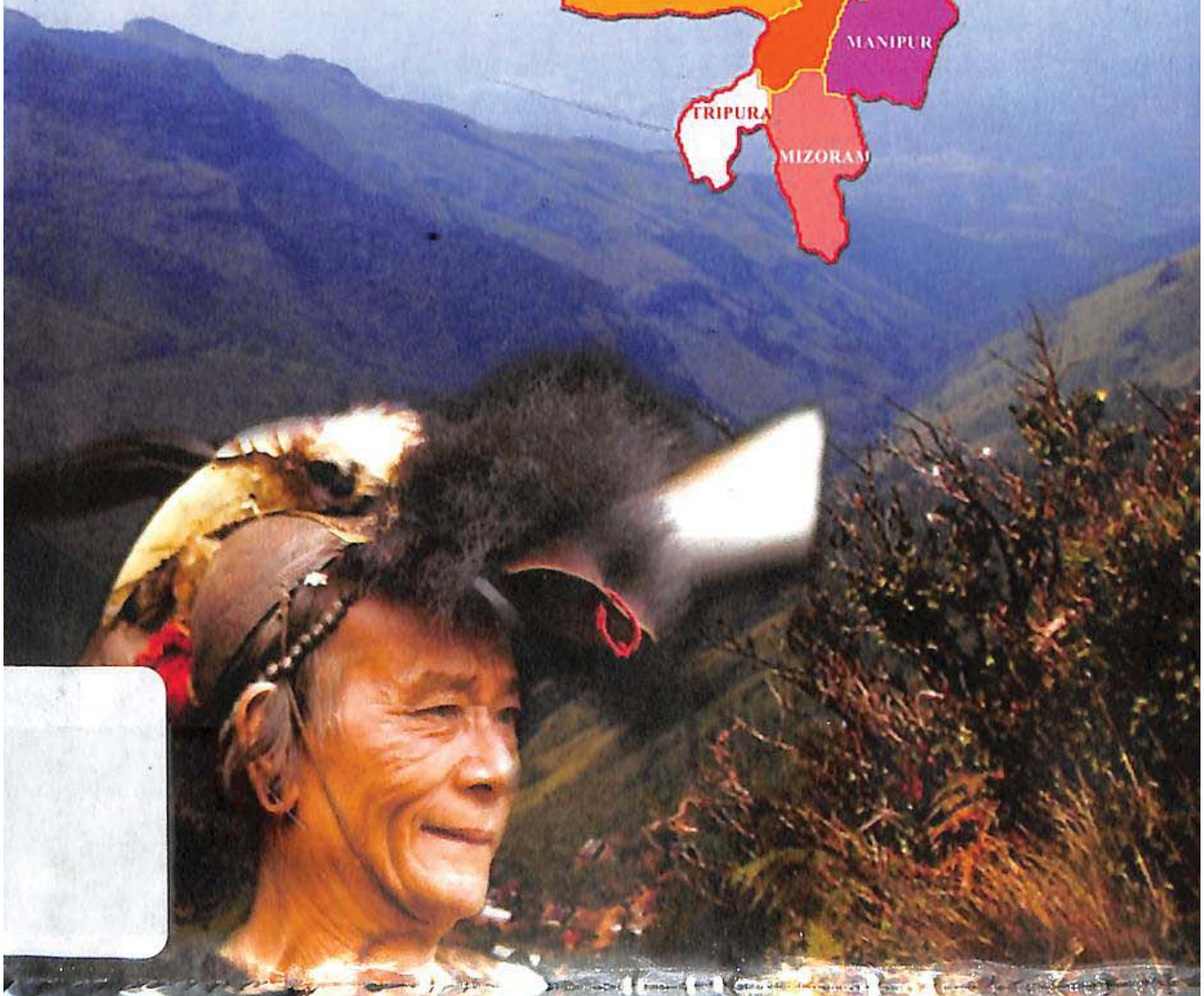
INDIA'S FOREIGN POLICY TOWARDS SOUTH ASIA

Relevance of North East India

P. TEPEKROVI KISO



About the Book

India's foreign policy's approach to integrate the North East region with our neighbours does pose various challenges on account of illegal migration, drug trafficking, illegal trade, trade in narcotics and arms trafficking and insurgency related problems impacting decisively the political and security scenario of the region in particular and socio-economic and cultural fabric of the people of the region in general and thus threatening India's security and strategic interests. North-East India that comprises of eight states today namely; Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura is relevant both strategically as well as economically from the perspective of Indian foreign policy. The region shares territorial contiguity and cultural, ethnic, linguistic commonalities with South Asian neighbours-Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal in particular. For example, the region shares 98% of its border with Bangladesh adjoining with Assam, Meghalaya, Mizoram and Tripura. Bhutan borders with Assam, Arunachal Pradesh and Sikkim. Nepal is adjoined to Sikkim.

The North-East region, thus, serves as a gateway for India's foreign policy towards South Asia in particular and East and South East Asia in general. It is in this context that the North East India becomes relevant for India's foreign policy towards SAARC, India's Look East Policy, Bay of Bengal Initiative and Mekong Delta Initiative. The political, security, social and economic developments in the North East have wider and decisive repercussions for India's relations with the countries of South, East and South East Asia.

The direction, dynamics and dimensions of India's foreign policy towards South, East and South East Asia determine the parameters of political, security, social and economic developments in the region of North East India. Thus while North East India integrates India's foreign policy with our neighboring countries and economic associations and groupings like SAARC and ASEAN, our foreign policy, on the other hand, provides immense economic, investment and commercial opportunities for the region and the people of North East India having a great bearing on people's economic and social conditions with a far reaching impact on politico-security scenario of the region. Thus security of the North-East India determines the security of India as the region is so strategically located. It is in this context that the study of India's Foreign Policy towards South Asia occupies an important place from the prospective of the North-East India.

About the Author

P. Tepekrovi Kiso was the first batch of Master of Arts in Political Science (NET) in Nagaland University (NU) 2000: M.A. Human Rights, Indian Institute of Human Rights (UGC-JRF), New Delhi (2004): P.G. Journalism & Mass Communication (NET), Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) 2005. Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) from NU (2008): Certificate Course on Peace and Development in Gandhian Perspective (three months course) (2012): Diploma Creative Writing in English Diploma Creative Writing in English (2011): Again, earned the degree Doctor of Philosophy from Department of Political Science awarded from Nagaland University on 3rd July, 2013 on the topic India's Foreign Policy Toward South Asia: Relevance of North East India.

At present working as Junior Research Fellow, Women's Studies Centre, Nagaland University, Kohima since 3rd September, 2007 to till date.

Prior qualify UGC- JRF in Human Rights and Duties he was a recipient of prestigious for doctoral fellowship of Rajiv Gandhi National Fellowship for ST, University Grants Commission amongst first in Nagaland University.

Mahatma Gandhi Fellow (Fellowship), Gandhi Smriti and Darshan Samiti, New Delhi since 2nd October, 2007 (on Declaration of International Non Violence Day). He was awardees of Human Rights Millennium Award and 2001 Human Rights Promotion Award as being as student of Human Rights and strong accorded in civil rights with duties for dignity with peace loving in the world.

He also availed Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR) Travel Grant in 2007 & 2010 for visiting libraries in the country and Delhi in particular. He also got a grant to visit Abroad for Data Collection sponsored by ICSSR, New Delhi, 2010 for his doctoral thesis writing. The ongoing Research Project are entitled Indo-China Diplomacy on Border Issues sponsored by Indian Council of Social Science Research, New Delhi and Gender Disaggregated.

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Relevance of North East India

P. TEPEKROVI KISO

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Preface

North-East India that comprises of eight states today namely; Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura is relevant both strategically as well as economically from the perspective of Indian foreign policy. The region shares territorial contiguity and cultural, ethnic, linguistic commonalities with South Asian neighbours- Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal in particular. For example, the region shares 98% of its border with Bangladesh adjoining with Assam, Meghalaya, Mizoram and Tripura. Bhutan borders with Assam, Arunachal Pradesh and Sikkim. Nepal is adjoined to Sikkim.

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Thus security of the North-East India determines the security of India as the region is so strategically located. It is in this context that the study of India`s Foreign Policy towards South Asia occupies an important place from the prospective of the North-East India.

The social root causes of the domestic problem create and disturb national peace and security. It is relevant to foresee the real social causes in the region. Before the British, none of the empires in India were interested in as well as found it difficult to control the remote and hilly North-Eastern areas. Consequently, the region had enjoyed a long history of independence in socio-political and self-sufficiency in economy. Since the people of North-East differ basically in racial, cultural, ethnic and religious

aspects from that of India, they have been suspicious about Indians.

Moreover, the policy of the British to keep these people away from the rest of India created separatist tendency among these tribal people. That is why soon after India`s independence North-East region become the hot bed of insurgency causing serious problem to India`s national integration. The militant groups began to use the neighbouring countries of India as their organizational bases and obtained enough moral and material support from the countries who have been inimical to India`s progress and prosperity. Thus, North-East is a burning region. In several ways, it is one of South Asia`s most disturbed region. The challenge of and to North-East has several dimensions.

All the states and ethnic groups cannot be seen as one single politico-economic unit. For instance, the Nagas possessed a completely different history, social and political lineage. However, with the passage of time, the States of Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Mizoram, Tripura, Nagaland and Meghalaya began to be identified as a single geographic unit and socio-economic identity. The political process and administrative convenience has come to legitimize this 'region as north-east India'.

The concept of north-east India and as a homogenous entity and the regional reorganization of this multi-ethnic setting has done colossal damage in social, political and economic parameters. In evolution of the policy for the region, the policy makers should have paid greater attention to the fact that the region has immense geo-political diversity as well as strategic significance: It is bound by four countries of Bhutan, Bangladesh, China and Myanmar.

The region geopolitically shares a large frontier with Bangladesh and receives a large number of political and

social refugees from Myanmar, Tibet and Chittagong hill tracks of Bangladesh. The people of the region see themselves as different and call rest part of India as 'mainland'. Many of them belong to the Mongoloid stock and are close to the people of South-East Asia and China.

Though India boasts for 'unity in diversity', but, this diversity obsessed with security treats this diversity as a threat. According to expert, this region is also seen a zone of buffer against China.

The region has a major obstacle to investment in the form of inner line permit that prevents even Indians from entering Nagaland, Mizoram and Arunachal Pradesh.

The region exhibits certain common problems like drug trafficking, immigration problems, ethnic turmoil and insurgency. There are also immense inter-regional differences in ethno-social issues and political aspirations. Different stages of socio-economic growth and development are discernible in the valley. Illegal migration has completely changed the geo-politics of Assam Assembly Constituencies of 126 as many now being controlled by Muslims. In some areas, ULFA leaders who started their movement against illegal immigration have been given shelter in Bangladesh.

The report of Pakistan' s ISI directly supporting various insurgent groups of North-East is creating modules of fundamentalist Muslims all over Assam with a view to using them at an opportune time against the national interest of our country by vitiating security scenario in the region. Other objectives of ISI include promoting indiscriminate violence in the State by providing active support to local militant outfits, supply of explosives and sophisticated arms to various terrorist groups, sabotage of oil pipelines and other installations.

The insurgents groups in Tripura, Nagaland, Arunachal Pradesh and Manipur continue to get patronage and support from Bangladesh. Logistic support for insurgent leaders and their family members is arranged in Dhaka and Sylhet.

The most significant factor has been collaboration among various insurgent groups of the North-East aided and abetted by Bangladesh.

The linkage between Maoists operating in 'Siliguri corridor' and insurgent groups of North-East is another worrying factor. This is a narrow corridor, only 25 Kms wide providing road and rail access to North-East. Efforts by ISI/Maoist in collaboration with other insurgent groups to infest this area can lead to serious repercussions for the whole of India and particularly for the North-East.

Perhaps ULFA is the only separatist organization which has so far withstood all forms of punitive action. While the Bhutan action has upset the ULFA, it has not succeeded in breaking the movement. Its leaders continue to get shelter in Dhaka and guide the movement from there. To find out long-term solutions in the North East, approaches have to be made that involve individuals as well as communities working together for everyone's benefit. Fundamentally, it is a question of empowering people to fashion their own destiny.

It is in this context that India's relations with South Asian neighbours assume significance. A cordial relationship with South Asian neighbors will create favourable economic, political, and security environment in the region. This will have positive impact on security and developmental scenario in the North-East in particular.

Today, it is seen that the security related problems in the North-East generally emanate from the neighboring

countries and a good relationship with them will improve the security scenario in the North-East.

Moreover, a cordial relationship with South Asian neighbors will brighten the prospect of SAARC and will have a positive spill-over effect on the North-East as the region would be benefited from the enhanced trade and commerce with neighboring South Asian countries.

The success of India's foreign policy towards South Asia would depend on the nature of security scenario in the North-East as the region would play an important role as a gateway for India's foreign policy towards South Asia.

