

SOUTH ASIAN STUDIES

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JANUARY 1996

SOUTH ASIA STUDIES

RAFIQ AHMAD

Editor

South Asian Studies seeks to provide a forum for discussion of issues and problems primarily relating to South Asia. We welcome contributions by researchers, administrators, policy makers and all other interested in promoting better understanding of South Asian Affairs.

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U.S.A. in South Asia after Cold War : A Case Study of Pakistan

Dr. Mrs. HINA QANBER

INTRODUCTION

After the break up of the Soviet Union the world has changed from bipolar to unipolar structure. America has emerged as the only super power in the world after the end of cold war.

The present article is an attempt to analyze the American policy in South Asia in the context of Pakistan after cold war.

GEOGRAPHICAL AND GEO-POLITICAL IMPORTANCE OF PAKISTAN

At the time of independence, Pakistan was fragmented into two parts, namely East and West Pakistan which made it, simultaneously, parts of South East as well as South West Asia. There was no direct land or air route between the two wings of Pakistan as the hostile India in between split apart the two parts of Pakistan.

Pakistan has gained much importance in geographical as well as geo-political conditions in the world, as Farida Aziz writes :

Pakistan's geo-strategic importance is highlighted by its strategic placement in contiguity with three powerful states, namely, Russia, India and Peoples Republic of China. ... Like Iran, Pakistan provides a back door to step in vital oil rich areas when desired. Pakistan's unexplored oil and minerals reserves in Baluchistan offer an attractive bait to Soviet Union.¹

Dr. Mrs. Hina Qanber, Department of Political Science, Islamia University, Bahawalpur Pakistan.

Elaborating the geo-strategic location of Pakistan, Herbert Feldman comments :

A glance at the map shows that the West Pakistan lies solidly along the banks of the Middle East, separated from USSR by a narrow tongue of Afghan territory and stands watching over the trade routes of the Arabian Sea. Pakistan is greatly concerned with China's active entry into the Asian Affairs.²

In the past, the global policies of United States and USSR and the kind of inter-relation and interaction that existed between them, the regional actor, namely India, has directly and profoundly affected the security of Pakistan.

After USSR break up and the Islamic Revolution of Iran, expressing his views on the prevailing geo-political situation of Pakistan, Mr. Robert Oakly (former U.S. Ambassador to Pakistan) said that :

We keep our eyes upon Soviet Central Asia and the territories that lie just south of it — Turkey, Iran, Afghanistan and Pakistan, because they could again become the arc of crises.³

Nearly the same views have been expressed by the American analyst Barbara Grosette of *New York Times* :

Central Asia is an old idea taken a new life not only in Pakistan but also in the Muslim World beyond the Middle East as far as China. ... A process, however exploratory, of rediscovering old cultural, historical, religious and commercial bonds, is under way, perhaps most of all in Pakistan — the nation in the middle.⁴

Thus, we note that every new event of the region or world has exercised its pressure on the geographical as well as geo-political importance of Pakistan.

DEMISE OF SOVIET EMPIRE — THE END OF COLD WAR

Being a gateway from South Asia and China to Middle East, European countries and, the most important, storage of hot water in the form of Arabian Sea, Pakistan got the recognition of its geo-political importance among the super powers right from its emergence.

After the second world war when Pakistan emerged as an independent state, the world was already divided into two blocks. The new era was named as cold war.

The post world war polarization between United States and Soviet Union made many nations suspicious of Soviet's communist design. Consequently the new born states moved closer to United States which emerged as the richest nation and the chiefest aid giving country through out the world.⁵

That was the situation in which the newly emerged state like Pakistan had to survive. Thus Pakistan's adherence to the American's bloc was, therefore, consequential predominantly to the post war bloc formation.

On the other hand the attitude of Soviet Union towards new born state of Pakistan was unfavourable as compared to India. To most of the Soviet scholars Pakistan was but a paradox of history.⁶ A leading Indologist A.M. Dyakov called Pakistan an 'artificial state' and commented that the sole link between the two parts of Pakistan was a common religion.⁷

It is an admitted fact that Soviet Union, however, had always been friendly to Afghanistan and since 1921 all of the Afghan governments had agreed to refrain from permitting their territory to be used for anti-Soviet purposes.

In spite of geographical contiguity, identity of religion culture and economic interests, Pak-Afghan relations have never been cordial. After independence, Pakistan's efforts to normalize the relations with Afghans were not a complete success.

The main issue between the two Muslim states was the status of Pakhtoon and Baluchi based on the assumption that they are akin to them from ethnic, linguistic, geographical, historical as well as traditional points of view.⁸

Thus, the internal development in Afghanistan along with the bickering on Pak-Afghan border in late 1970's, the Soviet Union got an opportunity to fulfill their long desire of acquiring control over the West Asian oil and gaining an access to the warm waters of Indian Ocean by overthrowing the Daud's regime and launching communism coup through the People's Democratic Party (DRA) of Afghanistan, combining Khalq and Parcham groups under President Tarakki in April 1978.⁹

Although Tarakki himself denied that DRA was communist or Marxists oriented and denied Soviet's hand in the coup, yet Western strategists regarded it as a communist coup which ultimately led to the entry of Soviet forces in Afghanistan.¹⁰

Obviously the United States was certainly upset and distressed by the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. The emergence of Khomeini's Islamic revolution and the collapse of Shah's regime in Iran, forced U.S.A. to assist the Zia's military government in Pakistan even though Pak - U.S.A. relations had never been poorer than at that particular moment.¹¹

Thus, to avoid Soviet encroachment, U.S.A. realized the necessity of reinforcing the Pakistan armed forces, as it was a united effort in the face of potential Soviet aggression against Pakistan. Moreover this was the best time for U.S.A. to equalize the revenge of Vietnam war.

The Soviet Union and Afghanistan accused the U.S.A., China, Pakistan and the neighbouring Muslim countries for providing aid to Afghan Mujahideen.¹² It warned Pakistan against dragging herself into a 'risky game' that could have fatal consequences.¹³

But the military regime of Zia, fearing a threat from the leftist government in her close neighbourhood, was anxious to prevent the Afghan leaders from consolidating their own power. Thus on the basis of Muslim brotherhood, Pakistan government did help Afghan Mujahideen by allowing 2.5 million Mujahedin refugees in her territory and providing them necessities and utilities of life.

Thus Afghan Mujahideen, with the help of U.S.A. aid, resisted the Soviet forces (in the form of DRA government). Further, due to the Islamic revivalism in Iran and Pakistan (by Khomeini's Islamic Revolution and Zia's government, respectively) along with the continuous insurgence and rebellion of Afghan Mujahideen, very soon Soviet leaders perceived a potential threat to her national and security interest; and, as we see, after eleven years Soviet leaders were forced to withdraw their troops from Afghanistan, and the threat which was given to Pakistan, Afghan war rather proved a 'risky game' for USSR having the fatal consequences in the form of demise of Soviet Empire.

Apart from the international humiliation and embarrassment, Afghan war collapsed the economy of USSR :

It is difficult to calculate how much Soviet Union spent on Afghanistan before or after 1989, as the cost was divided between many different budgets. But it is clear that it presented a significant drain on the Kremlin's finances at a time when Soviet Union was facing general economic collapse.¹⁴

Among the other causes, Perestroika, introduced by Gorbachev, was also one of the factors which crushed the communists very badly. The main objective introducing Perestroika was :

Soviet Union lacking the strong economical base could not sustain the financial stress and choose to lay fresh national priorities in 1980's.¹⁵

This situation created a civil war between reformists and communists. Consequently, Gorbachev resigned and handed over the power to Vice-President Gubandian. However due to lack of proper planning among the rebels, the *coup d'etat* ended in failure :

Perhaps the main factor behind the defeat of *coup d'etat* and disintegration of former Soviet Union was ignoring the power of public opinion and the influence wielded by the western mass media.¹⁶

Another factor was U.S.A's. new World Order :

As a matter of fact, the design of Bush's American style new world order curtailed the collapse of USSR's atomic power.¹⁷

Gorbachev resigned from General Secretaryship of KPCC on December 12, 1991, and, consequently, the Communist Party was disintegrated and 74 years of communists rule ended in demising the Soviet Empire into 16 independent states including Central Asian Republics (CARs).

