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The US Presidents and the Post-cold War Security

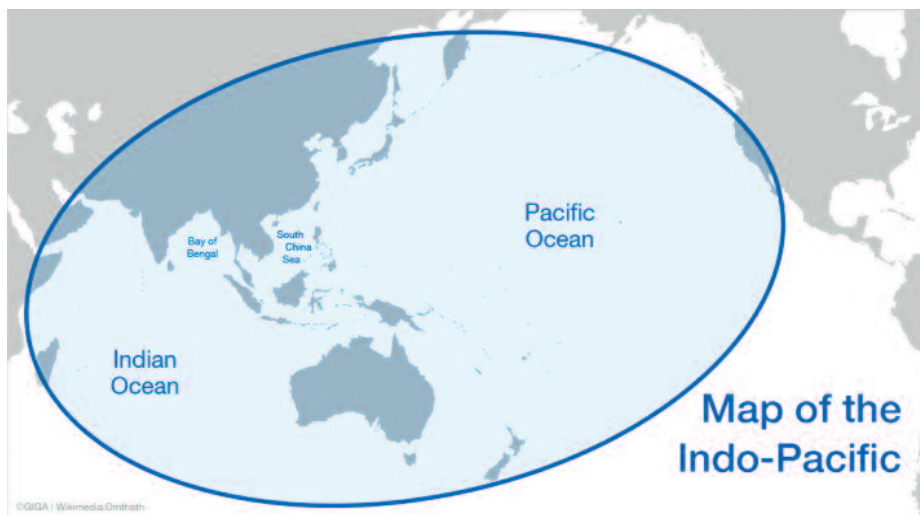
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THE SECURITY WORLD

ABOUT US

The Security World is being published with the primary purpose of promoting peace, security and international cooperation through analysis, policy dialogue and dissemination of information. We are also trying to focus on the contributions of our defense forces and law enforcement agencies in curbing terrorism and their role in the international arena to bring back peace and security. As there is no noteworthy publication to project these achievements, we believe the Security World will play a pivotal role in this regard.

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THE US PRESIDENTS AND THE POST-COLD WAR SECURITY

Air Vice Marshal Mahmud Hussain (Retd)



The post-Cold War era has been a most interesting phase in international politics in recent history. No other period has held the balance of power system in so much of ambivalence. The period has two distinct phases.

The first phase started with the collapse of the former Soviet Union. It was undoubtedly uni-polar. The second phase, the present one is multi-polar, though many would term it as “unipolar-multipolar”. The distinction is subtle, and hardly enervates the paradigm of multi-polarity.

There is no denying the fact that the United States has been dominating global politics since the middle of the 20th Century. In fact, it was President Woodrow Wilson, in the aftermath of the 1st World War who set the profile of US superiority. His “fourteen point principles” was a precursor to managing global affairs. Great political phenomena need great powers to act together on behalf of the rest of mankind. But great nations also need great leaders with the vision of comprehending complex world politics on a grand scale. The leadership role of the US presidents in shaping the course of recent history has been a deciding factor for peace and conflict.

It is interesting the uni-polar world order which the US had created was a short-lived euphoria for the western world. Its replacement by a multi-polar world is a testing ground for assessing the role of successive US presidents in the post-Cold War era. Relatedly, the assumption of US leadership and international order imply the direction in which the world has moved since the fall of the Soviet Union in 1989.

George W. Bush Sr. (1989-1993)

The fall of the Soviet Union made the United States so visionary and confident of its strength in material capabilities that America became exceptional in promising a return of Wilsonian idealism to its foreign policy on a worldwide basis. America dreamt of a new world order. President George W. Bush Sr. (1989-1993), the first President in the post-Cold War era inaugurated the phase of uni-polar world order under his country’s profound colossus. He echoed his country’s mission in the following word.

“We have a vision of a new partnership of nations that transcends the Cold War. A partnership based on consultations, cooperation and, and collective action, especially through international and regional organizations. A partnership united by principle and the rule of law and supported by an equitable sharing of both cost and commitment. A partnership whose goals are to increase democracy, increase property and, increase the peace, and reduce arms.” (President George Bush ►►)



- Sr., “The UN: World Parliament of Peace,” address to the UN General Assembly, New York, October 1, 1990.)

America proved its exceptionalism in the first Gulf War. It was a classic example of combing the principles of idealism with the imperatives of *realpolitik*. Gulf War was both a political campaign and a military campaign *par excellence* at grand strategic scale. It modulated Clausewitzian proverb, that “global war to achieve global political objectives need a global leader.” It also successfully tested the Wilsonian doctrine of collective security, “a war of all against one”. In the previous two World Wars, the United States was an ally of the victors. It joined the wars rather late. But the Gulf War was an American War. The UN resolution passing the approval for the war was unanimous. 26 countries joined the war and Bangladesh was one of them with 6000 troops. It was a massive participation of the world body against a single enemy. The planning of the Gulf War was highly complex and difficult. Even if there was any country who opposed the war, its voice was, at best, muted. The war epitomized the US’s single-handed panache global leadership. It also heralded the advent of a uni-polar world order. To echo the truth of that moment: “America made the world order, and the world order made America”.

Bill Clinton (1993-2001)

Certainly, the US had an overwhelming military power, and it was able to accomplish tasks that others were unwilling for lack of political will and consensus. The impact of its actions was world-

wide and left an indelible impression of greatness. It showed courage to transplant its own values and institutions across the world. Its mental power was enormous. When President Bill Clinton, the second US President (1993-2001) in the uni-polar moment, took power, he proclaimed his intention to enlarge democracy, and it was reminiscent of a global governance.

“In a new era of peril and opportunity, our overriding purpose must be to expand and strengthen the world’s community of market-based democracies. During the Cold War, we sought to contain a threat to survival of free institutions. Now we seek to enlarge the circle of nations that live under those free institutions, for our dream is of a day when the opinions and energies of every person in the world will be given full expression in a world of thriving democracies that cooperate with each other and live in peace.” (President Bill Clinton, “Confronting the Challenges of a Broader World,” address to the UN General Assembly, New York, September 27, 1993.)

Clinton was emphasizing the role of democracy, free-market economy and globalization in making the post-Cold War security environment resolute and sustainable. American hard power was conjoined with its soft power. Once again, the growth of worldwide networks of interdependence overarching the mantle of “globalization” offered means for *laissez-faire* economy. It was possible for the US to create an environment of shared interests through economic interdependence, and institutions while maintaining a posture of “American hegemon”. Its geo-political appeal enlarged NATO membership. It guaranteed security ►►

► to its Asian allies, notably, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan and the ASEAN bloc. It showed to the world the utility of force to attain definitive political outcome for peace in Bosnian crisis that for long defied solution due to incompetent handling of European powers.

Externalities that once so constrained the United States in taking actions were removed but unhinged freedom of exercise could also be damaging to reputation.

George W. Bush Jr. (2001-2009)

President George W. Bush junior (2001-2009), the third US President in the uni-polar moment, avoided the path of reconciliation and seemed to favor the strategy of “go alone”. His famous coinage of the expression ‘either you are with us or with them’ eroded much confidence in moral high ground that the United States as a single superpower was supposed to enjoy from others. Instead of strengthening the political hierarchy for itself, the Bush Administration, much to its bewilderment, was de-constructing the moral side of political perspectives. “Either/Or’ version in international politics lent suspicion into the minds of others under conditions of uni-polar dictates. It meant that America made rules for strategic engagement, and it was morally obligated upon others to obey her. In the task of confronting the so-called “evil”, there was no choice but to condescend to the United States.

Despite all the braggadocio of US intransigence, there were challenges to uni-polar order emanating from a de-constructive language. What was for the United States a “war on terror” took on a different meaning as “freedom struggle” by others. US failure to resolve the Middle East crisis till today is a case in point. The United States could not obtain unanimous support to back its Middle East peace plan. Terrorism which President Bush called the product of Islamic fundamentalism was also a challenge to western imperialism. It was the beginning of challenging US intention, thereby attacking its unipolar moral aspirations. Take the French-Amer-

ican row over the US logic to wage the second Gulf War. Chirac’s multi-polar rhetoric in defending his opposition to the war became a concern of ambivalence among US policymakers, even inviting British Prime Minister Tony Blair to call Chirac’s vision of multi-polarity dangerous. Fareed Zakaria infers the beginning of the end of the US-dominated uni-polar world with the collapse of Iraq in 2003. The second Gulf War was a blundered strategy and has played a definitive role in the decline of US pre-eminence with the rise of Islamic terrorism. Iraq became a costly fiasco. Joseph E. Stiglitz makes an empirical assessment of the economic consequences of going alone in the war in his book, *The Three Trillion Dollar War: The True Cost of the Iraq Conflict*. Middle East, the center of gravity of world oil production transformed into a jihadist flashpoint when Zarqawi-led group called the Organization of Monotheism began operations in Iraq in May 2003. In October 2006, the Islamic State of Iraq (ISI) was formed. The Iraq War has turned into a global nightmare. By the time ISIS announced the establishment of the caliphate and renamed itself as “the Islamic State” in June 2014. The upshot to Iraq War had engulfed the whole of Middle East and may turn out to be America’s longest war.

Great convictions must be matched by great deeds carefully chosen with proper and in-depth strategic vision. A successful leader is one whose idealism is matched with the resources available for the application of realist choices. A demagogue is unable to comprehend the complexities of international politics by transcending nationalistic jingoism. Bush junior unlike his father who saw America’s role as befitting its strength and stature in the unique position of remaking a *New World Order*, lacked a clear perspective of international system. The way he prosecuted his Global War on Terror (GWOT) contained seeds of US’s decline from a position of moral superiority. This was damaging for a superpower that wanted to lead the global order. A simple analogy with his previous predecessor Bill Clinton will reveal how ►►



Left: US President Joe Biden. (Photo: Kevin Dietsch/Getty Images. From top down: Russia's President Vladimir Putin. (Photo: Alessandro della Valle/Keystone via Getty Images); Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky. (Photo: Ukrainian Presidency via Getty Images); Chinese President Xi Jinping, above, and President Cyril Ramaphosa. (Photo: Andy Wong/Getty Images; Graphic: iStock)

▶ divergent he was in getting the world along with him. Bill Clinton saw in the world an immense potential for interdependence; he was a champion of *globalization*, where more integrated global community of shared responsibilities, shared benefits and shared values would overcome poverty, ignorance, disease and bad government.

Barack Obama (2009-2017)

By the time Barack Obama took office as the fourth President, challenges to the uni-polar world order started building up. Obama worked hard to maintain a balance between soft power and hard power. Obama withdrew the vast majority of U.S. soldiers in Iraq by late 2011, and when he left office, there were roughly 8,400 U.S. soldiers in Afghanistan. Obama reiterated a long-term NATO partnership with Russia. He continued to advocate for a negotiated two-state solution of Israeli-Palestine conflict and his administration abstained from vetoing the UN Security Council Resolution to end the Israeli settlement in Palestinian territory captured during the 1967 Six-Day Yom Kippur War. He made a major breakthrough

in US-Cuba relations. Obama's attitude differed radically from that of his predecessor, George W. Bush. Iran deal was an exemplar of multi-lateral agreement with other P5+1 powers (China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States; plus Germany). Obama's foreign policy during the Arab spring was based on respecting the aspirations of the local population against a dictator whereof the Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak had to resign at

his insistence. The Obama administration announced to review U.S. military assistance to Saudi Arabia after its warplanes killed more than 140 people at a funeral in Yemen's capital Sana. Obama stated his desire to close the detention camp in Guantanamo Bay urging that the camp's extrajudicial methods were a violation of legal norms. There were 242 prisoners when he assumed office, and only 41 inmates remained at the time of his departure. The Obama administration launched a successful operation that killed Osama bin Laden, the leader of Al-Qaeda. Response to his killing across the world was positive. The US Libyan campaign culminated in the toppling of the Gaddafi regime, and in November 2015, Obama announced a plan to resettle at least 10,000 Syrian refugees in the United States.

But it was in Asia, the rise of China, in the eyes of American scholars and strategists that undermined the image of the United States as "the indispensable nation and the world's sole superpower." No wonder that Obama's "geo-political pivot to Asia" was in response to the emergence of Chinese power in the Asia-Pacific. His ▶▶

► Secretary of State, Hilary Clinton went so far as to declare that for the United States, “the future of politics will be decided in Asia, not Afghanistan or Iraq, and the United States will be right at the center of action”. Obama essentially wanted the United States to solidify its unipolar influence where it was geo-strategically most needed. China’s continued territorial claims in the South China Sea and the East China Sea put Obama administration into closer relations with ASEAN (Association of South East Asian Nations). Its relations with Australia, the Philippines, Vietnam, Laos, Japan and South Korea got better. But the most important foreign policy attribute of Obama was to walk the Wilsonian path by enhancing the soft power attraction of the United States. Obama lifted many sanctions on Myanmar after America helped encourage openly contested elections there. But the most potentially substantive action by Obama was to design the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) as the key pillar of the “Asian Pivot”. Started as a “geo-economic fraternity”, the partnership could also be used as a conduit for collective security in dealing with the rising China in its own sphere of influence. If President Bush junior was a realist par excellence willing to dominate the world with the insouciance of a lone superpower, Obama melded his version of *realpolitik* with the liberal doctrine of a great power’s manifest destiny.

Donald Trump (2017-2021)

President Donald Trump, the fifth US President in the post-Cold War era (2017- 2021) has damaged much of US global leadership image through reckless foreign policy. He had flouted every possible initiatives that his predecessors, both democrat and republican, took to manage the international affairs. He had underrated himself by being a populist, nationalist and protectionist. His doctrine of “America First” was a great shift that despised its traditional role of global leader after World War II. His ideas often seemed dangerous for world stability. He had no

clue to the “soft power” influence of a great nation in rallying the support from the recalcitrant states. His coercive foreign policy with states that could be contained through a mix of proportionate “stick and carrot” strategy was producing irrelevant results. He saw everyone as plotting against the United States. The meaning of the world through democracy, globalization and free market economy, that the United States wanted to maintain throughout the period failed to enter his policy directives, and gave a big kink to the US fostered liberal order. His realist paradigm lacked the bigger picture of the world.

His “make America great again” slogan sounds hollow in respect of the burden of responsibility owed by a great power. No alliance group has been more flabbergasted than Europe to find that the US administration was, no longer, interested in its security as part of America’s strategic objective. He withdrew from the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), thereby giving away space to China in Asia. Both North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and European Union, he saw as tools of Canada and Germany to beat the United States on trade. He picked up trade wars with China that could spell far-reaching deleterious effects for global economy. He had very little respect for multi-lateral rules and institutions that was once the hallmark of US leadership. By rejecting the global agenda on environment, he made Europe into a global leader on energy and the environment. In the Middle East, careless handling of the crisis and mostly a non-interventionist attitude is seeing the emergence of Russia as a strong opponent to US influence. Shifting of US embassy to Jerusalem was a move that instead of thawing Israel-Palestine enmity has further worsened the peace process. His behavior with Iran was eccentric and unwarranted of foreign policy appropriate to a great power. Only in case of North Korea, he has shown some sanity in behavior by shunning previously chosen path of destruction but for that more than his own interest, South Korea and China would have to be credited as these countries might, no longer, bear ►►

Sl.	Period	President	Type	Global Security Challenges
1.	1989-1993	George H.W. Bush Sr.	Liberal-Realist	Convergence
2.	1993-2001	William J. Clinton	Liberal	Convergence
3.	2001-2009	George W. Bush Jr.	Realist	Divergence
4.	2009-2017	Barrack Obama	Liberal-Realist	Convergence
5.	2017-2021	Donald J. Trump	Ultra-Realist	Divergence
6.	2021-	Joe Biden	Ultra-Liberal	Divergence

Table: US Presidents in the post-Cold War era (Author's Own Formulation)

coming back to the tragic reminiscences of Korean and Vietnam wars.

Joe Biden (2021-)

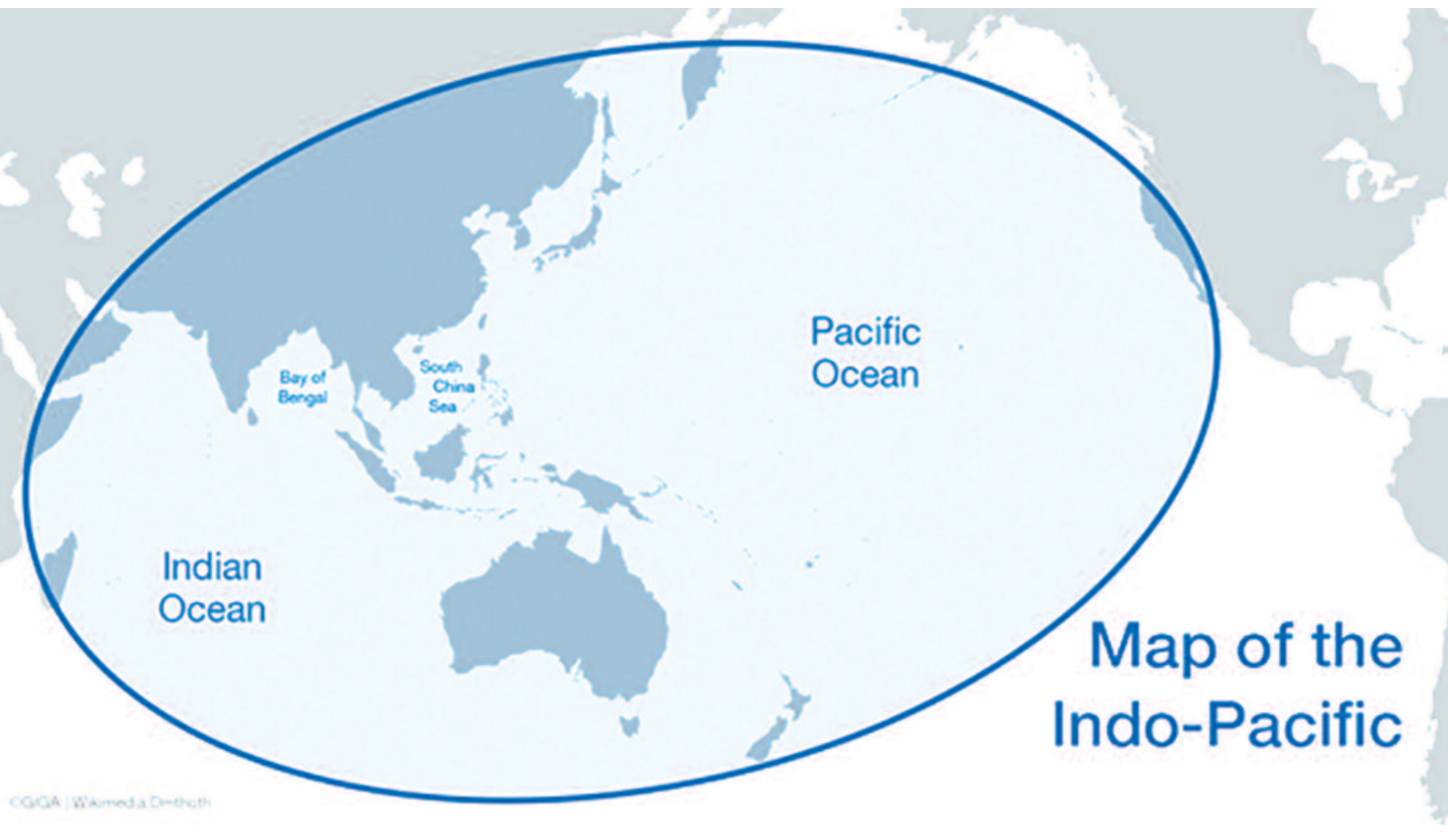
The sixth US President in the post-Cold War era, Joe Biden (2021-) received the first severe shock when Vladimir Putin declared that his attack on Ukraine was not just to teach a lesson to Russia's neighbor but also to challenge the US-led world order. At the time of this writing, Ukraine is being backed up militarily by NATO under the leadership of the United States, but it has not been of much help to the US cause of a stable world order, and no one will bear in terms of rising energy prices, and damaging economies. The war has also brought China closer to Russia engendering a challenge to US hegemony. Both Putin and Xi Jinping have attacked US-sponsored post-Cold war order by adopting strategies that the US may find lot harder to deal with.

