

Relationships between India and Bangladesh: New Developments

Dr. D. Chandramouli Reddy

Asst. Professor

Department of Political Science and Public Administration
Sri Krishnadevaraya University, Anantapuram, Andhrapradesh

Abstract:

Since Sheikh Hasina became the Prime Minister of Bangladesh in 2009, India and Bangladesh's ties have seen considerable advancements in the last decade. There has been a notable increase in the number of bilateral contacts, while regional groups such as BIMSTEC and BCIM have provided opportunities to further bilateral and multilateral interactions. As a result, this study makes an effort to analyse India and Bangladesh's relationships while keeping the most recent developments in mind.

Keywords: Bilateral exchanges, Collective affiliations, Regional Groups, Strategies.

Introduction:

The bilateral relationship between India and Bangladesh has demonstrated vigour and vitality in the last decade. Numerous agreements and regular bilateral communication marked this period. Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina held the latest digital summit on 17 December 2020. India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi stated at the digital summit that improving ties with Bangladesh has been his top priority since assuming office. Furthermore, he emphasized the importance of Bangladesh as a cornerstone of our "Neighbourhood First" strategy^[1]. The pandemic hasn't dampened the spirit of cooperation between the two countries, which have maintained strong ties despite the difficulties. In her response, Bangladeshi Prime Minister Hasina said she was thrilled to see him again, "especially on this month of victory" during the summit. She continued that in December, all Bangladeshis are filled with the spirit of joy, freedom, and celebration as we remember with profound thankfulness our 'Father of the Nation,' Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. Whom under their able guidance, we were able to achieve great independence. It was fitting that the gathering took place so soon after Bangladesh's 16 December celebration of Victory Day, the day the country won its independence from Pakistani forces during the 1971 Liberation War, because this event is a part of the history of both countries. India supported Bangladesh's fight for independence. The companionship between India and Bangladesh has endured for 50 years, largely thanks to their shared experience during the Liberation War. Prime Minister Narendra Modi's planned visit to Dhaka in March 2020 was rescheduled due to the outbreak of COVID-19, so this gathering marks the first time the frontrunners of the two South Asian neighbours have met on a bilateral platform^[2].

India and Bangladesh met virtually and signed seven agreements on multiple issues, including hydrocarbons, elephant conservation, sanitation, agriculture, and reopening a cross-border rail link that had been in use until 1965. India needs energy desperately^[3]. It will be much easier for tourists from Bangladesh to travel to neighboring countries like Nepal and Bhutan once the Chilahati-Haldibari railway link is repaired. While in Dhaka, Modi and Hasina also opened a digital display commemorating the lives and legacies of Mujibur Rahman, the founder of Bangladesh, and

Mahatma Gandhi. The year 2020 will be known in Bangladesh as Mujib Borsho, honoring the birth centenary of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, better known by his pen name, Bangabandhu. He is well-known for his outspokenness on behalf of his people and his fight against systemic discriminatory practices^[4]. Because of this, a people's movement emerged, resulting in Bangladesh's independence. Bangabandhu worked to strengthen amicable ties between his country and India. To pay tribute to Sheikh Mujib, both Prime Ministers unveiled a stamp honoring Bangabandhu sheik Mujibur Rahman. The Postal Service has printed and distributed 500,000 stamps, 30750 First Day Covers, and 25610 Bangabandhu brochures.

In recent years, communication and cooperation between India and Bangladesh have improved. The two sides have increased their economic and trade ties and worked together on connectivity and infrastructure initiatives^[5].

Collective affiliations in history, culture, language, and other distinctive similarities classify the partnership, and both prime ministers are pleased with the present state of bilateral relations. They highlighted that the foundation of their relationship is brotherly love and that their alliance is based on principles of sovereignty, equality, trust, and understanding that go far beyond those of a simple strategic alliance. In August 2020, Foreign Secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla made his first trip outside India since the COVID-19 lockdown began in late March. He visited Dhaka^[6].

Mr. Shringla, a former high commissioner for India in Dhaka, made his first overseas trip as foreign secretary in the first week of March when he visited Bangladesh. Mr. Shringla, during his March 2020 visit, assured the Bangladeshi government that India's plan to update its National Register of Citizens (NRC) would not affect the country in any way. Representatives of the Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist, Jain, Parsi, and Christian societies who have come from Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Afghanistan until 31 December 2022 will be granted Indian citizenship, despite mixed reactions from the people of Bangladesh. This comes after Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen and Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan canceled December 2019 trips to India in the wake of the new citizenship bill^[7].