The CARs are Muslim states having deep cultural and religious relations with Pakistan. Recently, these states have joined Pakistan in the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), and, therefore, can play vital role in the world politics, especially, in the context of Pakistan as they can use Pakistani seaport as a gateway for trade with many other countries including oil rich states of Middle East and the warm Western Indian Ocean :

One must not hesitate to accept the fact that former Soviet rule despite its all evils, left the Central Asians with, if not very advanced but a decent technical manpower base which had proved its brilliance augmenting Soviet power during colonial days. Their achievements in the field of science and technology, agriculture, industry, education and socio-cultural aspects are magnificent, to say the least.¹⁸

Further Central Asia has great deal of natural resources such as minerals and a varied physiography allocating enough areas for fresh water lakes,

forests, pastures, arable land. These resources combined with human resources available in the region can make this part of the world a group with immense economic and political power.

RUSSIAN'S ATTITUDE AFTER COLD WAR

Hence USSR, which was a super power and had been a symbol of danger for Pakistan since its birth, got scattered into pieces and, in this way, cold war between the two super powers ended. Thus, there is no danger as an environmental pressure on the politics of Pakistan.

After cold war Russia changed its attitude and made a statement that it sought to follow a balanced approach towards South Asia and attaches 'independent significance' to its relations with Pakistan. It must be added here that the first ever contact made by Russia with Pakistan after the cold war was in regard to release of its 30 POWs being held in Afghanistan after the withdrawal of Russian forces. In this regard the former Prime Minister Alexander Rustkoi visited Pakistan and asked the government to facilitate the release of the POWs. At the same time he offered to sell Russian warplanes and military equipment to Pakistan. His visit followed a string of high level visits between the two states. Moreover in July 1994 the two countries signed accords relating to a broad range of bilateral issues including collaboration in the field of defence, outer space technology and peaceful uses of nuclear energy, manifesting a radical shift from the Soviet foreign policy.¹⁹

However, being a Muslim country, Pakistan is deeply concerned with the bloody crises in Chechnya. Since the start of Chechen imbroglio, Pakistan had adopted the position that Chechnya was a part of Russia. Pakistan asked Russian government to halt military operations in its Chechnya Republic and begin talks with separatist leaders.

Despite Pakistan's policy and steps taken towards that end, Russia appears to have hardened its stance *vis-a-vis* Pakistan which is amply manifested by the statement of Pakistani Foreign Minister that Russia was trying to pass the responsibility of the bloody crises in Chechnya, on countries like Pakistan;²⁰ though he categorically reiterated that Pakistan considered the strife of Chechnya as an internal problem of the Russian Federation, notwithstanding the sympathy, the people of Pakistan hold for their Caucasian brothers in faith.²¹

Such a statement from Islamabad, as comments Siddiqi, particularly following the new 'honey moon' of relations with Russia, manifests a probable

new low in the ties with the cold war adversely. It looks particularly upsetting when viewed in context of the refusal by the Russian Prime Minister Chernomyrdin in India of supplying arms to Pakistan which Pakistan badly need.²²

Of course, India is another important factor in spoiling relations with Russia, as she felt uncomfortable with Pak-Russian burgeoning relationship, fearing loss of its strategic value with Moscow after the end of cold war, due to Russia's shift in its stance over Kashmir Issue. Russia expressed concern over human rights violation and called up on all sides to work for a solution through peaceful moves. Further Indian Prime Minister Narsima Rao, during his visit to Moscow, also failed to obtain any assurance from Moscow that arms would not be sold to Pakistan.

Moreover India has long been trying to persuade Russians as well as the Central Asian Republics that Pakistan was exporting Islamic Fundamentalists there. India also exploited the involvement of Afghans in Tajikistan and Uzbekistan to their benefits, as, in Tajikistan, Afghans activists were reported to be assisting the Tajik opposition. In Chechnya, apart from Afghans who are giving tough resistance to Russians, are people from Jordan, Saudi Arabia and Lebanon.

Another contentious issue which affects Pak-Russian relations, after cold war, was the inclusion of CARs into the ECO in 1993 as Pakistan seeks strong and active ECO to establish immense economic and political power in the region (contrary to Russia's imperialist designs and economic stranglehold). The Russian Prime Minister, while opposing the Muslim alliance, said that "ECO threatens the CIS and asked the CAR members of the ECO to choose either of the two-alliances."

All these developments have led to the souring of ties with Russia and are perhaps responsible for delay in Pakistani Prime Minister Ms. Benazir Bhutto's visit to the Russian Federation.

However, keeping in view the successful visit of Ms. Benazir Bhutto, to U.S.A. and convincing Clinton Administration against the Pressler Amendment passed against Pakistan, Pakistanis seem to be very optimistic in establishing a firm basis of warm relations with Russia in future; and they hope that the visit of Pakistani Prime Minister to Russia will clear up the misunderstandings and confusion with regards to its role in supporting Islamic activism, ECO, and most important of all, to neutralize the Indian propaganda. They also hope that Pakistan is well placed to make breakthrough with regard to the sale of military hardware during the Prime Minister's visit to Moscow.

PAK - U.S. TIES AFTER COLD WAR

Pakistan for a long time had been the front-line state for the battle against communism and the communist forces, especially when the Soviets entered into Afghanistan.

During Afghan War the entire American-led West with all the resources at its disposal including battalions of intelligence operators, thousands of military trainers and as many gurilla-war experts alongwith, literally shiploads of sophisticated arms were allowed to descend on Pakistan's territory. Scores of military training camps were allowed to be set up and perhaps a force of quarter of million militants was equipped, trained and sent in Afghanistan to ambush, sabotage and eventually force the invading Russians to retreat. Thus, Pakistan essentially made the West's dream of defeating communism true.

After the Afghan War, Russia is no more a super power and its empire has been broken into pieces :

The Russians have lost their image and they are no longer considered a power that could be a threat to the Americans at least for the time being. With the dawning of new reality, the world has come to know the super powers phraseology has become meaningless. Ultimately, there is only one guarantor of power left in the world and that is the America. This is the reason why Americans were able to break the back of Iraq as there was no one to come to rescue of that small power.²⁵

The cold war has ended and the West, unfortunately, has also packed up and left in a hurry. Meanwhile Pakistan has been left with whole army of highly trained organizations like *Harkatul-Ansar*, *Jehad Markaz*, *Dawatul Arshad*, *Al-Akwan Islamic Academy*.

Further at the end of Soviet occupation, two million Afghan refugees were left behind in Pakistan along with a series of well organized and well financed organizations (as mentioned above) which are called religious by name but they are not imparting religious training. Rather they promoted sectarianism and terrorism in Pakistan. American's most wanted terrorist, Ramzi Ahmad Youaf was arrested from Islamabad. Egypt's sought after radical, Shawl-el-Islamboli (whose brother assassinated President Sadat) may be in hiding in Peshawar. Extremists militants have recently gunned down two Americans.

This situation forced Michael Richardson of *International Herald Tribune* to ask the question in an interview with Ms. Benazir Bhutto, during her visit to

Singapore that "Islam seems to be turning increasingly violent in Pakistan. Why?"²⁴

Pakistan has almost one million Afghans still staying as refugees who naturally have links with the activists involved in the internecine conflict in their country. They easily cross the 'Porous' Pak - Afghan border over which Pakistan government has little control.

Pakistan on more than one occasions, had made clear its anti extremist and anti-terrorist policy. On appeals of Western States, it deported about 3000 of their activist nationals from Peshawar. Many of them fled to Afghanistan and the remaining to their native countries like Algeria, Egypt, Tunis, Sudan including some other Arab countries. Also the Pakistani Government's operation against a religious force, the *Tehrik Shariat-i-Mohammadi* which had practically controlled parts of Malakand Division in Pakistan, proves its anti-extremist and anti-terrorist credentials. Further the extradition of Rmazi Ahmad Yousaf (who was prime suspect of WTC bombing) to the U.S.A. is another worthwhile development of proving its anti-extremist policy.

However, no Western power has even cared to turn back and look at the havoc that their own creation have been playing with the citizens of Pakistan that helped them in their greatest hour of need.

After cold war, Pakistan is not getting the type of political and moral support it really ought to be. Rather, Senator Larry Pressler was successful in getting the highly discriminatory. Pressler Amendment passed that singled out Pakistan as the country to be penalized through military and economic sanctions. It cut off all the military and economic aid to Pakistan and pressurizing Pakistan to roll back her nuclear programme and to sign NPT. Pakistani feels that this is a discriminatory law against Pakistan, because it does not apply to any country of the world except Pakistan.

Pakistan had already paid about 1.2 billion U.S. dollars for F-16 and other military equipment; but is getting neither delivery nor the money back.

It is very difficult to understand why America is playing discriminatory role with Pakistan, while Pakistan proved a tested ally in defeating Communism during Afghan War. American's such attitude, rather fuel fanaticism in Pakistan.

