1.1 INTRODUCTION

National security is a constant source of concern in the contemporary world. Heightened interests in national security inspire academics, intelligentsia, members of civil society, government planners—both civil and military, to learn more about national security, the apparatuses involved in it and the goals associated with it etc. Bangladesh lacks a national consensus as to what constitutes its security and what are the sources of its insecurity. Generally, the ruling elites of the country equate the country’s security with its immunity from external aggression. Hence, too much emphasis on the military defense. But the 1/11 episode\(^1\) in Bangladesh has quite strikingly revealed that politico-social and economic instability accompanied by a near absence of law and order is slowly eroding the basis of national security. The national security of Bangladesh needs to embrace a set of goals among which guarantee for domestic peace emanating from durable political, economic and social stability in the country’s polity stands as a cardinal one. The relevant questions that arise now: What is national security? What are the concerns of the national security of Bangladesh? Was the pre 1/11 national security notion a faulty one? What went wrong with the decision making processes and decision making institutions and structure with respect to national security of Bangladesh as understood in a holistic sense? Drawing lessons from the 1/11 event, what reforms need to be brought about in the national security realm of Bangladesh in the future?

Against this backdrop, this chapter tries to highlight the structural and systemic aspects of national security of Bangladesh.
by taking an inventory of the various pertinent developments, events and incidents which took place in the periods of both pre and post 1/11. The purpose of such exercise is to discern the weaknesses and shortcomings inherent in the national security institutions and systems of the country.

1.1.1 Objectives
As understood, the national security agenda of Bangladesh is a comprehensive and a broad based one, with a number of agencies and actors involved in it for policy formulation and operationalisation. However, in recent times, it has been observed that these agencies have proved to be dysfunctional due to a number of reasons of political, economic and social nature. Since, in the current socio-political and economic context of Bangladesh the concept of reform or cleansing the 'old order' is gaining more acceptability at the national level, the realm of national security affairs cannot remain outside this purview. Hence, the task of the chapter is two fold:
- to identify the reasons behind the malfunctioning and incompetency of the bodies/agencies responsible for making national security policies and upholding the country's security; and
- to suggest ways and means to address the problem at a macro level.

1.1.2 Methodology
Like the foreign policy of a state, national security decision-making process is also a complex one requiring both theoretical and operational interpretations. However, this chapter will not deal with much theoretical tools or concepts. Rather, the chapter will be mainly based on empirical observations of facts, events and occurrences that took place in the pre and post 1/11 in the domain of national security. Research materials from books, journals, newspapers, electronic media and few relevant publications constitute the research documents for the authors.

1.1.3 Structure
In addition to the introduction taken up in Section 1, the chapter is divided into four other sections. Section 1 sets the background of
the study. Section 2 entitled “National Security in the Context of Bangladesh: A Comprehensive Approach” reflects on the theoretical issues concerning national security and their relevance in the context of Bangladesh. Section 3 titled “Structural Aspects of National Security of Bangladesh” endeavours to deal with elements and forms of national power and various agencies and institutions that matter in national security of Bangladesh. Section 4 titled “Systemic Aspects of National Security of Bangladesh” attempts to deal with few critical issues like democracy, governance, corruption, violence and terrorism that, in the context of Bangladesh, have serious implications for the state’s security. Section 5, the final section of the chapter is suggestive in nature and puts forward few recommendations for better management of Bangladesh’s national security. The section, in particular, elaborates on the need for a national security council. The chapter ends with a general conclusion.

1.2 NATIONAL SECURITY IN THE CONTEXT OF BANGLADESH: A COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH

The concept of national security goes back to the very beginning of nation-states themselves. While the general concepts of keeping a nation secure are not new, the specific modern use of “national security” itself came into common parlance in the 20th century. As such, methodologies to achieve and maintain an acceptable state of national security have been consistently developed over the modern period to this day. The Encyclopedia of Social Sciences defines national security as ‘the ability of a nation to protect its internal values from external threats.’ Generally, national security is viewed in terms of power, avoiding war or is equated with survival and, for some, it is the relative freedom from existential threats. It is used to justify the maintenance of defence forces, the development of new weapons systems and the manufacture of armaments. In the literature on International Relations, the concept has been, therefore, used more in militaristic sense. The widely used and accepted definition of the concept is purely a military one, i.e., security is the immunity of a state or nation to threats emanating primarily from outside its boundaries.

The military approach to national security is based on the assumption that the main threat to security emanates from other nations. Little wonder that the western literature on national
security is basically dominated by this assumption. Walter Lippman conceives security as 'protection of core values' while others call it the 'protection of minimum core values' while still others call it the 'protection of minimum core values.' But the difficulty arises in determining the core values. Amidst the ambiguity came the definition provided by Arnold Wolfers. According to him, 'national security after all is nothing but the absence of the evil of insecurity, a negative value so to speak.' More recently some scholars have put emphasis on 'vital national values' as the core of national security policy. But who is to decide vital national values and how? Some have suggested even 'national will' or 'national spirit' as the core for security policies. Nonetheless, the more familiar approach to security is conceived in terms of 'abstract values' and is concerned mainly with the preservation of independence and sovereignty. Thus, it has traditionally been equated with military strength of a nation state. Leaders of many developing nations are concerned with having an adequate military apparatus to defend their newly acquired independence against external threat or internal insurrections. The post-war trends show an increasing expansion of the military establishment in the developing nations. The desire for advanced weapons systems also increased. The number of developing nations that compete with each other to acquire such systems has also ascended. To attain security from being dominated, attacked or annihilated by others, the nations were driven to acquire more and more power. This process in turn rendered the others more insecure and compelled them to prepare for the worst. This provides reasons as to why external rather than internal security issues have dominated security discourse in the western world. The relatively smaller countries under the world order system collectively termed as Third World countries who mostly achieved their independence after the World War II, came to perceive security in western perspectives and like many colonial legacies they inherited this concept too.

With the change in ground realities of politico-economic, social, cultural and environmental in nature, there is, however, a growing shift from military oriented classical definition of security to one that is more comprehensive in nature. Since the end of the Cold War, and with the rise of terrorism, transnational crimes and trafficking etc., national security had to shift its focus dramatically. Especially in the context of the underdeveloped and developing
smaller countries, the security concerns are entirely different. It is increasingly realised that it is poverty, not the lack of military hardware that is responsible for insecurity across the ‘southern half of the planet.’ The applicability of the military hardware based security concept is, therefore, relatively less relevant to the Third World countries. The stupendous problem that these countries face today is purely politico-economic and social in character and they constitute legitimate security concerns. Robert McNamara, the former World Bank President very aptly observes, ‘Security means development. Security is not military hardware, though it may include it, security is not military force, though it may involve it, security is not traditional military activity, though it may encompass it. Security is development and without development there can be no security.’ In effect, the development oriented security concept found its resonance in virtually all the poor and underdeveloped countries of the Third World where the impoverished politico-economic and social conditions of the peoples needed readdressing so as to guarantee each individual at least the minimum necessities of life. Bangladesh could not probably remain detached and uninfluenced by this new security thinking.

Coming to the issue of Bangladesh’s security, one would notice that there is a very small recognised security community in the country. Nevertheless, the subject, since long, has generated intense debate among the academicians, the intelligentsia, the politicians, the government and military planners, the members of civil society and the section of silent but conscious masses. While the earlier debate was based on Bangladesh’s obsession with a perceived threat from a particular external source and the government’s failure in devising an effective strategy to counter the threat, the current debate, in a radical departure from the past, focuses on a wide range of dimensions related to the very existence or survival of Bangladesh itself. In other words, the ongoing debate on Bangladesh’s national security reflects a transition from conventional security to an alternative thinking to view its security concerns and problems from a much wider angle—protection against all major threats to human survival and well-being, not just military threats. The transition has been facilitated by a few positive political changes in Bangladesh’s international, regional and internal milieu and by a grim realisation that stresses—economic, social, political,
demographic and environmental—in present day Bangladesh society are enough to reach a serious dimension threatening the very survival and existence of the country in the future.

In the catalogue of strains and stresses that bedevil Bangladesh, it is poverty that comes first. The abject poverty measured by some economic criteria as low per capita income, lack of purchasing power, malnutrition, illiteracy, and unemployment etc., would undoubtedly explain the perennial anxiety of the people about their life, freedom and existence. In effect, in Bangladesh poverty at the individual level is to be understood in the context of global economic scenario. To quote Q.K. Ahmad, “Bangladesh was born into promise shaped and sharpened by the increasingly bloody struggle against the Pakistani rule over a period of two decades and the eventual War of Liberation in 1971. It was necessary to wrest political independence to shake off the Pakistani political domination, economic exploitation and socio-cultural subjugation, and pave the way for realising that promise. The promise was economic, social and cultural emancipation and advancement of the people of Bangladesh (then East Pakistan), particularly of the country’s downtrodden men and women.”

Despite sustained domestic and international efforts to improve economic and demographic prospects, Bangladesh remains one of the world’s most densely populated and least developed nations. Needless to mention, poverty-stricken Bangladesh faces an uphill struggle in escaping from the categorisation of a least developed country as galloping poverty is the foremost reality of the country’s economy. At present, poverty is the weakness of the national economy, and hence a cause of the social and economic malaise of a large section of the people. With a per capita income of US$450, Bangladesh remains as one of the poorest countries of the world. A population of about 150 million people is crammed into an area of 144,000 sq.km of territory, which is 916 persons living in one square kilometer. Out of total geographical area of Bangladesh, about 9 million hectares are cultivable land. But every year the cropland is shrinking owing to inexorable expansion of human settlement. It is estimated that the growing population pressure will use upto 50 per cent of the country’s cultivable land by 2025 unless an innovative land-use policy at national level seeks to manage the issue.

The pressure of population on land and its limited resource base is extremely high and more so due to the fact that the country’s
economy is basically agrarian in nature. The agricultural sector employs nearly 55.27% of the total work force of the country and contributes to 44% of the country's GDP. In contrast, the industrial sector shares only 14% of the country's GDP, the lowest in South Asia. Due to lack of capital, technical know-how and non-availability of required raw materials, the industrial sector remains in an impoverished state today. To overcome the resource and other deficiencies, an external dependence on aid and assistance has, thus, become a distinguishing characteristic of the overall economic insecurities of Bangladesh. As a result, Bangladesh has over the years, become one of the most indebted nations. High-handed policies of World Bank and IMF are not helping to ameliorate the growing economic insecurities of Bangladesh.

It should be mentioned that economic development is a continuing process with no obvious beginning or definable end. Thus, whatever economic weaknesses that Bangladesh had at its base in the beginning, could have by now been surmounted significantly had there been a proper utilisation of the country's resources within a broad framework of economic development. However, this has not been so. The administrative and managerial inexperience, in framing a proper strategy/a plan to address the economic problems of common masses, has resulted in a man-made deprivation of already scarce resources in the country. What was set in trend is an inequity in the distribution of income and wealth, the result of which has been an eventual polarisation of Bangladesh society into two distinct classes—the rich and the poor. The latter class into which falls the majority of the Bangladeshis has been deprived not only economically but also marginalised socially and politically.

