Introduction
Sheikh Md Monirul Islam

“In terms of security, where are we? Where are we heading for? Do we have a security vision? In more realist parlance, do we have a security mission? Are we lost in the wilderness of security-oblivion? Are we fumbling in the wasteland of ignorance, indecision and ineptitude? Today, the stark question that stares the nation in the face is: Whither National Security?” These were the questions raised in the concluding paragraph of the maiden volume published as part of BIJSS endeavour for annual survey of national security in 2007. It was decided then that every year there would be a report to the nation on the crucial subject of National Security. The second report is an effort to meet that commitment.

Until recently, the whole gamut of security thinking was focused on ensuring the security of allegedly insecure state, although the preferred term was ‘national security’. One of the worst outcomes of this was the fact that ‘national security’ was achieved at the expense of the security of the people in terms of their political, social and economic rights and choice. Thus, instead of ensuring the security of its citizens, state has often posed a threat to their security. Over the last century, the number of people, killed by their own governments, outnumbered the number of people killed in international and civil wars. With the end of the Cold War, a qualitative change in the security thinking has occurred, giving rise to monumental structural changes. While on the one hand, it has intensely decreased the traditional security threats to the states that emerged victorious in the Cold War, on the other, the world has confronted a series of intra-state violent conflicts of various origins, large-scale atrocities, and even genocide. Historical records demonstrate that of the 103 wars fought during the first post-Cold War decade, 97 had been fought within rather than between states. All these could not be even explained by the Realist/Neo-realist security paradigm, not to speak about devising remedies.
Consequently, rethinking about the meaning of security became the dominant trend during the 1990s. This, in turn, led to a paradigmatic shift in the understanding of security. In the changed context, while the traditional security (TS) concepts, with their military-centric concerns, did not become obsolete, the new security agenda came to include more and more non-traditional issues dubbed as non-traditional security (NTS). Eventually, this has unleashed a process of 'securitisation' of a wide range of issues from various fields. By now, security came to include a vast number of diverse areas such as intra-state conflict, ethnic-religious violence, landmine, terrorism, democracy, human rights, gender, crime, consequences of underdevelopment, poverty, hunger, deprivation, inequality, diseases and health hazards, human development, economic security, market, water, energy, emigration, environmental degradation, disasters, etc.

Over time, whereas TS concerns continued to dominate the security preoccupations in some countries, NTS concerns came to include almost everything in some other countries. In some cases, both TS and NTS issues assumed pre-eminence. Bangladesh is one of those countries faced with a wide range of severe challenges in the field of security intertwined by both TS and NTS issues. Threats to its security, as understood from the traditional perspective, never disappeared. Occasionally, such threats manifested vividly. Constrained by poverty, backwardness, underdevelopment, human deprivation, misgovernance, environmental degradation, turbulent processes of socio-economic and politico-cultural development, etc., Bangladesh faces much more intense threats in the NTS field.

Despite the security challenges of great proportion, security studies, as a separate discipline, is yet to develop in Bangladesh. Like in most of the developing countries, it is relatively a new discipline. Until the establishment of the Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies (BIISS) in 1978, no specialised research institute dealt with the subject. Meanwhile, a number of institutions, including some private ones, are devoted to carry out research on security studies. Also, following the broadening of the scope of security studies, some institutions are engaged in researching the non-traditional aspects of security. These research efforts have widened the community of security studies in
Bangladesh. Nevertheless, the security issues, as mentioned, are being mostly researched unsystematically. Hence, studies on the issues in comprehensive, coherent, and synthesised form are scanty. Additionally, academic research endeavours often cannot keep pace with the ever-changing context of security studies at the national, regional, and global levels. Consequently, a constant void in the fields of TS and NTS studies persists.

As mentioned in the opening paragraph, BIIS has decided to undertake regular research pertaining to national security of Bangladesh, publishing the output as book every year. Thus, the first annual survey of national security of Bangladesh, covering the developments in the year 2007, was published in 2008. The current volume, which covers the developments in the year 2008, contains five chapters, encompassing five broad areas of national security. Following is a brief account of the issues and outlook presented in the book.