Recent years have seen high-level visits and interactions between India and Bangladesh:

The two countries top leaders have met and talked frequently. In addition, there have been several frequent visits at the ministerial level and regular visits between senior officials. In October 2019, the prime minister of Bangladesh traveled to India to attend the India Economic Forum summit hosted by the World Economic Forum. Sheikh Hasina, Prime Minister of Bangladesh, was the featured speaker at the World Economic Forum's annual summit. The visit's most quick result was the decision to sign seven pacts addressing issues such as transportation, communication, capacity development, and cultural exchange. The agreements include a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for the provision of a Coastal Surveillance System and a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for the transportation of goods through the ports of Chattogram and Mongla to and from India. Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Universities of Hyderabad and Dhaka; Agreement Concerning the Implementation of the Lines of Credit (LOCs) Committed by India to Bangladesh; MOU on India's Withdrawal of 1.82 Cusecs of Water from the Feni River for the Drinking Water Supply Scheme for Sabroom Town, Tripura, India; Agreement to continue the Cultural Exchange Programme and a Memorandum of Understanding to further cooperation in youth affairs.

Further, three new initiatives were launched. The projects include importing bulk LPG from Bangladesh, opening the Vivekananda Bhaban (a student hostel) at the Ramakrishna Mission in Dhaka, and opening the Bangladesh-India Professional Skill Development Institute (BIPSDI) at the Institution of Diploma Engineers Bangladesh (IDEB) in Khulna. It is noteworthy that the statement focused on the most important avenues for increased collaboration between India and Bangladesh. Teamwork will be fostered in the following areas: border security and management; win-win business partnerships; boosting connectivity on land, water, and in the skies; harnessing defence cooperation; trying to consolidate development cooperation; cross-border energy cooperation; cultural cooperation through celebrations of Mahatma Gandhi's birth anniversary (2019), the birth centenary of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman (2020), and the 50th anniversary of Bangladesh's War of Liberation (2021).

The Bangladeshi Prime Minister, Sheikh Hasina, had previously visited India from April 7-10, 2017. During the trip, 36 bilateral documents were signed covering various topics, from civil nuclear energy and space to IT and defense to capacity building. Bangladesh also received the third Line of Credit (LOC) for \$4.5 billion. The two leaders presided over a memorial service for Indian soldiers who died during Bangladesh's Liberation War. In addition to attending the BRICS-BIMSTEC Outreach Summit, which took place in India on October 16-17, 2016, Prime Minister Hasina was there on those days. Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited Bangladesh on June 6-7, 2015, after taking office in May that year. The visit resulted in the signing of 22 separate bilateral documents, including the approval of the India-Bangladesh Land Boundary Agreement (LBA) and the second Line of Credit (LOC) for \$2 billion. By exchanging territories, India and Bangladesh, by signing the historic LBA agreement, have resolved a land boundary dispute that had been ongoing for the past 41 years, significantly improving their relations. On 6 June 2015, in Bangladesh, both countries signed the LBA for 2015^[8]. The agreement allowed the transfer of 111 Indian enclaves to Bangladesh, totaling 17,160.63 acres. In exchange, India was given 51 enclaves in Bangladesh, totaling 7,110.02 acres. Under the International Court of Justice's ruling.

India's former External Affairs Minister, Smt. Sushma Swaraj and India's Minister of State for External Affairs, Lt. Gen. (Ret.) V.K. Singh made their first solo international trips to Bangladesh on 25-27 June and 24 August 2014, respectively. In March 2013, former President Pranab Mukherjee made his first international trip as head of state when visiting Bangladesh. For the first time in 42 years, Bangladesh's "ceremonial Head of State," President Md. Abdul Hamid traveled to India in December 2014^[9].

Upon taking office in 2010, Sheikh Hasina also made a trip to India. These meetings have helped strengthen cooperation between the two countries in several different areas, and they are evidence of the value the leaders of both countries place on their relationship. Significantly, the current direction of the relationship can be traced back to the joint communique granted after Prime Minister Hasina's visit in 2010. As a result of the meeting, the two countries' foreign ministers have agreed to meet annually to discuss the state of their relationship. India extended a credit line to Bangladesh in the amount of US\$1 billion during Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's trip, furthering the development partnership that is an important part of bilateral ties. The Indian government has pledged US\$10 billion in aid to Bangladesh, making it one of the country's most important development partners^[10].