On the other hand a horrifying scenario for Russia which finds it difficult to erase the memory of eleven year long Afghan War when activist from different Muslim countries, but trained in Pakistan, along with Afghans, gave

a bloody nose to Soviets, ultimately leading to their withdrawal. Further with the inclusion of CARs into the ECO, Kremlin fears that with the establishment of a ring of Muslim States near its southern border and with the spread of Muslim militancy into its heartland, Russia would ultimately split into Muslim and Christian Russia.

Thus, after cold war, Pakistan got stuck like a sandwich between the two rivals, America and Russia.

A quick glance on U.S.-Pakistan relations shows that the United States and Pakistan have been close friends and allies over the last 40 years. They have stood shoulder by shoulder not only against Communist expansion in South Asia, but also on other fronts and issues as well. Pakistan has always demonstrated its commitments to close Pak-U.S. ties.²⁵

Before analyzing Pak-U.S. ties after cold war, let us review their relations during cold war :

- (i) For over ten years, Pakistan acted to counter alien aggression in Afghanistan, which resulted in the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan in 1989 — an event that marked the beginning of the end of cold war.
- (ii) In establishing Sino-U.S. diplomatic relations, Pakistan acted as a proponent and a facilitator.
- (iii) Pakistan stood by United States and Islamic world during Iraqi invasion of Kuwait.
- (iv) Pakistani soldiers have been the bedrock of International peace keeping force in Cambodia and Somalia. Moreover Pakistani soldiers are being trained in Slovakia to enforce peace in Bosnia.

Thus, Pak-U.S. relationship has withstood the tests of, both, time and crises, over and over again during the last 40 years; and that is why the present first American lady Hillary Clinton had to say that "Pakistan is a tested ally whose friendship we highly value." Acting Secretary of State, Strobe Talbott, commenting on Pak-U.S. relations, has recently said that "the tragedy (killing of two Americans from U.S.A. High Commission in Karachi) occurred in a country that is a good friend of Pakistan." Joseph Nye, the Assistant Secretary of Defence stated in a Senate hearing that "Pakistan has long been a friend in an area where we have sometime not had an abundance of friends."²⁶

In the past, though the relationship between the two countries has been strong, but it did have many fluctuations. There were ups and downs with

respect to Vietnam and Grenada, where Pakistan opposed U.S. policy. Also Pakistan objected to U.S. military intervention in Panama. Pakistan was gravely hurt when the United States embargoed arms to both, India and Pakistan, after Indo-Pakistan war in 1965; whereas the Indians, being supported by Soviet Union, were hardly affected. Similarly, in 1971, arms embargo in South Asia exclusively affected Pakistan as the total cut off in economic and military assistance was imposed on Pakistan.

Since October 1990, the United States has imposed sanctions on Pakistan under the terms of highly unfair and discriminatory Pressler Amendment, conditioning aid to Pakistan and Pakistan alone on the nuclear question in South Asian region. Not only the U.S. has refused on a legally binding contract to deliver F-16s that have been paid for already, but also imposed economic sanctions by denying assistance for female literacy programmes, nutritional assistance and family planning.

Some observers criticize that the U.S. has never been able to gauge properly the intensity of rivalry between India and Pakistan. Here one must realize, as comments Pervaiz Cheema, that U.S. views their relations from a global perspective and does not accord due considerations to regional complexities.²⁷

However, for local states American's regional policy is far more important than its global pursuits. But as remarked by Michael Lind :

With the illusion of being the 'last super power' long shattered, Americans have to think about Americans interest. ... And for the next century the United States must concentrate on Asia.²⁸

Secretary of State Warren Christopher, told the National Press Club before he was to leave on a week-long visit to Asia, that :

"I see extraordinary potential for prosperity, stability and democracy in Asia."²⁹

How important South Asia is for the Americans can be assessed from the statement of Robin Raphel, Assistant Secretary of State for South Asian Affairs, during her address before the Senate Foreign Relations sub-committee on Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs. She forcefully stressed that :

"With the end of cold war, region such as South Asia have gained increased importance because of American's global concerns." Further she stressed that, "the Americans vital interests in South Asia include halting proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery, promoting democratization, human rights, economic reforms,

encouraging trade and investment, development, population planning and resisting ecological deterioration." Later, she also included the combating terrorism and narcotic trafficking.³⁰

The United States, indeed, is committed to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons at, both, global and regional level, and this, of course, does apply to South Asia as well. Thus the current modification of Pak-U.S. policy is, in fact, the product of its global concerns.

In spite of repeated assurance from Pakistan Government that Pakistan's nuclear programme is peaceful, and its expression of willingness to sign NPT provided its regional adversary India, also agrees to do the same, the United States wants to refrain from undertaking any step which takes Pakistan closer to nuclear weapon state. Thus, Pakistan being a recipient of U.S. economic and military assistance, certain operative constraints prevent the Americans to continue the flow of aid to Pakistan. Pressler Amendment, in fact, is one of them which requires U.S. Presidential certification before any aid is released to Pakistan.

Pressler is a household name in Pakistan. His Amendment has strained Pak-U.S. relations over the last five years. His visit to Pakistan in January 1992 was very controversial, because of the statement he made in New Delhi before coming to Pakistan. He alleged Pakistan's involvement in Kashmir, raising fears about the dangers of growing fundamentalism in Pakistan and warning about the potential threat of emergence of the so called Islamic Bloc covering CARs.

Although Senator Pressler tried to soften his remarks during his visit to Pakistan, but the adverse impact of his pronounced statements could not be erased as the President and Prime Minister of Pakistan cancelled their scheduled meetings with him.³¹

A lot has happened since then. The U.S.A. has reiterated that Kashmir is a disputed territory and there seemed to be no danger of fundamentalism in Pakistan or the emergence of anti-U.S. Islamic Bloc in Central Asia.

The U.S. administration believes that Pressler Amendment has outlived its utility and, instead of persuading or pressurizing Pakistan to abandon the nuclear option, it has, rather, driven the country into nuclear corner. The denial of military cooperation with Pakistan has created a serious power imbalance in the region.

In Pakistan, the impending repeal of the Pressler Amendment caused euphoria and raised expectations of imminent reinstatement of U.S. economic

and military aid. Mr. Brain Wood, the Under-Secretary for International Security, remarked that :

Sanctions against Pakistan are not likely to be withdrawn and may continue even after Pressler Amendment has been repealed. The US policy on non-proliferation has not changed. The modified legislation is not going to be Pakistan-friendly and may not be entirely to our liking. The sooner we realize it the better it will be for our public and policy makers.³²

Answering the question "Why has the U.S. Administration decided to seek the repeal of Pressler Amendment?" Munir A Khan, former Chairman of Atomic Energy Commission, said :

"Simply because it no longer serves American perceived interests and has failed to prevent proliferation in South Asia. By cutting off conventional military supplies to Pakistan, the U.S. has, instead of weakening, strengthened Pakistan's resolve to retain the nuclear option. By applying this Amendment only to Pakistan, the U.S. has, rather, encouraged India to proceed with its nuclear weapons and nuclear delivery system programme thereby unwittingly contributing to nuclear arms race in the sub-continent. Further, since the U.S. is concentrating on Pakistan's nuclear programme only, India does not feel bound to respond positively or enter into a dialogue on the nuclear issue."³³

President Bush had also recognized this anomaly and sought to repeal this discriminatory Amendment in April 1991, but could not succeed, as he did not have enough votes in the Congress.

President Clinton, with a majority in both Houses of Congress, has resolved to do what President Bush could not accomplish.

America has reached the conclusion that there is no direct nuclear threat from Russia or imminent danger of nuclear war. However, its security can be threatened by mini-nuclear states which could possibly escalate and draw in the United States.

Hence the turning point came when in a Joint Press Conference with Pakistani Prime Minister Ms. Benazir Bhutto, at the time of her visit to the United States in April 1995, President Clinton publically expressed that withholding Pakistan's equipment as well as the money paid for it, was unfair to Pakistan. President Clinton has tried to make good his promise to Pakistani leader that he would request the Congress for permission to either return Pakistan its money or its equipment.³⁴

Senator Hank Brown moved President Clinton's initiative in the form of an amendment termed as 'Brown Amendment'. He disclosed that "the Brown Amendment authorizing President Clinton to release about \$370 million embargoed arms to Pakistan, will be introduced in Foreign Operations Bill to be taken up by the Senate in September after August recess."³⁵

Thus, Clinton's Administration is trying 'awfully hard' in finding ways of helping Pakistan. Two vital arms of Clinton Administration, the Defence Department and the State Department, have strongly urged the U.S. Senate to support President Clinton's initiative for release of Pakistan's withheld military equipment.

