea is becoming significant and is on the rise. It was more than US\$ 40 million in July 2012 to January 2013. The growth of remittance flow has marked steady increase since 2009-10 and it significantly surpassed the annual inflow of 2011-12 in just first seven months of the current fiscal year.

#### 4. Development Partnership

As mentioned earlier, South Korea has long been Bangladesh's one of the key development partners. Bangladesh receives mostly credit in soft terms. Even though there is annual gap between commitment and disbursement, it is evident that in many years considerable loans have been received which were not committed.

**Table 8: Commitment and Disbursement of Foreign Aid from South Korea (Million US\$)<sup>20</sup>**

|         | COMMITMENT |                |         |        |        | DISBURSEMENT |                |         |        |        |
|---------|------------|----------------|---------|--------|--------|--------------|----------------|---------|--------|--------|
|         | Food       | Comm-<br>odity | Project |        | Total  | Food         | Comm-<br>odity | Project |        | Total  |
|         |            |                | Grant   | Loan   |        |              |                | Grant   | Loan   |        |
| 1996/97 | -          | -              | -       | 31.274 | 31.274 | -            | -              | 0.640   |        | 0.640  |
| 1997/98 | -          | -              | -       | -      | -      | -            | -              | 0.360   | 0.158  | 0.518  |
| 1998/99 | -          | -              | -       | -      | -      | -            | -              | -       | 19.042 | 19.042 |
| 1999/00 | -          | -              | -       | -      | -      | -            | -              | -       | 8.555  | 8.555  |
| 2000/01 | -          | -              | -       | -      | -      | -            | -              | -       | 0.443  | 0.443  |
| 2001/02 | -          | -              | -       | -      | -      | -            | -              | -       | -      | -      |
| 2002/03 | -          | -              | -       | 58.000 | 58.000 | -            | -              | -       | -      | -      |
| 2003/04 | -          | -              | 1.000   | 20.000 | 21.000 | -            | -              | -       | 9.441  | 9.441  |
| 2004/05 | -          | -              | -       | -      | -      | -            | -              | -       | -      | -      |
| 2005/06 | -          | -              | -       | 51.000 | 51.000 | -            | -              | -       | 4.465  | 4.465  |
| 2006/07 | -          | -              | -       | -      | -      | -            | -              | -       | 14.896 | 14.896 |
| 2007/08 | -          | -              | 7.860   | 28.000 | 35.860 | -            | -              | -       | 9.707  | 9.707  |
| 2008/09 | -          | -              | -       | -      | -      | -            | -              | -       | 4.530  | 4.530  |
| 2009/10 | -          | -              | -       | -      | -      | -            | -              | -       | 20.069 | 20.069 |
| 2010/11 | -          | -              | -       | -      | -      | -            | -              | 3.605   | 70.990 | 74.595 |
| 2011/12 | 0.000      | 0.000          | 9.500   | 73.530 | 83.030 | 0.000        | 0.000          | 0.000   | 60.136 | 60.136 |

<sup>20</sup> Economic Relations Division, *Flow of External Resources into Bangladesh*, Ministry of Finance, Government of Bangladesh, Dhaka, 2013.

Bangladesh has been receiving financial and technical assistance from EDCF at soft interest rate since 1987. The interest rate is 0.01 per cent per annum which has to be paid in 40 years with 15 years of grace period. The government generally signs Framework Agreement of US\$200-300 million for assistance of 2-3 years. However, further agreements are signed under this agreement later on. So far, 14 loan agreements have been signed for 15 projects.

**Table 9: Terms of EDCF Loan<sup>21</sup>**

| Terms                  |   | Description   |
|------------------------|---|---|
| Interest rate          | : | 0.01% (simple)  |
| Repayment period       | : | 40 years (15 years grace period)                          |
| Service charge         | : | 0.1%  |
| Overdue charge (penal) | : | Additional 2% with interest                               |
| Interest payment       | : | Every 6 months  |
| Service & supply       | : | Limited competitive bidding among Korean companies        |
| Loan repayment         | : | Semi-annual equal installment after 15 years grace period |
| Currency               | : | Through South Korean won equivalent to US dollar          |

The government of Bangladesh has signed three important agreements with South Korea under EDCF in the just concluded fiscal year 2011-12. These included modernisation of railway signaling and interlocking system, well field construction and salvage vessels. These are likely to contribute significantly in improving public transportation in enhancing welfare of relevant passengers and people moving through rivers and seas.

**Table 10: Three Agreements in 2011-12<sup>22</sup>**

| Project Title   | Cost (Million US\$) |
|---|---------------------|
| Replacement & Modernisation of Railway Signaling & Interlocking System at 11 Stations of Bangladesh Railway | 22.00               |
| Well Field Construction Project at Tetulzhora-Bhakurta area of Savar Upazila (Part-1)                       | 45.00               |
| Salvage Vessel Procurement by Supplementary Loan  | 6.533               |
| Total   | 73.533              |

There were four important projects that have already been completed so far under EDCF. These include increasing water security in the drought-prone zone like Chittagong, and maritime security through distress and safety system as well as introducing integrated maritime navigation system. A very important contribution was made towards introducing digital land management system, which is a long discussed and expected system in the Ministry of Land for eliminating land related disputes and conflicts.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*

**Table 11: Four Committed Projects<sup>23</sup>**

| Sl.   | Project Title   | Cost (Million US\$) |
|-------|---|---------------------|
| 1     | Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS) and Integrated Maritime Navigation System (IMNS) | 37.50               |
| 2     | Installation of Wireless Broadband Network for Digital Bangladesh                                   | 77.50               |
| 3     | Bhandar Juri Water Supply Project of Chittagong WASA  | 58.50               |
| 4     | Digital Land Management System/Ministry of Land   | 15.50               |
| Total |   | 218.00              |

The areas of cooperation in Country Partnership Strategy 2013-2014 of South Korea are:

- Promoting economic development and social welfare through the expansion of energy, water supply and drainage infrastructure.
- Improving accessibility and quality of maternal and child health services.
- Enhancing national competitiveness through human resource development.
- Enhancing productivity and transparency of the public administration through e-Government and capacity building.

**Table 12: Agreement with KOICA on draft contracts for 5 Projects<sup>24</sup>**

| Project Title  | Cost (Million USD) |
|--|--------------------|
| Establishment of National Institute of Advance Practice Nurses in Bangladesh | 12.84              |
| Establishment of IT Labs in Secondary Schools in Dhaka District              | 3.53               |
| Enhancing Cyber Crime Investigation Capability of Bangladesh                 | 3.00               |
| Establishing Data Center & Web-Portal System for Digital BRTA                | 2.00               |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>21.37</b>       |

Under the aegis of Korean International Cooperation Agency (KOICA), bilateral Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed on 16 June 1993. Under this MoU, a total of US\$31.44 million was granted for 16 projects up to 30 June 2012. Ten projects worth US\$17.14 million have already been completed. These projects are expected to contribute in enhancing capacity of Bangladesh Rice Research Institute (BRRI), introducing ICT-based education system and spreading technical education in Bangladesh.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*

South Korea is also offering generous support to Bangladesh in voluntary service and training for long. Korean volunteers and physicians come and stay for around two years under World Friends Korea. It covers health, rural development, ICT development and training of Korean language. Now nearly 70 physicians are serving Bangladesh voluntarily. KOICA invites many Bangladeshis from various sectors every year and around 100 officers are being trained. It contributes significantly in human resource development (HRD).

## 5. Examining the Trade Potential

### 5.1 Export Potential in South Korea

It is believed that Bangladesh has huge untapped export potential to South Korea, which should be realised through removing behind and beyond the border constraints. To understand this particular aspect, stochastic frontier gravity model has been adopted that captures trade resistances beyond and behind the border by bifurcating the error term of an augmented gravity model. The inclusion of a non-negative unobservable term in this model helps capture unobservable and manmade resistances to trade and barriers.

Drawing on Kabir<sup>25</sup> and Salim *et al.*<sup>26</sup>, the nature of the stochastic frontier problem of Bangladesh's exports has been explained as follows. Suppose that the export function is  $f(x_{ij,t}, \beta)$ , where  $x_{ij,t}$  is the vector of economic, geographic, social and institutional factors that influence exporters  $i$  and importers  $j$  at time  $t$ , and  $\beta$  is the vector of unknown parameters. Now the following gravity equation has been adopted to examine the potential of Bangladesh's exports in line with the functional form of the exports frontier:

$$\ln EXP_{ij,t} = \alpha_0 + \alpha_1 \ln TGDPI_{ij,t} + \alpha_2 \ln RFE_{ij,t} + \alpha_3 \ln SIM_{ij,t} + \alpha_4 \ln DIST_{ij} + \alpha_5 \ln RER_{ij,t} + \alpha_6 BOR_{ij} + \alpha_7 SAARC_{ij,t} + v_{ij,t} - u_{ij,t} \quad (1)$$

where  $EXP_{ij,t}$  is the scalar of observed exports from Bangladesh  $i$  to destination (including South Korea)  $j$  at time  $t$  (in US dollars). In Equation (1)  $DIST_{ij}$  indicates the distance between  $i$  and  $j$ , and  $BOR_{ij}$  and  $SAARC_{ij,t}$  imply common border (1 = if Bangladesh and  $j$  share border; 0 = otherwise) and membership in SAARC's preferential trading arrangement or free trade area (1 = if a country is a member; 0 = otherwise), respectively. The stochastic error term,  $v_{ij,t}$ , a two-sided normally distributed variable, represents the random exogenous shocks to the exports processes.  $u_{ij,t}$  is a stochastic variable that follows a non-negative distribution. The technical efficiency term  $u_{ij,t}$  is time-varying. In the simplest specification,  $u_{ij,t}$  is a time-invariant truncated normal random variable, and  $u_{ij,t}$  and  $v_{ij,t}$  are distributed independently. Moreover,

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*

$$TGDP_{ij,t} = TGDP_{i,t} + TGDP_{j,t}$$

$$RFE_{ij,t} = |\ln PGDP_{i,t} - \ln PGDP_{j,t}|$$

$$SIM_{ij,t} = 1 - \left( \frac{1n(GDP_j)}{1n(GDP_i + GDP_j)} \right)^2 - \left( \frac{1n(GDP_i)}{1n(GDP_i + GDP_j)} \right)^2$$

$RFE_{ij}$  takes a minimum of zero if both countries exhibit equal GDP or production. The range of  $SIM$  is given by,  $0 \leq SIM_{ij} \leq 0.5$ ; where 0.5 means 'equal' and zero implies 'absolute divergence' in country size. In a 'factor box representation' of trade model<sup>27</sup>,  $TGDP$  can be related to the length of the diagonal of the box,  $SIM$  with the location of the consumption point along the diagonal, and  $RFE$  to indicate the distance between production and consumption points along the relative price line.<sup>28</sup>

$$RER_{ij,t} = ER_{ij,t} (P_{j,t} / P_{i,t})$$

where  $P_{i,t}$  and  $P_{j,t}$  are price levels of Bangladesh and destination countries respectively.  $ER_{ij,t}$  is the bilateral nominal exchange rate between the currencies of foreign country  $j$  and Bangladesh  $i$ . An increase in the bilateral real exchange rate reflects depreciation of the importer's currency against that of the exporters. Thus, the coefficient of  $RER$  is expected to be positive in the exports panel.

In order to construct the panel data of Bangladesh's exports for the period of 1980-2010, the sample countries are drawn from all the destination countries of Bangladesh's exports by posing a quantitative criterion — the countries should have 0.2 per cent of its total world exports to the individual partner country. This criterion has helped identify the major export destination.

The Maximum Likelihood estimates of gravity equation (1) have been presented in Table 13 for Bangladesh's exports.  $TGDP$  turns out to be positive as expected. The positive but insignificant  $RFE$  indicates absence of *Linder* effect in exports of Bangladesh. However, positive and significant  $SIM$  indicates that the pattern of exports follows New Trade Theory if it performs at the frontier.

<sup>25</sup> M. Kabir, 2010, *op. cit.*

<sup>26</sup> R. Salim, M. Kabir and N. al Mawali, "Does More Trade Potential Remain in Arab States of the Gulf", *Journal of Economic Integration*, Vol. 26, No. 2, 2011, pp. 217-243.

<sup>27</sup> The 2x2x2 trade model is comprised of two goods (differentiated and homogenous), two factors (capital and labour), and two countries (importer and exporter).

<sup>28</sup> P. Egger, "A Note on the Proper Econometric Specification of the Gravity Equation", *Economics Letters*, Vol. 66, No. 1, 2000, pp. 25-31

**Table 13: Results of the Stochastic Frontier Gravity Model<sup>29</sup>**

|                        | Coefficient | Standard Error (Robust) | P >  z |
|------------------------|-------------|-------------------------|--------|
| lnTGDP <sub>ij,t</sub> | 2.643       | 0.167                   | 0.000  |
| lnRFE <sub>ij,t</sub>  | 0.150       | 0.157                   | 0.340  |
| SIM <sub>ij,t</sub>    | 13.009      | 1.365                   | 0.000  |
| lnDIST <sub>ij</sub>   | -1.691      | 0.724                   | 0.020  |
| lnRFR <sub>ij,t</sub>  | 0.156       | 0.046                   | 0.001  |
| BOR <sub>ij</sub>      | -2.169      | 1.009                   | 0.032  |
| SAARC <sub>ij,t</sub>  | 0.032       | 1.798                   | 0.986  |
| Constant               | -41.418     | 7.140                   | 0.000  |
| Country: 35            |             |                         |        |
| Time Period: 1980-2010 |             |                         |        |
| Wald $\chi^2$          | 445.25      |                         |        |
| Prob> $\chi^2$         | 0.000       |                         |        |
| $\mu$                  | -3.535      | 9.295                   | 0.704  |
| ln( $\sigma^2$ )       | 2.721       | 1.140                   | 0.017  |
| ilgt(y)                | 1.746       | 1.339                   | 0.192  |
| Log likelihood         | -1,608.55   |                         |        |

The sign of DIST is negative and significant, which indicates that distance elasticity of exports is negative, i.e., greater distance of destination country discourages exports from Bangladesh. It is negative and significant at 5 per cent level in the exports panel. RER takes the desirable sign, which indicates that a real depreciation increases exports. The variable BOR takes the unexpected sign indicating that common border with India decreases Bangladesh's exports in the long run.

To calculate Bangladesh's export potential, suppose that  $\beta_k^*$  are the estimates of parameters of the potential gravity function that yields the highest possible export from Bangladesh to destination countries in the following way:

$$\beta_{k,t}^* = \max_j (\hat{\beta}_{kj,t}) , \quad j = 1, 2, \dots, n; t = 1, 2, \dots, T; k = 1, 2, \dots, K \quad (2)$$

Based on the regression estimates, export potential between countries,  $i$  and  $j$ , can be worked out by the following ratio:

$$PE_{ij,t} = \frac{EXP_{ij,t}}{\exp(\ln EXP_{ij,t}^*)} \quad (3)$$

<sup>29</sup> Author's estimation.

where  $EXP_{ij,t}$  is the realised exports and  $PE_{ij,t}$  is the export predicted from the significant coefficients of Equation (1) that yields the maximum possible export following 'fewer' behind the border constraints.  $PE_{ij,t}$  denotes the index of potential export that varies between 0 and 1.

**Table 14: Country Ranking in Realisation of Export Potential<sup>30</sup>**

| Sl. | Country      | % Unrealised | Sl. | Country     | % Unrealised |
|-----|--------------|--------------|-----|-------------|--------------|
| 1.  | Greece       | 72           | 19. | Germany     | 16           |
| 2.  | Bhutan       | 56           | 20. | Australia   | 16           |
| 3.  | Singapore    | 49           | 21. | France      | 16           |
| 4.  | South Korea  | 46           | 22. | India       | 15           |
| 5.  | Japan        | 46           | 23. | Spain       | 14           |
| 6.  | Saudi Arabia | 45           | 24. | Hong Kong   | 14           |
| 7.  | Ireland      | 31           | 25. | UK          | 13           |
| 8.  | Austria      | 31           | 26. | Sweden      | 12           |
| 9.  | Russia       | 30           | 27. | USA         | 12           |
| 10. | Nepal        | 28           | 28. | Italy       | 11           |
| 11. | Finland      | 28           | 29. | Netherlands | 9            |
| 12. | Poland       | 26           | 30. | Pakistan    | 9            |
| 13. | South Africa | 26           | 31. | Belgium     | 7            |
| 14. | Norway       | 25           | 32. | Mexico      | 6            |
| 15. | Denmark      | 25           | 33. | Sri Lanka   | 4            |
| 16. | Iran         | 24           | 34. | Brazil      | 1            |
| 17. | Turkey       | 22           | 35. | Canada      | 1            |
| 18. | Switzerland  | 18           |     |             |              |

The trend of realisation of Bangladesh's export potential over time has been displayed in Table 14. However, 43 per cent export potential is unrealised in the first ten countries where export potential is highly unutilised. Amongst these countries Greece, Singapore, South Korea, Japan, Saudi Arabia, Ireland, Austria and Russia are big markets where Bangladesh can significantly expand its exports, varying from 30 to 72 per cent. In South Korea, the long-term untapped export potential is as high as 46 per cent. It means that Bangladesh can increase export to South Korea significantly by removing behind the border constraints such as infrastructural and institutional barriers.

## 5.2 Benefits of Free Trade Area (FTA)

In order to understand the possible benefits of free trade with South Korea, Global Trade Analysis Project (GTAP) model has been applied. The GTAP model is a popular simulation tool, which is based on multi-region computable general equilibrium (CGE) model.<sup>31</sup> In the standard model, all markets are assumed to be perfectly competitive. The regional government can drive wedges between prices of the producers and consumers by imposing taxes and subsidies on commodities and

<sup>30</sup> Author's estimation.



factors. Buyers differentiate between home-grown and imported goods, and also different sources of imports by region of origin. Investment in each region comes from a global pool of savings wherein each region contributes a fixed proportion of its income. Investment allocation is made according to the existing relative rates of return.<sup>32</sup>

**Table 15: Commodity Decomposition of Change in Trade Balance due to a Potential FTA<sup>33</sup>**

| Commodity Group              | South Korea | Bangladesh |
|------------------------------|-------------|------------|
| Grains Crops                 | 4.37        | 7.27       |
| Animal and Meat              | 4.11        | 0.13       |
| Extraction                   | -24.9       | -3.32      |
| Processed Food               | 3.89        | 0.86       |
| Textiles & Apparel           | -244.3      | -61.16     |
| Light Manufacturing          | -33.19      | 59.94      |
| Heavy Manufacturing          | 227.44      | 43.68      |
| Construction Services        | 0.51        | 0.03       |
| Transport & Communication    | 25.78       | 0.99       |
| Other Services               | 36.27       | 3.38       |
| Total                        | -0.02       | 51.8       |
| Excluding Textiles & Apparel | 244.28      | 112.96     |

The simulation analysis suggests that welfare effect of a Bangladesh-South Korea FTA has been found to be negative, for Bangladesh it would be US\$32.64 million and for South Korea it would be US\$106.51 million. It would be mainly because of loss of allocative efficiency in both the countries due to the existing government support at production level. GDP growth effect would also be slightly negative—for Bangladesh it would be 0.02 per cent and for South Korea it would be 0.06 per cent.

On the contrary, the trade balance or net exports, defined to be the difference between the monetary value of exports and imports in an economy over a period of time, has been found to be positive for Bangladesh but unchanged for South Korea in the case of Bangladesh-South Korea FTA. However, if the sensitive textiles and wearing apparel sector is taken aside, the trade balance effect would be positive and significant; for South Korea and Bangladesh it would be US\$244.28 and 112.96 million, respectively. Thus, there is an avenue for bilateral FTA taking aside adversely affecting sectors.

<sup>31</sup> T. W. Hertel (ed.), *Global Trade Analysis: Modeling and Applications*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.

<sup>32</sup> M. Siriwardana and J. Yang, "GTAP Model Analysis of the Economic Effects of an Australia-China FTA: Welfare and Sectoral Aspects", *Global Economic Review*, Vol. 37, No. 3, 2008, pp. 341-362.

<sup>33</sup> Author's simulation.

## 6. Way Forward

Trade and investment would be the most important areas that should be harnessed in the near future and build on successes so far in the last four decades of economic partnership. There should be reforms in the trade regimes so that tariff barriers are minimised to enhance consumer welfare of both the countries. In doing so, there is a need for preferential market access of Bangladeshi products in South Korea through further liberalisation, which would help in reducing the mounting trade deficit disavouring Bangladesh.

Informal communications and discussions with South Korean investors and officials reveal that Korean giant corporate like Samsung want one more private EPZ, which would be in addition to KEPZ in Chittagong. The Bangladesh government should assess Korea's demand for required infrastructure. In removing infrastructural barriers and energy deficiency Bangladesh can learn from Korean good practices.

Bangladesh will need significant expansion of physical infrastructure as per 'Vision 2021' to graduate to a middle income country from a least developed one. Here, opportunities of huge Korean interest in construction sector (*e.g.*, Samsung construction) may be utilised. The other key recommendations for further strengthening bilateral relations and building on past successes would be as follows:

- Increase KOICA's grant.
- Attract investment in research and development (R&D).
- Utilise opportunities in Korea in education and HRD. Further training facilities should be explored in agricultural R&D, bio-technology, ICT, light and heavy manufacturing, and extraction sectors.
- Strengthen cooperation in science and technology.
- Establish heavy manufacturing plants with support from Korean technology and big manufacturing industries.
- Address institutional, *e.g.*, entry and institutional barriers.
- Strengthen G-2-G cooperation in manpower export for exploring further opportunities.
- Reduce risks and uncertainties as well as confrontations to reap maximum benefits to facilitate attaining double-digit growth and developmental targets.

## 7. Concluding Remarks

The paper tries to assess the forty years of diplomatic relations between Bangladesh and South Korea from economic perspectives. It reveals that South Korea, one of Asian Tigers and OECD members, has turned out to be a critical trading partner of Bangladesh. It has become the third largest import source and twentieth top export destination of Bangladesh. Since Bangladesh is importing raw materials, intermediate goods and capital machineries from South Korea, it is regarded as manufacturing friendly trade outcome but the mounting trade deficit has become of critical concern for Bangladesh. Given this context, it is important for the country to look for preferential market access in South Korea through pursuing further liberalisation. The FDI from South Korea has also been significant over the years. Both the full FDI and joint ventures have been found to be the most employment intensive, which is in line with the government's inclusive growth strategy. Therefore, further investment potential should be tapped through institutional reforms and reducing infrastructural rigidities among others. South Korea has also been one of the top development partners for long but the assistance is coming mainly as loan. The Bangladesh government can pursue KOICA for attracting more grants. Finally, there is a need for attracting investment and assistance in R&D, science and technology, industrial development and HRD for developing knowledge-based economy in Bangladesh.



*Segufta Hossain***ENVIRONMENT-SECURITY NEXUS: BANGLADESH PERSPECTIVES****Abstract**

Global security scenario has changed with the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century and dimensions of the definition of security have also changed with the end of the Cold War. Non-traditional security threats have in some aspects replaced the traditional security concerns. Sources of security threats have also increased and become diversified in the era of globalisation. Environmental stresses and degradation have become a security threat and the main concern of environment-security nexus is the scarcity of resources which initiates competition, displacement and gradually conflict. Bangladesh is highly vulnerable to global warming, climate change, environmental stresses and environmental degradation due to climate change. Climate change instigates increased frequencies and intensities of natural disasters. The geographical location and some other issues like over population, unplanned development activities, lack of proper rules and regulations have also made the country more vulnerable to environment related threats. There is a possibility of scarcity of resources and the competition over the scarce resources would displace a large number of people which may destabilise the country and gradually affect the stability and security of the region. Bangladesh government has adopted some policies and formulated strategies to protect the environment, properly use the natural resources and control the degradation of environment and pollution. The country is also trying to combat the impacts of climate change and climate change induced environmental problems with its own resources. International support is necessary to counter the impacts of climate change, climate change induced natural disasters and environmental degradations as they create not only development challenges but also security threats for the country. The present paper would focus on the interrelation between environment and security and try to highlight the nexus between environment and security of Bangladesh.

**1. Introduction**

The dimensions of the definition of security have changed with the end of the Cold War with new concerns over human rights, development and environmental risks. The beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century observed lots of dramatic changes in the global security scenario. The traditional security threats are replaced by non-traditional security threats which cannot be solved or effectively addressed by the traditional ways like employing military power. In the era of globalisation the threats to both traditional and non-traditional security have increased and environmental problems,

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**Segufta Hossain** is Research Fellow at Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies (BIISS). Her e-mail address is: [segufta@biiss.org](mailto:segufta@biiss.org)

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which affect both people and countries alike, are in the forefront. The interrelation between environment and security is a complex one. The issue of security and development is linked with access to natural resources and vulnerabilities to environmental changes. The main concern of environment-security nexus is the scarcity of resources which instigates competition leading to conflict. Resource scarcity, degradation, over exploitation of natural resources and environmental hazards increase risk and exacerbate internal as well as external security concerns. The existing tensions among and within the states due to non-environmental actors can also be intensified by resource scarcity, environmental degradation, competition over natural resources and environmental hazards.

