5.1 INTRODUCTION
In developing countries like Bangladesh, discourse and public policy making in the arena of national security have traditionally been an exclusive preserve of public institutions, in particular, security sector institutions. Such a narrow focus is understandable because national security has been viewed in military and state centric terms. However, as the Cold War was coming to an end, security concerns in different parts of the globe began to encompass issues beyond the traditional domains of the state and military. In the process, conceptual boundaries and policy making in the fields of security have become much more widened and complicated in the post-Cold War, especially, post-9/11 era. Side by side with concerns for sovereignty and border security, issues like hunger, malnutrition, poverty, deprivation, environmental degradation, civil strife, unorganised as well as organised violence, including ethnic and sectarian conflicts—all these became legitimate security concerns of nations, population groups and individuals. Newer concerns like transnational crimes, pandemic diseases, global warming, disasters and energy security are making space in security discourse. For some time, concepts like comprehensive security\(^1\) and cooperative security,\(^2\) both of which could capture the broader version of security encompassing both military and non-military, state-centric and non-state-centric, security issues have been in circulation. However, newer and distinct concepts also began to emerge. One such approach has been non-traditional security (NTS) juxtaposed to traditional security. Thanks to
attempts from organisations like the Ford Foundation, an attempt has been going on for several years to build empirical knowledge base\(^3\) on NTS perhaps more at a descriptive level. The advantage of this conceptual innovation has been that already established newer concepts like human security, environmental security, food security, thanks to path breaking *Human Development Report 1994* by United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), could be conveniently subsumed under NTS.\(^4\) Because of what has come to be known as broadening and deepening of security discourse, role of a wider variety of actors and agents beyond the public institutions was recognised. Role of civil society in discourse and public policy making of security becomes especially relevant in this context.

**Question is:** What is public policy making? Public policy is a course of action adopted by the government on method of governance and system of regulative methods including laws, regulations, administrative guidelines and procedures.\(^5\) In a democratic set up, usually, elected politicians set the legislative and regulatory framework while the bureaucrats develop administrative guidelines, procedures and funding criteria but stakeholder’s views and advice based on frontline experiences do also count in public policy making in democracy.\(^6\) The role of civil society in public policy making may be put in perspective in the following contexts. First, public policy making has become much more complex, multifaceted and multidisciplinary. Public institutions alone may not have the expertise in dealing with multifarious policy issues. Second, the broadening and deepening of security agenda dictate that all major social forces including the civil society be part of the policy making process. Thirdly, public policy making in a democratic set up requires participation of major stakeholders including the civil society.

This chapter makes an assessment of the role of civil society including think tanks and research organisations in discourse and public policy making on security of Bangladesh, keeping 2007 as a reference year. Along with setting the conceptual boundary of civil society, the paper makes an inventory of Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) of the country dealing with security and related issues. Section 3 of the chapter provides brief background of the emergence of different types of CSOs in Bangladesh while Section 4 reviews the concept of security and outlines the indicators of public policy role
of civil society institutions in security. The burden of the chapter is on Section 5 in terms of assessing the role of CSOs in security of Bangladesh.

The study is based mainly on consultation of secondary literature on relevant aspects. A major handicap of the study has been the sheer dearth of information on CSOs in Bangladesh working in some way in security related fields. First of all, public policy includes a variety of activities many of which are ubiquitous and difficult to be determined without first hand information. Secondly, at times, organisations mandated to work on issues like enterprise development and corporate governance, do undertake hardcore traditional security research, dissemination and advocacy. Consultation of published information materials and accessing respective websites was not, therefore, enough for the present study. Thus, many of the conclusions of the study are tentative. A more comprehensive and updated version on the subject would require field based first hand information in future.

5.2 CONCEPT AND FUNCTIONS OF CIVIL SOCIETY

5.2.1 Concept of Civil Society

There is no consensus about the definition of civil society. The focus of the debate boils down to three aspects: first, space occupied by the civil society identified by asking the question what is not civil society; second, how to draw a line among a huge array of possible candidates for civil society; and third, what should be the sorting out criteria: agent or organisation, or the functions it does? That is: is civil society what it is or what it does? The crux of the debate would be evident if we indulge in a long quote from Hye (1998):

On the one hand, it (civil society) is being contrasted with non-civilian (military society) and on the other, it is being defined to include all institutions other than the formal organs of the state. These two extreme positions leave much scope for confusion. .... the proposed definition of the civil society includes the private sector, voluntary organisations (NGOs), social welfare organisations, professional bodies, trade unions, community based organisations, special interest groups, research organisation, “advocacy group” and media. This definition excludes legislature, the judiciary, the government, local government institutions and private sector trading and manufacturing units. Civil society covers multifarious activities from provision of limited public goods (microcredit, primary health-care, etc.) to advocacy for social reforms (gender equality, human rights for disadvantage groups etc.).
Currently, there is more or less a consensus that civil society refers to groups, associations and other form of collectivities outside state power and market. While 'outside state power and market power' defines the space occupied by the civil society, the essential qualifications of civil society are: protection, promotion, vouching and struggling for the interests of the common people vis-à-vis state and market powers. Viewed in this sense, civil society generally refers to non-governmental organisations, non-profit organisations, private voluntary organisation, think tanks and research organisations, community groups, indigenous peoples' organisations, faith-based organisations, professional associations and foundations. Apparently, one can agree with this generalised definition of civil society excepting that a huge array of bodies including the nominal ones having little contribution to public good comes within the purview of civil society. Thus, private sector organisations working for profit are not part of the civil society. In the like manner, political parties, whose primary motive for activities is seeking, acquiring and retaining state power, are not part of the civil societies. Thirdly, individuals working selflessly for the cause of people's welfare will not constitute civil society per se because, civil society consists of bodies, associations and other forms of collectivities. Individuals may work consistently or haphazardly for one or many causes but the fact remains that without any form of collectivity, their impact on policy will be minimal. Thus, even if individuals contribute to public goods, they will not be part of the civil society.

Even if some kind of consensus has developed around the concept of civil society, practical problems of inclusion and exclusion remain. First problematic concerns the NGO community: should NGOs be considered as part of the civil society? NGO community in Bangladesh seems to have become a natural entry in civil society evidently because of their role in poverty alleviation, social empowerment and rights approach to development. But should all NGOs over a wide spectrum of categories be considered as part of the civil society? Many NGOs are part of the market process, although they will claim to be non-profit organisations. Many perhaps work for themselves more than for the communities for which they seek and mobilise funds. Examples of degenerated and delinquent NGOs swindling poor people's hard earned savings are not rare. Thus, some kind of selectivity and judgement will be needed about NGOs.
Second, what should be the selection criteria: agent, organisation or functions? This question comes to the fore because at times, political parties, which otherwise do not fall _prima facie_ in the category of civil society, will more often than not advocate for protection and promotion of public welfare and rights. In a democratic system, it is true of the opposition parties which, by way of opposing and criticising the party in power, appear to be more vocal than even the civil society organisations for the welfare of the common mass. While such voices would add to the strength of the civil society, the fact remains that the primary goal of political parties remains mobilisation of public opinion for gaining state power. Thus, the definition of this paper stands with respect to political parties.

Third problematic concerns semi-government, autonomous research and advocacy bodies playing civil society functions. There are organisations which are part of the state or receive funding from the government, but play active role in policy briefing, awareness building, advocacy, even as pressure groups. These think tank type organisations not only themselves play civil society role, they provide forum for both government and non-governmental organisations and the civil society alike on issues of public concerns. But the fact remains that their primary loyalty will be with the government and to that extent, they cannot occupy any space independent of the state. The Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies (BIISS), an autonomous body dealing with foreign policy, international affairs, security and strategic affairs and developmental issues would fall in this ‘standing on the door way’ category.

Fourth and a critical agent at that, concerns the media—print as well as electronics. No doubt media makes tangible contribution in awareness building, advocacy and pressure group function. Media itself plays a role and provides a forum or medium for other civil society actors to play their respective role. It is often considered coterminous with freedom of expression and freedom of speech. Freedom of the press is a _sine quo non_ for democracy and human rights. With so many positive sides, question is still raised about media’s manifest bias to any particular business interests and for that matter, political interests. The image of an independent newspaper is fast vanishing because of increasing corporatisation and market-media nexus. Thus, claims that media is a part of the state
power or market power may sound legitimate and media’s inclusion in the civil society remains a question mark.

With a view to approaching the problematic of defining civil society to accommodate the diverse aspects, Blaney and Pasha (1992) argues a workable solution to approach the concept from a variety of angles—structures or organisations, social and political space and as a process. For the purpose of this chapter, the authors focus on the organisations but keeping such aspects as space and process notionally alive at hand.

5.2.2 Types of Civil Society Organisations

There are various types of CSOs. Different criteria are used to get meaningful typologies of CSOs. One classification may be on the basis of sponsorship. For example, adapting a classification of think tank type organisations done by another think tank, the following typology may be offered (Table 5.1):

Table 5.1: Typology of Civil Society Organisations Based on Autonomy and Funding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Autonomous and Independent</td>
<td>Significant independence from any one interest group or donor and autonomous in its operation and funding.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quasi Independent</td>
<td>May be autonomous from government but other interest groups like unions, religious groups or donors or any other contracting group may provide significant portion of the funding, and hence, exert significant influence over operation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political Party Affiliated</td>
<td>Political parties sometimes may launch bodies for promoting advocacy or social welfare or target group programmes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Institutions</td>
<td>Sometimes, universities and other academic institutions sponsor bodies of specialised type to conduct research/action research and research and advocacy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quasi Government</td>
<td>Funded partly or wholly by government but not formally part of the government structure.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Adapted from Policy Research and Civic Engagement Impact Survey, Think Tanks and Civil Societies Programs, Foreign Policy Research Institute, Philadelphia, USA, 2008.
Hye (1998) offers a comprehensive classification of civil society organisations based on types of activities they perform and professional affiliation (Table 5.2).\(^{13}\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Media (Press, Radio, TV)</td>
<td>Public opinion forming, information dissemination, entertainment etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trade Unions</td>
<td>Collective bargaining, awareness creation among members about their rights and public policies relating to them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Bodies</td>
<td>Maintaining high standard of the profession, protecting the rights of the members, promotion of group interests.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private Voluntary Organisations</td>
<td>Advocacy of social change in particular areas, provision of limited public goods to their clientele (credit, primary health, adult literacy etc.) manufacture and distribution of consumer goods to members of public (like milk processing, fisheries, disadvantaged groups (e.g. minorities, tribal people, destitute women, street children etc.).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sports and Cultural Bodies</td>
<td>Promotion of sports and culture through the activities of their members.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Welfare Organisations</td>
<td>Promotion of social welfare of members or limited clientele in particular areas through voluntary services of various types.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Hye, Hasnat Abdul (1998)

Hye has not considered as important category of CSOs, namely, academic and research organisations and think tanks which play a significant role in generating, collating and disseminating information on diverse aspects of public life. Goon (2002) attempts a more comprehensive classification based on participation and membership in the CSOs. She identifies three categories of CSOs based on membership (help their members and own community) like indigenous community groups, mass organisations, trade organisations, non-membership (help others) like NGOs, philanthropic institutions, non-profit companies, and spurious (not helping) like ‘NGO’ for personal profit, government organised NGOs, business organised NGOs and donor organised NGOs.\(^{14}\) Goon’s uncharitable characterisation of the last category may not be agreed to by many. However, Goon’s other specific typology of civil society organisations based
on the level at which they are operative is realistic. She identifies: grassroots, middle-range and national level CSOs, as detailed in Table 5.3.

