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RESEARCH ARTICLE

GRAND STRATEGY IN THE CYNOSURE: WHY SHOULD BANGLADESH HAVE GRAND STRATEGY?

Sarwar J. Minar.

Senior Officer, International Programs and Relations, Independent University, Bangladesh (IUB) and Founder, Center for Grand Strategy Studies – a single issue think tank.

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Abstract

The post-Cold War world politics presents impetus and propels states to update their International Relations thinking in many ways irrespective of their power status in the world politics. As Bangladesh does not elude the impetus created by the global politics of 21st century, this paper argues that formulating grand strategy can contribute to update International Relations thinking of Bangladesh. Once seemingly obsolescence idea has become the cynosure of scholars in the 21st century. Tracing the evolution of the idea of grand strategy, this paper illustrates how formulation of grand strategy has descended from great powers to middle powers and, therefore, argues that the idea has become applicable for all states. The article, therefore, explores the rationales of Bangladesh to have grand strategy in the 21st century. The article argues that as the kernel of grand strategy is to serve grand national interests; So, Bangladesh can have declared grand strategy to safeguard and augment enduring national interests of Bangladesh. This article attempts to fill up the knowledge gap of nonexistence of grand strategy scholarship in Bangladesh and contributes to update Bangladesh's International Relations thinking by applying it.

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Introduction: -

The post-Cold War world politics presents impetus and propels states to update their International Relations thinking in many ways irrespective of their power status in the world politics. Bangladesh does not elude the impetus created by the global politics of 21st century. This paper argues that formulating grand strategy can contribute to update Bangladesh's International Relations thinking which is desired in the 21st century global politics. This paper explores the key question why should Bangladesh have grand strategy?

The study of grand strategy has been paradoxically neglected by the scholars of IR.¹ Lack of proper attention to the concept has caused dilapidation of grand strategy scholarship in International Relations. Moreover, grand strategy has historically been found only in the jargon of great powers. Fortunately, the study of grand strategy has gained prominence recently in the study of International Relations which played a significant role in rescuing the concept

¹Braz Baracuhy, "The Art of Grand Strategy", Review of Charles Hill, *Grand Strategies: Literature, Statecraft, and World Order, Survival*, Vol. 53, No. 1, February–March 2011, p.147.

Corresponding Author:-Sarwar J. Minar.

Address:-Senior Officer, International Programs and Relations, Independent University, Bangladesh (IUB) and Founder, Center for Grand Strategy Studies – a single issue think tank.

from total obsolescence.²The article presents an endeavor not only to assist in rescuing the concept of grand strategy from obsolescence of IR jargon but also to contemporize the concept in the 21st century.

Bangladesh is a transitional democracy and a peace loving country in South Asia. Bangladesh is among one of the few states of the world that became independent through the sanguinary demand of democracy. Bangladesh has fought no war in its forty-year lifespan since independence. Although there is political turmoil in Bangladesh, in contrast to other states in South Asia the condition of Bangladesh is better and many consider Bangladesh to be a 'light' in South Asia. Geographically, Bangladesh is situated at a very strategically important position in the region Asia with prospective land bridge between South Asia and Southeast Asia and direct access to the Bay of Bengal and therefore to the Indian Ocean. With rapid rise and increasing engagement of China, India, and Japan in South Asia, a new South Asian future is emerging. Therefore, Bangladesh should be more careful and serious about its image construction and play a constructive role in the emerging South Asia. This paper argues that Bangladesh should therefore devise grand strategy to construct a good image, to better serve its interests and to play a constructive role in shaping and constructing a better South Asian future.

The paper attempts to fill up the knowledge gap of nonexistence of grand strategy scholarship in Bangladesh. The article argues that by devising grand strategy, Bangladesh can better serve its national interests and update international relations thinking of Bangladesh.

The organization of the article is divided into five sections. Following the introductory section, second section explores the development of the idea of grand strategy over time from founding fathers of the concept in the pre-WWI and post-WWI to Cold War years and then to the modern thinkers of the post-Cold War and in the 21st century. Third section examines the factors that has contributed grand strategy to become the cynosure along with the real world practice of grand strategy that descended from great powers to middle powers and argues that states irrespective of power status, especially small states, can have grand strategy to serve their grand national interests better. Fourth section illustrates the rationale for Bangladesh to have grand strategy. And then the fifth section draws conclusion.

Grand Strategy: From Founding Fathers to the Modern Thinkers:-

The foundational basis of the concept of 'grand strategy' lies in the concept of 'strategy'. Sun Tzu in his classic *The Art of War* wrote that the strategy of combining tactics (tactic of using "the extraordinary and the normal forces") into offensive maneuvers like "the direct and the indirect."³Carl von Clausewitz in his classic *On War* wrote tactics teaches the use of armed forces in the engagement; and strategy teaches the use of engagements for the object of the war"⁴. Antoine Henri Jomini defines strategy as the art of making war upon the map, and comprehends the whole theatre of operations; the art of bringing the greatest part of the forces of an army upon the important point of the theater of war or the zone of operations.⁵Richard K Betts explained strategy as a plan for using military means to achieve political ends.⁶All of their definitions reveal that strategy dictates how to win political object through military means. J C Wylie gave a broader definition of strategy and perceive it as '[a] plan of action designed in order to achieve some ends; a purpose together with a system of measures for its accomplishment'.⁷His definition is

² Yale University, Princeton University, Duke University, John Hopkins University, Columbia University, Temple University, the University of Wisconsin-Madison, University of Georgia and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology etc. have started working with the concept of grand strategy. Their work includes writing books, arranging seminar, paper presentation, offering programs, and incorporating course on grand strategy in their syllabuses and so on.

