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PRIORITIES OF FOREIGN POLICY OF BANGLADESH SINCE 2005

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Abstract:

Foreign Policy is usually viewed as an extension of domestic policy. Foreign policy refers to the policy of a sovereign state to achieve its desired goals to the foreign countries. The Foreign Policy of Bangladesh emanates from the following provisions of the Bangladesh Constitution. These provisions are stated in Article 25 of the Constitution. So, the principles of Bangladesh foreign policy can't be controversial with the principles of these organizations. The basic principles of Bangladesh foreign policy is Friendship to all and malice towards none. Though it's difficult for researcher to select a particular topic and develops an appropriate objective which helps to the researcher when it's comes about the foreign policy but for getting a general picture the research we have selected a modern turning point of foreign policy of Bangladesh.

Key Words:

Foreign Policy, Bangladesh, South Asia, SAARC

1. Introduction

Foreign Policy is usually viewed as an extension of domestic policy. Foreign policy refers to the policy of a sovereign state to achieve its desired goals to the foreign countries. The foreign policy of Bangladesh, like that of any other state is also primarily a projection of the country's socio-economic and political compulsions in international politics.

The Foreign Policy of Bangladesh emanates from the following provisions of the Bangladesh Constitution. These provisions are stated in Article 25 of the Constitution.¹ 1. The State shall base its international relations on the principles of respect for national sovereignty and equality, non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries, peaceful settlements of international disputes, and respect for international law and the principles enunciated in the United Nations Charter. 2. The state shall endeavor to consolidate, preserve and strengthen fraternal relations among Muslim countries based on Islamic solidarity.²

a. Introduction to the Principles of foreign policy of Bangladesh

There are some principles maintained under the foreign policy of Bangladesh. Bangladesh is a member of various international key organizations such as the UN, the NAM etc. So, the principles of Bangladesh foreign policy can't be controversial with the principles of these organizations. There are four basic principles of Bangladesh foreign policy. They are given below: Friendship to all and malice towards none: Bangladesh being a poor country is dependent on the foreign aid which is provided by the states with various ideologies. That is why the Father of the nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman said: 'We are a small country; we want friendship to all and malice towards none.' Respect to the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of other states.³

b. Objectives of the Research

Though it's difficult to the researcher selects a particular topic and develops an appropriate objective which helps to the researcher when it's comes about the foreign policy but for getting a general picture the research. The overall objective of this study is to investigate how and what are the leading factors leads to Foreign policy of Bangladesh.

1. To find out what are the dynamic factors which leads Priorities of foreign policy of Bangladesh.

¹ The Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, Ministry of Law and Justice, the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh (Dhaka. 2016), p.15. 17

² Harun ur Rashid, "Bangladesh Foreign Policy: Realities, Priorities and Challenges", Published by Academic Press & Publishers Library, Third Revised edition, February 2015, Page-76-77

³ Harun ur Rashid, "Bangladesh Foreign Policy: Realities, Priorities and Challenges", Published by Academic Press & Publishers Library, Third Revised edition, February 2015, Page-76-77, 122-26

2. To find out what are their main factors and issues which led to change the priorities time to time.
3. To understand the role and response of the policy of ‘Friendship to all to malice to none’ at present.
4. Finally, to give some suggestions and recommendation to the policymakers and respective authorities regards the foreign policy of Bangladesh.

c. Research Questions

1. In order to achieve the objectives of the research the following leading question was framed and used:
2. How far Bangladesh can follow the policy of Friendship to all?
3. What would be the main factors which should change the foreign policy for coming future?
4. Does Bangladesh balance its foreign policy between two powerful neighbor China and India.
5. Which factors are influencing Bangladesh, if they followed Balancing Foreign Policy?

d. Methodology

Research methodology plays a significant role of the research. It consists of research design, data collection, analysis and explanation of the result. The term ‘methodology’ encompasses this whole process. The final outcomes of a research depend on the methodology that we are engaging and methodology deepens on the form of data needed to answer the research question. This research was a qualitative in nature from a Policy Assumption. It was used both the primary and secondary data in order to address the research question and objectives of the research more deeply.