The profile of human deprivation reveals that 50% of the people of Bangladesh are income poor (head count index), while 77% of the population lack basic or minimally essential human capabilities: capacity to be well nourished and healthy, capacity for healthy reproduction and capacity to be educated and knowledgeable. As a result, being disillusioned by long economic, social and political deprivation, the poorer section of the society has became a force to challenge, often with violence, not only the state authority but also every social norm, thereby causing a pervasive sense of uncertainty and insecurity. To this poverty stricken people, the concept of sovereignty and territorial integrity of the state bear little meaning.
unless there was, in the first place, a redressing of their multifarious human insecurities.

Few other features mark the socio-economic matrix of Bangladesh in a very negative way with implications for human security. These are:

- Socio-economic inequality in Bangladesh is not only acute, but also increasing.
- Urban-rural disparity is sharp and accentuating.
- Due to abysmal poverty, people are denied access to basic needs of life with the conditions of ultra-poor being worse.
- In terms of education, food, shelter and health, rural deprivation is relatively much more pronounced.
- Increasing rate of illiteracy, being more pronounced among women than men.
- Corruption is rampant with debilitating effects on Bangladesh’s governance, society and economy.
- Marginalisation of the poor and disadvantaged population, in particular the women in the political and social process.

Apart from economic problems, national politics constitute no less a threat to the security of the nation. As Iftekharuzzaman remarks, “Central to Bangladesh’s internal vulnerability scheme is the chronic political crisis and instability resulting from ceaseless dissension on core national issues." Lack of democratic leadership, practices and institutions, unequal distribution of power, influence and opportunity, destructively parochial politics, narrow interests of the political parties, lack of political tolerance, inability to accommodate the rights of the citizens, inequality before law and justice, absence of good governance, etc., are some of the factors responsible for causing a series of political turmoil in the past. Also, the political matrix of Bangladesh marked by continuing dissension on core national issues such as national identity, nation-building, development strategy, role of religion in national life, national security and foreign relations, etc., has been for long an endemic source of political instability in Bangladesh. At present, what is more ominous in the context of Bangladesh is the criminalisation of politics. Because the political parties are at loggerheads with each other, each of them patronise, harbour and even maintain
armed hooligans to keep support base safe and strong. Most of these elements are linked with various terrorist and cadre groups controlling various geographical and criminal areas. They regularly extort money from the well-to-do section of the population including the benefits, both material and non-material, from the parties that they support. Needless to state, politics in Bangladesh has, in recent years, been commercialised as well and thereby facilitating entry of corruption into it. Another important mark of political instability in the country is the frequent strikes, protests, violence and agitation by the opposition parties. This has caused chronic political instability and breakdown of law and order for which neither the government in power nor the opposition party or the big business have any composite and consensus based solution.

Linked with the political situation is the state of law and order in the country. Law and order situation in Bangladesh has seriously deteriorated in recent times despite the fact that it remains one of the election promises of the most important political parties in the country. Just on the eve of 1/11, the horrendous beating of a person to death in the street of Dhaka (the country's capital) in broad day light and in the clear view of thousands of people including the law enforces, indeed, took the entire world by surprise. The tragic incident, heavily mediatised globally further caused a scar on the image of Bangladesh, defamed earlier for being the most corrupt country for several years in succession. There is no gainsaying, in today's Bangladesh, the opening pages of all the newspapers project news of various crimes, i.e., raping, killing, smuggling, acid throwing, abduction, trafficking in small arms and the like. The deteriorating law and order proves that Bangladesh has become a heaven for the criminals. To this is added the ineffectiveness of the law enforcing agencies. It is no longer a hidden fact that many members of police in Bangladesh are said to be dishonest, utterly corrupt and have nexus with the criminals. The basic human rights include security of life and property. But in Bangladesh, rampant violence and crimes have become threats to both. Only if these cases are reported in the media, consideration whatever is given to a certain extent. Unfortunately, however, most do not come to public knowledge.

The law and order situation in Bangladesh should as well take into account violence against women in the country. In fact, the phenomenon arises in the context of global discrimination against
women and gender bias. In today’s Bangladesh, women are largely discriminated against in all sectors like physical security, health, economic opportunities and legal rights. Alongside this discrimination, like many women around the globe, “women in Bangladesh have to face violations of their human rights year after year. These acts of violence are both public and domestic—rape, acid throwing, fatwa, violence due to non-payment of dowry etc. Social reasons and legal loopholes are sources of violence against women in Bangladesh. The so-called religious and cultural norms, discriminatory and defective laws, denial of appropriate property rights of women, non-implementation of international instruments relating to women’s rights, and other related factors have created a negative environment for women. These factors consequently rendered the women vulnerable to various forms of violence and exploitation.”

Finally, it is environmental degradation in Bangladesh that draws one’s attention. “If a gallop poll were conducted among the ordinary citizens of Bangladesh to identify the top priority issues for the 21st century, it would not probably be unlikely that the environment would top the list.” Bangladesh is basically a riverine country and the largest delta in the world. Most of the lands are flood plains of three big rivers of Padma, Meghna and Jamuna except some hilly areas in the north-eastern sites. While the environment of the country few decades back was pristine, it is now under threat of degradation for reasons like high population growth, extreme poverty, unplanned urbanisation and industrialisation, modern agri-practices, deforestation, reduction of wetlands, over extraction of natural resources etc. While the list of environmental problems confronting Bangladesh is a long one, the major ones are ground water depletion and contamination, floods, cyclone and tidal surge, surface water pollution, loss of bio-diversity and ecosystem, marine pollution, solid waste, air pollution, noise pollution and sea level rise. The adverse effects of all the environmental problems seriously affect the human security of the Bangladeshis in one way or the other. However, it is the poor people who are usually hit the hardest by the damage to environment. In particular, they are vulnerable to water contamination, land degradation, deforestation, air pollution and climate change.

The above discussion shows that human deprivation caused by the consequences of underdevelopment, over population, illiteracy
and health hazards, poverty and marginalisation, environmental degradation and the like have taken a worst form in the context of Bangladesh. The persistence of threat to the safety and security of the individual and the people generated by misgovernance or lack of governance, violation of democratic and human rights, corruption, proliferation of small arms, extra-parliamentary political violence, killing and instability, gender discrimination and violence, trafficking in women and children remain a constant source of fear. In the context of Bangladesh, on the one hand, there are deaths from malnutrition and diseases, and on the other, prevailing fear and violence are equally conspicuous and debilitating.

The dismal situation as depicted above clearly reveals the vulnerability of Bangladesh on several fronts, be it political, economic, social or environmental. In order to grapple with the situation, the need is two fold: first to understand the concept of security in a comprehensive sense and then to take a stock of different elements that play respective role in any decision making with respect to national security. While the first task has been undertaken in the current section, the second task consists in identifying the elements relevant for national security. It may be mentioned that among such elements, some are nature given, and the others, and in majority, are either man-made or the machinations of different state organs or non-state actors. These elements constitute the structural and systemic aspects of national security of a state. They, in fact, provide the base for any effective national security strategy and their effectiveness would depend much on how the state and the society try to minimise the deficiency in certain aspects on one hand, and make benefits out of the potency in certain other areas, on the other. The succeeding two sections attempt to deal with these aspects.

1.3 STRUCTURAL ASPECTS OF NATIONAL SECURITY OF BANGLADESH

A state's security maneuverability is heavily dependent upon the various elements of national power. Power is one of the most important and basic concepts in politics. Over 2,000 years ago, Kautilya, who served as a minister to the first Maurya emperor of India, wrote, "The possession of power in a greater degree makes a king superior to another, in a lesser degree, inferior and in an
equal degree, equal. Hence a king shall always endeavour to augment his own power.' The 'realist school' of politics maintains that the power of a national political community is a function primarily of its mobilisable and deployable military force. Power is viewed as a quantifiable and commensurable mass, which can be measured and weighed. Chan in his study of Taiwan's trade relations with the US noted, 'in general, structural models of international relations are apt to posit the analytic or policy importance of one or more tangible assets, to treat these assets as proprietary properties, and to assign national status on the basis of these assets. The world is seen to have a hierarchy and countries are somehow locked into the structure. Attention tends to be directed to the more objective or quantifiable aspects of national assets, to the domestic rather than foreign sources for generating these assets, and to the basic rigidities and asymmetries of the international relation system'. The preponderance of the realist paradigm in international politics has thus treated power as a quantifiable, monolithic, homogenous and highly fungible entity, which can be acquired, possessed, accumulated, measured, compared and used irrespective of time and contexts. According to this paradigm then, military capability is thought to be the most important of all the components of power. Political realists, in particular, regard it as the central element in states' power potential. They argue that throughout history, the decisive factor in the fate of nations has usually been the number, efficiency and disposition of fighting forces. National influence bears a direct relationship to gross national strength, without that, the most exquisite statesmanship is likely to be of limited use.

However, our experiences often contradict our expectations derived from the notion of power based on tangible power assets. In commercial negotiations, diplomatic disputes, even military conflicts, the weaker side is sometimes able to prevail over the stronger side to obtain a more favourable settlement than its objective assets and liabilities would suggest. As Baldwin noted there are tendencies to exaggerate the effectiveness of military power resources and to treat military power as the ultimate measuring rod to which other forms of power should be compared. These tendencies are considered to be counter-productive in theorizing about international politics. He further noted that the proposition
that military force is more effective than other power resources is both ambiguous and debatable. In the absence of clearly specified or implied policy frameworks, the proposition that force is more effective than other power bases has little, if any meaning. Power resources that are effective in one context can be ineffective in another. Rothstein has also pointed out that small powers have been successful in influencing world politics in spite of their seeming lack of power. It must be noted that a states’ power can thus emerge from factors other than material resources.

In the traditional power hierarchy, Bangladesh ranks too low as it does not have in its possession the tangible (hard power) sources of power. Hence, the chapter will discuss the intangible (soft power) elements of power. The intangible source of power can be divided into various functional categories. Two such categories, the national nucleus and the national infrastructure are, however, vital to the power of all countries—big or small.

1.3.1 The National Nucleus

The national state forms the basis of this element of national power. The essence of a state can be roughly divided into five elements; the geographical setting and the geopolitico-strategic environment, resource base, people, government and leadership.

The Geographical Setting and the Geopolitico-strategic Environment of Bangladesh

The geographical setting of a state is significant and can be an advantage or a disadvantage. It may either help enhance national capabilities or add to the vulnerabilities of a state vis-à-vis its adversaries. As such any study on the national security of Bangladesh would remain incomplete unless the geographical setting and the geopolitical environment in which it operates is given due focus.