In addition, India and Bangladesh have more than fifty bilateral institutional mechanisms covering security, trade and commerce, power and energy, transport and connectivity, science and

technology, defense, rivers and maritime affairs, and so on. Approaches chosen to carry between the two countries are coordinated and overseen by a Joint Consultative Commission (JCC), which is chaired by each country's foreign/external affairs ministers.

Border Control and Security:

India's longest land frontier is with Bangladesh, at a length of 4096.7 kilometers. In June 2015, ratification documents were exchanged, thus bringing into effect the India-Bangladesh Land Boundary Agreement (LBA). As of 31 July 2015, India and Bangladesh have inked strip maps exchanging the territories they have claimed in the other country. By 30 November 2015, all remaining residents of these former enclaves who wanted to keep their Indian citizenship had relocated to India. The two countries have inked several security cooperation agreements. India's dedication to and respect for international law were displayed in the peaceful exchange of territories, which saw it give up more land for less in return. It helped improve ties between the two countries, especially with Bangladesh^[11].

India and Bangladesh signed the Coordinated Border Management Plan (CBMP) in 2011 to coordinate border patrol attempts to prevent transnational crime and preserve security on both sides of the frontier. The economic growth of this area of the Bay of Bengal has been facilitated by the conclusion of the maritime border arbitration between India and Bangladesh, as per the UNCLOS ruling of 7 July 2014^[12].

Engagement in the Division of River Resources:

There are 54 rivers that both India and Bangladesh share. Since June 1972, a binational commission called the Joint Rivers Commission (JRC) has been keeping the two countries in constant communication to ensure they are getting the most out of their shared river systems. In addition to the JRC's meetings (there have been 37 so far), there are also periodic gatherings at the JRC's Technical level^[13]. The 1996 Ganga Waters Treaty for rationing river Ganga water from the dry season (1 January to 31 May) has shown effectiveness. To assess how well the treaty requirements are being carried out, the Joint Committee on Sharing of Ganga Waters gets together regularly.

Improving Rail Networks:

India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Bangladesh's Sheikh Hasina officially opened a train link between their countries during an online summit in December 2020. Haldibari, in the eastern Indian state of West Bengal, is linked to Chilahati, Bangladesh, via a 10.5-kilometer-long rail line. Several land-based trans-border connections, like the Haldibari-Chilahati railway line, were severed after the 1965 conflict between India and Pakistan. East Pakistan is now known as Bangladesh. But despite becoming an independent nation in 1971 after splitting from Pakistan, trans-border linkages remained severed between 1975 and 1996, a manifestation of the tense bilateral relations between India and Bangladesh. Until the Awami League came to office in Bangladesh in 1996, relations between the two countries were tense, and the governments of India and Bangladesh did nothing to rebuild transportation links between their countries. It wasn't until 1999 that a bus service between Kolkata and Dhaka was established^[14]. Another quickly followed that linked Dhaka to Agartala in northeastern India. After being abandoned for 43 years, the railway between Kolkata and Dhaka was finally reopened in 2008. It allowed the two countries to launch the Maitri (Friendship) Express. In the meantime, other train lines have been repaired, including those connecting

Petrapole, India; Benapole, Bangladesh; Gede, India; Darshana, Bangladesh; Singhabad, India, and Rohanpur, Bangladesh; and Radhikapur, India, and Birol, Bangladesh.

One of the most recent reopened cross-border connections is the Haldibari-Chilahati railway line. Several railway links are planned to be established this year. To better connect Bangladesh to Assam and West Bengal, the Haldibari-Chilahati route was established. Access to rail networks will be improved, and this connection will bolster the region's economic and trade growth. The railroad connection now in place will make it easier to transport merchandise. Once the necessary infrastructure is built on both sides, passenger traffic can begin. The Agartala–Akhaura train link is progressing well ^[15].

Bengali is widely spoken in India and Bangladesh, a significant cultural relationship because of the shared history and civilizations between the two countries. It was during the Awami League's rule in Bangladesh that relations between the two countries were at their warmest.