(Note: This is a broad classification of the US Presidents. By "convergence" I mean the great power's ability to pull maximum support in its favored decision, and "divergence" implies when the great power acts alone. George H.W.Bush's ability to get unanimous UN approval in the First Gulf War is an example of "convergence", while the junior Bush's decision to "go-alone" in the

Second Iraq War in 2003 is of "divergence". Barack Obama's actions to engage with others such as Iran, Iraq and Asia (TPP) are very good examples of convergence, while Trump's insolence to the opposite is a signal to divergence.)

The leadership characteristics of a great power have strong influence upon the changes of international politics. It is difficult for world politics to operate in a vacuum. The post-Cold War security depends much on the leadership style of the United States but it should also warn itself of the hegemonic inclinations of a super-power. If the future growth of world's material capabilities depends upon the Asia Pacific, it is imperative for the United States to engage with Asian powers in a partnership mood. Otherwise, the world will be more insecure, and in the scenario of great power conflicts, the worst sufferers will be the potentially developing but materially weak states.

Air Vice Marshal Mahmud Hussain is a retired air force officer. He served as High Commissioner of Bangladesh to Brunei Darussalam from November 2016 to September 2020. He served as the Chairman, Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh (CAAB). Presently, he is working as the Distinguished Expert at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Aviation and Aerospace University (BSMRAAU).



Does Bangladesh Need an Indo-Pacific Strategy?

Commodore Kazi Emdadul Haq (Retd)



Introduction

Bangladesh has become the seat of discourse amidst the great powers' competition in the Indo-Pacific. Visits by the newly appointed Chinese foreign minister at midnight and high-level US delegations created curiosity among journalists and interlocutors. Social media, Twitter, television,

and interlocutors have built up the visits with lots of speculations, passing comments and views from their points of interpretation.

Intellectuals and YouTubers are trying to interpolate the logic of great powers' confluence in Bangladesh and the connotation of the Indo-Pacific Strategy (IPS). The visits from the US and China to Bangladesh after the adoption of the UNSC Resolution on Myanmar on 21 December 2022 have given rise to many theories of unresolved issues that placed Bangladesh in a geopolitically crucial position.

Amidst this media hype, Bangladesh's foreign ►

► minister realised the need for a “strategy” for the Bay of Bengal (BoB). Does Bangladesh need a strategy? If so, why? We need to analyse from the perspective of Bangladesh and, at the same time, the US policy towards Bangladesh.

Indo-Pacific Strategy of the United States

Before making a strategy, it needs a careful study of the Indo-Pacific approach of the United States. The United States generally pursues Bangladesh and other littoral countries to participate in Indo-Pacific roles. The crucial point is that the US-led IPS has not been known to sign or invited any countries to join, contrary to the China-led Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). China invited the nations to join and sign BRI. On the other hand, IPS is a strategy or concept in which the United States desires countries to participate in the Indo-Pacific affairs and uphold the "Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP)" policy.



An airfield, buildings, and structures on the artificial island built by China at Subi Reef. Ezra Acayan/Getty Images

[The IPS of the United States, February 2022](#), proclaims that the Indo-Pacific region stretches from the US West Coast to the Indian Ocean without clarifying the north and southern boundary. However, [Canada’s Indo-Pacific Strategy](#) states that the region encompasses 40 countries, including Bangladesh and landlocked countries Bhutan and Nepal. China is included in the region, but surprisingly Canada and Russia, or any other countries on the East Coast of the Pacific, were not included in the IPS, al-

though littoral to the Pacific. Ideally, the US should welcome all countries of the Indo-Pacific to play a powerful role in upholding the FOIP policy. The very establishment of the Indo-Pacific concept has become obscure to comprehend.

The IPS has [five objectives](#) (Page: 7) which target three areas to focus on: FOIP, security, and economy. However, the majority of thinktanks would agree that China is claiming almost all of the ►



Buildings and structures on the artificial island built by China at Fiery Cross Reef in the Spratly Islands. Ezra Acayan/Getty Images

▶ South China Sea (SCS) by drawing a 9-dash line and seizing control of islands (mainly Spratly and Paracel) in the SCS, coercing the United States into countering China through some strategy which later came out to be the IPS. The United States advocates all countries of the region have equal rights and “Freedom Of Navigation Operations” (FONOP) in all the seas of the Indo-Pacific according to the "United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), 1982”.

China also alienated most Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) by pushing the 9-dash line into their Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). The United States, its allies, and partners saw this as China's unlawful aggression in the SCS and started FONOP in the SCS to challenge China's territorial claim. As such, China considers the IPS a policy of the US containment of China. So the great power competition between China and the United States has pushed the neutral littoral countries to choose the sides to support.

Most Asian countries are hesitant to participate in IPS due to fear of China's economic retaliation. Because in the last two decades, China engaged most Asian countries with substantial financial investments under the banner of BRI, and they know the severe consequences of withdrawing China's support.

Action Plans of the United States

The United States has also outlined action plans in IPS to implement the US strategy. The aggressive advocacy of the United States is to strengthen ties among the "allies" and "partners" of the Indo-Pacific region through various programs and bilateral agreements.

To achieve the objectives of the Indo-Pacific, the

United States sporadically enforced forums, like, Quad (Quadrilateral Security Dialogue), AUKUS(Australia, United Kingdom, United States), IPEF(Indo-Pacific Economic Framework). Although not mentioned explicitly, these are the elements of IPS to achieve the US objectives. In addition to these forums, the United States also pursues countries to make military cooperation by signing agreements with GSOMIA(General Security Of Military Information Agreement) and ACSA (Acquisition and Cross Servicing Agreements). [The United States made GSOMIA agreements](#) with 76 countries and ACSA with over a hundred countries worldwide, including India and Sri Lanka.

Indo-Pacific is a vast region where logistic support is a prime concern while US ships are away from homeport. Through these aforementioned agreements, the United States effectively strengthened the partnership; thus, it helped achieve the objectives of IPS, mainly to [wean the neutral countries away](#) from Chinese influence and carry out uninterrupted FONOP.

Indo-Pacific Strategy of Other Countries

Many countries brought out their Indo-Pacific strategy unitedly, rather than individually. Nations prefer inclusive Indo-Pacific, which means all littoral countries to be included, contrary to the intent of the United States towards China. Although most ASEAN countries are not very happy with China's 9-dash line, the ASEAN forum wants the Indo-Pacific to be inclusive of China. ASEAN has named the concept "[outlook on the Indo-Pacific](#)" based on the principles of strengthening ASEAN centrality. Similarly, the EU also brought out the "[EU strategy for cooperation in the Indo-Pacific](#)", in place of an individual strategy per country. In South Asia, such an initiative has yet to be taken ▶▶

► either by SAARC (South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation) or BIMSTEC (Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation).

Indian Prime Minister Modi [does not want to see Indo-Pacific as a “strategy”](#) or directed against any country, and he [launched](#) Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative (IPOI) in 2019, where he used "ocean initiative" instead of “strategy”. Great economic powers like Canada and Japan also brought out strategies separately.

The central message of all of the Indo-Pacific concepts is believed by many to ensure freedom of navigation (rules-based order), security, and economic prosperity through shared participation by all, which is similar to the IPS of the United States.

Instead of an individual approach, countries preferred a collective one that conveyed a powerful message. The major controversy of IPS among the countries is appeared to be simmering over a single issue which is “inclusive” or “exclusive” of China. Specifying this inclusivity/exclusivity in the doctrine could be fatal for weak developing countries of the Indo-Pacific, for which these countries abstained from making such doctrine individually.

It is not obligatory for nations to make such a doctrine to achieve interests in the Indo-Pacific. As more than 90% of Bangladesh's goods flow through BoB, safeguarding Sea Lines of Communication (SLOC) would be the immediate concern of Bangladesh. For that purpose, Bangladesh might need a strategy in the near future, which the [Bangladesh foreign minister](#) has expressed, "we will also have our own strategy on how we want to see our Bay of Bengal and beyond".

The Bangladesh Navy mainly operates in the BoB but goes beyond during “goodwill visits” or for carrying out exercises with friendly navies.

Bangladesh Navy has put up its best effort to make a maritime strategy for a long time. The "Forces Goal 2030", an ambitious plan to modernise Bangladesh Armed Forces, has outlined the maritime strategy, which may further broaden.

Indo-Pacific Strategy and its Impact on Bangladesh

Let's look at the IPS of the United States, and where it placed Bangladesh to achieve US objectives. Is Bangladesh included as a US partner or an ally? The partnership is less formal than an alliance, also called a "strategic partnership". The United States has five treaty alliances in this region: Australia, Japan, the ROK, the Philippines, and Thailand. The US strategy categorically mentioned the US leading regional partners are India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Mongolia, New Zealand, Singapore, Taiwan, Vietnam, and the Pacific Islands.

Where is Bangladesh? Despite the fact that the United States is Bangladesh's number one export country and third largest trading country, Bangladesh is not a partner of the United States. Is the United States treating Bangladesh in the same category as Myanmar? If so, why?

In fact, the relationship between the United States and Bangladesh is like a "stepbrother" (unofficial comment by a US diplomat where I was present), and it has remained like this since the birth of Bangladesh till today. Former US President Richard Nixon and his secretary Henry Kissinger did not want an independent Bangladesh. Even after the independence, the legacy of Nixon continued in Bangladesh.

After coming to power, the [Biden administration didn't invite Bangladesh](#) to US President Joe Biden's Summit for Democracy, held in December 2021. In contrast, Pakistan was invited to that summit, but after a year, Biden described Pak-▶▶



Donald Lu in Dhaka. Source: PID Bangladesh

agreements" meant to strengthen defence relationship between the two countries.

Although seething with bitterness, Bangladesh may have to accept these realities and endure some unwanted advice without pointing fingers at the United States' problems at home. Due to its economic engagement with the United States, Bangladesh must maintain its support;

▶ istan as the ["most dangerous country"](#) in the world.

The United States was supposed to impart sanctions against India [under CAATSA](#) (Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act) for buying the S-400 missile system from Russia, but later the US exempted India from CAATSA; India continued buying Russian oil and gas at a subsidised rate which helped maintain Putin's economy during the Russian invasion of Ukraine; still, India remained the leading partner of the United States and consented to India as a net security provider in the Indian Ocean.

To fulfill the "Forces Goal 2030", Bangladesh cannot buy military equipment from the United States unless [Bangladesh signs two defence agreements with the United States](#): GSO-MIA and ACSA. The US officials termed them "foundational

perhaps, both countries have that understanding. The United States also supports Bangladesh through various programs. In September 2022, cohosted by both the US Army and Bangladesh Army, the 46th Indo-Pacific Armies Management Seminar (IPAMS) was held in Bangladesh, where 23 nations' senior army officers gathered.

Many conversationalists postulated that the United States invited Bangladesh to join Quad; this was, in fact, false. Quad members never in-▶▶



China's new Foreign Minister Qin Gang meeting with Bangladesh FM Abdul Momen. Source: Twitter/@BDMOFA

►vited any countries to join in Quad, let alone Bangladesh – it is a farfetched idea of interlocutors. It was also an inapt comment by the Chinese ambassador to Bangladesh to [warn Bangladesh not to join in Quad](#). Even the United States did not invite Bangladesh to the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework (IPEF), launched on 23 May 2022 in Tokyo by Joe Biden.

Despite the facts above, the United States wants to see Bangladesh participate in various Indo-Pacific roles.

UN Resolution on Myanmar

Another bizarre idea floated by some writers is [establishing a no-fly zone over Myanmar](#). This idea became popular among the readers, especially after the UN Security Council adopted [Resolution 2669](#) on Myanmar on 21 December 2022, which contains clauses related to Bangladesh that says to "create conditions necessary for the voluntary, safe, dignified and sustainable return of Rohingya refugees" (Serial 10 of the Resolution). Twelve votes adopted the resolution in favour, and as usual, China, India, and Russia abstained.

The United States is clearly recognising the looming threat for the Indo-Pacific region, expressed in the resolution: "underlining the risks that the Rohingya situation poses for the wider region". Although this adoption of this resolution does not imply any end to the Rohingya crisis because to take further action, UNSC needs to pass another resolution where both China and Russia would come with their mighty "veto" power.

Following the adoption of the resolution, it became popular discourse in the media on the issue of recent past visits from both the United States and China. It is implausible that the United States would take any actions in Myanmar, like invading Iraq, bypassing the UNSC approval. The US intention appears to be balanced, not alienating ASEAN.

The recent visit to Bangladesh by US Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asian Affairs, Donald Lu desires Bangladesh to participate perhaps aggressively in Indo-Pacific affairs. However, his visit, followed by China's new Foreign Minister Qin Gang's brief stopover in Dhaka on 10 January 2023, had anything to do with that is yet to unfold. But the meeting at midnight between two foreign ministers has raised eyebrows among the thinkers.

Conclusion

Indo-Pacific is not a club that Bangladesh can join; rather, it is a US strategy where the United States always invites littoral countries, including Bangladesh, to participate in various roles, and Bangladesh's response is reasonably fair.

It also appears that Bangladesh would not want to make any move that would be perceived as colluding with the present relationship between Bangladesh and China. Bangladesh ought to convey a strong message in line with the foreign policy of Bangladesh – "malice towards none" – that the engagement with both China and the United States is for the economic interests of Bangladesh and not to drag Bangladesh towards the great powers' competition.

The Indo-Pacific Strategy of the United States remains obscure to many, and they believed it to counter China. Making a doctrine based on an opaque IPS would be a daunting task for Bangladesh and could be counterproductive. At best, it would be a prudent idea to make some strategy for the Bay of Bengal, instead of the whole Indo-Pacific, in line with the maritime interests of Bangladesh.

Commodore Kazi Emdadul Haq, BSP, ndu, psc, BN (Retd), *Founding Member, Bangladesh Institute of Maritime Research and Development (BIMRAD).*



BRANDING BANGLADESH AND SECURITY

Air Chief Marshal Masihuzzaman Serniabat (Retd.)



Introduction

Ever since the perception of security has taken a bigger dimension encompassing much more than the traditional security, the possibility of security enhancement through other means has diversified. Today security means a whole lot of things. To name a few, Human Security, Economic Security,

Energy Security, Food Security, Cyber-security and so on. Each one has many aspects. Today, as we need to be strong economically to have supportive parallel development on the military side, we also need to balance out new frontiers and embrace them to enhance overall security of ours to maintain peace. If we can harness our potential in the cyber, we are likely to prevail also in many other areas. And that calls for a concerted planned effort from the Government.

In this paper, I am going to delineate how BRANDING BANGLADESH could also establish Bangladesh into a higher orbit of economic ►



► prosperity while enhancing security by placing Bangladesh among friends and making Bangladesh more capable in all other aspects.

When we become a Brand signifying and emboldened with all the good things, our product becomes competitive and we rise economically, in turn we can develop our other arenas, which further enhances security. These are tangible aspects, the intangible side is, when you make friendship to all and malice to none, (Dictum of Father of the Nation, ‘Friendship to all, malice to none’), you are in a position to negotiate and maintain Peace. It is because any aggressor would then see that he could become a pariah or a marked villain, when so many others are our friends. (It is not collective security).

Ways and Means

To meet the challenges of the 4th Industrial Revolution, we need computer literate skilled people in the coming decade. Thanks to the government initiative of setting up Technical Schools and Colleges and IT Parks, we would be having around 118 million computer literate young people in the

coming days (Data collected from BIDA). If we can further harness our Demographic Dividend by flourishing the Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Aerospace and Aviation University, we would be ready for the competitive world of tomorrow. Also here, the accreditation and endorsement of EASA (European Aviation Safety Authority) is essential. For that it is necessary to implement the Agreement Between Airbus and BSMRAAU signed on 8th December 2020, where Airbus would ensure EASA regulatory compliance of the University. On a broad perspective we can say that there has to be a matching between Education Institution output and the input requirement of the industries concerned.

And if we can forge a partnership between the University and the Air Force i.e., Military, a new type of PPP (Public Private Partnership) could develop and the resulting synergy between the University, the Industry and the Military could place us in an elevated higher orbit of manufacturing/ assembling/integrating complex and higher end products. As we lack industrial raw materials, this ►►

► development is a must. And I believe, our Honorable Prime Minister has taken a visionary step by setting up the BSMRAAU. Our ingenuity, resourcefulness and brain could make us competitive and we can do it with faculties consisting of Non-Resident Bangladeshis (NRB) coming back to their roots. A little bit of coaxing is required by making their remuneration attractive. This way, I believe we can harness our Demographic Dividend and become competitive compared to others. The opportunity to attract FDI in Aerospace Industries has become more due to the decoupling of Industries from the west looking for shores other than China and Russia (Due to UKRAINE war and China US Standoff). However, here, we have to be proactive and prove our worth by exhibitions - displays and off-course, **BRANDING BANGLADESH**. And what could be more attractive than to have a successful **AIR EXHIBITION/AIR SHOW** to Brand Bangladesh beyond Bangladesh.