³ Sun Tzu, *The Art of War*, cited in Colonel Joe Bassani, "Saving the World for Democracy: An Historical Analysis of American Grand Strategy in the 21st Century", available at http://www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/ndu/bassani_jaws_american_grand_strategy.pdf, last accessed on 1 October, 2014.

⁴ Carl Von Clausewitz, *On War*, cited in Richard K. Betts, "Is Strategy an Illusion?", *International Security*, Vol.25, No.2 (Fall 2000), p.6.

⁵ Jomini, *The Art of War*, Quoted in Michael I. Handel, *Masters of War: Classical Strategic Thought* (3rd edition), London: Frank Class, 2005, p.27.

⁶ Richard K. Betts, "Is Strategy an Illusion?", *International Security*, Vol.25, No.2 (Fall 2000), p.6.

⁷ Basil Liddell Hart, *Strategy: The Indirect Approach*, quoted in Colin S. Gray, *Modern Strategy*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1999, p.18.

important because it accommodates the times of peace as well as war. Peter Layton urged for updating the concept. He explained that with the growing complexities of waging war, the word ‘strategy’ appeared in to need of more granularity to allow more precise thinking.⁸ He noted the widespread use of the term that though strategy is derived from Greek word *strategos*, ‘army leader’, yet today the term has lost its sole association with war and has become much more widely used across society.⁹ Terry Deibel moved further and wrote that “strategy is a plan for applying resources to achieve objectives”.¹⁰ Hew Strachan gives a generalized view and sees strategy as a means to achieve the ends set by policy.¹¹ It is apparent from the above mentioned definition that the traditional meaning of strategy was operational level concept which was solely considered to be related to the conduct of war. On the other hand, modern meaning of strategy is more compassing to reach to end by using means. Strategy in the modern world is a nation’s (or its coalitions’) art of controlling and using its resources (including armed forces) in order to protect and properly represent its interests, defending it from current, potential, and possible threats.¹²

To perceive the link between ‘strategy’ and ‘grand strategy’ simple inspection of the definitions offered by Basil Liddell Hart and Colin S Gray are sufficient. Basil Liddell Hart defined strategy as “the art of distributing and applying military means to fulfill the ends of policy”¹³ and suggested that the role of grand strategy—the higher strategy—is to coordinate and direct all the resources of the nation, or the band of nations, towards the attainment of political object of the war – the goal defined by fundamental policy.¹⁴ Colin S Gray writes that strategy is the use that is made of force and the threat of force for the ends of policy¹⁵ and noted that strategy at issue may not be military strategy; instead it may be grand strategy that uses ‘engagements’, meaning all of the relevant instruments of power as threat or in action, for the objectives of statecraft.¹⁶

The founding fathers laid the origin and initial development of the concept of ‘grand strategy’ since post-WWI to the end of the Cold War era. In 1906, Sir Julian Corbett, in his ‘Strategical Terms and Definitions Used in Lectures on Naval History,’ divided strategy in two categories: major or grand strategy and minor strategy. According to him while ‘major strategy’ deals with the ‘whole resources of the nation for war’, including military, economic, diplomatic, and political matters whereas ‘minor strategy’ focuses on operational plans. However, he deleted the expression ‘grand strategy’ in his revised 1911 ‘Notes on Grand Strategy’ presumably to remove confusion.¹⁷ In 1923, JFC Fuller, in his book *The Reformation of War*, introduced different types of strategy: grand, major, and minor. Fuller’s grand strategy directed a nation’s military aspect, the moral of the civil population, the commercial and industrial resources and the element of spirit. He devised grand strategy to the highest level of government and involved coordinating the material and social forces of the British Empire to be well prepared for future conflict.¹⁸ In 1929, Sir Basil Henry Liddell Hart in his seminal work, *Decisive Wars of History: A Study in Strategy*, made Fuller’s idea more lucid and included a seminal description of grand strategy. Hart put “the role of grand strategy is to co-ordinate and direct all the resources of a nation towards the attainment of the political object of war: the goal defined by national policy. Grand strategy should both calculate and develop the economic resources and man power of the nation in order to sustain the fighting services. So, with the moral resources, to foster the will to win and to endure is as important as to possess the more concrete forms of power. And, it should regulate the distribution of power between the several services and between the services and industries. Nor is this all, for fighting power is but one of the instruments of grand strategy. It should take into account of and apply the power of financial pressure, diplomatic pressure, commercial pressure, and, not least, ethical pressure to weaken the opponent’s will. A good cause is a sword as well as a buckler. Furthermore, while the horizon of strategy is bounded by the war, grand

⁸ Peter Layton, “The Idea of Grand Strategy”, *The RUSI Journal*, August/September 2012, Vol.157, No.4, p.56.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p.57-58.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p.58.