India and Bangladesh are working together to build a waterway network in the north-east :

India and Bangladesh signed the Protocol for Inland Water Trade & Transit (PIVT&T) in 1972 to facilitate bilateral trade across the waterways and to better connect India's northeastern states to the rest of the country. Both parties signed an annex to the Inland Water Transit and Trade Protocol in May 2020. (Power). There are now ten active Indo-Bangladesh Protocol (IBP) lines, up from eight previously. The roads from Rajshahi to Dhulian to Rajshahi have been made operational, while the one from Rajshahi to Aricha has been extended. Two additional protocol routes, five additional ports, and two additional extended ports have been added with the PIWTT Second Addendum. This brings the total number of protocol routes to 10, the number of ports to 11, and the number of extended ports to 2. When the new protocol route is fully operational, it will considerably increase the reliability and cost-effectiveness of bilateral trade for consumers, manufacturers, and exporters in both nations^[16].

Investment and Trade between Both Countries:

In 1972, India and Bangladesh inked their first trade pact. After its initial 5-year term expired in June 2015, the India–Bangladesh Trade Agreement was automatically extended for five years during the Prime Minister's visit to both countries in the same month. More than one trade deal has been signed between the two countries. Over the past decade, bilateral commerce between India and Bangladesh has increased consistently. There has been a 17% increase in trade volume between the two nations during the past five years. In the Financial Year 2016-17, India imported a total of US\$672.40 million from Bangladesh, while exports to Bangladesh totaled US\$4489.30 million. In the 2018–19 fiscal years, India shipped \$9.21 billion worth of goods to Bangladesh, while Bangladesh imported \$1.04 billion worth of goods from India^[17]. Tobacco and alcohol are the only two tariff lines for which India has not granted Bangladesh duty-free, quota-free access since 2011 under the South Asian Free Trade Agreement (SAFTA). For the benefit of the people who live on both sides of the borders, four Border Haats have been set up, two in Tripura and two in Meghalaya. Border Haats between India and Bangladesh are now being discussed. The Bangladesh Investment Development Authority (BIDA) has received Indian investment proposals worth more than US\$ 3 billion for potential implementation in Bangladesh. Indian FDI in Bangladesh increased to \$88.0mn in 2015-16. Bangladesh's Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina visited India in April 2017, during which

13 deals were inked for around US\$ 10 billion in investment, primarily from the Indian power and energy sectors.

Financial Support from India In the last seven years, India has provided Bangladesh with three separate Lines of Credit totaling \$8 billion. This makes Bangladesh India's greatest LOC beneficiary to date. Line of Credit (LOC) for Bangladesh totaling US\$ 1 billion was announced during the visit of the Bangladeshi prime minister to India in January 2010, infrastructure (such as highways, railways, bridges, and canals) that facilitates travel. These projects are mostly finished or are in the final stages of completion. During Prime Minister Modi's visit to Bangladesh in June 2015, India provided a second LOC of US\$ 2 billion. This line of credit funds 15 projects in the transportation, energy, shipping, special economic zones, health care, and technical education sectors. In April 2017, during the visit of the Bangladeshi prime minister to India, India provided Bangladesh with a third line of credit for US\$4.5 billion. Construction of Ports, Railways, and Roads are all in scope for the new LOC—infrastructure like airports, utilities, telecommunications, shipping, etc. The Government of India gives grant support to Bangladesh for projects under 'Aid to Bangladesh' in addition to LOC funding. Thanks to this initiative, the Government of India has funded a wide range of projects, including a new school and college buildings, laboratories, dispensaries, deep tube wells, community centers, and the restoration of historical monuments and structures. The cities of Rajshahi, Khulna, and Sylhet are currently home to three separate Sustainable Development Projects (SDPs). In Bengal, where Rabindra Nath Tagore was born, his family's ancestral home has undergone extensive renovations. A total of 36 community health centers in strategically chosen areas of Bangladesh are also part of Shilaidaha's efforts. The Bangladeshi leg of the Agartala-Akhaura rail link is one of the most ambitious projects to receive Indian grant support^[18].

Disease outbreak and economic collapse in Bangladesh:

Over 7,500 people have lost their lives, and 511,000 have been infected in Bangladesh due to the ongoing pandemic. The COVID-19 epidemic hampered economic growth in Bangladesh, yet more than 454,500 people have recovered. The 2020 recession, however, was avoided by Bangladesh. The garment sector in Bangladesh, which represents 11% of the country's GDP and employs roughly 4.4 million people, was hit hard by the worldwide health crisis. Exports and remittances have grown, and the country's economy has reportedly recovered more strongly than predicted^[19]. The Japanese business publication Nikkei Asia called the Bangladesh instance "a textbook example of what happens when a country's exports and remittances fail to revive." "most among developing countries, the presence of "excellent "Despite its dense population and lack of resources, the country managed to keep the COVID-19 pandemic under control. Both capitals have frequently praised India and Bangladesh for their resolve to resetting the positive course of bilateral ties through India's early delivery of COVID-19 vaccinations to Bangladesh.

