

# 40 Years of India-Bangladesh Relations (1971-2010): Ups and Downs

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## **Abstract**

In the phase of interdependence, no country can afford to live in isolation. Therefore, foreign policy becomes a crucial instrument to operationalise objectives of nation-states in the international arena. There are many trends which can be identified with the post-cold war scenario. The dominant trend is that of globalization. The world today is being referred to as 'global village'. The world is becoming a more integrated economic community that it was ever before, supported by the communication revolution. India and its neighbours have many things in common, particularly their political history. Bangladesh emerged on the world map as sovereign independent country in December 1971. India's role in the liberation of Bangladesh strengthened bilateral ties between the two nations. The study is an attempt to understand the relationship between India and Bangladesh from 1971 to 2010. This paper first provides a brief overview of India-Bangladesh relations followed by discussing the change in their relationship in detail.

**Keywords:** Relations, India-Bangladesh, International

## **Introduction**

International Relations at all levels have been changing rapidly in the last quarter of 20<sup>th</sup> century. It is both an academic and public policy field, and can be either positivist or normative because it seeks to analyze as well as formulate foreign policy. It examines some of the critical issues of modern times such as the changing nature of international cooperation and conflicts, the new character of warfare, diplomacy, power politics, the impact of globalization upon states and societies, and persistence of world problems like poverty, migration, environment, trafficking in drugs, terrorism etc. The role of states and non-states actors in shaping world politics in new millennium is central to the study of international relations, as well as an understanding of how different vision of world order affect the prospects of peace and security.

A country's foreign policy is the product of its past history, which the country cannot change, its geography, which is normally very durable, its domestic circumstances and its international environment which is always in a flux and largely out of country's control. History and geography gives continuity to foreign policy and domestic and international circumstances produce undergoing dramatic transformation. The current change in the global as well as domestic milieu is the most crucial point in independent India's foreign policy. Year 1990 came as a turning point in foreign policy of India. In the early 1990's India's foreign policy confronted with the drastically changed domestic and external environment. At the domestic level it ushered the era of coalition politics which posed new challenges to the foreign policy makers of India.<sup>1</sup>

India and its neighbours have many things in common, particularly their political history. Most of India's neighbours were the victims of the colonial rule and acquired independence almost at the same time. India achieved the freedom by means of non-violent movement led by Mahatma Gandhi, which inspired many Asian and African countries to follow India and achieve their independence. India emerged as a natural leader, so far as fight for the freedom against the mighty British Empire by means of non-violent movement characterized by disobedience and non-cooperation, which may appear unique for the rest of the world and easy to practice. Independence to the countries extremely exploited by the colonial rulers presented a Herculean task to rebuild their economies and March towards economic development and the welfare of the masses.<sup>2</sup>

### Review of Literature

For any objective study, the review of the existing literature is essential. By reviewing existing literature, we can chart our course of study in this vast ocean of literature. The relationship between India and Bangladesh has been the focal point of many interesting studies in the field of International Relations. Published and unpublished literature on Indo-Bangladesh relation is very vast. Much of the literature on Indo-Bangladesh relations pertains to cold war period. But there is a dearth of objective literature in regard to Indo-Bangladesh relations in the post cold war era.

Although our main focus of study is Indo-Bangladesh Relations from 1971 to 2010, yet there are certain pioneer works which are very useful to understand the Indo-Bangladesh relations in historical perspective. The below mentioned studies have been helpful in understanding and analyzing the issues related to the present study:

**S. S. Bindra (1982)**, in his book, *Indo-Bangladesh Relations*, has pointed out that the relations between the two countries were of very friendly up to August 1975. The Government of India which played a memorable role in the emergence of Bangladesh, diverted its resources sincerely in order to build the completely wrecked economy of Bangladesh and social setup and was the first to recognize it as a sovereign independent country. India gave large quantity of economic aid and helped in setting the Bangladesh industry and other essential services. After military coup of 1975, change in the internal environment created stress and strains between India and Bangladesh.

**AKM Abdus Sabur (1999)**, in his article, "Bangladesh Foreign Policy in the Post- Cold War Era : Challenges and Options", has described that, the relations between Bangladesh and India have been constrained under the influence of a host of historical, geographical, economical, socio-economic and politico-cultural factors which are themselves highly contradictory in nature. In these circumstances the emergence of disputes between Bangladesh and India could be viewed as natural or even inevitable. Nonetheless, the persistence of all these disputes creating such a crisis of confidence in bilateral relations for so many years and with no solution in sight looks certainly bizarre.