BRANDING BANGLADESH THROUGH HOLDING AN AIR EXHIBITION

An Air Exhibition is a place where Aviation and Aerospace stakeholders showcase their products to the users. The Farnborough Air Show, Paris AIR SHOW attracts annually around 210000 to 351000 Visitors and is participated by 1500 to 2200 exhibitors and many Air Forces of the World with 130 to 180 aircraft. The LIMA, Langkawi AirShow held every alternate year is a combination of Naval and Aviation Display where many companies, manufacturers and other Stakeholders participate. The resulting output cannot be measured only in terms of Boost in tourism or Economic Opportunity but also in terms of the intangible benefit of fostering people to people contact, friendship between nations which could be of tremendous importance in the present world of turmoil and mistrust. The event

becomes the signature Show of the respective host countries. Bangladesh, having just graduated from a Least Developed country to a middle Income Developing country with persistent GDP growth rate of 6 plus for the last decade is well positioned to leap from simple products to complex products through a transformation with the use of AI and its Demographic Dividend. And what could be more alluring than Aerospace related items and products. Off-course, there are many challenges and almost insurmountable obstacles but we do have the potential and facilities in place. For example, the British Raj has left behind a dozen or more 5000ft plus length runways which could allow aerospace related factories or workshops to come up. And the 'potential' is in our young generation graduating from our BSMRAAU with EASA accreditation and ready to be absorbed in the vast Aviation market. But the world needs to know the Potentials here in Bangladesh and the Facilities available. That calls for Branding Bangladesh. And the Air Show is a very attractive proposal. If it is held beside the longest unbroken beach of the world, it is likely to become the best of the best shows on Earth.

Firstly, we need to understand that we have not done any such exercise before, so we need to hire consultants from those who have conducted such Air Exhibition successfully. Secondly, it needs participation and support from many departments of the government. As the operational aspect is the domain of the Air Force, they may be tasked to look into that aspect. The other parts would be the Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism, Ministry of Defence and Ministry of Transportation. In our perspective, the Prime Minister's Office could play a pivotal role through the Armed Forces Division. Various coordinating Instructions have to be brought out from the central office of the Prime Minister. One more aspect that could be instrumental in success is Flight Safety. Hospitality and detailed planning of all the events and side events could be a big chal-►►

Bangladesh Air Show 2022



challenge and would require support from many agencies and ministries. All things have to be looked into meticulously and in detail. Finally the financial matters and the transfer of all payments should be transparent and done with accountability and check and balance. The first exhibition would/may need some funds to meet the expenditure of hosting the Air Force Chiefs and other dignitaries. Otherwise once set the subsequent Shows would become self-sustaining. And once we showcase Bangladesh as a prospective country for building Industries and a place for tourism, we would be successful in branding Bangladesh. Subsequently we expect to boost sales of our products as we would be more competitive because of our Demographic dividend and the computer literate skilled workforce.

Aspects to be Considered

Patronage. In most of the AIRSHOWS, the patronage comes from the topmost personality of the government or state. Likewise, our Chief Patron should be the Honorable Prime Minister, Sheikh Hasina. This would bring enthusiasm and good coordination from all the government de-

partments involved.

Government Support

Support through Knowledge

Vigorous Campaign in Government Departments

Understanding Briefings

Directive and Instructions

Delegation Management

Hospitality

Sponsors

Coord

Advertisement

PR management

Main Global Partners

Aviation week

Flight International

Janes

Flight Global

Visitor management

Security

Hotel Management

Flight Management



- ▶ Civil Mil coop
- Radar Coverage
- Minute to minute control
- Flight Planning
- CFR
- Aerobatic shows
- Planning
- Willing Participants
- Side Events
- Seminars



TARGETS

The possible targets could be the following:

- 20 plus Business Chalets
- 100 plus Military Officials
- Exhibition Area more Than 70 Aircraft
- 10k Professional Visitors from 50 plus Countries
- Military and Civil Aerobatic Flights from the Globe
- 150 plus International Press

EXHIBITION CONCEPT AND ACTIVITIES

INDOOR EXHIBITION AND SHOWCASE
CONFERENCE/SEMINAR/TALKS/PRODUCT DEMONSTRATIONS

OUTDOOR STATIC DISPLAY OF AIRCRAFT AND EQUIPMENT

AERIAL DISPLAY - AEROBATIC TEAM/ SINGLE PERFORMANCE & FLIGHT DEMO

BUSINESS ACTIVITIES i.e. Business Matching, MOU Signing Ceremony, Networking, Lunch-eon/Dinner parties

OFFICIAL EVENTS i.e. Opening Ceremony, Press Conference

Sub Events i.e. Career Day, Volunteers Program

Conclusion

On Branding Bangladesh, the BAS or Bangladesh Air Show at CXB could have had a big role. It would have attracted FDI in Aviation Related Industries, boosted Tourism and with almost no expenses. Because the Aerospace companies would have rented the Tarmac Area for showcasing their product. The spillover economic activities are enormous. It was postponed due COVID. The Honorable PM did give an AIP (Agreement in Principle) to hold the show, a website was also there and also she gave an AIP to hire Consultancy.

But the preparation work needs to be now to Organize and Manage the whole Episode into a success. The whole matter is more relevant as many companies are relocating from Russia and China due to the Ukraine war and Taiwan Issue. And most importantly it would enhance Security by showing Bangladesh to the world.

Air Chief Marshall Masihuzzaman Serniabat (Retired), former Chief of Air Staff of Bangladesh Air Force (2018-2021).

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25 Years of CHT Peace Treaty: Challenges and Way Forwards

Major General M Ashab Uddin (Retd)

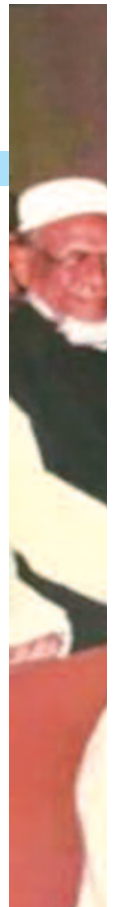


these problems dates back to the mid-fifties with the construction of the Kaptai Dam. This resulted in a large-scale tribal displacement leading to discontentment. The birth of Prabattya Chattagram Jano Sanhati Samity (PCJSS) in 1972 gave further momentum to the political aspiration of the tribal people under the leadership of Manabendra Narayan Larma. Under such compelling circumstances, Bangladesh Army was deployed for Counter Insurgency with a view to safeguarding the territorial integrity and maintaining the stability of CHT. On 02 December

The tribal leaders voiced for their rights to have a separate entity in Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) after the emergence of Bangladesh as an Independent state in 1971. Genesis of

1997, under the leadership and political wisdom of the then Government, the long desired “Peace Accord’ was signed between the Government of Bangladesh and the PCJSS, the political front of Shanti Bahini that waged an armed struggle for the autonomy of the CHT since mid-1970s. The accord has been hailed internationally as a successful case of conflict resolution. Signing of ‘Peace Accord’ has not only created a conducive environment for establishing peace in the entire CHT but also offered unique opportunity to grow sound economic and political culture in this region.

In the peace accord scenario, ‘Operation Ut-taran’ by the security forces (SFs) meaning „Transition to Peace’ has been launched in order to reinforce the Peace Accord implementation process. Yet, the situation in the CHT is in flux and has been gaining complex dimensions with one faction of the Hill people under the hardline political party, United People’s Democratic Front (UPDF), pursuing full autonomy. In the ▶





This historic moment of signing Chittagong Hill Tracts Peace Treaty.

► context of changed scenario, it is of paramount importance to Revisit the 'Peace Accord' to decide upon a combined strategy and select modus operandi for establishing a permanent framework of peace and continued socio economic development for CHT at national level. Major issues or problems of CHT are quite intricate and complex due to its geo-demographic diversity, socio-cultural difference, variant economic life and politico administrative system.

Shanti Bahini, the armed group of PCJSS, moved ahead its political agenda through a path of killings, abductions and other means of coercion. Due to Shanti Bahini's brutal attacks and retaliations by the Bengalis, a good number of tribal families took refuge in the neighboring Indian States during 1985-92. As a result of armed encounters, insurgents and SFS, both incurred loss of lives and properties. Additionally, Shanti Bahini committed some gruesome human rights violations in the form of abductions, killings and burning habitats in several areas of CHT. As per

the political approach the Government of Bangladesh undertook a holistic approach comprising political, socio-economic and military lines of operation since the inception of hostility. Military means could successfully contain insurgency within limit and, as a result, socioeconomic and political process could be steered as intended.

The process of dialogue imbued with political wisdom and pragmatic approach ultimately brought an end to the insurgency through signing of the 'CHT Peace Accord'. It is important to mention here that, the SFs never operated under any 'Special Power Act' to quell insurgency in CHT rather had always worked as part of the political process within the framework of 'In Aid to Civil Power'. Peace was always the goal not victory in all efforts to demonstrate extreme patience and human attitude despite enormous constraints and challenges.

In the Post-Peace Accord scenario the Government has attached highest priority for the sus-►►



The author visited Chattogram Hill Tracts while he was in the Bangladesh army as GOC of Chattogram.

► tained socio-politico and economic uplift of the region to implement CHT Peace Accord. Ministry of CHT Affairs headed by a tribal Member of Parliament has been established in 1998. A 25-member Regional Council headed by Shantu Larma (the ex-rebel leader) and 5-member interim Hill District Councils (HDC) each headed by a tribal person has been formed in three hill districts. So far 30 out of 33 subjects/departments have been handed over to the Hill District Councils and handing over of the rest is in progress. A Task Force for the Rehabilitation of Repatriated Refugees and Identification and Rehabilitation of IDP's within CHT has completed rehabilitation of all tribal refugees amounting 64,612 indi-

viduals of 12,223 families. Out of 72 clauses of Peace Accord, 48 clauses are fully implemented, 15 are partially implemented and rest 9 are on the process of implementation. Peace Accord implementation Process Monitoring Committee, a Parliamentary Standing Committee' of MoCHTA, has been formed. A land Commission, headed by a retired justice, has been working to settle land disputes in accordance with Land Dispute Settlement Act-2001. As per the peace treaty a brigade size force and 241 temporary security forces camps have been withdrawn from CHT.

To evaluate the current situation in CHT; inter-tribal party skirmishes, communal ten-

sion and other social crimes are observed in regular phenomenon. In spite of their differences over Peace Accord and leadership feuds, all tribal parties have common stance regarding core issues like land disputes, removal of settler Bengalis, withdrawn of Army and indigenous issues. By and large, the politics of CHT revolves around CHT and ethno-centric issues, rather than mainstream national politics, Inter-party power politics for control over area and illegal toll collection, armed clashes, killings, abductions, dire exchanges continue to create instability in the political culture of CHT.

According to an interview of Mr Shantu Larma ►►

► on 11 November 2011 in Independent News Channel, PCJSS is maintaining armed cadre for different purposes. As per the clause of CHT Agreement, PCJSS was supposed to surrender with all arms and equipment. However, from the day of signing the CHT Agreement, UPDF opposed PCJSS and became one of the rival group of Mr Shantu Larma. In addition JSS (Reformist) were separated from PCJSS due to ideological conflict in 2010. UPDF (Democratic) was formed from UPDF (Main) due to the same reason i.e. ideological conflict with UPDF (Main). Besides, emergence of Marma Nationalist Party (MNP) and Kuki-Chin National Front (KNF) in Rangamati and Bandarban respectively has become a new challenge to JSS (Main). Therefore, JSS (Main) is gradually losing ground and overall domination in CHT.

However, the miscreants sometimes appeared as a separate military force in support of their dream of establishing an 'Independent Jummaland' in CHT. The vested quarters also do not hesitate to portray Mr M N Larma as „Father of the Jumma Nation . At the same time the National Flag, National ID Card and currency of proposed Independent Jummaland are being displayed publicly. In 2011, they have published a list of complete and separate government structure in social media claiming Mr Shantu Larma as President and Mr Pretimay Khisa as Prime Minister.

Sudden emergence of KNF in Bandarban area with the claim of full autonomous state has become a serious concern for the country. Under the leadership of Nathan Bowm, KNF is trying to build a regular Army in order to create a new state comprising of Baghaichari, Barkal, Bilaichari, Rowangchari, Ruma, Thanchi and Alikadam Upazilla of CHT. A close connection between KNF

and „Jamatul Ansar Fil Hindal Sharqiya has drawn national concern about the existence of KNF in CHT. From different media, it is learnt that KNF has been imparting training to the militants of the new extremist group which is a serious concern.

After ILO Convention - 2007, the tribals of CHT are trying to create pressure on the Government for getting recognition as indigenous. Despite having no criteria to be recognized as indigenous, the tribals are vocal on the indigenous issue. The Tribal leaders are employing national and international lobbyist groups in order to obtain additional rights and facilities from the country.

A vested group regularly participate in propaganda campaign to defame the image of the country at national and international forums. They are ►►



The author visited Chattogram Hill Tracts while he was in the Bangladesh army as GOC of Chattogram.

▶ also conducting systematic hate campaign through seminars, talk shows, leaflets, posters, social media etc. Moreover, many tribal students with foreign scholarship are running hate campaign against the country from their respective

countries. Kolpona Chakma is the glaring example of fabricated information as part of hate campaign.

There are as many as 69 tourist spots now in CHT at present. The Regional Parties and the

Tribal leaders are often against Government initiative of exploring tourism potentials in CHT. The armed miscreants have burnt tourist vehicles in 2018 to create menace among tourists. Besides, abduction of tourists from different places is a regular incident in CHT. The protest against the initiative of constructing a five star hotel at Chandrapahar, Bandarban is the vivid example of negative posture of Tribal leaders towards tourism.

Land is a complex and one of the core issues in CHT. The prospect of settlement of land dispute is further complicated due to partial amendment of Land Dispute Act 2001 under the demand of JSS but issues like traditional land rights of Tribals, return of lands to refugee/IDPs and issue of allocation of Govt khas land to Bengalis through 'Kabuliat' etc remain the burning points. As heard, the recent fresh list of ▶

A view of Chattogram Hill Tracts



► 81,777 families of nearly 5 lacs tribal people as refugees and IDPs are handed over to the MOCHTA shall further complicate the land disputes. A proper and acceptable land survey is essential in CHT. It has been observed with grave concern that school/pagoda being constructed in khas land from where the security camps were withdrawn. Maintenance of a stable security situation in CHT is a big challenge, particularly in the post Peace Accord scenario. Inter-party rivalry due to leadership feud is quite prominent in CHT. The strategy of organizing and maintaining own-armed groups by the Regional Tribal Political Parties might lead the prevailing stable security environment of CHT to a critical situation/state. Conversely, if the rising Bengali politics is not directed or tackled well, then they might also deteriorate the law and order situation of CHT. Unless a combined approach is followed to address these issues integrating all stakeholders, peace and stability of CHT would remain a far cry. Maintenance of communal harmony is the main pre-condition to the stability of CHT.

Most of the communal clashes and unwanted situations take place due to land dispute. To resolve the issue, a land commission was formed in 2001. Government has amended a good no of sections of the Land Commission Act 2001 and promulgated Land Dispute Settlement Act-2016. However, if we closely monitor the commission, we will find 7 members out of total 9 are tribals. As a result, the commission has lost its impartiality which is reflected in the application. After Land Commission Amendment Act 2016, total 22,000 applications were deposited by tribals as opposed to only 500 applications from Bangalee. It reflects the mistrust of Bangalee Community on the Commission. Therefore, Bangalee Community is vibrant and vocal against the activities of Land

Commission. Besides, on 01 November 2018, a letter was issued by MoCHTA to evict the illegal settlements and assist the Bangalee families to re-occupy Sonamia Tila. No move was made by civil administration to implement the order of ministry till today. Sonamia Tila has 800 acres of land out of which 186.76 acres of land were allotted to 812 Bangalee families by the Government. At present, approximately 30-35 acres of land are illegally occupied by Sadhona Bonobihar and 82 Tribal families. Therefore, land issue is a core issue of Tribal - Bangalee clash in CHT.

To increase the capacity of law enforcing agencies, additional paramilitary forces and personnel from the Civil Administration with requisite equipment may be deployed as further scope to act proactively. In the context of present security-politico scenario, there is a compelling need to start with the activities of mainstream politics in full-swing at CHT. All regional political parties may be legalized by suggesting them to register at National Election Commission with a view to codifying their activities under applicable rules and regulations. The election of Regional and Hill District Councils is a long awaited affair. After having completed the pending judicial procedures, the election of Regional and Hill District Councils should be held on a priority basis.

One-tenth of Bangladesh, CHT has tremendous potentials to contribute to the national economy. To ensure a balanced and speedy development of CHT, the region may be declared as an 'Exclusive Development Zone' of Bangladesh. We are optimistic that with the commitment of all the stakeholders and concerted efforts, lasting peace shall prevail in CHT in due course of time.

Major General M Ashab Uddin, ndc, psc (ret'd) is a former General Officer Commanding, Chattogram and Ambassador. Email: majgenashab@gmail.com

“I will Miss the Most When I Leave Dhaka”: British High Commissioner Robert Chatterton Dickson

Rabb Majumder

Robert Chatterton Dickson, a seasoned diplomat, has been the British High Commissioner in Dhaka since March 2019.

According to UK website report, Robert served as the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's Additional Director for the Western Balkans Program from September 2018 until January 2019. He headed the Secretariat team that supported the National Security Council (NSC) and the National Security Adviser from August 2015 to August 2018 while working as a Director in the National Security Secretariat (NSS) of the Cabinet Office. In addition, he had main responsibility in NSS for the cross-Government Conflict, Stability and Security Fund and Prosperity Fund. He was also in charge of coordinating policy on a variety of foreign issues.

During a time of political and military turmoil in Afghanistan, Robert worked for the British Embassy in Kabul for two years between 2013 and 2015 as the Deputy Ambassador and Chargé d'Affaires. He represented the United Kingdom's economic, commercial, and political interests in 13 states of the US Midwest while serving as HM



British High Commissioner Robert Chatterton Dickson

Consul General in Chicago from 2010 to 2013. From 2007 to 2010, he served as the FCO Counter ▶▶

► **Terrorism** Department's director. From 2004 to 2007, he served as the British ambassador to the Republic of Macedonia.