A close interlinkage between effective natural resources management and national, regional and international security is being detected by the researchers. Consensus is emerging that around the globe, environmental degradation, inequitable access to critical resources upon which people depend in order to meet basic needs and competition to extract and control valuable commodities are each important contributors to conflict<sup>1</sup>. The scarcity of natural resources and degradation of natural system which increase threats to public health can increase insecurity which sometimes triggers violence. Environmental degradation and the exploitation of natural resources are recognised as important drivers of violence between and within states, contributing to poverty and state failure<sup>2</sup>.

Against this background the present paper would try to highlight the interrelation between environment and security and study the nexus between environment and security of Bangladesh. The paper is divided into five sections. After introduction, the second section of the paper discusses the relationship between environment and security. The third section focuses on the environmental concerns of Bangladesh. The fourth section deals with environment-security nexus from Bangladesh perspectives and the fifth section concludes the paper.

## **2. Environment and Security**

Environment is one of the most important pillars of sustainable development and mainstreaming environment in development cooperation activities may contribute to stability and peace of a nation. There is a clear link between environment and security more precisely between the management of the scarce or abundant natural resources and conflict. History provides evidences that conflict could be driven from natural resource degradation, scarcity and competition for controlling

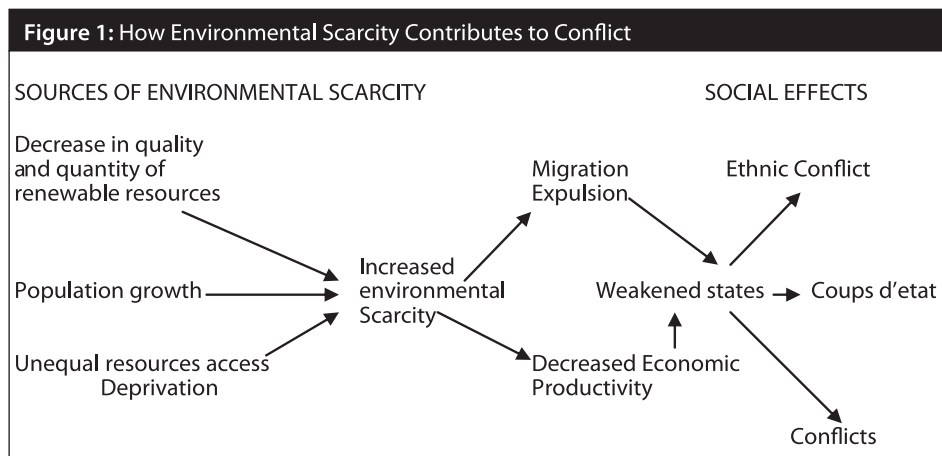
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<sup>1</sup> ENVSEC Initiative, *Environment and Security: A Framework for Cooperation in Europe*, Draft Background Paper, OSCE, UNDP and UNEP, 8 January 2002, p. 6.

<sup>2</sup> Oli Brown, *The Environment and our Security: How our understanding of the links has changed*, a contribution to the International Conference on *Environment, Peace and Dialogue among Civilizations*, Tehran, Iran, 9-10 May 2005, available at [http://www.iisd.org/pdf/2005/security\\_env\\_peace\\_iran.pdf](http://www.iisd.org/pdf/2005/security_env_peace_iran.pdf), accessed on 17 December 2012.

the areas where the natural resources are in abundance. Countries like Afghanistan, Burundi, Haiti, Indonesia, Iraq, Madagascar, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Rwanda and the Solomon Islands are overwhelmed by environmental problems and, therefore, tend to develop political and economic problems<sup>3</sup>.

Environmental stress and violent conflict are not directly linked. Environmental scarcity creates some immediate negative social effects like poverty, economic decline, inter-group tension, population movements/displacements, disrupted institutions and hardening of existing social cleavages which gradually can lead to instability and violent conflict. Figure 1 depicts how environmental scarcity contributes to conflict.



Source: Homer-Dixon cited in Leah Fraser, Related Environment and Security Research in Richard A. Matthew and Leah Fraser, *Global Environmental Change and Human Security: Conceptual and Theoretical Issues*, p. 17, available at <http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/cae/servlet/contentblob/389710/publicationFile/4505/17-GF-Matthew.pdf>, accessed on 02 December 2012.

The scholars are in dispute on the conceptualisation and identification of the links between environmental stresses and violent conflicts. Research is going on about the interrelation between environment and security. The environment, population and conflict thesis remains central to current environment-security debate.

Professor Thomas Homer-Dixon's project on "Environment, Population and Security" after a thorough analysis of the relationship between environmental scarcity and conflict found out that "under certain circumstances, scarcity of renewable resources such as cropland, freshwater and forests produce civil violence and instability.....Environmental scarcity acts mainly by generating

<sup>3</sup> Jared Diamond, *Environment, Population, and Health: Strategies for a More Secure World*, Environmental Change and Security Project Report, Issue 10, 2004, p. 9.

intermediate social effects such as poverty and migrations, that analysts often interpret as conflict's immediate causes"<sup>4</sup>. Professor Homer-Dixon also mentioned that "Environmental scarcity is caused by the degradation and depletion of renewable resources, the increased demand for these resources, and/or their unequal distribution. These three sources of scarcity often interact and reinforce one another"<sup>5</sup>. The project also highlighted on the "resource capture" and "ecological marginalization" which reinforce environmental scarcity and raise the potential for social instability and conflict generated in part by environmental scarcity which can have significant indirect effects on the international community<sup>6</sup>. Figure 2 describes the three views of the role that environmental scarcity play in violent conflict.

Beat Sitter-Liver *et.al.* in "Sustainable Development Futures: A Selection of Swiss Academic Perspectives" mentioned "There is ample evidence for correlations between rural poverty, environmental stress in rural arenas and discriminatory access to resources. These factors coincide with political instability, i.e. non-democratic change in regimes and/or violent conflicts and wars. These findings primarily apply to the least developed countries, second to countries with medium development characterized by poor state performance and unstable political conditions"<sup>7</sup>

Environment and Conflicts Project (ENCOP) in its international project titled "Violence and Conflicts Caused by Environmental Degradation and Peaceful Conflict Resolution" pointed out that in the recent past, environmental problems have become increasingly significant in producing conflicts especially in developing countries where desertification, water scarcity and climate change play a big role in originating and escalating current conflicts and usually act in combination with other factors such as poverty, economic decline, over population and political instability<sup>8</sup>.

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<sup>4</sup> EPS Project Description, The Project on Environment, Population, and Security, available at <http://www.homerdixon.com/projects/eps/descrip.htm>, accessed on 25 July 2012.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

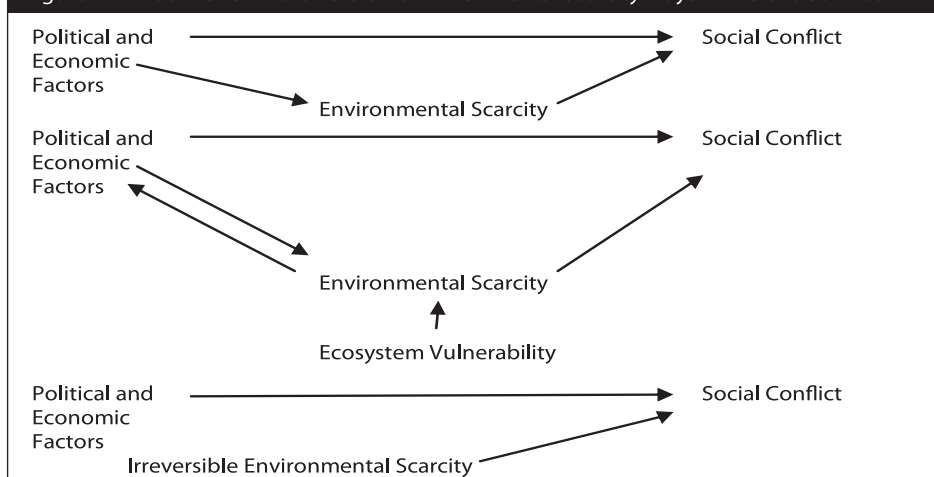
<sup>6</sup> Environmental scarcity often encourages powerful groups to capture valuable environmental resources and prompts marginal groups to migrate to ecologically sensitive areas. These two processes are called – "resource capture" and "ecological marginalization". *Ibid.*

<sup>7</sup> Beat Sitter-Liver *et.al.*, Sustainable Development Futures: A Selection of Swiss Academic Perspectives, Encyclopedia of Life Support Systems (EOLSS), available at <http://www.eolss.net/Sample-Chapters/C16/E1-53-57.pdf>, accessed on 12 December 2012.

<sup>8</sup> Kurt R. Spillmann and Günther Bächler (eds.), *Environmental Crisis: Regional Conflicts and Ways of Cooperation*, Occasional Paper No. 14, Environment and Conflicts Project (ENCOP) International Project on Violence and Conflicts Caused by Environmental Degradation and Peaceful Conflict Resolution, September 1995.



Figure 2: Three Views of the Role that Environmental Scarcity Plays in Violent Conflict



Source: Thomas Homer-Dixon, *Strategies for Studying Causation in Complex Ecological Political Systems*, Occasional Paper, The Project on Environment, Population and Security, available at <http://www.homerdixon.com/projects/eps/method/methods1.htm>, accessed on 25 July 2012.

A NATO/CCMS Pilot Study on “Environment and Security in an International Context” identified the relationship between environment and security to be subsumed under two fundamental environment-security linkages which refer to problems of environmental degradation (including natural catastrophes) and resource depletion or scarcity as a consequence of military activity in times of peace and war on the one hand and a direct or indirect source of conflict on the other.<sup>9</sup>

The environment-security nexus has become an important issue of discussion for the scholars due to a number of factors which include growing concerns about global climate change, fears about increasing demand and competition for natural resources caused by population growth and economic development. The studies on environment and security indicate that there is strong correlation between environment and security which is complex. On the one hand, environment affects security by destabilising livelihood, competition over scarce natural resources which leads to conflict. On the other hand, instability or conflict also negatively impact environment through large population movements or conflicts.

<sup>9</sup> Alexander Carius et.al., *NATO/CCMS Pilot Study: Environment and Security in an International Context*, Interim Report, October 1996, available at <http://www.wilsoncenter.org/sites/default/files/report3b.pdf>, accessed on 12 December 2012.

### 3. Environmental Concerns of Bangladesh

The topography of Bangladesh makes it vulnerable to the effects of global climate change. Former Secretary General of the United Nations, Kofi Annan, has warned that a rise in sea level could lead to the disappearance of much of the world's largest delta, Bangladesh.<sup>10</sup> Bangladesh is highly vulnerable for its location in the delta of the Ganges, Brahmaputra and Meghna river basins and the dense population of the country. Its economy depends on agriculture and natural resources which are sensitive to climate change and sea level rise. The country is densely populated with 958 persons per sq.km, (BBS 2008).<sup>11</sup> Poverty, over population and ignorance of the common people about the environmental issues have worsened the environmental degradation and natural resources depletion scenario of the country. Bangladesh stands to be affected environmentally in a number of ways. Deforestation leading to desertification, destruction of the wetlands, use of excessive fertiliser and chemical pesticides which reduces soil nutrients, over exploitation of underground water, rapid unplanned urbanisation, deterioration of water quality, land degradation, discharge of untreated sewage and industrial wastes have manifested people's ignorance about environmental degradation and natural resources depletion. Environmental changes and natural calamities like extreme temperature, drought, excessive rainfall at the wrong time, floods and flash floods, salinity, cyclones also have severe negative impact on the socio-economic condition and creates huge environmental damage in the country.

In Bangladesh, extremely high drought risk areas are located in the north-western part of the country. High variation of annual rainfall has made these areas more prone to droughts. Higher poverty rates, dependence on agriculture, withdrawal of underground water for irrigation, deforestation, upstream withdrawal of water of the river Padma/ Ganges have exacerbated the situation and made the region more vulnerable to droughts. Bangladesh is facing increased frequency of drought in the recent years. Droughts cause sufferings for the life and livelihood of the people and its impact has been observed in many sectors especially in agriculture, livestock and fisheries. Meagre supply of water, food and fodder creates untold miseries for both human and livestock. Droughts not only impact the agriculture, livestock and fisheries, it also severely affects the social life of people as people face difficulties in getting safe drinking water. Sometimes conflicts arise among the people because of the scarcity of water which sometimes leads to migration of population from the drought prone areas.

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<sup>10</sup> "Bangladesh exposed to global warming: Annan", *BBC News*, 14 March 2001, available at <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/1220036.stm>, accessed on 20 September 2012.

<sup>11</sup> Sudip Kumar Pal and Adebayo J. Adeloye, Challenges and adequacy of water resources management policies in Bangladesh, BHS Third International Symposium on *Managing Consequences of a Changing Global Environment* held at New Castle in 2010, available at <http://www.hydrology.org.uk/assets/2010%20papers/145Pal&Adeloye.pdf>, accessed on 17 December 2012.

Although the extent of changes in global climate by global warming and climate change is still under studies, the vulnerability of Bangladesh to the changes is widely recognised. It has been argued internationally that Bangladesh would suffer the most severe impacts of the climate change. Climate change would have an adverse impact on the agricultural production of the country, as well as there is a possibility of destroying infrastructures. So people would be forced to migrate either within the borders of Bangladesh or to adjacent countries which has the possibility of instigating regional conflicts. Climate change could induce more extreme natural calamities like more intense cyclones which could lead to intense storm surges, variability in temperature and rainfall which could lead to droughts and floods. The most important climatic change would take place along the coastline of Bangladesh as sea level rises. Bangladesh is a land mass which is on average no more than 10 meters above sea level, with that number drastically lower nearer to the coast. A 1 metre rise of the sea level will affect 15 million people and submerge 17,000 km<sup>2</sup> of areas and a rise of 1.5 metre will submerge 22,000 km<sup>2</sup> of land and affect 18 million people.<sup>12</sup> The rising sea level poses the biggest threat to Bangladesh as well as our delicate eco system. Most of the mangrove forests would go under water.

**Table 1: Climate Change Scenario for Bangladesh**

| Year | Temperature Change (°C) Mean |         |          | Precipitation Change (%) Mean |         |          | Sea Level Rise (cm) |
|------|------------------------------|---------|----------|-------------------------------|---------|----------|---------------------|
|      | Annual                       | Dec-Feb | June-Aug | Annual                        | Dec-Feb | June-Aug | Prediction          |
| 2030 | 1.0                          | 1.1     | 0.8      | 5                             | -2      | 6        | 14                  |
| 2050 | 1.4                          | 1.6     | 1.1      | 6                             | -5      | 8        | 32                  |
| 2100 | 2.4                          | 2.7     | 1.9      | 10                            | -10     | 12       | 88                  |

Source: M. Aminul Islam, "Climate change and development risk: Local perspective," *The Daily Star*, 15 March 2008.

Bangladesh is a riverine country which is criss-crossed by three major rivers - The Ganges/Padma, the Brahmaputra, the Meghna and their tributaries and distributaries. As 80 per cent of the country is floodplain, it is prone to yearly flooding. Between 30-70 per cent of the country is normally flooded every year<sup>13</sup>. But recently floods have become more frequent and serious. The Himalayan rivers carry sediments from the upstream and deposit them in the river beds which exacerbated the flooding of the country as the rivers lose their water carrying capacity due to sedimentation. Deforestation in the upstream areas increases the sedimentation rate of the rivers. Excessive precipitation due to climate change also increases the intensity of floods and flash floods of the country which hampers the life of the people of the country. Sea level rise would result in increasing coastal flooding and intrusion of saline water.

<sup>12</sup> United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), Impact of sea level rise in Bangladesh in Vital Water Graphics: An Overview of the State of the World's Fresh and Marine Waters, 2008, available at <http://www.unep.org/dewa/vitalwater/article146.html>, accessed on 18 December 2012.

<sup>13</sup> Sudip Kumar Pal and Adebayo J. Adedoye, *op.cit.*

Excessive temperature would result in increased amount of glacier melting which would also increase the amount of water flow in the rivers. The Inter-Governmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) states that the Himalayan glaciers are receding faster than in any other part of the world. The impacts of climate change on the Himalayan glaciers could be catastrophic for an estimated 1.5 billion people living in the vulnerable densely populated communities in the downstream river basins<sup>14</sup>. Changes in temperature would increase the intensity of cyclones and storm surges. According to IPCC, there is a possibility of an increase in peak intensities by 5-10 per cent which has potentially serious implications for a country already vulnerable to storm surges driven by strong winds<sup>15</sup>. A projected increase of 20-30 per cent in the associated precipitation could make the concerns even more serious as Bangladesh is also prone to inland flooding because of its topography and location at the mouth of three major river systems<sup>16</sup>. Bangladesh is facing increased number of cyclones in recent years. Their intensity and timing has also changed from the previous ones and the cyclones are taking place more frequently than the earlier ones. In November 2007, tropical cyclone Sidr with a 100 mile long front covering the breadth of the country and with winds up to 240 km per hour, hit Bangladesh which is noted to be an unusual occurrence with unusual intensity and timing.

Bangladesh is facing immense difficulties in managing her limited water resources. Since the establishment of the Farakka barrage, the river system of the country has been severely affected. Some of the rivers like the Gorai, the Madhumati, the Bhairab, the Arial Khan, the Kapotakkhya and the Mathabhanga have lost their flow. Freshwater availability has been reduced due to lack of water flow in the rivers and saline water intrusion in the downstream rivers. The life and livelihood of the population of these areas have changed and a large number of populations have to change their occupation and would be forced to migrate to other places for better living. Melting of glaciers would increase untimely floods and flash floods which would worsen the river bank erosion scenario of the country. According to the Centre for Environment and Geographic Information Services (CEGIS) every year 0.1 million people become homeless because of river bank erosion.<sup>17</sup> Arsenic contamination, due to the increased use of ground water, depletion of ground water table and their inadequate replenishment, has increased the risk of arsenic poisoning throughout the country. At present water in 61 out of 64 districts of the country is arsenic contaminated and about 1.5 to 2.5 million

<sup>14</sup> UNEP, *Recent Trends in Melting Glaciers, Tropospheric Temperatures over the Himalayas and Summer Monsoon Rainfall over India*, 2009, available at <http://na.unep.net/siouxfalls/publications/Himalayas.pdf>, accessed on 18 December 2012.

<sup>15</sup> Shardul agrawala et.al., *Development and Climate Change in Bangladesh: Focus on Coastal Flooding and the Sundarbans*, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), p. 15.

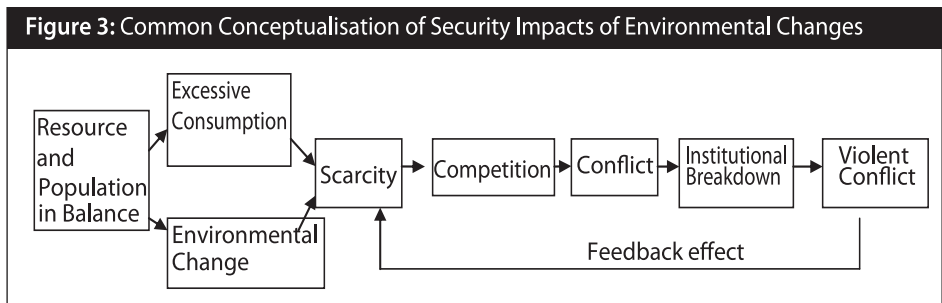
<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>17</sup> Tahera Akter, *Climate Change and Flow of Environmental Displacement in Bangladesh*, Dhaka: Unnayan Onneshan– The Innovators, 2009, p. 8.

tube-wells are estimated to be affected with 35 million people are at risk.<sup>18</sup> A survey conducted by Ground Water Task Force has reported that 7 out of 12 most arsenic contaminated districts are located in the Ganges basins where water of more than 70 per cent tube wells exceeds the permissible limits of arsenic.<sup>19</sup> People in the arsenic contaminated areas are already suffering from arsenic poisoning and the country is going to face a serious threat from this.

#### 4. Environment – Security Nexus: Bangladesh Perspectives

Environmental stresses could initiate resource scarcity and competition over the scarce resources could initiate migration. Resource scarcity and competition could lead to conflict within a country or region and such conflict may increase emigration. According to Grievance models of conflict, people will fight if they see a decline in their living conditions, particularly in relation to others.<sup>20</sup> Migration, due to the increased frequencies of environmental stresses, increases the socio-political pressure which may lead to insecurity and instability in the source areas from where the people migrate as well as the transit and destination areas. The common thought about security impacts of environmental changes is given in Figure 3.



Source: Oli Brown, Anne Hammill and Robert Mcleman, "Climate Change as the 'new' security threat: implications for Africa", *International Affairs*, Vol. 83, No. 6, 2007, p. 1148.

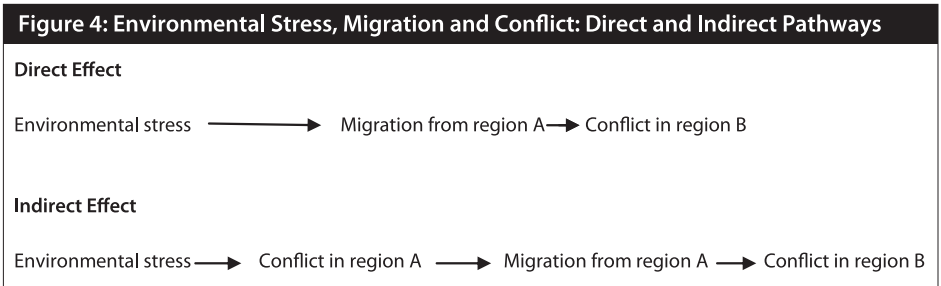
The direct and indirect pathways between environmental stresses, migration and conflict are depicted in the following figure (Figure 4). From the figure it can be observed that as the direct effect of environmental stresses, migration takes place from region A and begins conflict in region B. Indirectly, environmental stresses begin

<sup>18</sup> Department of Public Health and Engineering, Government of Bangladesh, *Arsenic Contamination of Ground Water in Bangladesh*, Final Report 2001, 1: Summary, Dhaka: Department of Public Health and Engineering, 2001, pp. 1-15.

<sup>19</sup> Mohammad Humayun Kabir, Neila Husain and Segufta Hossain, "Non-traditional Security of Bangladesh", in Mufleh R. Osmayn (ed.), *Whither National Security Bangladesh 2007*, Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies (BISS) and The University Press Limited (UPL), 2008, p. 261.

<sup>20</sup> Nils Petter Gleditsch, Ragnhild Nordås and Idean Salehyan, *Climate Change and Conflict: The Migration Link*, Coping with Crisis - Working Paper Series, May 2007, available at [http://www.ipacademy.org/media/pdf/publications/cwc\\_working\\_paper\\_climate\\_change.pdf](http://www.ipacademy.org/media/pdf/publications/cwc_working_paper_climate_change.pdf), accessed on 28 November 2012.

conflict over the scarce resources in region A which prompts migration from region A and when these migrated people reach the destination area i.e. region B, conflict starts over there.



Source: Nils Petter Gleditsch, Ragnhild Nordås and Idean Salehyan, *Climate Change and Conflict: The Migration Link*, Coping with Crisis - Working Paper Series, May 2007, available at [http://www.ipacademy.org/media/pdf/publications/cwc\\_working\\_paper\\_climate\\_change.pdf](http://www.ipacademy.org/media/pdf/publications/cwc_working_paper_climate_change.pdf), accessed on 28 November 2012.

Although Bangladesh is not the only country affected by the impacts of global climate change, environmental degradation and stress associated with it, the country is the most vulnerable to the impacts of global climate change and environmental degradation. The geographical location and some other issues like over population, unplanned development activities, lack of proper rules and regulations have made the country more vulnerable. Climate change instigates increased frequencies and intensities of natural disasters. Cyclone *Sidr* (2007), affecting the livelihoods of 8.9 million people and loss of US\$ 1.67 billion and Cyclone *Aila* (2009) affecting 3.9 million people and loss of US\$ 270 million are the examples of the impacts of climate vulnerability of the country. The victims of *Sidr* and *Aila* are still suffering and living on embankments in makeshift shelters. According to a World Bank study titled *Economics of Adaptation to Climate Change: Bangladesh*, a warmer and wetter future climate that goes beyond historical variations will exacerbate the existing climatic risks and increase vulnerability which will increase the extent and depth of inundation from flooding and storm surges and reduce arable land due to sea level rise and salinity intrusion. The median predictions from the General Circulation Models (GCMs)<sup>21</sup> are for Bangladesh to be 1.5°C warmer and 4 per cent wetter by the 2050s.<sup>22</sup>

Creating settlements for the huge population of the country increases the rate of deforestation, loss of agricultural land, filling up of waterbodies. People also depend on the forests for fuel in the rural areas. Industrial pollution is also observed in the lands and waterbodies adjacent to the industries which decreases the productivity of the lands and make the waters poisonous for human and as well as animals.

<sup>21</sup> General Circulation Model (GCM) is numerical representation of the atmosphere and its phenomena over the entire Earth, using the equations of motion and including radiation, photochemistry, and the transfer of heat, water vapour, and momentum.

<sup>22</sup> The World Bank, “Economics of Adaptation to Climate Change: Bangladesh”, 2010, p. xii, available at [http://climatechange.worldbank.org/sites/default/files/documents/EACC\\_Bangladesh.pdf](http://climatechange.worldbank.org/sites/default/files/documents/EACC_Bangladesh.pdf), accessed on 27 December 2012.