e. Research Problem

It’s difficult to find the Strengths and Weaknesses of Bangladesh foreign policy. The strengths appear to be its huge human capital, homogeneity and the resilience of the people against all odds, one language, absence of feudal society and social mobility with no rigid class structures, fertile lands, availability of abundant natural gas and people’s inherent dislike for autocratic rule. ⁴The continuing communal harmony is a great strength of Bangladesh. ‘Although Bangladesh is overwhelmingly populated by Muslim population, minority

⁴ Ataur Rahman, Foreign Policy Making in Bangladesh: Institutions and Processes. BISS Journal, Vol. 6. No.3. July 1985, p.335

communities (Hindus and Buddhists among others) practice their religions in peace and harmony.⁵ In every branches of the stale, minority communities are represented including at the higher judiciary of Bangladesh. The majority and minority communities live in peaceful existence and hardly there is any difference between individuals of majority and minority communities.⁶ So, take into consideration for a Research that where and how to start and where to end the foreign policy analysis from Domestic to external factors are difficult.⁷

f. Purpose of selecting the topic for this research

Begum Khaleda Zia (leader of the BNP) Along with four parties' alliances came to power in October 2001. This tenure Bangladesh took 'look east' policy, maintained and reconstructed relationship with China, Myanmar and Bangkok. This government also maintained good relationship with the Muslim world. But in 21 august 2004, a granite attack on opposition leader Sheikh Hasian gave a concern to international communities that Bangladesh is turning to a country of Islamic militancy and Sheikh Hasina took that opportunity to make claim against four parties' alliance's government. But she was not successful at that point of time. Begum Zia shows to the world a policy of intolerance against militancy, though it has proved in court that the initial arrested Jos mia story was collude in a white sky. But at that point of time the notion of begum zia was successful and that had given a good concern to international communities. For the sake of the time Begum Zia's administration successfully projected Hasina's claim doesn't have in reality.

About one year later in August 17, 2005 an Islamic militant group blast bombs almost all over the country. Because of this incident total scenario got totally different picture, Sheikh Hasina and Awame league raised their voice and gathered support from various International Community against BNP Lead Four Party Government. Hasina's long-term agitations against Begum Zia create an environment that's why she couldn't conduct election under the caretaker government on 22 January 2007.

So, an un-constitutional government comes by the support of army and Sheikh Hasina on January 11, 2007. Sheikh Hasina said for this occasion 'This Caretaker Government is the

⁵ Abul Fazl Haq, The Problem of National Identity in Bangladesh, The Journal of Social Studies (Dhaka), No. 24, April 1984, p.50.

⁶ M. G. Kabir, Religion, Language and Nationalism in Bangladesh, Journal of Contemporary Asia (Nottingham), Vol. 17, No. 4, 1987, p. 484.

⁷ M A Muhit, "Bangladesh in the twenty First Century" University Press Limited, p 112, 2003.

Successful outcome of our long-term movement.’ Its assume that Because of Bonding with that government sheikh Hasina come to power seven years after 2001 and still continue. ⁸

After the return of Awami League government in January 2009, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina made it clear that foreign policy of Bangladesh has made a major shift. Over a half decade of pursuing mutually unfriendly relations with India, Bangladesh has assured the latter of total commitment for that country's security concerns. Present government has also signed an agreement with Russia for the construction of a nuclear power plant in recent years. Bangladesh has bought two subs marine from china. It's clearly showed how much priorities government is giving on security. This security is not only for the border but also a holistic security in terms of Economy. So far, Bangladesh have managed its foreign relations especially with the neighbours as well as the world at large. Now Bangladesh is looking for a blanching policy toward their two powerful neighbours china and India.