Objectives of the study

I. To examine the linkage between foreign policy and national security particularly in the context of India's foreign policy towards South Asia and its impact on the political, security, economic and social developments in the region of North East India

II. To conceptualize and analyze the evolution of India's Foreign Policy towards its South Asian neighbours, country wise analysis of constraints both internal and external and challenges in the normalization of relations.

III. To examine the factors responsible for the emergence of SAARC, its relevance, its challenges and the future prospect, India's role in SAARC and benefit for the country.

IV. To analyse the problems (political, economic, social, ethnic, cultural) of North East region and contextualize them vis-à-vis India's relations with its neighbours.

V. To examine the relevance of foreign policy towards South Asia for the North Eastern region for its socio-

political stability, its economic development and its security.

VI. To examine the relevance of India's Look East policy for its South Asia neighbours as it would work as a gateway via North East to South and South East Asia.

Significance/Relevance of the Study

1. It is an attempt to examine India's Foreign Policy in the context of North East India.

2. The nature, course and direction of India's Foreign Policy towards South Asia determine and have noticeable impact on social, economic, political and security parameters in the North East India.

3. The study is relevant in the context of new/recent post cold war developments taking place in world politics.

4. The findings of the study would provide necessary inputs for the policy- makers particularly those dealing with the aspects of economic development and security related issues concerning the North East.

5. The research would be a guide to the future researchers in particular and particularly for those students and scholars working and specializing in the area of South Asian region and investigating into the security paradigm of the North East India.

Acknowledgements

I will always thank the Lord

I will never stop praising Him

I will praise Him for what He has done

With heart full of gratitude and love, I acknowledge God, the Almighty, for His ever living presence and abundance of blessings upon me during these years of my research work.

I feel privileged to put on record the contributions and blessings of a number of people during the course of my research work.

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I owe a deep sense of gratitude to the University Grants Commission (UGC), New Delhi, for awarding me the prestigious Rajiv Gandhi National Fellowship for ST that facilitated me financially to do my research work.

I feel privileged to acknowledge the Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR), New Delhi, for providing financial assistance under the Scheme of Data Collection Abroad to Dhaka, Bangladesh, in the year 2010 that that immensely helped me to do my field work in Dhaka. It enabled me to collect data from the various libraries located in Dhaka. It also gave an opportunity to interview the academicians in Dhaka and collect the primary material on my research topic.

I am again very grateful to ICSSR, New Delhi and Shillong, for providing Study Grant to enable me to visit different libraries in the country. Again, it is an inspiring and motivating that ICSSR, New Delhi sanctioned the Research Project entitled "Indo-China Diplomacy on Border Issues" on the verged of my thesis submission.

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course of my interaction. In this regard special mention may be made about the kind and cordial gesture of our former Governor, Shri S. Sankaranarayanan, who took keen interest in my research topic and provided his valuable insights.

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I am also grateful to my co-research scholars and friends for their mutual support and help. Finally, I am indebted to my parents and family members for their constant and silent support.

May the good Lord bless them all.

"End with to begin."

List of Abbreviations

APEC	Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation
ASEAN	Association of South East Asian Nations
BRIC	(groups of nations) Brazil, Russia, India and China
BIMSET-EC	Bangladesh India Myanmar Sri Lanka Thailand Economic Cooperation
BIMSETEC	Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation
CICIR	China Institutes of Contemporary International Relations
EAS	East Asia Summit
FIA	Foreign Intelligence Agencies
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency
IAF	Indian Air Force
IDSA	Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses
ISI	Inter-Services Intelligence
LoC	Line of Control
LTTE	Liberation Tigers of Tamil Ealam
MIVD	Military Intelligence and Security Service

NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NLD	National League for Democracy
NPT	Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty
PLA	People's Liberation Army
PWG	People's War Group
SAARC	South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation
SCO	Shanghai Cooperation Organisation
SPDC	State Peace and Development Council
ULFA	United Liberation Front of Asom
UNSC	United Nations Security Council

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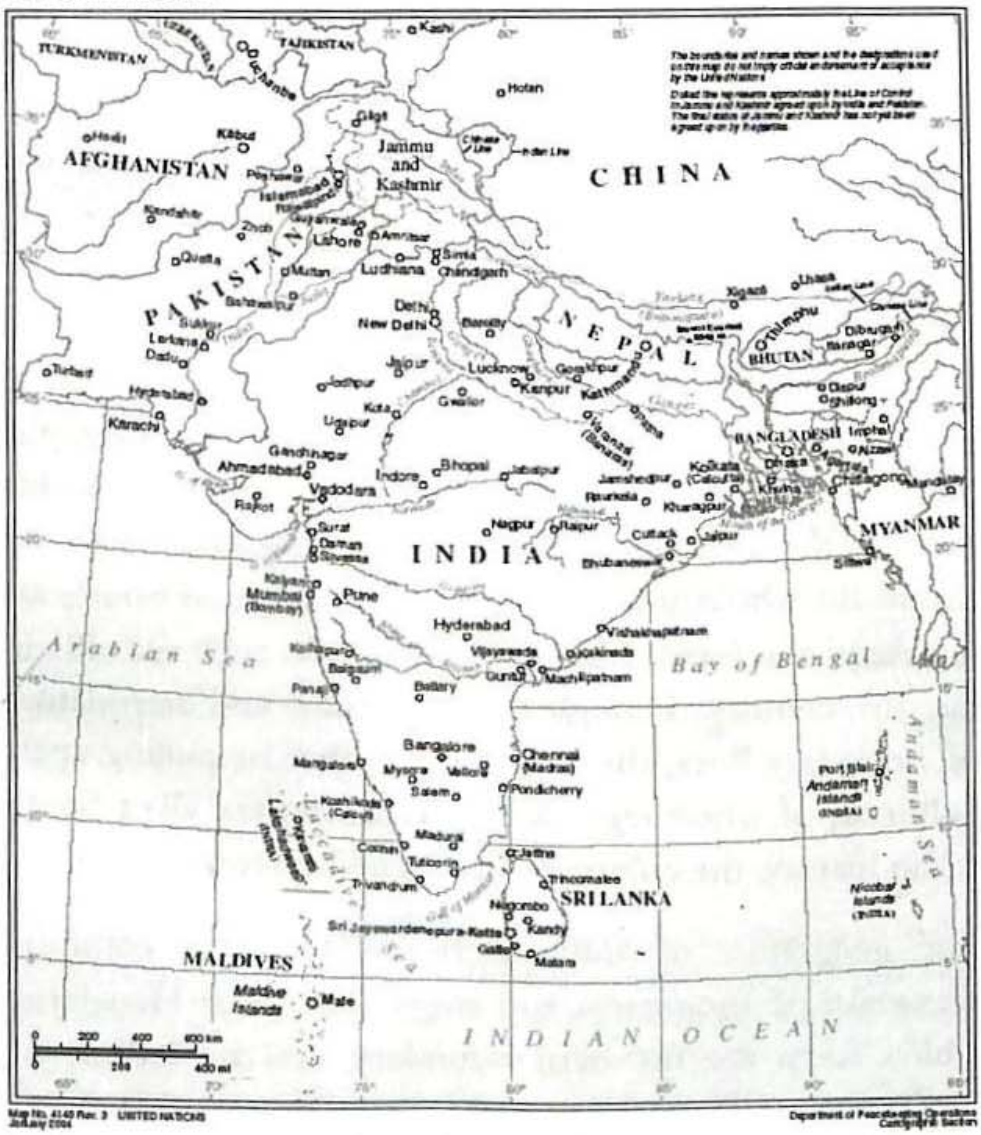
1

South Asia: An Introduction

Map 1.1

SOUTH ASIA



Sources: http://www.un.org/Depts/Cartographic/map/profile/seasia.pdf, "Map No. 4140 Rw: 3 United Nations, January, 2004", Accessed on 15th July, 2011.

South Asia: An Introduction

South Asia, consisting of the huge subcontinent of India, includes Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bhutan, Maldives as well as the nation of India itself. In spite of differences in physical appearance, complexion, stature, and other ethnological features, the people of the entire region of South Asia are unified by a common cultural and ethical outlook; a wealth of ancient textual literature in Sanskrit, Prakrit, and regional languages is a major unifying factor: Music and dance, rituals, customs, modes of workship, and literary ideals are similar throughout the subcontinent, even though the region has been divided into kaleidoscopic political patterns through the centuries.

The close interrelationship of the various peoples of South Asia may be traced in their epics, as in the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata.* Kinship between the gods and heroes of regions far distant from each other is evident, and the place names themselves often evoke common sources. Moreover, there have been continual attempts to impose a political unity over the region. In the 3rd century BC, for example, the emperor Asoka had almost the entire region under his sway; in the 11th century AD, Rajendra I Cola conquered almost the whole of India and a good portion of Southeast Asia; and the Great Mughal Akbar again achieved this in the 16th century. Though the expansion and attenuation of boundary lines, the bringing together or pulling apart politically of whole regions, have characterized all of South Asian history, the culture has remained essentially one.

The geography of the region encouraged a common adoration of mountains and rivers. The great Himalayas, which form the northern boundary, are the loftiest of mountains and are conceived to be the embodiment of nobility, the abode of immaculate snow, and the symbol

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of a cultural ideal. Similarly, the great rivers such as the Brahmaputra and the Indus are regarded as the mothers of their respective regions, assuring prosperity through their perennial supply of water.

The association of lakes and spring with water sprites and sylvan fairies, called *nagas* and *yaksas*, is common throughout the region. Karkota, the name of an early dynasty, itself signifies *naga* workship in Kashmir. Sculptures of *nagas* and *yaksas* found in widespread sites suggest a common spirit of adoration, as do sculptures, printings, temples, and religious texts that for centuries were immaculate intonation. The same classical dance is seen in sculpture in Gandhara in Pakistan, in Bharhut in the north and in Amaravati in the south.

The relation of the various arts to each other is very close in South Asia, where proficiency in several arts is necessary for specialization in any one. Thus, it is believed that without a good knowledge of dance there can be no proficiency in sculpture, for dance, like painting or sculpture is a depiction of the entire world.[1]

South Asia is thus a cultural region consisting of India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Afghanistan, Nepal, Sikkim, and Bhutan on the mainland, and Ceylon and the Maldives in the Indian Ocean. The region had an estimated population of 754 million or 20% of the world's total.[2]

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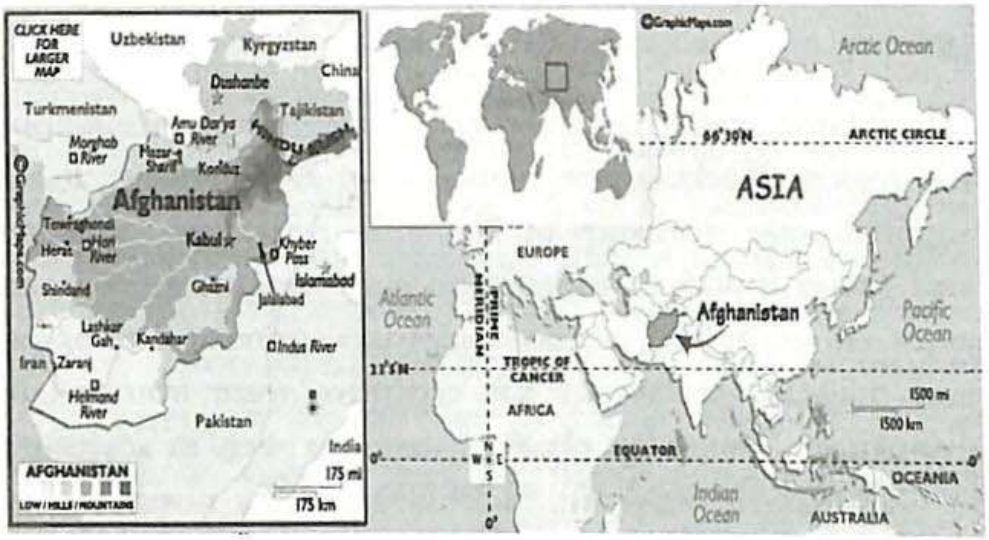
1 "South Asia" (1985), *The Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Inc., Volume 27, Robert P. Gwinn, Chairman, Board of Directors, Charles E. Swanson, President, Philip W. Goetz, Editor- in- Chief, Chicago, Auckland/ Geneva/ London/ Manila/ Paris/ Rome/ Seoul/ Sydney/ Tokyo/ Toronto pp 634.

2 "South Asia" (1984) *Encyclopedia Americana* Volume 25, Grolier Incorporated, International Headquarters: Danbury, Connecticut 06816, U.S.A., p 297.

Map 1.2
Afghanistan (Islamic Republic of Afghanistan)



Source: *"Worldatlas explore your world...,"* http://www.worldatlas.com/webimage/countrys/asia/af.htm, Accessed on 15th July, 2011.