Environmental degradation and stress increase the competition for scarce natural resources like land and water and gradually people would be forced to migrate to meet their necessary demands. Declining water availability hampers the hydrological system of the country and leads to the competition on the scarce resource among the users. Increasing intensity of extreme weather conditions, natural disasters and environmental degradation may lead to displacement and forced migration. An array of this type of incidents may gradually lead to destabilisation of the state and subsequently to conflict.

The economy of Bangladesh is based on agriculture and two-thirds of the total population depend on agriculture directly or indirectly. So, the impact of climate change, environmental degradation and stress on agriculture would be widespread and hamper the country's economy. Extreme temperature, excessive rainfall, drought, salinity intrusion, cyclones, etc. are responsible for the fall of agricultural production of the country. Agricultural production is always vulnerable to the extreme climatic events. Climate change has particularly adverse implications for Boro rice production and will limit its ability to compensate for lost Aus and Aman rice production during extreme climate events.<sup>23</sup> Maximum temperature has significant negative impacts on Boro rice yield that reduce about 2.6 to 13.5 per cent due to increase of 2°C maximum temperature and 0.11 to 28.7 per cent for 4°C maximum temperature.<sup>24</sup> Like the maximum temperature, minimum temperature has also negative impact on Boro rice yield that reduce about 0.40 to 13.1 per cent due to increase of 2°C minimum temperature and 0.11 to 15.5 per cent for 4°C minimum temperature.<sup>25</sup> Natural disasters intensified by climate change damage crops of the country every year. In 1990s, drought in the north western Bangladesh caused a shortfall of rice production of 3.5 million tonnes and unprecedented flash flood in the *haor* areas had accounted for a loss of about 1,50,000 metric tonnes of rice at the beginning of 2010.<sup>26</sup> The loss of agricultural productions, agricultural land and fresh water resources due to various environmental and man-made reasons would have a negative impact on the food production and freshwater supply for the people of the country. The loss of agricultural land means loss of livelihoods of the people, loss of food production and rising prices of the foodstuffs.

Fisheries sector is also facing difficulties due to the changes in environment. As the fish species are sensitive to water conditions, they are in threat of becoming extinct with any change in water conditions and quality. Decreasing water in the waterbodies is also the reason behind the decreasing of fish species. Fish cultivation of the country is also facing difficulties and fishermen and fish cultivators are leaving

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 73.

<sup>24</sup> Jayanta Kumar Basak, "Climate Change Impacts on Rice Production in Bangladesh: Results from a Model", p. 11, available at [http://www.unnayan.org/reports/Climate\\_Change\\_Impacts\\_on\\_Rice\\_Production\\_in\\_Bangladesh\\_Report.pdf](http://www.unnayan.org/reports/Climate_Change_Impacts_on_Rice_Production_in_Bangladesh_Report.pdf), accessed on 20 December 2012.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>26</sup> Ministry of Environment and Forests, "Climate Change and Agriculture in Bangladesh: Information Brief", p.4, available at <http://cmsdata.iucn.org/downloads/agriculture.pdf>, accessed on 27 December 2012.

their occupations and switching to other jobs. According to a study, the number of fishermen in the south west of Bangladesh dropped from 6 per cent to only 0.5 per cent while the number of rickshaw pullers increased from 1.3 per cent to 5.9 per cent.<sup>27</sup> These jobless people migrate to the cities for their livelihood and create pressure on the limited resources and facilities of the urban areas of the country and start competition for the urban amenities which sometimes initiate violence.

From the above discussion, it can be observed that changes in the environment destroy the resources of an area and initiate the risk of displacement of huge number of population. Scarcity of food and freshwater would have a negative impact on the food and freshwater availability of the country which might initiate competition among the common people. Increasing population would exacerbate the situation. Price hike of food items is the worst impact of the scarcity of foods. There is a possibility of conflict over food security, job security and land related issues due to over population. The displacement of large number of people instigates competition over resources of the areas where the displaced people settle down and may create instability in a country. A joint study titled "Climate Change and Security in Bangladesh: A Case Study"<sup>28</sup> by Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies and Saferworld found that the relationship between climate change and security is not always direct but depends on a chain of consequences such as climate change causes environmental degradation which undermines livelihoods of that area and reduce basic human security and create increased tension as competition for dwindling resources become more intense. This tension could lead to crime and violence and increase social instability. Deteriorating economic and social situation drives people to migrate from the affected areas to towns and cities in search of better life which sometimes again lead to disturbances. In Bangladesh, the violent unrest may have an effect on the stability and internal security of the country and there is also risk that international security will be affected by regional destabilisation.<sup>29</sup> According to the Saferworld study, "in Bangladesh socio-political pressures are increasing as more and more people migrate due to pressures brought on by an increase in the frequency and intensity of flooding, rising water salinity and loss of land. This in turn may lead to growing insecurity and instability in the regions of origin, transit and destination, as competition increases over resources such as water and land and people form groups prepared to use violence to defend their interests"<sup>30</sup>.

<sup>27</sup> See for details, Tajkera Khatun, "The Ganges Water Withdrawal in the Upstream at Farakka and Its Impact in the Downstream Bangladesh" in M. Feroze Ahmed *et.al.* (eds.), *Regional Cooperation on Transboundary Rivers: Impact of the Indian River-linking Project*, Dhaka: Bapa *et.al.*, 2004, p. 243.

<sup>28</sup> Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies and Saferworld, *Climate Change and Security in Bangladesh: A Case Study*, BISS and Saferworld, June 2009.

<sup>29</sup> Thomas Ansorg and Thomas Donnelly, "Climate Change in Bangladesh: Coping and Conflict", *European Security Review*, Number 40, September 2008, p. 3.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*



## 5. Conclusion

Environmental change does not figure as a separate, causal variable in the general migration literature, although older theories did allow for natural disasters under the category of “physical” factors.<sup>31</sup> Now-a-days the traditional concept and consensus about security has changed as the idea of security has taken new social, economic and environmental dimensions. The present trend shows that environmental changes cause displacement and migration. Environmental stresses and changed climatic events are influencing the people of Bangladesh by affecting the socio-economic conditions and would have severe impacts on the population of Bangladesh in future. The environmental stresses and environmental degradation would affect the land, water and other scarce natural resources on which people depend for their livelihood. The loss of land which is a living space and economic support would force people to migrate for their survival. The forced migration could lead to instability and violence which could further lead to violent conflicts inside the country.

Sustainable and equitable management of the environment could be an effective way to build cohesion, strengthen mechanisms for collaboration across the boundaries and reduce vulnerability to crisis. Efforts that are taken to reduce the risk factors could be beneficial for both environmental and national security. Environmental cooperation can also be a powerful tool for preventing conflict, building mutual confidence and promoting good neighbourly relations.<sup>32</sup> Sustainable management of scarce natural resources, with the objective to protect the environment and at the same time to contribute in poverty reduction, development, stability, peace and reconciliation, is essential.

The security of Bangladesh is under threat from climate change, environmental degradation and stresses. The stresses and degradations are affecting all aspects i.e land, air, water, etc. of environment. Deforestation, demolition of hills, river pollution, river erosion, loss of fertility, land degradation, urban congestion, sanitation problems in rural and urban areas, inadequate sewerage system in urban areas, pollution from solid and industrial wastes and natural disasters such as floods and cyclones all contribute to environmental and ecological degradation and loss of biodiversity.<sup>33</sup> Although Bangladesh does not have any responsibility for global warming and global climatic change, it is one of the most vulnerable countries of the world. The impacts of global warming and climate change such as sea level rise, salinity intrusion, cyclones, storm surges, changes in the nature and intensity of floods, changes in the nature of precipitation, changes in the temperature are

<sup>31</sup> Astri Suhrke, “Pressure Points: Environmental Degradation, Migration and Conflict”, available at [http://www.cmi.no/publications/1993%5Cpressure\\_points.pdf](http://www.cmi.no/publications/1993%5Cpressure_points.pdf), accessed on 17 January 2013.

<sup>32</sup> A. Wolf, “The Importance of Regional Co-operation on Water Management for Confidence-Building: Lessons Learned”, April 2002, available at [http://www.sustainable-peace.org/download/Regional\\_water\\_cooperation\\_and\\_confidence\\_building.pdf](http://www.sustainable-peace.org/download/Regional_water_cooperation_and_confidence_building.pdf), accessed on 10 July 2012.

<sup>33</sup> Ministry of Environment and Forests, *Bangladesh – Rio+20: National Report on Sustainable Development*, Government of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh, May 2012, p. XXI.

impacting the environment of the country and hampering the lifestyle of the people of the country.

Bangladesh government has taken some important steps to protect the environment, ensure proper uses of natural resources, control environmental degradation and pollution. Government has adopted National Environment Policy, National Water Policy, Bangladesh Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan and formulated National Conservation Strategy and the National Environment Management Action Plan to incorporate environment in the policy framework of the country. The country is also trying to combat the impacts of climate change with its own resources. Bangladesh government has set up Bangladesh Climate Change Trust Fund (BCCTF) in 2009 which has been receiving annual budgetary allocations for programmes related with climate change adaptation and mitigation. Over the past three years (2009/10-2011/12), the government has allocated the equivalent of US\$300 million (US\$100 million every year) which is being utilised in implementing the projects largely focused on climate change adaption and also on mitigation to an extent.<sup>34</sup> Bangladesh Climate Change Resilience Fund (BCCRF), established in 2010, gets its fund provided by the development partners and an amount of US\$125 million has been received until now.<sup>35</sup> Although Bangladesh is trying to continue the programmes and projects of adaptation and mitigation of climate change by its own allocations and different funds, it is very meagre to the huge demand for properly addressing the issues. It is necessary to have international support to counter the impacts of climate change, environmental degradations and stresses as the country is facing these issues not only as issues of development challenges but also as issues of security concerns.

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<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, p. XX.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*

Moinul Khan

## LOW PROFILE OF ISLAMIST POLITICS IN INDONESIA: EXPLAINING THE 'DEMOGRAPHIC PARADOX'

### Abstract

Although Indonesia constitutes the largest Muslim majority country, Islam-based politics remains at a low profile since its independence. This presents a 'demographic paradox' vis-à-vis the conservative interpretation of Islamic ideology as one and uniform in nature for power politics as evident in a number of Muslim countries. This article mainly seeks to explain as to why this is the case. While highlighting the reasons, this article finds that the pluralist nature of the Indonesian society and strong syncretic formation of Islam have influenced the Indonesian government to adopt religious neutral ideology, *Pancasila*. This was reinforced by two authoritarian regimes of Sukarno and Suharto for about four decades, who subordinated the public role of Islam. Although, the fall of Suharto saw the trend of conservative Islamist agenda often expressed in the rise of Islamic piety and violence against the Western interests through extremism and terrorism, this did not reflect in the voting behaviour in subsequent general elections. The popular appeal of Islamist parties has remained confined to a small minority of the vast majority of Muslim population. The post-Suharto governments of Indonesia have also shown firm commitment to promote secular ideals and domesticate the role of Islamists. This puzzle underlines the thesis that Islam is not a monolith and at the same time ideological characterisation by the orientalist and neo-orientalist school of thought ignores many realities especially in the case of Indonesia.

### 1. Introduction

Contemporary rise of Islamism in a number of Muslim countries involves an intense debate as to why Islamic profile is apparent or prominent in those countries. The orientalist and neo-orientalist, suggest that Islam is inherently linked to 'power and politics' and is opposed to modernity. The general contention of this ideology is that Islam does not allow the separation of religion from politics and is intolerant to other beliefs and minorities. At the same time, the other school of thought, often known as post-colonial studies, emphasises the local issues and circumstances that have prompted the Islamic profile, i.e., the context is instrumental in those Muslim countries. According to some scholars, Islam is a mosaic rather than a monolith and that the Islamic revival can better be understood as a response to local issues and challenges facing Muslim communities. In short, context is critical.<sup>1</sup> For example, in Malaysia, the ethnic rivalry

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Moinul Khan is PhD candidate and tutor at the Centre for Policing, Intelligence and Counter Terrorism (PICT), Macquarie University, Australia. His e-mail address is: moinul.khan@mq.edu.au

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<sup>1</sup> This debate is available in Bernard Lewis, *What Went Wrong? Western Impact and Middle Eastern Response*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002; "Islamophobia: A Challenge for Us All", London: The Runnymede

between the local Muslim Malays and non-Malays associated with the corruption and cronyism as a result of liberal economic policies pursued by the government to improve the conditions of local Malays have contributed to the formation of Islamic identity and agenda in that country.<sup>2</sup> However, none of these schools of thoughts are applicable to the Indonesian case. This presents a puzzle.

Given this backdrop, the main objective of this article is to seek an explanation as to why this is the case. In doing so, it will try to find answers to the following questions:

- What is the trend of Islamist politics in Indonesia in its contemporary political history?
- What led to the low profile of Islam?
- Is it characteristic of other Muslim countries?
- What is the relevance of conservative ideological dimension of Islam in the Indonesian case?

In doing so, this article is organised into six sections. Following introduction, section two gives an overview of the Islamist profile in Indonesia. In that context, this section also identifies the trend of marginal role of Islam in public life. Section three provides an explanation behind the rise of Islamic piety and extremism in the post-Suharto period. Section four highlights that the Islamic piety has little connection with the Islamist politics. Section five attempts to explain the key reasons behind the low profile of Islam and section six concludes the article.

## 2. An Overview of Islamist Politics in Indonesia: Low Islamic Profile

Indonesia is the largest Muslim country with 248 million people of which 86.1 per cent belong to Islam.<sup>3</sup> The number of Muslim population suggests that Islam would be a determinative factor for Indonesian politics. However, the review of Indonesian contemporary history presents a different story. The Islamic profile has not perceptibly been pronounced in institutions of polity compared to other Muslim countries. The impact of Islam on politics and the state has remained insignificant in relations to the statistical and numerical majority of the Muslim population. The Islamist groups have largely failed in its effort to Islamise Indonesia. Their electoral

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Trust, 1997, available at <http://www.runnymedetrust.org/uploads/publications/pdfs/islamophobia.pdf>, accessed on 10 February 2012; Shamsul Khan, "Islamic Fundamentalism in the Asia-Pacific Region: Failures of Civil Societies or Backlash Against the US Hegemony?" in Purendra Jain, Felix Patrikeeff and Gerry Groot (eds.), *Asia-Pacific and A New International Order: Responses and Options*, New York: Nova Science Publishers, Inc., 2006, pp. 71-88.

<sup>2</sup> Barry Wain, *Malaysian Maverick: Mahathir Mohammad in Turbulent Times*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009.

<sup>3</sup> Among the population, the Muslim constitutes 86.1%, the Protestant 5.7%, the Roman Catholic 3%, the Hindu 1.8%, the other or unspecified 3.4% (2000 census). See "The CIA World Factbook 2012", available at <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/id.html>, accessed on 11 March 2013.

performance remained confined between 10 to 44 per cent in the general elections.<sup>4</sup> This is clearly an indication of a “demographic paradox” in the Indonesian context.<sup>5</sup>

Since independence in 1945, Indonesia followed secularism in the state policy and strictly limited the role of religion in state affairs. However, Indonesia has always been under pressure from some Islamist groups to go along traditional Islamist agenda including the establishment of an Islamic state with *sharia* as the basis of the rule of law.<sup>6</sup> Indonesia always saw tendencies of orthodox Muslim movements often expressed in violent demonstrations either against the “infidels” or in an effort to establish an Islamic state.<sup>7</sup> This is evident both in the colonial and post independence periods of Indonesian history. In the colonial period, the more radical form of Islamist movements included the *Padri* movement in Sumatra in 1820s and 1830s by Islamist clerics who returned from Makkah and influenced by *Wahhabi* teachings and made an effort to introduce puritanical Islam in the form of *Wahhabism* in Indonesia. There were also some organised and sporadic Muslim radical movements armed with *jihadi* ideology to liberate Muslim lands from the occupation of the infidels.<sup>8</sup>

After independence, Indonesia faced similar movement in the name of *Darul Islam* (1949-62) which espoused armed rebellion against the secular government and in favour of establishing an Islamic state. The movement aimed at introducing *sharia* law and establishing Islamic values in the state and polity with “the Javanese ideal of the Just King who would bring in a reign of justice.” The *Darul Islam* later adopted violence as a means to achieve their objectives and clashed with the government forces. However, in the face of government repression, the organisation failed to gain broad-based support among the Indonesian people and ceased to exist after it was banned. Its prominent leaders were also captured in 1962.<sup>9</sup> Similar measures were

<sup>4</sup> Greg Fealy, Virginia Hooker and Sally White, “Indonesia”, in Greg Fealy and Virginia Hooker (eds.), *Voices of Islam in Southeast Asia: A Contemporary Sourcebook*, Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2006, pp. 39-50.

<sup>5</sup> Mirza T. Kusuma, “Pancasila: Indonesia’s Magna Charta”, *The Jakarta Post*, 10 June 2010, available at <http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2006/06/20/pancasila-indonesia039s-magna-charta.html>, accessed on 20 March 2013.

<sup>6</sup> Maria Pakpahan, “Pancasila Ideology Revisited”, 01 June 2010, available at <http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2010/06/02/pancasila-ideology-revisited.html>, accessed on 20 March 2013.

<sup>7</sup> Angel M. Rabasa, “Radical Islamist Ideologies in Southeast Asia”, in Hillel Fradkin, Husain Haqqani and Eric Brown (eds.), *Current Trends in Islamist Ideologies*, Vol. 1, Washington: Hudson Institute Publications, 2005, pp. 27-38.

<sup>8</sup> The major struggles were organised with Islam as the rallying ground for discontent against the colonial Dutch rule. One of them is the Deponegoro’s Revolt against the Dutch in 1825. Deponegoro, a prince and a royal family based in Jogykarta in Java, proclaimed *jihad* to drive the Dutch out of Java, resulted in the Java War (1825-30) that claimed about 15,000 Dutch and 200,000 Javanese lives. The Padri War lasted for 16 years (1821-1837) in West Sumatra with similar motivation. The other bloodiest encounter is the Ajtech War (1872-1908), raging in Java, Sumatra, Kalimantan, the Celebes and other islands. It is also known as the longest, costliest and biggest war in Dutch colonial history. In early 20th century, Sarekat Islam was formed in 1912 as a mass nationalist movement with Islam as the basis of solidarity. By 1919, membership of this movement increased to 2.5 million. See Dong S. Choi, “The Process of Islamization and its Impact on Indonesia”, *Comparative Civilization Review*, Vol. 34, Spring, 1996, pp. 11-26.

<sup>9</sup> Angel Rabasa, 2005, *op.cit.*, p. 27.

taken to suppress the other Islamist groups. For example, *Masyumi*, an influential group, was perceived as threatening factor to the secular regime when its members joined rebel armed groups in Sumatra and Sulawesi in 1958 using violent political Islam as their ideology. The government contained them through the use of force. Later in 1960, *Masyumi* was banned in Indonesia.<sup>10</sup>

However, during the later period of Suharto in the 1990s, Indonesia saw the upsurge of Islamic credentials within the legal and politically acceptable boundaries of the state. The state became a major promoter of Islamic institutions in the form of subsidising numerous Muslim activities. The country saw a gradual process of *santri-isation* (Islamisation)<sup>11</sup> across much of the state. This process became intensified in the wake of the fall of Suharto and the 9/11 attacks in 2001. Since the 1970s, the number of *santri* Muslims has grown considerably as a result of “accelerating Islamisation” mostly in the urban areas. Many of these Muslims have adopted Islamic way of life by praying five times a day, fasting in the month of Ramadan and following other rituals as per the strict prescriptions of Islam.<sup>12</sup> Mackie sums up this trend as follows:

Islamic prayers are now uttered at the beginning and end of school classes and university lectures and nearly in all public functions. Mosques, religious schools ... and Islamic newspapers, pamphlets and books have multiplied. The number of pilgrims making the haj to Mecca, the principal sign of devout belief, has increased sharply among the well to do. What this has meant in terms of religious belief and actual daily behaviour is hard to assess accurately, but Islam has certainly become a far more prominent element in both personal and national identity. Nothing like that was occurring before about 1970.<sup>13</sup>

At the same time, the steady growth of Islamic education has been noticeable. The number of religious schools and the students has increased in recent years. The country has also seen a growing number of Indonesians studying in the Middle East including Cairo and other cities. A substantial funding has also been made available and channelled from the oil rich Middle Eastern countries including Saudi Arabia. These have had an impact in the growing interests in new thinking on Islam flowing back to Indonesian context.<sup>14</sup> The key point of such religious activism is that the

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<sup>10</sup> Jaques Bertrand, “Political Islam and Democracy in the Majority Muslim Country of Indonesia”, in Johan Saravanamuttu (ed.), *Islam and Politics in Southeast Asia*, London: Routledge, 2010, p. 48.

<sup>11</sup> The *santri-isation*, commonly known as adherence to rigorous practices of Islam, actually began in the 1960s when a backlash against communism began following 1965 and a nation-wide emphasis was given to indicate the avoidance of communist commitment by religious conformity. See Jamie Mackie, “Australia and Indonesia: Current Problems, Future Prospects”, *Research Report*, No. 19, Sydney: Lowy Institute for International Policy, 2007, p. 70.

<sup>12</sup> Greg Fealy et. al., *op.cit.*, p. 41.

<sup>13</sup> Jamie Mackie, *op.cit.*, pp. 70-1.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 71.

country, once known as the advocate of secularism, has been under constant pressure from the Islamist groups to seek a 'state-favour' to Islam.

### 3. Explanation of Extremism and Terrorism

The rise of new extremist groups in the late 1990s exposed the country to terrorism challenging its resilience to demands of Islamist agenda. The *Jemah Islamiyah* (JI)<sup>15</sup> and other extremist groups<sup>16</sup> constituted the key extremist and terrorist organisations which were responsible for major terrorist acts including the Bali Bombing of October 2002<sup>17</sup>, the bombing of the Marriott hotel in August 2003 and the bombing of the Australian embassy in Jakarta on 09 September 2004. However, terrorism did not turn the country into a safe haven or base for building further network to carry out the Islamist agenda. These militant organisations represent "only a tiny proportion" of the total population and are not linked to major international terrorism network, therefore, not posing a serious threat to the secular fabric of the state.<sup>18</sup> The Indonesian government condemned the terrorist acts perpetrated in the name of Islam and brought the accused under active trial to show its commitment to the secular values. The government response limited the capacity of the radical Islamist groups to grow and commit further violence. Juwono Sudarsono comments, "radical Islamists are actually losing ground in the battle for the hearts and minds of most Muslims in Indonesia."<sup>19</sup>

<sup>15</sup> The JI primarily focused on domestic issues including the Muslim-Christian conflicts and participated in a number of attacks on Christian interests particularly in Maluku and Sulawesi. However, the US 'war on terror' shifted its focus from domestic to international issues. The group envisages a religion-based caliphate encompassing Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore, Thailand and the Philippines. Following 9/11 the JI began to establish network including the *Darul Islam* and Afghan war returnees throughout the archipelago for recruitment and gained strength in order to instigate damages to the Western interests in an apparent response to the interests of the Islamic *Ummah* as against the US attacks in Afghanistan and Iraq. However, they failed to obtain deep rooted support from among the people. See Jaques Bertrand, *ibid.*, pp. 57-8.

<sup>16</sup> The other groups are *Laskar Jihad* and *Front Pembela Islam*. The *Laskar Jihad* was formed in early 2000 mainly to defend the Muslims against Christian attacks in parts of Moluccan islands. Although the organisation condemned the US attack on Afghanistan, the leaders were opposed to the ideals of Bin Laden for his alleged rebellion against Saudi Arabia. They recruited fighters and sent them to the Christian dominated islands to protect the fellow Muslims. However, their activities were soon contained by the government forces. The *Front Pembela Islam* (FPI) was founded in 1998 and mainly characterised by a campaign against what they considered "immoral" as per the strict interpretation of Islam. As part of their activities, they resorted to raid bars, disco, brothels, alcohol sales, etc. However, they fell short of a threatening factor to the secular character of the state. See Harold Crouch, "Qaida in Indonesia: The Evidence Doesn't Support Worries," *International Herald Tribune*, 23 October 2001, pp. 1-2, available at <http://www.crisisgroup.org/en/regions/asia/south-east-asia/indonesia/op-eds/crouch-qaida-in-indonesia-the-evidence-doesnt-support-worries.aspx>, accessed on 10 March 2013.

<sup>17</sup> Among the terrorist acts, the Bali bombing was considered the most notorious. In the incident, about 202 including 88 Australians and seven Americans were killed. See *The Jakarta Post*, 10 October 2002.

<sup>18</sup> Harold Crouch, 2001, *op.cit.*, p. 1.

<sup>19</sup> Juwono Sudarsono, "The West and Islam in RI", *The Jakarta Post*, 05 November 2003, available at <http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2003/11/05/part-2-2-west-and-islam-ri.html>, accessed on 20 February 2013.

However, some analysts like Zachriya Abuza argue that the radical Islamists took a root as a “base-of-operations and source for recruits” in Indonesia with international terrorist network including Al-Qaeda. This posed a “potent” and “great concern” to the security in the whole of Southeast Asia.<sup>20</sup> In his book *Inside Al Qaeda: Global Network of Terror*, Gunaratna<sup>21</sup> finds such links to international terrorism.<sup>22</sup> Ken Conboy also holds the similar view emphasising Southeast Asia including Indonesia as the ‘Second Front’ in the Islamist radical’s network.