On August 3, 1995 Defence Secretary, Perry approached most of U.S. Senators through a letter recommending that the President Clinton's initiative be supported when it comes up in the shape of amendment moved by the Senator Hank Brown. The next day, the Acting Secretary of State, Peter Tarnoff, wrote a similar letter to the Senators. A key element in the communication was the fact that both these senior cabinet members emphasised the unjust and unfair manner in which Pakistan has been treated by the United States since the imposition of Pressler Amendment since 1990.³⁶

The United States of America, now seems, is prepared to help Pakistan financially and otherwise. A number of large U.S. multinationals are being persuaded to invest about five billion U.S. dollars into Pakistan's energy sector.

Thus, new dimensions and new foundations of Pak-U.S. relations are being determined; and, therefore, Brown's Amendment supported by Clinton's Administration can, indeed, be remarked as the 'mile stone' of the new era of Pak-U.S. relations.

However one must realize that International politics is not very different from ordinary real life where individuals and entities join forces only when there exists some commonality in goals and objectives.

Now the U.S. has realized that non-proliferation South Asia is a regional issue which involves the security of the countries concerned. Moreover this particular issue also has linkages with on going political disputes in the region.

In the prevailing situation, Pakistan needs to be urged to explain its position in clear terms. It has a strong case in asking for a non-discriminatory free and non-country specific legislation. Thus Pakistan can put its case logically and rationally that it cannot be expected to give up its nuclear option unilaterally and without meeting its legitimate security needs. If the U.S.

wishes to achieve the goal of non-proliferation in South Asia, it must first level the nuclear playing field; and that is possible only when the Pressler Amendment is finished.

The cold war may have ended, but the cold war between India and Pakistan has not ended. Rather, after cold war, the tension and the danger in the region has been increased by indigenous uprising in Occupied Kashmir.

Kashmir remains the core issue that divides India and Pakistan. The Kashmir problem underlines the security dilemma for Pakistan, as two, out of three, times the two countries gone to war over Kashmir. Thus peace in South Asia is threatened by the prevailing situation in Kashmir.

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Impact of NGO Activities on Socio-Economic Development of Rural Women : Evidence from RDRS Programmes in a Selected Area of Bangladesh

FARID AHMED, M.H. RAHMAN and S. BEGUM

INTRODUCTION

Situation of rural women in Bangladesh is such that it presents a dismal picture. The rate of literacy is very low. Only 16 per cent of women are literate compared to 31 per cent of men.¹ The ratio of female to male enrollment is approximately 1:3 in primary, 1:4 in secondary and 1:26 in higher education and the female dropout rate at every level is much higher than that of the male students.² Although the vast majority of the population are underprivileged, poor and illiterate women bear the brunt of poverty and ignorance that are more vast and complex.³

The rate of participation of women in education and employment is very different.⁴ While men tend to monopolize executive jobs and are decision makers women mostly do secretarial work or are engaged in nursing, school teaching or other subordinate or less well paid jobs.⁵

Rural women in Bangladesh have long remained an unrecognized contributor to agricultural and economic productivity. However, in recent times there has occurred a significant change in women's socio-economic status and a larger number of women are now taking up wage employment and other income-earning activities outside their homes.⁶ This change is the outcome of government and NGO activities. Instead of the community level programmes, Rangpur Dinajpur Rural Service (RDRS), an NGO followed a new approach to development known as 'target-group approach'. Although the participatory approach followed by RDRS has not launched separate

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programme for women, women's development is a central part of all its activities. With the implementation of its activities RDRS has created an impression that it has done a lot of work to improve the living condition of all members in general and that of the vulnerable rural women in particular.

Kurigram being one of the poorest of the poor areas in the region, it was covered by RDRS in North Bangladesh. The focus of the paper is to look into the impact of RDRS in improving the economic conditions in the locality particularly that of the women in some RDRS project areas in Sadar Thana of Kurigram district near Kurigram town.

The main objectives of this paper are noted below :

- (i) To determine the increase in income, employment and the poverty alleviation potentials of RDRS development activities.
- (ii) To examine the role of women in decision making process on important household affairs.

METHODOLOGY

To attain the objectives of the present study, a preliminary survey was conducted in 10 villages under the Project areas of RDRS in Sadar Thana of Kurigram district to understand the broad socio-economic characteristics of the area. Households' participation with RDRS in 1986 was the basis of selection. Among the list of prescribed works homestead agricultural production appeared to be an important aspect reflecting the significant role of women. The other reasons behind the selection of the area were easy communication facilities, a relatively homogeneous physiographic condition and acquaintance of the researchers to the Project area.

In order to meet the objectives, a survey schedule was carefully prepared to record the required data on various aspects of the study. A draft schedule was tested with some women group members in each village. The schedule was finalized after necessary correction, modification and adjustments being made.

For maintaining the consistency and comparing the changes before and after coming to RDRS, group members of five villages under four unions of Kurigram Thana who came under RDRS in the same year (1986) were taken as the sampling units. Sample frame contained 110 women (sampling unit) from where 50 per cent (55 women) were selected randomly as sample. Four samples were dropped due to erroneous and inconsistent answers reported by the respondents and the final sample size was 55 families.

Data were collected through personal interviews by trained investigators. The data were collected during the months of June and July in 1994. At the time of interview, the questions were asked systematically and if needed necessary clarifications were given. Care was taken to ensure the correctness of the data supplied. If there were items which were overlooked or found contradictory, these were corrected through a revisit.

INCOME GENERATION

Income sources were divided into six components like crops, vegetables, fruits and trees, dairy and poultry and their products, agricultural earnings from wage labour and wage earnings from non-agricultural labour. For measuring changes, absolute changes in parameters during 1986-1994 were converted to money value at the terminal year (1994) prices. The contribution of each of the sources is discussed in brief below.

Income Generation from Sale of Crops

The respondent households were able to increase average per family domestic production, consumption and income from sale of crops (Table 1). It is observed from the Table that after their involvement with RDRS (July 1986 to July 1994) the average consumption of the households increased by 33 per cent while wheat consumption increased by 111 per cent followed by rice (31 per cent) and pulses (18 per cent).

Average income from sale of all the crops increased (Table 1). The highest increase was observed in case of rice (131 per cent) followed by pulses (59 per cent), mustard (58 per cent) and wheat (51 per cent). Overall a 46 per cent increase of income from sale of all crops was observed.

TABLE 1
Change in Consumption and Income from Sale of Crops

(In Taka)

Crops	Consumption			Sale		
	After	Before	Change Percentage	After	Before	Change Percentage
Rice	2214.39	1694.90	31	489.80	331.96	131
Pulses	145.49	133.53	18	93.34	58.43	59
Mustard	—	—	—	63.75	39.70	58
Wheat	134.70	63.93	111	68.70	45.49	51
Tobacco	—	—	—	58.83	73.53	-30
Jute	—	—	—	393.34	393.53	0
Total	3494.58	1883.35	33	1066.76	733.66	46

Source : Field Survey, 1994

Changes in Income from Sale of Wage Labour in Agricultural Activities

It is observed from the Table 2 that overall average per family earnings of the households from sale of labour increased by 3 per cent only after their involvement with RDRS. The earnings of husbands were the highest (Taka 1894.12/household) before the households came under RDRS which decreased to Tk. 1762.75 (7 per cent reduction). Other male members whose income from wage labour amounted to Tk. 35.29 only before joining RDRS was estimated to Tk. 135.29. Wives and other female members did not earn from agricultural wage labour earlier. After participating in RDRS activities they were found to earn Tk. 23.53 and Tk. 58.83 respectively.

TABLE 2
Change in Income from Wage Labour in Agricultural Activities

(In Taka)

Labour given by	Income Per Year		
	After	Before	Change Percentage
Husbands	1762.75	1894.12	-7
Other Male Members	135.29	35.29	284
Wives	23.53	—	—
Other Female Members	58.83	—	—
Total	1980.40	1929.41	3

Average per family change in income earning from non-agricultural sources by categories of labour is presented in Table 3 which shows that husbands of each household earned an average of Tk. 4567.5 before their participation which increased to Tk. 10130.39 at the time of the study (122 per cent increase). The present income of other male members was Tk. 1452.95 as compared to the previous income of Tk. 264.70 (449 per cent increase). Similarly, the previous income of wives was Tk. 123.73 which increased to Tk. 1729.60 (1298 per cent increase). Overall a 168 per cent increase in annual average income per family from non-agricultural activities was earned by all categories of households after they joined the RDRS project activities.