Table 5.3: Classification of CSOs Based on Levels of Operation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grassroots CSOs</th>
<th>Middle-range CSOs</th>
<th>National CSOs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Associations in rural or urban communities</td>
<td>Associations at district level with sometimes limited national coverage</td>
<td>National or international associations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informal or minimum or organisations, staffed only with the organisers but hardly any professional people</td>
<td>Organisations with some professional staff, audited accounts</td>
<td>Professional staff, large turnover, funding from several sources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confronting local government</td>
<td>Confronting district or middle-range government</td>
<td>Confronting national government or international institutions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooperation between organisations within the local community</td>
<td>Cooperation between organisations regionally, or at times, nationally</td>
<td>Cooperation between organisations internationally</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dealing with problems arising in the community</td>
<td>Dealing with problems relevant to large area or groups of people</td>
<td>Dealing with problems concerning whole social classes, national as well as international</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


In any case, the two typologies offered above are complementary and help understand the nature and activities of civil society organisations in a comprehensive manner.

5.2.3 Functions of Civil Society Organisations including Public Policy Making

In general, civil society organisations perform the following functions:

- Civil society expresses the interests of social groups and raises awareness on key issues in order to influence policy and decisionmaking.
- Civil Society Organisations have been involved in shaping public policy through advocacy campaigns and mobilisation of people and resource.
As an element of democratic institution building, its activities may include seeking to influence relevant policies and legislation, providing oversight and watchdog functions and promoting accountability and transparency among government actors.

Historically, civil society groups have been a stronghold of human rights welfare of women, minorities and other marginal groups.

Civil society groups, such as non-governmental organisations, community-based groups, religious representatives, professional associations, trade unions, social movements and women's organisations, represent the interests, needs and concerns of their constituencies. These groups become politically active when they identify a need to advocate for a particular issue.

The types of activities outlined above bring the CSOs nearer as well as in the centre stage of public policy making. It may be mentioned that public policy in the post-Cold War era has become more complex and interdependent, and governments are recognising that they alone cannot find adequate solutions to vast problems of the society. Civil society organisations and research institutions, some even in public sector, turn out to be handy resource centres in providing broader perspectives, identifying alternative approaches, tapping wider sources of information and working out more imaginative solutions in a bid to maximise policy effectiveness and resource efficiency. This approach is particularly relevant in countries in transition where drawing on outside policy inputs may strengthen the development of civil society, increase public participation in decision making and help build trust in the national policy process.

Some organisations are created for the purpose of carrying out research and policy development per se on the basis of their expertise and from specific perspective. Think tanks, research institutes and social planning councils fall in this category. Usually in these research activities, issues are explored, analysed, predictions may be made and policy directions are suggested.

Some civil society organisations may not as such be created for public policy making but many of them may move to public policy making in order to find solutions to the problems they deal with and address the needs of their clients. Sometimes, they may move
to address systemic causes of the underlying conditions they face in service delivery. Social service organisations, organisations dealing with special clients like disabled, fall in this category. Similarly, sometimes many organisations are formed to bring together the perspectives of particular population groups like senior citizens, youth, women etc. They sometimes attempt to shape relevant public policies to impact on the population groups they serve.

A large number of organisations are formed for the purpose of addressing a particular issue and their main objective is the adoption of public policies on the concerned issues, along with the general purposes like creation of public awareness and mutual support. International development organisations, health charities, and organisations focused on environment and safety fall in this category.

Thus civil society organisations engage in public policy either as an intrinsic part of their raison d'etre, as a policy or obligations of cause based organisation, or as a logical next step in carrying out the delivery of services.

5.3 EMERGENCE OF CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS IN BANGLADESH

This section provides a brief profile of civil society organisations in Bangladesh. It is very difficult to come to even an approximation of the number of civil society organisations in the country. There are a number of regulatory bodies and registering authorities as far as the NGO type of CSOs are concerned. According to NGO Affairs Bureau attached to the Office of the Prime Minister/Chief Adviser to the Caretaker Government, there are 2360 NGOs in Bangladesh receiving foreign donation. Another registering authority is the Department of Social Welfare which provides registration to voluntary organisations throughout the country – local, regional or national. The main incentive for voluntary associations for registering with the Department of Social Welfare is the annual grants from the department. A third category of NGOs and private voluntary associations gets registered with the Registrar of Joint Stock Company. However, the space for civil society is much more than these categories of NGOs because there are associations and professional bodies which are not registered with any of the
regulatory bodies but provide important protection, advocacy, social welfare and developmental services. Thus, it is very difficult to provide any estimation of the number of CSOs in Bangladesh.

As far as growth of civil society organisations in Bangladesh is concerned, some watersheds may be mentioned: first, the tumultuous events leading to the independence of Bangladesh; and second, the prolonged anti-autocracy movements in the 1980s culminating in the ouster of Ershad regime and ushering of democratic era in 1990-91. One major impact of the movement for Bangladesh and War of Independence in 1971 was imbibing the people, in general and the educated section, in particular, with ideals of nationalism, social and economic justice and secularism. In particular, the goals of economic and social justice, and alleviation of poverty, inspired the growth of what turned out to be the largest NGO in Bangladesh, namely, BRAC (Bangladesh Rural Advancement Centre) in 1971. Likewise, Grameen Bank came into being in 1974 in a tiny village in Chittagong at the initiative of a young University Economics teacher, Dr. Muhammad Yunus. Grameen Bank (GB) turned out to be the initiator of well-publicised micro-credit. Subsequently, GB retained the scope and mode of operation with the poor and destitute women in the rural areas, but turned itself into a scheduled bank in 1984, thus formally no longer remaining an NGO. In any case, along this poverty alleviation stream, scores of NGOs dealing with microcredit, socio-economic upliftment, targeted programmes for the disadvantaged and marginalised population have come into being.

The prolonged autocratic rule during 1982-1990 that witnessed a political vacuum led to the growth and activism of what Aroma Goon called second generation civil society organisations. A good number of civil society organisations such as labour and peasant associations, Bar Associations, student organisations, workers and employees confederation (known as SKOP), religious groups, various cultural and professional groups came into being and felt emboldened to demand the ouster of the autocratic regime. CSOs focused on civil, political and human rights, access to justice, protection of insecurity proliferated in the 1980s and 1990s.

A third stream of CSOs dealing with minority rights had their origin in late 1970s and 1980s following the insurgency and counter-insurgency activities in the Chittagong Hill Tracts and the perceived
deprivation of civil, political and human rights and land rights. As rights of indigenous peoples, religious minorities were perceived to have suffered in the process of social forestry, deforestation and other infrastructure development, the minority rights organisations continued to derive their legitimacy throughout recent years.

A fourth stream of CSOs engages in traditional governance areas such as acting as catalysts and advocates of interests of the marginalised and the disadvantaged who are otherwise under-represented. They supplement governance responsibility where governance falters, mobilise people, defend interest of the poor, uneducated, unorganised and the weak, and where necessary, provide inputs, goods and services otherwise not available through public channels. A strong civil society is expected to demand a more democratically accountable and transparent state and good governance. It is also argued that citizen participation is central to the idea of civil society. A good number of civil society organisations in Bangladesh engage themselves with governance, democracy and participatory development.

A fifth stream of CSOs focuses on newer and emerging issues like climate change and environmental degradation, mitigating consequences of structural adjustment policies and the WTO process, energy security and food security.

In real life, however, the civil society organisations may not maintain the above typological finesses in the sense they may provide multiple services of different categories, and they may be offering a host of services well beyond their original mandates and programmes. Brief profiles of selected CSOs in Bangladesh with outline of their functions including security functions are presented in the Appendix. Ideally, the Appendix should have been constructed with primary data which remains a major limitation of the study.

Moreover, in order to better grasp the wide spectrum of activities which may be considered as security functions, the broader and deeper dimensions of security on a conceptual plane need to be understood. This is done in the following section.

5.4 CONCEPTUAL DISCOURSE ON SECURITY
5.4.1 From Traditional to Non-traditional Security
Over the past decades, there has been a constant search for re-defining security because of fast changing national, regional and
global milieu. In the process, it is being realised that the traditional state-centric, militaristic security paradigm can hardly address the security threats currently being faced by states, societies and individuals. Threats to survival and well-being of states, societies and individuals come—often in contradictory fashion—from non-state sources, mostly from within states, but also from extra-territorial sources. Certainly traditional security concerns like border and territoriality, power rivalry and arms race are not extinct. They are very much present in the national and public policy concerns in the developing world. Indeed, challenges to territorial sovereignty, sovereignty over resources, challenges to state autonomy in decision making in affairs of the state come from more variegated sources than traditional security experts can imagine. The problem is compounded by the almost incomprehensible speed at which changes are taking place in the domain of information flow and information technology. That means, traditional tools for dealing with even those areas which are considered traditional security concerns will have to be continually re-evaluated and redesigned. Thus, the need for a non-traditional approach to traditional militaristic security makes the task of interfacing between the two domains very pertinent.

Thus, traditional military security still perhaps is the dominant paradigm, but it is being increasingly realised that military security cannot respond to some of mankind’s fundamental needs like freedom from poverty, threats to individuals and groups from violent and non-violent sources threatening survival and dignified living. If protection of the borders and preservation of independence and sovereignty is a *sine qua non* for the survival of the citizens of a state, the non-traditional aspects would constitute at least sufficient condition for survival and necessary condition for a dignified living of the citizens. What is interesting, the dividing line between traditional and non-traditional security is indeed thin. This will be evident from Gregg Mills’ attempt to make a comprehensive typology of threats: territorial threats (some in traditional sense but mostly in the sense of sovereign incursions by population groups, resource extractions, fishing, diversion of waters), economic threats (economic globalisation and the sheer weight of international financial transactions provide opportunities to financial criminals to play foals that affect developments and macro-economic stability,
marginalisation of the geographically disadvantaged countries, intellectual property rights, demographic issues, pandemic threats of AIDS, malaria and water borne diseases), political threats (corruption, piracy, illegal narcotics and small arms, extra-parliamentary agitation and street violence, money laundering), and environmental threats (transboundary pollution, global warming and nuclear waste, depleted natural resources including water, prospecting of transboundary mineral and marine resources). Traditional and non-traditional security threats are mixed up difficult to be separated from one another.

However, there is also a tendency to expand the concept of security, both vertically and horizontally making it less useful as an analytical tool. If everything is securitised, all other approaches to and paradigms of knowledge could be rendered meaningless and unnecessary. The concept of security need not be too restrictive nor should it be too inclusive. Ayoob's views are pertinent here. He argues that "security or insecurity is defined in relation to vulnerabilities, both internal and external, that threaten to, or have the potential to, bring down or significantly weaken state structures, both territorial and institutional, and regimes.... Other types of vulnerability, whether economic or ecological, become integral components of our definition of security only if they become acute enough to take on overtly political dimensions and threaten state boundaries, state institutions, or regime survival." The advantage of this definition is that it goes beyond the realist restrictive nature and holds back the critical theorists' expansionist tendency in defining the concept.

The concept of comprehensive security as opposed to the recent trend segregating traditional security from non-traditional security, and for that matter, human security, may tackle many of the limitations of the newer concepts. The concept of non-traditional security includes on such issues as forms and effects of globalisation, unfinished agenda of nation-state formation, energy security, migration, refugee flow and displacement of population, ethnic strife, gender violence, environmental problems, identity, culture and nationalism, transnational crimes including small arms, drugs and human trafficking.

Concerns for people's security have led to the emergence of the concept of human security which generally means freedom from want and freedom from fear. The UNDP sponsored *Human Development Report* highlights concerns for freedom from want,
while concerns for freedom from fear of violence has been highlighted by the Canadian Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT). However, it has been felt that security needs of the state and those of the people need to be interfaced and seen in an integrated fashion for more than one reason. Comprehensive security does not exclude military security but gives precedence to other aspects like social, political, economic and environmental security. Instead of viewing security in terms of separate military and non-military security thresholds, comprehensive security uses a broad band prism to view the whole set of forces that affect the states, peoples and the societies. In particular, one needs to understand how economic, environmental, societal and governance factors impact on state policies. The combined impact of these factors leaves the state and the governing elite vulnerable to forces that cannot be mitigated by military force.