Now, Sheikh Hasina's policy is more political to India and economic to China. In terms of regime security Hasina is concentrating her relations with India and for trade, economy and other purpose toward china as well as rest of the world. Cause Bangladesh is losing opportunities which are emerging due to changing global realities. So, Bangladesh need to rethink its foreign policy priorities, enumerate its advantages and design a strategy to achieve specific goals.

g. Basic Priorities of Foreign Policy of Bangladesh:

According to the findings we have found three points about Bangladesh foreign policy, we have said throughout the article that priorities of Bangladesh based on three pillars: but some others priorities have changed due the situation during the era.

h. Balancing Approach towards external relations

Bangladesh is Following a Balancing approach for external relations, Bangladesh maintain a balancing approach of foreign policy since beginning the 21st century. While four parties' alliances government took Look east policy, from that point of view china got more chance to make strong relations with Bangladesh. Although India played a pivotal role in the independence of Bangladesh, it now witnesses a shift in the priority given to its ties by its Eastern neighbor. Dhaka desires good relations with India but fears the shadow of its western

⁸ Mohd Tajuddin, "Foreign policy of Bangladesh: liberation war to Sheikh Hasina", Published by National Book Organisation, Revised Edition 2016, Page-65.

Big Brother.⁹ Hence Bangladesh has welcomed China to be one of its most vital partners for trade in the decades since 2005. China Became number one trading partner since 2005, before India's Position was there.¹⁰ The matrix of Beijing-Dhaka relations permeates multiple avenues, ranging from strategic to commercial, from energy security to infrastructural of these the strategic ties are one of the most salient. The two countries have built up a solid military relationship, largely to the fact that China is Bangladesh's largest supplier of military equipment. Since 2010, Beijing has supplied Dhaka with five maritime patrol vessels, two corvettes, 44 tanks, and 16 fighter jets, as well as surface-to-air and anti-ship missiles, according to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute. That's in addition to new Ming-class submarines Bangladesh ordered from China in 2013, which are expected to enter the Bangladeshi fleet in 2016, according to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. China and Bangladesh have been moving to expand their cooperation besides hardware exchanges. China has helped to build Bangladesh's military capabilities since 2002. Naval defense is being given particular attention.¹¹

i. Does Bangladesh follow friendship to all malice to none?

Development is not only economic growth but also socio-economic development. That means equitable distribution of national income to all people with a view to providing a minimum material standard for human dignity and removing gross disparity between rich and poor within the country.¹²

For inclusive development Bangladesh took policy of more friends less instead of friendship to all. Not only that, Bangladesh is seeking new market for their product and inviting others for foreign direct investment in the name of liberalization. Now Bangladesh is more concentrating on their gross development, like Infrastructure and other visible development with the model of digital and Middle-income country later on developed country.¹³ After 2014 Bangladesh is giving more concern on blue economy. So, the concept of follow friendship to all malice to none is a copybook style Bangladesh for its foreign relations as well as foreign policy.

⁹ Bazlul Haque and et el, "The Era of Globalization and Emerging Issue: Challenges and Policy Options for Bangladesh", Volume XIV, Number II, p 107 (Science Review), December, 1998.

¹⁰ Centre for Policy Study, "Independent Review of Bangladesh Development", Volume II page 135, University Press Limited, 5th edition, 2011

¹¹ Ruksana Kibria, "Globalization and Bangladesh's Security and Foreign Policies", Internet Eddition, 2015

¹² Obaydullah Muhammad Abu, "Impact of Foreign Aid on Development in Bangladesh", Published by LAP Lambert Academic Publishing, 2011 Edition, page-46

¹³ R Sohan and M Ahmed "Public Enterprise in and intermediate Regime; A study in Political Economy of Bangladesh", BIDS, Dhaka, 2014.

2. Priorities of Bangladesh foreign Policy at present era

a. Growing Relations with China

China-Bangladesh have moved ahead steadily in spite of profound changes in the domestic politics of both countries and major international developments during the last three decades. China has emerged as a reliable partner to Bangladesh Extending economic, military and diplomatic support. The recent visit of Chinese President to Bangladesh made it apex of the history of Bangladesh-China bilateral relation ever seen. Now the relation between Bangladesh is not only fact in bilateral relation but also in international politics more specifically in geopolitics. Chinese President Xi Jinping quoted to intense “strategic partnership”. Let’s have a brief dynamic of Bangladesh- China relations.

i. Trade and Economic Relations with china

To assess the relation between Bangladesh and China we first have to look over economic relation as Bangladesh is 3rd largest trading partner of China. Let’s have a look to the chart.