**Sreeradha Datta (2002)**, in his article, "Indo-Bangladesh Relations: An Overview of Limitations and Constraints", has described that historic links, economic interactions and geostrategic interests make India and Bangladesh vital to each other. The geographical conditions, economic interactions, energy supplies, trade links, ethno-cultural proximity and historical linkages provide a plethora of opportunities for close, cordial and cooperative relations between the two countries. However, despite the growing trade linkages and opportunities, fundamental structural problems inhibit realization of their full economic potentials.

**Nurusal Islam (2004)**, in his paper, “Indo-Bangladesh Economic Relations : Some Thoughts”, has examined various aspects of Indo-Bangladesh trade relations, including cross-border illegal trade, the comparative trade regimes in the two countries, investment cooperation and the implications of the proposed Free Trade Agreement . It particularly explores the prospects and ways of increasing Bangladesh’s export to India, thus addressing the existing trade imbalance. The paper concludes that mutually beneficial agreements can be accorded, if the various aspects of economic cooperation are seen in a comprehensive framework.

**A. Kamboj (2009)**, in his article, “Indo-Bangladesh Relations-Changing Policies”, has suggested that in the age of globalization, Bangladesh must prioritize its economic agenda and see how the country can gain from the emerging economy of India. In view of India’s location and market potentials, Bangladesh should look at India as a long term strategic and economic partner. India on its part should be as magnanimous as possible in areas of trade and economic relations in ways that allow the two economies to be closely interlinked.

**Anjana Ray and Amit Kumar (2011)**, in their article, “India Take Lead to Cope with Challenges in Neighbourhood,” have examined the various issues and analyzes the position taken by India and Bangladesh on these problems like water disputes, refugee problem and boundary problem etc. Both Bangladesh and India stand to gain by working together to ward off the dangers of radical Islamic terrorist activities spreading throughout the region. The challenges that confront the two countries in the coming decade will however be different in nature from those of the late 20<sup>th</sup> century because climate changes, erratic seasonal patterns of cyclones and typhoons, frequency of floods, drought and river erosion etc.

**Anindya Jyoti Majumdar (2014)**, in her paper, “Making Sense of India-Bangladesh Relations”, has pointed out that India and Bangladesh are interrelated in geopolitical relations but their core objectives are different. Bangladesh is yet to form its own identity in which the perceived image of India figures predominantly, and the attitudes and expectations they develop towards each other shape the pattern of bilateral interactions between the two countries. Analyzed at three levels of geopolitics, attitudinal effects and functional exchanges, India–Bangladesh relations appear as a reflection of normal big country–small country power relations where policies are formulated on the basis of the primary principle of self-help but are further shaded by the quest for transforming itself into a nation-state by Bangladesh.

**Kashem and Islam (2016)**, in their article, “Narendra Modi’s Bangladesh Policy and India-Bangladesh Relations :Challenges and Possible Policy Responses”, investigates Narendra Modi’s Bangladesh policy and India –bangladesh relations under his regime. It challenges the conventional wisdom that when the BJP and AL regime are in power, India and Bangladesh do not enjoy warm relations and argue the opposite.

**Javid Ahmad Mir(2018)**, in his paper, “India Bangladesh Relations: A Study of Issues Influencing the Relations and Recent Trends,” has described that India’s connections with Bangladesh are human advancement, social and financial. With Bangladesh, India shares not just a typical history of battle for flexibility and freedom yet in addition continuing sentiments of both friendly and additionally familial ties. This shared trait is reflected in multi-dimensional relations with Bangladesh at a few levels of association. The two countries need to experience an adjustment in outlook, especially at the political level.

**Tahneia Quader (2019)**, in his paper, “India-Bangladesh Relations: With Special Reference to Narendra Modi’s Regime”, indicates that India-Bangladesh relation has got new momentum during Modi’s tenure

as the prime minister of India. Significant developments have been made over three key thematic areas during Modi's government in India. These are; dispute resolution, cooperation and connectivity. Therefore, consistency in Indo-Bangladesh friendly relations needs to be maintained no matter which regime remains in power both in Dhaka and Delhi.