Islamic Republic of Afghanistan

Afghanistan,[3] now called Islamic Republic of Afghanistan.[4]

Afghanistan is a mountainous, landlocked country. Wedged between the Soviet Union, Iran, Pakistan, the territory of Kashmir, and China, it lies literally and figuratively at the crossroads between East and West. Afghanistan, with a population of diverse ethnic origins and customs, is a nation in transition, attempting to bridge the gap between a tradition bound feudal society and a modern industrialized state.

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3 Afghanistan (1985), The Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc. Volume 1, Robert P. Gwinn, Chairman, Board of Directors, Charles E. Swanson, President, Philip W. Goetz, Editor- in- Chief, Chicago, Auckland/ Geneva/ London/ Manila/ Paris/ Rome/ Seoul/ Sydney/ Tokyo/ Toronto pp 128- 129.

4 "Afghanistan - Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia," http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Afghanistan, Accessed on 22nd June, 2012

An ancient, much plundered land, Afghanistan achieved at least a superficial measure of national unity in 1747 and became nominally a constitutional monarchy in 1931. In 1973 the monarchy was overthrown in a bloodless coup, and a republic was established. The new republic and its constitution of 1977 failed to survive the "Great Saur Revolution," of 1978, which brought into being a Marxist state under the patronage of the Soviet Union.

Even with the massive Soviet support the new Democratic Republic of Afghanistan was unable to win the allegiance of Afghanistan's Muslim population, whose disaffection ripened into insurgency. Impatient with the failures of the Afghan regime to suppress rebellion, the Soviet Union airlifted thousands of troops into Afghanistan in late December 1979 and installed a puppet regime. A shared hatred of the Soviet invader came as close as anything had in the past to unify, at least temporarily, the generally discordant tribes of Afghanistan, whose primary allegiance was traditionally to the family the village, and the lineage group rather than to the nation.

The Soviet Union pulled out from Afghanistan in 1989 creating a political vacuum to be filled up by Taliban. With the US intervention in December 2001 in the wake of 9/11 attack, Afghanistan's political future still looks bleak and uncertain.

The People of Afghanistan

All the citizens of the country are called Afghans, but the name Afghanistan, meaning "land of the Afghans," was not used to describe the area until the 18th century A.D. Local scholars and historians write that the ancient name for the region was Aryan, meaning "land of the Aryans." According to these historians, the movement of tribes from Central Asia into the area occurred after 2000 B.C.

Ethnic Groups and Languages of Afghanistan

The so called true Afghans are Pushtun tribes to whom the term "Afghan" was first applied. Ancestors of these Pushtun groups may have moved into the Indus Valley not long before the opening of the Christian era. Beginning in the 11th and 12th centuries the Pushtuns spread from the Sulaiman (Sulayman) Range north toward Peshawar and Kabul. Their numbers increased, and they won renown for their martial character and pride in independence. These Pushtuns, Pashtuns, Pathans, constitute between 50 and 60 percent of the population. They are Muslims of the Sunnite sect and speak Pushtu (Pashto), an Iranian language related to Persian. Among the major Pushtu tribes are the Durrrani (Durani), Ghilzai, Mohmand, and Shinwari; the ruling dynasty was Durrani.

The Tajiks are another important ethnic group. They are of Iranian origin and speak Persian much like that current in eastern Iran-Most are Muslims of the Sunnite sects, but some in the west are Shiites.

The Hazara, the third largest of the ethnical distinctive groups of the country. They believed to be the descendants of Mongols who moved into the region between the 13th and 15th centuries. They speak a dialect of Persian that contains many Turkish words, and are Muslims of the Shiite sect.

The Religion of Afghanistan

Nearly all Afghans are Muslims. Approximately 80 percent, including the true Afghans, Tajiks, Uzbeks, and Turkomans, are Sunnites. About 18 percent are adherents of the Twelver sect of Shiites, and the rest are Ismailities or members of more obscure sects. The precepts of Islam pervade the national life, playing a vital role in education, law, and social behaviour.

The religion hierarchy is very loosely knit. Most of the people are in touch with the mullahs (Persian mulla) or village priests, who teach the principles of Islam, instruct the children, and take charge of the local mosques. Shrines and places of pilgrimage attract pious veneration and strengthen the feeling of spiritual unity. Confronted with modern challenges to religion and its role in family and public life, the government operates higher theological schools designed to produce a broad- minded class of religious leaders.

Education in Afghanistan

Formerly education was in the hands of the mullahs, who taught village children the rudiments of reading, writing, and the Koran in schools called maktabs, which were usually conducted in mosques. While hundreds of such schools continue to function, with the government supplying books and other equipment, the ministry of education has built modern primary schools throughout the country.

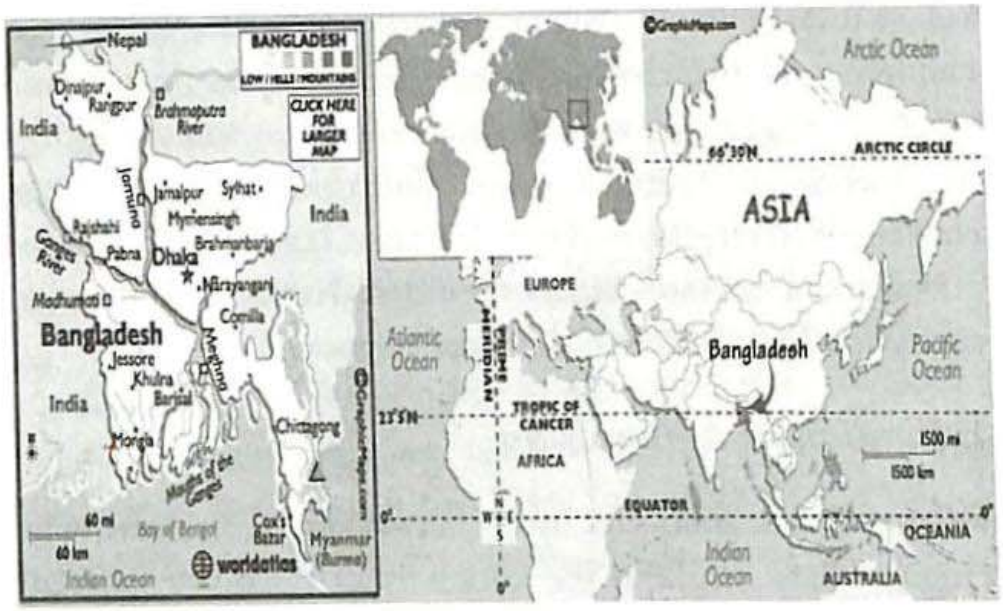
The Economy of Afghanistan

Despite the rush toward industrialization, Afghanistan remains a predominantly agricultural and pastoral country. Farming, the mainstay of the economy, employs an estimated 85 percent of the labour force.

The main focus of the development programme was the improvement of agricultural techniques and the extension of irrigation facilities. However, the agricultural side of the economy suffered a setback in the early 1970's when the country experienced several years of severe drought. Other goals included promoting new industries and generally building the economy to raise the national income and the standard of living.[5]

5 Donald N. Wilber, Editor of "Afghanistan" (1984), *Encyclopedia Americana* Volume 1, Grolier Incorporated, International Headquarters: Danbury, Connecticut 06816, U.S.A., pp 242- 248

Map 1.3
Bangladesh (People's Republic of Bangladesh)



Source: *"Worldatlas explore your world...,"* http://www.worldatlas.com/webimage/countrys/asia/bd.htm, Accessed on 15th July, 2011.

People's Republic of Bangladesh.[6]

Bangladesh is a republic in South Asia. Between 1947 and 1971, till it gained its independence, Bangladesh formed the eastern part of Pakistan and was called East Pakistan. Before the partition of India into independent India and Pakistan in 1947, the area that now forms Bangladesh ("the land of Bengal") had been the eastern part of the Bengal province of the British Empire.[7]

Bangladesh is one of the world's poorest nations, and is also among the populous and most densely populated. In addition, Bangladesh has a larger portion of its population

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6 *"Introduction Official Name: People's Republic of Bangladesh ...,"* http://images.rca.org/docs/mission/country-profiles/Bangladesh.pdf, Accessed on 22nd June, 2012

7 Edward C. Dimock, Jr., University of Chicago, "Bangladesh" (1984) *Encyclopedia Americana*, Volume 3, Grolier Incorporated, International Headquarters: Danbury, Connecticut 06816, U.S.A., pp 161- 161a

at risk of flood and famine under normal conditions than virtually any other country. [8]

Bangladesh, a land of rivers, lies in the easternmost part of the Indian subcontinent. It is almost entirely surrounded by India, a condition that affects the foreign policy and economy of Bangladesh.[9]

The Land and Natural Resources of Bangladesh

Bangladesh lies in the delta of several major river of the Indian subcontinent, primarily the Ganges (called the Padma in Bangladesh), the Brahmaputra, known as the Jamuna in its lower reaches, and the Meghna. They meet to form one river, which flows into the Bay of Bengal through a large delta formed by it. The tributaries of these are smaller rivers interlock, particularly in the monsoon season, making the central, western, and southern parts of the country a vast series of waterways surrounding low lying, fertile land. Rainfall on the land itself is high, varying from 50 to 200 inches (1,270- 5,080mm) per year.

Because of the extensive waterways, transportation is primarily by boat. Craft ranging in size from small boats to large cargo and passenger streamers constantly ply the rivers.

The tropical climate and heavy rainfall ensure thick jungle vegetation, especially in the swamps, the Sundarbans, in the southern part of the delta. This country is plagued by almost annual cyclones, especially to the fishing villages and offshore islands.

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8 Harry W. Blair (1993) "Bangladesh" *The Oxford Companion to Politics of the World* (ed) Joel Krieger, William A. Joseph, Miles Kahler, Georges Nzongola-Ntalaja, Barbara B. Stalling, Margaret Weir, pp 71- 72

9 Ibid pp 161- 161a

Mineral resources as far as is known, are almost nonexistent in this primarily alluvial land. Only three small pockets of natural gas and coal of a very low grade and have been discovered.

Timber from deciduous and evergreen trees is plentiful in the southern jungles but not easily accessible. Moreover, the wood is so hard as to be usable. Consequently, sun-dried mud, bamboo, and thatch are the primary in the rural areas.

In the forested areas are tigers and snakes of various kinds as well as spotted deer and wild fowl. The river are full of fish, a choice items in the Bengali diet.

The People of Bangladesh

The great majority of the Bangladeshis speak Bengali, a language that forms the easternmost branch of the Indo-Aryan family. Some Bangladeshis speak Urdu, the primary language of what is now Pakistan Urdu is written in a different script from Bengali. Others, in the hill areas of the east and north, speak languages mostly of the Tibeto-Burman family.

The Bengali speakers, most of whom are Muslims, share a physical and cultural heritage with their Hindu neighbours in West Bengal. They are generally smaller physically than most of the people of the subcontinent, tend to be dark in complexion, and have the reputation of being successful in such professional pursuits as law, medicine, politics, and the arts. Until the struggle that won independence for their country, they did not have a material reputation. But, their long bitter struggle against a well armed modern army produced a new military image.

The Hindus among the Bengali-speaking population, who share the physical and cultural characteristics of their Bengali-speaking Muslim brothers, are estimated to

have numbered about 17 million after the vast exodus of Hindus West Bengal in 1947. Many of these were among the 10 million people who fled to India before the Pakistan army in 1970 and 1971. Most these returned to their homes in Bangladesh after independence, protected by the assurances of a secular government.

The only overt different between Muslim and Hindu Bengalis is in the way the men and some women dress. Muslim men wear the lungi, a colourful garment resembling a sarong that is tried around the waist. The men after have beards in the Muslim style. The Hindus wear the dhoti, a white pleated garment brought between the legs and tied in front. Hindu women wear the sari, while in public many Muslim women wear the burqa, a black or white garment that covers the body from head to toe, with a veil for the eyes.

Hindu and Muslim Bengalis are justifiably proud of the long and rich cultural heritage they share. It has produced many poets, such as the brilliant Rabindranath Tagore.

The Urdu speaking people of Bangladesh are mostly of the group loosely known as Biharis. Particularly during the partition in 1947, large groups of Muslim migrated to Bangladesh from the Indian state of Bihar. Other non-Bengali Muslims arrived to staff, manage, and operate the jute mills. There are also non- Bengali Muslim families who have lived in Bengal for generations and some even for centuries, tracing their ancestry not to Bengal but to the Islamic heartland to the west. These never absorbed Bengali culture. Some of this group was antagonistic to the freedom movement. But most of them chose to remain in Bangladesh after independence.

The Religion of Bangladesh

Hinduism was the primary religious and cultural force in Bengal until the 12th century, when Islam began to assert

itself. Conversions, probably largely voluntary, were made to Islam from among the Hindus. But there were also conversions made from Islam to the form of Hinduism called Vaishnavism.