Geopolitically, Bangladesh belongs to the South Asian region which consists of less than 2% of the world land mass but serves as habitat for 20% of the total humanity of the world. Geostrategically, it is important for a number of reasons. Firstly, the region is the littoral area of Indian Ocean. Second, the region geographically is in close proximity to Russia and China. Third, the region serves as the ‘geographic bridge’ between West Asia and South East Asia as it connects West Asia on the west and South East Asia to the east.
Bangladesh with an area of 144,000 sq. km is located at the north-eastern part of South Asia. Except for a small length of border with Myanmar to the south-east, Bangladesh is surrounded on three sides by India. Even the country’s opening to south—the Indian Ocean—is patrolled by a powerful Indian Navy. Thus, Bangladesh virtually finds itself in an ‘India locked’ position. Bangladesh-India friendship of the Liberation era and the post-Liberation period steadily deteriorated into a posture of mutual suspicion, distrust and rigidity, which hampered development process in Bangladesh. There are many elements in this perceptual divergence. Apart from the conflictual frame created by the Farakka Barrage (as well as other ever growing number of barrages on other rivers) and consequent water withdrawal and the accord between the two countries without ensuring the guaranteed amount of water in the dry season for Bangladesh, there has been an Indian engineered insurgency in CHT (Chittagong Hill Tracts) and an India inspired peace accord that literally divided the mainstream population of the country. In addition to these, other threat perceptions include India’s plan of barbed wire fencing, the push-in operations of the alleged Bangladeshi settlers in India, and the continuing bickering of the BSF (Border Security Force) against the BDR (Bangladesh Rifles) and the civilian population in the borderlands of the country.

Aside the disadvantageous geo-strategic setting, Bangladesh’s geo-morphological conditions and its vulnerability to natural hazards of different types bear implications for the country’s security. Bangladesh is a flat alluvial plain, with an average elevation above sea level of only 10 meters. It has no natural barriers like mountain or big bodies of water separating her from the outside powers. Floods, cyclones and droughts are frequent resulting in intolerable levels of loss in human and material terms. Worse still, if a sea level rise were to occur, the phenomena such as coastal storm surges, tidal bore and typhoons would aggravate and the adverse effects of these would also penetrate further inland, causing an increasing security concern for life and means of survival of the people. According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), Bangladesh is projected to lose a largest amount of cultivable land due to rising sea levels. A 1m rise in sea levels would inundate 20% of the country’s landmass.
An increase in floods and drought conditions will have a direct and negative impact upon climate-dependent activities in the most environmentally and climatically vulnerable areas like agriculture, fishing, hydropower and resource management. Over the next few decades, independent researchers envisage a scenario in which population/land/food pressures become progressively acute. As it has been observed elsewhere, the cumulative effects of population pressure, poverty, landlessness, climate change, greenhouse effect and global warming and the consequent sea level rise with insufficient supplies of food are most likely to generate pressure for mass migration. Many, thus, opine that Bangladesh may not remain immune from this serious problem in the future.

Resource Base

The possession of or lack of natural resources like energy, mineral etc., has become an increasingly important power factor as industrialisation and technology have advanced. Natural resources affect power in a very significant way. The greater a country is self-sufficient in vital natural resources, the greater its power, conversely the greater a country's dependency's on foreign sources for vital natural resources, the lesser its power, the greater a country's surplus (over domestic needs), of vital resources needed by other countries, the greater its power.

Energy: It is the lifeblood and dynamic engine of growth in the twenty first century. For Bangladesh, it is a crucial factor for future prosperity. At present, the country has huge energy demand against very limited supply which is growing rapidly. Between renewable (biomass, hydroelectricity, wind and solar energy) and non-renewable energy resources (natural gas, coal and oil), the latter has significant role to play in the country's overall economic growth. Due to the unprecedented demand of these resources, the country now has become heavily dependent on available mono-energy resource (e.g. natural gas) and imported fuels. On the other hand, among the renewable energy resources, biomass is the main source of energy in the rural areas but its unsustainable usage is putting its future in jeopardy. Other renewable resources (solar, wind, and hydroelectricity) cannot be utilised efficiently because of its high cost, physical constraints, technological backwardness and
an ineffective energy policy. Therefore, the country is now facing formidable energy deficiencies due to these various natural and manmade factors. The serious issue of energy security is yet to be addressed at national policy-making level in a comprehensive way.

**Natural Gas:** Owing to its large potential gas reserve of 15.4 Trillion Cubic Feet (TCF) in 2005, Bangladesh became increasingly important to world energy markets. Though, estimation of gas reserve varies significantly from agency to agency, there is an expectation that there might be a possibility to find out more gas fields in the country. In 2004, production and consumption of gas were 462.626 BCF and 462.626 BCF respectively that showed almost even disbursement. As of FY 2005-2006, production of gas reached at 526.72 BCF and daily production was around 1.66 BCF. At present, produced gas is extensively used in different sectors in spite of having daily shortage of around 100 million cubic feet (MCF) of natural gas. Currently, gas constitutes 80 percent of commercial energy consumption and half of the gas is produced to meet the rising demand of electricity generation. Natural Gas could be a formidable indicator of power in Bangladesh if it is properly utilised. It may be mentioned that this natural resource has attracted many foreign companies for investment in Bangladesh.

**Coal:** Bangladesh has 2 billion tonnes (BT) of coal reserves in the north, comparable with 53 TCF of gas in five different locations. The status of deposits, however, varies by the government and other sources like that of total gas reserves. In 2006, another 105 million tonnes (MT) of quality coal was discovered in the north that is likely to increase up to 600 MT over an area of 12 square km. Since there was no commercial production, the consumption of this energy remained about 0.4 MT in 2005 that made the country a net importer. However, in January 2006, the first commercial production of 250 MW of electricity began from Barapukuria. Besides, it is estimated that from the second coal fired power plant near Phulbari, the country would be able to generate 3,700 GW per hour electricity burning 1.5 MT of coal annually. Though, these are not sufficient to meet the country's ever rising demand of electricity.
Oil: Bangladesh has a small oil reserve (28 million barrels) which is unable to meet the country's huge demand. Although it had low level of production capacity of oil per day (4000 barrels) in 2005, consumption was estimated high (about 91,000 bbl/d of oil) in the same year due to rising demand in transportation and irrigation sector. Hence, the country has to import almost all of its crude oil from OPEC countries and finished products from other regional countries.

Agricultural Output: Although it is not common to equate food production with power, a country's agricultural capacity remains an important factor. The contribution of agriculture to power depends on whether a country can adequately supply its domestic needs, whether it has a surplus of a commodity that others need and the percentage of its total economic energy that a country must devote to feeding its own people. In particular, food security in the context of current world crisis in grains and crops is increasingly linked up with agricultural land and productivity. In the context of Bangladesh, agriculture plays a vital role in the growth and stability of Bangladesh's economy, as is indicated by its share in GDP, employment and export earnings. But the contribution of agriculture is steadily declining which might be a sign of weakness for the country from the security point of view. For the last few years, the basic thrust of the agriculture policy has been on developing an integrated agriculture including crops, along with food management, livestock, fisheries, forestry and environment through more efficient utilisation of available land and water resources for sustainable growth. The task now is to improve upon the plan and its implementation without delay. A creative and comprehensive agricultural policy is a must for food security.

People

Single most important element of the national power is a country's human resources. Tangible demographic subcategories include number of people, homogeneity, health and education and above all intangible factors like quality of people in terms of creativity, productivity and leadership.

Population: People are an obvious asset of any state. As is true for geographic size, the size of a country's population can be a positive
or a negative factor. A large population supplies military personnel and industrial worker, sheer numbers of people is a positive power factor. However, a large population may be disadvantageous if it is not in balance with resources. Any mismatch between the population and the country’s resource base has the potentials to create a scenario marked by intense competition for and conflict over the scarce resources. In this respect, Bangladesh now figures in the list of countries viewed as ‘overpopulated’. Currently, in Bangladesh, about 150 million people are crowded in an area of 144,000 sq.km making it one of the most densely populated countries in the world. Although the rate of the population growth has been brought down from over 3 per cent to 1.42 per cent earning acclaims from many quarters including the UN, it is still considered high and dangerous. It needs to be further brought down, because the impact of resources spent on sustaining such a huge population is a perennial drain on the country’s meager resource base and investment opportunities. Also Bangladeshi society is highly stratified, especially in the rural areas where 90% of the population resides. In these areas, small elite dominates economic and political life and is able to appropriate most government development funds for its own benefit. It also commands much of the available lands. Social stratification marked by the discrepancy between the people in entitlements, privileges and benefits has the potentials to create social cleavages with implications for security not only at the individual level, but at the national level too.

**Homogeneity and National Identity:** Ethnically, Bangladeshi society is one of the most homogenous ones. Ninety nine per cent of the population consists of Bengalis. A tiny fraction of the population may be described as national minorities mainly inhabiting the hilly outlying area of the country. Homogeneity of the country’s population adds to its credibility. But, despite its ethno-linguistic homogeneity, Bangladesh has not been able to take advantage out of it, mainly for its failure at politico-economic and social planks. As a result, the Bangladesh society is marked by the absence of social cohesion. National Identity is another important element of national power. When this identity is affected by competing strands of nationalism, the nation itself stands divided and becomes vulnerable from both within and without. Creative harnessing, harmonisation and integration of these elements will enhance nation-building and
protect the national security of Bangladesh. It may be mentioned that the culture of Bangladesh is a composite one, and over centuries has assimilated influences of Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism and Islam. The land, the rivers, and the lives of the common people formed a rich heritage with marked differences from the neighbouring regions.

Education and Health: An educated and healthy population is of singular importance to national power. It is important for a country to develop the various segments of its population well. Most countries limit their power potential by underutilising major elements of their population. For example, sexism, tribalism and racism etc. limit the possible contribution of women and minority groups in virtually all countries. It may be mentioned that Bangladesh, despite a significant improvement in the adult literacy rate for women, increasing from 18 to 42 percent, there is still a 17% gap between men and women. The gap is larger in rural areas where only 36% of rural women are literate, compared to 60% of urban women.

The Constitution and major policy documents of the Bangladesh Government have recognised the health rights of people. Bangladesh has also ratified most of the related international treaties and conventions. However, the implementation of government policies and plans in the development of health services, human resource accessibility and availability, income distribution, rural-urban disparity, and the male-female gap has put the health system in a dismal state.

Morale: A final factor that affects the population element of national power is the morale of a country's citizens. The Liberation War of Bangladesh demonstrated the power of strong civilian morale. Resilience of the people in adversity and their resolve for security and development are absolutely vital. Conversely, the collapse of national morale can bring about civil unrest and even the fall of governments. The collapse of the USSR serves here as a glaring example.