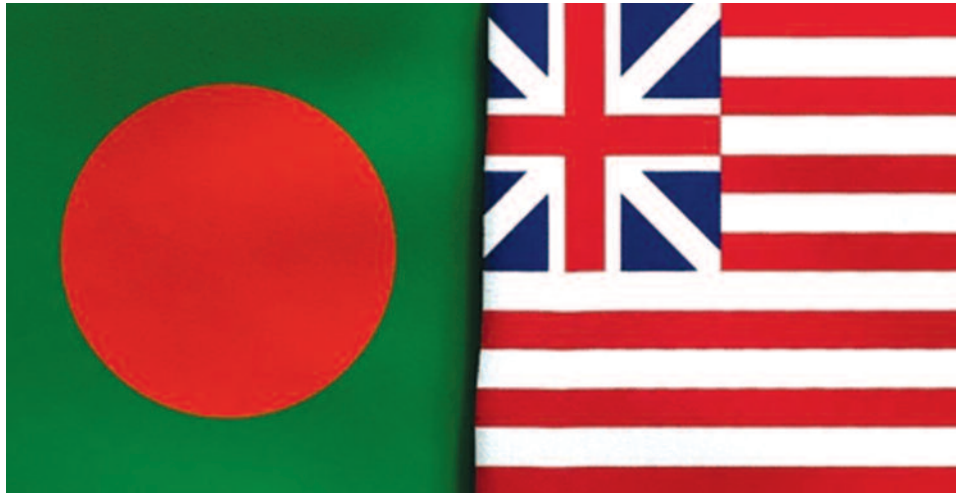
Prior to joining the FCO, Robert worked at the British embassies in Manila and Washington (first as the ambassador's private secretary and later as the press officer) (as Political and Press Officer). He has also worked at the FCO in London on matters like nuclear arms limitation, UN Peacekeeping, NATO, and Iraq. Robert worked as an analyst and UK and global portfolio manager for the asset management division of Morgan Grenfell & Co, a merchant bank in the City of London, before joining the FCO in 1990.

Teresa Albor, an artist who was born in the US, is married to Robert. He has two kids a stepson, and a stepdaughter.

The UK High Commissioner Robert Chatterton Dickson, who is respected for being calm, down to earth, and close to Bangladesh, spoke with Security World about a variety of topics, including the divisive Rohingyas, security, economic investment, and bilateral relations between the two nations. The following are snippets from the interview:

How do you see current relations between the UK and Bangladesh?

The UK's historic partnership with Bangladesh is a unique and valued relationship, cemented by people-to-people connections and deep cultural, trade and economic links. As Bangladesh continues to develop and broadens its ambitions through graduation from Least Developed Country status in 2026, we are proud to stand as a close partner, strengthening ties and building on the



values and outlook we share.

We also look forward to continuing to build on the close economic partnerships between Bangladesh and the UK, including through trade, private sector investment and increasingly through British Investment Partnerships, the UK's development finance institution.

How do you evaluate the UK - Bangladesh defence and security dialogue? How can we improve existing relations?

The UK and Bangladesh share many defence objectives, including the commitment to peace and security that Bangladesh demonstrates better than most through its commitment to the UN, most visibly through its leading contribution to the UN's peacekeeping operations.

Our first Defence Dialogue, held earlier this year, confirmed familiar areas where good defence cooperation is already taking place, and suggested new areas of shared interest including issues such as cyber security.

As we see with our permanent naval presence in the region, the UK is increasing its effort in the Indo-Pacific, including the Bay of Bengal and Bangladesh's neighbourhood. We are keen to work more with established and trusted partners, including Bangladesh, in support of regional peace and stability. ►►

► **How do you look at Bangladesh's Rohingya issue? Will it be a threat to regional and international security?**

It is difficult to see lasting regional peace and stability unless the Rohingya crisis and the situation in Myanmar are addressed. We are deeply concerned by the increasing violence in Myanmar. In Rakhine state, remaining Rohingya communities are caught in the crossfire of recent fighting between the Myanmar Armed Forces and Arakan Army. In recent weeks we have seen instances of this violence crossing the border, resulting in loss of life in Bangladesh.

We will use all available opportunities, including at the G7 and with our ASEAN partners, to push for a long-term solution to the crisis and its root causes. We will also use our role as penholder to keep the situation in Myanmar on the UN Security Council's agenda, and explore all available Council tools.

Globally, humanitarian funding is under unprecedented strain. To help the refugee context in Bangladesh, we advocate for increased substantive livelihoods opportunities for the Rohingya in Cox's Bazar. This would help to improve their levels of self-sufficiency and reduce their reliance on food aid.

We want to help the Government of Bangladesh make Bhasan Char a success. We are, however, concerned about the availability of healthcare on the island, and rising levels of malnutrition. We would advocate for a pause in relocations of refugees to the island to consolidate the development done to date and help to make the project a success, including by providing for more livelihood opportunities.

Would you please explain your assistance for the Rohingya refugees?

In addition to our international advocacy work,

whilst the Rohingya remain in Bangladesh, we will continue to support them with humanitarian relief.

We have provided £340m since 2017 to support the Rohingya and neighbouring host communities in Bangladesh. This has included food, water, shelter, healthcare, education and protection services. Our assistance has focussed on the communities in Cox's Bazar, as well as a contribution to support refugees on Bhasan Char.

We are grateful to the Government and people of Bangladesh for all the support they have provided, and to our UN and NGO partners for their continued work to deliver assistance on the ground.

What investment opportunities do you foresee for the UK and Bangladesh; and how do you evaluate economic relations between the two nations?

Economic relations between the UK and Bangladesh have been productive and stable since the UK recognised Bangladesh as a country in February 1972. Bangladesh is an important economic partner for the UK with a strong relationship in terms of trade, investments, and development assistance.

The UK is the third largest export market for Bangladesh and the second largest source of foreign direct investments. Bangladesh's exports to the UK were 4.8 billion USD in the financial year 2021-22. The UK is one of the main export destinations for Ready-Made Garments, agricultural and agro-based products, and leather products.

Bangladesh has long benefitted from duty-free access to the UK market on everything but arms and will continue to do so until it graduates from Least Developed Country (LDC) status. Under the UK government's new Developing Countries ►►

▶ Trading Scheme, Bangladesh will retain duty-free market access for 85% of goods, including Ready-Made Garments, after LDC graduation. This will help Bangladesh consolidate its position as one of the leading suppliers to major British clothing retailers.

Some of the UK's largest and best-known multinationals, as well as many small and medium enterprises, have also been operating in Bangladesh for decades. UK businesses operate in many sectors in Bangladesh, including the financial sector, consumer goods, education, manufacturing, energy, and the services industry.

While the economic ties between our countries are already very strong, removing barriers to trade and investment in Bangladesh will further strengthen the relationship. Bangladesh could implement regulatory and policy reforms to attract more UK investment into the country. The UK supports Bangladesh in the areas of investment climate, skills development, and economic policy development, all of which are expected to contribute to better policy formulation and investment attraction. A conducive business environment, improved labour standards, and better governance would make Bangladesh a great place to do business.

Do you have any message on the celebration of Bangladesh's 50th anniversary?

Our relationship is rooted in history. The UK was the first country that Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman visited in January 1972, before his homecoming. The UK was also one of the earliest countries to recognise Bangladesh's independence and has ever since been a proud friend of Bangladesh. Following Bangladesh's 50th anniversary as an independent nation, the UK looks forward to continuing to extend our bilateral and people-to-people relationships for

the next 50 years and beyond.

We look to Bangladesh to play a positive role in the rules-based international system; and remain a stable, reliable and human rights compliant partner of the UK. As a friend of Bangladesh, the UK is a strong supporter of plural, contested, fair and transparent elections and political process to support accountability, reflecting our shared Commonwealth values.

We will continue to work with Bangladesh to reduce extreme poverty; tackle the impact of climate change; recover from the Covid-19 pandemic; promote gender equality through educating girls, empowering women and ending violence against women and girls; promote freedom of expression for Bangladeshi citizens and protect the rights of the marginalised; support safe and voluntary return of the Rohingya refugees; and increase UK-Bangladesh prosperity through green and private sector-led growth and enhanced trade and investment.

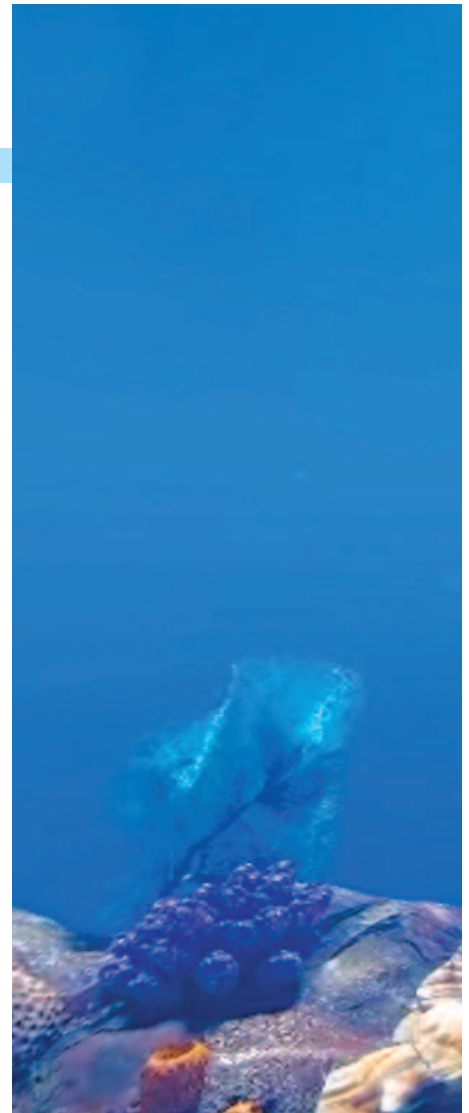
Reflections on HC's time in Bangladesh?

I have had a wonderful four years in Bangladesh, which has gone too quickly. Despite the difficult times we all went through in the first years of the pandemic, there is nowhere else I would rather have been. I was deeply impressed by the fortitude of the Bangladeshi people, and by the work of the Government of Bangladesh to keep the country's forward momentum on track.

During my time here I have travelled the length and breadth of the country, and it is the resilient, hospitable people of Bangladesh I will miss the most when I leave Dhaka. Everywhere people have been so warm and welcoming, and I look forward to following the progress of your great people into the future. Thank you to everyone in Bangladesh for making me so welcome. ■

Pathways to achieving sustainable Ocean futures

Rear Admiral Md. Khurshed Alam (Retd.)



The planet has already started absorbing increasing anthropogenic impacts and accelerating change to social-ecological systems, with local to global implications for human well-being (Steffen et al. 2015a). In response, there has been considerable international focus on conserving ecosystems and enabling sustainable development like formulation of the planetary boundaries' framework (Steffen et al. 2015b), and declaration of Aichi targets (CBD 2010a) and the Sustainable Development Goals

(SDGs) (CBD 2010b; Steffen et al. 2015b; UN 2015b). Yet, while the scale and urgency of the global environmental crisis have been broadly articulated, the necessary reforms to international governance and institutions, and the on the ground action needed to address the environmental crisis, have not kept pace. In particular, there is a need to move from incremental changes to existing governance and institutions to transformational reorganization such as change in equity among developing and developed countries in relation to sustainable development (Burch et al. 2019).

Any type of transformations requires forward-looking approaches that provide decision-makers with the necessary information to be proactive in anticipating and responding to changing social-ecological systems. (Boyd et al. 2015). A common ▶

Ocean of The Future



tool used to explore the future, to help evaluate options and to inform decision-making is quantitative modelling e.g. linked biophysical and economic models such as those used by the Intergovernmental Panel for Climate Change (IPCC). Quantitative models are invaluable in developing understanding of the trajectories of social-ecological systems. (Rosa et al. 2017). Reliance on data and quantitative approaches may constrain users' visions of the future, leading to an 'imagination gap' when prioritizing a more sustainable future and the transformations needed to achieve it (Galaz et al. 2016).

Critically, the visions portrayed in these futures are based on multiple types of knowledge and are 'shared' by those involved in the development process (Blythe et al. 2018). As part of a new, shared vision of the future, scientists and decision-makers can identify ways to encourage the uptake of behaviours—by individuals' communi-

ties and organizations, and from local to regional/global scales—that will leverage greater environmental and societal benefit and a more equitable distribution of those benefits among and within nations (Alexander et al. 2020).

Narrative scenarios (Konno et al. 2014) identify the capacities, technologies and enabling conditions that must be fostered to achieve desired transformations (Sadowski and Guston 2016). Narrative scenarios offer the opportunity to include diverse knowledge and value systems, and incorporate uncertainties, whereas predominantly biophysical and economic models are insufficient to capture the complexity and context-specific nature of many socio-ecological problems (Blythe et al. 2018; Pereira et al. 2019).

Scenario development (Francis et al. 2011) can be grouped into three broad categories of predictive, normative, and exploratory approaches. Predic-▶▶



► tive scenarios are focused on what will happen in the future based on current evidence (Amara 1984). For example, social-ecological modelling outputs can be integrated into predictive scenario development around the future consequences of climate change (e.g. Lotze et al. 2019). Normative scenarios are focused on describing what we would like to happen, conceptualised as the preferable future. For example, the SDGs provide an internationally negotiated set of normative goals for society's future to direct action internationally (UN 2015b). Exploratory scenarios look at a broader range of futures by outlining what could feasibly happen, allowing stakeholders to think creatively about what could happen over a given time period and unconstrained by current societal norms, political processes, or disciplinary approaches.

To provide pathways to the imagined future, stakeholders and policymakers need to design and implement complementary and coordinated actions across all levels of society from local community groups to national governments and international organizations allowing participants to work backwards from a desirable future to create

a series of actions to ensure attainment of that future (Robinson 1990).

In 2016, the First Global Integrated World Ocean Assessment found that a considerable proportion of the ocean has suffered serious degradation leading to significant changes to marine ecosystem structure and function and the ecosystem benefits we receive from the oceans (UN 2016). In response, the United Nations declared 2021–2030 as a Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development. The intent of this initiative is to stimulate international

efforts aimed at improving ocean health, and a core emphasis is on generating the knowledge and data necessary to support sustainable development into the future (UNESCO 2019). While generating quantifiable knowledge and collecting data are important to ensure scientific advice on sustainable development is relevant and fit for purpose, major transformations are needed to create a sustainable future for our oceans (Sachs et al. 2019).

However, there is currently little guidance within the marine science literature on the process of developing narrative scenarios that combine a range of worldviews from within the scientific community and beyond. As a result, understanding around the interdisciplinary approach and challenges associated with creating shared, plausible ocean futures to guide action and policy, is currently lacking.

To help address this gap, objectives will be to describe the overall interdisciplinary process that underpinned the Future Seas projects, detail the methods used to create the future scenarios and the action pathways to achieve those futures; and ►►

- ▶ reflect on the key barriers and enablers to achieving the project aims.

Future Seas aims to improve society's capacity to purposefully shape the direction of marine social-ecological systems over the course of the UN Decade of Ocean Science. The Decade will aim to achieve considerable progress in a number of research and technology development areas with a view of generating the following six societal outcomes.

A clean ocean, whereby sources of pollution are identified, quantified, and reduced and pollutants removed from the ocean in an efficient manner. Integrated research will assess the human and environmental shorter-term and long-term risks from ongoing and future types of ocean pollution and generate new ideas on how to reduce ocean pressures by recycling, improved waste management, and strengthening the governance regimes that encourage more sustainable production and consumption.

A healthy and resilient ocean, whereby marine ecosystems are mapped and protected, multiple impacts on them, including climate change, are quantified and, where possible, reduced and provision of ocean ecosystem services is maintained. The Decade will promote research aimed at elucidating impacts of cumulative stressors on the ocean, its seas, ecosystems, and resources, hence providing required information to enable actions, which can reverse the ocean ecosystem degradation. Improved evaluation and appreciation of the economic and societal value of the ocean and its ecosystems will also be instrumental to stimulate marine spatial planning, marine protected areas, coastal zone management and other ecosystem-based management approaches.

A predicted ocean, whereby society has the capacity to understand current and predict future ocean conditions and their impact on human well-being and livelihoods. Under the Decade, sustained and systematic ocean observations

would be expanded to all ocean basins and depths to document ocean change, initialize coupled models and facilitate improved ocean understanding. Knowledge of present and future conditions is a pre-requisite to the development of sustainable ocean economic policies and ecosystem-based management. More detailed and complete accounts of ocean processes can help to improve climate prediction in a significant way. The Decade will also build on advances in ocean robotics and the combination of remote and in situ ocean observations, which offer new opportunities and reduce operational costs; it will also promote multi-stakeholder contributions by governments, the private sector, and citizens.

A safe ocean, whereby human communities are much better protected from ocean hazards and where the safety of operations at sea and on the coast is ensured. The Decade will promote research aimed at minimizing impacts of various changes and risk reduction through adaptation and mitigation. It will also support the development of integrated multi-hazard warning systems (MHWSs) in all basins, hence, contributing to enhanced preparedness and awareness of society with regard to ocean risks. Community resilience and adaptive capacity, with elevated education and awareness concerning the use of observations and data, will also contribute to reduced impacts and improved efficiency of early warning systems for natural and man-made hazards. This area of research will be of great interest for the insurance and reinsurance industries.

A sustainably harvested and productive ocean, ensuring the provision of food supply and alternative livelihoods. The Decade should create a better understanding of the interactions and interdependencies of the ocean ecosystem and environmental conditions and processes, the use of resources and the economy. A major task in context of the development of the ocean economy will be in documenting the potential impacts ▶▶

► from environmental changes on the established and emerging maritime industries and their ability to generate growth, especially for least developed countries and Small Islands Developing States. Defining safe and sustainable thresholds for economic operations in the ocean will help policymakers and stakeholders in implementing a truly sustainable blue economy (Smith-Godfrey, 2016; Visbeck, 2018).

A “transparent and accessible” ocean, whereby all nations, stakeholders and citizens have access to ocean data and information technologies and the capacities to inform their decisions. The enormous need for more ocean information in the scientific, governmental, private and public sectors demands a step change in ocean education at all levels. New technologies and the digital revolution are transforming the ocean sciences; these will be harnessed to deliver data and information to all stakeholders. Science-policy interface for the ocean should be enhanced as well. Open access to ocean information, increased interactions between the academic and societal actor communities, and ocean literacy for all should capacitate all citizens and stakeholders to have a more responsible and informed behavior toward the ocean and its resources.