Thus there are four types of Bengalis in what is now Bangladesh:

1. Muslims whose ancestors were converted from Hinduism;
2. Muslims descended from Muslim invaders from the west, who traced their lineage to the Islamic heartland in the Arabian peninsula;
3. Hindus; and
4. People neither wholly Hindu nor wholly Muslim. The last category is interestingly exemplified by the widespread syncretistic cults, such as that of Satya-pir (as it is known by Hindus). Both communities engage in the rituals and festivals of their common deity.

Education in Bangladesh

Despite the fact that Bangladesh is one of the world's poorest and most overpopulated countries, the Bengali penchant for intellectual activity expresses itself in the continuing value placed on education. There is no way of estimating the extent of elementary education. Most villages have local schools, perhaps an Islamic madrassa or even a traditional Sanskrit tol.

The Economy of Bangladesh

The economy of Bangladesh is almost entirely agricultural. The primary crops are rice, the major food staple; jute, the major export crop; fish, used both as food and as an export commodity to the Indian state of West Bengal; and tea, second to jute as a potential earner of foreign exchange. Other agricultural resources are scarce.

Some vegetable, fruits and sugarcane are grown by peasants for home consumption, but except for jute and tea, nothing is grown in commercial quantity. Thus Bangladesh has not been able to earn foreign exchange through exports, and it has been unable to import those essential commodities that are lacking in its own economy, including food grains, cotton for cloth, industrial raw materials, and consumer goods.

The Rice in Bangladesh

Rice occupies about 80% of the cultivated land and is grown in three separate crops. Summer rice (*aus*) is harvested in July or August, at which time autumn rice (*amon*) is planted while water from the monsoon rains is still plentiful. Winter rice (*boro*) is planted and harvested during the drier season of December through April. It is less plentiful, accounting for only 10% of the total rice production. [10]

Foreign relations

Foreign relations for Bangladesh focus primarily in three directions. Disputes over sharing water from the Ganges River have persistently been the main conflict with India, followed by long-festering insurrectionary movements among tribal groups on both sides of Bangladesh's southeast border, in which the two countries have continually accused each other of complicity. The Bangladesh government hopes that the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation a (SAARC) will serve to alleviate some of its problems with India.

A second foreign policy concern has been dealing with international aid donors, led by the World Bank and the United States. The third major focus in foreign policy has been the

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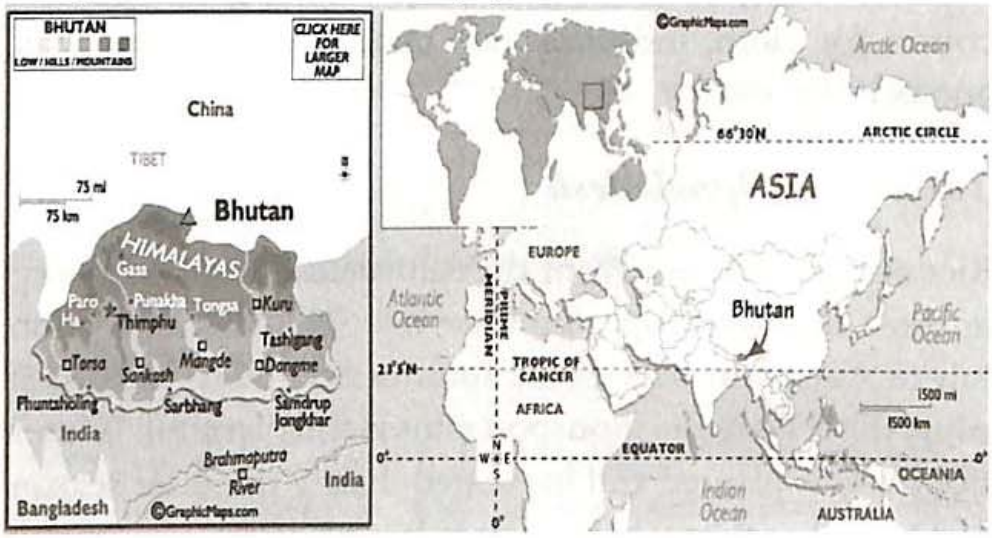
10 Ibid pp 161- 161a

Middle Eastern countries, chiefly Saudi Arabia, which also encouraging Islamic fundamentalism in Bangladesh.[11]

Map 1.4

Bhutan (Kingdom of Bhutan)

Source: *'Worldatlas explore your world...,'* http://www.worldatlas.com/webimage/countrys/asia/bt.htm, Accessed on 15th July, 2011.



Kingdom of Bhutan[12]

Historically, Bhutan had a theocratic system of government similar to that in Tibet, dominated by the Druk ("dragon") Buddhist sect of Mahayana Buddhism. The Druk leaders assiduously followed an isolationist policy toward all their neighbors, including Tibet. By the late nineteenth century the system had fallen apart, and it was replaced by a hereditary monarchy in 1907.

In the late 1980s by a broad range of new policies termed the *Drigham Namza*, or national culture principle, programme that had as its objective the preservation of Bhutan's national identity and traditional Buddhist culture. All Bhutanese, whatever their ethnic and religious background, were ordered to wear only "Bhutanese dress"

11 Ibid pp 71- 72

12 "*Bhutan - Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia*," http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bhutan, Accessed on 22nd June, 2012.

in public defined to mean the *glos* and *kiras* worn by officials in office but not, normally, by large segments of the public outside Thimphu. Dzongka, the official language, became the national language by decree, replacing the various Tibetan dialects in eastern Bhutan and Nepali spoken in southern Bhutan. [13]

Bhutan is a small kingdom in the eastern Himalayas, strategically located between India and China. By treaty it must seek Indian advice on foreign policy and defense. Thimbu (Thimphu) is the capital, but the Development Secretariat is at Paro. Bhutan has an area of about 18,000 square miles (46,620 sq.km).

The People of Bhutan

Bhutan's population comprises of three ethnic groups. The majority are *Bhutias*, of Tibetan descent, who call themselves *Dukpas or Drukpas* ("dragon people"). About one fifth of the people are of Nepali descent, while some small communities in eastern Bhutan appear to be related to the hill tribes of Assam. Bhutia migration to Bhutan was heaviest from the 14th to 17th centuries, but some migrated much more recently. The Nepali settlements, in the southern *duar* (pass) areas on the Indian, border, date mostly from 1910 or later. Nepali migration has been limited to maintain the population ratio between Nepali and Bhutia communities.

There are four main languages spoken in Bhutan: *Dzongka*, the official language, in western and northern Bhutan; *Bumthangka*, a related Tiberan dialect, in central Bhutan; *Sarchapkkha* in eastern Bhutan; and *Nepali* in southern Bhutan. These languages are mutually unintelligible, but

13 Leo E. Rose (1993) "Bhutan" *The Oxford Companion to Politics of the World*) ed. Joel Krieger, William A. Joseph, Miles Kahler, Georges Nzongola-Ntalaja, Barbara B. Stalling, Margaret Weir, pp 78- 79.

Dzongka, spoken by the largest number of people, is the main medium of communication.

The Bhutia and the ethnic groups in eastern Bhutia are adherents of the *Dukpa* sect of Tibetan Buddhism, which was superimposed on the primitive animism, called *Bon*, in the 16th and 17th centuries. The Hindu Nepalis are outside the official Buddhist religious system.

The Government of Bhutan

The first *Maharaja* (Duk Gyalpo, or "King of the Dukpas") of Bhutan was *Ugyen Dorji Wangchuk*, who founded the present dynasty in 1907. He was succeeded by his son Jigme Wangchuk in 1952, and by his grandson Jigme Singye Wangchuk in 1972.

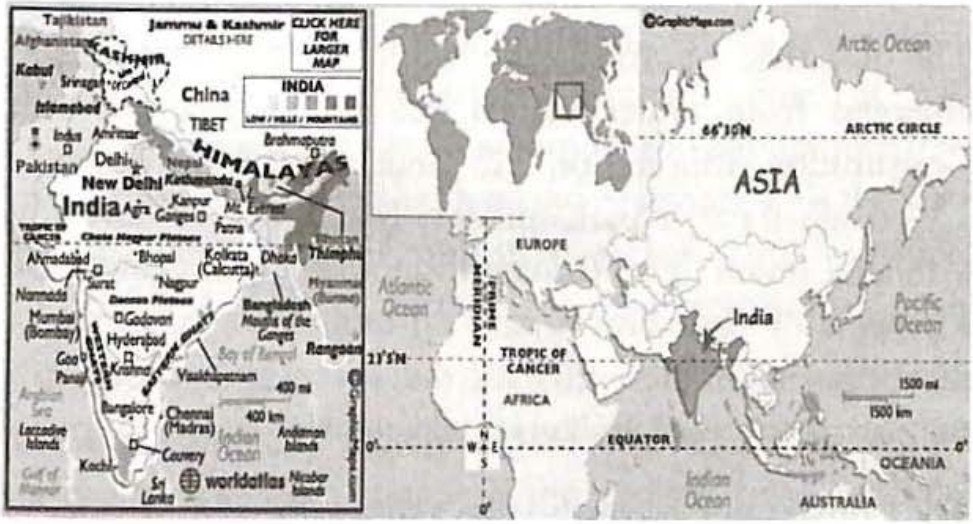
The king is, in theory, an absolute monarch, who rules with the assistance of a small Advisory Council. Legislation is enacted in consultation with the Tsongdu, a representative assembly that has 130 members, of who one fourth are nominated by the king and the rest elected by village headmen. The king also appoints all officials, including the governors (*ponlops*) of the two provinces and the distinct officers (*dzongpons*). The only political party the Bhutan and has its headquarters in India. The party's leadership is entirely Nepali.

The Bhutan government has a trade agent in Kolkata (Calcutta) who handles commercial relations with India and other foreign countries. Political relations with India are conducted through the Indian political officer to Sikkim and Bhutan, who resides at Gangtok, Sikkim. There is also an Indian advises to the government of Bhutan who advises on both developmental and political matters. An Indian military mission militia into a modern army.

Economy of Bhutan

The chief crops are rice, corn, wheat, millet, barley, mustard, vegetables, walnuts, oranges, and the spice cardaman. Bhutan's many small farms also raise yaks, cattle, sheep, and pigs, and their small, strong Tangun ponies are valued for mountain transportation. Silver copper, and iron have long been mined in small quantities for craftsmen. Among other crafts are the weaving of cloth, mats and baskets; paper making; and handwork in wood, leather, and mental.[14]

Map 1.5
India (Republic of India)



Source: "Worldatlas explore your world...," http://www.worldatlas.com/webimage/countrys/asia/in.htm, Accessed on 15th July, 2011.

Republic of India[15]

India is one of the oldest civilizations with a kaleidoscopic variety and rich cultural heritage. It covers an area of 32,87,263 sq. km. extending from the snow- covered

14 Leo E. Rose, University of California, Berkeley, "Bhutan" (1984) *Encyclopedia Americana*, Volume 3, Grolier Incorporated, International Headquarters: Danbury, Connecticut 06816, U.S.A., pp 643- 644.

15 *"India - Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia,"* http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/India, Accessed on 22nd June, 2012.

Himalayan heights to tropical rain forests of the world, India is well- marked off from the rest of Asia by mountains and the sea, which give the country a distinct geographical entity. Bounded by the Great Himalayas in the north, it stretchers southwards and at the Tropic of Cancer, tapers off into the Indian Ocean between the Bay of Bengal on the east and the Arabian Sea on the west.

Lying entirely in the northern hemisphere, the mainland extends between latitudes 8°4' and 37°6' north, longitudes 68°7' and 97°25' east and measures about 3,214 km from north to south between the extreme latitudes and about 2,933 km from east to west between the extreme longitudes.[16]

The Republic of India, the world's largest democracy, emerged from under British colonial rule. Its present Constitution, adopted on 26th January 1950, provides for a Westminster style parliamentary form of government in a federal union. The Constitution was a culmination of a process of evolution toward representative government that began under the British and that successively broadened the participation of Indians in elected legislatures.

The Constitution formally vests almost all executive powers of the government in the president, who is the head of state. The president, however, exercises power, with only rare exceptions, upon the advice of the prime minister and the Council of Ministers. Real power thus rests in the prime minister.

The president is elected for five year term by an electoral college consisting of elected members of both the bicameral Parliament and the state legislatures. The upper house of Parliament, the Rajya Sabha (House of the State),

16 Verinder Grover & Ranjana Aroraed (1996) "Land and the People" *Encyclopaedia of India* , Volume 1, Deep & Deep Publications, F- 159, Rajouri Garden, New Delhi 110027, p 3.

consists of members who are elected for six year terms by an electoral college made up of members of the state legislative assemblies. The lower house, the Lok Sabha (House of the People), is the supreme legislative body in India who are directly elected for five year term.

The Constitution also provides for an independent judiciary. The powers of the Indian Supreme Court are comparable to those of the Supreme Court of the United States and include broad original and appellate jurisdiction and the right to judge the constitutional validity of the laws passed by Parliament.