On the other hand, authors like Greg Fealy and Crouch do not subscribe to the above view. Crouch categorically argues that “It is probable that radical Islamic groups have received financial support from Qaida. But evidence is lacking to show that such links have decisively influenced their behaviour.”<sup>23</sup> Ricklefs also rules out the extremist fear of some press reports and government documents about the fear on Indonesian Islam and argues that the extremist organisations including JI, Lasker Jihad and FPI, inspired mostly by local issues, have now been “beheaded, shut down or suspended” to rise against the secular government of Indonesia.<sup>24</sup> This is also echoed by Jaques Bertrand who comments:

‘For the most part, it was JI and related groups that were inspired by radical Islamic ideology to undermine the democratic system and undertake violent acts. It has remained, however, a very small group with relatively little support among other Islamic groups or the Indonesian population at large. The state and the population have condemned terrorism, weakening their capacities. Since 2004, there have been few, if any signs of the ability of terrorists to wage new attacks or to gain any support among the broader population.’<sup>25</sup>

The terrorism in Indonesia is not driven solely by religious motivation. One of the main reasons of such terrorism is related to the “hatred caused by the Western humiliation” to the Indonesian. For example, Indonesians felt left-alone in the wake

<sup>20</sup> Zachriya Abuza, “Tentacles of Terror: Al Qaeda’s Southeast Asian Network”, *Contemporary Southeast Asia*, Vol. 24, No. 3, 2002, pp. 427-465.

<sup>21</sup> Ken Conboy, *The Second Front: Inside Asia’s Most Dangerous Terrorist Network*, Jakarta: Equinox, 2006.

<sup>22</sup> Rohan Gunaratna, *Inside Al Qaeda: Global Network of Terror*, Melbourne: Scribe Publications, 2002.

<sup>23</sup> The broad motivations and operations of JI are different from that of Al-Qaeda. For example, the Qaeda’s struggle is global in nature and its leadership are interested to export its fight anywhere in the world. However, the JI’s focus is strictly local i.e., to replace the government with Islam as its ideology. While Al-Qaeda pushes for a greater role in Southeast Asia, JI limits its activities over the structure of the government. See Alonzo Surette, *Jemaah Islamiyah in South East Asia: The Effects of Islamic Nationalism on the Indonesian Political Climate*. Unpublished thesis, Webster University, St. Louise, Missouri, USA, 2009.

<sup>24</sup> Merle Rickfels brings out an analogy with that of the Baader-Meinhof gang of West Germany, which emerged in late 1960s and 1970s. At times, they were popular with the 10-20 per cent public support in opinion polls. However, in the face of firm action by the secular government, the public support for the gang declined sharply and the leaders were captured in 1972. The main leader, Andrean Baader, committed suicide in 1977, causing a permanent blow to the organisation. See Merle Ricklefs, “Islam in Indonesia”, *The Australian Financial Review*, Review Section (10-11), 7 February 2003, pp. 1-2.

<sup>25</sup> Jaques Bertrand, 2010, *op.cit.*, p. 60.



of the end of the Cold War where the US used to consider them as an important ally and sided with them in the fight against communist threat. However, after the Cold War, Indonesia suffered an economic crisis in 1997 and they had to “crawl in front of the USA, the Western financial institutions to get help”.<sup>26</sup> They had to comply with the conditions imposed by them, many of which were considered derogatory to them. Another example of their sense of humiliation was the Western pressure to separate East Timor from Indonesia through referendum, which fuelled their alienation from the West. This sense of loss of dignity actually invited reactions from some sections of the Islamist groups through the terrorist means.

Mark Mancall gives a different explanation to the rise of terrorism in the Indonesian context. Since the Dutch colonial rule, a policy was adopted called *transmigrasi* (transmigration) of Javanese people to other islands including the eastern parts of Indonesia in order to redress the population pressure on Java. In the post independence period, this policy was also continued. However, these new Javanese migrants often found it hard to survive in competing with the existing Christian population in the eastern parts with limited resources including the land. This actually initiated a clash of interests, leading to communal conflict between the Javanese Muslims and the local Christians. Such conflict often developed into a *jihad* on the part of some Muslims to fight the Christians through organising groups and recruits with Islamist ideology. So the root of Islamists led terrorism is the communal clash of interests in the eastern parts of Indonesia particularly in Moluku, Sulawesi and the Spice Island.<sup>27</sup>

#### 4. Islamic Piety not Related to Voting Behaviour

Although the post-Suharto period was open to what is being argued as “a surge of religious freedom and experimentation, including *dakwah* and Wahhabi influences”, Indonesia broadly remained committed to secular values as its state ideology.<sup>28</sup> While it is true that the later days of Suharto saw some signs of rising Islamic values, Indonesian state has not committed to Islamic ideology and remains insulated from the influence of Islamist activism. The Suharto regime, being constantly accused of several corruption charges and being faced with internal divisions within its administration, sought the support of some Islamist groups by sponsoring Islamic activities, however not beyond the secular limits. The growing discontent from among the urban middle class Muslims was mainly not with the secularisation, but more relating to the government policies and practices including the corruption charges. This is aptly evident in the general election's results in 1999, 2004 and 2009. The electoral performances of the Islamist parties were no higher than it had been

<sup>26</sup> Timo Kivimäki, “Terrorism in Indonesia”, *NIAS: Asia Insight*, Issue 3, 2003.

<sup>27</sup> Mark Mancall, “The Roots and Societal Impact of Islam in Southeast Asia” [Interview by Anthony Shih]. *Stanford Journal of East Asian Affairs*, Vol. 2, Spring, 2002, p. 117.

<sup>28</sup> Unlike Malaysia, the religious courts in Indonesia are subordinate to the Supreme Court. See Fealy et. al., 2006, *op. cit.*, p. 47.

in the elections of 1955 and 1971.<sup>29</sup> This clearly indicates no increase of appeal of the Muslim political parties despite the signs of upsurge of Islam in the Indonesian context.<sup>30</sup> Although following the fall of Suharto, Indonesia saw the proliferation of political parties with Islamist agenda, this, however, did not radically alter their level of acceptance to the common people.<sup>31</sup>

The growing piety among Indonesians does not indicate the cause of concern mainly because it has not automatically translated into the increase of electoral votes for religious parties.<sup>32</sup> It is true that the average Indonesians have gradually chosen "Islamic pietism" in recent years, often reflected in the increasing number of Muslims performing Islamic rituals including regular prayers diligently, fasting during the month of Ramadan, participating in Qur'anic studies and following "Islamic products" like *sharia* banking and Muslim clothing. Nevertheless this created a contrasting trend i.e., the "rising religiosity and falling support for political Islam" through rejecting the political parties that support Islamic ideology.<sup>33</sup> This indicates that most religious Muslims do no longer consider the electoral support to political Islam as their religious commitment, disapproving the link between their faith and confessional behaviour through voting.<sup>34</sup> As Greg Fealy asserts:

'The declining vote for these parties deserves close analysis for what it tells us about popular attitudes towards religion in politics. The majority of Muslim voters appear not to regard Islam as critical to their electoral decisions, even though it may be important in their personal lives.'<sup>35</sup>

Why could not the Islamist parties make significant headway in electoral performance? Islamist parties in Indonesia suffer shrinking confidence among the voters of which Muslims are predominant. The main reason of their failure to attract voters is their inability to address the "pressing socio-economic issues" in

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<sup>29</sup> Despite the largest size of the Muslim population, the Islamist parties did not gain more than 44% of the total votes in any of the general elections. They also failed to amass pressure on the government to Islamise the Indonesian constitution and state. See Fealy et. al., *op.cit.*, p. 44.

<sup>30</sup> The only Islamist party, Justice Prosperous Party (PKS), made a substantial progress in the elections. It obtained 1.36 per cent in 1999, while 7.34 in 2004 and 7.8 in 2009. However, this individual progress is mainly due to its clean, pro-reform policies and its campaigns against corruption. Its moderate posture also helped to attract the urban middle class. The leadership made a number of compromises on Islamist agenda and maintained a pluralist orientation. See Greg Fealy, "Indonesia's Islamic Parties in Decline", *Inside Story: Current Affairs and Culture from Australia and Beyond* on 11 May 2009, available at <http://inside.org.au/indonesia%E2%80%99s-islamic-parties-in-decline/>, accessed on 11 March 2013.

<sup>31</sup> Jamie Mackie, *op.cit.*, p. 71.

<sup>32</sup> Kikue Hamayotsu, "The End of Political Islam? A Comparative Analysis of Religious Parties in the Muslim Democracy of Indonesia", *Journal of Current Southeast Asian Affairs*, Vol. 30, No. 3, 2011, p. 153.

<sup>33</sup> Greg Fealy, *op.cit.*, p. 1.

<sup>34</sup> Berno, "Political Islam in Indonesia – A Threat to the Pancasila State?", available at <http://bernardoh.wordpress.com/2009/11/04/political-islam-in-indonesia-a-threat-to-the-pancasila-state/>, accessed on 20 November 2012; Greg Fealy, *op.cit.*, p. 1.

<sup>35</sup> Greg Fealy, *op.cit.*, p. 1.

the Indonesian context. Although, the Islamist parties profess a complete code of life, they have not presented any effective model to resolve the material problems of the Indonesian people. According to a survey conducted by Indonesian Survey Institute, there exists an inverse correlation between perceived 'Islamicness' and the competence and ability to bringing back the country on track of prosperity.<sup>36</sup>

## 5. Why Political Islam is not on the Rise?

Having highlighted the low level of Islamic profile, we will now look at the reasons why Islam-based politics has not assumed a significant concern in the Indonesian context. Of particular importance of the above discussion is that the demographic dominance of the Muslims does not determine the behaviour of most Indonesians and the state has remained committed to secular values. The following discussion brings out the case as to why Islam is not determinative.

### 5.1 Recognising the Plurality of Indonesian Society

Indonesia consists of varied ethnic groups, languages, social organisations and cultures in an archipelago stretching from the islands of Sumatra, Java, Bali, Kalimantan, Sulawesi, Maluku and Papua. The country is one of the extended archipelagos with about 13,677 tropical islands spreading over 3,300 miles, having diversity with about 325 ethnic or cultural groups. They are in fact, also different in dialects and divided into 18 language groups. In such heterogeneity, "the ideal of unity is extremely difficult to accomplish."<sup>37</sup> Plurality has become the very texture of Indonesian society in the context of such diversity. This has actually led the Indonesians to promote the principle of *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*, or unity in diversity<sup>38</sup> to lend credence to this multiplicity. Although Indonesia is pre-dominantly a Muslim country, the promotion of this principle was mainly intended to represent the secular values and a "workable arrangement" to recognise differences and diversity within the country.<sup>39</sup>

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>37</sup> Dong S. Choi, 1996, *op.cit.*, p. 19.

<sup>38</sup> That is why a strong national leadership should now seriously embark on the implementation of *Pancasila* values. The first step to make is the realisation of the nation's motto *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* or Unity in Diversity. It means the respect for the place and freedom of the individual in harmony with the need of social unity. It also means the recognition of the importance of each ethnic and religious group within the national unity. *Pancasila*, therefore means harmony and not conflict in life. See Mirza T. Kusuma, *op.cit.*, p. 1.

<sup>39</sup> Pakpahan, 2010, *op.cit.*, p. 1; Judith Nagata, "Authority and Democracy in Malaysian and Indonesian Islamic Movements", in Johan Saravanamuttu (ed.), *Islam and Politics in Southeast Asia*, London: Routledge, 2010, pp. 18-44.

This recognition was reflected in the adoption of *Pancasila*<sup>40</sup> as its national ideology in the country's constitution to show the hybrid nature of the society. One of the principles of this ideology is the belief in 'One God'. However, it does not specify what the name of God is, indicating it very open to all. For example, the Muslims interpret it as Allah while it is God to the Christians.<sup>41</sup> The underlying message of this ideology is its religious neutrality leaving little space for the role of Islam in public life. The other objective is to achieve national cohesion among the different groups of Indonesians. The promotion of *Pancasila* thus serves two purposes. One is to diminish the tension between the role of Islam and the secular national state and the other is to prevent disintegration within the state.

The recognition of such plurality negates any opportunity of using Islam as the monopoly by any ethnic group. Accordingly, all ethnic groups sans Islam are minorities.<sup>42</sup> Unlike Malaysia, there is no official recognition of privileged relations between religion and ethnic groups in Indonesia. No religion is singled out or acknowledged constitutionally or by any legal provisions to claim any state sponsored concessions.<sup>43</sup> As Johan Saravanamuttu observes:

'In Indonesia, since the state is secular and based on Panchasila, which does not specify any official religion, the dividing issue is based less on competing discourses about the definition and meaning of the Islamic state, as in the case of Malaysia, than between a state that is quasi-secular and groups that advance political agendas that have Islamist goals or Islamic ideology.'<sup>44</sup>

The country's constitution reflects the plural nature of the society and the state upholds the secularism as its innate ideology. When the Jakarta Charter<sup>45</sup> containing Islamic provisions was drafted upon demands of some Islamist groups, the moderate and ethnic groups opposed to it arguing that the Islamic agenda would make the integration a problematic. The Christian groups already gave a warning that they would leave the state if the Jakarta Charter was adopted. The rejection of the

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<sup>40</sup> The *Pancasila* includes five basic principles which were adopted in the Constitution in 1945. Since then, the Five Principles have become the blueprint of the Indonesian nation. The Five Principles are: belief in one God, just and civilised humanity, Indonesian unity, democracy under the wise guidance of representative consultations and social justice for all the peoples of Indonesia, available at <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/440932/Pancasila>, accessed on 23 November 2012.

<sup>41</sup> Mark Mancall, *op.cit.*, p. 116.

<sup>42</sup> Nagata, *op.cit.*, pp. 18-20.

<sup>43</sup> The original constitution recognises five religions – Islam, Buddhism, Protestantism, Catholicism and Hindu-Bali. In 2006, Confucianism was included in the list. See, Nagata, *op.cit.*, p. 35. In Malaysia, Islam has been officially singled out as the state religion. See Barry Wain, *op. cit.*

<sup>44</sup> Johan Saravanamuttu, "Introduction: Majority-Minority Muslim Politics and Democracy", in J. Saravanamuttu (ed.), *Islam and Politics in Southeast Asia*, London: Routledge, 2010, p. 7.

<sup>45</sup> The Jakarta Charter was drafted in 1945 which allowed the inclusion of Islamic values including the mandatory requirement of the President be Muslim and introduction of Islamic laws in the state. However, this was rejected in view of the diverse nature of the fledgling state. See Fealy et. al., *op.cit.*, p. 47.

charter and later marginalisation of political Islam reinforced Indonesia's commitment to plural and secular values. Kusuma thus asserts:

'Pancasila puts Muslims, Christians, Hindus and Buddhists on an equal level. That is not only a revolution in Islamic thinking but also a translation of the mystical ideas of the great Sufi Muslim Ibn Arabi into a political program. Sufi Islam's tolerance and its rejection of any dogmatism has become a basis of political reality in Indonesia.'<sup>46</sup>

The *Pancasila* also brings out another important paradox of an Islamic polity. According to Islamic interpretation, in a Muslim rule or Islamic society non-Muslims are treated as *dhimmi*<sup>47</sup> who enjoys protection from the state in exchange of taxes or other means of sacrifices. However, the *Pancasila* ideology is an exception to this rule in the Indonesian context. The non-Muslims are not considered as 'second class citizens' but they are regarded as citizens of equal standing as far as the constitutional and legal rights are concerned. This offers the adoption of an inclusive policy by the Indonesian state.<sup>48</sup>

## 5.2 Influence of Syncretistic Nature of Islam

Islam in Indonesia is largely characterised as syncretistic in formation blended with local customs. Before Islam came into contact, there existed a powerful culture where Buddhism and Hinduism took firm root in ancient times. According to Clifford Geertz, in about 400 A.D. Hinduism and then Buddhism began penetration in the Java and in about 1500 A.D. Islam came through sea trade.<sup>49</sup> Authors like Rabasa hold that Islam spread to Southeast Asia including Indonesia mainly through the contacts of Arab Muslim traders in the middle ages and conversion of the local elites through peaceful means of preaching and *sufi* influence.<sup>50</sup> Dong S. Choi gives an explanation of three theories as to such preponderance of Islam through peaceful means.<sup>51</sup>

<sup>46</sup> Mirza T. Kusuma, *op.cit.*, p. 1.

<sup>47</sup> This *Pancasila* definition of monotheism is a clear-cut deviation from the traditional Islamic *dhimmi* principle. A *dhimmi* may be defined as a person with accountability and inviolability, granted human rights and constitutional rights. In classical Islamic jurisprudence the term *dhimma* means accountability and inviolability, which is usually termed personhood in modern legal discourse. *Dhimma* is also commonly understood as "protection", "treaty" and "peace" because it is a treaty that puts non-Muslims under the protection of Muslims (it is the concept of the rights of minorities), but used to be understood as second class citizens. See Mark Durie, *The Third Choice: Islam, Dhimmitude and Freedom*, USA: Deror Books, 2010.

<sup>48</sup> Mirza T. Kusuma, *op.cit.*, p. 1.

<sup>49</sup> Clifford Geertz, *The Religion of Java*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960.

<sup>50</sup> Angel Rabasa, *op.cit.*, p. 27.

<sup>51</sup> According to Dong S. Choi, there are three dominant theories that explain how Islam became preponderant in Indonesia. The first theory is the role of the *sufi* missionaries who mainly came from South India and Bengal mainly as preachers, teachers and politicians. They penetrated deep into the society including the villages and served as the agents of the rulers. These *sufis* preached Islam in line with the local traditions and belief system. For example, they advocated the "religious retreats" and minimised the strict rituals of Islam. The local people found convergence with the new religion much with their folks and traditions.

However, before the advent of these religions, the Javanese showed their conviction to animist traditions. The impact of Islam was about five hundred years while the other traditions are thousand years old. This has actually made Indonesian Islam "remarkably malleable, syncretic, multivocal and multilayered."<sup>52</sup> The underlying reason is that the length of Islam is less than that of the other traditions.<sup>53</sup>

The key implication of this syncretism is that Islam marked the face of the Indonesian character on the surface. However, it did not alter the very basic cultural textures and skeleton of the Javanese society.<sup>54</sup> This in a sense creates the notion of a tolerant, accommodative and flexible culture.<sup>55</sup> In another sense, the Indonesians were open to other incoming religions and took the necessary ingredients in accordance with their own fundamental folk traditions or beliefs to constitute a new synthesis.<sup>56</sup> Dian M. Safitri maintains:

'In history all over the world, religions have had to enter syncretism with local cultures so that they could easily be accepted by local societies. In Indonesia, particularly in Java, such amalgamation has proven effective in disseminating Islamic precepts. Yet, something else emerged from this fusion of Islam, Hinduism, and Javanese culture, termed *abangan*, which is incompatible with real Islamic tenets regarding ethical monotheism. Despite some criticism of *abangan*, many Javanese still practise it due to their pride of Javanese culture and the endeavour to perpetuate their ancestors' beliefs.'<sup>57</sup>

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They did not have to change their own practices when they converted. Islam thus made an easy access to the hearts and minds of the people. The second theory is the role of the merchants who came from the Middle East and came into contact with the local rulers of Indonesian coasts or ports and impressed them with their knowledge, products and skills. Gradually, they formed alliances with the rulers who converted into Islam often to court their support against rival kingdoms. For example, the coastal rulers used the merchants to resist the pre-Islamic kingdom of Majapahit (1293-1389). Once the local rulers converted, the local subjects also followed them. The merchants also found settlement in the coastal belts through marriages and building infrastructures and enterprises. Thus Islam made an inroad in Indonesia. The third theory is the value of Islam interpreted to the common people as worthy. They found in it individual and social justice, which was absent in the then "village-scaled societies". Islam provided an ideological basis to address both their spiritual and social demands. However, all the three theories were at work to explain the spread of Islam in Indonesia. The key point is that Islam came to Indonesia peacefully not by force. See, Dong S. Choi, *op.cit.*, pp. 12-3.

<sup>52</sup> Riaz Hassan, *Inside Muslim Minds*, Carlton, Australia: Melbourne University Press, 2008.

<sup>53</sup> Abdul G. Muhaimen, *The Islamic Traditions of Cirebon: Ibadat and Adat Among Javanese Muslims*, Canberra: ANU Press, 2005, p. 1.

<sup>54</sup> Java is the most populous island where about 60 per cent of the total Indonesian people live. It is the centre of Indonesian history during the Hindu-Buddhist-Muslim-Dutch periods. The Javanese are dominant economically, politically and culturally. Riaz Hassan notes that Indonesian Islam is largely blended with the social structure of Java where images and metaphors of the local culture became dominant in it. Riaz Hassan, *op.cit.*, p. 9.

<sup>55</sup> Angel M. Rabasa, *op.cit.*, p. 27.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>57</sup> Dian M. Safitri, "The Amalgamation of Javanese *Abangan*, Islam, Taoism and Buddhism in the Sam Po Kong Shrine", *Stanford Journal of East Asian Affairs*, Vol. 11, No. 1, 2011, p. 153.

While Islamic tenets are subject to different interpretations from different cultural, historical and intellectual circumstances, the Javanese also incorporated the Islamic traditions in their own way what appears as “the divergence in contexts”.<sup>58</sup> Such blending is not uncommon in the Middle Eastern Islamic literature which referred to the mutual influences between religious traditions. This has actually determined the Islamic flexibility in the Indonesian context. Consequently, the pressure for greater orthodoxy towards Islam may have “distasteful intrusion” in the spiritual lives of the Indonesian people.<sup>59</sup> As a result, Indonesian Islam remains “proud and confident of its syncretic blend with national and local traditions as well as of healthy eclecticism with the liberating values of foreign influences” that rules out the possibility of being trapped into any religious radicalism.<sup>60</sup>

### 5.3 The Diversity within Islam

The diversity of the Islamic community in Indonesia is remarkable. The categorisation of this community is also very complex. Based on Islamic piety, this community has drawn a sharp distinction between what Geertz in his famous book *The Religion of Java* (1960) indentified as *abangan* and *santri*. The first category is relating to the syncretistic traditions which represent the pre-Islamic elements, largely from the Buddhism and Hinduism.<sup>61</sup> On the other hand, the *santri* Islam is associated with strict interpretation of Islam. The followers seek to observe the rituals and practices as enshrined in the scriptures. For them, Islam is a key to the day-to-day lives of the Muslim.<sup>62</sup>

Among the *santri* Muslims, there are traditionalist and modernist groups. They are divided on doctrinal interpretations and practices of the Islamic prescriptions. The traditionalist group is led by *Nadhatul Ulama* (NU) which was formed in 1926 by K. H. Hasyim Asy’ari and K. H. Wahab Chasbullah and now has a membership of about 40 million Muslims of which most are from Java. This group mainly seeks to preserve the local customs while practising the traditional medieval Islamic scholarship.<sup>63</sup> On

<sup>58</sup> Mirza T. Kusuma, *op.cit.*, p. 1.

<sup>59</sup> Most Javanese people consider the relationship between one’s God and one’s soul as essentially an internal and sacred matter. This actually negates the orthodox interpretation of compulsion and force as per the rigid form of Islam. See Mirza T. Kusuma, *ibid*.

<sup>60</sup> Juwono Sudarsono, *op.cit.*, p. 1.

<sup>61</sup> They are not the strict adherents of the tenets of Islamic interpretations. Before the advent of Islam, the non-Islamic folk-beliefs and elements had a strong presence in the archipelago and their Islam accommodated these elements in their own way as against the strict adherence to the orthodox Islam. This group is often referred to as the Javanese Muslims, the largest ethnic majority in Indonesia. This term is also used to refer to the less observant Muslims in other ethnic groups in the country.

<sup>62</sup> For example, they pray five times, fast during the month of Ramadan, pay the wealth tax (*zakat*) and if possible perform pilgrimage to Mecca. See Greg Fealy et. al., *op.cit.*, pp. 30-40; R. William Liddle, “New Patterns of Islamic Politics in Democratic Indonesia”, *Asia Program Special Report*, Vol. 110, Washington DC: Woodrow Wilson International Centre for Scholars, 2005, p. 6.