¹¹ Hew Strachan, cited in Peter Layton, “The Idea of Grand Strategy”, *op.cit.*, p.58.

¹² Kristina Baubinaite, “The Preconditions of Grand Strategy in Lithuania”, available at <http://www.lfpr.lt/uploads/File/2011-26/Baubinaite.pdf>, last accessed on 15 September 2014, p.58.

¹³ Basil Liddell Hart, *Strategy: The Indirect Approach*, quoted in Colin S. Gray, *Modern Strategy*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1999, p.18.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ Colin S. Gray, *Modern Strategy*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1999, p.17.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ Sir Julian Corbett, quoted in Layton, “The Idea of Grand Strategy”, *op.cit.*, p.56.

¹⁸ JFC Fuller, quoted in Layton, “The Idea of Grand Strategy”, *op.cit.*, p.56.

strategy looks beyond the war to the subsequent peace”.¹⁹He differentiated the concepts of ‘pure strategy’ and ‘grand strategy’. By pure strategy he meant the art of generals and by grand strategy he meant the co-ordination and direction all the resources of a nation, or band of nations, towards the attainment of the political object of the war”.²⁰Hart goes on to argue that the scope of grand strategy transcends the military plane and extends into the fabric of a nation’s social life. Arthur A. Stein nicely explained the underlying causes of the creation of the idea of grand strategy. He explained that being strongly influenced by the experience of the WWI Basil Liddell Hart broadened the concept of strategy, which traditionally referred to the planning and employment of military resources to win major campaigns against a foe or to achieve victory in war itself, as grand strategy. He broadened the concept recognizing that military victory might be insufficient if it left the victor weaker and vulnerable to a new conflict. Therefore, success in war could not fulfill all the requirements of effective strategy.²¹ American nuclear strategists after World War II generalized this insight by including ‘deterrence’, a strategy to prevent war in peace time, deterring attack even by the strongest enemy power.²²

The modern thinkers of ‘grand strategy’ contributed to broaden the concept of grand strategy in the post-Cold War period. According to the modern thinkers, grand strategy now covers a country’s foreign policy outlook both in war and peace. The modern meaning of grand strategy is largely contributed by the works of Paul M. Kennedy, John Lewis Gaddis, Charles Hill, and Michael Howard.²³Though Michael Howard in his article ‘Grand Strategy in the Twentieth Century’ saw the concept as ‘the purpose of achieving the goals of national policy in wartime’, later he found a more encompassing approach in the work of military historian and theorist Basil Liddell Hart. He found that Liddell Hart while writing in 1923 incorporated the dimension of ‘peace’ into what was otherwise an essentially military enterprise, noting that while ‘the horizon of strategy is bounded by the war, grand strategy looks forward to the subsequent peace’. Thus, grand strategy, transformed into a larger political design, began to migrate from the realm of pure military studies to the realm of international studies.²⁴Paul Kennedy defines grand strategy as “the crux of grand strategy lies therefore in policy, that is, in the capacity of the nation’s leaders to bring together all of the elements, both military and nonmilitary, for the preservation and enhancement of the nation’s long-term (that is, in wartime and peacetime) best interests.”²⁵John Lewis Gaddis simply defined ‘grand strategy’ as the calculated relationship of means to large ends, it is about how one uses whatever one has to get to wherever it is one wants to go.²⁶ Peter Feaver pointed that “grand strategy is a term of art from academia, and refers to the collection of plans and policies that comprise the state’s deliberate effort to harness political, military, diplomatic, and economic tools together to advance that state’s national interest”.²⁷He emphasized that grand strategy to be the art of reconciling ends and means. It involves purposive action- what leaders think and

¹⁹ Basil H Liddell Hart, *The Decisive Wars of History: A Study in Strategy*, quoted in Layton, “The Idea of Grand Strategy”, *op.cit.*, p.57.

²⁰ Liddell Hart, *Strategy*, quoted in Colonel Joe Bassani, “Saving the World for Democracy: An Historical Analysis of American Grand Strategy in the 21st Century”, A Paper submitted to the faculty of the Joint Advance Warfighting School in partial satisfaction of the requirement of masters of science degree in joint campaign planning strategy, available at http://www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/ndu/bassani_jaws_american_grand_strategy.pdf, last accessed on 1 October 2014,p.5.; Liddell Hart, quoted in Hew Strachan, “The Lost Meaning of Strategy”, *Survival: Global Politics and Strategy*, Vol.47, No.3, Autumn2005,p.40.

²¹ Arthur A. Stein, “Beyond Realism: The Study of Grand Strategy,” in Richard Rosecrance & Arthur Stein(ed.) *Domestic Bases of Grand Strategy*, Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1993, p.3.

²² *Ibid.*, p.3.

²³ Baracuh, “The Art of Grand Strategy”, *op.cit.*, p.147-148.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p.149.