TABLE 3
Change in Income from Non-Agricultural Activities

(In Taka)

Labour given by	Average Income (Taka)		
	After	Before	Change Percentage
Husbands	10130.39	4567.25	122
Other Male Members	1452.95	264.70	449
Wives	1729.60	123.73	1298
Total	13312.93	4955.68	168

Table 4 depicts the overall situation of increase in total income from the own land of the concerned families increased by 54 per cent, and that from wage labour by 3 per cent. Income from hard labour (excavation, working as maid-servant) decreased by 26 per cent and that of light jobs increased by 48 per cent. In general average per family total income increased by a commendable 43 per cent.

TABLE 4
Average Per Family Total Income

(In Taka)

Source	After	Before	Change Percentage
Agricultural Sector (Own Land)	4987.49	3233.90	54
Agricultural Sector (Wage Labour)	1980.40	1929.41	3
Non - Agricultural Sector			
- Hard Work	161.52	218.00	- 26
- Light Service	13312.93	8955.68	48
Total	20442.34	14336.99	43

CHANGES IN STATUS OF WOMEN

Women's share in family income, their working experience out side home and their participation in awareness training programme offered by RDRS have had an impact on the socio-economic status of women. Change in status of women has been discussed under three major heads.

Change in Participation Rate in Self Development Activities

Women's participation in different social activities increased considerably after their coming under RDRS group (Table 5). Women did not participate in village arbitration, shopping and visiting Union Council to attend federation meetings before being involved with RDRS. After coming under RDRS women paid frequent visits to Kurigram town and these visits increased by 282 per cent. Women did not attend 'Somitte' or group to save money on their own initiative before coming under RDRS. After their involvement with RDRS it became mandatory for them to attend group or 'Somitte' meetings and the participation increased by 7150 per cent. Overall women's participation increased by 703 per cent in social and other self development activities.

TABLE 5

Rate of Participation in Self Development Activities

Activities	Participation (Days / Month)		
	After	Before	Change Percentage
Visit Kurigram Town	2.25	0.59	282
Attend Somitte Group	1.45	0.02	7150
Attend Village Arbitration	0.34	—	—
Shopping	0.16	—	—
Visit Union Council	0.70	—	—
All	4.9	0.61	703

Change in Attitudes and Value Judgement

Table 6 shows that on an average 0.29 women per family maintained 'purdah' during the study period which was maintained by 0.60 women before. Therefore, number of women maintaining 'purdah' reduced by 52 per cent. At present one woman from each household, believed in women job which was believed by 0.17 women earlier; that means, number of women believing to get jobs increased by 488 per cent. Similarly women's attendance to meetings increased by 490 per cent, women's doing family planning increased by 238 per cent, women who knew about family planning increased by 4900 per cent and their awareness on immunizing children increased by 165 per cent.

TABLE 6

Average Change in Attitude and Values of Women

Attitude and values considered	Responses (No. of Respondents)		
	Yes		
	After	Before	Change Percentage
Do you maintain 'purdah'?	0.29	0.60	52
Do you believe in women's job?	1	0.17	488
Do you attend meetings regularly?	1	0.02	4900
Do you adopt family planning?	0.98	0.29	238
Do you know about family planning?	1	0.02	4900
Do you think it is essential to immunize your children?	0.90	0.34	165

Change in Decision Making Status

Involvement of men, women and both men and women in decision making for nine different activities is shown in Table 7. Men's dominating status in decision making reduced drastically after the households joined RDRS groups. Men did not have any role in decision making with respect to gardening, caring children and family planning. The activities on which men made decision earlier were transferred to women for decision making except in business and service where men were seen practising more right in decision making reduced by 47 per cent. On the contrary, women also practised increased right of decision making in all activities. The extent to which women took decisions with respect to marriage of daughters and prospective sons increased significantly after they were members of RDRS groups. Overall decisions made alone by women increased by 49 per cent. Participation of both men and women in decision making also increased significantly. The highest increase of participation of both men and women was seen in case of crop production (325 per cent) followed by marketing agricultural produce 300 per cent), using family planning (135 per cent), rearing livestock and poultry (12 per cent) and rearing children (8 per cent). Overall increase of participation in decision making by both men and women was reported to be 100 per cent

TABLE 7

Average Change in Decision Making Status of Women

Decisions	Women Alone (No.)			Men Alone (No.)			Both (No.)		
	After	Before	Change Per Centage	After	Before	Change Per Centage	After	Before	Change Per Centage
Crop Production	0.14	0.08	75	0.17	0.50	-66	0.34	0.08	325
Homestead Gardening	1	1	0	-	-	-	-	-	-
Marketing Agril. Produce	0.24	0.06	300	0.63	0.92	32	0.08	0.02	300
Building and Repairing House	0.12	0.09	34	0.19	0.59	-68	0.68	0.29	135
Rearing Livestock and Poultry	0.80	0.69	16	-	0.12	-	0.19	0.17	12
Caring Children	0.59	0.50	18	-	-	-	0.42	0.39	08
Marriage of Sons and Daughters	0.06	-	-	0.06	0.22	-73	0.06	0.06	0
Family Planning	0.35	0.02	1650	-	-	-	0.45	0.12	275
Business and Others	0.37	0.02	1750	0.37	0.32	16	0.04	-	-
All	3.67	2.46	49	1.42	2.67	47	2.26	1.15	100

IMPLICATIONS

The foregoing discussion suggests that the participation of households particularly of women in the RDRS programme activities resulted in higher income and employment for the participant households. The households were able to increase domestic production, consumption and income from sale of crops. Further, the average income from sale of all the crops increased. The distinguishing aspect of change in income was from non-agricultural activities increased by 168 per cent. The incomes of households and other male members increased. But incomes of the housewives increased more spectacularly. Further, the employment of women in hard work decreased and that in light work increased. This is a tremendous development. One of the signals of economic development is that the dependence of the economy on the traditional agriculture sector decreases and the economy gets diversified. As a consequence, relative role of the agriculture sector diminishes but tertiary sectors are developed. This has happened in the case of the families under report. The overall level of employment in term of man-years per family increased: at the same time participation of men and women in light jobs and

service sector increased substantially.⁷ This is a remarkable improvement in the living standard of the participant households.

Particularly women substantially benefitted from their participation in RDRS activities. The socio-economic status of the women was enhanced and the gender problem improved substantially. Men's dominating status in decision-making reduced drastically after the households joined RDRS activities. Women in particular exercised increased right of decision-making in all activities. Overall decision-making made alone by women increased by 49 per cent including aspects such as marriages of sons and daughters and use of family planning. This is a spectacular impact.

It seems that women's share in increased household employment and income paved the way for their respectable position in decision-making. Moreover, it has increased joint decision-making by husband and wife which seems desirable for the well-being of a family.

Thus the findings clearly demonstrate that there was a tendency among women participating the RDRS groups to break away from the confusion of *Pay or Purdah* and participate actively in the household decision-making process.

The findings from this study comply with the results of contemporary researches.^{8,9,10,11,12}

The empirical evidence suggests in general that the rural women traditionally known as the 'birds in a cage'¹³ benefitted significantly by participating in the RDRS projects. They got higher income. Their level of employment also increased. The higher income and employment have empowered the rural women in making decisions on crucial household matters which helped reduce the gender problem to a great extent. Thus the overall impact of RDRS activities on the poor households in the study area was quite commendable.

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Hexing Indian Technology : A Space and Missile Analysis

ZULFIQAR ALI CHUGHTAI

INTRODUCTION

India has developed a highly sophisticated indigenous arms industry and has moved considerably ahead in missile cum space technology, having developed short range, medium range, intermediate range and intercontinental ballistic missiles. Her defence industrial base is comprising 39¹ factories and 8 major public sector units.² All these are working under Defence and Research Development Organization (DRDO).³ India has a huge array of laboratories and factories and scientists with enough cerebral capacity to draw up blue prints for atomic missile and space self-sufficiency and yet must buy weapons abroad.

The purpose of this paper is to evaluate those technologies of her space and missile programmes in which major breakthrough have been achieved by India.

TECHNOLOGY

In her space and missile programme, India has incorporated the following technicalities :

1. *Cryogenic Rocket Technology* : To have maximum payload achieving highest energy levels.
2. *Computer Technology* : To facilitate updating of missile fit/analysis on board.
3. *Solid-Liquid Fuel Ram-Rocket Propulsion Techniques* : For long range.

4. *Space Technology* : To launch satellite and emp satellite imagery for recce, survey, targetting command con and satellite attack.
5. *High Performance Gyroscopes Accelerometers* : For guidance/con accuracies.
6. *Re-entry Shields (Carbon-Carbon-Composites)* : To have requisite structural structure with minimum weight to withstand very high temperatures.
7. *Strap-on Computer for Guidance* : To have minimum CEP.
8. *Multiple Warhead Capability with Desired Warhead to Weight Ratio* : To have minimum destruction potential by nuclear as well as conventional warheads having flexibility in emp options.