Year	Export (million dollar)	Import (million dollar)
1997-98	48.51	592.46
1998-99	10.61	560.47
1999-00	10.56	568.06
2000-01	11.67	708.94
2001-02	18.92	657.78
2002-03	19.50	779.50
2003-04	45.65	1132.72
2004-05	56.07	1643.77
2005-06	64.35	2078.99
2006-07	92.97	2572.62
2007-08	106.95	3136.70
2008-09	97.06	3451.47
2009-10	178.63	3819.28
2010-11	319.66	5912.55
2011-12	401.94	6433.21
2012-13	458.12	6324

Source: Import Payment, Bangladesh Bank and Export Statistics, Export Promotion Bureau & Bangladesh Bank.

According to ‘the Daily Star’ in Bangladesh, the trade between Bangladesh and China reached about USD 12.5 billion. On 19- April 2006 both countries agreed to take steps to reduce this gap. At present, under the Bangkok Agreement China provides duty free access to 84 Bangladeshi products, though Dhaka is pushing for a complete opening of the Chinese market for its products in order to reduce the trade imbalance. China-Bangladesh trade volume reached a record high of 10.3 billion US dollars with a growth rate of 21.9%

compared with 2012, 10 times that of 2002. The accumulated investment (including investment from Hong Kong & Taiwan) in Bangladesh EPZ reached 1.42 billion US dollars at the end of 2013, providing jobs for more than 76,000 Bangladeshis. Several bigger investment projects are in the process of negotiation between the two sides. At the same time, a growing number of Bangladesh business people are now conducting business in China. China mainly imports: Raw materials like leather, cotton, textiles, fish etc. China major exports to Bangladesh: Include textiles machinery and electronic products, cement, fertilizer, tire, raw silk, maize etc.

b. Hasina's 'India first' policy

While some Bangladeshi experts argue for a tit-for-tat balancing strategy with China¹⁴, the intimate ties of geography, history and culture determine that Bangladesh cannot pursue a blind policy of equidistance between Delhi and Beijing. Attempts to deviate from this have led to occasional tensions in the past¹⁵, but the current positive bilateral momentum is due to PM Hasina's informal "India first" focus on key issues that impinge on Indian core security and economic interests. China played a large role in developing Bangladesh's port at Chittagong even before the "Belt and Road" initiative came along with it. In addition, Bangladesh set up a missile launch pad near Chittagong Port with assistance from China in 2008. These developments make it clear that Bangladesh fears perceived Indian hegemony.

However, Sheikh Hasina has reassured Delhi that her state will not be a base for anti-Indian man oeuvres. Such traditional military threats do not exist, but there are non-traditional threats towards India. These include terrorist outfits operating from Bangladeshi soil.¹⁶ This is one reason for which Bangladesh is keen to have strong military alliance with China, apart from counter-insurgency cooperation with India.¹⁷ It helps maintain the small state's internal security.

¹⁴ Mostofa, Faruque Mohmmmed. "Outstanding Issues in Bangladesh-India Relations." *Journal of International Relations*, Vol-1, no. 1 (2005)

¹⁵ Shahid. "Bangladesh-India Relations" and Farooq, Sobhan. "Dynamics of Bangladesh- India Relations": Dialogue of Young Journalists across the Border, Bangladesh Enterprise Institute. The University Press Limited, Dhaka, 2005.

¹⁶ Y. M. Bammi, "India Bangladesh relations-the way ahead", Published by Vij Book Store, First Edition-2010, Page-32

¹⁷ Shahid, Abdus, Brigadier General, Bangladesh Army. Bangladesh-India Relations: Key Bi- lateral Issues, Individual Research Paper, National Defense College, Bangladesh (August 2006) and <http://idcr.cprindia.org/blog/india-and-bangladeshreview-bilateral-opportunities> (Accessed February 20, 2018).

When Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited Bangladesh, the two sides signed an agreement to let Indian cargo vessels use Chittagong port a move read in India as reassurance that the port is not intended as a Chinese “pearl” in the Indian Ocean.¹⁸

3. Overall foreign relations of Bangladesh

a. Bangladesh and SAARC

Bangladesh, as a proponent of regional cooperation, had always paid a leading role in SAARC. Yet there has not been a substantial progress in regional peace and amity, mainly due to India-Pakistan rivalry.¹⁹ The so-called SAARC spirit of cooperation and fraternity is looking frail today due to the simmering hostility between India and Pakistan. In the current year Bangladesh is more emphasize on the BBIN (a sub-regional grouping consisting Bangladesh-Bhutan-India and Nepal) other than the SAARC.²⁰

b. Bangladesh - USA Relations

The Relations between Bangladesh and USA were boosted in March 2000 when President Clinton visited Bangladesh. A centerpiece of the bilateral relationship is a large U.S. aid program, totaling about \$163 million for 2009. In total, the United States has provided more than \$5.5 billion in food and development assistance to Bangladesh.

Total imports from Bangladesh were about \$2.6 billion (excluding services) in FY 2005, up from \$2.1 billion in 2002. In 2007 total imports reached \$3.4 billion. U.S. exports to Bangladesh (some \$333 million--excluding services--in 2005, and \$456 million in 2007) include wheat, fertilizer, cotton, communications equipment, aircraft, and medical supplies, a portion of which is financed by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID).²¹

i. Bilateral trade with USA and security for Garments industries

In 2014, U.S. direct investment in Bangladesh was \$465 million, an increase of 12.6 percent from 2013. These two governments held the second annual Trade and Investment Cooperation Forum Agreement (TICFA) meeting in Washington on November 23, 2015, which highlighted the potential for greater cooperation with Bangladesh, particularly in areas of developing infrastructure and energy resources. U.S. exports to Bangladesh include

¹⁸ Mihirkanti Choudhury, “Foreign Policy of Bangladesh and Indo-Bangla Relations”, Published By LAP Lambert Academic Publishing, 2012 Edition, Page-52

¹⁹ Davinder Kumar Madaan. “Indo-Bangladesh Economic Relations and SAARC”, (Dhaka: TYK Prokason, Tejgaon, 1996), p.54

²⁰ Shahnaz, Karim. “Security Imperatives and Economic Benefits of Transit Facility: A Bangladesh Perspective: Regional Economic Trends and South Asian Security”, edited by Iftekharuzzaman. The University Press Limited, Dhaka, 1997. Page 130-134

²¹ Foreign Relations, http://en.banglapedia.org/index.php?title=Foreign_Relations

agricultural products (soybeans, cotton, wheat and dairy), aircraft, machinery, engines, and iron and steel products. U.S. imports from Bangladesh include apparel, footwear, and textile products; toys, games and sporting goods; shrimp and prawns; and agricultural products. Worker rights and worker safety issues led the United States to suspend the country's Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) trade benefits in June 2013. At the time of the suspension, the United States provided the Bangladesh government with an Action Plan to address worker rights and safety issues as a basis for considering the reinstatement of GSP trade benefits. Since that time Bangladesh has made important progress in meeting some of the plan's objectives – especially in inspections, safety and security, and the United States continues to work with the Bangladesh government to ensure further progress on workers' rights. That may help Bangladesh for their garments industries.

