

National Security of
BANGLADESH
in the
Twenty-first Century

Edited by
MOHAMMAD HUMAYUN KABIR

The book deals with the nature and sources of threats to the national security of Bangladesh and elaborates on the security challenges in the present and future perspectives. It also raises and discusses various policy options for Bangladesh in dealing with such security challenges.

Mr. Mohammad Humayun Kabir, a gold medallist for his academic achievements, is a Senior Research Fellow of the Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies (BISS), Dhaka. His research interests include security and development, problems of governance, foreign policy of Bangladesh, politics of harnessing water resources, and sub-regional cooperation. He has to his credit a good number of journal articles, monographs, co-authored books, and contributions to books published both at home and abroad. His forthcoming (co-authored) book is on *Conflict Management and Sub-Regional Cooperation in ASEAN: Lessons for SAARC*. Mr. Kabir was a Research Scholar at the Centre for Policy Research (CPR), New Delhi, Research Fellow at the Bandaranaike Centre for International Studies (BCIS), Colombo, and Research Fellow at the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies (ISEAS), Singapore. From mid-2000 he is to commence in New Delhi his nine-month long research work on *Politics of Harnessing Common Rivers: The Case Study of the Mekong River And Lessons for the Eastern Himalayan Rivers* under the ASIA fellowship Programme (AFP) of the Washington-based Council for International Exchange of Scholars (CIES).

ISBN : 984 08 0157 0

Price : TK. 295/-

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Academic Press & Publishers Limited

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Published by
Academic Press & Publishers Limited
In Association with
Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies
Dhaka

Academic Press & Publishers Limited
55, Road-8/A, Dhanmondi
Dhaka-1209
Bangladesh

© Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies
1/46 Elephant Road, Ramna, Dhaka-1000
ISBN 984-08-0157-0
Price : TK. 295/-
June, 2000

Published by Habibur Rahman, Academic Press and
Publishers Limited, Dhaka

Preface

Apart from many other research programmes and organizational activities, the Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies (BIISS), Dhaka, holds a number of national seminars every year on topics of critical relevance to the national interest of Bangladesh. These subjects include national security, foreign policy, democratization issues, issues of governance and development, etc. Given the significance of the emerging security discourse in the post-Cold War era for a country like Bangladesh, BIISS organized a two-day national seminar on *"National Security of Bangladesh in the Twenty-first Century"* on 29-30 November 1998.

Mr. Shah A.M.S. Kibria, Hon'ble Minister for Finance of the Government of Bangladesh, graced the occasion as Chief Guest and inaugurated the seminar. Mr. Syed Yusuf Hossain, Defence Secretary of the Government of Bangladesh, presided over the Inaugural Session, while Brigadier Muhammad Shahedul Anam Khan, Director of BIISS, made the keynote presentation on the theme of the seminar. About 70 scholars, policy makers and opinion formers from Chittagong, Rajshahi, Khulna and Sylhet as well as from Dhaka participated in the two-day national seminar.

This book is a compilation of the research papers presented at the seminar. The papers were, of course, revised, and some authors chose to slightly change the titles of their papers. I thank all the distinguished participants for their learned and thought-provoking deliberations that helped the authors revise their papers for publication.

I take this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude to the Chief Guest of the seminar, to all the chairmen of its sessions, and to all the panelists of its four working sessions for their invaluable time and words of wisdom. I record my deep appreciation of and indebtedness to all my esteemed colleagues for their guidance and cooperation in organizing the national seminar and encouraging me to get the seminar papers published in book form. Particular mention in this

respect must be made of Major General Mustafa Kamaluddin, ndu, psc, Chairman of the Board of Governors of BISS, Brigadier Muhammad Shahedul Anam Khan, ndc, psc, the just-retired Director General of BISS, and Dr. Abdur Rob Khan, Research Director of BISS. The new Director General of BISS, Major General Jamil D Ahsan, BP, psc, has given me the final critical push to get the book published at last. I am indeed grateful to him for this. I owe a great deal to Colonel Emdaduddin Ahmed, Research Director of BISS, for the fondness and goodwill he cherishes towards me that often helps me go on in life.