²⁵ Paul Kennedy quoted in Colonel Joe Bassani, “Saving the World for Democracy: An Historical Analysis of American Grand Strategy in the 21st Century”, A Paper submitted to the faculty of the Joint Advance Warfighting School in partial satisfaction of the requirement of masters of science degree in joint campaign planning strategy, available at http://www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/ndu/bassani_jaws_american_grand_strategy.pdf, last accessed on 1 October 2014,p.8-9.

²⁶ John Lewis Gaddis, “What is Grand Strategy?”, the keynote address for a conference on “American Grand Strategy after War,” sponsored by the Triangle Institute for Security Studies and the Duke University Program in American Grand Strategy, 26 February 2009, p.7.

²⁷ Peter Feaver, “What is Grand Strategy and Why Do we Need It?”, *Foreign Policy*, available at http://shadow.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2009/04/08/what_is_grand_strategy_and_why_do_we_need_it, accessed on 24 February 2012.

want.²⁸ Former US Senator Gary Hart describes grand strategy as “the application of power and resources to achieve large national purposes.”²⁹ In 2012, Peter Layton, while undertaking PhD on developing grand strategy framework, argued that grand strategy is very distinct from strategy, grand strategy has wider scope, integrative, and forward looking nature, grand strategy aims to shape the world of the future. He further said that grand strategy is more than the application of resources; it also involves the development of the resources and their allocation. Grand strategy is concerned with assembling the man power, money and material necessary to build and sustain the means needed. Grand strategy, therefore, provides the means used by strategy.³⁰

However, at the beginning the use of the term ‘strategy’ and ‘grand strategy’ was similar and they were often understood interchangeably and perceived to be applicable only for war. However, grand strategy is mainly about winning ends by using appropriate means. John Lewis Gaddis pointed that grand strategy need not apply only to war and statecraft: it’s potentially applicable to any endeavor in which means must be deployed in the pursuit of important ends.³¹ Therefore, grand strategy is a comprehensive plan of action to use appropriate means to reach to desired goals.

Grand Strategy in the Cynosure:-

Historically, grand strategy is found only in the jargon of great powers and the art of grand strategy has historically been practiced only by the great powers of the world. Williamson Murray claimed that grand strategy is a matter of great states and great states alone. No small states, and few medium sized states, possess the possibility of crafting a grand strategy.³² Great powers are the most influential states in the international system at any given time, for instance, the Portuguese, Spanish, and Italians in the sixteenth century; the Swedes and the Danes in the seventeenth century; the British, French, and Germans in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries; and finally the Americans and the Russians in the twentieth century.³³ Great powers possess the capability to shape global order and its events in meaningful ways. During the Cold War, the United States and the Soviet Union called themselves superpowers as they had enormous destructive capacity of their nuclear weapons with the global scope of their national interests.³⁴ Rothstein defines great power as that one can fight wars against any country.³⁵ However, Great powers have been formulating and implementing grand strategy, influencing worldwide events to preserve their worldwide interests often through the direct use of military means. Great powers are said to be the front rank states in terms of military strength which is recognized as they are believed to have certain rights and duties regarding international peace and security.³⁶

With such overemphasis on great power grand strategy the questions emerge that how grand strategy came to the cynosure of all states? Can other states (middle powers and small states) have grand strategy?

It is conspicuous that devising grand strategy has descended from ‘Great Power’ to ‘Middle Power’. Few middle powers have started working about their grand strategy lately. Robert Keohane defined middle powers as the states that exist on the periphery of the global elite who frequently harbor great power ambitions and may exert significant influence within a certain area or region, but they lack the material capabilities to confront the hegemonic power or to play a central role to the shaping of the international system.³⁷ They might seek to establish itself as the leader of

²⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹ Colonel Joe Bassani, “Saving the World for Democracy: An Historical Analysis of American Grand Strategy in the 21st Century”, *op.cit.*, p.7.

³⁰ Layton, “The Idea of Grand Strategy”, *op.cit.*, p.58.

³¹ Gaddis, “What is Grand Strategy?”, *op.cit.*, p.7.

³² Williamson Murray, “Thoughts on Grand Strategy and the United States in Twenty First Century”, *Journal of Military and Strategic Studies*, Vol.13, Issue 1, Fall 2010, p.75.

³³ Martin Griffiths and Terry O’Callaghan *International Relations: The Key Concepts*, New York: Routledge, 2002, p.132.

³⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁵ Robert S. Ross, “Balance of Power Politics and the Rise of China: Accommodation and Balancing in East Asia”, in William Keller & Thomas Rawsby (eds.), *China’s Rise and Balance of Influence in Asia*, USA: University of Pittsburg Press, 2007, p.123.

³⁶ Griffiths & O’Callaghan, *International Relations: The Key Concepts*, *op.cit.*, p.133.