**Sanjay K. Bhardwaj (2020)**, in his study, "Tenets of India-Bangladesh Relations," attempt to assess India's relation with Bangladesh since its independence instead of only in the context of India's present neighbourhood first policy. The study deals with two aspects, first the basic tenets of India-Bangladesh relations viz, "cultural identity", religious identity and small states imperatives and second their emergent structural and functional varia

**Saleh Shahriar (2021)**, in his paper, "Bangladesh-India border issues: A critical review," broadly reviews Bangladesh-India cross-border issues and specifically calls attention to Bangladesh-India cross-border relations in the realm of comparative border research, which will expand our socio-political, economic, geographic and cultural understandings of bordering practices and border policies.

**Md Akbor Ali (2023)**, in his paper entitled, "51 Years of India-Bangladesh Bilateral Relations: Opportunities and Challenges", has stated that India and Bangladesh have unique neighbourly relations. Bangladesh is a geopolitically and strategically important country in India's neighbourhood policy. Bangladesh is especially important to India because of its connectivity with the country's seven landlocked northern sister states. Bangladesh's foreign policy discourse is dominated by the words "Indian factor" and "blocked by India." As a result, India is a top priority for Bangladeshi policymakers.

## Methodology

In order to pursue our study, both primary and secondary sources have been consulted. The subject has been treated in a chronological order. Primary sources include treaties, convention, documents, parliamentary debates documents and speeches of leaders of the both nations. Secondary sources include books, articles, journals, magazines and newspapers etc.

## Relations from 1971 to 2010

Bangladesh – initially Bengal, later East Bengal and then East Pakistan, has a rich cultural heritage and history. Initially, it came under the umbrella of Buddhist and Hindu rulers and later, under the Muslim rulers. Sufi Islam arrived in the 12<sup>th</sup> century and spread in a benign manner amongst the locals. In 1905, the British divided Bengal into West (predominately Hindus) and East (majority Muslim). Revoked in 1911, it sowed the seeds of partition which in 1947 resulted in India being divided on communal lines. The Muslims of East Bengal supported Pakistan as they were hoping for "autonomy"; instead they were looked down upon and discriminated by West Pakistanis.<sup>3</sup>

The emergence of Bangladesh was an event of major importance in the subcontinent. For the people of Bangladesh it was the end of a nightmare of terror and torture, a reassertion of their individuality and personality, and an opportunity to decide their own future development. For India it was a major victory of democratic secularism. The politics of hate and violence had been rejected and one more country in the region had opted for democracy and secularism. A constant source of anxiety not only for the fate and future of the minority community across the eastern borders but also for its potentially explosive impact on the Indian polity had been declared. India could reasonably feel assured about its security in one important sector of the eastern border. Together Bangladesh and India in friendship and on the basis of mutuality of interests and equality of relationship could help create conditions of peace and security in

the subcontinent, promote the development and welfare of the people of these countries, concentrate their resources on fighting poverty, disease and ignorance which were the real enemies, set an example for Pakistan and invite the people of that country too to join in this endeavour. There was widespread optimism – occasionally bordering on euphoria – about future developments. The rise of Bangladesh was seen as a critical catalyst in the process of establishing new relationships and turning back from the path of religious fanaticism, obscurantist politics and ruinous local conflicts and wars.<sup>4</sup>

Mrs. Indira Gandhi who was the Prime Minister of India at that time fully supported the cause of the Bangladeshis. India played a leading role in the liberation of Bangladesh. Its people made bold sacrifices for securing to the people of Bangladesh their freedom and their rights. These historic and unparalleled sacrifices made by the people of India and the material and moral support that they gave to the people of Bangladesh combined together to provide a solid foundation for the development of warm and highly friendly and cooperative relations between India and Bangladesh.<sup>5</sup>

Bangladesh has immense geo-strategic and geo-economic importance. Its geographic location in South Asia has made it an important country in the region. On one hand, a major portion of the country is surrounded by Indian states, which makes the Bangladeshis feel India-locked. On the other hand Bangladesh is seen as a potential transit route and connection point for social and commercial interaction between South and South East Asia. Bangladesh is also located between two strong economies i.e., China and India, both of whom are also looking at Bangladesh as a potential market for trade and investment. Apart from these advantages of location, Bangladesh's huge market, cheap labour and potential source of oil and gas, has gone unnoticed.<sup>6</sup>