c. EU in Bangladesh

The EU is assisting the government of Bangladesh in its priorities of developing the economy whilst addressing social exclusion and poverty. The EU has earmarked a €403 million sum to the country 2007-13. The EU's €403 million package of financial support 2007-13 is provided through two multi-annual indicative programmes (MIPs) for 2007-10 and 2011-13 respectively. The following are funding priorities: Human and social development – especially education (including technical and vocational education and training) to improve quality of teaching and strengthen progress made in enrolment and quality of primary schooling. Good governance and human rights to strengthen the efficiency of governance institutions improve the delivery of public services and promote the protection of human rights.²²

d. Bangladesh and Islamic countries

For a country like Bangladesh, which is the second largest Muslim country of the world, a substantial part of whose population (about 90 per cent) is Muslim; there is little option but to take Islam into consideration when formulating its policies, whether internal or external. The foreign policy of Bangladesh is significantly known for its close linkages with the Muslim countries, which is characterized as an emerging political and economic force to reckon with. It has also been considered that consolidation and promotion of cooperation with them could be potential source of enormous strength to Bangladesh. This may also and open up new possibilities of mutually beneficial economic cooperation through a well-planned mix of the

²² Foreign Relations, http://en.banglapedia.org/index.php?title=Foreign_Relations

surplus funds of oil rich Muslim countries with the abundant labour force available in Bangladesh.²³

e. ASEAN and Bangladesh

IMF forecasts Bangladesh potential 32nd largest economy by 2022. With this spirit, Bangladesh charted some game changing economic visions of economic graduation in to Middle-income country by 2021. In line with this forging mobility, connecting regional economic bloc especially ASEAN, OBOR backed BCIM can be inevitable towards desired investment, industry, trade and GDP acceleration. ASEAN is yet to be harnessed for Bangladesh to explore limitless opportunities of mutual trade and industrial investment cooperation based on mutual close cooperation for multi-modal connectivity and FTA. This proposed regional economic connectivity can socio-economically benefit to greater extent and solidify the economic landscape by improving the fate of one billion people in this greater region which is the potential largest market in terms of population and open up a new trajectory for this region. Considering this indispensable and contemporary geo-economic thought, a forging Economic synergy between ASEAN and Bangladesh can be held. Bangladesh, next to ASEAN area, can align economically to equip our geo-economic strength which enables to secure a geo political importance.

4. Bangladesh's linking their development with blue economy:

In Bangladesh, discussions on blue economy started after the settlement of maritime boundary delimitation dispute with Myanmar (2012) and India (2014). So, the Government has recently started dialogues with the stakeholders to adopt the concept of blue economy across relevant policies and plans. The objective is to exploiting untapped potential of the marine environment using useful solutions and innovations for increasing food security, alleviating poverty, improving nutrition and health, creating jobs, lifting trade and industrial profiles while protecting ecosystem health and biodiversity, and also improving regional security and peace.

The countries like Bangladesh, which currently have an underdeveloped blue economy, are well positioned to develop sectors of the blue economy. For example, fisheries and coastal aquaculture offer huge potential for the provision of food and livelihoods, respecting ecological parameters, creating sustainable employment and producing high value species for

²³ Foreign Relations, http://en.banglapedia.org/index.php?title=Foreign_Relations

international export markets. However, a strategic approach, supported with a governance structure is imperative to developing the blue economy otherwise the example of fisheries and coastal aquaculture development given here could easily lead to resource exploitation biodiversity loss and ultimately depletions loss of ecological function.²⁴

a. New opportunities for expansion of foreign trade & advantage of Bangladesh

i. Major Opportunities of Blue Economy Sectors:

In view of harnessing the full utilization of ocean-based resources within the present maritime boundary of Bangladesh, a range of productive economic sectors need to be emphasized and considered. Under blue economy approach within a comprehensive framework of ecosystem-based management if ocean spaces are properly planned and managed to carryout inter-sectorial coordination with public- private partnership and investment that will certainly generate strong foundation for huge earnings and economic benefits for the country.