Conflict over the Teesta River:

Water from the Teesta River is a contentious issue between both governments. Both governments agreed in 2011 that an interim agreement for exchanging the Teesta waters should be signed as soon as possible. This was reaffirmed in a joint statement following a virtual conference in December 2020. The unsettled problem of the Teesta River, which crosses the border between India and Bangladesh, was also discussed at the Modi-Hasina meeting. A recent analysis by the Asia

Foundation estimates that up to 21 million people in Bangladesh rely on the 121 km. of the Teesta within Bangladesh for economic survival. The government of India has publicly stated its intention to “convince all parties” to reach a water-sharing agreement. Modi’s administration and the one before it demonstrated a readiness to negotiate a river agreement with Bangladesh. When Modi was India’s prime minister for the first time, he emphasized that rivers should help strengthen ties between the two countries rather than cause tension. West Bengal’s government has been opposed to the deal since it would leave some portions of the Indian state without water, even though West Bengal and Bangladesh share a border^[20].

NRC:

Bangladesh is among the countries hardest hit by the Rohingya refugee crisis, and the NRC issue has sown mistrust in certain quarters. The Indian government has clarified that the National Register of Citizens and the Citizenship (Amendment) Act or CAA are domestic matters. The CAA aims to help persecuted minorities who fled to India from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, or Pakistan as soon as possible by expediting their application for Indian citizenship. The other communities’ access to citizenship-seeking channels is not diminished. It also doesn’t have any plans to deport anyone. Nearly 4,000 persons from Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Bangladesh have been granted Indian citizenship in the past six years, per the Indian Home Ministry. There could be 2,830 persons from Pakistan, 912 from Afghanistan, and 172 from Bangladesh. About 600 of them are Muslims who were just granted Indian citizenship. Today, India has and will continue to award citizenship to eligible foreign nationals who have relocated there. India’s Citizenship Amendment Act has received extensive coverage in Bangladeshi media (CAA)^[21].

Dhaka says India’s Citizenship Amendment Act is none of its business. But there are dissenters; a group of reporters discussed this matter at length. According to several Dhaka-based experts, CAA is a global problem. A rising number of people in Dhaka, Bangladesh, are worried that illegal immigrants now residing in India may be deported back to their home country. The government of Sheikh Hasina has made efforts to ease people’s concerns. The foreign minister of Bangladesh, Dr. AK Abdul Momen, has told his country’s people that Bangladeshis currently living in India will be returned home.

The Rohingya Crisis:

For India’s sake, it’s crucial to address the problem of illegal immigration from Bangladesh, which includes both Hindus and Muslims. There are a lot of Bangladeshi people living in India illegally. According to popular belief, most Muslim migrants are economic migrants rather than victims of religious persecution like the Hindus. At some point in the past, Rohingya refugees, originally from Myanmar, began entering India via Bangladesh, further complicating the situation. Some believed that the authorities in Bangladesh were actively encouraging these people to cross into India. Many believe that Bangladesh believed that the presence of Rohingyas in India would pressure the Indian government to take their side in the conflict between Myanmar and Bangladesh. Further, Dhaka could expel the thousands of Rohingyas within its borders^[22].

It is well-known that minorities in the Muslim-majority nations bordering India, such as Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Afghanistan, experience violence and religious persecution. They are frequently forcibly converted and deprived of their land and possessions. The women are kidnapped, converted, and then married off. There has been no worldwide criticism of these acts, which is

deeply disappointing. The city of Cox's Bazar has become home to the biggest refugee camp in the world. There are currently more than 900,000 Rohingya in that area. Some Indians worry that the situation may worsen if illegal immigrants are forced to leave the country.