<sup>63</sup> Traditionalists continue to adhere to the Syafi’i school of legal interpretation, which is taught by charismatic ulama (scholars and teachers), in thousands of boarding schools (called *pesantren*) throughout



the other hand, the modernists known as *Muhammadiyah*<sup>64</sup> consider the traditional practices as impure and want to cleanse the faith by returning to the pristine teaching found in the Qur'an and the example of the Prophet. They also seek to apply the modern advances and concepts as long as it does not contradict the key Islamic teaching. This organisation now claims to have about 30 million members throughout Indonesia.<sup>65</sup> Although both these organisations seek to confirm the Islamic rituals in different doctrinal directions, they have in general shown their moderate posture on politics and eschew extremism.<sup>66</sup>

However, while the traditionalists are known as "political quietists" the modernists' view governance of social life in accordance with the Islamic rituals. Among the modernists, there exists two trends, one is known as the liberal or moderate and the other Islamist. Most modernists fall into the liberal category while a small minority belong to the Islamism trend. The moderates reinterpret the Qur'an and *Hadith* in the context of modern problems and circumstances. They are interested to look at sacred rituals distinct from the secular values and keep the state outside the purview of religion. However, the Islamists try to assert themselves differently with regard to the state. They view every aspect of human and social life should be administered in accordance with Islamic prescriptions. Nevertheless, the Islamist Muslims are a minority within a minority and has remained a "peripheral phenomenon" in Indonesia.<sup>67</sup>

Even within the Islamist parties<sup>68</sup>, there are two groups: Islamist and pluralist parties. The Islamists proclaim Islamic identity and seek to establish Islamist agenda in their campaigns and goals while the pluralist parties have adopted religious neutral state ideology, *Pancasila*, as their basis and eschew *sharia* based agenda. Of the ten such parties, seven are Islamist and three constitute pluralist in their posture on Islam. Such distinction is important mainly because the party ideology and moderate posture draw the level of popular support. The seven Islamist parties obtained 17 per cent of the total votes while the pluralist parties received 12 per cent. This is a decline by 5 per cent and 3 per cent in that order from the 2004 election. In the 1999 election, these figures were 16 per cent and 24 per cent respectively. The key point is that the Indonesians have made a difference in their voting behaviour between parties which

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the archipelago. In Java and in few other regions the largest and most politically influential traditionalist organisation is Nahdlatul Ulama or NU (The Awakening of the Religious Scholars and Teachers).

<sup>64</sup> Muhammadiyah, founded in 1912, has membership of about 25-30 million.

<sup>65</sup> Modernists tend to be more urban and Western-educated than traditionalists. They are greatly influenced by such nineteenth and early twentieth century Middle Eastern thinkers as Muhammad Abduh and Rashid Rida, abjure the Syafi'i and other classical schools in favour of direct reading of the Qur'an and Hadith, (sayings attributed to the Prophet Muhammad). Considerably fewer in number than traditionalists, modernists are scattered throughout the archipelago, with the greatest concentrations in Yogyakarta and West Sumatra. See R. William Liddle, *op.cit.*, p. 6.

<sup>66</sup> Greg Barton, *op.cit.*, p. 115.

<sup>67</sup> R. William Liddle, *op.cit.*, pp. 6-7.

<sup>68</sup> The main Islamist parties are the National Awakening Party (PKB), Justice Prosperous Party (PKS), PPP (Development Unity Party), PBB (Crescent Moon and Star Party) and National Mandate Party (PAN).



follow pro-*sharia* Islamist ideology and those who are secular in outlook.<sup>69</sup> Such a distinction constructs the Islamist agenda into “stagnant and limited to a very small minority of the Islamic community”.<sup>70</sup>

Moreover, many of the Islamist parties have suffered internal tensions varying from ideological interpretation of Islamist agenda to rivalry among party leadership. For example, PKB, an influential Islamist party, has been faced with internal feuds between competing groups and has changed four chairmen since 2004. Its charismatic leader, Abdurrahman Wahid, former president of Indonesia, has been alienated from the party leadership and he was critical of the present leadership during the 2009 election. This actually resulted in the shift of votes among the rural Javanese Muslims, known as party’s solid support base, from PKB to other parties. Similarly, PPP has been deeply divided into two groups along the line of two main Islamic organisations, *Nahdlatul Ulama* and *Muhammadiyah*, and its leadership has experienced cleavages arising out of personality and sectional clashes.<sup>71</sup> The Islamists suffer cleavages within their Islamic agenda and have greatly failed to present a consolidated one Islamic platform for the Indonesians.<sup>72</sup>

#### 5.4 *The Role of Authoritarian Secular Regimes*

For most of recent history, Indonesia was ruled by two prominent authoritarian regimes of Sukarno (1950-65) and Suharto (1967-1998). These two regimes strongly promoted the ideology of *Pancasila* as an instrument to marginalise the role of Islam. They always used the state machineries to subordinate Islam in the public discourses. The keys to their strategies were policies to limit the activities of the Islamist movements ranging from persuasion to using force in order to contain them. Judith Nagata highlights such two strategies:

“One method was to incorporate Muslims into a controlled electoral process, like PAS in Malaysia, and a sequence of religious political parties were created, from Masyumi to the PPP (United Development Party), all as coalitions of several religious groups more easily manageable by the government. Another strategy was Suharto’s co-optation of the most prominent (and possibly subversive) Muslim intellectual[s] and students in a government managed organizations, Indonesian Association of Muslim Intellectuals (ICMI). By this means, even students overseas were kept under permanent, in indirect, control. Arguably, Suharto was master of an authoritarian democracy at the time, in anticipation of a political Islam yet to materialize.”<sup>73</sup>

<sup>69</sup> R. William Liddle, *op.cit.*, pp. 5-7.

<sup>70</sup> Greg Fealy, *op.cit.*, p. 1.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*; Berno, 2009, *op. cit.*, p. 1.

<sup>72</sup> R. William Liddle, *op. cit.*, pp. 5-7.

<sup>73</sup> Judith Nagata, *op.cit.*, p. 36.

The regimes in fear of an Islamic revival applied restrictive policies on the Islamist organisations that supported the establishment of an Islamic state.<sup>74</sup> The amalgamation of all Islamist parties as PPP clearly indicates that the new party complied with the limits set by the government. The merged party was not even allowed to take a name referring to Islam. Similarly, the creation of ICMI was also intended to “channel and control” the mobilisation of certain Islamist groups. These government supported groups also saw an opportunity to gain greater power in cooperating with the regimes. Many of the groups later accommodated with the government run programmes and participated in the political process including representation in the Parliament and obtain power within the government. Such accommodation resulted in the emergence of ‘civil Islam’ in Indonesia.<sup>75</sup> The outcome of Suharto’s policies was thus, to subordinate the influence of political Islam.<sup>76</sup>

The authoritarian strategies of the government including repressive measures to control the Islamist groups worked well to contain their agenda for an Islamic state. One of such efforts to domesticate the Islamists was framing of a legislation in 1985 that required all organisations to adopt *Pancasila* as their basis of ideological posture.<sup>77</sup> Such measures of Suharto were labelled what Judith Nagata<sup>78</sup> calls “authoritarian democracy” to restrict the voices of the Islamists and the role of Islam in the polity.

## 6. Conclusion

The above discussion has dealt with the formation and the very character of Islam in the Indonesian context. We have seen that although the vast majority of the population are Muslims and there are some pressures from radical groups to Islamise, Indonesia remains committed to the secular values. The radical Islamists, although often expressed their existence in politics through various means including violence, constitute a minority within the minority population who seek to establish an Islamic state with *sharia* as the basis of the rule of law. However, as we have observed, these Islamists are “vastly outnumbered, out-educated, out-publicised..... and outinfluenced by the tolerant, forward-thinking moderates of Indonesian Islam.”<sup>79</sup> The discussion has also highlighted the main reasons as to why Islamist politics has not assumed greater importance as compared to other Muslim countries including Malaysia and Pakistan

<sup>74</sup> The adoption of authoritarian measures including the use of force was common to both Sukarno and Suharto. The repression and ban on *Darul Islam* and *Masyumi* are examples of such measures.

<sup>75</sup> Jaques Bertrand, *op.cit.*, p. 49.

<sup>76</sup> Berno, *op.cit.*, p. 1.

<sup>77</sup> The law also provided the government to supervise, intervene and if necessary ban an organisation in order to ensure compliance. The legislation limited the practices of Islam only to individual level at family and mosque, restricting embracing Islam as a complete code of conduct including political activities. These restrictions invited reactions from the radical groups including the clerics who threatened political opposition including violence. However, the government in turn was not ready to tolerate such dissidence through stern actions including arrest, seizures, trial for subversion and long term prisons.

<sup>78</sup> Judith Nagata, 2010, *op.cit.*, p. 36.

<sup>79</sup> Merle Ricklefs, *op.cit.*, p. 12.

where Islam has assumed higher profile in response to local contexts.<sup>80</sup> Although syncretism is characteristic to Islam in South and Southeast Asian Muslim countries, Indonesian case presents differently considering the very pluralistic society in terms of ethnicity, language, region, religion and culture. The state since independence recognises the importance of such plurality and has firmly followed *Pancasila* as religious neutral state ideology and disapproved the greening of Islamist ideology. The majority people have not shown inclination towards the Islam-based political parties who, in their belief, can hardly address their socio-economic problems. The election results of 1999, 2004 and 2009 show that the Islam-based politics are on the decline and marginalised despite the fall of Suharto who was known as staunch supporter of secular values and for authoritarian suppression of the Islamist agenda. The key element of the analysis is that Indonesian Islam is hardly sensitive to the global resurgence of Islam caused by ideological conviction and its characterisation of universalism that challenges the status quo.

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<sup>80</sup> In Malaysia, the ethnic conflict between 'not-so-majority' Malays and 'not-so-minority' non-Malay has elevated the public role of Islam. This has found expression in the state sponsorship of Islamist activism (e.g., the sharia courts have been made equal to that of the Supreme Court). Islam was also made the state religion of the country and equated with that of Malay identity. Before the independence, Malay states did not experience any religious issue since there were no competing groups for political eminence. However, this has become more pronounced in the post independence period as the Malays saw their communal interests being marginalised by the non-Malays. The Malay communities began to link their identity with Islam. Hence the rise of Islam is inherently connected with the communal political interests between two communities, the Malays and the non-Malays. See Maznah Mohamad, "The Authoritarian State and Political Islam in Muslim-Majority Malaysia", in Johan Saravanamuttu (ed.), *Islam and Politics in Southeast Asia*, London: Routledge, 2010, pp. 65-70. Similarly, in Pakistan Islam has assumed higher profile in the polity largely because of the ethnic rivalries among different groups such as Mohajir vs. Sindhis, Panjabis vs. others. Due to heterogeneity in the social structure, Islam was instrumental as the unifying factor of the state. The ruling elites particularly the military also used the 'Islamic card' to legitimise their authority. This happened since its independence in 1947. Thus concept of jihad was developed in the 1971 war on Bangladesh by the military regime. The Pakistan army was given the impression that the Bengali liberation forces, Mukhti Bahini, were "kafir army" (infidels) and "to defend Pakistan" was equated with "to defend Islam". See Emajuddin Ahamed, "Current Trends of Islam in Bangladesh", *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 18, No. 25, 1983, p. 1117; Christine Fair, "Is Pakistan's Army as Islamist as We Think?," 2011, available at <http://www.defence.pk/forums/pakistan-army/129844-pakistans-army-islamist-we-think.html>, accessed on 20 Jun 2012; "Pakistan: The Mullahs and the Military", *ICG Asia Report No. 49*, pp. 7-8. The Islamisation made a "creeping progress" during General Zia's time (1978 – 88) covering legal, political and economic systems and the psyche of the nation so deeply that the subsequent governments found hard to back out "whether they wanted it or not". See William B. Milam, *Bangladesh and Pakistan: Flirting with Failure in South Asia*, New York: Columbia University Press, 2011, p. 82.



*Nazmul Arifeen*

## **GLOBAL GOVERNANCE, UNITED NATIONS AND THE NON-STATE ACTORS: THE UN RESOLUTION ON THE RULE OF LAW 2012**

### **Abstract**

Some International Relations (IR) scholars, primarily those belonging to the dominant realist schools of the discipline, often undervalued the importance of International Organisations i.e. the United Nations arguing that a 'world government' is not attainable in an international system composed of sovereign states of equal status. While that claim is largely valid and a global government remains an unattainability in the foreseeable future, however, as this article argues, global governance—a process through which different actors, both state and non-state, achieve goals through informal and formal structures which in a way contribute in achieving order in the international system—is feasible. Since its inception, the UN has played a commendable role in this regard. Unlike its predecessor, it has been remarkably successful in managing the complexity of global affairs. The organisation is increasingly playing significant role in different spheres of international affairs. Taking the case of the high level meeting on the rule of law at the 67<sup>th</sup> session of the UN General Assembly, this paper argues that the UN has achieved the objectives of global governance by accommodating emerging new actors including non-governmental and civil society organisations. In doing so, the paper explores how non-state actors use informal structures and international norm setting mechanisms to complement the UN in achieving its objectives of global governance.

### **1. Introduction**

Following a high level meeting, participated by the heads of states and governments as well as non-state actors, at the 67<sup>th</sup> session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) on the rule of law, the United Nations (UN) approved on 24 September 2012 a resolution<sup>1</sup> entitled the Declaration of the High-level Meeting of the General Assembly on the Rule of Law at the National and International Levels. As a result of a resolution adopted during the 66<sup>th</sup> UNGA, the UN opted for the rule of law as a theme for this high-level meeting. The UN has considered the rule of law as an agenda since 1992 with renewed interests since 2006. In the following years, the UN adopted resolutions at least five times and produced a number of documents including a report of the UN Secretary General that catalogued the efforts put together so far by the UN on the rule of law at the national and international levels. The purpose of the UN's emphasis on the rule of law is not limited to the application

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**Nazmul Arifeen** is Research Officer at Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies (BIISS). His e-mail address is: [arifeen@biiss.org](mailto:arifeen@biiss.org)

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<sup>1</sup> Resolution No. A/RES/67/1.

of it at the international level; rather, the UN has been active in promoting rule of law at the national level through promoting and strengthening democracy and other national legal institutions viz. the judiciary. However, the outcome document at the 67<sup>th</sup> UNGA marked the latest development of the UN's endeavour in recent years to promote rule of law at the national and international levels. From a global governance perspective, this was a momentous event owing to two distinct reasons: strengthening the rule of law at the national and international levels augments the UN's future role in global governance and it provides non-state actors including civil society and non-governmental organisations with an opportunity to maneuver and delineate their positions in the meeting, thus contributing to emerging global governance.

This paper analyses the developments at the UNGA from a global governance perspective. It begins by asking some fundamental questions with a view to unravelling some governance problems at the global level: what does global governance entail in the post-Cold War international politics and what are its characteristics? What role does the UN play as far as global governance is concerned? Observed through a global governance lens, why is the Resolution No. A/RES/61/1 a significant event? And finally, what were the agenda of the civil society and non-governmental organisations as far as the resolution on the rule of law is concerned? Addressing these questions the paper seeks to unravel both the emerging role of non-state actors and locate their position in the global governance spectrum.

Following the introduction, the paper begins with an exposition of the conceptual underpinnings of global governance in section two. It, then, moves on to explore the role played by the UN in an increasingly globalised world in third section. The fourth section specifically addresses the resolution on the rule of law<sup>2</sup> to show that how non-state actors fit into the emerging global governance architecture. In the fifth section, the paper analyses the role played by non-state actors *vis-à-vis* the resolution. The final section draws conclusions based on the discussion.

## 2. Global Governance: The Conceptual Framework

International system consisting of states, in the absence of a supranational authority to impose order, is anarchical by nature. Yet, at any given time, there are fewer visible conflicts at the global level compared to those occur within the nation-states run by governments. While there is no world government in place with supreme power and authority that can be exerted over states in the international system, however, a remarkable level of order and stability exists at the global level.<sup>3</sup> Although the UN exists, but it is in no way a "world government"; rather, a mere association of states. In that sense, it can be argued that the world is *governed* without the existence or even necessity of a government.

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<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> See Hedley Bull, *The Anarchical Society: A Study of Order in World Politics*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002.

To grasp the complexities of global governance, one needs to go beyond the traditional understanding of international political organisation. Because when it comes to world's organisation, our focus is often narrowed down to the notions of nations and states, as our understanding of politics is often limited to these entities considered to be the foundations of politics.<sup>4</sup> But scholars have raised questions whether states are the only primary actors, as often portrayed by realist scholars. They contend that neither are states only predominant actors in the international politics, nor have they lost their relevance in the age of globalisation. This is not to argue that states have lost their rights of sovereignty, rather the realm over which these exclusive rights, e.g. sovereignty and legitimate use of violence, can be exerted is dwindling, as the concept of state boundaries is becoming more and more blurred owing to rapid changes ensuing globalisation. The authority that states used to exclusively enjoy once is increasingly diffused and their hierarchy is diminished as well.<sup>5</sup>

Before we delve into the discussion on global governance, it is worthwhile to probe into the theoretical underpinnings of the term 'global governance'. The term is often mistakenly taken for 'world government', although 'governance' is very different from 'government'. While both government and governance consist of rule systems and steering mechanism through which authority is exercised to enable the governed to move towards a desired goal, but the rule systems of government consists of formal structures and institutions for addressing diverse issues. On the other hand, the rule systems of governance is much broader in sense. It implies collective attempt—both public and private—that uses informal as well as formal structures to make demands, frame goals, pursue policies and generate compliance.<sup>6</sup> Governments produce compliance through formal privileges such as sovereignty and constitutional legitimacy, on the contrary, governance generates rule systems from traditional norms and habits, informal agreements, shared premises, successful negotiations and other practices that lead people to comply with their directives. In that sense, as the demand for governance increases with the proliferation of complex interdependencies, rule systems can be found in non-governmental organisations, international corporations, civil societies, many other types of non-state agents and even in some intergovernmental organisations<sup>7</sup> that are not considered to be

<sup>4</sup> James N. Rosenau, *Study of World Politics: Volume II Globalization and Governance*, New York: Routledge, 2006, pp. 111-123.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>6</sup> James N. Rosenau, "Strong Demand, Huge Supply: Governance in an Emerging Epoch", in Ian Bache and Matthew Flinders (eds.), *Multi-level Governance*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2004, pp. 31-32.

<sup>7</sup> The idea that whether or not intergovernmental organisations are non-state actors is contested. Paul Reuter contends that such organisations are groups of states "which can permanently express a juristic will distinct from that of its individual members". See Paul Reuter, *International Institutions*, London: Allen & Unwin, 1958, p. 214, cited in Clive Archer, *International Organizations*, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition, London: Routledge, 2001, p. 32. Intergovernmental organisations enjoy certain level of autonomy *vis-à-vis* their positions on various issues. Besides, once the intergovernmental organisations are functional more often with their own bureaucracy, their roles are no longer contingent upon the acceptance by the member states. This gives such bodies a certain level of autonomy with regard to their actions. *Ibid.*, p. 81. In addition, some of these bodies allow significant level of non-governmental organisations' involvement in their activities.

governments.<sup>8</sup> While a world government would entail transfer of sovereignty, decision making authority from nation-states to a higher authority, on the other hand, global governance denotes how decisions are taken at the global level, cooperation between and among different entities.<sup>9</sup>

| Table 1: Difference between government and governance |  |  |
|---|--|--|
|   | Government                             | Governance   |
| Actors  | Public                                 | Both public and private  |
| Compliance mechanism                                  | Sovereignty, constitutional legitimacy | Traditional norms and habits, informal agreements, successful negotiations |
| Structure   | Formal structures and institutions     | Informal and formal structures   |

Source: Based on James N. Rosenau, *op. cit.*

Nevertheless, the United Nations is not a world democracy entrusted with political will and legitimate monopoly over violence to rule the society of nation-states. Some scholars have argued that it is highly unlikely that a form of global governance would emerge in the foreseeable future that would replace the nation-state system.<sup>10</sup> Rather than being replaced by a global government, nation-states are complemented by other actors including non-governmental organisations, intergovernmental organisations, civil society and transnational corporations, among others. Therefore, global politics is “characterized by the decreased salience of states and the increased involvement of non-state actors in norm- and rule-setting processes and compliance monitoring”.<sup>11</sup> Moreover, the scope of global governance is not necessarily limited to national and international spheres; rather it permeates into sub-national, regional and local spheres as well. At the state level, governance is done by governments whereas at the global level, it is often managed by multiple governments and other sources of authority that include non-state actors which may emerge from sub-national level as well. This can be imagined as governance without the presence of a world government. To put it in philosophical terms, global governance would be similar to what Immanuel Kant referred to as *cosmopolis* and a world government can be compared to *Leviathan* of Thomas Hobbes.<sup>12</sup>

For example, non-governmental organisations are found to be greatly involved in drafting the texts of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL) which is an intergovernmental organisation. Given these characteristics of the intergovernmental organisations, they have also been considered as non-state actors in this paper.

<sup>8</sup> James N. Rosenau, *op. cit.*

<sup>9</sup> Pascal Lamy, “The WTO’s contribution to global governance”, in Gary P. Sampson (ed.), *The WTO and Global Governance: Future Directions*, New York: United Nations University Press, 2008, pp. 40-41.

<sup>10</sup> Joseph S. Nye Jr. and John D. Donahue (eds.), *Governance in a Globalizing World*, Virginia: R. R. Donnelley and Sons, 2000, pp. 12-14.

<sup>11</sup> Tanja Brühl and Volker Rittberger, “From international to global governance: Actors, collective decision-making, and the United Nations in the world of the twenty-first century”, in Volker Rittberger (ed.), *Global Governance and the United Nations System*, New York: United Nations University Press, 2001, p. 2.

<sup>12</sup> Pascal Lamy, *op.cit.*



Thus, there are two concurrent features of the emerging global order: while the authority of non-state entities continues to augment, at the same time, the autonomy of national governments is eroding due to various international norms and treaties that rule out the possibility of states' arbitrary or whimsical behaviour disregarding international community. As other influential actors rise at the global stage, national governments are yielding their monopoly of representing their societies on the international scene, often contesting the legitimacy of official positions.<sup>13</sup> Non-state actors are seen functional in the role of such international agenda setting and collective decision-making.

This comparative nascent phase of global governance embodies some key features. Timothy Sinclair made a distinction between international institutions driven by states and global governance induced by the private actors.<sup>14</sup> According to him, global governance denotes the organisation of international life by private e.g. non-state actors in great measure. He criticised the international institutions dominated by the state thereby remain open to politicisation. Few would deny the fact that private actors are adept at providing solutions to international problems that cannot be addressed by normative thinking. Klaus Dodds, on the other hand, suggested<sup>15</sup> that international institutions do not exist independently of other agents, e.g. non-state actors, and structures. As far as global governance is concerned, it is difficult to distinguish between states and private actors. He, therefore, advocates for deepening of institutions and, maintains that global governance is based on rules and law embedded in the world institutions. Therefore, two arguments follow that, both the rule of law promoted by international institutions as well as the emergence of private or non-state actors play a growing role in the governance of global politics.

### 3. The United Nations and Global Governance

The United Nations is the only international organisation in existence with universal membership, albeit of states, that encompasses almost every ambit of human life. It is also the most obvious example of an international organisation that has successfully accommodated virtually all states of the world. There is almost nothing in human life that does not fall within the broad agenda of the UN. The emergence of the UN represents a particular world order viz. the post World War II era. Debate exists among scholars whether the founders of the UN wanted to make the organisation a supranational government. To some scholars, the organisation was

<sup>13</sup> Nora McKeon, *The United Nations and Civil Society: Legitimizing Global Governance –Whose Voice?*, New York: Zed Books, 2009, p. 7.

<sup>14</sup> Peer Schouten, "Theory Talk #5: Timothy Sinclair on Social Forces, Transnational Corporations and Global Governance", *Theory Talks*, available at <http://www.theory-talks.org/2008/05/theory-talk-5.html>, accessed on 27 November 2012.

<sup>15</sup> Peer Schouten, "Theory Talk #6: Klaus Dodds on James Bond, the Final Argument for a Geopolitical Approach to International Relations, and a Russian Flag on the Bottom of the Ocean", *Theory Talks*, available at <http://www.theory-talks.org/2008/05/theory-talk-6.html>, accessed on 27 November 2012.

nothing more than an association of sovereign states intended to salvage humanity from another scourge of war<sup>16</sup> – an enthusiasm that rightly captures the sentiment of world leaders in the wake of World War II.

When founded, the UN could not possibly foresee what world order would emerge in the wake of rapid decolonisation and proliferation of international and national non-governmental organisations. The world is more integrated today than the time the UN was created. “The enormous growth in people’s concern for human rights, equity, democracy, meeting basic material needs, environmental protection, and demilitarization has today produced a multitude of new actors who can contribute to governance.”<sup>17</sup> In the last more than six decades, the global politics has witnessed the rise and fall of bipolar world to the emergence of a multipolar world as pointed out by Fareed Zakaria<sup>18</sup>. Some authors believe that in this constantly changing world, the failure to adapt to the demands and voices of divergent and emerging new actors, both state as well as non-state agents like civil society and transnational corporations, would mean two things for the UN: either the organisation runs the risk of losing its relevance to the twenty-first century’s ever-growing political complexity or being replaced by stronger and more accommodative form of international organisation.<sup>19</sup> Thankfully, the UN charter outlines, albeit vaguely, some of its functions that gave the organisation the necessary framework it required to assume a future role of a supranational government.<sup>20</sup> The gradual institutional change within the UN with its offshoot agencies, sub-organs and various commissions afford it the functionality and leverage to address the most pressing issues of the contemporary world. Compared to any such organisation that existed in human history, the UN possesses attributes to manage complex governance challenges of contemporary world politics.

To understand the global governance output of the UN, it can be conceived as the UN’s capacity to provide government-like services in absence of world government.<sup>21</sup> Indeed, in any international humanitarian crisis and conflict, states and other actors look up to the UN to undertake initiatives to resolve the matters. When it comes to combating problems that are truly global in nature, e.g. climate change or nuclear proliferation, the UN is the single legitimate body that has both the mandate and capacity to act as pseudo-hierarchical authority. This does not obviously mean that the UN at one stage would evolve as a government of society of states, but

<sup>16</sup> W. Andy Knight, *A Changing United Nations: Multilateral Evolution and the Quest for Global Governance*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2001, pp. 161-162.