Secondly, while the forces of globalisation and information revolution had led to substantial weakening of the state, the institution of state which has displayed a remarkable degree of resilience over the last three hundred years is unlikely to wither in the foreseeable future. So, tensions between state security and human security in a holistic sense will occupy the centre stage of security discourse in the coming decades.

Thirdly, very often military and non-military security issues co-exist. This is perhaps true more for South Asia, a peculiar region where nuclearisation, conventional arms build up go hand in hand with flow of small arms, drugs, insurgencies, sectarian and communal violence, extra-parliamentary political violence and instability. In the context of India-Pakistan relations, one would find that insurgency and very high stake inter-state confrontation, small arms and sophisticated nuclear weaponry, form a continuum so that traditional and non-traditional security issues become enmeshed. Even freedom from want and freedom from fear, the two alternative versions of non-traditional security are enmeshed when one see that poverty, and deprivation, environmental degradation are mixed with unorganised but endemic class, caste and group violence; political process is linked with black money, extortion and rent seeking. This is a region where protracted conflicts like Kashmir, Sri Lankan ethnic conflicts continue and at the same time, newer types of conflicts have emerged. Even moves for regional and sub-regional cooperation are subjects of controversy and deadlocks.
From the above discussion, one may argue that threats to security for a poor developing country like Bangladesh at state, society, groups and individual levels originate from a variety of sources—traditional and non-traditional, all impacting eventually on human security. It will be pertinent at this point to review briefly some of the sources of insecurity to Bangladesh to set the role of civil society in public policy making on security in perspective.

**5.4.2 Review of Sources of Insecurity to Bangladesh**

Given Bangladesh’s peaceful foreign policy based on friendship and good neighbourliness, we do not expect any major threat to Bangladesh’s security from traditional sources. But one has to appreciate a number of realities on the ground. Firstly, the continuing insurgency in India’s north-eastern states is likely to impinge on Bangladesh’s security in multiple ways. The catalogue of outstanding issues in Bangladesh-India relations is quite substantive including huge trade imbalance and India’s allegation that Bangladesh harbours insurgents from India’s north-east. With Myanmar, Bangladesh has a close friendly working relation despite the outstanding issue of Rohingya refugees and undemarcated maritime borders. Encroachment in Bangladesh’s coastal and off-shore areas in terms of poaching, piracy and dumping of hazardous materials may be considered another source of insecurity which is likely to increase in the coming years. One indicator is dwindling sweet water fishery and our increased dependence on marine fisheries. Indian, Korean, Thai and Myanmar’s fishing trawlers regularly encroach into Bangladesh territorial waters. Piracy and deviant shipping in the ports have increased, dumping of hazardous waste takes place. The maritime boundary of Bangladesh has not been demarcated either with India or with Myanmar. The Bay of Bengal is now known to be a repository of minerals as well as living resources. An eventuality cannot be discounted when there could be scrambles over these resources between and among the three maritime neighbours.

As far as, non-traditional security is concerned, the catalogue, again, is quite long. The country suffers from frequent devastating natural disasters, poverty is chronic and pervasive. Bangladesh is already affected by two emerging threats—energy security and food security—and is likely to be affected by the adverse consequences
of climate change. Societal security and for that matter, human security is affected by un-organised violence as well as organised violence. Drug peddling, arms traffic and proliferation, human trafficking affect societal peace and human security. Cross-border movement, arms and drug inflow, arms transit, piracy and poaching not only affect societal security but also impinge on national sovereignty.

Some observations may be made on the basis of the discussion above. Firstly, on a comparative basis, conventional security issues confronting Bangladesh originate from the unstable regional environment as well as from Bangladesh’s geo-political location vis-à-vis its largest neighbour, India. However, admittedly, threats to its security from the conventional military security sources are not that worrisome. Secondly, other sectoral threats, economic, environmental and societal are intermestic both horizontally and vertically. Horizontal intermestic character originates from the fact that economic threats spill over into societal domain, environmental threats also spill over into economic domains and vice versa. Vertical linkages occur because environmental issues, even societal issues like flow of small arms, human trafficking, movement of population, have cross-border dimensions. Thirdly and finally, the nature of the security issues suggest that preventive, mitigation and adaptive measures to threats to security cannot be undertaken by the state alone. Role of other actors including the civil society needs to be recognised and taken on board in earnest.

5.4.3 Frameworking the Role of Civil Society in Discourse and Public Policy on Security

Having seen the wide array of issues that come under the purview of either traditional or non-traditional security, the authors would soon undertake an empirical examination of the role of civil society organisations in the discourse and public policy making in security. First, the authors make an attempt at frameworking the role of civil society organisation in discourse and public policy making in security which is bound to be speculative as no work has been done in this area. In what follows, an outline of possible role of civil society organisations in discourse and public policy making in security is presented.
**Academic Research, Deliberation and Publication**

A sizable section of the civil society organisations engage in academic research, deliberations and publications on diverse issues of national security. The CSOs may have academic and research work as part of their mandated activities or they may add on among other preoccupations. However, mainly the dedicated research and academic institutions have in-house research capabilities. Others resort to outsourcing. The academic works are disseminated through seminars/conferences and publications including as books and regular journals. However, research activities may be commissioned by sponsors including the public agencies. In recent years, because of donor preferences for government-civil society partnership, public agencies are major clientele of research works.

**Policy Paper and Policy Briefing**

An important category of security related functions of the civil society is preparation of policy papers and policy briefings for its clientele. While general policy propositions and advocacy works may be done by most of the academic and think tank type CSOs, specific policy papers are usually made by specialised institutions.

**Advocacy and Pressure Group Function**

Civil society organisations are at the forefront of advocacy and pressure group activities. In general, advocacy and pressure group activities concern non-traditional security issues, mainly because of the fact that traditional security issues are the domain of public personalities and public sector institutions. But, in the post-9/11 era, the distinction between the two gets blurred in such cases as insurgency, terrorism, sovereign incursions and the like. Thus, we also observe advocacy activities on traditional security issues.

**Civil Society-Donor Partnership**

Civil society-donor partnership is a common place phenomenon in developing countries like Bangladesh mainly in view of civil society organisations' quest for resources, ideas and models. For the purpose of the paper, we would be interested in the security aspects of the partnership. Security in this context may be looked
into from traditional point of view like autonomy of decision making on the part of the CSOs, and from NTS point of view like impact on empowerment, advocacy, policy change and more importantly, provision of security as a public, societal or group goods.

**Governance Role**

Given the fact that political instability and poor governance in many of the developing countries impinge on security, the governance role of CSOs may be examined in this context.

**Securitisation**

Securitisation is a concept in the context of non-traditional security which refers to raising certain existential threats to the level of security by 'speech act.' The concept originally was evolved in the context of Europe but scholars are objecting to the restrictive practices of focusing on discursive rather than objective threats to security, speech acts for valid securitisation only by state actors, and the requirement that the speech act has to be recognised or accepted by others. Actually, much of securitisation is carried out by non-state actors and it may also be carried out by non-speech acts. Securitisation should also go beyond the act of construction of insecurity and refer to objective threats to life of the masses bulk of who may not be able to ventilate or express the existential threats they are confronted with. Thus, we need to go beyond the European context to apply the concept of securitisation.

**Providing Security to Target Groups/Clientele**

Public sector reforms in the 1980s and 1990s driven by neoliberal policies on privatisation and reduction in the size of state tended to create a vacuum in service delivery especially on the part of the poorer segments of the population who could not afford the privatised services. Besides, because of governance failure and often repressive nature of the state, the state turned out to be the source of lack of service delivery and for that matter, insecurities to the poorer and the marginalised. Violation of human rights, lack of access to justice, loss of livelihood at the hand of private forces, criminal hands and commercial interests lead to proliferation of
insecurities of citizens. Thus, civil society organisations do come forward to ensure and provide security to the threatened and vulnerable population groups.

5.5 ROLE OF CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS (CSOs) IN SECURITY OF BANGLADESH

The role of a civil society organisation depends on the nature, scope and objectives of the organisation. The Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) in Bangladesh have been involved in various policy and programme related activities like research, analysis, information dissemination, dialogues, seminars and consensus building in relation to a specific issue, with the intention of raising understanding and awareness in the policy arena. Some research organisations also provide policy papers, policy briefs, and advocacy to bring change in public policy. Some CSOs, mainly NGOs, are involved in development work, poverty alleviation, human rights promotion, environmental issues, and also providing security to some particular groups of people like women, children and disabled person. This section will focus on the role of CSOs in Bangladesh in some details based on limited information.

5.5.1 Academic Research, Dissemination and Publication

Academic research is the channel for finding out the cause and effect of a social problem more systematically. A good number of research organisations, and think tanks are working for academic research in Bangladesh. The research activities of the Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies (BIISS), Centre for Policy Dialogues (CPD), Bangladesh Unnayan Parishad (BUP), Bangladesh Centre for Advanced Studies (BCAS) can be mentioned in this regard. While BIISS falls outside the purview of this chapter because of its autonomous status, some passing remarks may be made about its activities because it is the premier think tank on security studies in the country. BIISS promotes studies, organises seminars, conferences and workshops and makes publications on the issues of traditional and non-traditional security, and other vital national and international issues. The year 2007 was not an exception. One of the significant activities was organising an international workshop on “Democracy, Governance and Security Reforms” from 12-16 August 2007. Many civil society members,
bureaucrats, and security sector personnel joined the event to evaluate the security policy. This organisation has collaboration with international organisations and donor agencies. For instance, with the support from the Department for International Development (DFID), UK, BIJSS has conducted a research project entitled “Bangladesh Human Security Assessment 2007” to provide qualitative and quantitative analyses of the levels, trends and drivers of human insecurities in Bangladesh, and identify significant policy implications for government, donors and civil society in Bangladesh. BIJSS published articles and monographs on security related issues.

Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD) as a CSO is engaged in academic research and dissemination on developmental issues, specifically on trade and WTO. It is prominent in undertaking primary data based studies. In 2007, it completed a substantive field based study on functioning of essential commodity markets in Bangladesh sponsored by the Ministry of Commerce.

5.5.2 Advocacy and Pressure Groups

The CSOs in Bangladesh have a watchdog and advocacy role in various human rights issues. Their voice in reforming the national security agencies like police, RAB (Rapid Action Battalion, a newly raised elite force to combat crimes) has been notable. Leading civil society members and NGOs like Ain o Shalish Kendra (ASK), Odhikar, Bangladesh Women Lawyers’ Association (BNWLA) are playing an oversight role and giving pressure to the government to ensure transparency and accountability of police and RAB. They have advocated for enhancing the capability of the forces and recommended to reform the colonial police act of 1861 and have also expressed their deep concern about the extra judicial killings in the country. They have provided advocacy for reforming all the bad laws including Section 54 and Special Act of 1974, which is basically used for political purposes. Recently, Bangladesh government has prepared a draft ordinance for reforming the police forces. The CSOs have given their critical comments to make the Police Ordinance 2007 more effective and are putting pressure on the Government to pass the Ordinance as law.

An independent, impartial and efficient judiciary is the very foundation of ensuring justice, people’s rights and security. Nevertheless, according to Transparency International Global Corruption Report
on Bangladesh, two thirds of Bangladeshi people who used a lower court in 2004 paid bribes. ASK and Odhikar have acted as pressure groups for separation of the judiciary from the executive. The Caretaker Government took the initiative to separate the judiciary in 2007. However, the real independence of the judiciary is yet to be achieved and the continued relevance of CSOs as advocates and pressure groups in this regard remains.