³⁷ Hal Brands, “Dilemmas of Brazilian Grand Strategy”, *Strategic Studies Institute Monograph*, August 2010, p.16-17, available at <http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pdf/PUB1017.pdf>, accessed on 4 April 2012.

a particular geographic region, he added.³⁸ Therefore, states like Canada,³⁹ Brazil⁴⁰ and Iran⁴¹ are considered as middle power in international system. These middle powers have started working to have grand strategies to achieve their national interests and prestige. For example, Canada, Brazil, India, and Australia all have started working on having grand strategy to preserve their respective national interests. Brazil is pursuing a multilateral grand strategy which is aimed at hastening the transition from unipolarity and western economic hegemony to a multipolar order in which international rules, norms and institutions are more favorable to Brazil's interests. President Lula D. Silva has done so by emphasizing on three diplomatic strategies namely soft balancing against United States, building coalitions to magnify Brazilian negotiating power, seeking a leader's position in a more united South America.⁴² Hugh Segal proposed Canada to develop a grand strategy to integrate military, diplomatic, and foreign aid instruments in a thrust that preserves security and opportunity at home, advances leverage with allies, and responds in an integrated way to the threats that are real from abroad.⁴³ India's grand strategy, with a reflection a pre-independence world view and elite consensus which is in turn shaped by a perspective on India's history dominated by the thinking of Jawaharlal Nehru,⁴⁴ is to emerge as one of world's great powers and to be a major and important actor in international community.⁴⁵ Australian grand strategy can be succinctly put as to defend the continent from any armed attack and maximize sovereign freedom of action as a nation-state.⁴⁶ Thus, the middle powers of the world are at descry to practice grand strategy in the 21st century.

On the one hand, the post-Cold War world politics has created impetus states to have broader role in international arena irrespective of their position in global power structure and on the other hand the purge and broadening of the idea of grand strategy have made it possible to bring them together and contemporize the concept. Thus, the concept of grand strategy has become the cynosure of savant academicians as well as policy makers of the world.

During the Cold War only the powerful states, the super powers, used to be independent in their international relations thinking and functioning in the world state. The relatively smaller states had very limited scope of international relations thinking, let alone functioning in the world stage. However, in the post-Cold War era with the rise of multilateral platforms, complex interdependence, and transnational threats have given small states new avenue of broadening their role in international arena and therefore updating their international relations thinking irrespective of their position in global distribution of power. Such changes in the world politics presents impetus and propels states to apply and avail grand strategy to update their IR thinking.

³⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁹ J.L. Granatstein, "Can Canada have a Grand Strategy?", (The paper presented at the Grand Strategy Symposium, Canadian Forces College, Toronto, 6-7 April 2011), available at <http://www.cdfai.org/PDF/Can%20Canada%20Have%20a%20Grand%20Strategy.pdf>, accessed on 21 January 2012.

⁴⁰ Brands, "Dilemmas of Brazilian Grand Strategy", *op.cit.*

⁴¹ Scott Sagan, Kenneth Waltz and Richard K. Betts, "A Nuclear Iran: Promoting Stability or Courting Disaster?", *Journal of International Affairs*, Spring/Summer 2007, Vol. 60, No. 2, p.135.

⁴² Brands, "Dilemmas of Brazilian Grand Strategy", *op.cit.*

⁴³ See Hugh Segal, "A Grand Strategy for Small Country", *Canadian Military Journal*, Autumn 2003.

⁴⁴ Timothy D. Hoyt, "India's Grand Strategy: Some Preliminary Thoughts", Changing Military Dynamics in East Asia Policy Brief 5, January 2005, *The Study of Innovation and Technology in China (SITC)*, A Project of the University of California, Institute on Global Conflict and Cooperation; See Stephen P. Cohen and Sunil Dasgupta, *Arming without Aiming: India's Military Modernisation*, Washington DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2010, p. 28; Krishnappa Venkatshamy, "The Problems of Grand Strategy", *Journal of Defense Studies*, Vol.6, Issue.3, 2012.

⁴⁵ K. Subrahmanyam, "Grand Strategy for the First Half of the 21st Century" in Krishnappa Venkatshamy & Princy George (eds.), *Grand Strategy for India: 2020 and beyond*, New Delhi: Pentagon Security International, 2012, p.13.

⁴⁶ Neil James, "Grand strategy, Strategy and Australia", *The Strategist*, available at <http://www.aspistrategist.org.au/grand-strategy-strategy-and-australia/>, accessed on 12 February 2015; Rod Lyon, and Hayley Channer, "Strategic Interests and Australian Grand Strategy", Policy Analysis, Australian Strategic Policy Institute, 7 February 2013, available at http://mercury.ethz.ch/serviceengine/Files/ISN/161927/ipublicationdocument_singledocument/ad7b073e-dc14-4031-a60b-b2ae287fae8b/en/Policy_Analysis108_Strategic_interests.pdf, accessed on 16 February 2015; Darin J. Lovett, "Space power for Australia's Security: Grand strategy or Strategy of Grandeur", A Thesis Presented for Graduate Completion, School of Advanced Air and Space Studies Air University, Maxwell Air force Base, Alabama, 2012.