<sup>17</sup> Commission on Global Governance, *Towards the Global Neighbourhood: The Report of the Commission on Global Governance*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995, cited in Nora McKeon, *op. cit.*, p. 6.

<sup>18</sup> See Fareed Zakaria, *The Post-American World*, New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2008.

<sup>19</sup> Roger A. Coate, W. Andy Knight and Andrei I. Maximenko, “Requirements of Multilateral Governance for Promoting Human Security in a Postmodern Era”, in W. Andy Knight (ed.), *Adapting the United Nations to a Postmodern Era: Lessons Learned*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2001, p. 16.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>21</sup> Thomas G. Weiss and Annelies Z. Kamran, “Global Governance as International Organization”, in Jim Whitman (ed.), *Palgrave Advances in Global Governance*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009, p. 82.

it implies its ability to foster international cooperation between divergent and new actors that are not necessarily states.

But question arises with regard to how the UN accomplishes these arduous tasks of governing. If we look at the patterns of the UN's actions, one of its modes of functioning is to transform ideas into international norms, laws and institutions, thereby creating rules of the game by which states must act to remain legitimate stakeholders of international society. The UN, therefore, acts by setting international standards. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights is one such example of how ideas are transformed into inviolable international norms. Thus, despite not being a government, the UN regulates states' behaviour in substantive way. As shown in this particular case taken up by this paper, the UN, with the involvement of both state and non-state actors, is consciously promoting respect for the rule of law across the globe. If successfully implemented, the UN Resolution on the rule of law of 2012 would emerge as new standards for international society.

#### 4. High Level Meeting on the Rule of Law at the National and International Levels

It is customary that the UNGA's regular session begins each year on Tuesday in the third week of September and the discussion goes on for the next one year. World leaders gather at the UN headquarters at the beginning of each session. The formal gathering of world leaders at the 67<sup>th</sup> session of UNGA was held from 18-28 September 2012 at the UN headquarters in New York. This year's theme for the General Assembly was "Bringing about adjustment or settlement of international disputes or situations by peaceful means". Apart from the regular General Debate, there were high level meetings on the rule of law, sustainable energy, scaling up nutrition, peace building and fifteen years of the Chemical Weapons Convention. The session on the rule of law was a significant milestone owing to the fact that it was the first ever high level meeting on the issue held in the gathering. This attempt by the UN was aimed at codification and universal application of international law which has deeper implications for national, regional and international politics.

Before we set out to discuss the rule of law at the national and international levels, question can be asked why does it behoove upon the UN to promote such agenda in an international forum like itself? The answer to this question also has relevance to the notion of global governance. As an international body tasked with the welfare of humanity and preserving peoples from scourge of war, the UN faces multifarious challenges when it comes to compliance of international law by nation-states. Despite its overarching activities that encompass many aspects of human life, the UN is not government *per se* and, therefore, does not possess a police force to enforce laws. To overcome this shortcoming, it depends upon the voluntary endorsement and acceptance of such laws by states, the hitherto dominant actors in the international system. On the other hand, scholars often argue that international

law is not law in true sense. Since there is no world legislature to enact such laws, it is the sovereign states that voluntarily approve of and ratify such laws. It is also, in essence, how governance is managed at the global level. Without the existence of a global lawmaking body, the UN carries out the task by involving states and non-state actors like civil society thereby setting international norms.<sup>22</sup>

A norm-setting endeavour by the UN in recent times is the promotion of rule of law at the national and international levels. The success of the onerous task is, nevertheless, largely dependent upon the voluntary acceptance by the sovereign nation-states. The following discussion brings into forefront some of the activities undertaken by the UN.

At the international level, the UN efforts to promote international law include persuading states to sign and ratify international treaties and other instruments, setting international standards, as well as providing material and logistical support for the application of law. In addition to these, the UN provides assistance to the implementation of international law at the domestic level.

The high level meeting came up with a declaration at the end of the meeting which was later passed as a General Assembly resolution. The draft that was circulated by the President of the General Assembly on 19 September 2012 included 42 articles in three sections, in addition to a brief preamble.

The first section delineates the importance of the rule of law as a prerequisite for an international order based on the rule of law and its equal applicability to all states and international organisations. The declaration interlinked democratic values and the rule of law which are mutually inclusive. Economic growth, sustainable development, poverty alleviation and human rights all are contingent upon the robust adherence to and practice of the rule of law. The core values of international norms can be found in diverse experience of national practices of international community. Therefore, these values are not alien to societies across the world. However, there is a need for sharing these national practices of the rule of law through dialogues and negotiations.

The resolution stresses the significance of national ownership of such rule of law principles. After all, it is respective states who will apply these laws in their own contexts. Connected with this is the autonomy of the legal institutions that must be able to work with fairness and integrity. To this end, the resolution highlights informal justice mechanisms that are in line with the core values of international human rights. All people, particularly women and children, should be treated equally before the law.

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<sup>22</sup> See Commission on Global Governance, *Our Global Neighborhood*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1995, available at <http://www.sovereignty.net/p/gov/ogn-front.html>, accessed on 21 January 2013.

The section two acknowledges the contribution of the UN and its various organs regarding the promotion of the rule of law. The General Assembly has contributed to the promotion of the rule of law “through policy making and standard setting” and thereby progressing evolution of international law. The Security Council, the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), the International Court of Justice, the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea and International Law Commission all have played substantial role in strengthening the rule of law in their respective domains.

The third section enumerates the obligations of states under international law and its domestic implementation. States were asked to “strengthen the rule of law through voluntary pledges in the context of the high level meeting”. In this connection, the role of relevant civil society actors and other non-governmental organisations in supporting capacity-building and technical assistance was stressed.

A number of other resolutions related to the rule of law were adopted at the 67<sup>th</sup> UNGA.<sup>23</sup> A resolution<sup>24</sup> pertinent to the rule of law was adopted on 14 December 2012 and it contained 17 articles.<sup>25</sup> It further builds on the issues related to the rule of law. The resolution welcomes the “dialogue initiated by the Rule of Law Coordination and Resource Group and the Rule of Law Unit in the Executive Office of the Secretary-General”. It emphasised the importance of implementation of the rule of law at the domestic level and providing technical assistance upon the request of the respective states. The International Court of Justice, the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law and the International Law Commission were requested to continue to provide comments and reports related to the promotion of the rule of law. Finally, it was also decided that at the 68<sup>th</sup> UNGA the rule of law will be discussed by the member states and the resolution invites the member states to comment on “the rule of law and the peaceful settlement of international disputes”.

## 5. Non-State Actors and the Resolution<sup>26</sup> on the Rule of Law

Although the General Debate session of the UNGA remains to be the exclusive prerogative of the nation-state actors where only the heads of the states and governments are entitled to delineate their views on pressing issues of international importance, other sideline meetings give non-state actors adequate space to maneuver. The UNGA high level meetings on a number of thematic issues were such opportunities to posit and put forward their agenda. In the 67<sup>th</sup> session of UNGA, some civil society and non-governmental organisations were invited to speak

<sup>23</sup> For a complete list of resolutions adopted at the 67<sup>th</sup> UNGA visit the official website of UN General Assembly Resolutions, available at <https://www.un.org/en/ga/67/resolutions.shtml>, accessed on 24 March 2013.

<sup>24</sup> Resolution No. A/RES/67/97.

<sup>25</sup> See the Resolution No. A/RES/67/97 adopted by the General Assembly, available at <http://www.unrol.org/files/A-Res-67-97.pdf>, accessed on 22 March 2013.

<sup>26</sup> Resolution No. A/RES/67/1.

in the high level meeting on the rule of law. Their active participation facilitated the inclusion of non-state actors actively in concerned domain. Not only several non-governmental organisations, including one entity of the UN itself, were invited to the high level meeting on the rule of law, representatives from respective non-state actor entities contributed to the discussion by outlining their positions on the issues concerned. The list includes the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL), International Crisis Group (ICG), International Development Law Organization (IDLO) and International Institute of Higher Studies in Criminal Sciences.

As the case of the high level meeting indicates, non-state actors are becoming increasingly influential in the global governance. Rather than positing positions on global issues through their respective governments or states where they originate from, non-state actors are being transformed into the new stakeholders in the global governance architecture, directly exerting their influence often bypassing their national governments. However, it should be noted here that there are accommodative mechanisms for civil society and non-governmental organisations within the UN. Many of the large non-governmental organisations are given right to convey their opinions to the UN through the ECOSOC. Although non-governmental organisations are not entitled to be members of the UN, they can apply for 'consultative status' within the ECOSOC of the UN. There is a separate committee on non-governmental organisations that vets applications and provides NGOs with consultative status with the UN. The ECOSOC grants consultative status of different types to such organisations depending on the size and level of activity of the NGOs. Once given the status, NGOs assume the privilege to participate in some meetings of the UN, give their opinions and deliver their views on matters related to their work areas. Following that trend, in recent years diverse non-state actors e.g. civil society and non-governmental organisations, in addition to states, actively take part in the meetings of the UN including high level meetings on specific issues.

There are several reasons for involving non-state agents in the high level meeting on the rule of law at the national and international levels. Apart from diverged and professional expertise in the issues concerned, these non-governmental organisations have often more experience than those of many nation-states with regard to upholding the rule of law especially at the international level. Some of them are so influential in the respective domains that any international attempt to address those matters must accommodate the views of these non-state actors. This is a leverage civil society organisations enjoy to create pressures on state actors and influence policy outcomes. The following section discusses the concrete proposals given by the non-state actors<sup>27</sup> at the high level meeting on the rule of law.

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<sup>27</sup> Here non-state actors include non-governmental organisations, intergovernmental organisations and civil society organisations, among others.

## 5.1 *Positions held by the non-state actors*

The UNCITRAL is not a distinct organisation; instead, it is a core legal entity within the United Nations system active in the domain of international trade law. Its activities primarily concern commercial law and to develop frameworks aimed at harmonising and modernising international law of trade.<sup>28</sup> The association of UNCITRAL in the promotion of legislative and non-legislative instruments in a number of key areas of commercial law for the last five decades justifies the prerogative it was given to put forward its agenda at the high level meeting. Therefore, its views to promote the rule of law was from commercial and trade law perspectives. Globalisation has translated into increased commerce and trade between and among states and other actors in the world. UNCITRAL's position was that, to facilitate and sustain that trend, there should be universally applicable norms and standards in place to guide trade that occurs among various actors across the globe. To this end, it proposed several recommendations before the participating states to include in the resolution of the high level meeting. It demanded the recognition and enforcement of property rights and contracts, providing guarantee of the legal security to promote entrepreneurship and recognition of its activities relating to the rule of law promotion in any outcome document. States ought to modernise commercial law in order to establish environments that support and enable trade and commerce.<sup>29</sup> It also insisted that the promotion of the rule of law in commercial relations ought to be an integral part of the UN's broader agenda to promote the rule of law at the national and international levels.

The ICG is involved in policy prescriptions and advocacy in the field of conflict prevention and resolution. As far as the rule of law is concerned, ICG distinguished between institutional, procedural and substantive nature of the rule of law.<sup>30</sup> The institutional rule of law, termed as "law and order", focuses on law enforcement e.g. the UN Department for Peacekeeping Operations, which also draws on the idea of security and security institutions. The procedural understanding of the rule of law, called "Rule by Law", entails preference for rules over human arbitrariness. In this sense, laws must be public and properly enacted before enforcement. However, the ICG argues that these meanings of the rule of law inadequately address the actual purpose of the rule of law: that is the substantive underpinnings of the matter. The argument follows that the rule of law also needs to be substantive to encompass human rights aspects—that

<sup>28</sup> For details of the activities and mandate of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL), see "A Guide to UNCITRAL: Basic facts about the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law", available at [http://www.uncitral.org/pdf/english/texts/general/12-57491\\_Guide\\_to\\_UNCITRAL\\_rev.pdf](http://www.uncitral.org/pdf/english/texts/general/12-57491_Guide_to_UNCITRAL_rev.pdf), accessed on 27 November 2012.

<sup>29</sup> Statement by Hrvoje Sikiricj, the UNCITRAL Chair at its 45<sup>th</sup> session, on the occasion of the High-level Meeting of the 67<sup>th</sup> Session of the UNGA on the Rule of Law, available at [http://unrol.org/files/Statement\\_UNCITRAL.pdf](http://unrol.org/files/Statement_UNCITRAL.pdf), accessed on 27 November 2012.

<sup>30</sup> Statement by Louise Arbour, President and CEO of the International Crisis Group, on the occasion of the High-level Meeting of the 67<sup>th</sup> Session of the UNGA on the Rule of Law, available at [http://unrol.org/files/Statement\\_President\\_CEO-and-ICG.pdf](http://unrol.org/files/Statement_President_CEO-and-ICG.pdf), accessed on 17 November 2012.



is the robust enforcement of law can in no way violate fundamental human rights and “not just that no one is above the law, but that everyone is equal before and under the law and is entitled to its equal protection and equal benefit.”<sup>31</sup> This would prohibit enactment of law that discriminates against women or disregards other inalienable human rights. In short, the fundamental proposal by the ICG was that in addition to endorsing “law and order” or “rule by law” models, states should champion the substantive ‘rule of law’ at the national and international levels.

IDLO, considered to be the main inter-governmental entity exclusively devoted to advancing the rule of law, works with governments, non-governmental organisations and civil society stakeholders to strengthen the rule of law and good governance in developing countries as well as countries in economic and democratic transition. IDLO’s specific recommendations were engaging with civil society and empowering local communities who are the ‘end users’ of justice. The legal and institutional reforms should be aimed at meeting local demands and needs, in accordance with international norms and values of the rule of law. As for post-2015 international agenda following the end of Millennium Development Goals, IDLO proposed embedding of the rule of law with sustainable development and shifting towards rights-based approach to development away from need or charity-based approach.<sup>32</sup> In this new approach, people will be empowered to claim their rights from their respective duty bearers i.e. governments.

International Institute of Higher Studies in Criminal Sciences (ISISC), a non-governmental organisation, has been working in the field of effective criminal justice systems worldwide and strengthening of respect for the rule of law. Its proposals included increasing the effectiveness of the rule of law, rather than making the concept broader to include “every value and goal of international and national societies”<sup>33</sup> It advocated against the diffusions of the task of the rule of law promotion among the UN bodies and agencies. Rather, it suggested the creation of a special council or committee within the Secretary-General’s office to coordinate all activities of UN’s bodies related to the rule of law. To make the best use of expertise at the disposal of all actors concerned, that committee may include representative from non-governmental organisations, along with inter-governmental and governmental ones. It gave especial emphasis on the promotion of the rule of law at the national level in particular.

Following these discussions, nation-states were asked by the Secretary-General to voluntarily pledge how far individual states were willing to comply with

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<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>32</sup> Statement by Irene Khan, the Director-General of the International Development Law Organization (IDLO), on the occasion of the High-level Meeting of the 67<sup>th</sup> Session of the UNGA on the Rule of Law, available at <http://www.unrol.org/files/Statement%20by%20IDLO.pdf>, accessed on 18 November 2012.

<sup>33</sup> Statement of the International Institute of Higher Studies in Criminal Sciences (ISISC) on the occasion of the High-level Meeting of the 67<sup>th</sup> Session of the UNGA on the Rule of Law, available at <http://unrol.org/files/Statement%20by%20ISISC.pdf>, accessed on 18 November 2012.



the international law. Despite not being full members of the UN, non-state entities to a large extent shaped the setting of international norms and values in general and resolution in particular. To see how much of these demands were finally accepted, following discussion of the paper examines the resolution.

## 5.2 *Non-state actors and the outcome resolution*

A scrutiny of the resolution<sup>34</sup> shows that several points raised by the non-state actors were reflected in the outcome resolution at the 67<sup>th</sup> UNGA.

The recommendations put forward by UNCITRAL included, *inter alia*, the enforcement of property rights and recognition of its activities. At least, some of these suggestions made it to the resolution. The resolution praised the role played by UNCITRAL in modernising and harmonising trade law. Following globalisation, the nations of the world are increasingly interconnected through the web of international trade and other transactions that occur between and among the states. This calls for urgent necessity of predictable international customs and norms to guide trade business relations between states. For generating sustainable and equitable development as well as facilitating entrepreneurship, the role of fair, stable and predictable legal frameworks that govern international commerce were recognised by the resolution. However, other recommendations by the UNCITRAL regarding international trade law could not be accommodated as developed and developing countries do not see eye to eye on several aspects of such laws.

The demands raised by IDLO were to empower end-users of justice, a shift from need-based to right-based approach and to integrate the rule of law into the post-MDG agenda. There is little disagreement that making the rule of law a part of measurable international mechanism such as MDG will strengthen its implementation. Therefore, the resolution acknowledged that “the rule of law and development are strongly interrelated and mutually reinforcing”. The notion of the rule of law will draw more international attention in the coming decades as some analysts have argued that the rule of law will be an integral part of international development agenda following the MDG.<sup>35</sup> The resolution also notes that mutual relation between the rule of law and sustainable development will be considered in the post-2015 era. Therefore, it is likely that whatever international agenda the UN takes up in the wake of the MDG, the notion of the rule of law will dominate the development vernacular. Nevertheless, a move away from charity-based approach will also impose more responsibility on the governments as “duty-bearers” to meet the demands of their people i.e. the “right

<sup>34</sup> See the UNGA Resolution No. A/RES/67/1 entitled the Declaration of the High-level Meeting of the 67<sup>th</sup> Session of the General Assembly on the rule of law at the national and international levels, available at [http://unrol.org/files/Declaration%20HLM\\_A%20RES%2067%201.pdf](http://unrol.org/files/Declaration%20HLM_A%20RES%2067%201.pdf), accessed on 15 November 2012.

<sup>35</sup> Terra Lawson-Remer, “Global Goals for Human Rights and Governance After 2015: Part VI”, Council on Foreign Relations, 12 February 2013, available at <http://blogs.cfr.org/development-channel/2013/02/12/global-goals-for-human-rights-and-governance-after-2015-part-vi/>, accessed on 25 March 2013.

holders". However, some of the developing countries with poor human rights record might resist such move by the UN to endorse their responsibility as the duty-bearers.

ISISC's proposal included capacity-building of the UN with regard to the rule of law related matters, national ownership of the rule of law concept, enhancing the efficacy of the rule of law rather than broadening its range to incorporate every value of international society. Instead of diffusing the responsibility among other UN agencies and bodies to coordinate the various tasks of the rule of law, it urged the establishment of a special council or committee, incorporating both governmental and non-governmental organisations, within the UN Secretary-General's office. It is understandable that further broadening the scope of the rule of law will make it too difficult to implement and execute its prime objective. With respect to the promotion of the rule of law at the national level as raised by ISISC, national ownership of the rule of law concept and full implementation of the International Humanitarian Law at national level were emphasised by the resolution. To achieve this end, the resolution asked individual states to make voluntary pledges based on national priorities. This move was actually aimed at creating national ownership of the rule of law.

Despite accommodating many recommendations of the non-state actors, the suggestions made by the ICG were not directly reflected in the resolution. A number of reasons can be identified for this. First, notwithstanding the universality of values of the rule of law, in practice, its applicability differs across nation-states. Western and non-western positions on "law and order" and "Rule by Law", as pointed out by the ICG, are not the same. At the current phase of codification of international law, the notion of "Rule by Law" will be difficult to be agreed upon. It is one of the reasons why the UNGA resolution did not directly address the issues flagged by the ICG.

## 6. Conclusion

The 67<sup>th</sup> UNGA's thematic focus on promoting the rule of law in universal application for global governance has significance for the international politics in the coming years. The success of the rule of law remains debatable given the vast differences among nations on how to define and enforce it. The United Nations' project for a universal application of the rule of law is an ambitious scheme and, its tangible output is debated. Multilateral efforts to reach a consensus on a definition of the rule of law agreed by all member states have led to bickering among the member states. Despite the fact that the UN attempt to produce an agreeable definition of rule of law has produced at least eight documents since 2000, the UN member states continue to wrangle over how to define the rule of law.<sup>36</sup> Although developing countries and the weaker states fully endorse the idea of codification and enforcement of international

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<sup>36</sup> Stewart M. Patrick, "How to Advance the Rule of Law (Hint: Outside the UN)", Council on Foreign Relations, 2 October 2012, available at <http://blogs.cfr.org/patrick/2012/10/02/how-to-advance-the-rule-of-law-hint-outside-the-un/>, accessed on 18 October 2012.

law and a more powerful International Court of Justice, however, the excitement over the issue subsides as difficulty abounds over how to reach a consensus. The agenda of the rule of law promoted by the United Nations speaks of implementing the rule of law both at national and international levels. To the western countries, the phrase implies independent judiciary and ensuring human rights at the national level, on the other hand, the developing countries see the term as adherence to the international law which is often breached by the developed countries under the pretext of humanitarian intervention.<sup>37</sup> Similarly, while the developed countries are more interested in ensuring good governance and the rule of law at the national level, the developing countries are of the view that it is the developed countries of the West who often break the international law.

Indeed, states remain the dominant actors of international politics, but the rise of other actors as newer sources of authority challenges the core foundations of traditional understanding of state like sovereignty. The rise of these inalienable global values in tandem with globalisation is causing the gradual weakening of the notion of state sovereignty to some extent. In this emerging system, states are more accountable for their actions to the international community.

On the other hand, the non-state actors are playing important role as far as the global governance is concerned. NGOs and other non-state entities are excluded from the UN membership, barring them from taking part in the UNGA. Although these non-territorial and non-state entities lack sovereignty, their role as newer sources of authority cannot be ignored in a globalised and increasingly interconnected world. International organisations like the UN ought to provide increased opportunity of participation by the non-state entities like international NGOs to bolster and recognise their efforts in global governance.

<sup>37</sup> Neil MacFarquhar, "At United Nations, Renewed Focus on Syria, if Not New Ideas", *The New York Times*, 23 September 2012, available at <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/09/24/world/middleeast/at-united-nations-renewed-focus-on-syria-if-not-new-ideas.html>, accessed on 12 October 2012.



**Zohra Akhter**

## **THE RELEVANCE OF ‘NATIONAL SECURITY’ IN THE POST-COLD WAR WORLD**

### **Abstract**

National security has remained a major theme of International Relations (IR) because of its academic as well as policy relevance. Grounded in realism, national security dominated the security discourse during the Cold War era. However, the demise of the Cold War and the emergence of new security threats, i.e. climate change, environmental degradations, poverty, endemic diseases, transnational crime and drug trafficking etc., pose significant challenges to the national security paradigm. Many among the new generation of security experts, moreover, negate the relevance of national security. In this context, the paper explores the relevance of national security in the post-Cold War era by applying four objective criteria, viz., levels of analysis, nature of threats, goal of security and means of security. The paper eventually concludes that given the new realities, the notion of national security has been gradually redefined though not drastically abandoned. This redefinition of national security could deal with new challenges while keeping many of its traditional aspects intact. These modifications in the concept have helped ‘national security’ remain as a relevant and predominant concept in IR.

### **1. Introduction**

The end of the Cold War is a watershed in the contemporary history of international politics. The event brought about dramatic changes in the field and sub-fields of the discipline of International Relations (IR). In the post-Cold War period, intense debates have been witnessed in context of the conceptualisation of security, which is an “essentially contested concept”<sup>1</sup> in IR. The debate mainly centred on the relevance of traditionally understood ‘national security’ in this new era.

The debate has divided the security scholars into two clearly identifiable camps, the traditionalists and the non-traditionalists. Traditionalists view that the realist interpretation of security which is essentially ‘national’ and militaristic in orientation is still relevant for the post-Cold War period. Traditionalists like Stephen Walt do not want to include new issues into the domain of national security although they acknowledge the change in international security environment. This is because

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**Zohra Akhter** is Lecturer in Department of Social Relations at East West University, Dhaka. Her e-mail address is: zakterbd@gmail.com

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<sup>1</sup> Barry Buzan, *People, States and Fear: An Agenda for International Security Studies in the Post-Cold War Era*, (2nd Edition), Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1991, p. 7.

such inclusion “would destroy its intellectual coherence and make it more difficult to devise solution to any of these important problems.”<sup>2</sup> Some traditionalists even argue that there is no fundamental change in international security, and military security is the core of state security.<sup>3</sup>

The non-traditionalist camp consists of two different sub-groups: wideners and deepeners. Considering the abysmal effects of new challenges i.e., environmental degradation, climate change, human and drug trafficking, endemic diseases and terrorism on the stability and security of states, the wideners argue to broaden the definition of national security. In contrast, the deepeners question the significance and validity of considering states as the sole referent object of security. To them, there is no meaning of security if humankind is not secured. As such, they go beyond the traditional security discourse and focus on humankind, communities, their culture and society as the new referent objects of security.

Keeping this debate in perspective, the paper seeks to analyse the importance of national security in the post-Cold War world. In this endeavour, the paper begins with introductory remarks in section one; while an attempt has been made to provide a critical overview of the realist interpretation of national security in section two. In doing so, the section applies four basic elements of national security: a. levels of analysis, b. nature of threats, c. goal of security and, d. means of security. Section three explores the application of national security in the Cold War period. Section four surveys how and why this traditional notion of security has been challenged by the new generation of scholars. Section five examines the relevance of national security in the post-Cold War era. Finally, the paper eventually has reached the conclusion that given the new challenges, the notion of national security has been gradually redefined though not drastically abandoned. This redefinition of national security could deal with new challenges while keeping many of its traditional aspects intact. These modifications in the concept have helped the notion of ‘national security’ remain as a relevant and predominant concept in IR.