Economy

India's economy record has been mixed. Since independence, it has pursued a development strategy aimed at self-reliance through import substitution and capital intensive industrialization. India has a mixed economy with the state sector dominating the industrial sector, both by direct ownership and by a system of controls regulating private enterprises. [17]

India, a republic of South Asia occupying the greater part of the Indian subcontinent, is the seventh largest and the second most populous country in the world.

India possesses a remarkably rich heritage from the past but is also burdened with staggering problems in the present. Some of these problems have long standing social and economic bases. Others come from the fact that the present nation of India was born of the partition of the former British Indian empire into the two new countries of India and Pakistan when independence was won in August 1947.

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17 Bhanu Pratap Mehta and Atul Kohli (1993) "India" *The Oxford Companion to Politics of the World* ed Joel Krieger, William A. Joseph, Miles Kahler, Georges Nzongola- Ntalaja, Barbara B. Stalling, Margaret Weir, p 416.

Until the partition of 1947, the name "India" (which is ultimately of Greek rather than Indian origin) was applied to the entire Indian subcontinent, a huge landmass including the peninsula that juts southward from the rest of Asia into the Indian Ocean. This historic area is cut off from the rest of Asia by deserts, mountains, and jungles in the north. These barrier isolated the peoples and the cultures of India, but did not prevent the movements of peoples some of them conquerors into the subcontinent.

Ancient Culture of India

India has one of the world's most ancient cultures. The earliest records of it are archaeological discoveries in the Indus Valley dating from the 3 millennium B.C. Unlike the cultures of early Greece and Egypt, it has survived the ravages of conquerors, although it is continually being modified. India's size and its compartmentalization by mountains and deserts prevented the political unification that would have led to cultural uniformity. But, Hinduism has been marked by an amazing tolerance of varying metaphysical ideas. Over the ages it has not only permitted the penetration of many revolutionary religious ideas but has actually accepted most of them, even though in doing so it has harboured mutually contradictory dogmas. It is thus not a single creed but a vast assemblage of ideas and practices.

On the other hand, Hinduism established rigid rules for most of the practical aspects of life, perhaps ever as early as in the time of the Indus civilization. Some ancient Hindu institutions are today subjects of social reform. [18]

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18 W. Norman Brown, University of Pennsylvania (1984) "India" *Encyclopedia Americana* Volume 14, Grolier Incorporated, International Headquarters: Danbury, Connecticut 06816, U.S.A., pp 864- 866, 869.

The People of India

India is a land of great diversity. Although its unique civilization has been a unifying factor and the intermixture of its peoples has produced a degree of uniformity, many differences originating in the distant past still exist. On the basis of characteristic physical, cultural, and linguistic features, the people of one region can be distinguished from those of another. Northern Indians have similarities that set them off from southern Indians; likewise, people of the eastern and western regions can be constrated. In served parts of the country, tribal peoples from separate and easily distinguishable elements in the population.

The Racial Composition of the Modern Population in India

In Racial Elements in the Population, distinguished six major racial strains that have amalgamated in varying degrees to form the modern population of India. These are:

1. The Mediterranean strain,
2. a broad headed strain,
3. a long-headed, or "Nordic," strain,
4. the Mongoloid,
5. the Negrito, and
6. the proto- Australoid. [19]

The Religion and Philosophy of India

India has had one of the world's most creative religious and philosophical developments. Among the religious and originated in India are Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism,

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19 Dorothy M. Spencer, University of Pennsylvania (1984) "People," *Encyclopedia Americana* Volume 14, Grolier Incorporated, International Headquarters: Danbury, Connecticut 06816, U.S.A., pp 864- 866, 869.

Sikhism, a number of lesser- known faiths, and many reform movements, especially those allied to Hinduism. In addition, India has received two great religious of Semitic origin, Islam and Christianity, which have assumed distinctive forms there. An ancient but small Jewish community survives, and India has most of the world's practicing Zoroastrians (Parsis). India's religious creativity has been accompanied by a distinctive and subtle philosophy. Indeed, religion and philosophy have never maintained separate existences in India. [20]

Political System of India

The Republic of India has a federal form of Government. Powers are divided between the Centre and the constituent states. There are 3 lists. The Union List, State List and the Concurrent List. The Government of India can make laws on the items enumerated in the Union List; the State make laws on the items in the State List and both the Central Government and the State Governments can make laws on the items in the Concurrent List with the proviso that the laws of the Central Government shall prevail over the laws of the state government.

Legislative power is vested in Parliament, consisting of the President and Bicameral Parliament. The Rajya Sabha (Council of States) consists of 245 members, elected indirectly by the state legislatures. Though some of them are nominated by the President. The members of the Rajya Sabha are elected for 6 years term, one-third retiring every two years. The lower house or the Lok Sabha (House of the People) has 542 members directly elected by universal adulthood suffrage for a period of 5 years. The President

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20 W. Norman Brown, University of Pennsylvania (1984) "Religion and Philosophy," *Encyclopedia Americana* Volume 14, Grolier Incorporated, International Headquarters: Danbury, Connecticut 06816, U.S.A., p 869.

is the Executive head and elected for 5 years term by an Electoral College comprising of elected members of both Houses of Parliament and the state legislatures. The President exercises executive power is responsible to Parliament. The President appoints the leader of the majority party in the Lok Sabha as the Prime Minister, and other ministers on the advice of the Prime Minister.

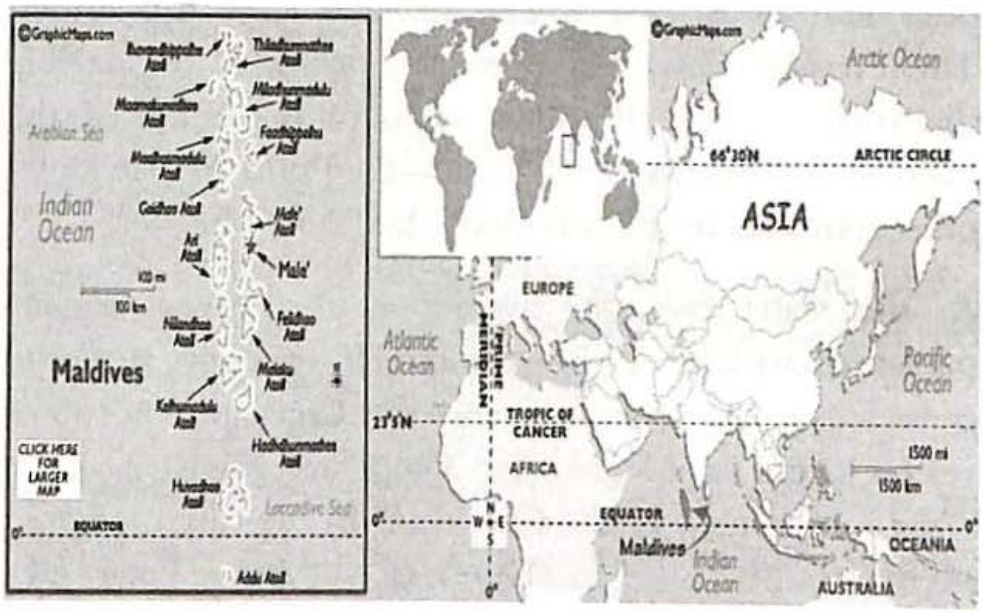
At the state level, the system is also based on the parliamentary type of government. The executive authority is vested in the Governor and the Legislative power is vested in the state legislature. The Chief Minister of the State is appointed by the Governor. In the case of failure of the constitutional machinery of the state, President's Rule can be imposed by the central government.

The Judicial system in India

All courts form a single hierarchy, with the Supreme Court at the head, which constitutes the highest court of appeal. Immediately below it are the High Courts and subordinate courts in each state. Every court in this chain administers the whole law of the country, whether made by Parliament or by the state legislatures. [21]

21 Pratapgiri Ramamurti (1997) "India: An Introduction", *Encyclopaedia of SAARC Nations*, Volume 1, (ed.) Verinder Grover, Deep & Deep Publications, F- 159, Rajouri Garden, New Delhi 110027, pp 3-4.

Map 1.6
Maldives (Republic of Maldives)



Source: *"Worldatlas explore your world...,"* ttp://www.worldatlas.com/webimage/countrys/asia/mv.htm, Accessed on 15th July, 2011.

Republic of Maldives[22]

Maldives, an island country in the Indian Ocean lies in southwest of India and Sri Lanka. The islands extend about 550 miles (880km) north to south across the equator, from about 7° north latitude to about 1° south latitude.

The United Nations classifies the Republic of Maldives as one of the 25 least developed countries in the world. Since Maldives achieved independence from Britain in 1965, grants and loans from many nations and international agencies have been assisting in public health programmes, airport development, and the improvement of agriculture, fishing, and shipping.

Almost all Maldivians are Sunni Muslims, and Islamic tradition is reflected in the country's constitution and legal

22 *"Maldives - Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia,"* http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maldives, Accessed on 22nd June, 2012

system. Politically, non-aligned, Maldives has rejected bids by foreign countries for bases on its territory.

The Land of Maldives

The Maldives Islands are an archipelago of more than 2,000 small coral formations, the northernmost of which lie about 275 miles (440km) southwest of India and 440 miles (705km) west of Sri Lanka. Most of the islands are grouped into 20 atolls, 14 of which have spacious deepwater lagoons suitable for ship anchorages. All the Maldives are low, averaging 5 to 6 feet (1.5- 1.8 meters) above sea level. Only about 220 are inhabited. No island covers even 5 square miles (13 sq km), and the capital island, Male, measures only 1 by 1.5 miles (1.6 by 2.4 km).

The Economy of Maldives

Agriculture is limited by the lack of land and suitable soils. Small plots produce maize (corn), millets, yams and sweet potatoes, manioc, other vegetables and a variety of tropical fruits, including mangoes, bananas, coconuts, and pineapples.

Fishing provides more employment than any other industry. Some of the catch in used to prepare dried fish. Sliced, boiled, and then smoked over coconut wood fires, Maldivian dried fish is considered a delicacy. Among other economic activities are boat construction, coconut processing for copra and coir, sail and net weaving, and the handcrafting of lace, woven mats, and lacquer wares.

The People of Maldives

The Maldivians represent a mixture of people; many of which migrated in centuries past from Sri Lanka and western India. Also part of this mixture is the descendants of Arab traders and of black slaves imported from Africa.

Divehi, the Maldivian language, is related to Sinhalese, the language of Sri Lanka.[23]

The Maldives has been a traditionally insular state in the Indian Ocean with a fragmented geography and an independent polity. In the 1970s, however, the Maldives dramatically increased its diplomatic contacts and active participation in international and regional forums. Such a significant expansion in Maldivian foreign relations underscores the imperatives of socioeconomic development and trade for a country that is among the least developed countries in the world. Additionally, it emphases the Maldives' need for establishing a politico-cultural identity as a modern, Islamic nation- state.

The Republic of Maldives is a geostrategic location in the Indian Ocean region has given it the impetus to purse a nonaligned policy and to support the declaration of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace. As a member of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation, the Maldives, under the guidance of President Maumoon Abdul Gayoom (reelected to a third term in 1988), has gained considerable political visibility and regional recognition.

Virtually independent throughout its history, the Maldives emerged as a sovereign nation in 1965, marking the end of its 1887 protectorate pact with the British.

The present system of governance is highly centralized and has its roots in the oligarchic structure of the sultanate. For the most part, Maldivian politics is dominated by elite drawn from few influential families who frequently command considerable support.

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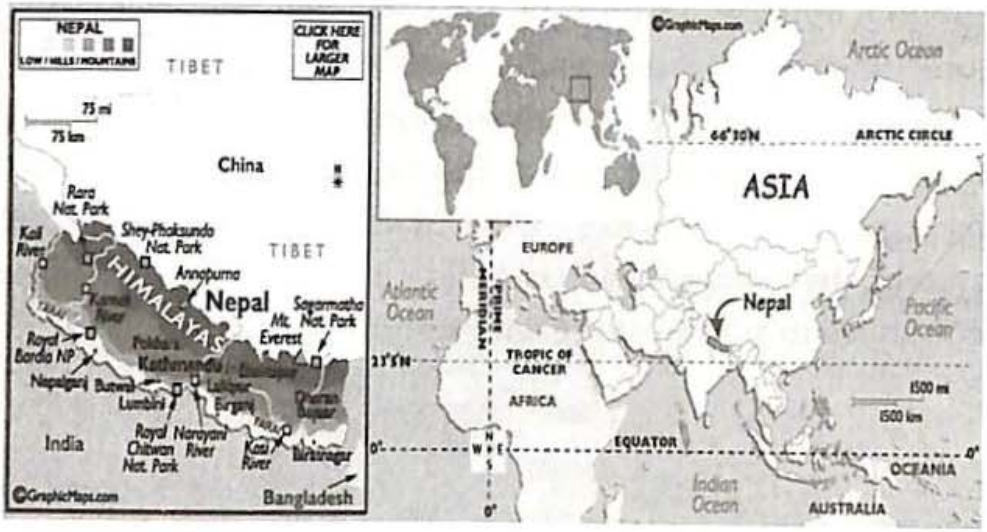
23 Robert C. Kingsbury, Indiana University (1984) "Maldives" *Encyclopedia Americana* Volume 18, Grolier Incorporated, International Headquarters: Danbury, Connecticut 06816, U.S.A., pp 168- 169.