The role of CPD as advocates and pressure groups with respect to monetary, fiscal and trade policies of the government has been quite tangible. On the other hand, BEI with its active advocacy cell has been consistently and persistently advocating for enacting counter-terrorism and anti-money laundering laws.

The advocacy role of the Refugee and Migratory Movements Research Unit (RMMRU) in promoting the rights of the refugees and migrant workers is also notable. It has initiated regional collaborative research for refugee and displacement, and has provided policy advocacy at national and regional levels. It has engaged itself in campaigns for adoption of national law on refugees, accession to 1951 Refugee Convention and Ratification of UN Convention on rights of all migrant workers and their families 1990. It has addressed the questions of citizenship and rehabilitation of camp-based stranded Pakistanis (Biharis). Currently, it is preparing policy document on institutionalising linkages with Bangladeshi diaspora.

5.5.3 Producing Policy Papers and Policy Briefings

Working on producing policy papers and policy briefings are concerns of some CSOs, which usually undertake research on specific issues to contribute to public policy making in the respective fields. However, CSOs in general, in Bangladesh lack adequate legal and strategic framework and capacity for policy making. Despite that, some CSOs have already made valuable contribution in designing national policy. The role of CPD as a leading CSO can be considered in this respect. Contribution Bangladesh Centre for Advanced Studies (BCAS) in climate change related issues, Institute of Governance Studies (IGS) in governance issues may also be mentioned.

CPD is the member of various consultative committees set up by the government of Bangladesh to provide policy inputs on trade related issues. It maintains an active and extensive network with a large number of regional and international organisations to
advance Bangladeshi interests in the context of global trading system. Every year CPD contributes to enhance the quality of trade policy discourse by organising policy dialogues and publishing Independent Review of Bangladesh’s Development (IRBD). In addition to trade, CPD works on implementation of political and electoral reforms. In 2003, it organised a national policy review forum to review the actions taken by the parliament and the government. It called for creation of an articulation and implementation of the necessary laws and regulations so that clean and competent candidates could be nominated and elected. CPD also worked in 2001 on preparation of pre-election policy briefs.

Similarly, IGS, BRAC University, a centre for training as well as conferring post-graduate degrees for government officials, has made some tangible efforts in generating public policy debates on good governance.

5.5.4 Civil Society-Donor Partnership

Partnership between civil society and donor is not a new concept. This partnership has flexibility to work in areas where government is unable or unwilling to act because of political sensitivities or logistical problems. However, this joint venture has already shown some controversial tendencies. With inadequate finance, some CSOs are becoming increasingly dependent on aid donors. They are employing extensive networks with development partners who have their own agendas and targets to pursue their goals. What is at stake here is autonomy of local CSOs to define and sustain their own agenda, goals and objectives, priorities and values.

Over-reliance on donor support or external dependence leads to disempowerment of domestic policy making process. It is essential for civil society-donor partnership to establish their authority based on the credentials of their spokespersons and organisations that must be driven by a natural commitment to the concerns of the citizens of their country. The scope of this partnership should be broadened to include provision of financial and technical assistance by donors to build human resource and institutional capacities of their partner organisations. Since 1980s and 1990s development of civil society-donor partnership has advocated and persuaded government of Bangladesh to change policies in various issues.
With funding from donor agencies, BRAC’s initiatives on countrywide family planning programmes, adolescent reproductive health, prevention and control of HIV/AIDS infection and promotion of gender equality and women’s empowerment have been notable. Joint initiatives of BRAC and donors have also been significant in increasing women’s access to income and employment generation, helping awareness of social issues, providing micro-credit, health care, training and capacity development for the poor women to enhance societal development. On the other hand, partnership between the BIJSS and donor agencies like DFID, Saferworld, etc. in promoting research activities on traditional and non-traditional security in Bangladesh has been significant. In this respect, DFID funded project on Bangladesh Human Security Assessment 2007 and Saferworld funded projects on Links between Climate Change, Migration and Security in Bangladesh could be mentioned.

5.5.5 Governance Role
Civil society in Bangladesh historically has played a proactive role in democratic and governance process of the country. In general, the pro-democracy and rights-based role turns out to be anti-establishment. However, in a turn of events in 2007, the pro-active role of the civil society happened to be pro-establishment. Of course, such a role, which happened to be in line with the development partners of Bangladesh, was criticised by the common people as well as counter-hegemonic civil society groups.

5.5.6 Public-Private Partnership (PPP)
Public-Private Partnership (PPP) is a contractual agreement formed between a public agency (national government, district administration, municipal authorities, local government bodies, para-statal corporations, state universities and research organisations) and a private sector entity (commercial for profit enterprises, development focused voluntary NGOs, cooperative societies, community based organisations, religious and professional organisations, trade unions, research and academic institutions, households). PPP allows greater private sector participation in delivery of services. It also allows public agencies to use private sector resources to achieve certain public agency objectives. Bangladesh has gained some
experience on PPP, especially in respect of scope and diversity of NGO activities in social services. Sectors of PPP in Bangladesh include health, education, infrastructure development, tourism, ICT and industries. Infrastructure continues to be high on development agenda of the government. But the infrastructural development has continually been insignificant due to unavailability of private sector investment. PPP may have a good opportunity to ramp up country’s financing on infrastructure since it can involve mixed public-private financing. In this case, proposed Padma Bridge can be a prime target for such financing.

5.5.7 Securitisation

Civil society plays an important role in raising different issues to the status of security. It creates awareness among the mass people and the policy makers about various issues such as dysfunctional politics, terrorism, minority rights, human rights, corruption, freedom of speech, poverty and so on. In a democracy people have the right to know the activities of the government, especially the decision of the government that affects their life, liberty and property. Information is important for people to make choices regarding their participation in the state, the market and the civil society. Sufficient information helps people to decide rationally and take the right course of action beneficial to them. Media—both print and electronic—thus helps people to know what is happening around the world, socialise them with the values of pluralism and equip them with the elements of modernity.

In recent time, terrorism has become a great concern for the national security of Bangladesh. Although Bangladesh government has almost succeeded in combating terrorism, the problem, even if at residual level, remains. Many of the civil society organisations including research and human rights bodies are raising alarm signals about the potentials of the remnants to regroup and emerge as a threat to national security. Similar has been the role of different NGOs in raising concerns about avian flu, drug addiction, and small arms flow.

However, motivated campaigns, misinformation or partisan approach at times may cause troubles and anarchy in the society, and thus, contribute to insecurity.
5.5.8 Providing Security to Target Groups

CSOs, especially some NGOs, make significant contribution in providing security—livelihood, food, energy, health services, protection of human rights, and protection of minority rights. NGOs such as Bangladesh Protibondhi Foundation (BPF), Community Development Library (CDL), CARITAS,Chars Livelihoods Programme (CLP), Centre for the Rehabilitation of the Paralysed (CRP), OXFAM Bangladesh, may be mentioned as catalytic agents in providing security to particular groups of people like women, children, disabled persons, marginalised poor, and landless people.

The BPF is providing education and rehabilitation for handicapped children and adults. It serves as a Teachers Training Centre for professional students for special education. The CDL is engaged in activities intending to change the quality of life of the people. It is trying to educate, inspire and empower unprivileged people, including people with disability, to take part in the process of social development and also to benefit them.36

The CARITAS Bangladesh has been taking measures for emergency relief, disaster preparedness, rehabilitation, reconstruction, and community development for poor, marginal groups in national and local level. The organisation has been giving much importance to empowerment and institution building of the landless, of the women and of the indigenous communities. CARITAS undertook Development Extension Education Services (DEEDS) in 1979, Gender and Development Project (GDP) in 1992, Integrated Human Development Project (IHDP) in 1990, including Integrated Community Development Projects (ICDPs). All these core projects are now extended in 110 upazilas of the country with 369,222 rural poor, women (70 per cent) and men as members of 19,164 primary groups/cluster groups. There are also 64,858 Adiwasi members, which is 18 per cent of total beneficiaries, with 60 per cent Adiwasi women. All members of these groups are in interaction with each other within their respective societal structures to achieve socio-economic growth and sustainable development.37

The CLP is helping to improve livelihood security of very poorest people living in riverine areas of Kurigram, Gaibandha, Jamalpur, Bogra and Sirajganj districts. The CRP is helping to promote community based treatment, rehabilitation and support services for the disable and vulnerable groups especially children, girls and
women in promoting rights and welfare of disabled people and highlighting disability awareness through influencing and lobbying the government. The OXFAM Bangladesh is working for gender equality, disaster preparedness, and helping the people for secure living. It helps landless people, especially women, marginalised people with disability, the tribal people and the sex-workers.

5.6 LIMITS OF CIVIL SOCIETY IN BANGLADESH

Civil society organisations in Bangladesh suffer from various limitations or weaknesses. Sometimes the activities of CSOs are the cause of the problems not only for themselves but also for others. The lack of a proper role of civil society could be both cause and effect of an undeveloped democracy in Bangladesh. For a matured and tolerant democracy, a robust civil society is desirable. Similarly, without a strong democracy, building an effective civil society is unrealistic. However, it seems that almost every organised section of Bangladesh society is divided into two major streams that are totally polarised and adamant about retaining their own political position. Now question is why we do not have an effective civil society in Bangladesh? What are the principal obstacles or challenges to build such a civil society? Some of the major limitations of the civil society in Bangladesh are discussed in the following.

5.6.1 Partisan Tendencies of Civil Society

Civil society in Bangladesh is far from being non-partisan. It is evident that civil society in particular some intellectuals and CSOs are directly or indirectly involved in partisan politics. The university professors' are divided in blue, white, and pink colours. It is polarised, politicised and intolerant like their patron political parties. Therefore, it is difficult to find any independent voice among most of them. Those who are really independent are muffled by the louder voice of the partisan majority. It is claimed that the polarisation in politics has gone so deep that it has divided the country into almost two nations. Some civil society members have further contributed to this polarisation of politics.

5.6.2 Colonial Legacy of Polarised Civil Society

Colonial legacy is found in the polarised civil society of Bangladesh. In fact, the root of the polarised civil society is laid in the freedom
movement against the colonial master. Colonialism created a divided political milieu on a countrywide scale, which was reflected in the struggle between the colonial government and colonised subalterns. Later, this polarisation turned to a struggle between the colonial power and the nationalist forces. It was not a simple task to organise the multi-ethnic, linguistic and religious communities of the entire undivided Indian subcontinent. The organisation of the nationalist forces led to the division of both public and private spheres of life in the undivided Indian subcontinent. This division influenced the other areas as well. In fact, the whole South Asia witnessed a proliferation of polarised politics, starting with religion but slowly encompassing other areas as well such as language, culture, and complexion and so on. It is argued that in the face of polarisation politics and the wake of struggle against colonialism, the civil society of the subcontinent also got polarised and violent. In fact, unlike the civil society in the West, civil society in colonial South Asia could no longer boast of its civilising and consenting roles. The colonialism made civil society to such an extent that the latter soon got into business of organising and reproducing violence and intolerance similar to that of political society.

5.6.3 Immature Democracy

Plato said that an ideal state can be possible only if a civil society is there to support it. This is true but it can also be argued that a liberal democracy (close to an ideal state) is necessary to build a strong civil society. An effective and impartial civil society can not be built in a repressive or authoritarian state. The civil society must be allowed to express the virtue of their wisdom to prosper the nation and society. However, there are different views which argue that for a democratic government a strong civil society is not necessary. For instance, Japan, France, Spain have a low civil society participation and weak civil society. Their democracy is stable and can ensure people’s rights. In fact, the political parties and election are what ensure a pluralism of political choices in these countries. Political systems harmonise with their own tradition and culture. Political parties left a little room for the role of civil society in the developed world. But in countries like Bangladesh where political parties are not responsible and democratic, justice
are not ensured, civil society has a vital role. Nevertheless, civil society alone cannot go far if the political parties and government do not sincerely try to play their due role.