The People's Republic of China and the Republic of Bangladesh:

The countries of Bangladesh and China have maintained strong associates throughout history. In multiple instances, China forged close ties with Bangladesh to bolster the string of pearls hypothesis and strategically surround India in the region. Regarding imports, China is Bangladesh's most important commercial partner. The imports from China accounted for the vast majority of the \$18 billion trade in 2019. China benefits tremendously from this trade imbalance. In a recent announcement, China said it would not impose tariffs on 97% of Bangladeshi goods entering the country. The exemption was made possible by China's duty-free, quota-free plan for the world's poorest nations. Many in Bangladesh are pleased by this development since they anticipate an uptick in exports to China as a direct result. Bangladesh is the greatest beneficiary of India's \$30 billion aid program because of the country's great investment of \$10 billion in developmental assistance. About \$30 billion in Chinese aid has been pledged to Bangladesh^[23].

Moreover, the scenario is more complex because of Bangladesh's close defense ties with China. Bangladesh's preference for Chinese weapons stems partly from the fact that after their liberation, many officers from the Pakistan Army. The latter was familiar with Chinese weapons transferred to the Bangladesh Army. As a result, the Chinese supplied tanks, missile launchers, fighter aircraft, and other weaponry systems to the Bangladeshi military. Bangladesh recently acquired two Chinese Ming-class submarines. India is on high alert for further Chinese military expansion into Bangladesh after the impasse in Ladakh.

In 2020, bilateral ties between Bangladesh and China strengthened, particularly in trade and commerce. As a "development partner," China has pledged to increase its aid toward Bangladesh's infrastructure initiatives. The media claimed in Bangladesh that Dhaka had approached China for a loan of roughly USD 1 billion to advance the Teesta River Comprehensive Management and Restoration Project.

Relations between India and Bangladesh on a Global Horizon:

Since the relationship between India and Bangladesh is positive, the two countries can work together in numerous regional forums, which speed up the developmental process.

India's SAARC partner, Bangladesh. After the 2016 Uri terrorist assault, India decided to boycott the 19th SAARC summit, which was scheduled to be held in Pakistan. Bangladesh backed India's decision and criticized Pakistan for its sponsorship of terrorism. The Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) is a platform for multilateral cooperation among Bangladesh, India, the Maldives, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Nepal, and Bhutan. Bangladesh has taken the lead in this initiative. Dhaka has served as the group's secretariat since 2014. Due to its strategic location in eastern South Asia, Bangladesh enjoys several regional advantages that few other countries can match. It will serve as a hub for many projects that aim to link ASEAN and other East Asian countries with Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, and Nepal. Bangladesh stands to gain from increased possibilities in the transportation and logistics sector, as well as from access to new markets, as well as new import sources of high-quality items at competitive prices.

Bangladesh has indicated an interest in joining current India, Myanmar, and Thailand trilateral highway project to improve connections between South and South East Asia. Following their online meeting, Prime Ministers Narendra Modi of India and Sheikh Hasina of Bangladesh issued a joint declaration expressing Bangladesh's desire to join the India-Myanmar-Thailand trilateral highway project. And in the same vein, India has asked its adjacent countries to open a route through Bangladesh that would link West Bengal (Hilli) and Meghalaya (Mahendraganj)^[24].

Despite being deleted from Beijing's Belt & Road Initiative (BRI) because of resistance from New Delhi, the long-proposed 2,800-kilometer-long Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar (BCIM) corridor received new life at a meeting hosted by the four parties in Kunming in June 2019. In a simultaneous declaration, the four parties believed that improved connectivity across all modes of transportation, including roads, trains, canals, aircraft, energy, and digital, would significantly boost regional competitiveness. We learned that the meeting attendees agreed that broader cooperation was required to construct this route. To connect Kunming and Kolkata, the 2,800-kilometer BCIM corridor must go through Mandalay and Dhaka. Considering the current trajectory of connections between the two countries, it is clear that India and Bangladesh have much in common, both historically and culturally. Relationships between the two countries benefit from strong political and economic links. Since working together in multiple regional group's benefits both countries, India and Bangladesh are close collaborators. Warm and welcoming India The stability of the South Asian area depends on the state of relations with Bangladesh. India is Bangladesh's true neighbour, and current developments in bilateral relationships imply that Bangladesh is a solid supporter of India's Neighbourhood first strategy.