I extend my thanks to Mr. Habibur Rahman, Managing Director of the Academic Press and Publishers Limited, for having borne with me through a series of broken promises on my part to deliver him the manuscript for publication sooner. My thanks are also due to Mr. Ahmedur Rahman and Mr. Mojibour Rahman, computer operators at BISS, for their occasional assistance as and when my own computer knowledge proved inadequate.

Very special words are for my wife, Rosy, and son, Nayeem, for having provided me an unduly enduring ambience at home conducive to academic work. Her loving care has always removed my distress and his naughty presence around has constantly lightened the burden of my exacting vocation of research.

I most sincerely extend my thanks to the authors they so richly deserve for their laudable contributions to this volume. The views expressed in this book are, of course, strictly their own and may not necessarily reflect those of the Editor or of the Institution he works for.

Mohammad Humayun Kabir
BISS, Dhaka
June, 2000

About the Contributors

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Dr. M. Asaduzzaman, Research Director of the Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS), Dhaka, specializes in energy development and energy management.

Dr. Munim Kumar Barai is Assistant Professor at the Bangladesh Institute of Bank Management (BIBM), Dhaka.

Mr. Afsan Chowdhury, who is an independent media person reporting for the *BBC* and *Deutsche Welle*, is the Advisory Editor of the *Dhaka Courier*, Contributing Editor of *Himal South Asia* (Kathmandu) and Consultant to *Ekushey TV* (Bangladesh). He is also a social activist involved with the **Disaster Forum**, a network of outfits working on various disaster related problems, and **Breaking the Silence**, a group working on the problem of sexual abuse of children.

Dr. A. M. Choudhury is Chairman of the Bangladesh Space Research and Remote Sensing Organisation (SPARRSO), Dhaka.

Group Captain Ishfaq Ilahi Choudhury, ndc, psc is an Officer of the Bangladesh Air Force (BAF). He is a graduate of the National Defence College, Mirpur, Dhaka. He is also a graduate of the Defence Services Command and Staff College (DSCSC), Mirpur, and the Air Command and Staff College, Alabama, USA. He held various command and staff appointments in his career, including that of the Directing Staff of the DSCSC. Currently Group Captain Choudhury is commanding the Air Defence Operations Centre (ADOC) of BAF. A number of his articles appeared in various professional journals and newspapers.

Dr. CAF Dowlah is Policy Advisor to the World Food Program (WFP), Bangladesh.

Mrs. Neila Husain is Research Fellow at the Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies (BISS), Dhaka, specializing in small arms issues.

Dr. Syed Anwar Husain is Professor of International History at the Department of History of the University of Dhaka, Dhaka. Currently on deputation to Bangla Academy as its Director General, Professor Husain has worked extensively on ethnicity, politics and security of Bangladesh.

Major General Syed Muhammad Ibrahim (Retd), BP,awc, psc is a valiant freedom fighter who fought in Bangladesh's Liberation War in 1971, having obtained the gallantry award of Bir Protik. General Ibrahim held various important command and staff appointments, including those of the General Officer Commanding (GOC), 55 Infantry Division of the Bangladesh Army and the Director General of BISS.

Dr. Muinul Islam, Professor of Economics at the University of Chittagong, is currently Director General of the Bangladesh Institute of Bank Management (BIBM), Dhaka.

Mohammad Humayun Kabir works for the Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies as a Senior Research Fellow.

Dr. Abdur Rob Khan is Research Director of the Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies.

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Brigadier Muhammad Shahedul Anam Khan, ndc, psc of the Bangladesh Army had a distinguished career. Commissioned in 1968, he is a graduate of the Staff College, Camberley, UK, and the National Defence College, India. He held various important command and staff appointments. Some of these

appointments are Directing Staff of DSCSC, Mirpur, Commanding Officer - Infantry Battalion, Commander - Infantry Brigade, Commandant - School of Infantry & Tactics, Assistant Chief and Acting Chief Military Observer - UNIIMOG, Defence Attaché in Beijing, and Director General of the Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies (BIISS), Dhaka. A number of his articles appeared in various professional journals and newspapers. He left BIISS and retired from the Army in March 2000.

Editor :

Mohammad Humayun Kabir is a Senior Research Fellow of the Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies (BIISS), Dhaka.