The purge of the concept of grand strategy, removal of misconstrues, played a significant role as well. Although the concept of grand strategy evolved from the study of military strategy and history⁴⁷ where grand strategy used to describe the overall coordination of strategies, tactics and resources in support of military operation, now-a-days its scope has been broadened. As military historian and theorist Basil Liddell Hart included the dimension of 'peace', the concept of grand strategy was transformed from the study area of pure military studies to the study area of international studies.⁴⁸ Grand strategy is not just about war. According to Liddell Hart, "... although the concept of the grand strategy includes the eventual possibility of war, it must necessarily embrace the perspective of peace too."⁴⁹ Additionally grand strategy is not just about fighting war either. Grand strategy may be as concerned with avoiding war as with fighting it.⁵⁰ War avoidance was certainly a basic principle of Byzantium's approach to grand strategy, at least from the death of Justinian in 565 AD.⁵¹ Thus, one should not assume that grand strategy is only a matter of war; some of the greatest successes of grand strategy have been wars not fought, the most obvious of which was the Cold War.⁵²

Grand Strategy for Bangladesh: Why Should Bangladesh Have Grand Strategy?:-

There has been growing understanding that Bangladesh should update international relations thinking in the post-Cold War regional and global politics. Formulating grand strategy can play a significant role in updating international relations thinking of Bangladesh. The rationale why Bangladesh should devise grand strategy is numerous. Krishnappa Venkatshamy while interrogating the concept of grand strategy identified a number of benefits of grand strategy⁵³ which can easily be applied in the case of Bangladesh. Additionally, there are other benefits. The rationale for Bangladesh to devise grand strategy is shortly discussed below:

First, Robert J. Art noted that determining a nation's interest is the central task of grand strategy.⁵⁴ Grand strategy can aid Bangladesh to identify, clearly articulate and better serve national interests of Bangladesh. Morgenthau noted that 'national interest' is the driving force of national policy. In the case of Bangladesh national interest embraces such matters as national security, socio-cultural and economic development.⁵⁵ This can be categorized further. The Primary interest of Bangladesh includes self-preservation, maintaining territorial integrity and political independence. It is claimed that economic development and the achievement of higher level of living are also considered as primary interests of Bangladesh. In addition, trade, aid, access to communication of flows, sources of supply, and foreign market are considered as middle range interests of Bangladesh.⁵⁶ Abdul Halim writing in the 1980s added safeguarding and well as augmenting national power in relation to other states, ideological independence, and maintaining national prestige as national interest of Bangladesh in addition to previously mentioned interests of Bangladesh.⁵⁷ Emajuddin Ahamed added that preserving peace in regional and international arena is also considered to be interest of Bangladesh. Emajuddin Ahamed also noted that desired peace not for the sake of peace but also for the strategic consideration of national development and security.⁵⁸ However, in the 21st century global politics normative aspect of interest perception has become very important; that is creating and

⁴⁷ Baracuhy, "The Art of Grand Strategy", *op.cit.*, p.147.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p.149.

⁴⁹ B. H. Liddell Hart, *The Decisive Wars of History: A Study in Strategy*, quoted in Kristina Baubinaite, "The Preconditions of Grand Strategy in Lithuania", *op.cit.*, p.58.

⁵⁰ Murray, "Thoughts on Grand Strategy", *op.cit.*, p.80.

⁵¹ This is the main theme in Edward Luttwak's book on the grand strategy of the Eastern Roman Empire, quoted in Murray, "The Thoughts on Grand Strategy", *op.cit.*, p.80.

⁵² John Lewis Gaddis, *Now We Know: Rethinking Cold War History and The Cold War: A New History*, quoted in Murray, "The Thoughts on Grand Strategy", *op.cit.*, p.80.

⁵³ See Krishnappa Venkatshamy, "The Problem of Grand Strategy", *Journal of Defense Studies*, Vol. 6, Issue.3, p113-118.

⁵⁴ Robert J. Art, "Geopolitics Updated: The Strategy of Selective Engagement", *International Security*, Vol. 23, No. 3 (Winter, 1998-1999), p.83.

⁵⁵ Emajuddin Ahamed, "Bangladesh and Policy of Peace and Non-Alignment", in Emajuddin Ahamed (ed.), *Foreign Policy of Bangladesh: A Small State's Imperative*, Dhaka: UPL, 1984, p.20.

⁵⁶ "Introduction", in Emajuddin Ahamed (ed.), *Foreign Policy of Bangladesh: A Small State's Imperative*, Dhaka: UPL, 1984, p.vi.

⁵⁷ Abdul Halim, "Foreign Policy of Bangladesh: Framework of Analysis", in Emajuddin Ahamed (ed.), *Foreign Policy of Bangladesh: A Small State's Imperative*, Dhaka: UPL, 1984, p.20.

⁵⁸ Ahamed, "Bangladesh and the Policy of Peace and Non-Alignment", *op.cit.*, p.16.

maintaining better image of state is also considered as national interest. In case of Bangladesh, depicting as a responsible member of world community, portraying as strategically important state, portrayal as peace loving state, or expression of willingness to be one of world's garment factories can be considered as national interest of Bangladesh. These normative aspects of national interest have very significant impact on preserving and advancing the core and middle level interests of Bangladesh. Thus, devising grand strategy is apparent to serve not only above mentioned interests of Bangladesh but also project a better image of Bangladesh. Therefore, Bangladesh should obviously have grand strategy.