Fig.2 Major Sectors related to blue economy in Bangladesh

Bay of Bengal and coastal regions are the backbone of national economy of Bangladesh. The blue economy can create enormous opportunities to resolve the issues of climate changes at the coastal areas by addressing the challenges. On the other hand, it might generate jobs for millions and bring about tangible changes in the lives and livelihood of the millions of people

²⁴ Nafis Ahmad., A New Economic Geography of Bangladesh (New Delhi, n.d.), 2015, pp. 117- 120.

living along the coastline, in islands and across Bangladesh, if the marine based economic resources belonging with many sectors are managed and governed by principles of biodiversity protection, conservation is community-led and efforts for care are intertwined with a vision of scientific understanding. The past and present status and trends and future potentials of marine based economic resources (Living, non-living and potential other resources) within the identified sectors are summarised in Table 1 and major opportunities of these sectors are detailed in the following paragraphs.

Marine Resources	Economic Sectors	Past and Present Status and Trends	Future Potentials
Living Resources	Marine Fisheries and Aquaculture	Marine fishing in shallow & shelf waters in existing fishing grounds Improved extensive shrimp farming practice; Mariculture of sea bass, grouper, marine eel, pomfret, mullets etc. absent; Soft shell carb culture limited	Explore large pelagic fish harvesting; Long line fishing of Tuna & tuna like fishes Hatchery based seed production & mariculture of important marine Supp
	Marine Non-Traditional Species	Seaweed, marine algae culture absent; No marine oyster, mussel, sea cucumber, sea urchin etc. culture	Initiation of seaweed & marine algae culture; Initiate shell fish breeding & culture
	Marine Biotechnology	Biotechnology not yet utilized for any marine living & biological resources	Application of marine biotechnological tools for developing pharmaceutical drugs/chemicals & other products as human food
	Blue Carbon	Sequestrations Estimates of carbon sequestration in vegetated estuaries and coastal habitat were not yet properly recorded; Mangrove forests reducing trend due to deforestation	Bio-mitigation of climate change by blue carbon sequestrations by restoration of overall coastal ecosystems and habitats i.e. Sequestering and storing carbon at mangroves, saltmarsh and sea grass ecosystems.
Nonliving Resources	Oil, Gas & Minerals	Oil & gas exploration & extraction limited; Coastal sand mining & dredging	Intensify oil & gas extraction; Explore & update potential mining
	Sea Salt	Traditional solar evaporation	Salt refining & marketing using modern technologies
Potential Other Resources	Marine Renewable Energy	Solar, wave & wind energy limited use	Implementation of using wind, wave, solar, tide, water current etc. as marine renewable energy
	Marine Trade, Shipping and Transport	Port shipping & transport limited	Sea born trade & fleet use need to be expanded
	Tourism	Coastal tourism limited	Expansion of tourism in sea beaches & in existing & newly developed islands

	Maritime Education and Research	Maritime human resource development limited; Research on marine and ocean related aspects also scanty	Expanding marine education & research at existing & newly established institutions
	Maritime Surveillance	Bangladesh Navy/Coast Guard watch the marine resources	These services expanding to secure all marine resources of the extended boundaries
	Marine Spatial Planning	No MSP has yet been formulated, designed and implemented	MSP will be the guiding tools for BE to build up the strategy for management and full utilization of maritime resources

Table 1: Major marine based economic resources within the identified sectors along with their past and present trends and future potentials (modified after Anon 2016)

5. Cooperation with other nations including the UN for climate safety measures

Bangladesh will be the one of the main effected country because of global warming and climate change. The country’s climate scientists have concluded that ‘by 2050, rising sea levels will inundate some 17% of the land and displace about 18 million people’, according to the report ‘Borrowed Time on Disappearing Land’, published in 2014 by The New York Times. Not only had the environment related issues, being a poor country Bangladesh has lots of barrier to overcome for their development. And without help and cooperation of the international community Bangladesh can’t overawe those problems. That’s why Bangladesh more relay on the cooperation and wants some of the structural framework through the UN.

a. Climate Change and Roles of Bangladesh

For nations like Bangladesh very much at risk from rising sea levels and other hazards this is a key and complex issue. Bangladesh is one of the planet’s most densely populated countries, situated over the large delta where three of Asia’s biggest rivers Brahmaputra, Ganges and Meghna meet. While cyclones and flooding have always been a part of life, they now appear more frequent and less predictable. River erosion has intensified and the sea levels have risen, carrying salty water farther inshore. In many places, life as people knew has disappeared. For example, Bangladesh relies almost completely on groundwater for drinking provisions. Pumping water causes the land to sink; so, as sea level rises, the risk of flooding increases even more.