5.6.4 Civil Society and Donor Agencies: Patron-Client Relations

The donor agencies have become an important development partner of Bangladesh. They have provided aid not only through government organisations but also through the local NGOs. It is claimed that some NGOs and think tanks try to get fund for their narrow self-interests. For vested interests or financial benefit, some intellectuals even work as the agent of the donor countries or big powers who have influence in Bangladesh. These so called intellectuals and organisations do not hesitate to sell the vital national interests and the image of the country just for their personal benefit. The patron-client relationship and dependence on donor agencies for funding ultimately jeopardise the effectiveness of NGOs.

5.6.5 Lack of Interaction between Civil Society and Government

There is a lack of interaction between the policy makers and civil society. Sometimes, the policy makers, especially the civilian bureaucrats are reluctant to take into account the policy recommendations provided by the civil society. At least two reasons can be mentioned here: (1) habitual bureaucratic mentality not to accept new ideas from the civil society; (2) due to lack of a clear idea about what civil society is. Similarly, government recognition to any civil society members or organisations also creates confusion in the society. For example, when the present Caretaker Government invited some civil society members for dialogue to overcome the current political crisis in Bangladesh, it created misgivings in public perceptions that there has been an alliance among the government, development partners and civil society.

5.6.6 Limited Resources

Bangladesh is one of the poorest countries in the world. But the list of the insecurities it has been facing is long. CSOs are required to have a vast resource to resolve the number of socio-economic and political problems in Bangladesh. However, the limited resources
are a major impediment for proper functioning of civil society organisations. Many civil society organisations have a lack of resources and manpower to conduct their research and development activities. To produce good public policy, the fund provider should consider the right organisations that have researchers and experts on a particular issue.

In addition, it is also observed that the network within the NGOs has been weak, and the impact of the development activities is not always visible.

5.7 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

With its limitations the government of Bangladesh alone cannot manage the vast problems of the society that may create direct or indirect threat to the national security of the country. Therefore, civil society members and CSOs have a vital role in helping out the government for ensuring people's right, security and development. Civil society can help promote transparency and accountability of the parliament and cabinet decisions. It can help establish a society based on rule of law, democratic values and social justice. Civil society can be considered a bridging mechanism between state and citizens. However, civil society in Bangladesh is not active and strong. As a whole, the role of civil society in Bangladesh is not encouraging. It has been polarised and ineffective in its role in building the society and nation. CSOs are directly or indirectly involved in partisan politics which hampers the democratic process and nation building.

It is argued that civil society has been more active during the democratic period. Of course, if a state is authoritarian then civil society cannot function freely and properly. However, again, one may raise questions about the effective functionality of civil society in Bangladesh even in the previous democratic periods from 1990 to 2006. For a country like Bangladesh where democracy is not institutionalised, justice is not ensured, all the state institutions including parliament lacks transparency and accountability, politics of dynasty has been apparent, absence of democratic practice in political parties is a common phenomenon, civil society can be considered as the light at the end of dark tunnel to guide the nation. Hence, civil society is expected to play its due role in
order to promote the overall security of Bangladesh, which includes both traditional territorial security and non-traditional human security.

Although Bangladesh lacks a robust civil society, there are some significant achievements earned by civil society in different time in pre- and post-liberation period of Bangladesh. Civil society had a glorious role in our past especially to liberate the country from the West Pakistani rulers. Their initiatives unified all the political actors and mass people to start an autonomy movement in late sixties. Since mid-1980s, civil society has emerged as an alternative force along with the conventional political parties and pressure groups in Bangladesh. In 1990, the civil society played a courageous role by launching a mass movement to dislodge Ershad’s military regime. In addition, civil society pressures led the newly elected legislature to replace the presidential system by the parliamentary system.

Civil society organisations have been involved in various activities including academic research of a social problem, development work, poverty alleviation, human rights promotion, environmental security, and also providing security to some particular groups of people like women, children, disabled persons, ethnic and religious minorities. Therefore, although there has been criticism about the effectiveness and partisan inclinations of civil society, it is not too much to say that the civil society has now been recognised as a credible channel for voicing the critical issues ranging from politics and governance to human security.

It is argued that “Civil society is the well-spring of social capital—the ability of people to work together for common purposes—that in turn is integral to good governance.” Hence, a robust civil society is necessary for promoting peace and security and sustainable development of Bangladesh. Civil society can open a new window of opportunity to monitor public institutions, identifying critical issues and constraints in legal, institutional and judicial processes of governance, persuading the political parties to practice democratic politics. Nevertheless, if the civil society, having its own agenda to serve its narrow interests, cannot really think independently about what is best for the nation, hope for a robust civil society is idealistic. Only the truly independent representatives of the civil society can properly claim itself to be holding unbiased views, carrying weight and depth, about issues that concern people’s interests.
For building an effective civil society in Bangladesh, some specific recommendations are given below:

1. Civil society members and organisations must stop partisan tendencies and emphasise on national interests rather than the narrow party interests;

2. Scholars and experts can try to give a clear boundary of civil society organisations based on their motivation and actual activities that help the government in producing better public policy;

3. Civil society, in particular, think tanks and NGOs, should stop patron-client relations with the donor agencies just for narrow self-interests. A commission can be established to monitor the patron-client relations of the civil society and donors damaging the image and interests of the country;

4. Civil society can play a vital role by providing critical evaluation of the existing public policy. Hence, it must be impartial and constructive in its criticism of government policy;

5. It should focus more and more on the empowerment of the marginalised groups;

6. Civil society members can help minimise the differences between the political parties and government in times of national crisis;

7. Civil society should be allowed to participate in the defence policy formulation. It can play an oversight mechanism in arms procurement;

8. An independent and constructive media can play an oversight role in a society. It can help promote the culture of peace and tolerance in the society. However, media in Bangladesh has been frequently accused for partisan and yellow journalism. The government and civil society can think of establishing an independent commission to monitor yellow journalism;

9. Due to limited resources and technologies, many CSOs working for the development and security cannot continue their projects. Therefore, the organisations can have network for promoting their activities;
10. CSOs can enhance its impartial and credible watchdog role to promote transparency and accountability of the security sectors in particular the police and the RAB. It can assess the newly produced Police Ordinance 2007 and monitor whether the provisions of the new ordinance are implemented or not;

11. Civil society can play a vital role in upholding the parliamentary democracy. The civil society members, especially who have links or rapport with the mainstream political parties can ask political parties to resolve the political issues in parliament at any cost.

ENDNOTES


3 Ford Foundation has sponsored a project called "Non-Traditional Security Issues in South Asia" for the period 1 October 1999 to 30 September 2001. It is part of an Asia-wide project implemented by three institutions, Regional Centre for Strategic Studies, Colombo, for South Asia, UN University, Tokyo, for North eastern Asia, and the Institute for Defence and Strategic Studies, Singapore, for South East Asia. The project structured more or less similarly for the three regions, has three components: Globalisation, Governance and Environment. The leading author of this Chapter coordinated the Globalisation component for South Asia.


6 Ibid.

7 Mention may be made of Bangladesh Enterprise Institute. See, www.bei-bd.org.

8 The present authors admit of these limitations and would appreciate receiving feedbacks. They would also sincerely apologise for inadvertent inappropriate information on any of the organisations or exclusion of any CSO from the purview of the paper.


10 www.biiss.org.


15 Mohammad Humayun Kabir, "The State and Civil Society in Bangladesh" in Mizan R Khan and Mohammad Humayun Kabir (eds.), ibid.

16 Aroma Goon, "Civil Society and Social Empowerment" in Mizan R. Khan and Mohammad Humayun Kabir (eds.), ibid., p.145.

17 Sramik Karmachari Oikka Parishad—Labour, Employees United Council.

18 Mohammad Humayun Kabir in Mizan R. Khan and Mohammad Humayun Kabir (eds.), ibid., p.27.

19 Mohammad Humayun Kabir in ibid., p.28.


25 Remarks by Ann-Marie Slaughter are notable here. She said: "The state is not disappearing; it is disaggregating into separate functionally distinct parts. These parts—courts, regulating agencies, executives and even legislatures—are networking with their counterparts abroad creating a dense web of relations that constitute a new transgovernmental order". See, Ann-Marie Slaughter, "The Real New World Order," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol.76, No.5, September-October 1997, pp.183-97.

26 It is not the purpose of this chapter to go into the details of traditional security issues of Bangladesh. For details, see Chapter 2 of this volume on "Traditional Security of Bangladesh."

28 Ibid.
29 For details, see, Chapter 4 of this volume on “Non-traditional Security of Bangladesh”.
32 The laws have finally been enacted.
38 Ibid.
45 Ibid.
## APPENDIX