CRYOGENIC ROCKET TECHNOLOGY

Cryo-technology is highly sophisticated and has taken almost 15 years for development even in advanced nations such as USA, Russia, Japan and France. Russia has offered 3 cryogenic engines to India. The contract is based on sale and transfer of technology. Agreement was held in between Russia Space Agency, "Glavkosmos and Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO)." This deal was held in 1992 with 250-million U.S. Dollars.⁴ This deal also involves transfer of Russian technology involved in the roughly 500 million U.S. Dollars. Indian Space Scientists are confident of building their own cryogenic engines and expected : "to launch the country's first Geostationary Launch Vehicle (GSLV) by 1997."⁵ According to latest report ISRP hopes to have its own cryogenic by the end of 1998.⁶ The study project of cryogenic propellants was started in 1986 with the part of a Rs. 16 crore.⁷ After the completion of report in December 1983, a contract was signed between "Russia and India with Rs.235 crore to provide two flight stages as well as the technology for making the engine and stage.... GSLV project with Rs. 756 crore was approved in November 1990."⁸ Soon after the contract the American Worries imposed sanctioned against ISRO and Glavkosmos for two years which were relaxed in May 1991 due to renegotiated contract between these two organizations; which leaves out the technology aspect. Under this plan Russia will deliver the first dummy engine in January, 1996. Moreover "India is to receive two dummies and seven engines" the first fully operational cryogenic engine will be delivered to India in December 1996. The delivery of the other six engines will be speed out evenly over the next three years. Under the revised terms of Rs. 235 crore contract, Russia agreed to supply three times more engines, including two dummies and two boosters at no additional

charge, to compensate for its refusal to provide the technology. ... In a further concession to India, Glavkosmos agreed to sell an additional three cryogenic engines at 1990-91 prices.*⁹

According to ex-Director of Indian Space and Research Organization Professor U. R. Rao, "Rocket engines were being indigenously developed at the Liquid Propulsion Systems Centre (LPSC) at Valiyamla.*¹⁰

The basic design of India's indigenous cryo engine and the Cryo Upper Stage (CUS) for the Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle (GSLV) has been completed at LPSC. Special fabrication and test facilities are being set up for the testing of the CUS on production and the industries have been identified to fabricate the cryogenic engine. An integrated liquid hydrogen plant had already been commissioned at the LPSC for the production of the propellant : even as ISRO hopes to have its own cryogenic stage by the end of 1998. While the cryo control electronic integration had been completed. The special equipment *required for the fabrication of cryo stage was under procurement.*¹¹

Moreover India is also interested in *using the Russia proton booster (and her technologies) to place two or three telecommunication satellites in geostationary orbit between 1995 and 1997, at a combined cost of over 158 million.*¹²

There is no formal agreement between these two countries of India and Russia not to be export the engine to other countries or to modernize them without Moscow's consent and to use them only for peaceful purpose.

COMPUTER TECHNOLOGY

India's network of computer is consisting of IBM, the Param, Flosolver, Anupam and Pace Plus. She needs computer technology for her defence missile programme as they are vital in fields such as metrology, aerospace, where million's of calculations are required rapidly. India purchased Super Computer XMP-14 from United States. Later U.S. refused India for second one. India with the help of Centre for the Development of Advanced Computing (CDAC) in Pune, made his own version known as PARAM.

Indian scientists decided to organize a platoon of computers called parallel processors, linked by a sophisticated software to act as one giant computer working with small teams and on a shoestring budget they have come up with some remarkably versatile substitutes :

1. NAL (National Aeronautical Laboratory) at Bangalore built Flosolver a parallel processor that is almost half as powerful as the Gray XMP. These are being used in the fields of cryptography for defence manufacturers.
2. PARAM of Centre for the Development of Advanced Computing (CDAC) was a complex 64-node Linkage that gives it the ability to match supercomputer in speed.
3. Meanwhile, the blindingly fast chipps 16, a parallel processor developed by Bangalore — based Centre for Development Of Telematics (CDOT) is already being used by Tata Institute of Fundamental Research.
4. Indian Defence Research Development Organization (IDRDO), which needs super computers in its programmes ranging from missile to combat aircraft is satisfied with a computer developed by all Hyderabad based Advance Numerical Research and Analysis Group (ANURAG).¹³

In February 1994 India achieved a milestone in super computers through "indigenous parallel processing technology with the use of a 32-node microprocessor christened Anupam. ... Anupam is capable of giving 40 million instructions per second. The fastest microprocessor of the US giant ... eight processors each with its own memory of 32.26 mb size were connected by a high speed bus. The result was a computing machine that gave a computing power of 100 to 200 million floating point operations per second. The system was expanded to 16 nodes and doubled to the 32 nodes system which gave high speed."¹⁴ India had achieved high performance for computational fluid dynamics code relating to calculations of airflow around an aircraft which was more than six times faster than an IBM Computer.

After the liberalization of American export controls on Computers in February 25, 1994, the commerce department of India had issued a notification for purchase of computers "with a rating of upto 500 MTOPS."¹⁵ Beyond this India is interested in 1000 MTOPS level from America.

Recently Aeronautical Development Agency (ADA) with Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO) in association with the Bangalore — based India Institute of Science (IISC) has developed the computer called, 'Pace Plus'¹⁶ for satellite launch vehicles, combat aircraft, missile and under water vessels. According to Prof. Deshpande of the (IISC) "This Pace Plus with eight nodes takes two hours to perform a calculation

which five years back took 40 hours. By March, when Pace Plus is fitted with 32 nodes, the same computation will take only 35 minutes.*¹⁷

SOLID-LIQUID FUEL RAM-ROCKET PROPULSION TECHNIQUES

India has some of the world's best in terms propellant technology and flight dynamic. Both solid-liquid fuel ram rocket propulsion techniques are being used in her missile and satellite programmes. The 'Solid Propellant Technologies are being manufactured by (NOCIL) a private sector. However, France and Japan are willing to sell technology and parts.*¹⁸ The 'France have collaborated with the Indian Space and Research Organization (ISRO) in the development of the Vikas engine, based on the Viking design that constituted the crucial liquid propulsion stage in the vehicle.*¹⁹ Upto July 21, 1989 Liquid Hydrogen was not produced in the country. 'The engine was fired using Liquid Oxygen (LOX) and Gaseous Hydrogen (GH₂) the water cooled version. Now Liquid Hydrogen became available with the help of U.S. company, Process System International, was commissioned around the end of (1992) at ISROs Liquid Propulsion Test facilities at Mahendragiri (near Nagercoil) in Tamil Nadu.*²⁰ Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV) has mastered solid booster and Liquid fuel engine technology. Its first stage was the third largest solid propellant rocket in the world. The indigenous development of non cryogenic liquid propellant (UDMH) is one such instance. Its second stage is fitted with Vikas liquid fuel engine. The Agni EO3 is the first step towards the development of the true inter-continental Ballistic Missiles. The propulsion systems of Agni is based on two stages with two auxiliary propulsion systems. 'The first stage of Agni is based on solid-fuel booster motor of SLV-3, whereas second stage twin engine is based on liquid motor.*²¹

India has successfully flight-tested a state of the art propulsion system for third generation 'fire and forget' anti tank guided Nag missiles. This light weight propulsion system has separated booster and sustained motors and use low smoke, high energy nitramine as propellant.*²² In this connection India has used high strength aluminium alloy called HE15 for fabricating rocket motor parts, provided motors thermal protection cover made of a composite glass phonetic ablative materials.

Pirthvi is single stage twin liquid fuel motor with uninhibited Dimethyle Hydrogen with a Nitrous Oxides is used as fuel in Pirthvi, where as Akash missile is two-stage which can be launched from a mobile tracked vehicle, has two-engines. The first stage booster motor is solid fuel and an air breathing

(ram rocket) engine is the second stage a Conventional warhead could be fitted onto it. The rocket up to three stages, is considered as a small rocket and solid propulsion technology is useful, but for space programmes, Liquid propulsion technology could be adopted.