In essence, systemic and structural factors of national security are domestic in nature. Nations are endowed with the sovereign right to influence these factors for their self-interests. However, the systemic and structural factors have an external dimension as well. Chapter 1 deals with the systemic aspects of national security focusing on the external dimension. The nation-states constitute a part of the international system, and various developments in this arena directly or indirectly influence the national security of a state. These various developments follow certain norms and values, thereby setting patterns of nation-states' behaviour at the international level with certain degree of predictability. While the systemic developments take place at the international level, they subsume the developments into other levels too. In particular, regional events influence the security policy of a state since a region is considered to be a sphere with which nation-states are structurally integrated. Thus, numerous systemic factors of external nature significantly impact upon the national security of Bangladesh. The two regional issues—Indo-US strategic partnership and Sino-Indian relations—were thoroughly analysed, assessing their implications for Bangladesh. While dealing with the global dimension, attention was focused on the issues such as US policy towards war on terror, global financial crisis, and climate change. The Chapter then identifies the challenges facing
Bangladesh vis-à-vis the issues discussed, exploring the options available to her to address these challenges.

The traditional concept of national security is concerned with direct i.e., military threats to security that may impinge on the sovereignty or territorial integrity of a state. Chapter 2 discusses the traditional security of Bangladesh, identifying the sources of threat, which originate from the country's external and internal settings. In assessing the threats to the security of Bangladesh emanating from the external sources, the Chapter deals with Bangladesh's contiguous neighbours: India and Myanmar. Factors such as geo-strategic location, size, resources, technological and industrial bases, and military capability are evaluated in comparative perspective to assess the threats to the security of Bangladesh posed by India and Myanmar. In discussing the threats stemming from the internal sources, issues, entailing unrest, violence, terrorism, proliferation of small arms, piracy, poverty, drug trafficking, illegal trade, uncontrolled mass immigration, environmental degradation, terrorism, and extremism, etc. are scrutinised. Also, adequate treatment is given on Bangladesh's defence preparedness. Next, the Chapter examines the sources of traditional and non-traditional maritime security threats to Bangladesh and options to address these threats at national, regional and international levels.

Foreign policy is assigned to secure material, moral, and political support for the fulfilment of the domestic tasks of socio-economic and politico-cultural development of a country. An enquiry into the role of Bangladesh diplomacy, among other things, should look at two specific crucial issues. The first one is the objectives of Bangladesh diplomacy that emanate from the domestic tasks of the country. The second one pertains to the exploration of appropriate diplomatic ways and means for achieving these objectives. Viewed thus, Chapter 3 explores the interface between national security and foreign policy of Bangladesh touching upon a wide range of issues. It begins with looking at the global and regional contexts of Bangladesh foreign policy. Issues examined are: changing international order with a focus on war on terror, global recession, the change in US leadership, and the changing security scenario in South Asia. How all these issues influence Bangladesh’s foreign policy is analysed. Also, efforts are directed
to understand the objectives of and challenges to Bangladesh foreign policy. In this regard, the relevance of economic diplomacy in achieving the objectives of foreign policy is discussed. The Chapter then evaluates Bangladesh's pursuance of its diplomacy in the regional and global context. In the regional context, discussion is concentrated on countries such as India, Pakistan, and Myanmar as well as regional and sub-regional organisations such as SAARC, SAGQ, BIMSTEC, and the Kunming Initiative. In the global context, Bangladesh's relations with the West, East and Southeast Asia, and the Middle East are analysed. Next, the Chapter deals with the global recession and challenges to Bangladesh diplomacy, discussing three major issues, viz., trade, export of manpower, and foreign direct investment.