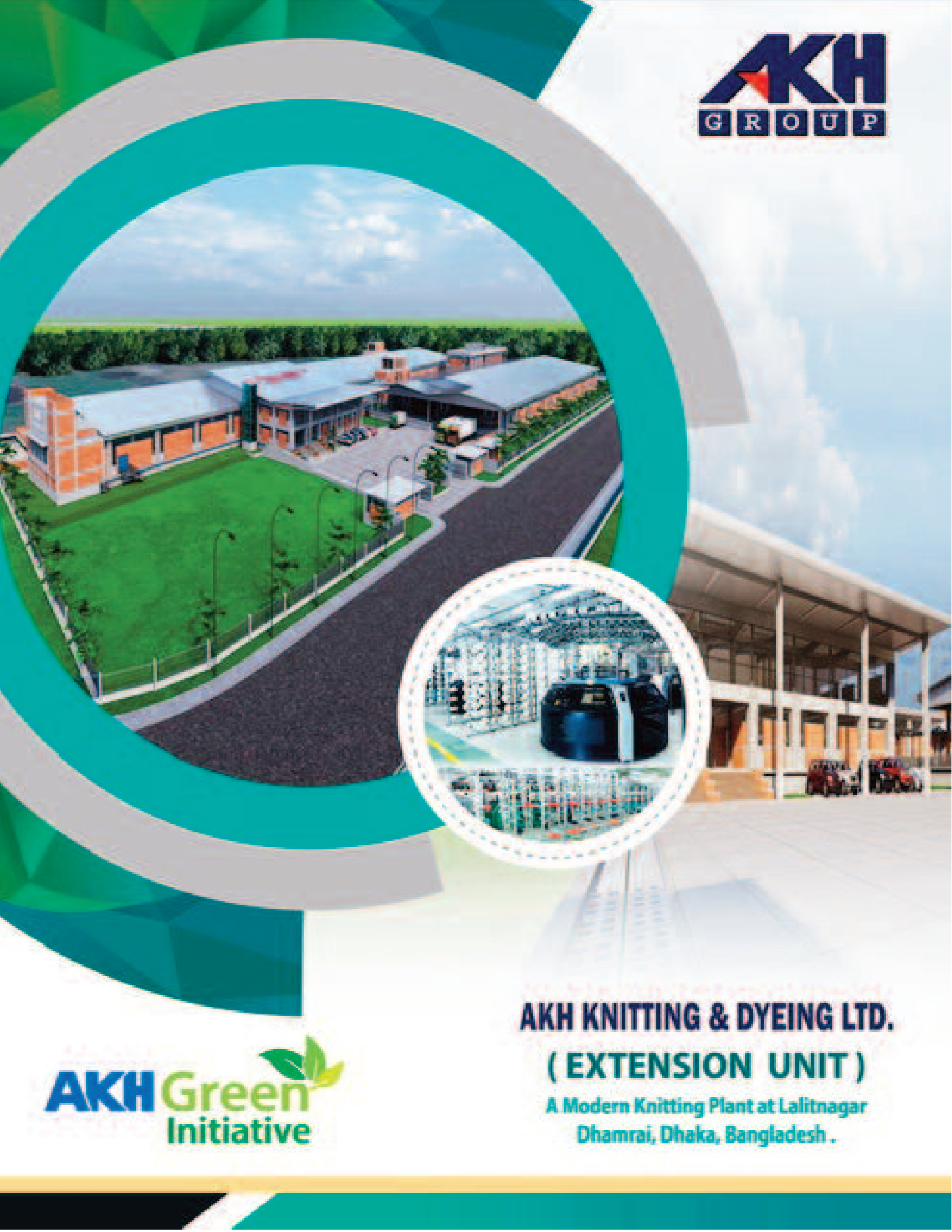
Society faces a number of complex, interacting global challenges, from feeding a population that is predicted to approach 10 billion by 2050, to addressing climate change. These issues are often divisive or lead to feelings of powerlessness due to their apparent intractability (Longo et al. 2019). Simplified, shared, mental models of the future have been proposed as a way to facilitate action in the face of complex global issues (Costanza 2000; Jerneck 2013). Such mental models provide a ‘mobilising narrative’ by exploring society’s capacity to change our current trajectory to one that better supports a healthy environment, economy, and society (Galaz et al. 2016; Jerneck 2013). Currently, there is little guidance available on the

process of working with large interdisciplinary groups to form robust teams that provide a safe space to develop shared visions of the future.

The societal outcomes of the Decade are holistic. In order to be achieved, most of them require actions by the society, governments, or by key stakeholders. However, there is no causal link to achieving them that would be entirely scientific. Nevertheless, progress in several thematic areas of ocean science is either necessary or very useful to achieve them. Scientific papers should not be the sole measure of success of the Decade. Impact to society, appropriately measured against clear objectives, should also be a measure of success. Areas of research and technology development (R&D) should be interconnected but allow focused design and planning. Progress in these areas is necessary to facilitate protection and the sustainable use of the ocean, on global and more localized scale.

The complex and uncertain nature of many key challenges facing the oceans and our society can lead to inertia and paralysis among private and public actors alike. It is our hope that presenting sustainable but realistic versions of the future and highlighting that collectively we have the combination of knowledge, resources, and technology to respond constructively, may lead to greater action across all levels from individuals to governments. Society needs a vision of what the future could look like, beyond the ‘doom and gloom’ story that we must avert the ‘inevitable’ catastrophe. The earth is already undergoing significant transformations in the Anthropocene. Now we need to develop and disseminate tangible depictions of where we are headed but also where we could head if we actively chose to steer the transformation to a more sustainable future.

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Bangladesh Perspective of Human Rights: A Retrospective Analysis with an Eye to the Future

Dr. A. K. Abdul Momen



Bangladesh is probably unparalleled in the world in a sense that very birth of Bangladesh was aimed for upholding democracy, human rights and justice. In 1970, when Bangladesh Awami League (AL) won majority votes to form the new government (out of 299 seat election AL got 167 plus 32 =199, PPP got 86) the then Pakistani military junta conspired with a majority party of west Pakistan (PPP) to deny and reject the voice and decision of the people. Subsequently, when the Bengali nation started fighting for justice and to establish people's mandate, genocide was let loose on the unarmed people of then East Pakistan by the

Pakistani oppressive rulers. If independence, democracy, human rights and justice have a price to pay, Bengali nation paid the price with 3 million martyrs, 200 thousand dishonored women and 10 million refugees. In addition, 30 million people out of 75 million were dislodged from their homes. Subsequently, after paying such a high price, we have achieved our independence to uphold democracy, justice, human rights and human dignity. It comes to me as no wonder, when I see, each and every one of this country is a strong believer of human rights, justice and fairness. So, when we hear, at times, advice of others to teach us the principle and value of human rights, we feel pity as many of them practiced slave trades, apartheid, exploitation and extreme subjugation of people. I feel pity that they are trying to teach Bengali nation something for which Bangalees made the highest sacrifice possible.

Before delving deeper into the topic, let us take a walk down the memory lane. From the very beginning of our journey as an independent coun-▶▶



Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen addresses a seminar titled 'Promotion and Protection of Human Rights: Bangladesh Perspective' at the Foreign Service Academy in Dhaka on 11 December, 2022. Collected

► try, the Bangladesh Awami League was very resolute to establish rule of law and within 10 months it adopted the Bangladesh Constitution incorporating the basic principles of justice, democracy and human rights. It also tried the criminals and collaborators who committed crime against humanity during our War of Liberation. Charges were framed against almost 26,000 collaborators and the trial process started quickly. Almost 800 collaborators who were involved in killing, arson, rape and such other heinous crimes were convicted and jailed. Then came the darkest night of 15 August 1975. Our Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, along with most of his family members, was killed in the most brutal way possible. Then came a period when turmoil, uncertainty, lawlessness and terror engulfed the whole nation. As a nation, we had to endure the excruciating pain of experiencing military coups, one after another, with each

one of such coups the nation drifting further away from the principle of democracy, secularism, justice, human rights, and dignity for all.

During this period, we had to experience the reign of military, quasi-military, and civil-military technocratic governments. What they did was nullifying Awami League party's endeavours to ensure justice for the people of Bangladesh. They abrogated the trial of the war criminals and released all prisoners. They corrupted the constitution. They even introduced an act known as "Indemnity Ordinance" exonerating the heinous killers of Father of the Nation and most of his family members from any judicial trial and punishment. Thus, common people of this country were denied rule of law and justice for many years. A reign of terror and radicalism was encouraged.

Fortunately, after 21 years, our Hon'ble Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, the leader of Bangladesh ►

► Awami League, the party that delivered independence and liberty of this country, that promoted the concept of human rights and justice in Bangladesh, formed the government. Afterwards the newly formed government annulled “Indemnity Ordinance” and paved the way for establishing rule of law and justice in the country.

Awami League always believes in fair and transparent election and fair transfer of power through constitutional process. So, when Awami League lost the election in 2001, it transferred power peacefully to BNP-Jamat-led Alliance. But, when BNP-Jamat-led Alliance came into power, terrorism, radicalism, killing, murder, atrocity, and brutality took fresh start in Bangladesh. Mr. Bertill Linter, a British journalist, wrote an article titled “Bangladesh: A Cocoon of Terrorism” in April 4, 2002 published in the Far Eastern Economic Review. Similarly, another journalist Mr. Alex Pherry wrote “Reigning the Radicals of the time” in Times Asia Magazine in October 21, 2002 followed by an article of an American journalist Ms. Eliza Griswold titled “The Next Islamic Revolution” published in New York Times on 23 January 2005, Sudha Ramachadram (“Mixing Aid with Terror”, Asia Times, October 2, 2005) and Selig Harrison (“Bangladesh in a new hub of Terrorism”, Washington Post, August 2, 2006) narrating the rise of extremism.

In these articles, one thing was common- the gradual transformation of the country towards radicalism by ruining the principle of secularism, moderate Islam, justice, Human Right, religious harmony that the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and Hon’ble Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina promoted. We do recall a piece of article titled “M.B. Mecca” which vividly described how terrorism was mushrooming in Bangladesh. The Article mentioned that 100 Al-Qaeda terrorists landed in Chittagong after returning from Afghanistan. More than 170 Jihadi Training Centres were established all across the country with tacit support of BNP-Jamat gov-

ernment. No wonder, one Washington based journalist Mr. Arnold de Borchgrave published an article “Cry for Bangladesh” in May 2003 where he described an “Osama fan club” established in Bangladesh and they chanted “We will become Taliban, and we will turn Bangladesh into Afghanistan”. We saw rise of many terrorists during that regime. One such terrorist was Siddiqur Rahman known as “Bangla Bhai”. He publicly executed people, hanging them from the trees in many places of greater Rajshahi. We had to watch series of terrorist activities. Two judges were killed in the middle of a session due to bomb blast. The then British High Commissioner luckily escaped death, but his associates were killed. Progressive intellectuals and academicians were regularly subjected to attacks- all orchestrated or executed by terrorist groups, and Jihadis. In one single day, 495 bombs were detonated in 63 districts of Bangladesh by BNP Jamat terrorists. Even the current Prime Minister, then opposition leader Sheikh Hasina could barely escape death when a grenade attack was launched on the rally of Awami League Party that organised rally to protest rise of radicalism and widespread corruption, on 21 August 2004. The Grenade attack left 24 AL leaders dead while severely injuring 374 other members of the Party, many of whom had become permanently disabled.

We did a study focusing on ten years’ terrorist incidents and fatalities - five years prior to 9/11, 5 years after 9/11. The study shows that terrorist incidents and fatalities sharply increased after 9/11 in Bangladesh during the period of the rule of BNP-Jamat. The table I shows that total terrorist incidents sharply increased from 7 during 1996-2001 (Awami League period) to 553 during 2001-2006 BNP-Jamat period. In terms of fatalities it increased from 58 to 570 lives during the same period, one of the highest in the world.

No wonder BNP-Jamat period of 2001-2006 was known as the “golden period of terrorism and lawlessness”. Interestingly, instead of condemning ►►

► the terrorist war lords, the US officials in Dhaka quickly dismiss any links between terrorism and Jamaat-e-Islami at the time. However, good news is that after the death of many, finally US officials realised their fault and declared Islami Chatra Shibir (ICS), the militant youth group of Jamaat-e-Islami Party, as a terrorist organisation.

ers plus transparent ballot boxes. There might be some violence and weaknesses in our few polling centres. Once such occurs, the Election Commission declares voting in that centre as “null and void”. All over the world, perfection in voting is still a far cry. We want perfection; we are trying sincerely to reach perfection. In fact, democracy

matures through trial and error process. During BNP time it concocted 12.3 million fake votes, it conducted voter less election in 1996 and it manipulated Election Commission. Good news, because of Sheikh Hasina’s commitment those days are gone. However, even in the US, where they have been practicing rule of law, democracy for more than 250 years, yet 77% of Republican voters of USA think that the last

Table-I				
Increase of Terrorist Incidents & Fatalities Before & After 9/11				
Region	1-27-1996 through 9-11-2001	9-12-2001 through 7-27-2006	1-27-1996 through 9-11-2001	9-12-2001 through 7-27-2006
South Asia	4604138	1416	4919	
North America	61	64	2988	8
Middle East	1241	8183	660	15308
Bangladesh	7	553	58	570*

(Source: MIPT Terrorism Knowledge Base, Oklahoma, USA)

Human Rights

Now, come to the Bangladesh perspective on human rights. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina champions the resolution declaring “right to development” as a human right. Our Father of the Nation wanted to have a Sonar Bangla- a prosperous Bangladesh where right to vote, right to food, right to clothe, right to shelter, right to education and right to healthcare would be ensured which were the basic human rights and these are priorities of Bangladesh. No wonder, under prudent leadership of Sheikh Hasina, Bangladesh achieved these targets. Now no one dies of starvation or hunger in Bangladesh. We have nearly achieved our goal of “right to food”. And Sheikh Hasina’s government ensured “right to vote”. She has established a highly independent Election Commission so that we can have a fair voting system and to stop voter fraud, she has introduced biometric picture id or identification card for vot-

Presidential election was “stolen” through “Voter Fraud” (Source: Monmouth University Poll) and 64% Americans believe US democracy system is “in crisis and at risk of failing” (Source: NPR/IPSOS Poll). They also think American democracy is run by money. It has been reported that 91% of all the lawmakers were financed by the Wall Street Companies. In comparison to this situation, we are still doing better. But we want to do much better. Unlike many countries, we want to ensure true direct public representation at each level of our governance system.

Our firm belief in the principle of human rights is reflected in our actions. At the face of atrocity and persecution when 1.1 million Rohingya were forced to flee Myanmar en masse, there was no one other than our Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina who came forward with a generous humanitarian heart and provided them temporary shelter. However, I am thankful to all the friendly ►►

► countries who have been supporting Bangladesh in this humanitarian efforts, and especially, I would like to mention the USA for extending steady support to these distressed people in their need. May I appeal countries of the world to come forward for resettlement and relocation of these persecuted people? I look forward that their human rights are upheld. I heard some US lawmakers wanted to provide better education system for the persecuted Rohingya Children. I totally endorse their sentiment and we would like to offer them to take these people to their own country to ensure better education.

Enforced Disappearances

I would like to mention that UN Working Group on Enforced and Involuntary Disappearance shared 76 cases of so-called “Enforced Disappearance” with us. We took the issue seriously and we found that among these 76, two are foreign nationals; one case is more than 27 years old. We constructively engaged with the Working Group and found 10 such persons have already reappeared. This reappearance cases are clear manifestations that these numbers are concocted by some vested organisations. It is rather unfortunate that the Working Group shared the concocted information with us without properly verifying the information. UN organisation should conduct their own research and survey rather than accepting the narratives received from some politically motivated NGO/CSO activists so that the credibility of the UN is not put into question. Our foreign friends should be careful about the concocted information shared by politically motivated individuals who disguise themselves under the cover as human rights activists, or civil society members or NGO activists.

It may be mentioned that in the USA in spite of

its best efforts and sophisticated technology and well-trained Police Force, each year almost 1,000 people are shot dead by police in line of duty without due judicial process (Source: Statista Research Department, www.statista.com) and each year almost 600,000 persons are reported as missing (Source: Statista Research Department, www.statista.com).

Table-II	
Shot dead by Police in the USA	
Year	Number
2021	1,055
2020	1,020
2019	999
2018	983
2017	981

(Source: Statista Research Department, www.statista.com)

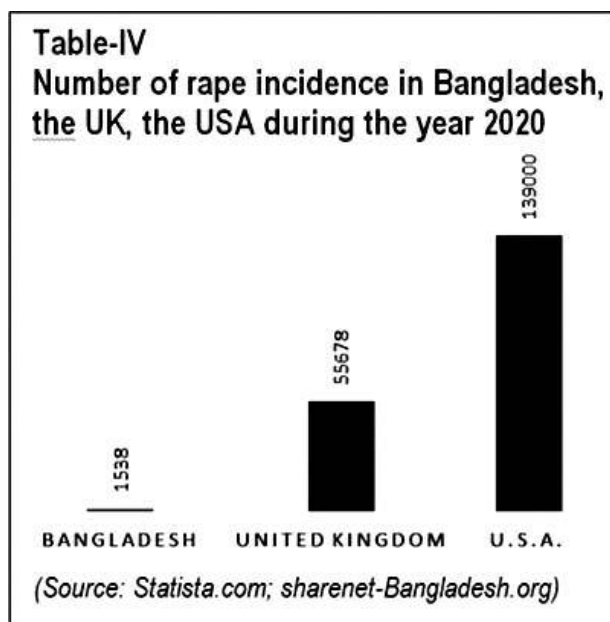
Table-III	
Number of missing person in the USA according to National Crime Information Center (NCIC) database	
Year	Number
2021	5,21,705
2020	5,43,018
2019	6,09,275
2018	6,12,846
2017	6,51,226

(Source: Statista Research Department, www.statista.com)

[Note: A Person is considered missing when they have disappeared and their location is unknown. A person who is considered missing might have left voluntarily.]



- ▶ The UK Human Rights report has expressed concern about 'rise of number of rape and domestic violence'. It drew my attention and I looked into data and found the following:



Total reported rape in Bangladesh in 2020, during the Covid time, was 1538 while it was 55,678 and 139,000 in the UK and the USA respectively. Incidentally, the UK's total population is only 67 million, less than half of Bangladesh population (165m) and that of the USA is double of Bangladesh. Therefore, data shows that compared to the UK and the USA, Bangladesh incident of rape is much lower.