Bangladesh is bounded by India on three sides-North, East, West, and except for a small portion on the East, where it borders Myanmar. Both the countries share a common history, socio-cultural heritage and land border of 4096 kms. They share many things due to their geographic proximity; both regions have the experience with British colonialism, and both have numerous cultural heritages. Both countries lie in the basins of the Ganges and Brahmaputra rivers, on which they both depend. Bangladesh depends on India for harnessing the resources of the Bay of Bengal, which forms its Southern boundary, as well as for providing safe international water routes for trade and commerce. The commonality between the two countries is reflected in multi-dimensional relations at several levels of interaction. High-level exchanges, visits and meetings take place alongside the wide-ranging people-to-people interaction.<sup>7</sup>

The foreign policy of Bangladesh has always been guided by its two core factors i.e. economic compulsions and India as a regional power. In this paradigm India occupies the center stage in Bangladesh's foreign policy, which is persuaded by virtue of its geographical surroundings, historical legacy, and more importantly, persistence of a number of outstanding bilateral issues which are vital to its existence. Bangladesh has to develop its foreign policy in the light of certain basic factors such as the geographical realities of the region, its search for security, historical background, and cultural affinities. In this paradigm for the foreign policy makers of Bangladesh nothing figures more prominently than the 'India factor'.<sup>8</sup>

After independence, Bangladesh adopted a political system quite similar to India. It was a direct outcome of Mujibur Rahman's attraction towards the principles India believed in, and also of India's influence and role in the independence of Bangladesh. Immediately after his return from Pakistan in January 1972, Mujib had declared that Bangladesh was to have special ties with India. In his speech at Calcutta on February 16, 1972 he said, "I have no doubt that India, our next door neighbour, will proudly march on as the largest democracy, with secularism and socialism at home and non-alignment in

international relations”. The Awami League Government officially announced that ‘friendship with India is a cornerstone of the foreign policy of Bangladesh’. As a result of this tilt towards India, Bangladesh followed many ideals of Indian foreign policy. For example, it endorsed the principle of non-alignment, peaceful co-existence and opposition to colonialism, racialism and imperialism in any form. Besides, Bangladesh was deeply committed to anti-imperialism as it had already experienced the intentions of the powers that had provided military and political support to Pakistan in its exploitation. Since the emergence of Bangladesh, the Prime Ministers of two countries had made regular contacts and signed a number of agreements from time to time, particularly in last twenty five years, Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Peace on March 19, 1972.<sup>9</sup>

During the Mujib era, the political, economic and cultural relations between the two countries were more than satisfactory. The notable achievements of both the countries were the signing of Indo-Bangladesh Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Peace in 1972, signing of border agreement in 1974 which solved the problem of enclaves at the satisfaction of both the countries and the understanding reached between the Prime Minister of India Mrs. Indira Gandhi and the Prime Minister of Bangladesh Sheikh Mujibur Rahman on the Farakka Barrage dispute. Indian Prime Minister assured his counterpart in Bangladesh that India would not commission Farakka Barrage, pending some solution to the barrage problem and India kept the promise it made. When the barrage was commissioned on April 21, 1975 and dedicated to the nation, both the countries had already signed an Interim Agreement on April 18, 1975 on the sharing of the waters of the river Ganga. No doubt, India made major concessions to Bangladesh while reaching on an understanding and keeping its promise. It can be said that both the countries were committed to peace and has all regards and faith in the territorial integrity of each other.<sup>10</sup>

After the assassination of Shiekh Mujibur Rahman in August, 1975, the relations started becoming tense. There was political instability in Bangladesh. Many coups and counter coups occurred in Bangladesh between August 15 and November 1975 because factionalism and politicization of army. Zia-ur-Rahman made drastic changes in constitution by amendment. Secularism was replaced by Islam in the preamble of Bangladesh constitution and it became Islamic republic. General Zia-ur- Rahman, the successor of Sheikh Mujib, was unfavourably disposed towards India. It was mainly because of the strong influence of the General’s ultra-left and right-wing supporters, who were anti-India. Moreover, he had been once part of Pakistan’s army and had been somewhat influenced by Pakistan. General Rahman’s fear was that India might attempt to destabilize his government and hence this made him to forge close strategic and security tie with Pakistan, China and the United States. He thought that this might contain Indian influence in the sub-continent. Bangladesh started buying weapons from China, a move which disappointed India. Border skirmishes started and in 1976 Indo-Bangladesh relations deteriorated. The Indian Government during 1977-78 staunchly opposed cross border migration and smuggling from Bangladesh which further affected the ties.<sup>11</sup>