References:

1. Sufian, A. (2022). Geopolitics of the NRC-CAA in Assam: Impact on Bangladesh-India relations. *Asian Ethnicity*, 23(3), 556-586.
2. Islam, N. (2020). Turkey, Asia anew and South Asia: A comparative assessment on bilateral relations and soft power policy with Bangladesh, India, and Pakistan. *TURAN: Stratejik Arastirmalar Merkezi*, 12(47), 379-398.
3. Rao, K. P. (2018). A study on India and central asia relations through the eye of energy politics. *ZENITH International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research*, 8(2), 75-85.
4. Jain, R. (2020). Water Crisis or What are Crises? A Case Study of India-Bangladesh Relations. *E-International Relations*, Available at: <https://www.e-ir.info/2020/06/11/water-crisis-or-what-are-crises-a-casestudy-of-india-bangladesh-relations>.
5. Shahriar, S. (2021). Bangladesh-India border issues: A critical review. *Geoforum*, 124, 257-260.
6. Sur, M. (2019). Danger and Difference: Teatime at the northeast India-Bangladesh border. *Modern Asian Studies*, 53(3), 846-873.
7. Rafi, A. E. (2022). Pakistan-Bangladesh Relations. *Focus*.
8. Chowdhury, S. M. (2020). Bangladesh-India Relations. *Indian Foreign Affairs Journal*, 15(3), 191-198.
9. Salman, S. M., & Uprety, K. (2021). Conflict and cooperation on South Asia's international rivers: A legal perspective. In *Conflict and Cooperation on South Asia's International Rivers*. Brill Nijhoff.
10. Burgess, S. F. (2020). India and South Asia: Towards a benign hegemony. In *Indian foreign policy in a unipolar world* (pp. 231-250). Routledge India.

11. HASSAN, M., & BALA, A. (2019). AN ANALYSIS ON INDIA-BANGLADESH BORDERS KILLING. *International Journal of Social, Political and Economic Research*, 6(1), 69-83.
12. Patel, A., Lotia, H., Malik, A. A., Mundt, M. D., Lee, H., & Rafiq, M. A. (2021). Gendered impacts of environmental degradation in informal settlements: A comparative analysis and policy implications for India, Bangladesh, and Pakistan. *Journal of Comparative Policy Analysis: Research and Practice*, 23(4), 468-484.
13. Rahman, A., Hossain, M. A., Ullah, R., & Iqbal, M. M. (2020). Reproductive biology of Gagora catfish (*Arius gagora*) at Meghna river system, Kushiara River, Bangladesh. *International Journal of Aquatic Biology*, 8(6), 383-395.
14. Bhattacharjee, J., Modi, N., & Hasina, S. (2020). Migration, river management, and radicalization: What does the future hold for India-Bangladesh relations? *Occasional Paper, Observer Research Foundation*.
15. Quader, T. (2019). India–Bangladesh relations: With special reference to Narendra Modi’s regime. *Journal of South Asian Studies*, 7(3), 83-93.
16. Quader, T. (2019). India–Bangladesh relations: With special reference to Narendra Modi’s regime. *Journal of South Asian Studies*, 7(3), 83-93.
17. Murshed, M., Chadni, M. H., & Ferdous, J. (2020). Does ICT trade facilitate renewable energy transition and environmental sustainability? Evidence from Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Nepal, and the Maldives. *Energy, Ecology and Environment*, 5(6), 470-495.
18. Haque, H. E., Dhakal, S., & Mostafa, S. M. G. (2020). An assessment of opportunities and challenges for cross-border electricity trade for Bangladesh using the SWOT-AHP approach. *Energy Policy*, 137, 111118.
19. Ahmed, N., Bhatnagar, P., Islam, M. S., & Alam, S. (2020). COVID-19 and unconventional leadership strategies to support student learning in South Asia: Commentaries from Bangladesh, India, and Pakistan. *International Studies in Educational Administration*, 48(3), 87-94.
20. Akhter, S., Eibek, K. U., Islam, S., Islam, A. R. M. T., Chu, R., & Shuanghe, S. (2019). Predicting spatiotemporal changes of channel morphology in the reach of Teesta River, Bangladesh, using GIS and ARIMA modeling. *Quaternary International*, 513, 80-94.
21. Pandey, A. NRC, AND ITS IMPACT ON INDO-BANGLADESH RELATIONS (2020).
22. GUHA, M. MIGRATION: AN IMPEDIMENT IN INDO-BANGLADESH RELATIONS (2022).
23. Hossain, D. (2021). Bangladesh–China Relations in an Era of Globalisation: Dynamics and Challenges. In *Routledge Handbook on South Asian Foreign Policy* (pp. 326-343). Routledge.