Yet Bangladesh government has undertaken very strong measures against rape and violence against women, including new law stipulating capital punishment for murderous rapes. However, we are not complacent about our sincere ongoing efforts to combat violence against women, and this indeed remains as a top priority for our law enforcement agencies and judicial system. Also, Bangladesh Awami League being the leader of the liberal segment of our political parties, who else would ensure more rights of women and their safety and security?

Let me say few words on the 'concern' of some of our friends about the democratic space and freedom of expression in the country. I would like to underscore that the Government of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina remains determined to take forward the democratic process through holding the next parliamentary election under the provisions of the constitution in a free, fair, and participatory manner, and under the full control of the independent Election Commission. Recently, the Election Commission has successfully conducted the mammoth local government elections, with strong participation from all political parties and huge enthusiasm of the people across the country. Bangladesh Awami League and its Government rely solely on the will of the people. No external interference or internal conspiracy can derail us from this undertaking. Bye the bye, Bangladesh elections are highly participatory, hardly vote cast is below 72%, while vote cast in industrialised countries range between 35% and 60% and average is 45% much below to that of Bangladesh's 72% of votes.

Finally, we must be remindful of the fact that every single life is equally valuable all across the world, irrespective of race, colour, ethnicity and background. In UN, Bangladesh has been promoting Culture of Peace. Basic element of culture of peace is to inculcate a mindset of tolerance, a mindset of respect towards others irrespective of religion, ethnicity, colour, race, or background. If we can inculcate such a mindset, then the venom of hatred will reduce and the violence will reduce leading to a world of sustainable peace across nations. Promotion and protection of human rights is a dynamic process. Only the mindset of cooperation, collaboration, and helping each other can ensure the human rights and dignity for all.

Dr. A K Abdul Momen is a Bangladeshi economist, diplomat, politician and the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Bangladesh.

The pros and cons of Currency Crises and the Bangladesh Narratives

Dr. Jamaluddin Ahmed

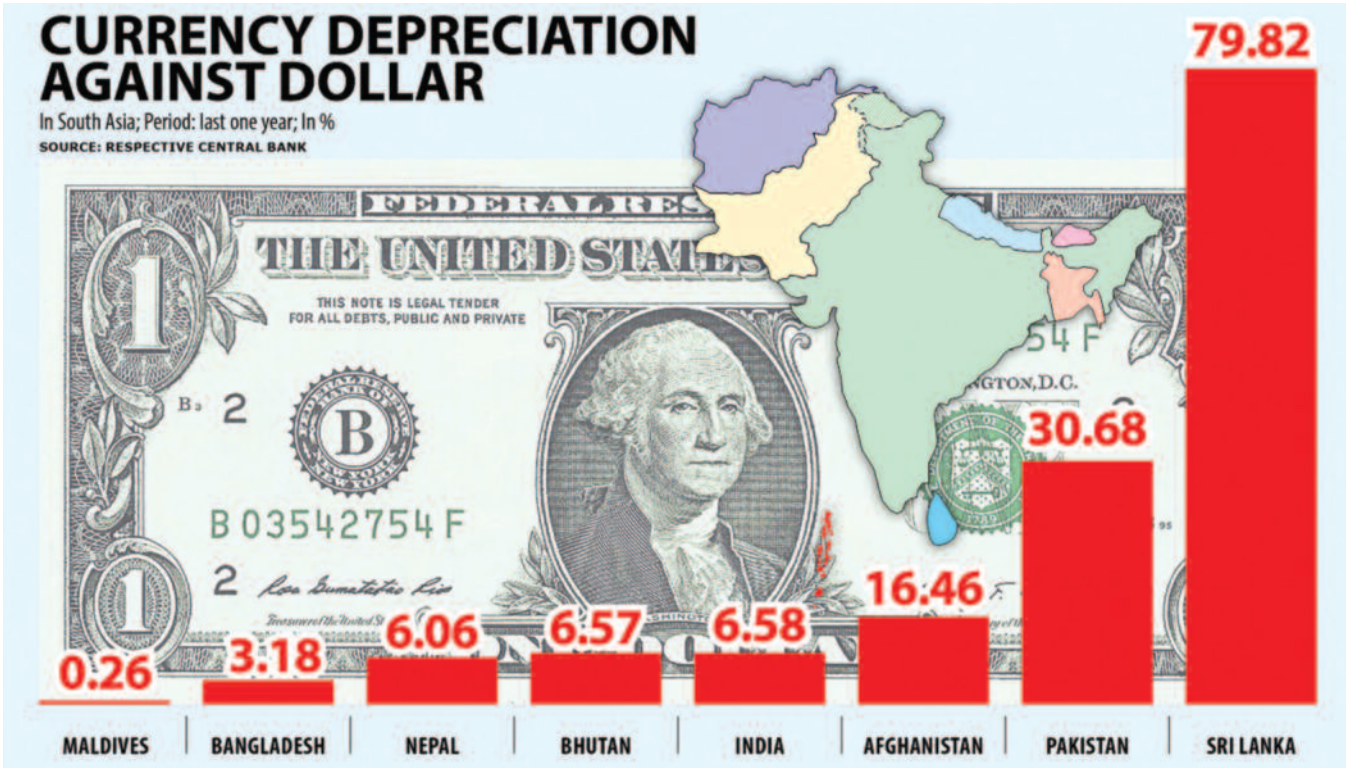


Currency crises defined as speculative attack on foreign currency value of currency. A speculative attack often found leading to a sharp exchange rate depreciation despite a strong policy response to defend currency value.

The exchange rate is often considered to be the most critical price for any economy, for its effects all other prices. The currency policy structures a country economic relation with rest of the world and it is crucial in degerming a development prospect. Specially, the poor countries. Currency politics has attracted lead news of the day in the globe. Exchange rate policy responds to domestic politics for different policies benefit group in the society. The increased global integration of financial market, possibility to spec-

ulate against exchange rates of individual currencies and thus, the increased frequency of currency crises, has attracted center point of discussion increasingly. Reinhart et al (2002) described in his own paper 'Two hundred years of contagion on financial crises with major immediate international repercussion (1800-1930; 1980-2002) and financial crises without immediate international repercussion.

Credit Rating Agency Standard and Poor's Sovereign Rating History since 1975 reported expected and unexpected crises before and after. We all know 1990 currency crises after the demise of Soviet system, ERM 1992, South American countries, East Asian Currency crises erupted during 1995 onwards. Thus, currency crises and financial crises together with other variables combined with the economic crises. The assessment of leading factors, testing the signals and early warning using appropriate methodology, the policy makers get wakeup calls and understand the gravity of currency crises in economic policies. Taking clear position on the symptoms, early warnings, inconsistent policies, ►



identifying factors those can trigger speculative attacks against currencies, measures to control exchange rate and domestic liquidity, assess the length and negative consequences.

The key question authorities face the readjustment of exchange rate regime, that is the first institutional victim of successful speculative attack. To get a deeper diagnosis one must analyse deeper diagnosis on a broad set of political and institutional variables such as electoral and government system, federalism, constitutional protection, public finance stability, central bank independence, transparency of public finance and government policy, external constraints coming from international treaties and many others.

The theory and causes of currency crises. There is neither a uniform nor a uniform description of currency crises in the economic literature. Sharp devaluation of currency, speculative attack that was successfully defended meaning authorities did not allow large scale devaluation but implemented preventive measures resulted in the se-

vere and negative effects on the real sector. It seems that currency definition cannot be formulated univocally. Only conditional approach to the issue can guarantee the reliable and useful solution. In principle, currency crises can be identified alternatively as, decline in exchange value of currency, drastic macroeconomic policy adjustment and outflow of foreign exchange reserves.

Economists claims currency crises as the loss of confidence in further stability domestic currency value. Sharp devaluation of the real exchange rate or its departure from the long-term trend can be considered as the beginning of the crises. Various definitions of currency crisis are subject to intensive debate in the economic literature. The most popular definition is a “currency crash” as a nominal depreciation of the currency of at least 25 percent in a year (USD bilateral rate). Calculations of the cost of currency crises loss output relative to trend can be analyzed showing the number of crises, average recovery time, and the cumulative loss of output per crisis with out- ▶▶

▶ put loss percentage point shows the severity of crises. The need to identify potential causes and symptoms of becoming more apparent. There is clear need to develop a warning system that would help detect sufficiently in advance whether a country may face a crisis. The early warning system should indicate vulnerability to crisis appear to have worked out best. The other approach directly estimates the probability of currency crisis using limited dependent variable econometric techniques.

The relevance to transition countries, impossible trinity, association with other crises, incidence of currency crises-and measurement issues, frequency of currency crises, predicting currency crises, determinants, statistical methodology, event study approach, signaling approach, probit and other approaches-and assessment of crisis prediction approaches are important issues need to be considered as applicable to the particular country needs. The impact on globalization, capital control, due to currency crises have to be considered. Currency crises affect economic activity, depreciation of domestic currency in successful currency attack may expand the tradable goods sector, and spur growth make exchange rate more competitive. Contractionary depreciation increases repayment cost of external debt particularly in dollars, reversal of FDI can slow down growth. The main stream view had been that any negative effect from a currency depreciation were ultimately offset by a positive effect of stimulus to net exports leading to an overall expansionary effects of depreciation, particularly in developing countries currency crises in combination of banking crises are very costly, by reducing output by 5-8 percent over a 2 to 4 years period. Currency crises accompanied by sudden stops have severe economic consequences- as the abrupt reversal in foreign credit inflows in conjunction with realignment of exchange rate typically cause a sharp drop in domestic investment, domestic

production, and employment. The currency crises can have adverse long-term effects. However. Countries that are more open to trade are likely to experience less dramatic drops in real growth and much quicker rebounds in the aftermath of currency crises. Currency depreciation against USD of 22 countries between Aug 2008-Feb 2009 with 25% + have been presented in this paper.

Currency Crisis Models-Indicator Selection: The *early literature* described model referred to as the first generation or canonical model of crises. It corresponded to a situation when weak economic fundamentals resulted in a persistent loss of foreign reserves, which did not allow maintaining a fixed exchange rate regime. The model delivered several findings that could be important in predicting currency crises. In the light of assumptions applied to the first generation models the above factors could be considered the potential candidates for *early warning indicators*. Recently noticed *contagion effects* have considerably influenced the achievements of currency crises theory. In *second generation models* of currency crises, best represented by Obstfeld (1986, 1994), policymakers weigh the cost and benefits of defending the currency and are willing to give up an exchange rate target if the costs of doing so exceed the benefits. *Third-generation models* are harder to characterize simply but generally focus on how distortions in financial markets and banking systems can lead to currency crises. Different third-generation models offer various mechanisms through which these distortions may lead to a currency crisis. *Other third-generation models* highlight how financial liberalization and government guarantees of private sector liabilities can generate moral hazard and unsustainable fiscal deficits that can lead to crises.

Warning Indicators of Currency Crises: The theoretical models offer the selection of economic and financial indicators helpful in the analyses of vulnerability to crises. Although the theory does not ▶▶

► give an unambiguous answer as to what the early warning system of currency crises is, the models provide useful insight as to what economic variables should indicate impending crises. The main leading indicators can be grouped into the broad categories: domestic macroeconomic variables, external variables, public finance, foreign variables, and institutional and structural variables. The following scheme presents how particular leading indicators resulting from theoretical models of currency crises could be classified into the mentioned categories. The next step is to considerably limit this long list of indicators to only those variables, which are perceived as “preferred” in predicting the probability of currency crises. Only selected indicators turn to significantly affect the probability of devaluation and to provide the most accurate signals during the period proceeding the crises. Indicators Statistically Significant, Stylized Facts on the Behavior of Selected Indicators, Average Lead Time, Relevance to Transition Economies, Impossible Trinity, Association with other Crises, Incidence of Currency Crises, Frequency of Currency Crises, Predicting Currency Crises, Determinants of currency crises, Event Study Approach, Signaling Approach, Probit and Other Approaches, Assessment of Crisis Prediction Approaches, Globalization, Capital Controls, and Currency Crises, Effects of Currency Crises, and Currency Depreciation against U.S. Dollar, August 2008–February 2009 Currencies with 25% depreciation or greater.

Leading Indicators of Currency Crises: The turbulence and collapse of the European Exchange Rate Mechanism in 1992-93 and the onset of the Mexican crisis in December 1994 have rekindled interest in both academic and policy circles in the potential causes and the symptoms of currency crises. In particular, there is a question as to whether those symptoms can be detected with sufficient advance so as to allow governments to adopt pre-emptive measures. While accurately forecasting the timing of currency crises is likely

to remain an elusive goal for academics and policymakers alike, there is no question about the need to develop and improve upon a warning system that helps monitor whether a country may be slipping into a situation that is bound to end up in a crisis.

This summarizes the main explanations for speculative attacks and balance-of-payments crises that have been presented in the theoretical literature. The aim is to provide some background as to why a variety of indicators have been used in empirical work on crises. Initially, this literature stressed that crises were caused by weak “economic fundamentals,” such as excessively expansionary fiscal and monetary policies, which resulted in a persistent loss of international reserves that ultimately forced the authorities to abandon the parity. More recently, however, some papers have argued that the authorities may decide to abandon the parity for reasons other than a depletion of official international reserves. Instead, they may be concerned about the adverse consequences of policies needed to maintain the parity (such as higher interest rates) on other key economic variables (such as the level of employment). Recent models also have shown that a crisis may develop without a significant change in the fundamentals, these models, economic policies are not predetermined but respond to changes in the economy, and economic agents take this relationship into account in forming their expectations.

The Traditional Approach—Krugman’s (1979) model shows that, under a fixed exchange rate, domestic credit expansion in excess of money demand growth leads to a gradual but persistent loss of international reserves and, ultimately, to a speculative attack on the currency. This attack immediately depletes reserves and forces the authorities to abandon the parity. The process ends with an attack because economic agents understand that the fixed exchange rate regime ultimately will collapse, and that in the absence ►

► of an attack they would suffer a capital loss on their holdings of domestic money. Some of these extensions have shown that *speculative attacks* would generally be preceded by a real appreciation of the currency and a deterioration of the trade balance.

Recent Models The traditional approach stresses the role played by declining international reserves in triggering the collapse of a fixed exchange rate, some recent models have suggested that the decision to abandon the parity may stem from the authorities' concern about the evolution of other key economic variables—suggesting that yet another family of variables could be useful in helping predict currency crises. These models in which the authorities' *objective function* depends positively on certain *benefits* derived from keeping a fixed nominal exchange rate (such as enhanced credibility in their efforts to *reduce* inflation) and negatively on the deviations of output from a certain target level. Under a fixed exchange rate, *increases* in foreign interest rates lead to *higher domestic* interest rates and lower *levels* of output, making it more *costly* for the authorities to maintain the parity. Once foreign interest rates exceed some critical level, the *cost of keeping* the exchange rate fixed *surpasses* the benefits, and the authorities abandon the parity. More generally, this approach suggests that a variety of factors which may affect the authorities' *objective function* could be used as *leading indicators* of currency crises. An increase in domestic interest rates needed to maintain a fixed exchange rate may result in higher financing costs for the government. To the extent that the authorities are concerned about the *fiscal consequences* of their exchange rate policy, the decision to abandon the parity may depend on the stock of public debt. Also, *higher* interest rates may *weaken* the banking system, and the authorities may *prefer* to devalue rather than incur the *cost of a bailout* that could result from an explicit or implicit official guarantee on the banking system liabilities.

Therefore, the presence of banking problems (say, as reflected in the relative price of bank stocks, the proportion of non-performing loans, central bank credit to banks, or a large decline in deposits) could also indicate a *higher likelihood* of a crisis. Leading indicators may also include *political* variables. The empirical literature on indicators and Currency Crises have been presented. Graciela Kaminsky, Saul Lizondo, Carmen M. Reinhart (Table 1, 1997) provides a summary of 25 selected empirical studies on currency crises. The first column lists the study, the second describes the sample periods and the periodicity of the data, and the third provides information on the countries covered and the type of episode examined. The fourth column lists the economic and political variables that have been used as indicators, and the last column sketches certain features of the methodology used and the principal goal of the study in question. These studies provide information on the numerous and varied experiences with currency crises.

They examine sample periods that run from the early 1950s to the mid 1990s, and cover both industrial and developing countries, although with more emphasis on the latter. About half of the studies use monthly data, with the rest using annual or quarterly data, or data of varied periodicity. Most of the papers examine the experience of various countries and study several crisis episodes; only a few papers focus on a single country. A *first group* of papers provide only a qualitative discussion of the causes and developments leading to the currency crises. *second group of papers* examine the stylized facts of the period leading up to and immediately following the currency crisis. A *third group of papers* estimate the probability of devaluation one or several periods ahead, usually on the basis of an explicit theoretical model, along the lines pioneered by Blanco and Garber (1986) in their discussion of the Mexican crisis of the early 1980s. A *fourth type of* ►

► methodology is used in Kaminsky and Reinhart(1996). This paper presents a non parametric approach to evaluate the usefulness of several variables in signaling an impending crisis.

The Indicators: Graciela Kaminsky, Saul Lizondo, Carmen M. Reinhart (Table 2, 1997) presents a list of the 103 indicators used, grouped into six broad categories and some sub-categories,” including: (1) the external sector; (2) the financial sector; (3) the real sector; (4) the public finances; (5) institutional and structural variables; and (6) political variables. The indicators of the external sector were, in turn, classified into those related to the capital account, the external debt profile, the current account, and international (or foreign) variables. The indicators of the financial sector were split into those that could be associated with financial liberalization, and other indicators. Other financial variables: central bank credit to the banking system, the gap between money demand and supply, money growth, bond yields, domestic inflation, the “shadow” exchange rate, the parallel market exchange rate premium, the central exchange rate parity, the position of the exchange rate within the official band, and M2/international reserves. Real sector: real GDP growth, the output gap, employment/unemployment, ages, and changes in stock prices. Fiscal variables: the fiscal deficit, government consumption and credit to the public sector. Institutional/structural factors: openness, trade concentration, and dummies for multiple exchange rates, exchange controls, duration of the fixed exchange rate periods, financial liberalization, banking crises, past foreign exchange market crises, and past foreign exchange market events.” Political variables: dummies for elections, incumbent electoral victory or loss, change of government legal executive transfer, illegal executive transfer, left-wing government, and new finance minister; also, degree of political instability (qualitative variable based on judgement).