Second, grand strategy can help to prioritize aims and goals of Bangladesh. Clark Murdock and Kevin Kallmyer pointed that grand strategy is central to establish priorities among a long list of potential objectives.⁵⁹ This prioritization can be divided into two categories. On the one hand this is to prioritize problems among a list of problems and therefore take appropriate steps to solve the problems that are barriers to the betterment of Bangladesh. Christopher Hemmer additionally pointed that assessing threats is an essential part of grand strategy; Keeping the USA's grand strategy in mind he mentioned that grand strategy can help to prioritize what global regions and issues does Washington need to be deeply concerned about and what ones can be ignored safely? While there is a tendency for a great power's security perimeter to grow, grand strategy is about assessing the most important threats a country needs to put its scarce resources against.⁶⁰ On the other hand, this is to prioritize which objective to pursue among a number or list of goals to pursue. The scarcity of resources is one of the basic problems of states of the world irrespective of their power and position in the world, therefore, formulating grand strategy can help Bangladesh a lot to manage such problems.

Third, grand strategy can play an essential role in consolidating national identity of Bangladesh and can also be instrumental in building national consensus⁶¹ in Bangladesh. For instance, grand strategy can help to create Bangladesh's identity as peaceful and peace loving state, as a responsible member of world community which can aid to build national consensus about its policy and better policy formulation in Bangladesh.

Fourth, grand strategy can play role in creating domestic coherence in Bangladesh. Grand strategy can help to focus effort by coordinating government agencies which increases the chances of success of efforts. A publicly articulated grand strategy will contribute to bring coherence among various sectors of state policy. Formulating a grand strategy will contribute to various departments of the government to develop their short, medium and long-term plans in accordance with the overall grand national goal of Bangladesh. Grand strategy will assist armed forces to acquire armaments and advance technologies with a focus on a definite national goal of Bangladesh. Grand strategy can provide a basis for prioritizing national resource allocations of Bangladesh which will also improve coordination among various national agencies and provide a central direction to individual and collective actions.

Fifth, grand strategy can play role in creating national strategic leadership in Bangladesh by educating political leaders and policy makers of Bangladesh. Grand strategy may also contribute in persuading Bangladesh's national policymakers to think systematically about the long-term consequences of their actions. The diplomats of Bangladesh will get a broad framework for analyzing and expressing the foreign policy behavior of Bangladesh. Formulating a grand strategy can constructively contribute to educate national leaders and bureaucrats of Bangladesh and may even assist to create of national strategic leadership needed to preserve long-term enduring national interests of Bangladesh.

Sixth, grand strategy can play key role in creating public awareness in Bangladesh about long-term visions pursued by the states. Grand strategy can thus play role in educating the general people of Bangladesh to evaluate whether particular actions undertaken by certain government are aligned with the nation's core goal in the long term or not and respond accordingly.

Seventh, grand strategy can help Bangladesh to reduce ambiguity in explaining the world scenario both regionally and globally intelligibly. Grand strategy can facilitate policy makers to take consistent and concrete action by taking

⁵⁹Clark Murdock &Kevin Kallmyer, "Applied Grand Strategy: Making Tough Choices in an Era of Limits and Constraint", *Orbis*, Fall 2011, p.544.

⁶⁰ Christopher Hemmer, "Grand Strategy for the Next Administration", quoted in Murdock and Kallmyer, "Applied Grand Strategy: Making Tough Choices in an Era of Limits and Constraint", *op.cit.*, p.544-545.

⁶¹Venkatshamy, "The Problem of Grand Strategy", *op.cit.*, p.119-120.

into consideration the key actors, their interests, and balance of powers scenario. Grand strategy can thus help Bangladesh a lot to set appropriate direction of overall national policy and guide the nation toward the right course in times of internal and external turbulence.

Eighth, grand strategy can give better direction for Bangladesh's foreign policy. As grand strategy is essentially broader than foreign policy and provide framework and ideas for action, the political leaders of Bangladesh coming into power would get basic guideline and ideas of conducting Bangladesh's foreign policy prudently than they would do otherwise. Simple replication of Braz Baracuhy's declaration would be that the foreign policy of Bangladesh would be best conducted and assessed in the light of a grand strategy which incorporates a vision of how Bangladesh sees itself in the future. Grand strategy additionally would help Bangladesh to take into consideration the global and regional balance of power, and define its positions which serve the national interests of Bangladesh. If grand strategic goal is set to be a responsible actor of global community, or strategically important actor in South Asia, or emerging economic actor, or one of world's garment factories, successive governments should take proper actions through their foreign policies on how to materialize the grand strategic goals efficiently. Grand strategy can thus dictate successive governments with a proper direction for Bangladesh's foreign policy.