## 2. National Security: The Realist Lens

Realism is one of the most important theoretical traditions in IR which is well-known for its methodological rigour and practical value. Since the 1940s, after its clear victory over idealism, both academia and policymakers have embraced this tradition for their analysis. Consequently, it has also shaped the security discourse in IR for decades. Snow has rightly pointed out that because of realists’ domination in the security discourse, “the pattern of historic and contemporary national security concerns cannot adequately be understood without understanding the realist paradigm.”<sup>4</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Stephen M. Walt, “The Renaissance of Security Studies”, *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 35, No. 2, June, 1991, p. 213.

<sup>3</sup> Cited in David A. Baldwin, “Security Studies and the End of the Cold War”, *World Politics*, Vol. 48, No. 1, October, 1995, p. 117.

<sup>4</sup> Donald N. Snow, “Geopolitics: American and the Realist Paradigm”, in *National Security for a New Era*:

The realist interpretation of security is mainly centred on the absence or presence of war.<sup>5</sup> This notion of security involves both an objective dimension and a subjective one. According to Wolfers, "Security, in an objective sense, measures the absence of threats to acquired values, in a subjective sense, the absence of fear that such values will be attacked."<sup>6</sup> Almost in a similar fashion, Walter Lippmann has defined security with its primarily goal being the protection of a nation's core values, i.e., sovereignty/territorial integrity of the state. According to him, "A nation is secure to the extent to which it is not in danger of having to sacrifice core values, if it wishes to avoid war, and is able, if challenged, to maintain them by victory in such a war."<sup>7</sup> Hence, the security of a state rises and falls with a state's ability to address the threat.<sup>8</sup> Such conceptualisation essentially considers security to be 'national' and focuses solely on military aspects to ensure it. It assumes that there is a 'sovereignty contract' between states, which considers that "military force is a necessary evil to prevent the outside – difference, irrationality, anarchy and potential conflict – from conquering the inside of homogeneous, rational and orderly states."<sup>9</sup>

Realism views the international system as characterised by anarchy with states being the primary actor/unit of analysis. Neo-realists argue that the nature of this international system creates an insecure environment in which states feel threatened by other states. Without any overarching authority to control the behaviour of states in this system, states have to depend on the logic of 'self-help' for their survival. The accumulation of power is central to the idea of 'self-help'. Therefore, power conceived mainly in military terms has become a defining characteristic of the international system.<sup>10</sup> To Morgenthau, power is both a means and an end in itself; power is important to achieve national interests and that makes acquiring power a primary national interest.<sup>11</sup> The accumulation of power by individual states for ensuring security renders national security a zero-sum notion.<sup>12</sup> It encourages competition rather than cooperation among the states creating a 'security dilemma'.

The realist conceptualisation of security, therefore, has a unique view of states. It views states as the sources of insecurity and the referent object of security

*Globalization and Geopolitics*, (2nd Edition), United States: Pearson Education, Inc., Longman, 2007, p. 51.

<sup>5</sup> Jacqui True, "Feminism", in Scott Burchill, et.al. (eds.), *Theories of International Relations*, (4th Edition), UK: Palgrave, Macmillan, 2009, p. 251.

<sup>6</sup> Cited in Joseph J. Romm, "The Concept of National Security", in *Defining National Security: The Nonmilitary Aspects*, New York: Council of Foreign Relations Press, 1993, p. 5.

<sup>7</sup> Cited in Anthony D. Lott, "Realists on Security", in *Creating Insecurity: Realism, Constructivism, and US Security Policy*, UK: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2004, p. 14.

<sup>8</sup> Mohammad Ayoob, "Defining Security: A Subaltern Realist Perspective", in Keith Krause and Michael Williams (eds.), *Critical Security Studies*, Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 1997, p. 124.

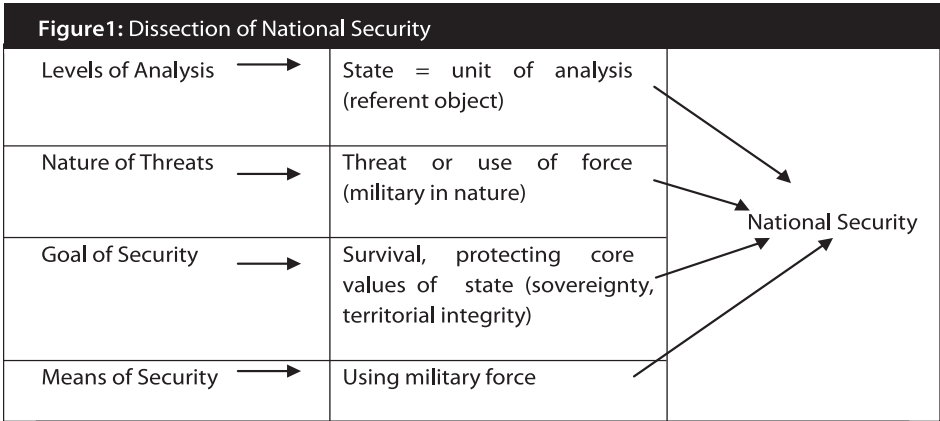
<sup>9</sup> Jacqui True, 2009, *op. cit.*, p. 251.

<sup>10</sup> Charles L. Glaser, "Realism", in Alan Collins (ed.), *Contemporary Security Studies*, (2nd Edition), UK: Oxford University Press, 2010, p. 16.

<sup>11</sup> Terry Terriff, Stuart Croft, Lucy James and Patrick M. Morgan, "International Relations and Security Studies", in *Security Studies Today*, UK: Polity Press, 2001, p. 33.

<sup>12</sup> Jacqui True, 2009, *op. cit.* p. 253

at the same time.<sup>13</sup> The key characteristics of the state will remain unchanged as long as the international system remains anarchic in nature.<sup>14</sup> Therefore, states continue to accumulate their military power to safeguard their sovereignty from threats posed by other states in the system. It is, thus, clear that the four basic elements: levels of analysis, nature of threats, goal of security and means of security are essential to conceptualise security. These elements are summarised in Figure 1.



As shown in Figure 1, the main goal of national security is to ensure the survival of states by protecting the core values of the state, i.e., sovereignty and territorial integrity. That means level/unit of analysis is the state because it is the referent object of security. In the national security paradigm, the nature of threat is always militaristic in nature where military is the only means that can ensure the security/survival of the state. Because of their importance for understanding security from a comprehensive perspective, these elements are used as objective criteria to dissect the current debate between the traditional and non-traditional security schools and evaluate the validity of the notion of national security in the post-Cold War period.

### 3. Cold War Security Discourse: Golden Age of National Security

After World War I (WWI), idealism emerged as a dominant theoretical tradition in IR that viewed international institutions as the important tool for promoting peace and stability in the world. With the horrific experience of the WW I in mind, the adherents of this tradition denounced the use of force or war in IR to attain security. The onset of World War II (WWII) challenged the fundamental tenets of idealism. Contrary to idealist assumption, war once again came to the centre stage of statecraft. Thus, idealism failed to explain the onset of growing conflicts and to prevent the WWII. The vacuum created by the demise of idealism was immediately filled up by the emergence of realism. Realism became prominent in a short span of time because of

<sup>13</sup> Anthony D. Lott, 2004, *op. cit.* p. 13.

<sup>14</sup> Terry Terriff, et. al., 2001, *op. cit.* p. 35.



its explanatory power and special focus on the national security defined in terms of military security of states.<sup>15</sup>

International politics in the post WWII period was characterised by the ideological rivalry between the two superpowers: USA and USSR. The communist expansionism by the USSR was identified as the key security threat to the free world upheld by the USA. The US officials became worried about the Soviet expansion in the war-torn Europe and elsewhere since early 1946. It was evident in the Clark Clifford's September 1946 report to President Truman in which top US officials predicted about possible communist expansionism posing a grave threat to the world.<sup>16</sup> As a result, the US adopted the 'containment policy' and focused on military preparedness to counter the Soviet threat. In line with these developments, the US national security policy (NSC 68) defined security as the "preservation of the US as a free nation with the fundamental institutions and values intact."<sup>17</sup>

Though the first decade (1945-1955) after WWII was characterised by an increase in conflictual relations and the struggle for hegemony between the US and the USSR, "security was not first and foremost about a military relationship but rather about political one."<sup>18</sup> Given the massive devastation caused by the WWII in Europe, security during this phase was conceived in its widest term including military aspect, economic welfare, economic stability and individual freedom. Notably, the relationship between national security and domestic politics such as economic, civil liberties and democratic political process was of crucial importance at that time.<sup>19</sup> Above all, there was an understanding that national security had to be achieved through both military and non-military means.<sup>20</sup>

The second decade (1955-1965) after WWII was considered to be the Golden Age for national security. During this phase, security was solely defined in military terms and "a focus on threat manipulation and force projections became the central, almost exclusive, concern of security."<sup>21</sup> Carl Von Clausewitz's famous dictum, "War is the continuation of politics by other means", remained central to the foreign policy orientation of the superpowers. The centrality of state, military force, balance of power,

<sup>15</sup> In 1947, Morgenthau's famous book, *Politics among Nations*, identified key principles of the realist interpretation of international politics focusing mainly on power, national interest, and war. These principles were well received by academia and policymakers. They had a strong bearing on subsequent foreign policy and military policy making during the Cold War.

<sup>16</sup> Anon, "Realism and Idealism – The Cold War", *Encyclopedia of the New American Nation*, available at <http://www.americanforeignrelations.com/O-W/Realism-and-Idealism-The-cold-war.html>, accessed on 15 October 2010.

<sup>17</sup> K. M. Fierke, "Definitions and Redefinitions", in *Critical Approaches to International Security*, UK and USA: Polity Press, 2007, p. 19.

<sup>18</sup> David A. Baldwin, "Security Studies and the End of the Cold War", 1995, cited in K. M. Fierke, 2007, *op. cit.*, p. 19.

<sup>19</sup> David A. Baldwin, 1995, *op. cit.*, p. 122.

<sup>20</sup> K. M. Fierke, 2007, *op. cit.*, p. 19.

<sup>21</sup> Edward A. Kolodziej, "Renaissance in Security Studies? Caveat Lector!", *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 36, No. 4, December, 1992, pp. 421-438.

and the use of threats became the core of national security policies. In addition, military tactics and doctrines such as massive retaliation, deterrence, first and second strike capabilities, strategic force vulnerability, competitive risk-taking, escalation, damage limitation, flexible response, limited war and arms control came to the forefront during this golden age.<sup>22</sup> The military and foreign policy establishments were preoccupied by these themes. The world, for the first time in history, was on the verge of nuclear war in 1962. Thus, military force and capability became the single most important instrument of statecraft. It is clear that all the key elements as identified in section 2 were applicable to the notion of national security as understood during this phase.

Though the introduction of détente and the end of Vietnam War led to a decrease in interests in the military affairs, it revived after a brief interval in the late 1970s. The prominence of national security remained relatively unquestioned till the end of the Cold War.

#### 4. Post-Cold War Security Discourse: A Critique of National Security

With the end of the Cold War, the prominence of national security has been critically challenged by a plethora of new issues such as intra-state ethnic conflicts, drug trafficking, transnational crimes, international terrorism, resource scarcity, environmental degradation and climate change, poverty and malgovernance etc. Writing in the mid 1980s, Ullman rightly envisaged that, "The coming decades are likely to see a diminution in the incidence of overt conflict over territory: the enshrinement of the principle of national self-determination has made the conquest of peoples distinctly unfashionable. But conflict over resources is likely to grow more intense as demand for some essential commodities increases and supplies appear more precarious."<sup>23</sup> The realist definition of the security with its focus on military aspects has been criticised for its inadequacy in acknowledging these new challenges. Based on the four objective criteria identified in section two, this section attempts to examine the challenges faced by the national security discourse in the post-Cold War era.

**Levels of Analysis:** Scholars supporting non-traditional security agenda argue that realism's central focus on state as a unit of analysis is no longer applicable in the new security agenda. Given the new challenges, it seems that a range of new referent objects for security are emerging at different levels.<sup>24</sup> Buzan explains that different set of rules, regimes and institutions forming the international economic order, the global climate system, various international regimes like Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) have emerged as the referent object above the state while nations and religions can be the distinct referent object alongside the state. Moreover,

<sup>22</sup> Sean M. Lynn-Jones, "International Security Studies After the Cold War: An Agenda for the Future", The Center for Science and International Affairs, Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, December, 1991.

<sup>23</sup> Richard H. Ullman, "Redefining Security", *International Security*, Vol. 8, No. 1, 1983, p. 139.

<sup>24</sup> Barry Buzan, "Rethinking Security after the Cold War", *Cooperation and Conflict*, Vol. 32, No. 1, 1997, p. 11.

individuals can be regarded as a referent object below the state.<sup>25</sup> Buzan with others argue that state centrism ignores the importance of other sub-units, sub-systems, transnational units as levels of analysis. It is not analytically sound to privilege states as a level of analysis because the unit level can incorporate much more than states.<sup>26</sup>

Security scholars who are termed as 'deepeners' like Ken Booth also criticised realists' levels of analysis saying that there is no meaning of security if human being are not the referent object of security.<sup>27</sup> They defined security in terms of human emancipation as both state and human being are the two sides of the same coin.<sup>28</sup> Krause and William argue that it is the individuals and the communities, where they live in, is to be secured.<sup>29</sup> According to Booth, the problem of realist theory is that it sees the structure as anarchic, because there is no "supreme law-maker or law-enforcer to keep the order."<sup>30</sup> Booth argued that, "this anarchy between states does not necessarily produce chaos, the non-technical, everyday meaning of 'anarchy'. States form a primitive society, with rules, norms and values (such as international law, diplomacy and sovereignty). This element of society usually cushions states from each other."<sup>31</sup> The concept of human security, as adopted and popularised by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), has also focused on individuals not the state as the referent object of security. This new approach to security is people-centered.<sup>32</sup> It stresses on the freedom from hunger and freedom from fear.

**Nature of Threats:** As mentioned earlier, the post-Cold War era have experienced major challenges from non-military issues like global climate change, poverty, famine, transnational crime, terrorism etc. Traditional militaristic security paradigm propagated by the realists has failed to recognise these threats. Thus, this paradigm has given birth to what Ullman identified as the 'false image of reality'.<sup>33</sup> Ullman further argues that this false image is misleading and dangerous because it is, on one hand, concentrates on military threats ignoring the others and thus reduces the total security.<sup>34</sup> On the other hand, it leads to excessive militarisation in international relations which in the long run increases global insecurity. Therefore, the new generation of security experts including Ullman, Jahn et. al., Nye and Lynn-Jones, Mathews, Brown, Crawford, Haftendorn, Tickner, Waever et. al., Buzan, Deudney who belong to different schools of thought recognise the importance of such non-military sources of threats.<sup>35</sup> They argue that these non-military sources of threat

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 11-12.

<sup>26</sup> Barry Buzan, Ole Weaver and Jaap de Wilde, "Introduction", in *Security: A New Framework for Analysis*, London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1998, pp. 6-7.

<sup>27</sup> Paul D. Williams (ed.), *Security Studies: An Introduction*, London and New York: Routledge, 2008, p. 7.

<sup>28</sup> Ken Booth, "Utopian Realism in Theory and Practice", *International Affairs*, Vol. 67, No. 3, July 1991, p. 539.

<sup>29</sup> Cited in David Mutimer, "Critical Security Studies: A Schismatic History", in Alan Collins (ed.), *Contemporary Security Studies*, (2nd Edition), UK: Oxford University Press, 2010, p. 89.

<sup>30</sup> Ken Booth, *op. cit.* p. 529.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>32</sup> Jon Barnett, "Reclaiming Security", *Peace Review*, Vol. 9, No. 3, September, 1997, p. 407.

<sup>33</sup> Richard H. Ullman, 1983, *op. cit.*, p. 129.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*; Egbert Jahn, Pierre Lemaitre and Ole Waever, "Concepts of Security: Problems of Research and Non-

have even brought about changes in the function of the military establishments in recent time. Militaries in many countries may be trained and called upon to contribute to global security such as peace-keeping and humanitarian intervention but these states do not necessarily face existential threats from other states in the system.<sup>36</sup>

Realist interpretation of security is further criticised for its ethnocentric obsession with external military threats to the state.<sup>37</sup> Because of its ethnocentrism, the western security discourse has failed to analyse the nature of threats found in the developing countries that account for 75 per cent of the total number of states in the world. Unlike neo-realists who claim that insecurity stems from the anarchic nature of the international system, security scholars like Ayoob argue that in the developing countries security threats primarily originate within the boundaries of states rather than threats coming from the international system. These threats have their roots in the relative weaknesses of governing structure and the lack of development in those countries.<sup>38</sup> Ayoob noted that since the end of WWII, most of the conflicts in the developing world (Third World) have been part of the nation-building process.<sup>39</sup> As a result, the developing countries experience more internal conflicts rather than external threats. This is evident from the recent findings cited in the SIPRI Year Book: 2010 which states that amongst all the armed conflicts in the world during 2000-2009, only three were inter-state in nature.<sup>40</sup> More importantly, all the major conflicts were concentrated in the developing world (Figure 2). It "reflects the remarkable difference between the security concerns of the Third World states and those of the developed countries in relation to the international system as a whole."<sup>41</sup>

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Military Aspects", *Copenhagen Papers No. 1*, Copenhagen: Centre of Peace and Conflict Research, 1987; Joseph S. Nye Jr and Sean M. Lynn-Jones, "International Security Studies: A Report of a Conference on the State of the Field", *International Security*, Vol. 12, No. 4, Spring, 1988; Jessica Tuchman Mathews, "Redefining Security", *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 68, No. 2, 1989; Neville Brown, "Climate, Ecology and International Security", *Survival*, Vol. 31, No. 6, 1989; Neta C. Crawford, "Once and Future Security Studies", *Security Studies*, Vol. 1, No. 2, 1991; Helga Haftendorn, "The Security Puzzle: Theory-Building and Discipline Building in International Security", *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 16, No. 3, 1991; Ann J. Tickner, *Gender in International Relations: Feminist Perspectives on Achieving Global Security*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1992; Ole Weaver, Barry Buzan, Morten Kelstrup and Pierre Lemaitre, *Identity, Migration and the New Security Order in Europe*, London: Pinter, 1993; Barry Buzan, 1983, *op. cit.*; Barry Buzan, 1991, *op. cit.*; Barry Buzan, "From International System to International Society: Structural Realism and Regime Theory Meet the English School", *International Organization*, Vol. 47, No. 3, Summer, 1993; Barry Buzan, "Rethinking Security after the Cold War", *Cooperation and Conflict*, Vol. 32, No. 1, 1997; Daniel Deudney, "The Case Against Linking Environmental Degradation and National Security", *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, Vol. 19, No. 3, 1990.

<sup>36</sup> Barry Buzan, "Rethinking Security after the Cold War", 1997, *op. cit.*, p. 16.

<sup>37</sup> Mohammad Ayoob, 1997, *op. cit.*, p. 121.

<sup>38</sup> Steve Smith, "The increasing insecurity of security studies: Conceptualizing security in the last twenty years", *Contemporary Security Policy*, Vol. 20, No. 3, 1999, p. 81.

<sup>39</sup> Mohammad Ayoob, 1997, *op. cit.* pp. 122-123.

<sup>40</sup> Ekaterina Stepanova, "Armed Conflict, Crime and Criminal Violence", in Summary of SIPRI Yearbook, 2010, available at <http://www.sipri.org/yearbook/2010/files/SIPRIYB10summary.pdf>, accessed on 22 October 2010, p. 5.

<sup>41</sup> Mohammad Ayoob, *The Third World Security Predicament: State Making, Regional Conflict, and the International System*, Boulder and London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1995, p. 7.

**Figure 2: Major Armed Conflicts around the World, 2009**

In 2009, 17 major armed conflicts were active in 16 locations around the world

| Conflict Location   |                                  |
|---|----------------------------------|
| Africa  | Rwanda                           |
|   | Somalia                          |
|   | Sudan                            |
|   | Uganda                           |
| Americas  | Colombia                         |
|   | Peru                             |
|   | USA                              |
| Asia  | Afghanistan                      |
|   | India (Kashmir)                  |
|   | Myanmar (Karen State)            |
|   | Pakistan                         |
|   | Philippines                      |
|   | Philippines (Mindanao)           |
|   | Sri Lanka (Tamil Eelam)          |
| Middle East   | Iran                             |
|   | Israel (Palestinian territories) |
|   | Turkey (Kurdistan)               |
| Where a conflict is over territory, the disputed territory appears in parentheses after the country name. All other conflicts are on taking control over government.<br>Only 6 of the major armed conflicts in 2009 were over territory, with 11 being fought over government. Indeed, conflicts over government outnumbered those over territory in 9 of the 10 years 2000–2009.<br>For the sixth year running, no major interstate conflict was active in 2009. |                                  |

Source: Summary of SIPRI Yearbook, 2010, p. 4, available at <http://www.sipri.org/yearbook/2010/files/SIPRIYB10summary.pdf>, accessed on 22 October 2010.

Given the huge number of new challenges, there is a possibility that security could become an all-encompassing concept thus blurring the distinction between security issues and non-issues. Therefore, a number of security scholars have come up with specific criteria. Buzan and his colleagues argue that to be included into the security domain, an issue, be it economic, environmental, political and military, has to pose an existential threat(s) to the referent object.<sup>42</sup> For example, in political sector anything that questions recognition, legitimacy or governing authority can be regarded as an existential threat to sovereignty.<sup>43</sup> Similarly, Ayooob also sets criteria for an issue to be regarded as a security issue though it is different from what Buzan and his colleagues developed. To him, an issue can be included in the security domain if it can "either affect the survivability of state boundaries, state institutions, or governing

<sup>42</sup> Barry Buzan, Ole Weaver and Jaap de Wilde, "Introduction", in *Security: A New Framework for Analysis*, London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1998, p. 21.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 22.

elites or dramatically weaken the capacity of the states and regimes to act effectively in the realm of politics, both domestic and international."<sup>44</sup> Human Security approach, however, considers an issue to be a security issue if it jeopardises the human development. Such threats include epidemics, hunger, unemployment, crime, social conflict, political repression and environment hazard among others.<sup>45</sup>

**Goal of Security:** The sole focus of the realist security paradigm on the protection of core values, i.e. sovereignty/territorial integrity of the state excludes other important goals of security such as ensuring the individual emancipation, economic security, environmental security and political stability etc. Baldwin eloquently remarked that if a country fails to provide food, shelter, clothing and things that are necessary for survival of human being, military security for that state will be of no use.<sup>46</sup> It is, however, important to note that the new generation of security experts has not come up with a new agreed goal of security. Experts define the goal of security from their own ideological perspectives.

The security scholars who are termed as wideners like Buzan and Ole Wæver recognise multiple threats to states and they argue that addressing all the existential threats emanating from multiple sources should be the goal of security. To them, the goal of the security is dependent on how an issue is securitised by the 'speech act' of the political elites of the state. For Ayoob, however, the primary goal of security is to save the state from both internal and external threats. Hence, ensuring security for state structure, both territorial and governing regimes are important in his conceptualisation of security.<sup>47</sup>

On the other hand, the scholars who belong to the deepeners' camp emphasise on different referent objects for security and propose different goals of security based on their referent objects. Scholars like Kruase and Williams opine that the goal of security is to protect the ideas, norms, values that constitute the communities because they give importance on the individual and communities where individual live in.<sup>48</sup> For Booth and Wyn Jones, who focus on individual as the referent object of security, the stress is on human emancipation. According to Booth, emancipation "is not universal timeless concept; it cannot be at the expense of others; and it is not synonymous with Westernization. Instead, it has the following three roles: it is a philosophical anchorage; it is a strategic process; it is a tactical goal".<sup>49</sup> Thus, Booth sees human emancipation as the goal of security.

<sup>44</sup> Mohammad Ayoob, 1997, *op.cit.*, p. 130.

<sup>45</sup> Roland Dannreuther, *International Security: The Contemporary Agenda*, UK: Polity Press, 2007, p. 47.

<sup>46</sup> David A. Baldwin, 1995, *op.cit.*, p. 128.

<sup>47</sup> Mohammad Ayoob, 1997, *op. cit.*, p. 132.

<sup>48</sup> Cited in David Mutimer, "Critical Security Studies: A Schismatic History", in Alan Collins (ed.), *Contemporary Security Studies*, (2nd Edition), UK: Oxford University Press, 2010, p. 89.

<sup>49</sup> Cited in Steve Smith, 1999, *op.cit.*, p. 90.