### Brief Profile of Selected CSOs in Bangladesh

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name and basic information</th>
<th>Functions and coverage</th>
<th>Major security functions</th>
<th>Role in public policy making (if any)</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Action on Disability Development (ADD)</strong> founded in 1995 as right-based development mental international organisation continuing with private fund and international donation.</td>
<td>Working on disable to campaign for equal rights and ensure social justice. ADD works in national and grass-roots level. Clients: CSOs.</td>
<td>Strengthening disability movement and ensuring their social rights.</td>
<td>Influencing policy makers on disability welfare. Bangladesh Persons with Disabilities Welfare Act of 2001 is a success of ADD.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Action Against Trafficking and Sexual Exploitation and Children (ATSEC)</strong> founded in 1998 as non-profit organisation running with private fund.</td>
<td>Functioning on preventing women and child trafficking and sexual exploitation. ATSEC works in national and regional level. Clients: NGO activists.</td>
<td>Working on securing human rights.</td>
<td>Creating database on trafficking and sexual exploitation so that researchers and policy makers can analyse the information scientifically.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bangladesh Institute of Law and International Affairs (BILIA)</strong> founded in 1972 as non-govt organisation continuing with govt. and donor fund.</td>
<td>Ensuring rule of law, good governance, human rights and international cooperation. BILIA works nationally. Audience: all cross section of society, scholar, and lawyers.</td>
<td>Working on securing human rights and ensuring good governance.</td>
<td>Facilitating the formulation of common policies in important areas of Law and International Affairs.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Name and basic information</th>
<th>Functions and coverage</th>
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<th>Role in public policy making (if any)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bangladesh Political Science Association (BPSA)</strong> <em>(founded in 1972 as non-govt. organisation continuing with private fund)</em></td>
<td>Working on national, regional and international politico-security issues. BPSA also works on energy and food security and WTO issues. Clients: academics, policy makers and politicians.</td>
<td>Functioning on national security council and good governance</td>
<td>It engages leaders and influential people in the society in the form of dialogue on key issues of sustainable democratic govt and to arrive at a consensus that is desperately needed in Bangladesh.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bangladesh Institute for Peace and Security Studies (BIPSS)</strong> <em>(founded in 2007 as non-govt. organisation running with private fund)</em></td>
<td>Focusing on enhancing peace and security issues. BIPSS works at national, regional and International level. Clients: scholars, civil societies and policy makers.</td>
<td>Working on human and regional security</td>
<td>Providing development strategies and practical policies on security issues to the govt. agencies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association (BELA)</strong> <em>(founded in 1992 as non-profit association running with private fund)</em></td>
<td>Research on environmental, intellectual property rights and providing training for cross sectoral actors. BELA works in national and grassroots level. Clients: lawyers, human rights activists and diplomats.</td>
<td>Addressing environmental and human security</td>
<td>To date BELA has filed about 44 cases, covering river, air and industrial pollution in Bangladesh. Following one of these cases the concept of “Public Interest Litigation” was recognised by the judiciary.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon (BAPA)</strong> <em>(founded in 1997 as non-govt. organisation running with private fund)</em></td>
<td>Working on environmental issues. BAPA works in national level. Clients: NGO activists.</td>
<td>Addressing environmental security</td>
<td>Acting as pressure group in preserving and restoring rivers and water bodies, and protesting against deforestation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC)</strong> <em>(founded in 1972 as non-govt. organisation continuing with private fund)</em></td>
<td>Working on poverty alleviation, empowerment of the poor and socio-economic development. BRAC works at nationwide level. Clients: NGO activists and academics.</td>
<td>Actions on poverty alleviation and socio-economic security</td>
<td>Providing a holistic approach to poverty alleviation and empowerment of the poor in Bangladesh. Its core programmes include economic and social development, health, education, and human rights and legal services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name and basic information</td>
<td>Functions and coverage</td>
<td>Major security functions</td>
<td>Role in public policy making (if any)</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Bangladesh Unnayan Parishad (BUP) founded in 1980 as non-profit organisation running with private and donor fund.</td>
<td>Research on macro-economic management, trade and commerce and alternative approaches to poverty alleviation and human development. BUP works at national level. Its client is economists, scholars, development activists, etc.</td>
<td>Working on human development and poverty alleviation.</td>
<td>Providing recommendations to the government for human development and poverty alleviation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangladesh Protibondhi Foundation (BPF) founded in 1984 as non-profit voluntary organisation running with founders', philanthropists' and welfare agencies' contributions.</td>
<td>Conducting research and working on education, evaluation, prevention and rehabilitation of handicapped children and adults.</td>
<td>Preventing disability.</td>
<td>No specific role is found in public policy making.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD) founded in 1993 as private think tank continuing with private endowment fund.</td>
<td>Consultations and research, knowledge generation, policy awareness raising, policy influencing and capacity building. CPD works on national and regional issues. Its client is govt. officials, agency executives, business community, professionals, academics, NGO activists and donor representatives.</td>
<td>Working on trade and agricultural development.</td>
<td>Giving specific recommendation to policy makers for redefining policies and ensuring implementation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institute of Governance Studies (IGS) founded in 2005 as research and training institute running with private fund.</td>
<td>Research, knowledge generation and reporting on annual state of governance and development. IGS works on national and global issues of governance. Its client is scholars, policy makers, etc.</td>
<td>Working on good governance and development for democracy.</td>
<td>Dissemination of best practices and trainings on public policy administration.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change Maker (Society for Social and Economic Development) founded in 1993 as non-profit organisation continuing with private fund.</td>
<td>Addressing urgent needs of community people and working locally on privileged and marginalised people. Civil society organisations, private sector enterprises, govt. agencies, educational and research institutes are the clients of Change Maker.</td>
<td>Functioning on socio-economic development for wider cross-section of community.</td>
<td>Working with Ministry of Housing and Public Works on conservation and improvement of water quality in urban areas.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Contd.)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name and basic information</th>
<th>Functions and coverage</th>
<th>Major security functions</th>
<th>Role in public policy making (if any)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community Development Library (CDL) founded in 1980 as non-govt. development organisation running with private endowment fund, especially donor fund.</td>
<td>Raising critical societal consciousness and working on changing living standard of disadvantaged social groups. CDL works in community level. Its target audience is academics, planners, development, cultural, political and human rights activists, environmentalists, feminists, community leaders and so forth.</td>
<td>Empowerment of un-and-under-privileged people.</td>
<td>Delivering information to activists and organisations committed to promotion of sustainable development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centre for Strategic and Peace Studies (CSPS) founded in 1999 as private think tank continuing with private fund.</td>
<td>Research, publishing policy papers, organising workshops and seminars. CSPS works on key national and international security issues. Clients: different professionals and interest groups.</td>
<td>Working on elections, border disputes, reforms in police sector, and terrorism.</td>
<td>Identifying key issues on elections and Indo-Bangla relations and giving suggestions for the government.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CARITAS founded in 1967 but it started working in Bangladesh in 1976 as non-profit development organisation running with foreign donation.</td>
<td>Working on emergency relief measures, disaster preparedness, rehabilitation, reconstruction, and community development. CARITAS works on national and local poor and marginal groups (women, landless, orphan and children).</td>
<td>Reducing poverty, unemployment and malnutrition, and motivating ethnic communities for development.</td>
<td>Although no direct role is found in public policy making, CARITAS plays country-wide complementary and supplementary role to government activities towards socio-economic development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chars Livelihoods Programme (CLP) functioned in Bangladesh through Maxwell Stamp plc, funded by DFID, UK.</td>
<td>Providing infrastructure, asset building, encouraging social development and protection, and promoting enterprise. CLP works on poorest people in char areas of Kurigram, Gaibandha, Jamalpur, Bogra and Sirajganj Districts.</td>
<td>Working on char livelihood security.</td>
<td>Disseminating information on extreme poverty in areas of chars and river erosion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centre for the Rehabilitation of the Paralysed (CRP) founded in 1979 as an organisation for the disabled running with donations and self sources.</td>
<td>Providing community based treatment, rehabilitation and support services. CRP works nationally and locally on disable children, girls and women.</td>
<td>Awareness raising and breaking down barriers on preventing disability and establishing their equal rights.</td>
<td>Influencing and lobbying government for promoting rights and welfare of disabled.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

(Contd.)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name and basic information</th>
<th>Functions and coverage</th>
<th>Major security functions</th>
<th>Role in public policy making (if any)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OXFAM Bangladesh started activities in 1972 as NGO supportive organisation running with donor funding programme.</td>
<td>Ensuring gender equality and disaster preparedness, providing education and healthcare services and legal rights to landless people, especially women, marginalised with disability, tribal and sex-worker. OXFAM Bangladesh works in very remote area for strengthening community based organisations.</td>
<td>Securitising community based organisations.</td>
<td>Found no comprehensive and direct role in public policy making.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refugee and Migratory Movements Research Unit (RMMRU) founded in 1996 as research, training, and policy advocacy institution, continuing with private fund.</td>
<td>Functioning on potential contribution of migration, regional collaborative research for refugee and displacement, and policy advocacy at national and regional levels. RMMRU’s clients are academics, grass-roots leaders, professionals, and NGO activists.</td>
<td>Working on migration, refugee and displacement; securitisation of cross-border movement of labour.</td>
<td>Engaged in campaigns for adoption of national law on refugees, accession to 1951 Refugee Convention and Ratification of UN Convention on rights of all migrant workers and their families 1990. Addressing questions of citizenship and rehabilitation of camp-based Bhikaris, preparing policy document on labour recruitment process, and for</td>
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<tr>
<td>Name and basic information</td>
<td>Functions and coverage</td>
<td>Major security functions</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Rangpur Dinajpur Rural Service (RDRS)</strong> founded in 1972 as humanitarian and development NGO continuing with private and self-generated fund.</td>
<td>Facilitating rural poor through advancing empowerment and promoting access to development resources. RDRS works at local and national level. Clients: civil society and business actors, different professionals, and government.</td>
<td>Working on poverty and empowerment.</td>
<td>It is obvious whether RDRS has any role or not in public policy making.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Society for Environment and Human Development (SEHD)</strong> founded in 1993 as non-profit organisation, running with private fund.</td>
<td>Working on ethnic issues, environment, development, and human rights; publishing books, survey reports (such as, on Rohingya Refugees) and research monographs (such as on <em>Parbotto Chattagramme Jumchash</em>); and producing documentary films (such as, on destruction of Madhupur salt forest in Tangail, mangroves in Cox’s Bazaar, and CHT: Life and Nature at Risk).</td>
<td>Securing rights of ethnic people and working on environmental development.</td>
<td>Giving recommendations and influencing policy makers through documentary films, survey reports, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Unnayan Shamannay (US)</strong> founded in 1994 as non-profit and non-govt. research organisation, running with project oriented fund.</td>
<td>Conducting research and publishing material on environment, trade, national budget, poverty and governance; capacity building; and policy advocacy. US works at national and local level. Clients: development partners, scholars, academics, govt. personnel, etc.</td>
<td>Working on ensuring sustainable development.</td>
<td>Providing policy recommendations and influencing policy makers on sectoral allocation of national budget and reducing absolute poverty.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Unnayan Bikalper Nitirnirdharoni Gobeshona (UBINIG), Policy Research for Development Alternatives, founded in 1984 as policy advocacy and research organisation, running with private fund.</strong></td>
<td>Working with local handloom weavers, shrimp fry collectors, cyclone and saline disastrous to mobilise marginalised farmers under experiences of coastal and saline ecology and management. UBINIG works at grass root level in Tangail, Cox’s Bazaar, Noakhali, and throughout Bangladesh.</td>
<td>Addressing development and social change, producing healthy and environmentally conscious foods, and ensuring equitable distribution of productive resources.</td>
<td>Changing paradigm, agenda, content and direction of mainstream policy to map gaps in information, analysis and identify areas where state engagement is urgent for immediate gains.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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The New Nation
### Index