Cryo Upper Stage

India is busy in the construction of indigenous Cryo Upper Stage (CUS) with the same specification and interface of the one India proposed to acquire from Russia. *A 12.5 tones of Liquid Oxygen (LOX) and (LH₂) liquid hydrogen as propellants ... the thrust chamber would have a multi element coaxial injector and a nozzle with a expansion ratio of 200 partly regeneratively cooled and partly dump cooled.*²³ Special fabrication and test facilities are being set up at Liquid Propulsion Systems Centre (LPSC) for the testing of the CUS on production and the industries have been identified to fabricate the cryogenic engine. *ISRO hopes to have its own cryogenic stages by the end of 1998. While the cryo control electronic integration had been completed, integration of hardware and software and cryo-mixer ratio control electronic was under programme. However, the special equipment required for the fabrication of cryo stage was under procurement.*²⁴

SPACE TECHNOLOGY

India is building two satellite systems (IRS) and (INSAT) indigenously. The Department Of Space (DOS) and the Government of India has given the go-a-head and financial sanction for INSAT satellite upto INST-2E. IRS-IA first Indian remote sensing satellite was put in space in March 1988. India is one of the few countries in the world that has developed, launched and operated its own remote sensing satellites under Indian Institute of Remote Sensing (IIRS) in the Doon valley. Regard IRS-IA, IRS-IB and IRS-IC are already being launched. Where as INSAT-2A and INSAT-2B are the communications satellite.

INSAT-2C satellite has been launched by an Ariane rocket in 1995 where as *INSAT-2D satellite scheduled for launch in 1996-97.*²⁵ After the successful flight of PSLV in to Low Earth Orbit (LEO), *the government has cleared the proposal made by ISRO for three PSLV launchers to lift Indian Remote Sensing (IRS) satellite on every year beginning 1986 costing Rs. 600 million each*²⁶ IRS-P2 is being used for military purpose. India's space technology could be discussed as under :

1. PSLV (Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle) Programme.

2. GSLV (Geostationary Launch Vehicle) Programme.

PSLV Programme

It was a research project of Indian Space and Research Organization (ISRO), under the Vikram Sarabhai Centre (VSC) in Trivandrum and at the Sriharikota in Andhra Pradesh (Launching Pad). It is 14 story tall and 275 tones in weight. It has a functional name : Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle or (PSLV). *Its mission is to launch a remote sensing satellite of IRS class weighing around 900 Kg. into a circular orbit around the earth poles at the height of 800 Km. ... its third generation space launcher, (ASLV) could put a payload of 150 Kg. into a Low Earth Orbit (LEO) of 300 Km., only a sixth of PSLV capability.*²⁷ PSLV has given India Intercontinental Ballistic Missile (ICBM) capability with ability to launch 5 tones warhead, whether chemical, biological or nuclear. India is mastering terminal guidance systems and recently he converted PSLV into missile (IRM). All this development is without cryogenic engine. Now India is increasing 5 times its capability. The successful flight of PSLV-3 in October 1994 has converted into intercontinental range missile. In addition to commercial satellites, the PSLV has the potential to launch military reconnaissance or communication satellites which will require a greater frequency of launchers.

GSLV Programme

According to 1995-96 programme India is ready for fifth generation Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle or (GSLV). According to Indian Scientists *PSLV will be used for launching remote sensing satellites, the GSLV will be used to launch INSAT class satellite into an orbit of 36,000 Km. in space.*²⁸ This programme has a capability to launch INSAT-2 class of satellites weighing 2000 Kg. into a geostationary transfer orbit as compared to PSLV with the capability of launching 1000 Kg. into a 1000 Km polar orbit. India's GSLV design can meet : *2.5 tones payload requirement in the Geostationary Transfer Orbit (GTO). consistent with range safety, mission constraints, use of proven (PSLV) modules to the maximum for cost effectiveness.*²⁹ GSLV is a three stage vehicle with the higher population efficiency of the cryo stage in terms of the specific impulse makes it an ideal choice for the upper stage of GSLV. It may be noted that : *specific impulse achievable with cryo-fluids is of the order of 450 seconds compared to 300 seconds of earth storable liquids giving a significant payload increase. For every one second increase in the specific impulse, the pay load gain is of the order of 10 Kg.*³⁰ The core of GSLV: *being a 125 tones solid booster in PSLV with four liquid strap-ones of Vikas engine, each with a propellant

loading of 40 tones. The second stage of GSLV is the Vikas liquid propulsion systems in PSLV and the last upper stage, a 12 tones restartable cryogenic engine which uses liquid oxygen and liquid hydrogen. The most interesting aspect of GSLV is its modularity, which without straps-ons has the same capability on PSLV, with two straps-ons : can launch over 1600 Kg. into a polar orbit and with all the four straps-ons, can launch 2.5 tones in geostationary transfer orbit.*³¹

ELECTRONIC WEAPONS SYSTEMS

HIGH PERFORMANCE GYROSCOPES ACCELEROMETERS

In the field of electronic; in weapon systems, India is working on :

1. Electro-Mechanical Components.
2. Electro-Chemical Components.
3. Electro-Optical Components.

In these fields of electronic there are five big organizations *DRDO., BDL., HAI., ISRO., ECIL.*³² are working.

Electro-Mechanical Components

DRDO and BDL have developed a large number of free gyroscopes, rate gyroscopes, rate integrating gyroscopes, accelerometers, transducers, pneumatic and hydraulic components upto a level of precision and accuracy. Moreover computer guidance system on missile which is fed data while in flight by specialized data-gathering devices such as accelerometers and gyroscopes has been successfully developed. With her circular error probability of about 100 meters; now India is ready to sell *her own built MIG-29 operations and maintenance simulator.*³³

Electro-Chemical Components

Electro Chemical Industries Limited (ECIL), has been making nickel cadmium batteries. Indian Space and Research Organization (ISRO) has been developing batteries for some of its launchers. DRDO has developed and flight tested thermal batteries and primable silver zinc and fluosilicic lead acid batteries. Progress has been made in *Salt Water activated batteries, CECRI, Karaikudi too has some expertise.*³⁴ The Bharat Dynamics Limited (BDL) with its facilities for making missiles batteries may be the best choice for the technology holding base. India is developing 'flash' memory chips which can retain information even when power is off and will replace computer disk drives.*³⁵

The Semiconductor Complex Limited (SCL) in Chandigarh with Bharat Electronic Limited (BEL) a premier micro-electronic venture of the Government of India at Mohali, "are trying to manufacture" micromaster monolithic microwave integrated circuit design and processing technology, gallium arsenide and indium phosphide technologies.³⁶

"SCL is specialist in computer - aided designs and were working in the field of process engineering and fabricated Very Large Scale Integrated Circuits (VLSIC) under DRDO."³⁷

Electro-Optical Components

BEL has a production unit near Pune for night vision devices. The bulk of the other components such as low light television cameras, infrared detectors, laser optics, laser material, charge coupled devices, thermal imaging and pyro electric, continue to be imported.

RE-ENTRY SHIELDS (CARBON-CARBON COMPOSITES)

In this field India acquired the following technology :

1. Super Alloys.
2. Super Conductor.
3. Special Alloy for High Temperature Strengths for Space.
4. All Composite or Technology of Advanced carbon Composit.
5. Rare Earth Metals.
6. Stealth Technology.

In the field of Carbon-Carbon Composites : Mishra Dhatu Nigam Ltd. (MDNL), Aeronautical Development Agency (ADA), Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) at Kanpur, Defense Metallurgical Laboratory (DMRL) at Hyderabad are working day and night. Mishra Dhatu Nigam Ltd. (MDNL) has manufactured a Super alloys, titanium and special steel required for defence hardware, space and other engineering communication equipments. Besides these super alloys India has been successful in developing a special alloy of "niobium, hafnium,"³⁸ for the country's space programme. With this India has become the second country in the world after the United States to produce the special alloy which combines high temperature strength with good ductility. According to Dr. Sinha a Project Director at Nuclear Fuel Complex (NFC), "materials like indium, bismuth, cadmium, selenium, gold and tantalum having a very high purity (up 099.9999 per cent) required by electronic and

other industries in the country were already being produced in the NFC's special materials plant using sophisticated techniques like zone-refining, electron beam, melting and electro refining.³⁹

At the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), "India has achieved a breakthrough in the field of High Temperature Super Conductors (HTSC)"⁴⁰ with the help of national heavy-ion accelerator in Caen, France.