The Gayoom administration follows the institutional framework outlined in the 1968 constitution, which calls for the functional separation of the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of government. The political infrastructure is a unique blend of traditional modes of governance and modern concepts of state, based primarily on Islamic principles. For instance, in the Maldivian criminal justice system, banishment, a customary form of punishment, continues to prevail along with imprisonment.

The president is the chief executive and, in the absence of political parties, is nominated by the members of the Citizens' Majlis the unicameral legislature and confirmed in a nationwide referendum. Forty eight members serve five years terms in the Majlis two representatives from each of the nineteen administrative atolls, two from Male (the capital), and eight appointed by the president. The cabinet ministers and presidential appointees, directly responsible to the president of the functioning of the ministries and departments under their control. Local atoll administrations have a hierarchical structure headed by the *atol veriya* (atoll chief), who is aided by the *khatib* (island headman), and the latter's deputy, the *kuda khatib.* [24]

24 Guy Martin (1993) "Maldives" *The Oxford Companion to Politics of the World* (ed.) Joel Krieger, William A. Joseph, Miles Kahler, Georges Nzongola-Ntalaja, Barbara B. Stalling, Margaret Weir, p 558.

Map 1.7
Nepal (Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal)



Source: *"Worldatlas explore your world...,"* http://www.worldatlas.com/webimage/countrys/asia/np.htm, Accessed on 15th July, 2011.

Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal.[25]

Nepal, is an independent kingdom situated south of the Great Himalayas range between latitudes 26°25'N and 30° 17'N and latitudes 80°6'E and 88 14'E, and bordered by Tibet to the north, India to the west and south, and Sikkim to the east. Nepal's total area is 54,362 square miles (140,797 sq km).

The flag of Nepal consists of two red triangles outlined in blue, with a white symbolic representation of the moon on the upper triangles and of the sun on the lower.

The People of Nepal

The ethnic make up of Nepal has been determined largely by its location between central Asia and India, and the Nepali population is mainly the result of largely scale migrations from these areas. Mongolians, who migrated

25 *"Nepal - Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia,"* http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nepal, Accessed on 22nd June, 2012.

to Nepal by way of Tibet, Sikkim, and the tribal areas of Assam and Bengal, and Indo- Aryan from the Indian plains form the basic ethnic groups within Nepal.

Tribal, caste, and topographical factors have encouraged communal exclusiveness, and these divisions still play an important role in Nepal's social and political life. The most prestigious and powerful social groups in much of the country are the Brahman, Kshatriya, and Vaisya castes, of India origin. Other important ethnic communities are the Magars and Gurungs of the Western Hills; the Newars of Katmandu Valley; the Kirantis and Limbus of the Eastern Hills; and the Bhotias, or Tibetans (including the famous Sherpas), along the northern border.

The Language of Nepal

The national, Nepali, stems from the Indo-Aryan branch of the Indo- European family. It is a derivative of Sanskrit and is similar to Hindi in basic form and vocabulary. Several Hindi dialects- Maithili, Bhajpuri, and Kumaoni are spoken by considerable sections of the population in the Tarai. A second category of languages in Nepal is the Tibeto- Burman languages, of which the most important are Newari, Magarkura, Gurungkura, Kiranti, Limbuani, and some of the Tibetan dialects.

The Religion of Nepal

Hinduism, blended with older religious, practices in certain areas, is the predominant religion of Nepal. About 10% of the population located mostly in Katmandu Valley and along the northern border are Buddhists.

The Government of Nepal

Nepal is a Hindu monarchy in which theoretically, full sovereign powers reside in the king. Between 1846 and

1951, however, these powers were exercise by the prime minister, a post given in perpetuity to the Rana family.

On 12th February, 1959, a constitution was promulgated by King Mahendra Bir Bikram, and general election was held. The constitution provided for a bicameral legislature and a responsible cabinet system. The king retained broad powers, however, which he used in December 1960 to dissolve the cabinet and parliament and suspend the constitution.

Representative Government of Nepal

The attainment of independence by India in 1947 changed the entire political situation in Nepal, since the Rana family had depended on British support. Moreover, many Nepalis had participated in or were influenced by the nationalist movement in India and were making increasingly persistent demands that the autocratic Rana regime be overthrown.[26]

Nepal is situated between China on the north and India on the south, Nepal is a landlocked country. Its topography is dominated by the Himalayas, except for a narrow area along its southern flank. Thus, geography has made Nepal dependent on India in economic, cultural, and various other ways.

Nepal's modern history has been shaped by geography, the colonial legacies of South Asia, and its own quest for national identity. Such a quest became intense following the conquest of Kathmandu valley by the Gorkhali king Prithvi Narayan Shah generally considered to be the founder of modern Nepal in 1768. Taking note of Nepal's difficult geo-political location between China and India, Prithvi Narayan advised his successors not to get too closed to either one in

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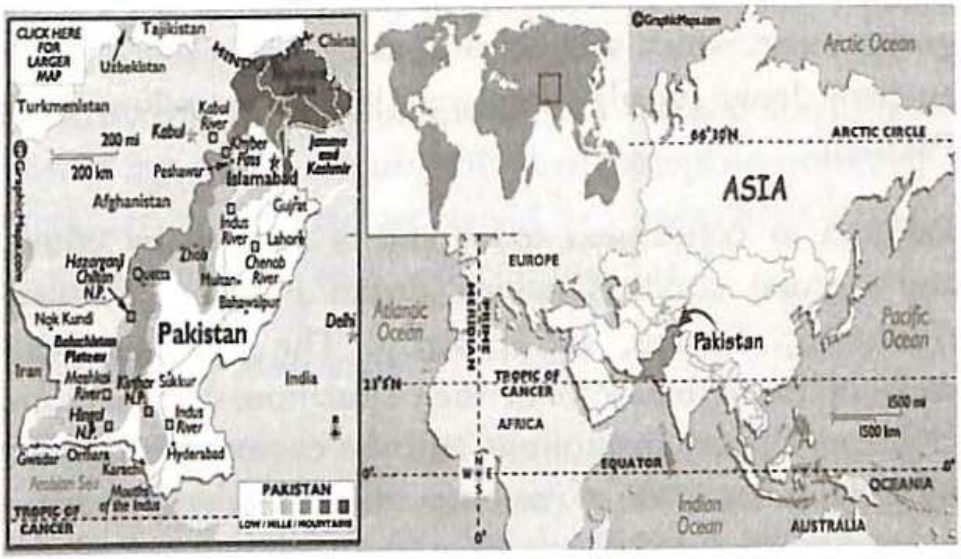
26 Leo E. Rose, Author of "Nepal; Strategy for Survival," "Nepal" (1984) *Encyclopedia Americana*, Volume 20, Grolier Incorporated, International Headquarters: Danbury, Connecticut 06816, U.S.A., pp 100- 101.

order to avoid domination. Internally his rule was inspired by a Hindu religious ethos and a brand of military chivalry that together would come to dominate the political culture of Nepal. A rigid caste hierarchy characterized the post-Shah political structure and social relations.[27]

Map 1.8
Pakistan (Islamic Republic of Pakistan)



Source: *"Worldatlas explore your world...,"* http://www.worldatlas.com/webimage/countrys/asia/pk.htm, Accessed on 15th July, 2011.

Islamic Republic of Pakistan[28]

Pakistan a country in South Asia that geographically and historically is associated with India but culturally has strong attachments to the Middle East. When Pakistan was established in 1947, its territory was carved from Muslim majority areas of the British Indian Empire; the western Punjab, Sind, Baluchistan, the North West Frontier Province, and eastern Bengal. The first five of these areas formed a territorial unit, but East Bengal was separated from

27 Lok Raj Baral (1993) "Nepal" *The Oxford Companion to Politics of the World* (ed.) Joel Krieger, William A. Joseph, Miles Kahler, Georges Nzongola-Ntalaja, Barbara B. Stalling, Margaret Weir, p 623.

28 *"Pakistan - Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia,"* http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pakistan, Accessed on 22nd June, 2012.

the western part of the country by 1,000 miles (1,600km) of land belonging to the newly independent state of India. Islamic solidarity was expected to make a nation out of what some people called a geographical monstrosity. But too many problems arose from the physical separation of East and West Pakistan and from the ethnic, linguistic, and cultural differences between them. These problems could not be dealt with either adequately or justly by the central government, which was dominated by a bureaucracy and an army drawn mostly from larger but less populous West Pakistan.

Pakistan as constituted today still is plagued by ethnic and cultural conflicts, which divide Punjabis, Pathans (Pakhtuns), Sindhis, and Baluchis. The Punjabis, who make up more than 69% of the population, dominate the civil and military institutions and the economy. Conflicts over the allocation of resources among the provinces compound the division arising from cultural and ethnic differences. The Islamization of some of Pakistan's laws and institutions initiated by the government of President Zia- ul- Hq after 1977, is unlikely to overcome the country's many problems in the near future.

Ever since attaining independence in 1947, India and Pakistan have regarded each other with deep suspicion and intense hostility.[29]

The Land of Pakistan

Pakistan extends about 975 miles (1,570km) on a northeast-southwest axis from the Chinese border to the Arabian Sea. It reaches its great with of some 725 miles (1,165km) from north-west southeast between the Iranian and Indian

29 Khalid Bin Sayeed, Author of "Politic in Pakistan" "Pakistan" (1984) *Encyclopedia Americana*, Volume 21, Grolier Incorporated, International Headquarters: Danbury, Connecticut 06816, U.S.A., pp 273-277, 280.

frontiers, narrowing to 135 miles (215km) between the Afghan boundary and the Kashmir cease-fire line.

Most of the eastern half of the country is flat alluvial lowland less than 600 feet (180 meters) in elevation, drained by the Indus River and its major tributaries, the Sutlej, Ravi, Chenab, and Jhelum. This low land also includes the western part of the Thar (Great Indian) Desert along the Indian border.

The fertile alluvial soils of the eastern lowland constitute Pakistan' major land resource. Much of their plain, however, is very dry, and agriculture would be impossible without irrigation from the Indus and its tributaries. [30]

The People of Pakistan

Pakistan represents a variety of ethnic groups and elements, mostly a Caucasoid stock and quite distinct from the aboriginal peoples of this area of the Indian subcontinent. In the 2nd millennium B.C. groups of nomads, with their horses and cattle, moved in waves out of the steppes of Central Asia. These were the Aryans, some of whom settled in the valley of the Indus River.

The Ethnic Groups and Languages of Pakistan

The people of Pakistan tribal nomads, settled farmers, and townsfolk how great diversity in their ways of life and occupations. But they show an even greater diversity in their ethnic origins and languages.

Baluchi tribes occupy the barren and rugged southwest. This region, which extends westward into Iran, has long been known as Baluchistan. The inhabitants speak Baluchi,

30 Robert C. Kingsbury, Indiana University (1984) "The Land," *Encyclopedia Americana,* Volume 21, Grolier Incorporated, International Headquarters: Danbury, Connecticut 06816, U.S.A., p 274.

an Indo- Aryan language. Banditry was a normal way of life for them well into the 20th century.

The Brahuis of Baluchistan speak Brahui, a Dravidian tongue similar to those of that they are descended from a pre-Aryan population, yet they are not Dravidian in physical characteristics. They engage in seasonal farming and raising flocks.

Panjabi, still another Indo- Aryan language. The Punjabis fall into three major caste Rajputs, Jats, and Arains and five minor ones. Most prominent socially are the Rajputs, traditionally local provinces, warrior and landowners. They make excellent soldiers, and many of them serve as officers in the Paksitani army. The Jats are landowing cultivators, as are the less prosperous Arians.

The Religion of Pakistan

Muslims in Pakistan adhere to several sects. Possibly 90% follow the Sunni sect, while most of the remainder is Shia Muslims. The latter sect is strongest in Sind. In addition are small minorities of Ismailis, who spiritual leader is the Agha Khan, and of Ahmadiyas. The Ahmadiya sect was founded in 1901 by a local religious reformer. The more orthodox Muslim leaders have branded it a heretical movement.