The choice of indicators was dictated by theo-

retical considerations and by the availability of information on a monthly basis. They include: (1) international reserves (in U.S. dollars); (2) imports (in U.S. dollars); (3) exports (in U.S. dollars); (4) the terms of trade (defined as the unit value of exports over the unit value of imports); (5) deviations of the real exchange rate from trend (in percentage terms); (6) the differential between foreign (U.S. or German) and domestic real interest rates on deposits (monthly rates, deflated using consumer prices and measured in percentage points); (7) “excess” real MI balances;²⁴ (8) the money multiplier (of M2); (9) the ratio of domestic credit to GDP; (10) the real interest rate on deposits (monthly rates, deflated using consumer prices and measured in percentage points); (11) the ratio of (nominal) lending to deposit interest rates; ²⁵ (12) the stock of commercial banks deposits (in nominal terms); (13) the ratio of broad money (converted into foreign currency) to gross international reserves; (14) an index of output; and (15) an index of equity prices (measured in U.S. dollars). For all these variables (with the exception of the deviation of the real exchange rate from trend, the “excess” of real MI balances, and the three variables based on interest rates), the indicator on a given month was defined as the percentage change in the level of the variable with respect to its level a year earlier. Filtering the data by using the 12-month percentage change ensures that the units are comparable across countries and that the transformed variables are stationary, with well-defined moments, and free from seasonal effects. These studies reviewed in this paper indicate that an effective warning system for currency crises should take into account a broad variety of indicators, as these crises are usually preceded by symptoms that arise in a number of areas. Indicators that have proven to be particularly useful in anticipating crises include the behavior of international reserves, the real exchange rate, domestic credit, credit to the ►

► public sector, and domestic inflation. Other indicators that have found support include the trade balance, export performance, money growth, real GDP growth, and the fiscal deficit. The “Signals” Approach describes the “signals” as well as some of the empirical results obtained by using this approach. It summarizes the discussion in Kaminsky and Reinhart (1996), who examine 76 currency crises from a sample of 15 developing and 5 industrial countries during 1970-1995. It also expands the analysis presented in that paper by ranking the indicators by three alternative metrics which include: calculating the probability of a crisis conditional on a signal from that indicator; the average number of months prior to the crisis in which the first signal is issued; and the persistence of signals ahead of crises.

Currency Crises in Emerging-Market Economies-Causes, Consequences: Older history registers many episodes of government defaults and bank runs. However, *currency crashes*—one of the forms of *financial instability*—were not so frequent until the middle of the last century. The reason for this was very simple. The world monetary system was dominated by a number of *strong currencies* based on the gold standard and their satellites (currency boards in colonies) and consequently only the extreme events such as the World War I and Great Depression could temporarily damage this system. The new crisis episodes *stimulated* both theoretical discussion and a large body of empirical analyzes trying to identify the causes of currency crises and their rapid propagation, their *economic and social consequences*, methods of their preventing and effective management after a crisis had happened. The existing terminology related to currency crises is not precise and can create certain confusion. *Banking crisis* refers to the actual or potential bank runs or failures that induce banks to suspend the internal convertibility of their liabilities or which compels the monetary authorities to intervene to prevent this by extend-

ing assistance on a large scale. The *public debt crisis* is a situation in which a government cannot service its foreign and/or domestic obligations. The *balance of payment crisis* is a structural misbalance between a deficit in a current account (absorption) and capital and financial account that after exhausting international reserves leads to a *currency crisis*. the typology of financial crises comprises of banking crisis, public debt crisis, balance of payment crisis leads to currency crisis (Antczak (2000)). A currency crisis can be understood as a sudden decline in the confidence to an individual currency usually leading to a speculative attack against it. Frankel and Rose (1996) propose one such criterion, defining a “currency crash” as a nominal depreciation of a currency of at least 25 percent in a year, provided that this represents a 10 percentage points increase in the rate of depreciation from the previous year. Severity of the currency crises measured by reserve losses and nominal depreciation of the domestic currency analyzed 14 historical episodes by Jakubiak (2000) in terms crisis date, loss of reserves, and nominal depreciation against USD of crisis hit countries.

Theoretical Models of Currency Crises, *First-generation Models, Modified First-generation Models, Second-generation Models and third-generation Models, Early Warning Signals, Step towards developing an effective Early-Warning-System, Early warnings indicator* (statistically significant), *Behavior of selected warning indicators* (stylized facts) are explained. The Causes of Currency Crises, Fiscal Imbalances, Causes of Currency Crises, Fiscal Imbalances, Results of Empirical Research have been detailed. The currency overvaluation and Measure a Real Exchange Rate Overvaluation, the role of exchange rate regimes are analyzed from the context of currency crisis. The structural weaknesses of the banking and corporate sectors, relationship between banking and currency crises, the most frequent weaknesses of the banking sector in relation to currency crisis are explained. A ►►

► review of empirical research on analyzing the panel of 21 industrial, 37 developing and 32 emerging-market countries over the period of 1975–1997 [“Emerging markets” were defined as countries with relatively open capital markets while “developing country” sample included other developing and transition economies]. Glick and Hutchison (2000) find that out of these 90 countries 72 had banking crises and 79 experienced at least one currency crisis. There were 90 banking crisis episodes and 202 currency crisis episodes. Out of 90 banking crises 37, i.e. 41% of the total have been twin-crises [“Twin” crises were defined as banking crises accompanied by a currency crisis in the previous, same, or following year]. The frequency of banking crises *increased* four times between the decade of 1970s and 1990s while the frequency of currency crises remained *more or less the same*. The occurrence of *twin* crises rose as well. All types of crises, in particular the *twin* crises, were *more frequent* in the financially liberalized emerging markets. The same authors also provide empirical evidence on the interrelation between currency and banking crises.

The frequency of *banking* crises accompanied by *currency* crises is higher than the frequency of *currency* crises accompanied by *banking* crises. *Currency* crises tend to *cluster* one year *after* a *banking* crisis while *banking* crises *accompanied* a *currency* crisis usually in the *previous* year. Both findings support the view that *banking* crises *provoke* *currency* crises rather than the opposite.

Political Instability: The role of a political factor in provoking *currency* crises seems to be obvious but certainly needs in a more *concrete* specification. The notion of political instability/fragility may involve a broad range of situations. On the one extreme, these can be such *dramatic* events as external or domestic military conflicts. Some countries suffer *chronic* constitutional problems

like *conflict* between executive and legislative branches of governments (very frequent in CIS and Latin American countries) or between federal (central) and regional governments (examples of Russia, Brazil and Argentina). Many developing and transition countries do not have a well-established configuration of political parties what creates difficulties in forming stable and *predictable* governments. *Finally*, even in the most stable democracies there are *episodes of minority* governments, *unstable* government coalitions, *irresponsible* behavior of individual politicians or political parties, and *uncertainty* related to forthcoming election results. On the other hand, even the very stable *authoritarian* regime can be challenged by democratic aspirations of societies. Political instability creates *uncertainty* among money holders what, in turn, *increases* the risk margin associated with a specific currency or debt instrument. This may trigger the *sudden* capital outflow, *stop* capital inflow or *push* money holders towards currency substitution.

Political instability *decreases* chances of correcting unsustainable policies inconsistent with a currency peg and, therefore, *accelerates* the moment of a speculative attack (under the first- and third-generation crisis models). It also increases probability of *inconsistent* policy goals what may *trigger* a speculative attack according to the second-generation crisis models.

Finally, political instability complicates crisis management, deepening its scale and negative consequences. In some cases political instability can be endogenous vis-a-vis a crisis. When crisis starts it usually *undermines* legitimacy of a government that often results in political *destabilization*, which in turn makes any bold anti-crisis steps very difficult.

Crisis Management—How to defend an exchange rate if at all. After a *currency* crisis’ outburst its further dynamics depends very much on govern- ►►

ment ability to take the required corrective measures, introduce a consistent policy package, act consequently and quickly enough, influence financial markets developments and calm market panics. Political factors mentioned above play an important role here. Also support of the international financial institutions (notably the IMF) may help a government in regaining influence on financial markets and help to convince market participant to resist temptation to withdraw their capital. Contagion Effect. The new feature brought by currency crises in the decade of 1990s is their fast propagation from one country to another. This happened after the collapse of British pound in November 1992, after the Mexican crisis in December 1994 (the so-called *Tequila effect*), after the Thai crisis in July 1997 (sometimes called the “*Asian flue*”) and again after the Russian crisis in August 1998. A large body of both theoretical and empirical literature started to analyze what was referred to as a “*contagion*” effect.

Economic and Social Consequences of Currency Crises. In the public discussion about currency crises and other kinds of financial turbulence the majority of opinions point at crises’ severe costs (Stiglitz, 1998). According to this dominant view, crises are unfavorable incidents and should be avoided using all possible means. On the other hand, one can expect that crises, punishing evident cases of economic mismanagement, could have disciplining effect on governments (and indirectly on their electorate), push necessary reforms (Rodrik, 1996), and may automatically correct imbalances created by politicians. Additionally, crises brought the experience to the international financial organizations (Kohler, 2001). The comparison with a mechanism of bankruptcy on the micro-level seems to be a good parallel here. Among the countries analyzed, Bulgaria seems to be the best case of such a positive self-correcting mechanism, involving a change of government, comprehensive package of economic reforms and introduc-

ing a currency board just after the 1996–1997 crisis (Ganev, 2001). Other such positive examples involve Mexico (Paczynski, 2001) and Thailand (Antczak M., 2001).

The Role of International Liquidity in Preventing Currency Crises. Many economists (Feldstein, 1999; Mishkin, 1999; Radelet and Sachs, 1998) call for higher foreign exchange reserves holdings as a measure helping to prevent currency crises. At first glance, this proposal seems to make sense: even with less-than perfect economic policy, country could survive any speculative attack, provided that its central bank has enough foreign exchange reserves. What is more, if the reserves are high enough, the attack (bound to fail) will never happen, according to first-and second-generation crisis models. In addition, numerous empirical studies suggest that insufficient international liquidity was a good predictor of the recent crises (Radelet and Sachs, 1998, Tornell, 1999, Bussiere and Mulder, 1999).

The Role of the IMF in Preventing Currency Crises. As the basic statutory mission of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) is to deal with balance-of-payments disproportions it is reasonable to ask what has been the role of this organization in preventing currency crises of the last decade (or resolving them when already happened). This question is particularly important as many well-known economists question effectiveness of the IMF in the recent crisis episodes. Meltzer (1998) critique of the IMF and US Treasury role before and during the Mexican crisis, and Radelet and Sachs (1998) critique on the IMF role in Thailand and Indonesia are just two examples of a large body of such opinions. The Chronology of IMF Intervention in Asian Currency Crisis.

Causes and sources of Asian Financial Crises: It is also notable that financial crises in emerging markets have occurred under varying macroeconomic conditions. They have occurred when current-account deficits were large and unus- ▶▶

tainable (Mexico and Thailand), but also when such deficits were relatively small (Indonesia and the Russian Federation). Although significant overvaluation has often been characteristic of countries experiencing currency turmoil (Brazil, Mexico and the Russian Federation, all of which used the exchange rate as a nominal anchor to bring down inflation), this has not always been the case; in most East Asian countries the appreciation of the currency was moderate or negligible. Similarly, while in some cases crises were associated with large budget deficits (Brazil and the Russian Federation), in others the budget was balanced or in surplus (Mexico and East Asia). Finally, crises occurred when external debt was owed primarily by the public sector (Brazil and the Russian Federation) or primarily by the private sector (East Asia).

Of these various episodes, the Asian crisis was generally more difficult to predict than the Mexican, Russian or Brazilian crises. This is in part because these economies had been held up as examples of prudent and sustainable economic policies, and in part because of the orthodox faith in the fallibility of markets and the undisputable benefits of free capital movements. However, there were exceptions. The BIS Report 1996 warned about the exposure in East Asia. Similarly, the 1996 TDR sounded a clear warning on South-East Asia, noting that growth in the region relied excessively on foreign resources, and that these economies could suffer from loss of competitiveness and were highly vulnerable to interruptions of capital inflows. Like elsewhere, the crisis in East Asia broke out with a sudden loss of confidence and massive withdrawal of capital by both domestic and foreign investors as well as unhedged debtors. The course of events is well known and needs no repetition here. What we propose to do instead is to analyse the crisis by distinguishing between the build-up of external

vulnerability and the factors that triggered the loss of confidence and exit. In both respects, external as well as internal factors, including domestic policies, appear to have played a crucial role. The build-up of external vulnerability, why did the lenders lend, why did the borrowers borrow, why did the borrowers borrow, policy errors, institutional weaknesses, the outbreak of the crisis and contagion have been analyzed.

Asian Financial Crisis of 1997-1998 Revisited: Causes, Recovery, and the Path Going Forward: The assignment conducted on the 1997-1998 Asian financial crisis, which adversely affected a considerable number of Asian, Latin, and European economies aiming to do the following: (1) identifying the major causes of this financial crisis; (2) examining the recovery of the affected economies by the early 2000s; and (3) determining the ways in which future financial crises could be prevented. Subsequent to the main sections of the paper, concluding remarks will be made. The 1997-1998 Asian financial crisis is considered the third international financial crisis in modern history (Garg, et al., 1999). According to Ardiansyah (2002), the first sign of the financial crisis was the declaration made by the Thai real estate developer Somprasong Land on February 5, 1997, that it had defaulted on a \$3.1 million interest payment for a \$80 billion Euro-convertible bond. This was followed by the bankruptcy of Finance One, Thailand's largest financial institution. As a result of these two startling events, Thailand's currency, the Baht, became unstable and depreciated significantly against the U.S. dollar. The decline of the Thai currency caused the financial crisis to spread to Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Philippines, and subsequently to South Korea, Hong Kong, and China. During the financial crisis of 1997-1998, the impacted countries experienced a substantial loss of the value of their currencies, as well as the value of their domestic stock markets (Ardiansyah, ▶▶

►2002). The crisis, also, resulted in lower demands for imported goods, lower rates of export, less government and private spending, higher poverty rates, reduced production, massive layoffs, and hence increased unemployment. Pang (2000) summarizes the Asian financial crisis in a series of events: (1) the collapse of the regional economies mainly as a result of dysfunctional, overvalued currencies, which were themselves caused by high rates of inflowing foreign direct investment (FDI) and foreign portfolio investment (FPI); (2) the sudden and swift liberalization of the regional capital markets to entice more FDI and FPI; (3) heavy corporate and private debt in Dollar and Yen; (4) the public backlash to the excessive crony capitalism present in the region; (5) the insufficiency of the remedial tools and state policies utilized in the region; (6) the rise and global contagion of investor panic; and (7) the governments' fake promises of bailout to local corporations. The Asian financial crisis, according to Davidson (2005), came as an economic crash with the end of what he calls the "Asian miracle," which is the remarkable performance of East Asian economies in the previous two decades. The Asian financial crisis caused by a combination of equally important factors, and cannot be adequately explained by a single, unequivocal cause. In this section of the assignment paper, the major causes of the financial crisis will be identified and thoroughly evaluated. *Crony Capitalism*: The financial crisis could be partly attributed to the failure of the Asian economic model, which fundamentally deviated from the basic principles of free market capitalism (Lee, 1998). Almost all of the countries that were affected by the crisis pursued a version of the economic system often referred to as "crony capitalism." Enderwick (2005) defines crony capitalism as "a form of capitalism that restricts the allocation of economic resources and opportunity to a country's privileged elite or politically connected 'cronies.'"

This economic system is closely associated with

corruption and rent-seeking practices, which result in lower incentives for wealth creation and a misallocation of resources (Aligica & Tarko, 2014). The ubiquity of cronyism in the East Asian economic systems significantly contributed to the emergence of the 1997-1998 Asian financial crisis. Fixed Exchange Rates Fixed exchange rates—also referred to Another factor that led to the Asian financial crisis is the phenomenon of "moral hazard," which refers to governments' and the international community's artificial guarantees of financial stability, with implicit promises of bailout to corporations at times of economic crisis (Pang, 2000). as pegged exchange rates—could be identified as another cause of the Asian financial crisis. This resulted in a *misallocation of investments*, declining returns on investment, and ever-more fragile financial systems (Lee, 1998). The contagion of the financial panic initiated by the depreciation of the Thai Baht, also, played a role in the occurrence of the Asian financial crisis (Baig & Goldfajn, 1999). Upon the eruption of Thailand's local financial crisis, the majority of international *short-term creditors withdrew their loans from the entire East Asian region*, assuming the homogeneity of the East Asian economies (Radelet & Sachs, 1998). As a result, a severe foreign exchange and stock market turmoil spread in East Asia, with significant consequences for the economies of Thailand's neighboring countries, namely Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, and Korea (Baig & Goldfajn, 1999). Thus the Asian financial crisis was partly caused by the *contagion of financial panic* in the international investment community.

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Vienna Convention and Diplomatic Practice

Waliur Rahman



“An Ambassador should be a trained theologian, should be well-versed in Aristotle and Plato, and should be able at a moment’s notice to solve the most abstruse problems in correct dialectical form: he should

also be expert in mathematics, architecture, music, physics and civil and canon law.”

—Ottaviano Maggi (1596)

The 1961 Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations outlines the rules of diplomatic law and codifies the rules for the exchange and treatment of envoys between states, which have been firmly established in customary law for hundreds of years. As is stated in the preamble of the Convention, the rules are intended to facilitate the development of friendly relations among nations,

irrespective of their differing constitutional and social systems.

The Convention requires diplomats to obey local laws. Article 41 paragraph 1 of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations states in unequivocal terms: “Without prejudice to their privileges and immunities, it is the duty of all persons enjoying such privileges and immunities to respect the laws and regulations of the receiving state. They also have a duty not to interfere in the internal affairs of that state.” It reminds diplomats to respect the laws and regulations of the receiving state and unequivocally restricts them from meddling in that nation’s domestic affairs.

Diplomats are privileged, and the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations exempts them from legal action, taxation, and a host of other things in the host country, but restricts them unequivocally, by the provisions of Article 41 paragraph 1, from interfering in the internal affairs of the host country.

In addition, the Charter of United Nations and the International Court of Justice reaffirmed non-▶▶



► intervention as a norm of customary international law. The principle of non-intervention in the internal affairs of States also signifies that a State should not otherwise intervene in a dictatorial way in the internal affairs of other States.

A number of foreign diplomats in Dhaka have been discussing about our internal affairs for quite some time now. It is observed that diplomats have been publicly commenting in front of the media on the fairness and environment for voting in the upcoming elections, which in no way fall under the purview of traditional diplomacy.