Ninth, grand strategy can help Bangladesh to coherently pursue her long-term goals and interests. Grand strategy would assist in the continuation of foreign policy to prove Bangladesh a responsible member of world community. Grand strategy would assist in the continuation of policy, for instance, how to make the best use of population, how to sustain sending workers to other countries and for that purpose how to create or develop skilled workers and build special relations with specific states or regions like Middle East, East Asia or South East Asia, how to sustain priority for garments sector development irrespective of government change. Similarly, grand strategy can help to take steps to undertake in order to develop internal capacity, build relations and make strategic partnerships, adopt with immediate and remote external environment ultimately to increase the share of strategic importance of Bangladesh in South Asia. To that end, having grand strategy is very important.

Tenth, grand strategy can help Bangladesh to play a constructive role in the making of a better South Asian future. South Asia is emerging as one of the key regions of importance in the Asian cross board. India and China are rising very rapidly, economically and therefore militarily, that has increased South Asia's importance in the world politics as well as concern of the other South Asian states. Besides, their sheer economic cooperation they have competing and overlapping interest perception in South Asia. The USA has long been interested in South Asia and it will continue to do so in the coming decades. The emerging security scenario in South Asia is likely to be a complex one mostly because of the simultaneous rise of China and India. Besides, poverty, nuclearization and terrorism, the simultaneous and rapid rise of China and India along with the increased engagement of the USA are the fundamental factors for understanding the twenty-first century South Asian future. There is a formidable possibility of competition among the power actors to strive to establish their authority in South Asia. Hence, formulating a grand strategy may be helpful for Bangladesh to adapt with the emerging complex scenario of South Asian International Relations in order to harness the grand national interest of Bangladesh within such emerging South Asian order.

To acclimate and harness these benefits from rapidly changing and uncertain future with prospective benefits, Bangladesh should devise grand strategy. A grand strategy will give Bangladesh a broader framework and environment to formulate foreign policy in a better way which will assist Bangladesh to use every scope to advance its grand national interests in South Asia and beyond. That's why Bangladesh, even if considered, as traditionally perceived, a small state, should have a grand strategy in the 21st century. The formulation of grand strategy will contribute to the updating International Relations thinking of Bangladesh.

Conclusion:-

With the systemic changes in the post-Cold War era, the scope for all states irrespective of power status has been broadened. Additionally, grand strategy formulation has emerged in the cynosure of the world due to the middle powers' practice of grand strategy beside great powers as well as due to the development of the idea in the post-Cold War period towards a more inclusive one.

As the scope for Bangladesh has been broadened, formulation of grand strategy would be a timely initiative to update IR thinking of Bangladesh. The age of connectivity also creates such a scenario where Bangladesh can exercise more power than ever before. In addition, the rapid rise of India and China deserves special attention in immediate vicinity of Bangladesh both now and in the future. Formulating grand strategy can bring big change in

Bangladesh's IR thinking and can provide Bangladesh with more space to have stronger foreign policy to reach to the desired national grand interests and goals. Although it is quite hard for a state like Bangladesh to shape the system, yet, Bangladesh can take a number of initiatives through engagement based on grand strategy to influence others' actions and to shape the regional developments that serves her interest. Grand strategy can assist Bangladesh to improve her regional strategic importance and power as well as her status in both regional and international arenas.

A grand strategy is also essential to adapt with and make the best use of the changing South Asian regional environment in order to discover and preserve Bangladeshi grand national interests in the impending decades. Formulating a grand strategy will assist to devise a central highest level planning for Bangladesh, give rationale to foreign policy of Bangladesh and a better foreign policy direction, prioritize goals of foreign policy, take cautious and consistent foreign policy, seek long term national goals, undertake proactive foreign policy and even aid to influence emerging regional future in meaningful ways.

However, it is obvious that formulating grand strategy is both complicated and costly task. Also, once it is formulated it is necessary to sustain to gain benefit politically, economically and militarily in the emerging complex international political scenario of the 21st century. Declaration of grand strategy can benefit Bangladesh numerously in South Asia as well as in the world.

With very limited means and capabilities, Bangladesh has to be careful and cautious about allocating resources and her role in international affairs regionally and globally in order to advance her national interests. Grand strategy can aid in managing limited means and capabilities. The leading universities of Bangladesh, especially those teach International Relations can start offering courses on grand strategy, arrange seminars and can start researching on grand strategy which will ultimately help in better grand strategy development in Bangladesh. Think tanks can initiate program to develop better grand strategy for Bangladesh. Bangladesh's future prospect to many extents depend on the development of grand strategic framework and vision of future set and pursued by the leaders of today.

In addition, the execution of grand strategy is crucial because grand strategy is largely irrelevant if it is not integrated into decision making process and executed in meaningful way.⁶² Through prudent execution of grand strategy Bangladesh can play a constructive role in constructing a better image, a better state, and a better South Asian future. Grand strategy by providing an organizing and coherent framework can help to elucidate ambiguities and uncertainties of emerging future, to manage risks as well as to avail the opportunities for serving the enduring national interests of Bangladesh. So, Bangladesh can obviously avail formulating grand strategy in the form of the highest level of national strategy to define national grand ambition and take cautious and consistent steps by developing, coordinating and directing all of Bangladesh's resources ultimately in order to serve better her long-term, enduring and paramount, grand national interests.

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