The Social Pattern of Pakistan

Traditional Muslim society in Pakistan is divided roughly into two classes: the ashraf, or highborn, descendants of Arab, Afghan, and Turkic invaders of India; and the alaf, or lowborn, descendants of the indigenous peoples who had been converted from Hinduism. Although the concept of caste is anathema to Islam, the indigenous caste system did not disappear among the converts to Islam, and it affected the social organization of the invaders. The Muslim

castes tend to correspond to occupations. But the Islamic members of castes are not frozen in status, as in the case in Hinduism. [31]

The Economy of Pakistan

The economy of Pakistan, like that of other developing nations, is a mixture of the traditional and modern in agriculture, transportation, commerce, and manufacturing. Traditional, often primitive, forms of production are slowly being replaced by modern, more efficient ones.

Agriculture dominates the economy. While farming directly employs 56% of the labour force (including rural service, trade and processing workers), more than three fourths of the people are dependent on the land far their main source of livelihood. Much of Pakistan's small factory industry is based on agricultural raw materials and its exports are chiefly farm products and then manufactures, such as yarn and textiles. [32]

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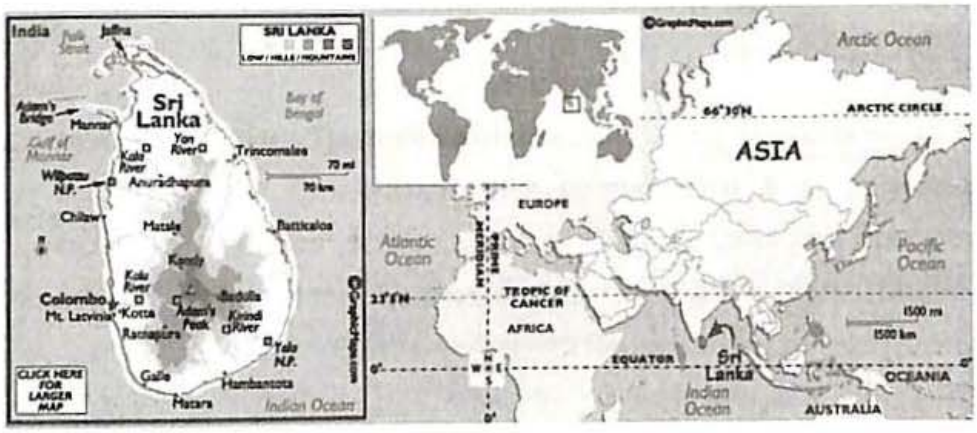
31 Donald N. Wilber, Author of "Pakistan Yesterday and Today," (1984) "The People," *Encyclopedia Americana*, Volume 21, Grolier Incorporated, International Headquarters: Danbury, Connecticut 06816, U.S.A., p 275.

32 Robert C. Kingsbury, Indiana University, (1984) "The Economy," *Encyclopedia Americana,* Volume 21, Grolier Incorporated, International Headquarters: Danbury, Connecticut 06816, U.S.A., p 280.

Map 1.9
Sri Lanka (Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka)



Source: "Worldatlas explore your world...,"http://www.worldatlas.com/webimage/countrys/asia/lk.htm, Accessed on 15th July, 2011.

Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka[33]

Sri Lanka, is an island nation situated in the Indian Ocean southeast of India. It was known as Ceylon until 1972, when it changed its name to Sri Lanka the island's ancient Sinhalese name, meaning "*the resplendent land.*" The total area is 25,332 sq miles (65,610 sq km).

The 24th largest island in the world, Sri Lanka is shaped like a pearl or leardrop- or, less romantically, like a mango or pear. Lying only a few degrees north of the equator, it has a tropical climate, warm and humid at sea level but cooler and more pleasant in the south central highlands.

The island was well known as Serendib or Taprobane to ancient navigators and was important as a source of gems and spices. It is one of the world's most beautiful countries, famed for its fine tea, its gemstones, its colourful landscapes, the underwater flora and fauna off its reef- protected beaches, and the pageantry of its religious festivals.

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33 *"Sri Lanka - Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia,"* http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sri_Lanka, Accessed on 22nd June, 2012.

Sri Lanka's mixed population, variety of religions, language problems, economic difficulties, and shifting political balance between left and right make it resemble Asia in miniature, illustrating both the charms and the troubles of that continent.

The Land and Natural Resources of Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka, structurally an extension of the south Indian plateau, is separated from India by the Palk Strait (20 miles, or 32 km, wide at its narrowest part) and by the Gulf of Mannar. Mannar Island, off Sri Lanka's northwest coast, and nearby shallows known as Adam's Bridge virtually connect Sri Lanka with the mainland. The island's greatest length is 270 miles (435 km), from Point Pedro in the north to Dondra Head in the south. Its greatest width is 140 miles (225 km), from Colombo in the west to Sangamankanda in the east.

The Natural Resources of Sri Lanka

The rocks forming the island are among the oldest in the world. The decomposition of these rocks has formed the red soils of Sri Lanka, known as laterites.

Quartz, feldspar, and mica and minerals found in Sri Lanka, as are ilmenite, monazite, thorianite, and kaolin (China clay). Sri Lanka is a renowned for its sapphires, rubies, aquamarines, and other gemstones, both precious and semiprecious. Another mineral product, exported in modest quantities, is graphites (locally called plumbago). Small amounts of gold are found in the rivers, and there are excellent iron ore deposits in the south central area.

The Ethnic Group of Sri Lanka

The Moors (with other Muslims, forming about 7% of the population) are descendants of Arab merchants who took over the spice trade after the 8th century A.D. and

held it for 800 years. Sinhalese areas, and profess the Muslim faith: Though they have no caste distinctions, they segregate their women, some of whom are kept in *purdah* (seclusion). Among other Muslims are the Malays, brought in as mercenaries by the Dutch and now almost absorbed as a group, and the "Afghans," Baluchis from Pakistan, whose big, colourfully costumed men are often money- lenders.

The Burghers (0.6% of the population) claim to the descendants of the Dutch and other European employees of the Dutch East India Company who intermarried with Sinhalese. Among them are counted others of mixed ancestry. They consider themselves Europeans in culture and background, speak English and wear western clothing, and generally keep apart from other groups. Most Burghers are Protestant Christians; some are Catholic.

The Veddas (Veddas) are the nearly extinct Sri Lankan aborigines. The few surviving Veddas live primitively in the jungles of eastern Sri Lanka. They are animists in religion.

Other small communities are the Europeans, Parsis, Goanese, a few Chinese, some Indians, and some Telegu-speaking gypies known as Kuravans.

The Economy of Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka, exploited for centuries by countries greedy for its riches, today has serious economic problems. The economy is based primarily, on three basic agricultural commodities: tea, rubber, and coconuts. Two thirds of the cultivated land and two thirds of the population are involved in the production and distribution of these products.

The Government of Sri Lanka

With the adoption of a new constitution on 22nd May, 1972, the self- governing dominion of Ceylon, in which

the British monarch was, represented the independent Republic of Sri Lanka. This constitution was amended in 1977 and replaced by another in 1978 that changed the country's name to Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka.

Under the 1978 constitution, the head of state is the president elected for a six- year term and limited to two terms. The president appoints a member of the National State Assembly as prime minister.

The unicameral National State Assembly has 196 members who hold office for six years unless that body is dissolved sooner. The judiciary consists of a supreme court, a court of appeals, and a number of subordinate courts. The present must appoint a constitutional court to test the validity of acts of the Assembly.

For administrative purposes Sri Lanka is divided into 22 districts, agent appointed by the central government. [34]

For the purpose of present study, China and Myanmar have been included as India's relations with them have great bearing on North East and more importantly, the people and region of northeast share many commonalities with these two neighbours.

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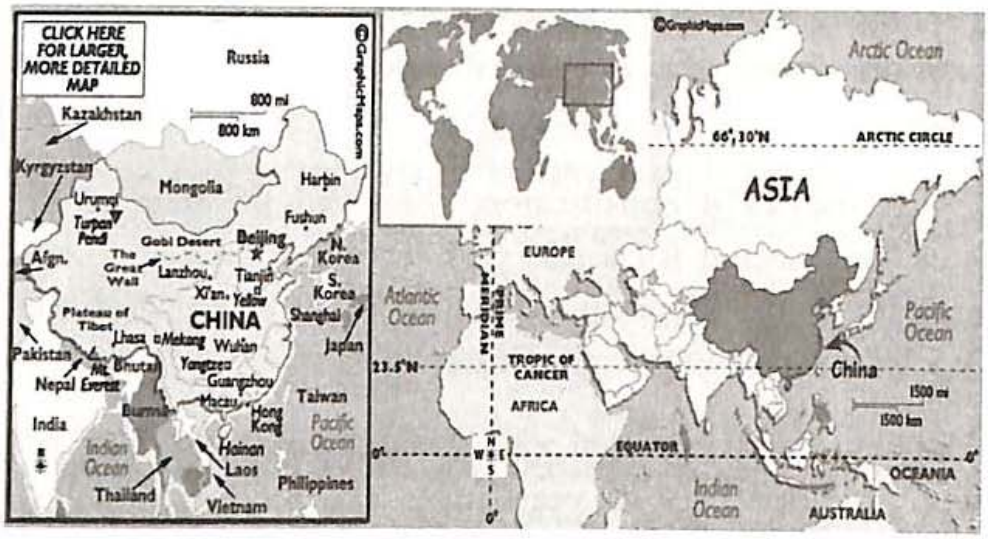
34 Argus John Tresidder, Author of "Ceylon, an Introduction to the Resplendent Land," 'Sri Lanka" (1984) *Encyclopedia Americana*, Volume 25, Grolier Incorporated, International Headquarters: Danbury, Connecticut 06816, U.S.A., pp 550, 550a, 550c, 550g.

Map 1.10
China (People's Republic of China)



Source: "Worldatlas explore your world...," http://www.worldatlas.com/webimage/countrys/asia/cn.htm, Accessed on 15th July, 2011.

People's Republic of China (PRC)[35]

The People's Republic of China (Communist China) was formally proclaimed on 1st October, 1949. Its first constitution was adopted in 1954, its second in 1975, and its third in 1978. The Chinese Communist Party (CCP), with its own constitution and administrative system, continued to exercise complete control over the government.[36]

China occupying of one of the pivotal geographical regions of the earth, is the most populous country in the world, containing almost one fourth of the human race. Since 1949 the country has been divided in fact into two separate entities, each of which claims legal jurisdiction over all of China: Communist China (the People's Republic of China), in control of the mainland,

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35 *"Names of China - Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia,"* http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Names_of_China, Accessed on 22nd June, 2012.

36 Hyman Kublin, Brooklyn College, The City University, New York, 1984) "Introduction" (*Encyclopedia Americana*, Volume 6, Grolier Incorporated, International Headquarters: Danbury, Connecticut 06816, U.S.A., p 492.

and Nationalist China (the Republic of China), in the control of Taiwan.

An Introduction of China

For some 3,000 years, China has been one of the main centres of the world. Rivaled for sheer power and sophisticated living only by the Roman imperial colossus China's civilization exerted political and cultural influence throughout one of the few heavily populated regions of the world at the beginning of the Christian era. In subsequent centuries new empires rose and fell in many parts of the globe, while the nature of civilization underwent successive changes. Despite many vicissitudes, however, China continued to endue a political entity, and in our own times it has once again surged to the forefront of international affairs.

China the Oldest Contemporary Civilisation

As the world's "oldest contemporary civilization," China has inherited a complex legacy of cultural patterns from the past. In many instances the Chinese sought to preserve their cultural heritage intact and to transit it to their descendants with a minimum of modification. But, as any Chese were not completely averse to innovation when circumstances seemed so to warrant it.. Nor were the Chinese entirely reluctant to discard institutions and values which seemed no longer to fulfill social and cultural needs.

Furthermore, China's way of life did not serve the purposes of the inhabitants of China alone. The institutions, ideas, manners, and customs of the Chinese posed a perennial lure for peoples in neighbouring lands in Korea, Japan, the northern and western border regions, and the areas along the long southern frontier. Their cultures were given the lasting impress of things Chinese. It is noteworthy too

that the "West" did not escape China' cultural influences. During the 18th century western Europe was swept by a fad for Chinese ways and fashions, the vestiges of which are still apparent.

The Apogee of Chinese Power

Traditonal Chinese civilization reached its apogee of power and splendor for the fourth time the Chou (about 1027- 256 B.C.), Han (202 B.C.- 220 A.D.), and T'ang (618- 906) dynastic periods were the first three during the 15th of mid 18th centuries. By almost all relevant criteria, China under the Ming (1368- 1644) and the Ch'ing (1644-1912) was during these centuries indisputably one of the greatest states in the world. In effective command of their domains, the Ming and Ch'ing emperors justifiably took for granted foreign respect for their authority. But thereafter the Chinese empire entered into a steady decline. After much buffeting from foes at home and abroad, the last of China's imperial ruling houses and the imperial order itself collapsed in revolution.

The People of China

Nearly one fourth of all the people in the world live in China. The "men of Han" referring to the world live in China. The "men of Han" referring to the dynasty 202 B.C.- 220 A.D. are usually called "the Chinese" by Westerner; they have a common history, culture, and written language.