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>academicians, 15, 84; academics, 7, 11, 51; institutions, 312, 324, 330; research, 324, 326-327, 337; thinking, 276</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>adaptation/coping strategies, 284</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>adivasi, 332</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Admiral (rank of 4 star), 89</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>adversaries, 23, 80, 84-85, 104, 132, 148, 196, 272</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>adverse effects, 20, 24, 234, 261</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>advocacy, 8, 119, 191, 245, 258, 282, 309, 311-314, 317, 324-328</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afghanistan, 35, 94, 129, 180, 256</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Africa, 123, 149, 351, 355</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African Union, 183</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>agitation, 19, 44, 56, 320</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>agrarian, 17, 262</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>agriculture, 25, 27, 48, 176, 228-229, 248, 250, 253, 260, 267, 285; modern practices, 20</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ahmad, Qazi Khokquzzaman, 16, 36, 57-59, 349</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ahmed, Abu Taher Salahuddin, 63, 121, 353</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ahmed, Fakhruddin, 63, 123, 161, 179, 304</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ahmed, General Moeen U, 106, 351</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ahmed, Imtiaz, 289, 341, 349</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ahmed, Kaz Fakhruddin, 63</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ahmed, M. Feroze, 297</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ahmed, M., 205, 360</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ahmed, Major General Mansur, 78, 80, 82, 121, 353</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ahmed, Major General Syeed, 121-122, 353</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ahmed, Moudud, 341, 349</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ahmed, President Prof. Dr. Iajuddin, 91, 161</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ahmed, Sabbir, 202, 353</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ain o Salish Kendra (ASK), 306, 327, 356</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Air Force, 99-101, 103, 304</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aircraft, 73, 75-76, 92, 115, 254</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Al Qaeda, 129</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alexander, Douglas, 173</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>alliance(s), 85, 87, 103-104, 117, 119, 147; opportunistic, 35; relationship, 147</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>alternative discourse, 216; paradigm, 210</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amnesty International (AI), 181</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>analysis level of, 212; tool of, 214</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>analytical value, 212</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annan, Kofi A., 184</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>anti-Americanism, 131</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>anti-autocracy movements, 317</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC), 40, 49</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arab, 177, 203</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>arbitrary withdrawal, 270</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>armaments, 13, 75, 86, 256</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armed Forces Division, 62, 77, 80, 83, 88-91, 101, 123</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>arms, 45, 67, 70, 73, 75, 82, 85, 92, 102-103, 106, 174, 255-256, 281, 319, 321, 323, 338; AK-47, 255; inflow of, 323; missile, 76, 99, 120, 355; nation-in, 85; procurement of, 338; proliferation of small, 21, 44, 256; race, 85, 319; revolvers, 255; rifles, 255; small, 19, 43, 47, 60, 66, 70, 103, 255-256, 287, 320-321, 323, 331; trafficking, 67, 102-103, 255, 281; transit, 323</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armstrong, David, 201, 359</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arunachal Pradesh, 169</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASEAN, 170-171, 175, 201, 220, 290, 352</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assam, 169, 171</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>assets, 22, 27, 115, 151, 163-164</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>asymmetric relationship, 146, 151-156</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
asymmetries, 22
Atlantic Ocean, 174
Australia, 57, 88, 105, 122, 153, 254, 290, 355
Awami League (AL), 35-36, 42, 56, 61, 108
Awareness, 8, 32, 53-54, 77, 242, 258, 273, 280, 283, 285, 311, 313-314, 316, 326, 330-331, 333; building, 311; campaign, 273; mass, 281, 286
Ayoob, Mohammed, 320, 340, 353
Bahrain, 167
Baldwin, David A., 288, 353
Bangladesh Bank (BB), 188, 303
Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS), 230, 232, 300, 302-303
Bangladesh Centre for Advanced Studies (BCAS), 326, 328
Bangladesh Enterprise Institute (BEI), 293, 328, 339
Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association (BELA), 306
Bangladesh Human Security Assessment (BHSAl, 213, 215, 290, 327, 330, 357
Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies (BISS), 2, 4-5, 8-9, 53, 57-59, 61, 119, 121-122, 199, 287-290, 292-293, 295, 311, 326-327, 330, 340, 350-356
Bangladesh Institute of Law and International Affairs (BILIA), 357
Bangladesh Institute of Police Support Operation Training (BIPSOT), 184-185, 204, 356
Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), 35-36, 42, 56, 61, 89
Bangladesh Navy, 69, 84, 91-92, 99-101, 103, 304
Bangladesh Paribesh AndoloD (BAPA), 297
Bangladesh Protibondhi Foundation (BPF), 332
Bangladesh Rifles (BDR), 24, 62, 256, 258, 304
Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAc), 305, 317, 329-330
Bangladesh Unnayan Parishad (BUP), 40, 57, 59, 326, 349
Bangladesh Women Lawyers’ Association (BNWLA), 327
Bar Associations, 317
Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC), 157, 169-171
Bay of Bengal, 32, 66, 69, 101-102, 105, 143, 156-157, 169, 250, 254, 269, 299, 322
Beckett, Margaret, 173
Bhutan, 134, 166, 169-170, 202-203, 358
Bhutto, Benazir, 134
Bihar, 328
bilateral
bilateralism, 155; discord, 158; issues, 68, 153, 157; relations, 71, 155, 157-162, 164-165, 168, 194; settlement of contentious issues, 152, 158; talks, 162, 164-165; trade, 165, 175
bio-diversity loss, 20, 285
biological, 94-95
biomass fuel, 264
bird flu, 208, 242-243, 282-283
birth registration, 282
black money, 321
Bolivia, 131
border
common, 158, 162, 256; cross-border movement, 323; cross-border, 66, 70, 158, 160, 162, 183, 241, 258, 323; illegal cross-border activities, 67, 158; international, 68; maritime, 67, 322; push-in, 24; undemarcated, 322
Confidence Building Measure (CBM), 153


Confrontation, 3, 36, 40, 69, 97, 152, 159, 224, 265, 321

Connectivity, 31, 103, 161-162, 167, 171

Consensus, 11, 19, 33, 38-39, 51, 97, 117, 166, 168, 178, 309-310, 326; building, 326; oriented, 38

Constitutional opposition, 35

Consumer Rights Protection Ordinance, 279

Contentious issues, 63, 67, 155, 160-161; technical, 144, 176

Coping capabilities, 273

Corruption, 2, 6, 8, 13, 18-19, 21, 32-33, 38, 38-43, 49, 65, 59-60, 62, 150, 182, 208, 223-224, 227, 277, 292, 331, 341, 353, 360


Critical theorists, 219, 320

Culture, 29, 36-37, 50, 52, 94, 107, 167, 201, 225, 269, 313, 320, 334, 338, 352

Cyclone(s), 20, 24, 91, 100, 115, 143, 173, 178-181, 203, 208-209, 230-232, 247, 249-250, 252-254, 274, 283-284; shelters, 284; SDR, 173, 181, 203; tornadoes, 143; victims, 274

Darfur, 183

Defence Services Command and Staff College (DSCSC), 184

Defence, 6-7, 13, 64-65, 67, 71-72, 77-99, 101-106, 109, 111-112, 116-119, 137, 338; active, 84, 86; co-operation, 64-65, 98-99, 102-103, 105, 117, 119; credible, 6, 64, 72, 84-85, 87-88, 90, 92-93, 95, 97, 116-118; expenditure, 64-65, 71, 85; forces, 6, 13, 84, 86, 88, 90-91, 93-94, 96-97; industry, 86; national, 4, 77-78, 83, 85-88, 97, 117; planning, 64-65, 89; production, 83; purchase, 97; second line, 93-94

Deforestation, 20, 130, 142, 318

Democracy, 6-7, 13, 29, 32-37, 39, 41, 50, 52-53, 66, 90, 111-112, 117, 138, 141, 150, 173, 226, 241, 277-278, 308, 311, 318, 331, 333-334, 336, 339; competitive democratic, 107; democratic deficit, 208; democratic leadership, 18, 65; democratic society, 83; democratic spirit, 151; functional, 81; smooth transition to, 277; sustainable democratic order, 35

Department for International Development (DFID), 245, 290, 327, 330, 357

Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DEFAIT), 321

Department of Social Welfare, 316

desertification, 142
deterrence, 79, 86-87, 94, 241
developing countries, 41, 82, 128, 151, 153-154, 175, 181, 188, 212, 219, 224, 228, 235, 247-248, 263, 278, 307, 322, 324-325

Dhaka Eastern Bypass, 31
dialogues, 137, 149, 154, 162, 197, 201, 335, 352; sustained process, 276
dignity, 35, 50, 102, 214-215, 259, 273-274; freedom to live in, 215
diplomacy, 7, 64, 82, 110, 116, 126-127, 141, 144-149, 172, 179, 182-183, 194, 196; pursuit of, 140, 146; economic, 140, 144, 146, 148, 171-172, 179, 181, 192, 196; constructive, 133, 165; multilateral, 6-7, 178-179
diplomatic circles, 77; objectives, 146, 148, 196; relations, 171
disaster(s), 364 Whither National Security Bangladesh 2007

management, 51, 176, 271, 273, 284; natural, 69, 114, 150, 182, 208-209, 216, 220, 247, 249, 252, 273-274, 284, 322; post-disaster diseases, 284; post-disaster resettlement, 285
Index

embezzlement, 40
emergency, 36, 48, 56, 91, 96-97, 101, 114, 181, 208-209, 221, 225, 241, 254, 332
employment, 27, 41, 112, 114, 142, 164, 173, 176-177, 228, 230, 232-233, 236, 267, 269, 279, 330;
opportunities, 142, 176-177, 233, 279;
unemployment, 16, 35, 43, 47, 69, 229, 233, 237, 258-259
empowerment, 214-215, 235, 293, 325, 330, 332, 338
enemy, 85, 104
energy
cooperation, 167; insecurity, 262-264; nuclear, 266-267; renewable, 26, 167, 265, 268, 286
enforcement, 47, 51, 60, 237, 280
environment, 1-2, 20, 23, 27, 31, 33, 55, 69, 71, 77, 79, 81, 86, 130, 133-134, 137, 142, 153-154,
162, 168, 172, 194, 236, 239, 246, 248, 250, 252, 256, 260, 262, 264, 284, 316, 323,
enabling; 281; enabling socio-political, 218;
environmental degradation, 20-21, 130, 142,
255, 263, 307, 318, 321; geopolitico-strategic,
23; international, 109, 112, 140, 146; land
degradation, 20; protection of, 145
Ershad, H.M., 99-99, 317
establishment, 4, 14, 51-52, 102, 146, 148-149,
177, 191, 195, 197, 219, 258
ethno-linguistic, 28, 157
European Union (EU), 36, 138-139, 153, 167, 172-173, 203, 254, 274, 357
exodus, 163
expansionist tendency, 212, 320
exploitation, 16, 20, 142, 227, 229, 237, 257-259,
267
explosives, 47, 60, 95, 255
export, 27, 130, 142, 144-145, 147, 153, 162, 164,
173, 175-178, 183, 187-188, 191-193, 198, 203,
229, 245, 253, 357; earnings, 27, 145; markets
for, 144; of manpower, 144, 147, 183, 188, 192;
promotion of, 144
external
aggression, 11, 82-84, 96; relations, 143, 146,
148-149, 172, 195-197
extortion, 40, 44-45, 66, 228, 239, 255, 321
extremism, 60, 69, 86, 240, 250
Exxon Mobil, 189
Farakka Barrage/River, 24, 159, 260-261, 297
fascism, 34
fear, 21, 46, 60, 66, 214-215, 222, 243, 256, 270,
320; freedom from, 215, 228, 320-321
Ecuador, 131
education, 18, 27, 30, 35, 40-41, 48, 50, 60, 77,
173, 175-176, 180, 191, 235-237, 242, 258, 280-
282, 284, 331-332; non-formal, 149; statistic
scholars, 212
Egypt, 187-188
Election Commission (EC), 40, 91, 278
elections, 35, 42, 45-46, 91, 115, 225, 228;
presidential, 132; roadmap of, 52, 138
Index 365
discord, 151
discourse, 44, 47, 63, 77, 212-213, 215-216, 234,
270, 295, 307-308, 323, 329; counter-nation-
state, 213; sustained, 275
discrimination, 19-20, 47, 236, 282
diseases
infectious, 283, 285; malaria, 245
disparity, 18, 29, 151-152, 156, 224, 267
disputes, 22, 66-68, 113-114, 133, 158-160, 163-
164, 168, 194; international, 83; long-standing,
152; settlement of, 158
division, 53, 91-92, 163-165, 334; fighting, 92;
international of labour, 145; of common assets,
163-165
domestic
dynamics, 147; gross savings, 142
donor, 48, 172, 175, 254, 257, 312-313, 324, 327,
329-330, 335, 338; agencies, 48, 257, 327, 330,
335, 338
drought, 25, 143, 285
drugs, 70, 126, 170, 238-239, 244-246, 255-257,
287, 320-321; abuse, 238-239; inflow, 323;
peddling, 255, 323; trafficking, 42, 239, 257
Early Harvest Programme, 165
early warning system, 283
economy, 156, 260
economic
benefits, 144, 271; dependence, 154; expanding
cooperation, 161; fostering cooperation, 165;
growth, 25, 38, 41, 173, 176, 262, 281;
integration, 166; international relations, 147;
politico-economic, 14-15, 28, 135, 154; realities,
49; socio-economic, 2, 18, 30, 41, 51, 84, 92,
104, 109, 126-128, 138, 140-141, 143-145, 147,
154, 156, 168, 179, 193, 238, 240, 247, 260,
281, 317, 332, 335; strength, 151, 168
economy, 16-18, 27, 32, 38-39, 41, 47-48, 55, 62, 72,
85-86, 90, 141-143, 151, 153, 171, 182, 189,
191-192, 198, 228-229, 250, 252-253, 260, 262,
279
Ecuador, 131
education, 18, 27, 30, 35, 40-41, 48, 50, 60, 77,
173, 175-176, 180, 191, 235-237, 242, 258, 280-
282, 284, 331-332; non-formal, 149; statistic
scholars, 212
Egypt, 187-188
Election Commission (EC), 40, 91, 278
elections, 35, 42, 45-46, 91, 115, 225, 228;
presidential, 132; roadmap of, 52, 138
Index 367