The country’s climate scientists have concluded that ‘by 2050, rising sea levels will inundate some 17% of the land and displace about 18 million people’, according to the report ‘Borrowed Time on Disappearing Land’, published in 2014 by The New York Times.

In the face of such challenges, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina warned in 2014 that, although Bangladesh was working on plans to face climate change, ‘new and additional resources will be needed for their implementation’. In the wake of the Paris Climate Conference, the dilemma is not only about the sums that are to be committed as aid, but also how much of this aid is to be translated into policy and practices to cut emissions by shifting to green energy and conserve carbon reservoirs. However, both challenges require different strategies and perspectives. Bangladesh’s climate plans include adaptation and mitigation strategies, but will that be enough? And are they compatible?

So, global initiative should be taken to save the country, as it is a global problem, to a greater extent.” As preparation for the climate summit, all countries worked on their Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs). The objective was to create a new international climate agreement under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) that puts the world on a path toward a low-carbon, climate-resilient future. Developing INDCs was a process that identified these efforts, and analysed where there was potential to increase ambition domestically so all countries can work collectively towards reducing emissions. But what do INDCs actually mean to a country like Bangladesh? Were they just about fulfilling an international requirement?

In this regards “Bangladesh is one of the best examples globally of community-based adaptation. They have been taking care of themselves. It also leads the Least Developed Countries (LDC) group in issues such as loss and damage and climate finance. It comes to no surprise that premier (Sheikh Hasina) committed in NY, at the UN climate summit, to realistic INDCs,” added Kakakhel. Indeed, after every cyclone or flood, people in Bangladesh have rebuilt their homes, they have learned to grow rice and other crops in new ways, they have tried new farming methods to deal with salty water, or they have moved further inland and migrated.²⁵

²⁵ S M Munjurul Hannan Khan¹, Saleemul Huq² and Md Shamsuddoha, The Bangladesh National Climate Funds, A brief history and description of the Bangladesh Climate Change Trust Fund and the Bangladesh Climate Change Resilience Fund by Ministry of Environment and Forests, Government of Bangladesh ² International Institute for Environment and Development, London, UK ³ Center for Participatory Research and Development, Dhaka, Bangladesh

b. Bangladesh and Climate Finance Fund

Bangladesh has access to climate finance through the Climate Change Trust Fund (government) and the Climate Change Resilience Fund (multiple donors), which could help channel funds towards climate strategies. But according to Kakakhel, this is not only a question of funds. “There is the transfer of needed technology, intellectual property rights, but also the level of preparedness in the country. Bangladesh needs money, but has to know for what. If you don’t plan properly and allow people to build houses in a flooding zone, it is not a question of putting the blame on climate change. You have to take ownership of your problems.”²⁶

Concluding Remarks

Domestic, regional and extra-regional pressures have combined to shape Bangladesh’s foreign policy and its relations with the two most powerful and influential states India and China.

Studies of Bangladesh’s foreign relations since 1975 have been minimal, tending to be descriptive, biased accounts. The most common themes of those studies are ones which point either to Bangladesh’s turbulent political life and economic woes or to India’s desire for regional dominance as being the principal influence on regional international relations. This study, by contrast, emphasizes and illustrates the way in which both domestic and external pressures have impinged on Bangladesh’s foreign relations. A range of perspectives is applied in order to give depth to the study and to minimise bias as much as possible. These perspectives take into account what is taking place within and outside the region generally; as well as what is happening within Bangladesh.

²⁶ Mizanur Rahman Khan, the Global Population Problem: A North-South Dimension, *BISS Journal* (Dhaka). Vol. 7, No. 3. July 1986, pp. 380-381.