Some nations and their diplomats based in Dhaka have chosen to disregard the fact that Bangladesh's democracy has grown and that the majority of the population wants peace and prosperity for the region. But when they criticize Bangladesh's democratic elections, high level of development, and commitment to human rights and freedoms, they appear as "preachers of democracy," which only serves to highlight their attempt to destabilize our nation and halt

Bangladesh's progress toward achieving an honorable reputation on the global stage.

The tendency of foreign diplomats to intervene in developing countries is not a new development in international politics. Rather, it is a persistent issue that has repeatedly resurfaced throughout history. Bangladesh, which gained independence in 1971 after a bloody Liberation War, struggled to build solid democratic foundations. Just three and half years after Bangladesh's independence, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was assassinated, throwing the newly-born nation into a political dilemma. The battle for power among various groups in the following years provoked foreign diplomats to meddle overtly or covertly in the country's national affairs. Even though the picture of such intervention has significantly changed, it cannot be said that it is over.

Diplomats attempt to establish themselves as a means of solving problems in the name of election-centred compromise, opening the door to entering into the country's national politics. They ►

- ▶ try to use democracy and human rights as effective tools to interfere in the internal affairs of emerging countries to advance their foreign policy.

Diplomats must realise that their more than frequent press and media appearances and meetings with host government officials and politicians on issues of the country's internal affairs and politics give rise to beliefs and perceptions in the public mind that are incorrect, and could even adversely affect their bilateral relations with Bangladesh while in no way helping to improve our politics or governance. They should also realise that no other capital would allow such violation of the Vienna Convention.

A diplomatic representative is a symbol of the bilateral relationship between two states. The function of a diplomat is "protecting friendly relations between the sending State and the receiving State and developing their economic, cultural and scientific relations" (Article 3.e. Vienna Convention). While it is a priority of diplomats to win the "hearts and minds" of the local populace, there is regrettably a rising trend for diplomats to misuse their status.

In any democratic country, an ambassador can certainly go to the high echelons of the government, meet the leaders of the opposition parties, or talk with civil society and express his government's specific concerns. But it is wrong and inappropriate when they meet with them in relation to the host country's domestic political issue.

Diplomacy is an art whose purpose is to develop and diversify relationships, encourage cooperation, promote trade and investment, avoid conflicts, and thereby achieve mutual benefit. Effective and skillful diplomacy is vital to navigating an ever-growing list of common challenges like the economic crisis, climate change, pandemics, transnational terrorism, and the arms race that could spell doom if left unresolved.

Diplomacy is an art that bears the best fruit when conducted with discretion and outside media glare. It can, as it is doing in Bangladesh, spoil good intent when conducted in the press and media. The bottom line, Vienna Convention and all the rest notwithstanding, is that diplomats in Bangladesh should keep their views about internal affairs to themselves, and if their good intentions get the better of them they should convey these views discreetly to their hosts.

Chancellor Metternich once complained that he ruled the whole of Europe but not Austria. By saying so, Metternich was capsuling in his own inimitable way the strength and limitation, 'à la fois' of diplomacy. A diplomat-politician par excellence, Metternich played a pivotal role to help maintain the balance of power in a war torn Continent.

It has been said that without the Austrian Chancellor there would have been no Congress of Vienna. Polemics apart, one can hardly deny the influence of the superb skill and personal diplomacy of Metternich in successfully concluding the colloquium of this 'motley crowd' at Vienna in 1815.

It may be too dangerous to set standards in diplomacy. Power alignments change, so do the socio-geo political compulsions of Nation-states. But certain finer aspects of protocol, demeanours, accoutrements have emerged over the years which are almost identified with what diplomacy stands for. For Example, in the 17th Century the chief diplomat of French King Louis XIV, Francois de Callier's recommended, the diplomat-negotiator must possess the patience of a watchmaker and be devoid of personal prejudices. Watchmakers are not necessarily diplomats (let alone good). But the point is well made by the French King's Chief negotiator. Again Francois de Calliers was not so kind with lawyer-diplomats. He believed in general, the training of a lawyer breeds habits and dispositions of mind which are not favourable to the ▶▶

► practice. of diplomacy. One may not agree with this because a prior condition to successful diplomacy pre-supposes that a diplomat- negotiator 'should be endowed with what E.M. Forster called "three dimensional qualities". Must a lawyer be devoid of these attributes?

"Open diplomacy openly arrived at" was the Wilsonian vision after the First World War. But times have changed. Al-

though one may not necessarily accept what an expert said, 'Sincere diplomacy is no more possible than dry water or wooden air', one reads with considerable sympathy what Nicolson said, "The theory that diplomacy should proceed always frankly and in the public view has led to negotiation but broadcast and televised, and at all national discussion being abandoned in favour of interminable propaganda speeches.

A noted French Envoy to the United States earlier this century, Monsieur Jules Combon wrote, "The day secretary is abolished, negotiation of any kind becomes impossible."

Monsieur Phillippe Commynes, the negotiator of Louis XI thought two great princes who wish to establish good personal relations should never meet face to face. It sounds ironical if one takes a cursory view of the canvas of diplomacy from Metternich (Congress of Vienna) to Wilson (Versailles) and then onwards to the present day summits and super-summits.

Ivan Maisky, the noted Soviet Diplomat to the Court of St. James during World War II, in his book written on his war-time experiences' gives interesting insight into the challenges and recompenses of a functioning diplomat.



Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations – Done at Vienna on 18 April 1961

The three great Victorian Ministers—Castlereagh, Canning and Palmerston, who raised the quality of diplomatic practice to a place of importance and excellence left imperishable foot-print on modern day diplomacy. Palmerston is reported to have said, "The life I lead is like that of a man who on getting out of bed every morning should be caught up by the ends of the arms of a windmill and whirled round and round till he was again deposited at night to rest ! Not very enviable, but the modern day Palmerston would not have a very different story to tell either. When Arthur Ponsonby, the British diplomat, was presenting his 27-page memorandum to Thomas Sanderson in October 1900, he was not only ventilating the possible disappointments and frustrations in the conduct of diplomatic activities, he also underlined the vital importance of diplomacy – its three dimensional utility in a world of warring homo-sapiens. Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard sweeter-this verse could perhaps have better been dedicated to the art of diplomacy rather than the Grecian Urn.

Waliur Rahman, *Former Special Envoy of the Prime Minister of Bangladesh*



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BRIEF NEWS

US Poised to Open Four Military Sites in Philippines: Report



The US is poised to reach an agreement with the Philippines to open as many as four military sites to counter increasing threats from China.

The move is part of Washington's efforts to expand its strategic footprint in the Asia Pacific as Beijing ramps up its military presence in the South China Sea.

Two of the proposed military facilities will be situated on the northern island of Luzon to give US forces a "strategic advantage" in case of a conflict in Taiwan or the South China Sea.

The sites would also facilitate cooperation on national security concerns and rapid disaster response, according to a report by The Washington Post.

Both countries have reportedly done extensive work over the past few months to evaluate military sites in the country.

An official announcement is expected this week as US Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin meets with Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.

Increased Military Cooperation

US-Philippines relations became strained when former President Rodrigo Duterte threatened to end the Visiting Forces Agreement that provided legal protections to the US military in Manila.

However, when Marcos was elected, he made it clear that the Southeast Asian nation needed to step up its military capabilities amid growing security threats.

Manila even canceled an agreement to purchase heavy-lift helicopters from Russia and considered buying their US counterpart.

Earlier this year, the allies vowed to strengthen defense cooperation and the transfer of technology to modernize the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

Washington also agreed to host a "maritime dialogue" with its Asian partner this year to identify potential joint maritime activities.

EU Doubles to 30,000 Number of Ukraine Troops to Train



The European Union is doubling the number of Ukrainian troops it aims to train to 30,000 as it seeks to bolster Kyiv's fightback against Russia, EU officials said Wednesday.

The 27-nation bloc set up a program for Ukrainian forces in November with the initial target of training 15,000.

"This will be reached probably before the end of the second quarter of this year and there will be a new additional target of a further 15,000 Ukrainian soldiers trained by various European countries," an EU official said.

"So that will bring the number of

Ukrainian soldiers trained in this scheme to 30,000."

The increased figure — to be formally announced at an EU-Ukraine summit in Kyiv on Friday — comes as European allies step up their military support.

Several EU nations have pledged to provide German-made Leopard 2 tanks to Kyiv and are already training Ukrainian troops to use them.

It is unclear if that training is covered by the EU program.

The EU training is being carried out across multiple European countries, with its headquarters in Ukraine's neighbor Poland.

Members states have also separately trained Kyiv's forces to use the weapons systems they are supplying.

The United States, Britain and other international backers of Ukraine have in addition trained thousands of troops.

Ukraine has pleaded with its allies to help bolster its forces ahead of a feared broader Russian offensive in the spring, and to allow its troops to go on the attack instead.

Grinding battles over the winter in the east of the country focused around the town of Bakhmut have taken a heavy toll on both sides.

First Batch of US Bradley Fighting Vehicles on Way to Ukraine

The US has shipped the first batch of Bradley infantry fighting vehicles to Ukraine as part of the \$2.85 billion military aid package announced earlier this year.

More than 60 Bradleys left South





- ▶ Carolina last week to provide Kyiv's forces with additional firepower.

According to US Transport Command head Jacqueline Van Ovost, the ongoing invasion of Ukraine has proven the complexity of power projection and the importance of logistics.

"Our support to Ukraine would not be possible without the strong relationships we have with our allies and partners that provided the access, basing, and overflight to facilitate the delivery of aid," she stated.

In addition to Bradley fighting vehicles, the US will send Stryker armored personnel carriers, missiles, and ammunition to help Ukraine defend its territories.

Since February last year, total US military aid to Kyiv has reached \$27.1 billion.

'Very Powerful Vehicle'

The US Army's Bradley infantry vehicle is a full-tracked, medium armored vehicle capable of providing cross-country mobility and protection to mechanized units.

It carries the M242 25-millimeter automatic cannon and a 7.62 coaxial machine gun.

With a top speed of 38 miles (61 kilometers) per hour, the vehicle can accommodate a crew of three and up to seven squad members.

Among the unique features of the Bradley is its independent viewer that allows commanders to scan for targets and maintain situational awareness.

According to US Army transportation commander Rebecca D'Angelo, the vehicles will provide supporting

fire for Ukrainian soldiers and serve as transport to support missions from other locations.

"The Bradley is a very powerful vehicle that we are providing to the Ukrainians," she said. "This is going to hopefully enhance their capabilities to provide forward advancement in the battlefield and regain lost grounds, by having equipment that matches or exceeds what the Russians have."

Indo-Russian joint venture starts manufacturing Kalashnikov AK-203 assault rifles for Indian Army

Indo-Russian Rifles Private Limited, a joint venture between Russia and India, registered and located in India, whose founders on the Russian side are Rosoboronexport and Kalashnikov Concern (both are subsidiaries of the Rostec State Corporation), has started producing Kalashnikov assault rifles.

"Russia and India are linked by strong partnership relations. Military-technical cooperation between the two countries has resulted in the construction of the joint venture Indo-Russian Rifles Private Limited. With the launch of series production of Kalashnikov AK-203 assault rifles, high-quality, convenient and modern small arms will begin to enter service with India's defense and law enforcement agencies. The model combines excellent ergonomics, adaptability to different shooters and high performance characteristics, it is one of the best assault rifles in the world," said Sergey Chemezov, General Director of Rostec.

The joint venture plans to ensure 100% localization of the production of AK-203 rifles in India. In fu-

ture, the company may also increase output and upgrade its production facilities to manufacture advanced rifles based on the Kalashnikov assault rifle platform, "Korwa Ordnance Factory in Amethi, Uttar Pradesh, has produced the first batch of 7.62 mm Kalashnikov AK-203 assault rifles. The beginning of deliveries to the Indian Army is expected soon. At the same time, the factory's capacity makes it possible to fully equip the personnel of other law enforcement agencies in India with AK-203 assault rifles, which, due to their high adaptability, are suitable for various operators. In addition, the joint venture will be able to export its products to third countries," said Alexander Mikheev, Director General of Rosoboronexport.

Indo-Russian Rifles Private Limited fully complies with the Government of India's Made in India initiative and DAP 2020. Today, India is the first country to start producing the AK-200-series assault rifles of the world-famous brand.

The AK-200-series assault rifles have retained all the advantages of the traditional AK scheme: reliability, durability and ease of maintenance. At the same time, they fully meet the latest requirements for firearms in the world in terms of ergonomics and the ability to mount high-tech additional equipment.

Russia and India continue to implement military-technical cooperation projects. Their current and future programs are maximally focused on technological cooperation, including on the basis of joint ventures, in the format of licensed production and joint R&D projects. Rosoboronexport aims to cooperate on terms of transfer of technology put forward by the Indian side and in accordance with the Make in India initiative. ■

Popular Life paid Taka 24,41,68,189 (Twenty Four Crore Forty One Lakh Sixty Eight Thousand One Hundred Eighty Nine) by 7,468 checks to the insurance claimers



At a recent meeting held in the auditorium of the Diploma Engineers Institution (IDEB) in Dhaka, Popular Life Insurance Company Limited presented checks totaling taka 24,41,68,189 to 7,468 insurance customers' claims. Mohammad Joynal Bari, chairman of the Insurance Development and Controller Authority, served as the meeting's chief guest. Sheikh Kabir Hossain, chairman of the Bangladesh Insurance Association, attended the meeting virtually as a special guest. BM Yousuf Ali, CEO and Managing Director of the Popular Life Insurance Company Limited, presided over the event. Abdullah Haroon Pasha, additional secretary for the Ministry of Finance, Moinul Islam, member for (administration) Insurance Development and Controller Authority, Kamrul Hassan, member for (life) Md. Nazrul Islam, member for (non-life) and Dr. Naznin Kawser Chowdhury, Executive Director, (Joint Secretary) were among those present at the meeting. BM Shawkat Ali, additional managing director of the company, presided over the event. The meeting was also attended by Mohammad Anis Uddin Miah, former secretary and senior consultant of the company, Mohammad Sirajul Haider NDC, former additional secretary and senior consultant of the company, Roy Debdas, former chief Insurance controller (In Charge) and senior consultant of the company, Colonel retd Ahsan Aziz PSC, senior consultant of the company, Nandan Bhattacharje and Mostafa Helal Kabir, additional managing directors, Syed Motahar Hossain, senior DMD, Mohammad Nowsher Ali Nayeem, Mohammad Abu Taher, Feroz Iftekhar, Md Habibur Rahman, Md Bashirul Islam and Emad Uddin Ahmed Prince, DMD Mohammad Kamal Hossain Mohsin, Md Khalilur Rahman Dulal, Syed Sultan Mahmud, and CFO Ershad Ali Hiru and other high officials of the company attended the program.

Photo shows guests are handing over check to the Insurance customer's claim.

It may be mentioned that the company has paid a total of 5 thousand 239 crore 6 lakh 52 thousand to 38,52,903 insurance customers till to date.

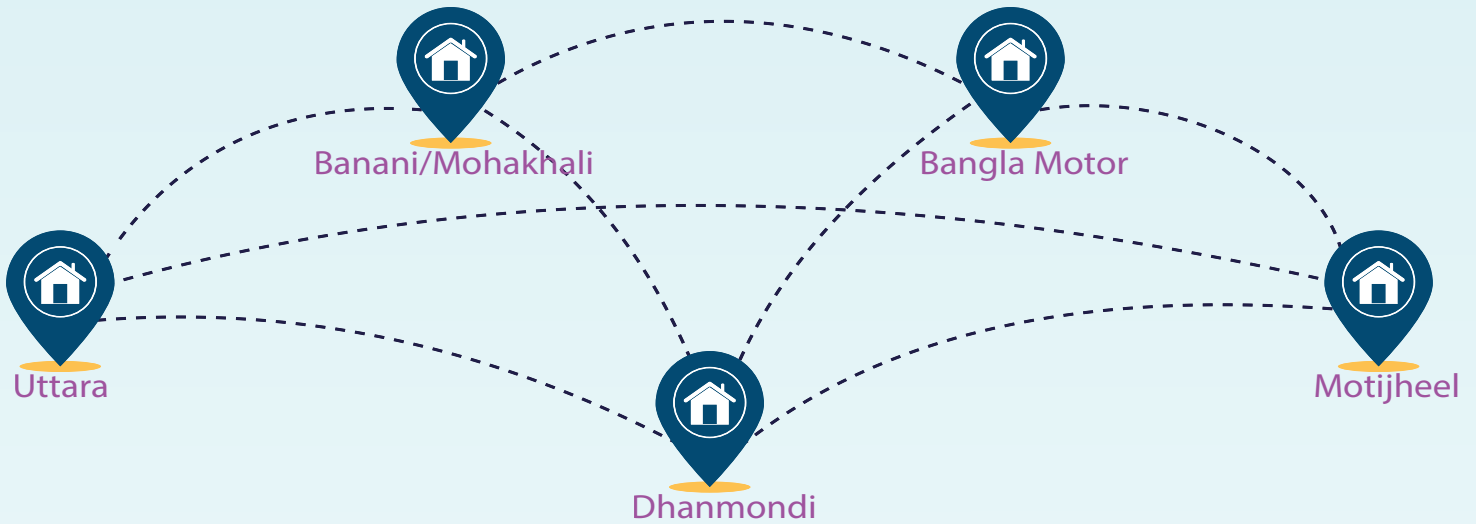


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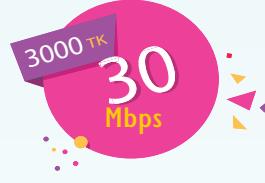
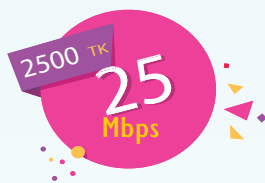
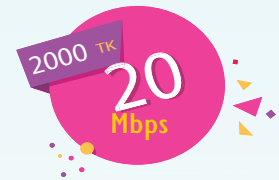
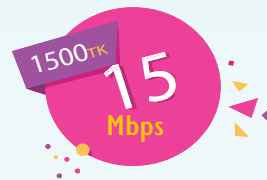
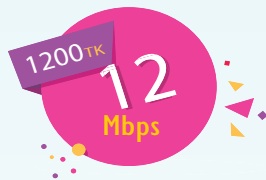
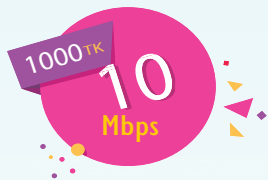
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