Hossain, Segufta, 207
Human Development Report, 213, 289, 292-293, 308, 320, 357-358
humanitarian needs, 274; operations, 273
hunger, 292, 357
Hyef Hatun Abdul, 309, 313, 339, 341, 349, 352
Ihsanoglu, Ekmeleddin, 180
image building, 146, 149; negative, 151, 181; positive, 150-151, 154; problem, 150
Imams, 274
imports, 27, 77, 142, 162, 173, 176, 187, 232-233, 245
Independent Review of Bangladesh’s Development (IRBD), 329
Independent South Asian Commission on Poverty Alleviation (ISACPA), 167
Indian External Affairs Minister, 161
Indian Foreign Secretary, 161
Indian Navy, 24, 156, 269
Indian Prime Minister, 137, 161
Indian State Minister for Commerce, 162
Indian, 23-24, 67-73, 90, 100, 102, 137-138, 152, 156, 160-162, 164, 200, 256, 269-270, 272, 297-298, 322, 334, 358; anti-Indian feelings, 163; Ocean, 23-24, 100; Sino-Indian relations, 175
Indonesia, 104, 174-176
Industries Minister, 148, 196
information, 8, 30, 32, 38, 54, 65, 69, 87, 95, 118, 127-128, 149, 197, 204, 209, 245, 283, 287, 309, 313, 315, 319, 321, 326, 331, 339
infrastructure, 30-32, 41, 115, 171, 176, 250, 269, 277, 318, 331; national, 23; transmission, 263
Injecting Drug Users (IDUs), 243-244
Institute of Governance Studies (IGS), 328-329
Integrated Human Development Project (IHDP), 392
integration, 28, 50, 87, 93, 127, 277; integrated approach, 276, 283, 285
integrity functional, 272; territorial, 17, 63, 68, 81-82, 85, 90, 96, 104, 119, 216
intellectuals, 77, 93, 102, 240, 333, 335; interface, 275
intelligentsia, 11, 15, 101
Inter Services Intelligence (ISI), 95, 160
Intergovernmental Organisations (IGOs), 211, 220, 271, 275-276
Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), 24, 247
International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), 266
International Finance Corporation (IFC), 182, 204
International Labour Organisation (ILO), 145
International Monetary Fund (IMF), 17, 180-181, 204, 220, 274
International Network of Alternative Financial Institutions (INAFl), 191
international arena, 67, 82, 125-126, 128-129, 131-132, 136, 139-140, 146-147, 149-151, 168, 172, 179, 195; bodies, 146, 151, 153, 195; instruments, 20; market, 144, 230; NGOs, 181, 305; order, 125-126, 129, 145; organisations, 139, 145, 224, 254, 327-328; relations, 22, 62, 149, 151, 197; standards, 171, 220; system, 119, 125-126, 131-132, 146, 153-154, 221; Westphalian system, 271
inter-party feuds, 55
Index

Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), 55, 142
Milliband, David, 173
Mills, Gregg, 319
minimum core values, 14
Ministry of Commerce, 202, 327, 358
Ministry of Defence, 80, 88, 123, 357
misguided youths, 274
Mittal, 162, 272
Mizoram, 169
monsoon, 143, 247, 249
motivational campaigns, 274
Muhith, Muhammad A., 204
Mukherjee, Pranab, 161
multilateral
assistance, 154; framework, 155;
multilateralism, 155; organisations, 178
Multi-National Companies (MNCs), 211-272, 298
Myanmar, 24, 64, 66-76, 92-93, 156, 169-170, 256, 266-267, 269, 286, 299, 305, 322
Nagaland, 169
National Board of Revenue (NBR), 49
National Defence College (NDC), 81, 121, 298, 358
National Security Council (NSC), 48, 50-52, 62, 77, 87, 91-92, 97
national capacity, 210, 268-269; contingency, 81; core issues, 18, 36, 39, 51; identity, 18, 95; mobilisation of efforts, 131; multinationals, 90, 103, 189, 272; nationalism, 28, 60, 317, 320; nationalist, 334; nucleus, 23; spirit, 14; vital values, 14
natural calamities, 100, 113-114, 131, 143, 253, 273, 285
natural flow of rivers, 260-261
Nepal, 70, 104, 134, 156, 166, 169-170
nepotism, 40, 55
New Delhi, 58, 120, 123, 133, 152, 159-161, 166-167, 174, 198, 201, 290, 339, 341, 349, 351-352
Newly Industrialised Countries (NICs), 145, 174-176
Next Steps in Strategic Partnership (NSSP), 135, 137, 200, 358
NGO Affairs Bureau (NAB), 316
Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), 135, 179
Non-Traditional Security (NTS) interfacing, 216; mainstreaming, 215; newer issues, 275
normative ambience, 213; values, 210, 221
Odhikar, 225, 327-328, 358
Official Development Assistance (ODA), 176, 181
oil, 25, 27, 68, 136, 176, 234, 262-264, 303
Oman, 187
Ombudsman, 278
Operation Sea Angel, 100
Operation Seabal, 100
operational autonomy, 83, 312
operational doctrine, 78, 82, 271
Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), 37
Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC), 179-180, 203
OXFAM Bangladesh, 332-333
Pacific age of, 174; Asia region, 145, 174, 194; command, 100, 103
Padma Bridge, 31, 331
Palestinians, 177, 180
Para Commando, 92
Parbattya Chattagram Jana Sanghati Samiti (PCJSS), 160
Parliamentary Committee, 3, 53, 87
parochialism, 36, 55
participatory, 38, 223, 318
partner(s), 136, 154-155, 174, 176, 329; partnership, 8, 85, 87, 103, 135-136, 138-139, 154, 268, 324, 329-330; trading, 151, 153
self-sufficiency, 83, 231


Session of the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers, 180

seven sisters, 269

Shanti Bahini, 305

Shariah, 46

sharing rivers, 60, 67-68, 119, 157-159, 162, 185, 244, 256; 286-287, 289, 304, 340-341, 349-350, 352-353, 355-358; fragile, 35; inter-state relations, 135, 165, 168, 194; nation-state paradigm, 13, 212; non-state, 21, 63, 66, 117, 148-150, 181, 193, 197, 207-208, 211, 216, 221, 269-271, 275-276, 287, 319, 325; Palestinian, 177; responsibility of, 218-219; role of, 210-211, 216, 220, 275; small syndrome, 270; weak, 35

statecraft, 65, 148, 196

Sudan, 187

Summit, 59, 166-167, 180, 202, 231, 290, 353, 357

surface-to-air missiles, 75, 99

surveillance, 69, 100, 282

survey, 4, 40, 59, 87, 163, 230, 235-236, 261, 284


Taiwan, 22, 57, 174-176, 353

Taliban, 60, 129

tariff reduction, 170

Tata, 160, 162, 272

Technical Training Centres (TTCs), 191

technology(ies), 2, 17, 25, 30, 32, 67, 69, 95, 128, 137-138, 144, 167, 170, 182, 265-267, 273, 280, 338; advanced, 144; dual-use, 137; high trade, 137; information, 95, 118, 319; savvy, 280

terrorism, 2, 6-7, 13-14, 32-33, 42, 46-47, 49, 60, 66, 70-71, 77, 80, 86, 102-103, 126, 128-129, 138, 158, 162, 224, 235, 240-241, 255, 273, 277, 280-281, 286, 293, 324, 331; anti, 48, 129; combating, 2, 42, 69, 73, 75, 114, 124, 137, 158, 162, 167, 234, 273, 281, 285-286, 331; counter law, 47; counter measures, 281; counter strategy, 129, 280; counter, 47, 128-129, 280-281, 328; cross-border, 158; global war on, 60, 129-130, 150, 351; international, 129; Islamic, 46, 60; insurgency, 24, 67, 80, 86, 92, 158, 160, 255, 317, 321-322, 324; insurgent groups, 70, 96, 256; menace of, 281; militancy, 70, 240, 281; militants, 66, 241, 273-274; national strategy for combating, 129; terror, 44, 46, 129-131, 135, 173-174, 271; terrorist forces, 150; war on, 128-130

Thailand, 58, 88, 169-170, 174-176, 238, 256, 322

Think Tanks, 119, 312, 315, 340

threat(s), 6-8, 13-15, 18, 20-21, 24, 34, 44, 47, 49, 51-52, 65, 68-70, 79-80, 130, 135, 193, 220, 234-

Three New Missions in Darfur (UNAMID), 183
tidal bores, 143: surge, 20, 91, 248
Tin Bigha Corridor, 157, 159
tolerance, 3, 34, 50, 277, 280, 286, 338; religious, 81
Track Two approach, 281
trade, 8, 22, 31-32, 62, 66-67, 70, 85, 126, 128, 137, 139, 143-145, 147, 154, 158, 161-162, 164-165, 168, 170, 172-176, 178, 186, 194-195, 197-198, 202, 228, 239, 257-258, 266, 269, 309, 313, 315, 322, 327-330; dependence, 154; diversification of relations, 144; gap, 175-176; global, 147; imbalance, 67, 158, 161, 165, 322; in services, 141, 167; intra-regional, 166; promotion, 144; relations, 22, 234; trading partners, 153; two-way, 165; volume of, 147
trafficking, 14, 19, 21, 43, 60, 239, 245, 255-259, 283, 286-287; human, 67, 255, 257, 283, 286, 296, 320, 323; in children, 21, 287
training, 70, 81-82, 89, 91-92, 94, 96-97, 99-100, 102, 116, 129, 144, 184-186, 286, 329-330
transit facilities, 161, 257; routes, 269
transnational, 122, 181, 193, 222, 255, 275, 286-287, 296, 320, 350, 356; organisations, 146, 148, 195, 197
Transparency International (TI), 40, 42, 181, 227, 327, 341, 360
transparency, 39, 40, 42, 90, 97, 150, 181, 223, 227, 315, 327, 336, 339, 341, 360
transparent, 38-39, 80, 109, 111-112, 117, 223, 239, 318
transport, 30-31, 100, 176
tree plantation, 284
Tripura, 169, 305
Truth and Accountability Commission (TAC), 49
tyranny of geography, 156, 247, 270
umbrella concept, 207, 216-217, 275
unilateralism, 143

unipolarity, 125-126, 270
United Arab Emirates (UAE), 187-188, 258
United Kingdom (UK), 37, 57, 71, 88, 95, 173, 188, 273, 296, 300, 302-305, 327, 358
United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), 37, 109, 213-214, 228, 289-290, 292, 294, 308, 320, 357-358
United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), 179
United Nations Iran-Iraq Military Observer Group (UNIIMOG), 183
United Nations Security Council (UNSC), 136
unity, 47, 85, 97, 177
vandalism, 55
Venezuela, 131
Vietnam, 156, 201, 291, 359; post-Vietnam, 132
Village Defence Party (VDP), 52
Wal-Mart, 189
warfare, 86, 88, 93-95, 104; cyber, 88; information, 88; NBC, 88, 95; psychological, 88
Washington, 59, 76, 131-132, 200, 202, 248, 290, 353, 355, 357-359
watchdog, 148, 196, 225, 315, 327, 339
weapon(s), 80, 94, 116; new systems, 13; nuclear, 86
West Bengal, 169
wideners, 212, 288
Wolfers, Arnold, 14, 57
women, 57, 235, 277, 293, 296; empowering, 149, 235; empowerment, 236, 277; trafficking in, 21, 287
Woods, Bretton, 180
World Trade Organisation (WTO), 179, 201, 318, 327, 359

World War II, 14, 163, 174
world
contemporary, 11, 37, 43, 54, 135, 149, 151; developing, 272, 319; inequitable, 271; saferworld, 229, 236, 291-294, 296, 330, 358; third, 14-15, 30, 35, 57, 184, 350, 355-356
Yemen, 187-188
Yunnan, 170-171
Yunus, Muhammad, 317
Zamir, Muhammad, 298
Zoellick, Robert B., 15, 180