Relations between Delhi and Dhaka slightly improved when the Janta Government under Sh. Morarji Desai came to power. Sh. Desai, a Gandhian, decided to release Ganga Waters from Farakka, though Bangladesh did not reciprocate by granting transit rights. Sh. Morarji also agreed to work towards resolving the Land Border Issue, but the government soon changed hands, and Mrs. Gandhi came back to power in 1980. This time around, Mrs. Gandhi was more amenable to working with Zia but before any concrete steps could be taken, Bangladesh again plunged into turmoil due to Zia’s assassination on May 30, 1981.<sup>12</sup>

Bangladesh was ruled by Gen. Zia-ur-Rahman till May 1981 when he was killed. His successor, civilian President, Sattar was overthrown in a bloodless coup on March 24, 1982 and Lt. Gen. Ershad assumed power. Lt. Gen. Ershad took his country closer to Islamic oil producing countries. The attitude of new regimes towards India was marked by confusion. The problem relating to Farakka Barrage and sharing of Ganga waters were major issues of conflict between India and Bangladesh. The Bangladesh President had said in 1982 that, “we would not accept a policy of submission even if the entire North Bengal turns into a desert as a result of the Farakka problem...Bangladeshis are good Muslims, who offer their prayers five times a day and whom Allah would certainly help...Bangladeshi would continue to live for all times to come, Farakka or no Farakka...was not Islam born in the desert”. With such emphasis on Islam, relations with secular India could not be expected to be as smooth as were anticipated by Sheikh Mujibur and Indira Gandhi.<sup>13</sup>

However the foreign policy under Ershad did not significantly deviate from what it was under Ziaur Rahman’s dispensation and the anti-Indian and anti-Soviet approach was maintained. Gen. Ershad declared Islam as a state religion like Ziaur Rahman as well as H. M. Ershad did not have the direct support of the masses. They decided to use religion and anti-Indian sentiments to legitimize their rule in Bangladesh. As a result, during his regime Indo-Bangladesh relations and their bilateral disputes such as Ganga water, insurgencies, border demarcation and Chakma problem could not take any positive direction.<sup>14</sup>

The relations between two countries improved after the 1989 election which saw a coalition government assuming power in Delhi. The thrust was now on developing good neighbourly relations without similar reciprocity. The Indian Foreign Minister, I. K. Gujral’s visit to Dhaka in February 1990 marked a new era in Indo-Bangladesh relations. He assured Bangladesh that India would not allow its territory to be used against Bangladesh. The relations received further boost when the Indian Supreme court in a landmark judgment approved the transfer of Tin Bigha corridor to Bangladesh which was a contentious issue between both the countries. Agreement regarding this corridor was signed in 1972 and 1982. The Tin bigha corridor is rent free and is perpetually leased to Bangladesh for access to its enclave of Dahagram and Angorpotta. This perpetual lease provided for the retention of Indian sovereignty over the leased land with free movement of Indian citizens living on the either side of this corridor.<sup>15</sup>

The resumption of democracy in Bangladesh coincides with the return of the Congress government in India in 1991. However, Dhaka’s relations with New Delhi did not improve under Begum Khaleda Zia led Bangladesh Nationalist Party government. The anti-India policy followed by Khaleda Zia and the Bhartiya Janta Party’s growing influence stalled the concrete effort to resolve the contentious issues between two countries. The Awami League government’s return to power in 1996 after two decades brought new era of cordial relations based on mutual trust and cooperation. Her government signed the historic Ganga Water Treaty with India. It also paved the way for the return of thousands of Chakma refugees from Tripura to Bangladesh with the signing of a landmark accord that ended decades of tribal insurgency in the border region. Then, it sent a strong signal to insurgents operating all across northeastern India. Relations were further strengthened by India’s “Gujral Doctrine” which favoured the policy of giving unilateral concessions to small and weaker neighbours.<sup>16</sup>