Government

The quality of a country's government is a third power element associated with the national power. Whether it is a democracy or an authoritarian government, the question is how much competent the administration is, and whether a state has a well-organised and effective administrative structure to utilise its power potential fully. The collapse of the Soviet Union stemmed in part from its massive and inefficient bureaucratic structure.
Leadership

Leadership is one of the most significant elements of national power. Leadership skills and vigour adds to a government's and nation's strength. In every national system, important and crucial decisions are taken by the leaders. They decide the nature of relations with other states and declare war and conclude peace or treaties of friendship. Their decisions if successful create direct impact on the power of the states. Especially in the context of Third World, the quality of leadership is vital for nation-building and state-formation. National leadership thus has to be understood in all its dimensions, including political, bureaucratic (both civil and military), intellectual, academic, and corporate etc. The more well-versed a leader is in the problems and needs of the people, the more he is committed to solving and improving these, and the more mature and innovative the national leadership is at various levels, the better is the opportunity for the nation for security and development. Yet, it can be critical especially in times of crisis. Only a competent, visionary and creative leadership functioning within a legitimate political process can face the challenges of the time and contribute to the boosting of national morale during times of crises. In case of Bangladesh, no leader of such stature has yet come on the political scene. This is very much corroborated by the fact that 1/11 took place due to the absence of visionary leaders.

1.3.2 The National Infrastructure

Another group of the elements of power that form the foundation of state power is related to a country's infrastructure. The infrastructure of a state might roughly be equated with the skeleton of a human body. To examine the infrastructure of the state as an element of national power, the following sections will discuss technological competence and creativity, transportation systems, and information and communications capabilities.

Technology

Technology bolsters a great deal of national power. Socio-economic development of a country considerably depends on the level of science and technology. One good measure of technological sophistication and capability is the state of Information Technology (IT) capacity. Needless to say, the business, education, science and other key
elements of national power run on computer chips. In this sector, Bangladesh is still far behind the desired level. Emphasis needs to be put on this sector for faster development.

**The Transportation System**

The ability to move people, raw materials, finished products and sometimes the military throughout its territory is another part of a country’s power equation. Transportation is increasingly considered as a link in the supply chains between the centers of production, distribution and consumption so that the overall travel time for cost can be reduced. Bangladesh has 63,811 km of paved roads and 4,443 km of railroad track. Roads carry over 80 percent of national passenger traffic, providing the backbone of the transport sector in this country. Bangladesh Railway which is primarily a passenger railway handles approximately 10 percent of the national passenger and freight traffic. Although the road network has been substantially expanded and improved, lack of adequate resource allocation for maintenance threatens its sustainability. Secondly, statistics reveal that the fatality rate is more than 100 deaths per 10,000 registered motor vehicles each year. This is a major area of concern and needs to be addressed earnestly. Development of major infrastructure such as the Dhaka Eastern Bypass and the Padma Bridge is important to improve the connectivity and land use of the country. The Eastern Bypass would be a significant investment, comprising transport, flood control, and urban development of Dhaka, which is growing at more than 6 percent per year. The Padma Bridge would connect the currently isolated southwest and the eastern zones of the country.

Bangladesh has one of the largest inland waterway networks in the world with some 700 rivers and tributaries crisscrossing the country. Inland ports handle about 40 per cent of the country’s foreign trade. The inland waterways network which is 5968 km, shrinks during the dry season to 3865 km, connects almost all the country’s major cities, towns, and commercial centers. Moreover, since it is comparatively cheaper, safer, and environment friendly, it often serves as the only mode of transportation to the poor, especially during widespread flooding.

Improvements in the ports, railways and inland container depots in an integrated manner are essential so that the Dhaka-
Chittagong corridor which serves as the main trade route in Bangladesh can handle exports and imports effectively. A deep-sea port in the Bay of Bengal would boost the country’s economy and enhance its bilateral and multilateral trade relations. Many countries in the world like Singapore earn billions of dollars annually through their sea ports. Bangladesh could also go for such a scheme through building massive infrastructure. Bangladesh lacks adequate air links both internally and externally. In the current era of globalisation, extended air linkage is now a vital requirement for necessary movement of traffic and cargo.

**Information and Communication Systems**

A country’s information and communications capabilities are becoming increasingly important. The advent of satellites and computers has accelerated the revolution that began with radio and television. The internet has dramatically changed communication systems. Enhanced communication technology increases the ability of a society to communicate within itself and remain cohesive. It also increases efficiency and effectiveness in industry, finance and the military.

National security, thus, has many bases that vary over time and space, that can be divided into two dimensions, i.e., material and managerial. The first includes well-known elements like territory and geo-strategic location, demographic quality and composition, natural resource base, scale of national economy, military capability, level of technological development etc. The second and most overlooked dimension of national security is the administrative and political structure of the state and its ability to provide basic services to the population, tap their collective energy and creativity and as well ensure the quality of the various governmental institutions. A proper blending between these two dimensions can only convert material power from its crude form to a finished one. In this regard, any scheme for a successful implementation of national security issues in a comprehensive manner depends upon few systematic factors like democracy, governance, political stability, absence of corruption, terrorism and political violence, and finally linkage between the people and security matters, in other words, awareness about national security en masse. Until such systemic factors are guaranteed by the administrative and political structure of a country, material
power of a state despite being robust would bear very little implications for a comprehensive national security of the country whatever. The succeeding section attempts to deal with some of these critical issues in the context of Bangladesh.

1.4 SYSTEMIC ASPECTS OF NATIONAL SECURITY OF BANGLADESH

A nation’s elements of power, whether tangible or non-tangible, can only crystallise into a meaningful ‘power base’ when such elements are effectively processed through appropriate state apparatuses imbued with leadership and consistent ideologies, values and beliefs aimed at promoting the welfare of the nation. In other words, each state needs to chart out a way where universally accepted political and social norms and values are expected to find fulfillment in a free environment in order to make the state functioning effective and resilient. These values and norms are the systemic factors that play a critical role in the national policies of a state, i.e., the foreign policy, national security policy, economic policy, cultural policy etc., and significantly influence various agencies and actors associated with such state policies. Among these norms and values, democracy is upheld to be the supreme one. Failure in establishing a democratic order in a society is likely to engender malaises that have the potentials to cripple the very functioning of the state itself. Problems like corruption, violence, social conflict and absence of law and order, etc., are the negative systemic factors which have very negative impact on various state policies as mentioned above in a destructive way. This section attempts to understand democracy and governance as the two systemic factors that would impact on the national security of Bangladesh positively. The negative systemic factors like corruption, violence and terrorism would be dealt with in this section with the objective of discerning their deleterious effects on the country’s national security.

1.4.1 Democracy

Defining democracy seems to become redundant at this juncture when process of democratisation or struggle for democracy is characterising the political landscape for many nations in the world at present. Fukuyama termed the current process of democratisation as “remarkable consensus concerning the legitimacy of liberal
democracy as a system of government that had conquered rival ideologies like hereditary monarchy, fascism and communism, which may constitute the ‘end of mankind’s ideological evaluation” and the final form of human government.” However, for the purpose of the paper, it is relevant to know certain aspects that democracy is endowed with and the extent of support that such aspects can render in upholding the national security of a country.

Democracy provides the holistic system which upholds people’s and individual rights, affirms good governance, and assures sustainable working and living conditions. Democracy is rather an important instrument to mobilise around common goals and to involve the people in nation building. It guarantees that the citizens of a country live in an atmosphere of freedom, tolerance and mutual harmony. In the absence of a democratic order, social and religious cleavages will invariably intensify, the abuse of human rights will increase and poverty would spread further. All these are the recipes for disintegration and destruction of a state. The consolidation of democracy will, therefore, not only help attain development and good governance, but also ensure national security. By all logical conclusions, democratisation is fundamental to safeguarding the individual freedom and happiness and as well ensures the country’s continued good governance.

Linkage between democracy and national security can be drawn at two levels. From the perspective of traditional security that focuses on threat from across the borders, it is said that when a state is democratic and its neighbours are democratic, these states do not usually fight among themselves. As the theory of democratic peace suggests, such states share common values and principles and accordingly expect that as they are in the same level of playing field, they would promote cooperation instead of instigating conflicts, at least ideologically. As far as the internal security, or in other words, threats of non-conventional nature is concerned, democracy is well poised to face the challenges. As the process of democratisation gathers momentum, national security, apart from its external dimension, gets internally oriented and becomes less elitist in this situation, the state’s military capabilities become less relevant for the domestic security needs of the citizenry. As Achin Vanaik has pointed out, “externally determined security threats justify strong military capabilities. When security risks are internally determined,
purely military solutions become counterproductive."²⁹ In other words, civilian authority can take up the national security issues for its proper handling provided it is democratic in nature and has respect for common humanity and human dignity. In recent times, certain phenomena like state collapse, state failure, weak state, fragile state etc., have been caused by a complex web of factors among which ‘weak political foundation’ is normally the point from where the downward trend of the curve towards the phenomena as cited above originates. Thus, if the examples of certain failed or weak states like Afghanistan, Rwanda, Burundi, Congo etc., are taken, it would be found that at the root of their political foundation, there had been the total absence of democratic practices. In most cases, the important fact that has been neglected is that democracy can bring political stability and can address the issues of social integration, national harmony, poverty, unemployment, primary health care and education. This is possible as democracy has for its main ingredients free and fair election, rule of law, freedom of expression and assembly, constitutional opposition, equal opportunity for all and independent judiciary.

Unlike many Third World countries, Bangladesh has, however, remained relatively stable and peaceful and escaped from major internal upheavals. In the arena of governance, the euphoria for a sustainable democratic order following the country’s liberation in 1971 soon evaporated when a short lived democratic phase was replaced by a long period of autocratic rule. However, after many trials and tribulations, it is only after 1991 that a democratic transition started taking shape in the country. The process, of course, is slow and painful. Since 1991, democratic change of governments has become the norm. Leaders have been changed though ballots and not bullets and power oscillated between the two principal parties, the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) and the Awami League. Even though three national elections were held since 1991 (1991, 1996 and 2001), the democratic process still remains somewhat uncertain and unstable. In each of the periods, opportunistic alliances, incompetent leadership, unwillingness to recognise and accept popular verdict and lack of a responsible opposition have made the Bangladesh polity fragile and insecure. As one observer remarks, “For successive years, ‘democracy’ to an average Bangladeshi has meant little more than bitter polarised
politics, long absenteeism from the Jatiya Sangsad (National Assembly), and unruly mass rallies, demonstrations and pitched street battles between the two main political parties, the Awami League (AL) and the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP). While each of these parties, during their tenure in the opposition, managed to hold the country to ransom by paralysing the administration, they utilised their time in government by engaging in rampant and reckless corruption. This remained true not just for national politics, but for all forms of representative politics at every level, down to what went on in most of the 64 districts of the country.30

There is no gainsaying that democratic values and culture have not yet taken root in the body politic of the country to guide the approaches of government and opposition political parties to the articulation and operationalisation of their respective responsibilities and working relationship. As Kholiquzzaman remarks, “the process of democratic resurgence has been marked by serious periodic distractions, fracas and offensive and counter offensives within the body politic of the country.”31 Party parochialism, narrow interests, intolerance, disagreement and violent confrontation between the party in power and the opposition on core national issues and policies made the country’s parliament dysfunctional. In the circumstances, the formation of any local government structure was also adversely affected. Failure of democratic institutions in Bangladesh is further explained by three factors; corruption, criminalisation and commercialisation of politics. Needless to say, the cumulative effect of these vices brought the Bangladesh politics to such a national crisis that declaration of the state of emergency on 1/11 became a rational move to avert a civil war like situation.

