

Preface & Acknowledgement

One of the most significant features of the post-Second World war world has been the proliferation of large number of regional organizations with diverse aims and objectives ranging from politico-strategic alliance building to social, cultural and economic cooperation. Despite tremendous potentiality, however, South Asian region was a late starter in this direction. With the institutionalization of regional cooperation in 1985, the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation(SAARC) started its pious journey towards the end of meaningful cooperation among the seven member states, viz, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. Till today, as many as twelve Summit meetings SAARC countries have already been held within the short span of twenty-five years of its existence, each unfolding new directions towards the cause of cooperation. One of the most laudable area that the SAARC has moved toward has been the beginning of the era of South Asian Preferential Trade Area (SAPTA) aiming at reaching the stage of South Asian Free Trade Area (SAFTA) in line with European Union (EU) and North American Free Trade Area (NAFTA). The Organization is said to be steady, though slow, in its mission to cater to the needs of cooperation with the proper appropriation of the potentialities of the region for such cooperation in order to attain self-reliance.

However, despite all the potentialities and a bright future, the SAARC is alleged to have been bogged down in view of a number of obstacles that come in the way of meaningful cooperation among the member states of the SAARC. Among these, the strained relationship between India and Pakistan seems to leave profound impact on the efficacy and of the SAARC as a viable regional organization. It is the bilateral issues between India and Pakistan that are said to be impairing much of the prospective success of the Organization thus making the latter virtually an ornamental organization to make Declarations only.

Given this general background, the present thesis has modestly ventured to explore and probe the impact of Indo-Pak relations on the efficacy of the SAARC. The thesis has tried to focus upon the issues that strain the relationship between India and Pakistan and their cumulative impact on the success and / or failure of the SAARC.

The thesis has been arranged into seven chapters. Chapter – I is the introductory chapter that contains the specific research problem and the objective of the study, theoretical framework, overview of existing literature, significance of the

study and the methodology that was followed in collecting information for the study. Chapter – II deals exclusively with SAARC as a regional organization in South Asia in the overall framework of bilateral relations between the countries of the region. Chapter – III focuses on the historical background of India and Pakistan as two independent states of the region in which lies the root of discontent between the two countries. Chapter – IV and Chapter – V have been devoted to the intricacies of the relationship between India and Pakistan. Chapter – VI measures the impact of the relationship between India and Pakistan on the overall success and / or failure of the SAARC. Chapter – VII summarizes the findings and enlists the concluding observations.

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