After Bangladesh returned to democracy, there has been successful signing of treaties namely, Ganges Water Treaty 1996, and the agreement on Chittagong Hill Tracts in 1997. Both of these were signed when A L Government was in power. Situation was relatively better under Sheikh Hasina. When Khaleda Zia returned to power in 2001, there was wide scale of violence against Hindu minorities. There

was also indication of growth of Taliban/ Ai-Qaeda elements in Bangladesh causing concern for India. India was caught in between the rivalry between Prime Minister Khaleda Zia and the leader of opposition Sheikh Hasina. This affected the bi-lateral relations between the two countries. During this period, India tried to import natural gas from Bangladesh which was refused by Bangladesh government. The trade gap between both the countries was increasing. India offered a free trade agreement which was not received well in Bangladesh .It even turned down a proposal to join the Asian Highway project floated by Asian Development Bank because such a road would pass through India. Bangladesh was not ready to offer transit or trans-shipment facilities to India for transferring Indian goods to enter into any economic agreement with India, but at the same time it was also not able to offer any solution to address the high tariff and non-tariff barriers that exist in India for Bangladesh goods. The deterioration of the bi-lateral relationship has been due to the limited political contacts between the two countries during the second tenure of Begum Khaleda Zia.<sup>17</sup>

The Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, accompanied by a delegation which included the External Affairs Minister, visited Dhaka on June 19-20, 1999 on the occasion of the inaugural function of the bus service from Calcutta to Dhaka. The bus service has been welcomed by the people of two countries with great joy. It heralded a new dimension in the bilateral relations and represented a significant step in facilitating people-to-people interaction between the two countries.<sup>18</sup>

On March 20-22, 2006, Bangladesh Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia visited India. Both the Prime Minister discussed on various issues. Two agreements were signed during the visit. These were Revised Trade Agreement and the Agreement for Mutual Cooperation between India and Bangladesh for Preventing Illicit Trafficking in narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances. Both sides agreed that the institutionalized bilateral mechanisms such as Joint River Commission, Joint Economic Commission, Joint Boundary Working Groups and Home Secretary level talks would meet more frequently to ensure movement in a positive direction and their outcome will be monitored by the political leadership on a continuous basis.<sup>19</sup>

The Indo-Bangladesh relations had got a boost during the caretaker government's regime led by Fakruddin Ahmed. After a gap of ten years, the Bangladesh Army Chief Moeen Ahmed visited India and in a significant development the two Armies held joint exercise in Assam in February 2008. Minister for State for Commerce has also visited Bangladesh in 2007 and the two countries had agreed for border *haat*. In a deviation from the practice, for the first time Bangladesh during the regime of care taker government had invited Indian soldiers to be a part of the victory day celebration on December 16 at Savar on the outskirts of Dhaka.<sup>20</sup>

From January 10-13, 2010, at the invitation of the Indian Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh, Sheikh Hasina paid a three-day official visit to India. During Hasina's visit to India, New Delhi and Dhaka has concluded five important agreements, and they are: Agreement on Mutual Legal Assistance on Criminal Matters; Agreement on the Transfer of Sentenced Persons; Agreement on Combating International Terrorism; Organised Crime and Illicit Drug Trafficking; Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in Power Sector; and Cultural Exchange Programme.

The understanding between India and Bangladesh bore its fruit, when on August 7, 2010, the Indian Finance Minister Pranav Mukherjee visited Bangladesh. One of the main objectives of this visit was to witness the signing of \$1 billion credit facility offered by India to Bangladesh. In the same meeting, both countries agreed that the meeting of a Joint Boundary Commission would be held soon to work out ways of swapping Indian enclaves with Bangladeshi zones with India, a long standing demand of Bangladesh.



The agreement was also signed by both the countries to build a bridge over the river Feni to link the two nations and custom station at Tripura and Mizoram borders. Furthermore, New Delhi proposed to renew a deal that would allow Bangladesh to sell eight million pieces of garments to India every year. Therefore, the year 2010 clearly gave a sign of better understanding which both countries lacked towards each other during the past years and thereby, has tried to remove the cloud to win renewed commitment of Bangladesh.<sup>21</sup>

### Conclusion

If we review relations between the two countries, it appears that the dynamics of these relations revolve around some major issue between them. It can be said that India and Bangladesh can gain from each other by coming out of the bonds of internal politics and raise their hands for the cooperation in the field of energy, trade, science and culture. The two countries should find out a political way to resolve the bilateral issues like border demarcation, maritime boundary, issue of trans-shipment, bilateral trade etc. These are crucial for their economic benefits. None of the issues projected by either countries are non-resolvable - what is needed is the will to resolve them. Fortunately, in both countries there are people who had a positive outlook for future relation between the two countries.

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