The lessons drawn from the post 1/11 events in the country clearly demonstrate that a regime in the garb of democracy, and yet autocratic in nature, can be more dangerous than an autocratic regime itself for the country’s security. As a result, vigorous efforts are underway under the aegis of the current caretaker government to bring about reforms in various sectors of the government. The measures taken by the Caretaker Government after 1/11 to carry out extensive reforms in both the political and administrative arenas have the potential of bringing about a much-needed cleanup of the political mess in Bangladesh. The international community, in particular the EU member nations expressed support for the
Structural and Systemic Aspects of National Security

reform agenda of the Caretaker Government. The UK and the US too have welcomed the efforts of the Caretaker Government for bringing reforms in the political process of Bangladesh so as make democracy sustainable in Bangladesh.

1.4.2 Governance

The concept of governance abounds in definitions and interpretations of various types. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) defines governance 'as the exercise of economic, political and administrative authority to manage a country's affairs at all levels. It comprises mechanisms, processes, and institutions through which citizens and groups articulate their interests, exercise their legal rights, meet their obligations and mediate their differences.' In a similar vein, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) describes it more succinctly by stating that 'the concept of governance denotes the use of political authority and exercise of control in a society in relation to the management of its resources for social and economic. The concept of governance abounds in definitions and interpretations of various types. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) defines governance 'as the exercise of economic, political and administrative authority to manage a country's affairs at all levels. It comprises mechanisms, processes, and institutions through which citizens and groups articulate their interests, exercise their legal rights, meet their obligations and mediate their differences.' In a similar vein, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) describes it more succinctly by stating that 'the concept of governance denotes the use of political authority and exercise of control in a society in relation to the management of its resources for social and economic development.'

In brief, governance is the culture and process of decision making and the process by which decisions are implemented. An analysis of governance focuses on the formal and informal actors involved in decision making and implementing the decisions made and the formal and informal structures that have been set in place to arrive at and implement the decision. One should take note of the symbiotic relationship that exists between democracy and governance. In contemporary world, the much talked about concept of 'good governance' presupposes the existence of democracy as the prerequisite
for good governance. As Syed Ahsanul Alam opines, "The precondition for good governance is effective democratic institutions for democratising the society. Improvement of the living standard of people can not happen where people can not participate in governance, human rights are not respected, information does not flow, and civil society and the judiciary are weak." The author postulates 'The Nine I Model', or in other words, nine criteria to judge whether a country qualifies to have good governance or not. They are: (i) independent and non partisan election commission, (ii) independent judiciary and the rule of law, (iii) independent media and freedom of speech, (iv) independent anti-corruption commission, (v) independent and effective parliament, (vi) independent human rights commission, (vii) independent ombudsman system, (viii) investing in people, (ix) investment friendly government.

The stated criteria aim to ensure a type of governance that would be participatory, pluralistic, consensus oriented, accountable, transparent, responsive, effective and efficient, equitable and inclusive and follows the rule of law. More important, it assures that corruption is minimised, the views of the minorities are taken into account and that the voices of the most vulnerable in society are heard in decision making. It is also responsive to the present and future needs of society. In this regard, Amena Mohsin defines, "governance as the manner in which people are looked after or cared for by the state. In doing this, it takes cognisance of the modes, institutions, and manner of governance, which are responsible for the nature and quality of the polity that a state develops. The manner and modes of governance are linked to the notion of security. The term security is used here in a broad and comprehensive sense." In effect, the linkage between governance and security comes in the context of the wellbeing of the people, in other words, their human security. Bad governance weakens the economy of the country mainly due to corruption. According to Syed Ahsanul Alam, "Bad governance results in huge loss in economic growth annually. Bad governance and corruption deter investment, waste national resources and disequate allocation and increase insecurity. Moreover, the poor suffer the most from the consequences of bad governance and corruption. Amongst the major governance weakness: pervasive corruption, weak governance, absence of monitoring institutions seriously affects economic growth and poverty reduction in the country."
Bad governance also creates certain problems with security implications. These problems are in fact interlinked and lie in a continuum to reinforce each other for creating social disorder and unrest in the society. The result being that the society gets fragmented with resentment and grievances of the people remaining high all the time. The problems if enumerated would be: (i) political uncertainties through confrontations between various organs of the state, which have distracted attention from economic management, undermined investors' confidence and diverted the Government from development and implementation of necessary strategies and policies, (ii) gross politicisation of economic decision making and narrow political interference in the use of public resources; (iii) failure of public institutions to fulfill their mandate, limited or near absence of accountability and ineffective policy implementation; (iv) an outdated and ineffectual legal and judicial system; (v) persistent law and order problems and sectarian violence, and (vi) lack of fiscal discipline, tax evasion, loan defaults, non payment of utility bills and corruption.

Needless to state, in post 1/11 period, due to dysfunctional nature of democracy in Bangladesh, weak governance persisted in the country. As a result, the country suffered not only politically but that its economic performance was poor marked by increasing poverty, lawlessness and related problems. A brief look in to the pre 1/11 governance in Bangladesh would reveal the following scenario: (i) transparency and accountability problems; (ii) violent confrontational politics; (iii) absence of consensus on core national issues among major political parties; (iv) pervasive corruption; (v) bureaucratic procrastination and hurdles; (vi) absence of effective local government at different levels; (vii) lack of proper coordination—both horizontal and vertical; (viii) lack of competent and properly trained functionaries; (ix) absence of proper implementation of existing legal and regulatory provisions, with the rule of law being the casualty; and (x) absence of clear-cut delineation of economic and social responsibilities of the government, the private sector, and other actors within the market economy framework and of an appropriate system to regulate the market.

Good governance then arises from actions of a government which is honest, transparent, accountable, efficient and institutionally sound. In this regard, the post 1/11 Caretaker Government has launched a countrywide crusade against corruption as it is a
crippling deterrent to good governance and development. Establishing good governance also requires reforms of the political system, electoral system, state machinery and institutions to monitor it. The Caretaker Government has taken certain measures to curb violence and restore law and order in the country. Due to ban on political activities, politics of confrontation is not visible now. In particular, its efforts to bring about reforms in Anti-Corruption Commission, Election Commission, and Public Service Commission have earned the appreciation of the people. Efforts are also underway to separate judiciary from the executive. More important, reforms in the political parties are being sought by the Caretaker Government in order to ensure the participation of honest and eligible persons in the forthcoming election in the country. During its 12 months in office, the Caretaker Government has already taken important and visible measures in this reform process. In November 2007, more than eight years after the Supreme Court has passed an order asking the government to separate the judiciary from the executive, the order was finally implemented.

1.4.3 Corruption

Endemic corruption, in Bangladesh polity, continues to remain as a vice at all levels of the society. Its intensity went so high during the period of three democratic governments that this factor, in isolation from the others, can alone justify 1/11 event.

Corruption is inherently a secretive transaction, and, thus difficult to observe and measure. However, it is a phenomenon marked by embezzlement, nepotism, bribery, extortion, influence peddling, and fraud etc. In case of Bangladesh, a public opinion survey (based on a randomly selected sample of adults both men and women from rural and urban areas) conducted by the Bangladesh Unnayan Parishad (BUP) in April 1997 found that corruption is pervasive in Bangladesh throughout the government machinery. In particular, corruption in large scale public projects in the country is now a daunting obstacle to sustainable development, and results in a major loss of public funds needed for education and poverty alleviation in the country. It may be mentioned that corruption cost Bangladesh 745 million US$ (44 billion taka) in 2002, and the amount, according to Transparency International, Bangladesh, an affiliate of the Berlin-based Transparency International, was
equivalent to 10.38% of the Bangladesh’s total annual budget and 67% of the foreign aid received in the fiscal year that ended in June 2002. More alarming, 75% of foreign aid received by Bangladesh does not reach its intended target because of corruption.

Corruption is still a cancer-like disease in Bangladesh with debilitating effects on its society and economy. Today, the country being the most corrupt country in the world is facing numerous problems like reduced economic growth, income inequality, degraded governance, poor quality of government services in health and education, lack of public trust in government. All these exacerbate and promote poverty in Bangladesh, in particular rampant and wild corruption continues to blunt the country’s development performance, and hence its anti-poverty efforts. World Bank’s World Development Report for 2000/01 entitled ‘Attacking Poverty.’ The Report says, “The burden of petty corruption falls disproportionately on poor people .... For those without money and connections, petty corruption in public health or police services can have debilitating consequences. Corruption affects the lives of poor people through many other channels as well. It biases government spending away from socially valuable goods, such as education. It diverts public resources from infrastructure investments that could benefit poor people, such as health services, and tends to increase public spending on capital-intensive investments that offer more opportunities for kickbacks, such as defense contracts. It lowers the quality of infrastructure, since kickbacks are more lucrative on equipment purchases. Corruption also undermines public service delivery.”

Serious corruption also threatens democracy and governance by weakening political institutions and mass participation, and by delaying and distorting economic development needed to sustain democracy.

It is pertinent to mention about the effect of corruption on national security. The impact of corruption on national security is threefold: First, it worsens socio-economic conditions and facilitates growth of anti-national movements or activities. Second, corruption acts as a regressive tax on industrial growth, especially for the small-scale industries that are major sources of employment in developing countries like Bangladesh. It also reduces revenue collection of the state. Consequently, state’s capacity to allocate substantial resources to basic services as mentioned above is curtailed significantly. This
deprives the people of their legitimate opportunities to survive or for upward social mobility in the society. As a result, activities like terrorism and drug trafficking find their strong foothold in the society. In this connection, mention should be made about the symbiotic relationship between corruption and terrorism. The aim of corruption is to generate illegitimate wealth directly. Hence officials and bureaucrats in societies in collusion with the terrorists create discreet mechanisms through which illegitimate wealth can be used safely. Third, corruption undermines the legitimacy of the various organs of the state, including the law enforcing agencies. As a result, they become ineffectual actors in upgrading the national security of the country. Fourthly, corruption erodes and weakens the very foundations of the administrative and legal framework and disrupts the rule of law. Thus internal security can not be safeguarded unless the government apparatus is relatively free of corruption. Finally, corruption has the subversive effect of destroying discipline. Indiscipline leads to unaccountability which permeates the administrative apparatus and also leads to the growth of the threatening politico-bureaucratic-criminal nexus.