**Means of Security:** The realist's sole reliance on military means to ensuring security cannot withstand the changing realities of time. Baldwin rightly pointed out that "many of the problems – for example environmental protection, promoting human rights and democracy, promoting economic growth – are not amenable to solution by military means."<sup>50</sup> Hence, non-military means are recommended to address these hydra-headed security concerns. The recommended means are, however, dependent on the way how security is conceptualised. For example, security defined in terms of human emancipation can be achieved through social justice, relative prosperity and liberal democracy. Therefore, unlike realists, Booth argued that "to achieve security in anarchy, it is necessary to go beyond Bull's 'anarchical society' of states to an anarchical global 'community of communities'. Anarchy thus becomes the framework for thinking about the *solution* to global problems, not the essence of the problem to overcome. This would be a much messier political world than the states system, but it should offer better prospects for the emancipation of individuals and groups, and it should therefore ultimately be more secure."<sup>51</sup>

For Buzan and his colleagues, the means of security is dependent on the way an issue is securitised. When an issue is securitised, it is regarded as "an existential threat requiring emergency measures and justifying actions outside the normal bounds of political procedure."<sup>52</sup> Though Ayoob focuses on the security of state like Buzan, his position is different than that of Buzan. He argues that maintaining political order in the state is an important means to ensure the security of the state.<sup>53</sup> Without political order, social and individual values can neither be realised nor be protected from assault, violence and chaos.<sup>54</sup>

## 5. National Security: Exploring the Relevance

The forgoing section makes it clear that all the key elements of the realist notion of national security have been challenged by many security experts after the end of the Cold War. The changes in the security discourse in the post-Cold War era led to the widening and deepening of the security discourse. The concept of security has been broadened to include multiple sources of insecurity apart from traditional military threats. Furthermore, it has been deepened to include new referent objects for security other than states.<sup>55</sup> Rothschild coined the term of 'extensive security' to refer to such reconceptualisation of security.<sup>56</sup>

<sup>50</sup> David A. Baldwin, 1995, *op.cit.*, p. 130

<sup>51</sup> Ken Booth, 1991, *op. cit.*, p. 540.

<sup>52</sup> Barry Buzan, et. al., 1998, *op. cit.*, pp. 23-24.

<sup>53</sup> Mohammad Ayoob, 1997, *op. cit.*, p. 132.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>55</sup> Sarah Tarry, "'Deepening' and 'Widening': An Analysis of Security Definitions in the 1990s", *Journal of Military and Strategic Studies*, Vol. 2, No. 1, Fall, 1999, available at [http://www.ciaonet.org/olj/jmss/jmss\\_1999/v2n1/jmss\\_v2n1c.html](http://www.ciaonet.org/olj/jmss/jmss_1999/v2n1/jmss_v2n1c.html), accessed on 05 October 2010.

<sup>56</sup> Emma Rothschild, "What Is Security?", *The Quest for World Order*, Vol. 124, No. 3, Summer, 1995, p. 55.



In spite of the new challenges, scholars like Stephen Walt stress on the national security as understood in the realist paradigm or so-called traditional approach to security. On the other hand, scholars like Ken Booth, Keith Krause and Michael Williams put emphasis on individual and community as the referent object of security. These deepeners discard the old paradigm as an inadequate framework for understanding new security challenges after the Cold War. The wideners' position falls between these two extremes. Without being ideologically driven like the deepeners, the wideners like Barry Buzan, Ole Weaver, de Wilde and Mohammad Ayooob have come up with new frameworks for understanding national security. Their frameworks are important because they still focus on the security of states while addressing multiple sources of threats posed by the new security issues. Moreover, to make the framework analytically sound, they set threshold to define security issues. Thus, they keep the security issues distinct from other non-security issues so that the notion of "national security" does not run the risk of becoming an all-encompassing idea.

The contemporary world is still divided into sovereign states that emerged through the Treaty of Westphalia. The post-Cold War era could not transform this basic architecture of the international system. Therefore, states still remain the primary actors in the international system. It is the primary actor because on the one hand, it holds the authority within a given territory and thus exercises power over its population. On the other hand, it has the right to act independently in international affairs.<sup>57</sup> The post-Cold War period, however, has witnessed the intensity and extensity of new actors such as transnational organisations, international organisations and non-state actors. It is to be noted that these new actors are not as strong as states and they could not undermine the primacy and supremacy of states because their power is dependent on states and they have to function within the settings provided by states. States could, for example, impose more strict restrictions on trade and transnational corporations could not do much in this regard.<sup>58</sup> Moreover, in spite of the spread of globalisation as experienced in the post-Cold War era, nations still highly value their sovereignty and statehood. Palestinians' struggle for statehood is a glaring example in this respect. These issues revalidate the primacy of states in the international system. Hence, non-recognition of state as a referent object of security would be tantamount to ignoring the reality. Buzan has identified three reasons that qualify states to remain the referent object for security. Firstly, it is the state that has to cope with the sub-state, state, international security problematic. Secondly, the state is the primary agent for addressing the sources of insecurity. Finally, the state is the most important actor in the international system.<sup>59</sup> Therefore, it can be argued that the state-centric character of the international system helps 'national security' remain a dominant concept in international politics.

<sup>57</sup> Jill Steans and Lloyd Pettiford, *International Relations: Perspective and Themes*, United States: Pearson Education Limited, Longman, 2001, p. 29.

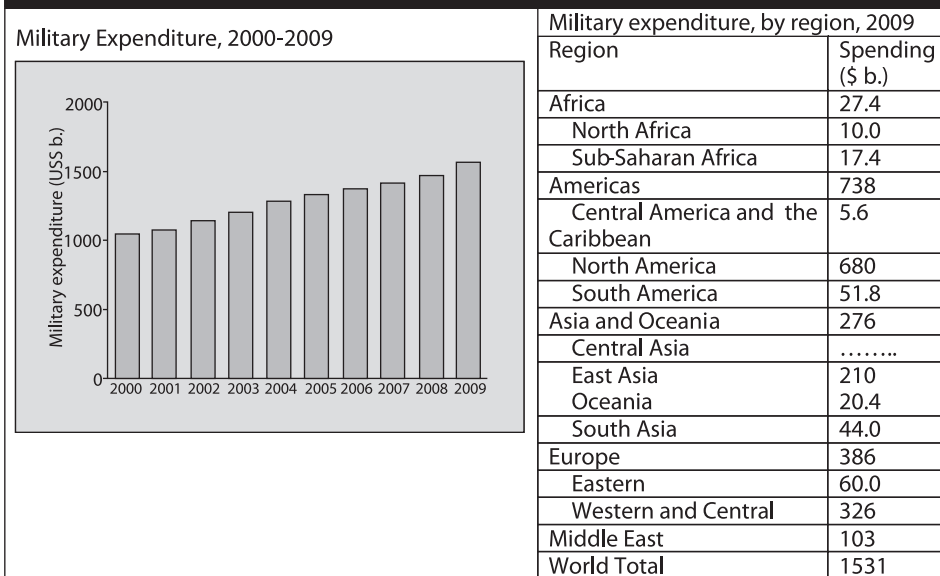
<sup>58</sup> Katja Keisala, "The European Union as an International Actor: Strengths of the European Civilian Power", Academic Dissertation, University of Tampere, Finland, 2004, available at <http://acta.uta.fi/pdf/951-44-6157-6.pdf>, accessed on 25 November 2010, p. 9.

<sup>59</sup> Cited in Steve Smith, 1999, *op. cit.*, p. 83.



It is, however, to be acknowledged that the traditional notion of 'national security' understood solely in military terms has lost its credential to the extent that it cannot adequately address the non-traditional challenges or threats to states. However, military security has not become an outdated or irrelevant concept. Therefore, Romm once commented that "military security has not vanished as key element of national security, but it has certainly declined in importance relative to the issues of economic, energy and environmental security."<sup>60</sup> As a result, states are increasingly recognising the new threats but they have not discarded military options for ensuring their security. The SIPRI Year Book 2010 reveals that the total military expenditure of the world was US\$1531 billion in 2009 which represent an increase of 6 per cent in real terms compared to 2008, and 49 per cent since 2000 (statistics shown in Figure 3). It was also estimated that military expenditure was 2.7 per cent of the global gross domestic product (GDP) in 2009 and this increase was observed in all the regions and sub-regions except the Middle East.<sup>61</sup> More importantly, the global financial crisis could not even subdue the military expenditure. The upward trend in military expenditure is a clear indication that states still rely heavily on military means for ensuring their security.

**Figure 3: Military Expenditure, 2009**



Source: Summary of SIPRI Yearbook, 2010: Armaments, Disarmament and International Security, 2010, p.10

<sup>60</sup> Joseph J. Romm, 1993, *op. cit.*, p. 5.

<sup>61</sup> Sam Perlo-Freeman, Olawale Ismail and Carina Solmirano, "Military Expenditure", in *SIPRI Yearbook, 2010: Armaments, Disarmament and International Security*, 2010, available at <http://www.sipri.org/yearbook/2010/files/SIPRIYB10summary.pdf>, accessed on 22 October 2010, p. 10.

Moreover, the neo-realist interpretation of the anarchic international structure and its logic of self-help are still evident in the behaviour of many states. Iran's controversial nuclear programme can be explained through this framework. Israel's undeclared possession of nuclear weapons has created security dilemma for Iran because these two countries are locked in a competition for regional dominance in Middle East. Driven by the logic of self-help, Iran feels the acquisition of nuclear weapons can ensure its security establishing a power parity vis-à-vis Israel. Similarly, the acquisition of nuclear weapons in 1998 by the two South Asian neighbours, India and Pakistan, can also be explained through the national security paradigm. Intense insecurity feelings from the neighbouring countries led both India and Pakistan to the nuclearisation process. India armed itself with nuclear weapons targeting the extra-regional power, China. India's nuclearisation, however, tilted the precarious regional balance to India vis-à-vis Pakistan. To maintain the regional balance of power, Pakistan followed the suit. In addition, various conflicts and arms races across the globe such as Russia's invasion in Georgia in 2009 and Kargil war in 1999 between India-Pakistan and the nuclearisation of North Korea also indicate the prominence and relevance of 'national security' in the post-Cold War era.

In the post-Cold War era, many new non-traditional security threats such as resource scarcity, transnational terrorism, climate change, intra-state conflicts etc. have the potential to entail military engagements. Thus, these issues could crawl into the domain of traditional notion of national security. In the context of environmental security, Toronto School led by Homer-Dixon argued that increased environmental stress may lead to intra and inter-state conflicts.<sup>62</sup> Similarly, in the context of terrorist attack, it has been observed that after the terrorist attack on Indian parliament in 13 December 2006, Indian government held Pakistan-based terrorist organisations responsible for the attack. This incident escalated tension between these arch rivals to the extent that both of them deployed more than a million soldiers, eyeball to eyeball along the border.<sup>63</sup>

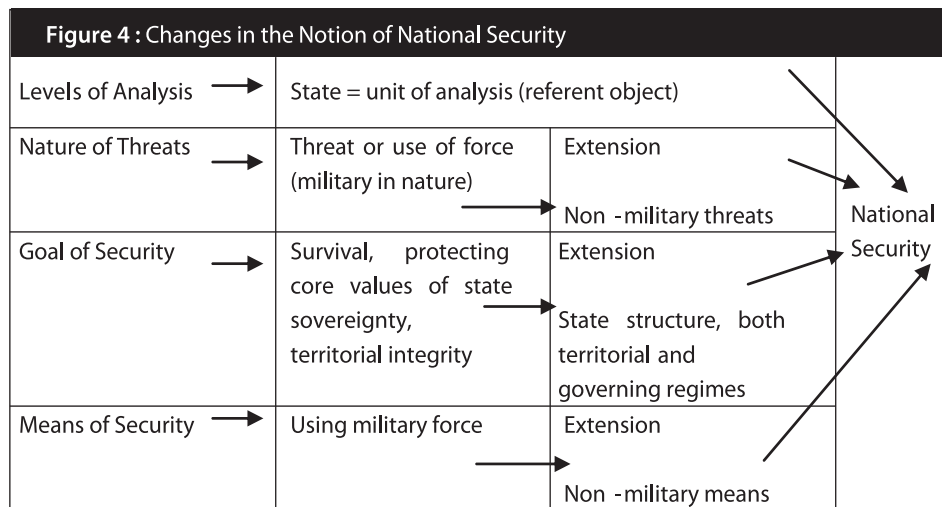
The importance of "redefined" national security could be explained with a case study of the US war on terror. By definition, international terrorism is a non-traditional security threat in the sense that the threat is posed by al-Qaida, a non-state actor operating globally. International terrorism came to the centre stage of contemporary international security through the 9/11 attack on the Twin Towers in the US in 2001. Immediately after the attack, the US declared war on terror to counter the threat posed by international terrorism. Subsequently, the US national security policy adopted the policy of preemption. Invoking this policy, the US attacked Iraq on the basis of the allegation that Iraq possessed weapons of mass destruction (WMD)

<sup>62</sup> Thomas Homer-Dixon, "Environmental Scarcities and Violent Conflict: Evidence from Cases", *International Security*, Vol. 19, No. 1, Summer, 1994, pp. 5-6.

<sup>63</sup> Sidhu Pal Singh Waheguru, "Terrible Tuesday and Terrorism in South Asia", *South Asian Survey*, Vol. 10, No. 2, 2003, p. 216.

that would hamper the US national security. Thus, a non-traditional security issue has become top on the security agenda in the world and this is being addressed through the framework of national security.

The forgoing analysis makes the argument evident that 'national security' with some modifications still remains the most dominant approach to security. This shift is summarised and shown in figure 4.



Substantial changes in national security have been observed in terms of nature of threats, goal of security and means of security although no important changes is evident in terms of levels of analysis. Analysis shows that states still remain unchanged as a unit of analysis for national security while the nature of threat has changed with time. At present, the threats could be posed by both non-state actors such as terrorists as well as state actors. Furthermore, the threats are no longer strictly military rather it could include various issues like climate change, transnational crime etc. Hence, states need to employ both military and non-military means to address these threats. Extension has also been observed in the goal of security. Apart from ensuring the territorial integrity and sovereignty, other issues such as ensuring democracy, establishing strong governing regimes and other issues which destabilise social cohesion and induce internal crises have also been considered as the goal of national security.

## 6. Conclusion

The demise of idealism with the beginning of the WWII followed by the forty years of ideological war between the two super powers precipitated the triumph of the realist notion of national security. Arms race between the super powers including

nuclearisation, deterrence, balance of power, limited war, proxy war and many other issues of militaristic security characterised the Cold War world politics. Hence, the notion of national security enjoyed its overwhelming supremacy during that time and dominated the security discourse in IR for subsequent decades. However, it has faced significant setbacks in analysing “more complex security problems” in the post-Cold War era. Several attempts have been made to redefine the notion of national security in this new era.

Considering the current nature of security challenges, many scholars suggest broadening of the definition of national security by incorporating new issues into its paradigm. Apart from militaristic threats, non-militaristic aspects also have the potential to be considered as threats to state and its people. Thus, they argue that the survival of the state is significant goal of security but threats to its survival can not only emerge from the anarchic structure of international politics but also from internal sources. Accordingly, the strong military is not the only means to ensure security. As such, they stress on the incorporation of non-military means depending on the nature of the security challenge. Another group of scholars defined as deepeners argue that humankind is the main locus of security instead of states. Security can only be ensured once human emancipation is achieved. There are many barriers i.e., poverty, illiteracy, diseases, mal-governance and social injustice etc. to human emancipation. Therefore, they observe that ensuring social justice and human rights, addressing social inequalities and establishing just society are the means to achieving true security in the true sense of the term.

Notwithstanding many analytical and normative challenges to the notion of national security, the analysis in this paper has revealed that the discourse of national security has still retained its predominance because of its practical implications. This is mainly because the end of the Cold War has not experienced any viable replacement of the sovereign-state system. Even though many new actors have emerged in the contemporary international politics, none of them is as powerful as the state. It is still the state which exclusively enjoys sovereignty. States must jealously protect their sovereignty in this anarchic international structure. The Bush doctrine or the US global war on terror and the Palestinian’s struggle for liberation indicated that every nation in the world still value sovereignty the most.

The changing trend of war and conflicts in the post-Cold War era indicate that national security paradigm should acknowledge the new realities of intra-state conflicts. It, however, does not indicate that there has been substantial change in the anarchic structure of international politics. Therefore, arms race and nuclearisation in different parts of the world are still evident.

The paper has argued that the fundamental idea of national security of protecting the sovereignty still today motivate the state to focus more on arms and

military institutions as far as the security of the state is concerned. The upward trend in world's defense expenditure also suggests that military means remain as the primary tool for national security for the states. All these indicate that the notion of national security is not obsolete in this age of globalisation. With important modifications, the concept of national security has retained both analytical rigour and practical relevance to address the security threats that characterise this new era.

**BOOK REVIEW**

**Underdogs End Empires: A Memoir** by I. P. Khosla, Konark Publishers Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, India, 2010, 419 pp, Price Rs. 695.

The book *Underdogs End Empires: A Memoir* is a collection of memories and thoughts of Ambassador I. P. Khosla, former Indian External Affairs Secretary, who has been in many important positions in the Indian Foreign Service from 1960 to 1996. In the book, he recollects his first hand experiences and links up those with the changing milieu of international and regional political developments defining colonial, Cold War and post Cold War era. What is most striking in this respect is his attempt to see the power relations between the big powers and the small and marginalised countries from a subaltern viewpoint of history. From the complicated contours of historical struggles for power and position, he tries to portray the role of 'underdogs' in dismantling major colonial powers and later their struggle against the hegemons during the Cold War.

The central theme of the book is the history of imperialism and colonialism and the people who were subjugated into this overall development and how the dominant discourse in the contemporary world reflects Western conception of history denying the aspirations and contributions of the underdogs. Ambassador Khosla bases the entire analysis on his own experiences as a diplomat particularly in Algeria and Afghanistan. He also includes chapters on Vietnam and Afghanistan to assess his thesis in the Cold War setting. Finally, he touches upon the changing scenarios in the post Cold War period and the emergence of newer threats viz., the gradual rise of China as a substitute of US hegemony.

To set the context of the analysis of evolutionary power relations between underdogs and empires, Ambassador Khosla devotes a significant amount of concentration in underlining the theoretical construct of the empire-building process and how this culminates into the emergence of a nationalistic struggle both as a matter of reaction as well as struggle for political and economic freedom. Into the process of empire-building, he equalises power with empire and also their capacity to win wars. What he emphasises is that the rise of imperialism with the end of classical era and the beginning of colonial subjugation of the countries in Asia and Africa is a manifestation of the power hunger by the imperialistic forces, though the story of modernity depicts a benign face of colonialism as a welcoming force by the colonised people. In his theoretical underpinning, he also outlines the rise of nationalism as a force of struggle for freedom and as an outcome of the dramatic changes in the political discourses, economic forces and equally the relations between the underdogs and the empires.

The book employs two broad perspectives of the existing narratives prevalent in the academic discourse of international relations in order to see the entire gamut of the political history ranging from classical era to post Cold War period. The first one

is the traditional perspective which Ambassador Khosla calls 'traditional stories'. The traditional view underlies that the possession of power and the making of war are inseparable empirically, normatively and also from the power equation perspective. According to Khosla, international morality, institutions and regimes, economics, society or culture are the consequences of power equation. The second approach is based on the modern discourses that disapprove the destruction caused by war. The focus of this approach underlies the ambition for a perpetual peace by eliminating the causes of war. This discourse underestimates the role of power and war in acquisition of colonies and instead claims that indigenous people offered no resistance to the empire-makers. Under the microscope of these two perspectives, the author presents a comprehensive overview of the history of colonial domination versus anti-colonial struggle in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The book is mostly dedicated to trace, using both traditional and modern perspectives, the dynamics of the evolution of power relations between underdogs and empires, dividing the book into four broad time frames: pre-colonial era, colonial era, Cold War period, and post Cold War developments. In the pre-colonial period, wars were considered as the most substantive instrument of power and the victorious were regarded as the most powerful. Empire makers during that time had to rely on their capacity to win thereby to expand their reign of power. On the other hand, during the colonial period, the power of the empire makers depended on the possession of colonies. But unlike the modern portrayal of the colonised as the passive recipient of the historic progresses, the book asserts that, the power structure was more evenly balanced between the colonisers and the colonies.

Besides, the imperialistic forces had to face stiff and violent resistances and in the due course of time they had to retreat from colonies either being forced or at the prospect of inevitable defeat. The author brings examples from Asian and African anti-colonial movements and details out the trends by analysing the situation in Indonesia and Algeria. Arguing on the colonial history of the Indian Subcontinent from the traditional approach, the author identifies two reasons behind the independence of the Indian Subcontinent: 1) the violent opposition of the subaltern groups and the nationalistic upheavals against the imperial rule; and 2) the suspicion and the prospect of disobedience by the Indian army to carry out orders of the British Raj.

A big focus of the book was an ample discussion of the underdogs' resistance against the two superpowers during the Cold War period. Starting from the post 1945 breakdown of British and French colonial rule, the book exposes how smaller countries were gaining their self-determination by defying the empire-making abilities of the big powers gradually as exemplified in the Suez Canal Crisis, South Yemen War and nationalistic movements in Algeria. The author is not in agreement with the narrative of superpower rivalry during the Cold War, instead, he argues that a great degree of cooperation and understanding between the USA and the

USSR existed. Supporting the traditional interpretation, author views the Cold War as the continuation of struggles between the empires and the underdogs. He brings the examples of Vietnam in detail and other resistance movements in Cuba, Nicaragua, Haiti, Dominican Republic, Granada and so on. Vietnam's struggle for self-determination, first against the Chinese, then against the French and finally against American intervention, underlines the enduring resistance and pressure that justify the traditional interpretation of power struggle against foreign domination and exploitation. The Soviet failure in Afghanistan, according to author, has been a crucial factor in the breakdown of the communist bandwagon.

Similarly, the post Cold War stories are narrated in the book using the traditional viewpoint that considers US invasion of Afghanistan and Iraq in the pretext of 'War on Terror' as the manifestation of US control over the invaded countries but also in the greater Middle Eastern region. The author opines that projected objectives of the wars like eliminating Al Qaeda and Taliban and the so-called weapons of mass destruction are all minors, while the consolidation and expansion of US spheres of influence is the major. The book predicts that US will not be able to win in Afghanistan and Iraq which will mark the beginning of the end of US military supremacy and economic power. China, as the author opines, will replace USA as the future hegemon and like all other historic powers will pursue its influence by means of military preponderance over the underdogs in the coming decades.

The modern story has a very different version and vision of world political history. Unlike the traditional story, it considers colonial era as the interaction among the people and as the natural culmination of human relationship that was even expected by the colonised people. It attributes the rise of nationalism as a contribution of the nation building by the colonial masters in the colonies of Asia and Africa. Hence, the loss of empires are shown in the cost-benefit prism arguing that the high maintenance cost of colonies forces big powers to let the colonies to be independent. Similarly, the Cold War is considered as super-power rivalry between USA and USSR, ignoring the position and resistance by the smaller countries. US victory over USSR is seen as the reason why Soviets has to withdraw from Afghanistan. And finally, the post 9/11 US war on terror is projected as an attempt to eliminate transnational network of terrorists and promote security and stability for the international community. Ambassador Khosla ends his memoir discussing the post Cold War shifts of power and the newer forms of threats the world is and will be facing including nuclear proliferation and terrorism. Predicting an American decline and a Chinese rise as a substitute, he mentions contemporary threats as neither traditional nor modern which can provoke defensive exercise of power by victim countries like the United States and India.

The book *Underdogs End Empires: A Memoir* is an important contribution in the field of anti-colonial history that marks several exceptions compared to other prevailing perspectives. For instance, the author rejects the conception that empire-



building was an unintended offshoot of trade and asserts that empire-making was an avaricious struggle for domination. Likewise, he views the fall of empires as the result of incessant struggle by subjugated people against the breach of their freedom and rights, discarding the view that extraneous factors such as international pressure, economic decline or aftermath of world wars resulted in the dismantling of empires. He also questions the accreditation of the colonial masters as the father of nationalistic aspirations claiming that the struggle for self-rule was primarily and essentially subaltern in origin. Importantly, the book, unlike the conventional trend of portraying the nationalist struggles in the Marxist-Leninist terms of socio-economic discrepancy between the pivotal class and the marginal portion of the society, assesses anti-colonial movements as natural developments marking the entry of the developing world as a powerful force into the making of subsequent political history.

One of the key merits of the book underlies in its egalitarian position against the depiction of the evolution of national identity one-dimensionally by the historians and the political theories that ignore the subaltern version of history. The rich historiographical account of the book including Chanakya, Thucydides, Kant, Gibbon, Foucault and Hobsbawm as well as many scholarly references from Morgenthau, Kissinger, Kennedy, Schilling helps the author to anchor his thesis into the broader spectrum of scholarship on the study of political history and also to reinforce academic rigour and historic validity of his findings. The book not only presents compelling arguments to reorient the dominant interpretations of the history of power struggle, but also advances an egalitarian commitment in favour of rebalancing the distribution of power more evenly. It is quite convincing that modern stories have mystified the actual contributions that underdogs made in their constant confrontation with the empires to reshape the destiny of the millions of oppressed people worldwide.

Looking critically, the book simplifies many of the complex issues in a singular vista, reducing the complexity and diversity of perspectives that could have enriched the book more. For example, his narratives of both traditional and modern stories label all the resistance movements as the product of nationalism and, therefore, ignore the big diversity and differences that exist among the nationalist movements in Asia and Africa. The analysis undervalues the importance of non-violence movements in the struggle for freedom among the British and French colonies particularly in the case of Indian Subcontinent. However, the book by advocating a subaltern perspective of history is a Significant contribution to the mainstreaming of non-western narratives in the contemporary discourse of international relations.

Reviewed by

*Md. Muhibbur Rahman*

Research Officer

Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies (BIISS)

E-mail addresses: mrahman@biiss.org and tanzimdu@gmail.com.

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