The Language of China

Han Chinese speak Simitic languages of the Sino- Tibetan language family. All of these languages are not mutually intelligible. Mandarin is China's official language and the one most extensively used. It originated in North China

and spread with the migrations of the people to east-central and southwest China. Different local varieties of Mandarin are mutually understandable.

Sinitic dialect that are not mutually intelligible and those that do not resemble Mandarin are found primarily in Taiwan and in southeastern China.

Some of the languages spoken by minority groups belong to the Sino- Tibetan language family, although they are not Chinese languages. Included in this group is Thai. Thai is spoken in different forms by ethnic groups such as the Chuang of the Kuangsi region and the Paiyi of Yünnan province.

Other groups who speak non-Chinese Sino- Tibetan languages are the Miao of southeastern Kweichow and western Human provinces, and the Yao of Kwangsi, Human, Kwangtung, and Yünnan province.

The Lolo tribesmen, who speak a Tibeto- Burman language and live in the mountains, have strongly and successfully resisted the Chinese.

The languages of several large minority groups in China belong to the Altaic language family. Three main branches are represented the Mongolian, Turkic, and Turgusic.[37]

The Economy of China

To a man such as Marco Polo, the seven centuries ago appeared to be a land of great wealth. In comparison with Europe during the Middle Ages, China's cities were larger and its upper classes were richer. But, this apparent prosperity was only a superficial veneer, which was supported by the toil of tens of millions of peasant farmers.

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37 Bernard Gallin, Michigan State University, "China" (1984) *Encyclopedia Americana*, Volume 6, Grolier Incorporated, International Headquarters: Danbury, Connecticut 06816, U.S.A., pp 492- 494, 497-498, 515-516.

By modern standards China was a poor, underdeveloped country in Marco Polo's time.

Throughout recorded history, agriculture has been the key sector in China's economy. Farmers provided the surplus that supported Chinese art and scholarship in the past. [38]

The Government of China

The People's Republic of China (Communist China) was formally proclaimed on 1st October, 1949. Its first constitution was adopted in 1954, its second in 1975, and its third in 1978. The Chinese Communist Party (CCP), with its own constitution and administrative system, continued to exercise complete control over the government.

The Chinese Communist claims to be the true representative of Marxism- Leninism, and the network of political organizations penetrating all sectors of society is based on Marx's "theory of contradiction." Simply stated, it is the belief that tensions and conflicts of interest are inherent in all situations. According to Mao Tse- tung, there are two types of contradictions, those that are two types of contradictions, those that can be settled by violence ("antagonistic contradiction") and those can be settled peacefully through appeal to reason ("non-antagonistic contradictions"). Since resolving these tensions moves history forward, animosity between groups and class struggle must be fostered rather than dampened.

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38 Dwight H. Perkins, Harvard University (1984) "Economy", *Encyclopedia Americana,* Volume 6, Grolier Incorporated, International Headquarters: Danbury, Connecticut 06816, U.S.A., p 515.

The Religion of China

The major religious practices in China are Buddhism, Taoism, Christianity. [39]

China approaches the twenty first century in much the same way it entered the twentieth: on the precipice of a political crisis that portends epochal change for the Chinese state and the Chinese people. Many of the dilemmas that fueled China's crisis at the end of the last century also shape its contemporary predicament: a frustrated quest for national wealth and power; an uneasy relationship with the West and a deep ambivalence about China's role in the international system; the crumbling legitimacy of the country's rulers; the pressure to incorporate new social forces into the nation's political life; an alienated intelligentsia who question the validity of Chinese cultural norms in a rapidly changing world. In many ways, these issues are as relevant to understanding China in the 1990s as they were in the 1890s.

The country has been through a century not only of terrible trauma but also modern, unified, and sovereign nation than it was hundered years ago. China's tragedy is that its leaders have largely squandered the promise of these achievements amid internecine power struggles that have once again brought China to the brink of crisis.

In terms of area, the People's Republic of China (PRC) is slightly bigger than the United States, making it the world's third largest nation,. After the Soviet Union and Canada.

The PRC is made up of twenty two provinces, five autonomous regions, and three centrally administratered municipalities (including Beijing, the capital of the

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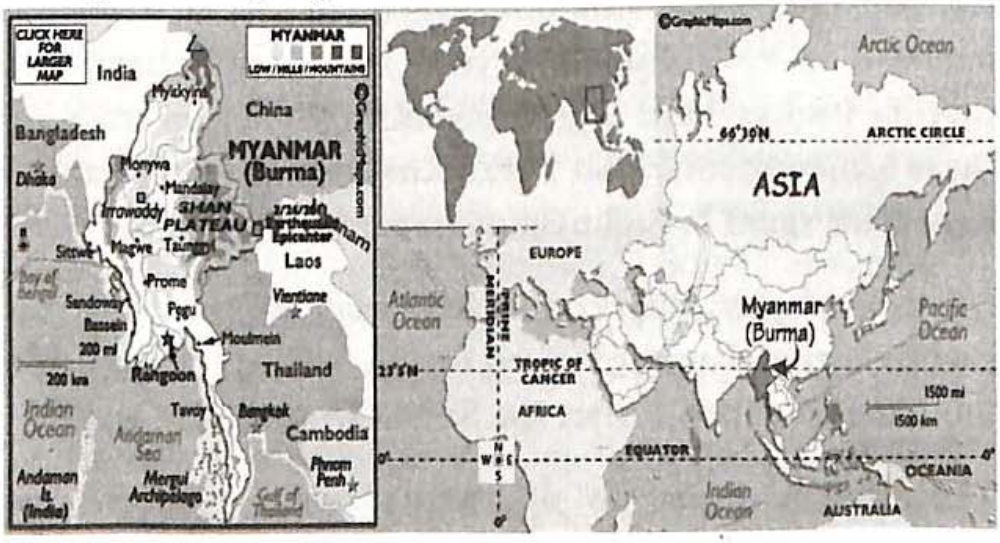
39 Harry J. Lamley, University of Hawaii (1984) "Government," *Encyclopedia Americana,* Volume 6, Grolier Incorporated, International Headquarters: Danbury, Connecticut 06816, U.S.A., p 515.

country). The autonomous regions, are areas of the country with high concentrations of non- Chinese ethnic minorities (they constitute approximately six percent of the total population). These regions are example, Tibet are, according to the constitution, entitled to some measure of self-government in order cultural identities, in reality, such autonomy is externally superficial.

The PRC is a *unitary* state in which the subnational levels are subordinate in all important matters to the centre. Growing regional economic differentiation, ethnic assertiveness, and the complexity of modern administration in a continental sized nation may increase centrifugal pressures on the PRC in the years ahead; movement toward a federal system with more power sharing between the centre and its constituent units might ease some of these tensions, but such a trend would run against the grain of age-old patterns formed when China was a highly centralized empire. [40]

Map 1.11
Myanmar (Republic of the Union of Myanmar)



Source: *"Worldatlas explore your world..."* http://www.worldatlas.com/webimage/countrys/asia/mm.htm, Accessed on 15th July, 2011.

40 William A. Joseph (1993) "China" *The Oxford Companion to Politics of the World* ed Joel Krieger, William A. Joseph, Miles Kahler, Georges Nzongola-Ntalaja, Barbara B. Stalling, Margaret Weir, p 128.

Republic of the Union of Myanmar

The official English name was changed by the country's government from the "Union of Burma" to the "Union of Myanmar" in 1989, and still later to the "Republic of the Union of Myanmar."[41]

Myanmar is in Southeast Asia and is located west of China, Laos, and Thailand and east of Bangladesh and India. The two thirds are Burmans, the remainder consist of Shah, Karen, Arakanese, Kachins, Chin, Mon, Palanug, Wa, Lisu, Lahu, Akha. The languages fall into two families, Tibeto-Burman and Mon- Khmer.[42]

Myanmar (Burma), a country in South east Asia sharing land boundaries with India, Bangladesh, China, Laos, and Thailand, seemed to be destined by location for a critical role in the ideological power struggle underway in Asia in the latter half of the 20th century. Instead, character of its political administration has prevented Myanmar's playing an active part in the world political arena and has made it a country isolated and quiescent.

Myanmar, like Italy or Spain, is a natural geographical entity. The horse-shoe shaped arc of mountains and hills that encircles Myanmar on the west, north, and east encloses the plains where most of the people dwell and cuts the country off from its neighbours. Migrations have from time to time changed Burma's culture and the composition of its population, but for nearly a thousand years these has been a continuous , history of Myanmese state, drawing its main cultural inspiration from Theravada Buddhism.

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41 *"Names of Burma - Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia,"* http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Names_of_Burma, Accessed on 22nd June, 2012.

42 John H. Badgley (1993) "Burma", The Oxford Companion to Politics of the World ed. Joel Krieger, William A. Joseph, Miles Kahler, Georges Nzongola- Ntalaja, Barbara B. Stalling, Margaret Weir, pp 100- 101.

Throughout its history, Myanmar has been inward- looking. Traditionally, the capital was ward- looking. Traditionally, the capital was known as "the Centre of the Universe." Then for a hundred years Myanmar was forcibly drawn into a wider political system the British Empire.

People of Myanmar (Burma)

While "Burmese" is a term sometimes loosely employed for all the people of Burma, it is (except as a definition of citizenship) usually applied to those 68% of the population who speak the Burmese language. This principal group is also known as Burmans. The Karens are the next most prominent group, forming about 10% of the total population. The shans, with approximately 8%, are the third most numerous group in Myanmar (Burma). The Burmans are short and slender with brown skin, whereas the Karens are stockier and often lighter in skin colour. Among other prominent ethnic groups are the Kachins, Chins, Mons, Arakanese, and Lao. Tribes in the northern hills are frequently rather tall and rosy cheeked and occasionally have wavy hair. Some hold that the aboriginal inhabitants are the Wa of the eastern borderland, who are darken- skinned and short. Burma's various peoples have intermarried in many areas.

The Religion of Myanmar

Even after half a century of steady life. Reliable figures are not to be had, but the best estimates put the total number of monks at about 110,000 of whom about 33,000 are novices (koyin) and the remainder is adult monks.

The Economy of Myanmar

Before World War II, Burman enjoyed a favourable export trade with India, Europe and Japan. Roughly half

of Burma's exports in terms of money value were made up of rice; about one quarter was the products of the oil refineries; minerals accounted for 12% to 14% and timber yielded about 7%. Burma led the world in the rice trade. Nearly 54% of the net rice exports of Asia came from Burma, which supplied 90% of India's rice imports, with large quantities also going to Ceylon and Malaya.

The return that Myanmar received for its exports was composed largely of consumer goods, for Myanmar produced few manufactures apart from textiles, sugar, and cement. The main industries were the Burmah Old Company, with its oilfields in middle Myanmar and its refinery at Syriam, outside Rangoon, and the Burma Corporation, which worked the great Bawdwin mines, producing tungsten and tin.

Burma's (Myanmar's) Education

In old Burma, almost all education was based on religion. The village monasteries provided teaching for boys between the ages of 6 and 12. The language of instruction was *Pali*, the sacred of Buddhism, and most of the lesson time was devoted to the reading and expounding of the scriptures. Some of the larger monasteries had the character of universities, with famous scholars and sizable libraries.

The British Period in Myanmar (Burma)

During the British period, then was a long attempt to preserve the monastic schools as the foundation of a secular educational system. However, the monks insisted on maintaining a distinction between religious and secular education, and so during the early 20th century the British administration had to seek other foundations for secular primary education. Government schools run by Christian missionaries or by individual Burmese headmasters.

The Government

From independence until March 1962, the Burmese government functioned under a constitution hastily drafted in 1947. This provided for a parliamentary democracy on British lines.

The Constitutional Government

The executive functions of government were exercised by a prime minister and a cabinet, while the present was the titular head of state. A judiciary had a Supreme Court as its apex. The constitution provided for general elections to be held every 5 years (or more often if necessary) to elect the parliament, the legislative branch. This consisted of two houses, the Chamber of Deputies and the Chamber of Nationalities. [43]

A military junta, the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC), seized power on 18th September, 1988 in Burma (Myanmar). The junta consists of senior military officers chaired by the commanding general of the army and includes commanders of the navy, air force, and the chief of intelligence, who functions as secretary as secretary of the SLORC. The People's Assembly was disbanded at the time of the coup de'etat, and the SLORC governs under martial law based on the 1974 constitution. An election for representatives to design a new constitution was held on 27th May, 1990, and an opposition party, the National League for Democracy (NLD) won eighty percent of the seats; however, the SLORC refused to accept the election as legitimate and his not allowed the representatives to meet.

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43 Hugh Tinker, University of London, "Burma" (1984) *Encyclopedia Americana*, Volume 5, Grolier Incorporated, International Headquarters: Danbury, Connecticut 06816, U.S.A., pp 1-2, 4, 6-8.