In Bangladesh, there are several manifestations of petty and grand corruption in pre 1/11 period. However, one of these came to light as the government itself was involved in it in many ways. The people at different levels indulged in corruption with impunity as mechanisms to curb it were either ineffective or non-operational. One of the aims of military backed caretaker government is to fight the extremely high levels of corruption that placed the country at the bottom of Transparency International’s Corruption Perception Index for several years. Both the heads of AL and BNP are charged with corruption as well as a host of their associates and family members. Many have been sentenced to varying terms of imprisonment by special anti-corruption courts set up to deal with the many corruption cases. Because of its anti-corruption drive, the Caretaker Government enjoys widespread support from the general public who have expressed increasing distrust in the two rival political parties as well as poor services. The interim government has declared that it intends to root out corruption and carry through extensive reforms, including reform in public services, the financial sectors and electoral reforms, in preparation for the holding of elections by the end of 2008. Despite former governments’ promises to combat the widespread corruption that exists at all levels of the
society, few results were seen before the current actions against the corrupt politicians and public officials.

1.4.4 Violence

Violence is as old as humanity itself, but in recent times, it has attained a new dimension due to its manifestation in various forms and in the degree of its intensity. The concept abounds in definitions and as well has been well treated theoretically, but from the operational aspect, violence, which is so much discussed today, had never been taken as a theme in itself. As Hannah Arendt, a German political scientist remarks “although it has always played an enormous role in human affairs, it is... rather surprising that violence has been singled out so seldom for special consideration.”

Needless to state, the increasing use of violence whether for asserting an identity, or for demanding structural change or even for achieving political ends has posed itself as an issue of great concern in contemporary world. It is a leading cause of death and non-fatal injuries worldwide. An estimated 1.6 million people lose their lives due to violence each year, including homicide, suicide and war-related deaths, while millions more suffer from non-fatal injuries and crippling disabilities.

In the context of Bangladesh, there is no denying the fact that the country, throughout its existence, has suffered political instability and experienced periodic outbursts of violence. Small skirmishes between rival factions, mass agitations and protests have been important elements of the political process. In terms of their frequency of occurrence, intensity, and the levels of violence with which they have been associated, it can be safely said that these took place in both the tenures of the past democratically elected governments and those of autocratic regimes. In certain instances, open armed confrontations between groups accompanied such agitations and protests. The reasons for violence in Bangladesh are: (i) intense factionalism based on personal rivalries, disruptive politics, undemocratic practices within the party, and the failure to fulfill the economic aspirations of the people, (ii) widespread corruption and inefficiency of government machinery, persistent poverty and unemployment, (iii) easy access to small arms made possible by illegal trafficking, (iv) inefficient law enforcing agencies and their partisanship, and (v) criminalisation of politics.
Though experiences of violence are not new in Bangladesh, over the years the nature and intensity of violence has assumed a terrible shape by the presence of acts like extortion, rent-seeking, robbery, hijacking, abduction, political killings, street violence, violence in educational institutes, repression by the state including the actions of the police and official paramilitary forces occasioned in large part by the absence of good governance, the pernicious effects of the proliferation of small arms including the existence of increasingly well-armed criminal groups. The typology of violence in the context of Bangladesh needs little reflections and it is furnished below in a tubular form.

Typology of Violence in Bangladesh

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Violence</th>
<th>Nature and Trend</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Political/Hartal Violence:</td>
<td>The role of violence as a medium of political discourse has increased strikingly in Bangladesh. Like many other countries in the world, street protest through diverse forms is an accepted mechanism in the politics of Bangladesh as a pressure tactic. Public demonstrations, marches and labour strikes are widely used as means of political expression in Bangladesh. However, unlike most other countries, hartal or strike coupled with violent protest is used here frequently as a regular political agenda.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political Killings and Bomb Attacks:</td>
<td>One of the most alarming trends of the recent confrontational political agitation is bomb blasts and grenade throwing in political meetings. Sniping at the opponents with crackers during hartal hours exposes people from all walks of life to virtual death threat.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arbitrary Arrest/ Detention and Police Violence:</td>
<td>The police arrests and detains people arbitrarily without warrants, or specific complaints being filed against them and denies access to counsel and family members.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extortion/Illegal Toll Collection/ Rent Seeking (Chandabaji):</td>
<td>It is a form of exacting money through force and terror. It thrives in all areas although most of the incidents of extortion take place in industrial/commercial areas, construction sites or any place where people can be coerced. It has become a problem to start a business or construction work in any site without paying toll to the illegal collectors. Refusal of payments results in loss of life and property.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campus Violence:</td>
<td>Campus Violence has been a public concern and a cause for national anxiety since 1973. It may be mentioned that in Bangladesh, all major political parties and most political leaders maintain armed cadres who are supplied by student fronts and factions. Invariably, the armed cadres have their protectors or ‘godfathers’ who have the power and influence in the administration to shield them away from the law. As a result, in</td>
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(contd.)
violence on female students: if murder, wounding and extortion have been the most extreme forms of campus violence since 1974, in recent years, then violence on female students has given a new dimension to campus violence. Rape, kidnapping, character assassination and teasing are now on the list of incidents associated with campus violence. Among the less horrifying acts of violence are occupations by force of a hall of residence by a student party or group, ousting rival residents of a hall from their seats, forcing other genuine residents to share their seats with their associates, compelling them to join party processions and movements, and selling hall seats for money.

electoral violence: in bangladesh the most violent form of political strife is violence in elections—both national and local. Perhaps it will not be an exaggeration to state that the election years have been routinely characterised by political violence. So far thirteen national polls (parliamentary and presidential elections and referendums) have been held in bangladesh since its inception. The first national election of bangladesh, held in march 1973, exhibited the crude exercise of muscle-power and other malpractices. This had the effect of intensifying the existing factional animosities, and legitimising violence in the electoral process. Thus in the 1980s and 1990s, electoral violence became more rampant and widespread. The presidential elections of 1978, 1981 and 1986, the parliamentary elections of 1979, 1986 and 1988, and the referendums of 1977 and 1985, all conducted under autocratic military regimes, witnessed allegations of extensive vote rigging and voter intimidation. In the parliamentary election of 1988, civil commotion reached unprecedented heights. According to official sources, actions by the army during the period of the elections caused the death of 85 persons and injury to about 500—the opposition estimates were 150 dead, and 8,000 injured. Even in the elections of 1991 conducted by the caretaker government and reported to have been free of malpractices, violent confrontations among the contestants during the election campaign cost 48 lives. Also in the three

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<td>Despite of many punitive laws enacted by governments from time to time, no government has been able to restore peace in the campus. Though campus violence is planned by leading student activists, its actual execution is carried out by their cadres who carry with them clandestinely or even openly weapons, such as home-made bombs and crackers, knives, daggers and fire arms. They are not necessarily students. Most of them are recruited at a price from school dropouts, slum dwellers and broken families. They are trained in making and throwing bombs at targets, and using firearms.</td>
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Type of Violence | Nature and Trend
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Domestic Violence: | Violence against women in the domestic sphere of their lives is most rampant. Domestic violence occurs throughout the country in both rural and urban area, literate and illiterate societies and in families of all income levels. The reasons for domestic violence can be explained by the deep-rooted attitudes regarding socially and culturally prescribed roles, responsibilities and traits of men and women.

Industrial Violence: | In recent times, industrial violence has become a regular phenomenon in few industrial centres of the country. Such violence finds its manifestation in general rampage, destroying cars, blocking roads, intimidating perceived adversaries and looting. Although industrial violence originates from the labour-owner conflict over wage and other issues, it at the same time demonstrates misgovernance not only in the political life but also in the commercial and business life of the nation.

All forms of violence as mentioned above have direct bearing on human security in so far as violence destroys lives and livelihood, breeds perennial insecurity, fear and terror, all with profound negative impact on human development and welfare. In such a scenario, social instability takes a permanent shape with the potentials to create fissures and tensions in the society. A society where ‘break up of law and order’ reigns ultimately lead to a collapse of the government machinery and hence the total collapse of the state itself. A glimpse in to the events just before 1/11 shows that electoral violence, which was not properly managed, ultimately led to anarchy and political instability to the extent that Bangladesh as a nation felt insecure not only at the human security level, but as the national security level too.

1.4.5 Terrorism

Terrorism that Bangladesh is currently plagued with is viewed by the majority as ‘Islamic terrorism.’ The ostensible aim of the movement is to establish an Islamic State in Bangladesh on the basis of Shariah (laws for the Muslims as enshrined in the Holy Quran). It is being spearheaded by two Islamic groups, i.e., Jagrata Muslim Janata Bangladesh (JMJB) and Jamaatul Mujahdeen.
Bangladesh (JMB), the latter taking the lead. A wave of bomb blasts including suicide bombings in recent times have been the expressions of their voice. Lt. General ATM Zahirul Alam remarks, "Bangladesh is a moderate Muslim majority country. Yet the wave of global terrorism and the Afghan fall-out have not spared Bangladesh. She has witnessed the home grown radical Islam which of now has been curbed significantly by effective handling. However, although largely abated it still has the potential to rear its head again unless sustained vigilance is maintained and the reasons that breed radicalism are addressed through intellectual discourse, motivation and enforcement action." The vigilance that is referred to in the remark is possible only when there is democratic and good governance in the country. In addition, the factors like poverty, unemployment, illiteracy, social exclusion and marginalisation, discrimination etc. can also be addressed through democratic and good governance.

Terrorism is termed as growing threat to national security, national economy, political and religions pluralism in Bangladesh by many concerned quarters. In a historic move on 19 May, 2008, the present Caretaker Government approved a new counter-terrorism law, laying down a maximum penalty of death for anyone involved in terrorist activities. The ordinance defined an act of terrorism as follows:

- Any act that poses a threat to the sovereignty, unity, integrity or security of Bangladesh or creates panic among the general masses or obstructs official activities. This shows the linkage between terrorism and national security.
- The use of bombs, dynamite or other explosives, inflammable substances, firearms or any other chemicals in a way that may injure or kill people to create panic among the public, and damage public or private property. This demonstrates now the presence of even small arms can destabilise a society with implications for security at all levels.
- (and) Take any person hostage, threaten anyone with death, assault anyone physically or create panic in the general masses or kill or hurt anyone seriously or detain or abduct a person by such acts. This shows the government’s concern for personal security of each individual.
The ordinance also said that anyone responsible for ‘financing terrorist groups’ whether local or foreign, will also be tried under the anti-terrorism law and a convict will serve maximum 20 years of rigorous imprisonment or minimum three years with financial penalty. This is a signal to those who have backed the terrorists earlier by means of illegally earned money.

It should be mentioned that RAB which was formed in 2004 has now been further empowered to deal with crimes of various nature during the present interim government. While few international organisations and Human Rights bodies have been critical about its role, the general public is pleased with its performance in maintaining law and order in the country. RAB now is well-equipped to have access to any crime spot in the country. Its effectiveness is now also visible even in the remote off-shore islands.