Contemporary national security discourse is no longer state-centric. The current security discourse encompasses a whole range of NTS issues. It is in this context and in the backdrop of the food crisis of 2008 that Chapter 4 looks at the NTS of Bangladesh, examining its food security. It begins with an overview of NTS security threats and vulnerabilities facing Bangladesh. Issues discussed are: political security, economic security, societal security, health security, environmental security, cross-border security, etc. In explaining the magnitude and impact of the food crisis, the Chapter probes into the intrinsic link between the domestic and external factors in generating and sustaining the food crisis with its debilitating impact on the state and people. Also, the link among climate change, energy security, and food security is examined. Measures adopted to mitigate Bangladesh's food insecurity are studied at the national, regional, and international levels. The Chapter contends that food security is not the problem of a single person, agency or for that matter, of any single country. It recommends that mitigating and preventive measures ought to be taken through intra- and inter-coordination among various domestic, regional, and global stakeholders.

The concept of civil society, and for that matter, civil society organisations (CSOs), transcends the domain of development and human rights discourse. With the paradigmatic shift in security and inclusion of NTS issues, CSOs emerged as a natural stakeholder in discourse and practice of security. Eventually, civil society became a catalytic agent for limiting authoritarian governance, empowerment
of the marginalised and enforcement of political accountability. Seen thus, Chapter 5 assesses the role of CSOs in the security arena of Bangladesh, studying human trafficking as a case study. The Chapter begins with a broad discussion on the role of CSOs in ensuring the security of Bangladesh. Then the role of CSOs in ensuring health security, development, gender security, governance, environmental security, disaster management, poverty alleviation, etc. is analysed. Highlighting the geographical distribution of CSOs, causal factors of human trafficking (low employment opportunity, social vulnerability of women and female children, social exclusion of women and economic vulnerability at home and expansion of sex trade abroad) are explained. Additionally, different routes of trafficking, modes of trafficking (employment prospects, love affair, fake marriage, and kidnapping, etc.) are discussed. An evaluation of the role of state and other agencies in managing the menace of human trafficking is also done. In this context, cooperation between government bodies and the CSOs is underlined. The other issues discussed are: the rescue and recovery of trafficked persons, their rehabilitation, social reintegration, and the potentials of CSOs in securitisation and provision of security to several disadvantaged groups, including trafficked persons.

Since its inception, BIISS has devoted significant part of its activities in pioneering new thoughts and ideas through wide range of activities. The annual national security survey is a part of broader BIISS research agenda. Scholarly and candid discussions in a free and academic environment have always been its prime concern. The book is an attempt at multidisciplinary and multi-dimensional analyses of national security to bring out the challenges to security at the national, regional, and international levels and explore the ways and means of facing these challenges. The subject of the book is complex. Despite national urgency, it is less explored. Conflicting perceptions and interests of the actors involved in the security discourse render an academic exercise on the subject even more difficult. Hence, there is no pretension of being able to address the issues raised squarely. If the work evokes some new interests among the academia, media, government officials, business circles, representatives from the civil society, NGOs and other concerned professionals and informed audience and if it invigorates their professional pursuit
on the subject, BIISS would consider its efforts a meaningful exercise.

Meanwhile, the end of 2008, the year under review, also witnessed a turning point in the history of Bangladesh. The long-drawn political turmoil has ended with the successful holding of the General Elections on 29 December 2008. In the Elections, the Bangladesh Awami League has achieved a stunning victory with a three-fourth majority in the Parliament. In conformity with the people’s verdict, the victorious party—Bangladesh Awami League—formed the new government, on 6 January 2009, with its chief Sheikh Hasina as Prime Minister. As a protracted political crisis found a democratic solution, a sense of security and stability has begun to prevail in the country. Thus, a new era of fresh prospects and opportunities has ushered in in the history of Bangladesh. The country's march towards democracy and prosperity is, however, certain to be difficult due to enormous tasks and severe challenges faced by it in the way of democratic transformation and socio-economic advancement. Nonetheless, democracy is likely to change Bangladesh’s self-image as well as its image abroad, thereby facilitating the country’s quest for democratic regeneration and socio-economic advancement.