1.5 POLICY PROPOSITIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS: NEED FOR A NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL?
After having elaborated the concept of security in a comprehensive manner and outlining the various structural and systemic aspects of national security, it now becomes an imperative to address the myriad of national security issues in a holistic way. As mentioned earlier, law and order situation prior to 1/11 of 2007 was in a state of collapse. Chaos and disorder, political unrest and anarchy were then the order of the day. Foreign investors, donor agencies and development partners were about to turn their back on the country. The whole nation was in a dilemma. Amid this backdrop, a state of emergency was declared on January 11, 2007, and the present caretaker government was sworn in. Given the fact that 1/11 was precipitated by a total disfunctioning of state organs and agencies, the foremost task at the moment is to redress the wrongs committed in the past in various spheres of the state. In this respect, the current caretaker government is credited with success in bringing certain changes and reforms in important areas. Although one year is not enough to assess achievements at national level, yet a beginning has been made. The government has taken a lot of extraordinary reform measures in many sectors, including judiciary, politics, economy, and social like education, health and agriculture in addition to poverty alleviation initiatives. Many positive changes
at all strata of life have taken place so far. For example, the crusade against corruption under the present caretaker government is possible as there is a good coordination between the National Board of Revenue (NBR), Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC), and the Office of Auditor General etc. The newly created Truth and Accountability Commission (TAC) would add further strength to the government's efforts in curbing terrorism and corruption in the country. It should be mentioned that all these bodies have been either formed or reformed in post 1/11 period, which was not possible due to misgovernance in pre 1/11 period. Likewise, reforms are currently needed in many spheres of governmental machinery. Perhaps, the most serious internal security threat arises from misgovernance and the breakdown of governance in the country—a fact amply demonstrated by the 1/11 events.

While the reforms as alluded to above have positive impact on issues pertinent to national security, the fact remains that national security like the foreign policy of a country is a very complex and delicate process having its own trajectory to follow. In this respect, national security policies should be a blend of political vision, national leadership, geopolitical, geo-strategic, socio-cultural and economic realities and military capabilities. Improving the national security of Bangladesh is a long term process. Unlike other states where threats to national security are external in nature, in the case of Bangladesh, these are mostly internal and more fundamental in nature. These threaten the core values, i.e., the independence, sovereignty etc. of the country. The need for reforms in the security sphere should therefore be met tangibly through few strategies, policies, new agencies and bodies. These are discussed below.

1.5.1 National Security Strategy
Given the fact that traditional threat has now been replaced by a diverse and interconnected set of threats and risks, the aim of the national security strategy would be to address and manage this diverse though interconnected set of security challenges and underlying drivers, both immediately and in the longer term, to safeguard the nation, its citizens and prosperity.

In formulating the national security strategy, the foremost guiding principles for Bangladesh should be the following:
- An approach to national security strategy is to be clearly grounded in a set of core values, i.e., respect for human rights and dignity, the rule of law, legitimate and accountable government, justice, freedom, tolerance etc. These values would define what the nation is and what it can do. These values also need expression in the country's foreign policy to meet the security needs.

- The national security strategy should be hard-headed about the risks, aims and capabilities of the nation. There should be an overreaching strategy bringing together the objectives and plans of all departments, agencies and forces involved in protecting the national security of Bangladesh. National security draws on the wide range of knowledge and activity across departments, agencies and forces which contribute to national security objectives. There is, therefore, the need for a greater focus on integration between the relevant security departments both horizontally and vertically.

National security strategy would, therefore, envisage (i) balance of power among the security organs of state, (ii) making democracy workable and operational at all levels of society, (iii) integration of civil society, media and corporate actors, (iv) building national culture of democracy and education system should focus on developing culture of democracy, (v) reengineering national security institutions, (vi) create post of Security Advisor to Prime Minister, (vii) activate National Security Council, (viii) formulate National Security Policy, (ix) revamp national security institutions, structures and processes, (x) security related think-tanks should be taken on board by the policy makers, (xi) profession-specific security advisers should be consulted by the national security council, and finally, (xii) operational freedom and professionalism should be enjoyed by the security agencies.

### 1.5.2 National Security Policy

Given the complexities of the subject, Bangladesh should be bold enough to devise a national security policy and, thereby, make a breakthrough in its security management. Needless to mention, in contemporary security governance, the security policy of a state is deemed necessary for identifying the various sources of threats and utilisation of the existing resources if necessary with international
collaboration. It may be mentioned that in the absence of such a policy, issues and sectors and the priorities in the domain cannot be properly identified. The formulation of a national security policy would eventually facilitate the establishment of Bangladesh’s national security act, which is non-existent at present. The act that would be a guide for the management of entire security affairs and may curb out a definitive place for the country’s other traditional enforcement agencies.

Since all internal threats bear serious implications for human security and welfare, there is a need for an elaborate and comprehensive internal security strategy, which should be immediately formulated covering socio-economic and political aspects of the country and urgent measures should be taken to formulate national security policy to execute the strategy without delay. The growing social inequalities between rich and poor should be reduced through the adoption of effective laws and regulations. Politically, the strategy would launch all out efforts to build consensus on core national issues thereby facilitating the restoration of political stability in the country. In this connection, if the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) is properly realised, a great portion of the problem with respect to human security and welfare is likely to be solved. It is important to take note of the fact that the comprehensive security issues are closely interconnected. This interconnectedness entails not only the role of government but covers the whole gamut of other agencies—non-governmental in nature as well. Thus, comprehensive security needs a broad operational base, there is the need to recognise the role of NGOs, the private sector, members of the civil society, academics, and media to fulfill the vast areas of comprehensive security issues. In this respect, the armed forces have a role to play as well. For example, their role during the disaster management is nothing other than to make the victims of such incidents physically safe and secure.

1.5.3 National Security Council (NSC)

Much of the problems, however, relate to the traditional aspects of national security. If security is a matter of threat perception, then the question arises as to the nature of such perception by the military which is considered to be the vehicle of the nation’s traditional security. While this is a debatable question which this
chapter does not intend to go into it, the present issue is about crafting an effective security management system for the country. In this respect, there is a need to have coordination between the armed forces, intelligence agencies, paramilitary forces like police, RAB, VDP etc. Although in a poor country like Bangladesh, spending too much on defense is not advisable, however, mobilisation of resources and men even with limited means is possible if the security management system is well governed. In this regard, the recent proposal for a National Security Council\(^\text{52}\) is a positive forward move to further enhance the security of Bangladesh, both internal and external. The establishment of a public or national security council, with an overwhelming civil content and a structure where the position and the opposition would have no recourse but to meet and work together and keep the ills of pre 1/11 era at bay is the need of the hour.\(^\text{53}\) Few critics are of the opinion that such a body is not required as Bangladesh does not suffer from any external security crisis. It may be mentioned that ever since the time the idea of NSC was floated, a segment of the public opinion has also shown skepticism and suspicion towards this move. Their anxiety largely stems from the fact that a body like NSC would result in civilian domination by the army. Opinions like this are, however, speculative at the moment. It may be mentioned that the point missed by this circle is that NSC is needed not only to confront external threat, but as well a myriad of threats at the internal level. For example, the National Security Council in India is not only meant for confronting the external threats, but as for those having its origin in its internal polity. A creative combination of political insight, long-term vision and a passion for democracy and democratisation is what is required to have it institutionalised and make it acceptable to the people.

1.5.4 Revamping National Security Institutions

As indicated in the previous section, democracy acts as a power house to run the entire government machinery commensurate with needs and aspirations of the people. It is only under a democratic government that institutions flourish. Democratic governance can only be ensured through reforms in political structure process and culture. In this respect, while the current Caretaker Government has floated a roadmap much remains to be done in the future in
certain areas like genuine, competent and honest representation of the people who can make the parliament functional, strike clear cut division of power between judiciary and the executive, bring accountability of the government, create awareness among the public and finally bring democracy in the party. Once these are ensured good governance is expected to yield benefits to the masses. From security point of view, these benefits would have positive implications for all. As mentioned earlier, misgovernance in Bangladesh has been in the past a factor to impede development and consolidation of national power. Good democratic governance would be a prerequisite to set the governmental mechanism function effectively.

If democratic governance is set in track in a right way, then bodies like Parliamentary Committee on security, Cabinet Committee on security, Public-Private Partnership in security discourse would naturally find their way. It may be mentioned that even during the past democratic regimes there were a number of parliamentary standing committees on different ministerial subjects including the defense but due to the malfunctioning democracy and the ineffective parliament none of these bodies could work efficiently. Lastly, two important aspects with respect to national security are to be taken into account i.e., policy and research. A crucial point with respect to elevating the national security issues in Bangladesh would probably be the formulation of national security policy. It must be realised that security is essentially a matter of perception while strategy/policy on the other hand is the mechanism to overcome the perception of insecurity. It is a way to fight and minimise the insecurities. Previously, regime security has frequently prevailed upon national security. As such, there was no conscious effort to devise an effective strategy to preserve national security. Of late, there are signs that people have started thinking of national security both at government and non-government circles.

1.5.5 Possible Agenda for Research Institutions

Once a national security policy is in place, interest will grow in more research which is now very scanty and being done in a very scattered manner by a very small security community. Institutes like BIJSS which played a pioneering academic role in the past in various security issues of the country should be given more priority
and relevance than before. Institutional bridges, thus, need to be built to overcome the existing gap between policy and knowledge. The product of research and analysis available outside government must be integrated in the policy making and operational process in larger national interest. The existing operational research and analysis within the governmental system will stand to benefit considerably if institutional linkages could be created for tapping the products of research and analysis available outside the government. A note of caution should be made here. Of late, few institutes, with the status of mere NGO, are cropping up in the country under the garb of regular research institutes with interest in security affairs. In certain cases, these institutes are believed to be carrying out the agenda of funding agencies outside the country.

Perhaps, an often neglected fact with respect to any national policy of Bangladesh whether foreign policy, security policy, commercial policy etc. is the lack of public awareness about these policies. In other words, there is an absence of a linkage between the national policies and the people. Since, the referent point of national security is people there is a need to create awareness and participation among them and mainstream them in the security discourse of the country. There should be an arrangement which would ensure that information and knowledge with regards to national security and the future of the nation are freely available for public discussion. It is a part of the intergenerational responsibility to transmit this knowledge to children and young people, so as to enable them to appreciate the vital importance of the security issues, the values they represent and the risks they face.

1.6 CONCLUSION
The concept of national security is longer crouched in semantical confusion or in any controversial debate. The ground realities in contemporary world clearly endorse the expansion of national security concept by including threats—both traditional and non-traditional in nature. Addressing these threats, however, becomes country specific as the nature and intensity of such threats vary among the nations. As a result, the onus is on each country to chalk out its own course of plans, strategies and actions to mitigate the threats as mentioned above.

After having rationalised the comprehensive nature of national security in the context of Bangladesh along with a long catalogue
of various structural and systemic factors, the paper has endeavoured to discern how the various deficiencies, weaknesses and lacunae associated with such factors affect the formulation of an effective national security policy. While many of the structural factors, in particular those related to irreversible geographical facts may remain static, the other factors, on the contrary, can be changed or improved if comprehensive development is given the utmost consideration as one of the arching principles of the country's national security. In this respect, concept of sustainable development is, perhaps, not new in the context of Bangladesh. Efforts in this respect should thus be more efficient, sincere and constructive and be marked by a process of continuity rather than a rupture in it. Needless to state, Bangladesh like other underdeveloped countries is en route for realising the Millennium Development Goals, which if implemented properly with firm political commitment could pave the way for addressing many problematic issues related to human security, in other words, the welfare of the general masses. Also, given the linkages between breakdowns in the economy and stability, security and development need to go hand in hand, mutually reinforcing each other. In other words, there is the need to securitise development.

It should be mentioned that development needs a relatively safe and secure environment. It is only functional politics that can create the desirable environment for development. The pre 1/11 period shows how development of Bangladesh remained handicapped by constant political instability in the country. The political malaise, therefore, needs to be addressed seriously, and in this regard, nothing other than democratic governance can be the answer to the problem. Various reforms that have been alluded to above would simply remain on the platter unless democratic institutions and bodies are made functional in Bangladesh. In this regard, Bangladesh now faces the challenge of transforming its body politic into a democratic one. The 1/11 episode should serve as an example for Bangladesh to come out of the politics so far marked by narrow interests, inter-party feuds, parochialism, self-interests, corruption, criminalisation, nepotism, favouritism, vandalism etc.

Democratic governance can ensure and well define the power and function of the various agencies needed to uphold the country's security. In this connection, the agencies and bodies responsible for maintaining the country's security in traditional sense can also have their respective places well defined in an interactive process
with the civilian agencies. The lesson drawn from 1/11 episode doubtlessly corroborates the fact that both segments of the society—civilian and military—need to work in conjunction with each other for the interest of the country’s national security.

The ensuing election (likely to be held by the end of 2008) is a great political test case for Bangladesh. Much of the reforms in the security sector can be expected in the future provided the newly elected government takes into account the lessons drawn from the 1/11 incident and moves in a constructive way to take various reformative measures as suggested earlier. Resources may not allow Bangladesh to take all the measures at a time. Caution should, thus, prevail in prioritising the security issues properly and then take necessary reform measures accordingly.

The most important factor that underlies all future efforts towards for securitising the country is the political will and commitment of the government in power. Any dearth in this factor is charged with the potentials to incite another incident like 1/11. The onerous task for the future government in Bangladesh would, thus, be to attest this spirit and carry out required reforms in the sectors both civilian and military for augmenting the national security of Bangladesh. Till that time, the citizens of Bangladesh would have to wait patiently to see the reincarnation of their democratic values and goals in the greater national interests of the country.

ENDNOTES

1 As known, Bangladesh Constitution provides for Neutral Caretaker Government (CTG) taking charge of the country on completion of each 5 year term of democratically elected government. The CTG, as per the Constitution, is responsible for organizing free, fair and credible election and handing over power to elected government within 90 days of assumption of office. The CTG that was formed after 5 years of rule by the BNP (Bangladesh Nationalist Party) led 4 party coalition government in October, 2006, was unable to create conducive conditions for organizing the pending election due to a large scale political violence in Bangladesh. The violence resulted mainly due to the opposition party’s (Awami League) agitation movement against the masterminded electioneering design of the BNP to retain in power. Continued violent demonstrations and clashes on the streets created lawlessness and anarchy to the extent that the nation was virtually on the brink of a civil war. At this point of no return, the CTG with active support of the armed forces took over the power through promulgating state of emergency on 11/01/07 (which many in the style of 9/11 call 1/11).


16 Climate Change and Bangladesh, September 2007, Climate Change Cell, Department of Environment, Government of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh.


18 In January 2007, Oil and Gas Journal (OGJ) reported that Bangladesh had only 5 TCF of proven natural gas reserves which is less than previous year, 2006 (15.397 TCF) and other previous estimated reserves. In addition to this, in 2004, Ministry of Finance reported that Bangladesh contains 28.4 TCF of

19 The country is trying to discover more new gas fields to meet the additional demand of different sectors. In 2006, the country discovered a new gas field with 500 billion cubic feet (BCF) reserves in block 9 at Gazipur, about 40 km north of Dhaka. Overall, four international companies are engaged in the production, development, and operation of 10 out of the country's 23 hydrocarbon blocks. For details, see; “Bangladesh Natural Resources News”, available at http://www.skyscrapercity.com/archive/index.php/index.php?t-401751.html, accessed 30 April 2008.


31 Qazi Kholiquzzaman Ahmad, op.cit., pp.1-55.
32 Professor Syed Ahsanul Alam, “Good Governance: Role of Individuals vs. Institutions,” published by Center for Good Governance (Bangladesh).

33 Ibid.

34 There are some bilateral donors who are not satisfied with the above mentioned indicators. They include five more elements as an essential part of good governance like democratization, human rights, rule of law, cuts in military expenditures and probity.


36 Syed Ahsanul Alam, op.cit.

37 Qazi Kholiduzzaman Ahmad, “Perspectives on Sustainable Development in Bangladesh”, Paper presented at a Roundtable on ‘Bangladesh Perspectives Towards 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development’, organized by Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies (BIISS) and Bangladesh Unnayan Parishad (BUP), Dhaka, 04 September 2001, p.9.

38 In Bangladesh, the Police Department is the most corrupt one followed subsequently by the Customs Department, Income Tax Department, Secretariat and Judiciary.


40 Ibid.


42 Ibid., p.12.

43 To Garver, violence is a violation of a person. Persons can be violated either way—physical or psychological. To him, violence is considered as the disempowerment of persons. Similarly, Johan Galtung describes violence as anything avoidable that impedes self-realisation. Self-realisation is in turn conceived of as the satisfaction of human needs which includes physiological, ecological, social and psychological/spiritual. Violence as conceived by Galtung and others that is, direct, structural, physical or psychological, undermines human security and hence national security because of the linkage between the two.


46 A survey on ‘Campus Violence in three Decades’ shows that the casualties of campus violence in three decades since 1974 were 128, with 4290 persons seriously wounded. Out of 128, the number of casualties in Dhaka University was 72, Rajshahi University 25, Chittagong University 11, Bangladesh Agricultural University 8, Islami University (Kushtia) 7, and Jahangirnagar University 5. Campus violence became so rampant during the regimes of Ziaur Rahman and Ershad that it drew world attention. In 1993, for example, The New York Times identified the Dhaka University as the ‘most violent campus in the world.’
Various issues of *Daily Star* and *Independent*

Several reasons explain the phenomenon of Islamic terrorism in Bangladesh. They are a failure in democratic process and presence of acrimonious politics, gross misgovernance, growing economic inequalities and rampant corruption, non-uniformity in education system, ideology and illusion, rise of Islamic parties, ineffective enforcement and intelligence agencies, implications of ‘Global War on Terrorism’, trafficking in small arms through Bangladesh.

“Jamaatul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) is a terrorist group dedicated to removing the country’s secular government and imposing a Taliban inspired Islamic theocracy in its place. In addition to calling for an Islamic State based on Sharia Law, JMB has denounced the American led invasion of Iraq, warning President Bush and British Prime Minister Blair to leave all Muslim countries. While JMB’s exact origins are unknown, it is thought to have been formed in the late 1990s to protest the Bangladesh government’s secular orientation. JMB perpetrated its first small scale attacks in 2002 and 2003. The group’s full time membership has swelled to around 10,000 while part time supporters figure up to another 100,000. JMB’s acitivity has risen concomitant with Islamic extremism as a whole in Bangladesh as have JMB’s connections to other Muslim elements in the country. One such element is Jagrata Muslim Janata Bangladesh (JMJB), a terrorist group that shares JMB’s radical philosophy. Though some suspect that JMJB and JMB are merely different aliases for a single operational group, JMB operates more widely than JMJB, which is generally confined to the country’s northwestern districts. However, the groups are closely allied, and both derive support from the hard line Islamic political party Jamaat-e-Islami, in addition to sharing some common leadership’. MIPT Terrorism Knowledge Base, available online [http://www.thb.org/Group.jsp?grouplD=4497](http://www.thb.org/Group.jsp?grouplD=4497), date accessed 05 April 2006.

In August 2005, JMB successfully coordinated the detonation of over 400 simultaneous explosions throughout Bangladesh. JMB primarily targeted governmental buildings, detonating mostly non-fatal devices throughout the regional capitals of the country in addition to Dhaka, Bangladesh’s capital. The attacks killed several people and injured over 100. Aimed at spreading mass panic and fear rather than inflicting mass casualties, most devices were filled with sawdust rather than lethal ball bearings or explosives. JMB is also responsible for several other bombings since August 2005, including the assassination of two judges in November 2005. These attacks featured the use of suicide bombers, the first time the group has used this more lethal tactic. JMB attacks are often littered with leaflets espousing their grievances. One such leaflet found at a bombing site reads”...the ruler of our country is an opponent of Allah because the ... government is made by a completely non-Islamic system....” Ibid. Anne Marie Oliver, a US academic has made an extensive research on the phenomenon of suicide bombing. In her book entitled, “The Road to Martyrs’ Square: A Journey into the World of the Suicide Bomber,” she aptly sums up her findings: “The motives are diverse: religion, nationalism, grievance, fame, glory and money, and last of all and
most important of all, they have to have an entire system that supports their actions (sympathetic grounds round the world). “In the context of Bangladesh, the motivation of suicide bombers stem from (a) misinterpretation of Islamic religion (b) glory and (c) money.


52 The concept of NSC is not new in Bangladesh. General Ershad patronized the idea in 1979, but the politicians and bureaucrats perceived the concept as militarization of politics or preparation for some kind of military intervention. The BNP government also formed a NSC in 1992, but was never pushed further. The Awami League Government also established a 24-member NSC on May 4, 1997 led by the Prime Minister. But it also met with the same fate like the previous ones.

53 A suggested composition of the structure of NSC in Bangladesh is given in Appendix.
**APPENDIX**

Suggested Composition of NSC in Bangladesh

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<th>Number</th>
<th>Role Description</th>
<th>Position</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The Prime Minister</td>
<td>Chairperson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Ministers of Defence, Foreign Affairs, Finance and Home Affairs</td>
<td>Members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Leader of the Opposition</td>
<td>Members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Professional Experts/Advisors from within the Governmental Bureaucracy</td>
<td>Members</td>
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<td></td>
<td>a. Civil: Concerned Secretaries</td>
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<td>b. Military: Heads of Armed Forces</td>
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<td>c. Intelligence Agencies: Chief of Intelligence Services</td>
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<td>d. Other Security Agencies: Heads of Police, RAB, BDR and Ansar etc.</td>
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<td>e. Governmental Experts on Food, Energy, Economy and Trade etc.</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Professional Experts/Advisors from outside the Government</td>
<td>Members</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a. Heads of Thinks Tanks on security, economy, trade, corruption, governance,</td>
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<td>international relations, climate change, poverty alleviation, and micro-credit</td>
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<td>etc.</td>
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<td>b. Heads of Professional Bodies—lawyers association, trade bodies, professional</td>
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<td>bodies, academia and credible NGOs etc.</td>
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