India which is endowed with the World's third largest deposits of rare earth metals, has embarked on an ambitious programme and have been successful in fabricating tiny, powerful rare earth magnets of miniaturized electronic good, defence, aerospace and medical applications. These tiny magnets are made of an alloy of iron, boron and the rare earth material neodymium in Defence Metallurgical Laboratory (DMRL) Hyderabad under a project sponsored by the Technology Information and Forecasting Council (TIFC) of the Department of Science and Technology (DST). The process involves "preparing the alloy in a special melting furnace under vacuum to prevent contamination by atmospheric oxygen and subsequently reducing cast iron ingots to micron sized particles. Magnets made by this technology deliver the maximum flux and retain their permanent magnetism at sufficiently higher operating temperatures."⁴¹

One of the proud achievements in the field of alloy is using "Carbon Composites for parts of fuselage currently made of Aluminum-Lithium alloy"⁴² and aerospace technology by fabricating and integrating in "All Composite Wing"⁴³ for the country's indigenous fighter. "All Composite Wing" is that it would result in reducing the weight of the air craft upto 60 per cent. It is made of a combination of plastic materials reinforced by carbon fibers. This new technology was also employed for fabricating the LCA's tail fin. India has developed "Stealth Technology"⁴⁴ which gives its war planes stealth-like characteristics, such projects has been in existence since 1991. The project involves developing a special plant which can reduce the reflectivity of combat aircraft to reduce chances of detection by enemy radars. The most significant achievement of Indian scientist is "qualification of the indigenously developed silica phenolic material used in the nozzle of the liquid engine. The material insulates the nozzle against flames that emerge from the rocket at temperature of 1300°C."⁴⁵

CONCLUSION

Through one of the world's poorest nation, India is engaged in a military build up that is sending shock-waves not only to its South Asian neighbours

but beyond the region. This is a sinful spending for a country whose people are so poor though about 40 per cent of its population lives below the poverty line, yet its armed forces are smaller than only those of the USA and China.

According to Dr. Pervaiz Iqbal Cheema "Indian motivation for its own missile (and space) programme" to be grouped into two categories. The first category involves national security and military-strategic considerations. ... The second category views the missile programme in terms of New Delhi's push for economic, scientific and technical self-reliance, a broad national strategy that seeks to prevent excessive foreign influence over its political, economic and social well being.⁴⁶ The US has tacitly recognised India as missile power. The Monetary Institute of Proliferation, California, in its study entitled, *India : Emerging Missile Power* says, "the central question facing the international community is not whether India will have significant missile capabilities, but rather how best to deal politically with India as missile power and how to ensure that India does not become a missile exporter."⁴⁷

Hexing of Indian Technology is now at the twilight of her self-sufficiency. Now India is in a position to build anything they want.

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S. No.	Name of City	Number of Factories	S. No.	Name of City	Number of Factories
1.	Dehradun	2	14	Jabal Pul	1
2.	Kanpur	5	15	Hazarat Pur	1
3.	Khamaria	1	16	Ambajhari	1
4.	Bhandara	1	17	Cossipore	1
5.	Chandigarh	1	18	Chanda	1
6.	Aruvankodu	1	19	Shahjahan Pur	1
7.	Ishapore	2	20	Medak	2
8.	Tiruchirapalli	2	21	Murad nagar	1
9.	Bhusawal	1	22	Avadi	3
10.	Kirkee	2	23	Varangaon	1
11.	Ambarnath	2	24	Dum Dum	1
12.	Dehu Road	1	25	Katni	1
13.	Itarsi	1		Total	37

Indian Total Number of Factories are

39

2. The details of major Public Sector Units are :
 - (i) Bharat Dynamic Limited (BDL).
 - (ii) Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL).
 - (iii) Bharat Earth Movers Limited (BEML).
 - (iv) Mazagon Dock Limited (MDL).
 - (v) Garden Reach Ship Builders Engineer Limited (GRSBE).
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The Muslims of India : Post-Election Scene

Dr. MOZAMMEL HAQUE

The Indian General Elections for the 11th Parliament has produced a hung parliament and a new government under the premiership of H.D. Deve Gowda had been formed. The main purpose of this paper is to analyse the implications and impact of the latest general elections on the future of Muslims as well as the role of the Muslim community in these elections and in the formation of the government.

By their sized and magnitude, India's elections, involving some 600 million voters, with 16,000 candidates battling for 545 seats in the Lok Sabha or Lower House of the Indian Parliament, were the world's largest exercise in democracy. Voting was staggered over six days from April 27 through to May 7. A total of 600 million registered voters across the country went to polls to elect 545 new MPs to Parliament.

MUSLIM VOTE BANK

With the announcement of the general elections and with the predictions of the opinion polls of the communal and fascist forces gaining ground, the Muslims all of a sudden became the focal point of adulatory gestures from all and sundry. At the national level, even the rightist and Hindu fundamentalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) appeared to have realised that it cannot make any significant poll impact without wooing Muslims. If anyone did not realise the significance of the community's decisive role as an arbiter, it was the Muslims themselves. They blissfully ignored the strength of unity much to the glee of their foes.

Muslims constitute about 12 per cent of the country's 950-million-strong population and their votes are crucial in deciding the outcome of some 200

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Lok Sabha seats in the 545-Member House. Muslims numbering more than 150 million in India and forming a solid bloc in many constituencies, are very strong in certain pockets, hold the key swing votes in many constituencies and could turn the tide for or against a particular party.

Political Parties

In its hankering after its traditional vote-bank, the Congress this time also took a lead. Prime Minister, P.V. Narasimha Rao, made frantic efforts to consolidate the Muslim vote bank. Rao himself held separate parleys with groups of Muslim leaders right from the outset of the poll season. In Delhi, he met prominent Muslim leaders and explained the party's viewpoint on the Ayodhya issue. The Congress also talked with different tongues on the Ayodhya issue, which still a very emotional issue for the Muslims. While the Union Home Minister, Shankar Rao Chavan averred that the party need not apologize for the Babri Masjid demolition a leader like Sharad Pawar, former Chief Minister for Maharashtra, has gone ahead and apologized. The Congress manifesto did not throw much light on the party's stand on Ayodhya. In Maharashtra the Muslims might vote *en masse* for the Congress or Third Front candidates, to keep the alliance out of power.

The Shiv Sena-Bharatiya Janata Party alliance took a back seat, as its past actions had created several doubts in the minds of Muslims, the scrapping of the Srikrishna Commission probing the riots in Bombay, being a case in point. Still, the BJP, which has an anti-Muslim reputation, worked hard to overcome that. The NF-LF made a strong pitch for votes among Muslims. The Third Front, on its part, was projecting Mulayam Singh Yadav, the former Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh, as the saviour of the Muslims.

Muslim Leaders

On the other hand, Muslim leaders at last seemed to have realised their crucial electoral power, gearing up to halt the BJP juggernaut. They started urging their community to elect candidates with secular credentials.

The All-India Minorities Front appealed to minorities and Dalits backward sections to vote for the Congress in those states where the Third Front is not strong to defeat the communal parties. It decided to support the Janata Dal and Left allies in Bihar, West Bengal and Kerala. Other prominent Muslim organisations, including the IUML, the second largest partner in the UDF, also supported the Congress-led front. Another Muslim organization, the Majlis Ulema in Bihar, publicly extended its support to the Congress Party

in the elections. It decided that "in the present scenario the Congress is the only party which could save the country from divisive and communal forces."

Thus, it appears that Muslim leaders and commoners lined up grudgingly behind India's ruling Congress Party saying it was a tactical move to keep a rightwing Hindu challenger at bay and emphasized that they would back Congress wherever a 'Third Front' was not a major force.

But there were also others among Muslim leaders who held different opinions and urged Muslim voters to vote for other parties and they advanced their own logic and reasons. The Ulema Council which met in Bombay, exhorted Muslims to support the Third Front candidates and exercise discretion in constituencies where a candidate from the Front was not contesting. Its directives were not normally followed by the educated Muslims in the urban areas of the state. But in rural areas, the Council's directives were the final word for the Muslim voters.

End Result

The end result of this contradictory appeals by the Muslim leaders was total anarchy and confusion prevailed in the rank and file of the Muslim voters. Voters in the Muslim dominated belt even at the last moment did not make their minds on their choices. A team of Muslim leaders who toured the country to assess the voters' mood had found the community divided over who to support to defeat the BJP and Shiv Sena.

Actual Voting

Muslim voters in the 78-odd constituencies where the communities has its sizeable presence seem to have by and large voted against the Congress in the recent Lok Sabha elections.

A computer analysis of UNI/C-voter shows that the voting pattern of the minorities have adversely affected the Congress Party's performance in Kerala, West Bengal and Tamil Nadu. Interestingly, in the process of defeating the BJP candidates, the Muslims voted for Congress in 12 of the 50 Muslim-dominated constituencies of Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Karnataka, Maharashtra and Uttar Pradesh. On the other hand, out of the 28 parliamentary constituencies where the minority voters have a dominating presence in the electorate of West Bangal, Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Lakhshadweep, the Congress could manage to win only five seats.

The variety of candidates which the Muslim voters supported in BJP strongholds can be understood by the number of candidates who were in

neck-and-neck fight with the BJP candidates in the 50 constituencies studied. The Samajwadi Party (SP) of Mulayam Singh Yadav received the maximum support of the minority voters in Uttar Pradesh. The party was in straight fight with the BJP in as many as 21 parliamentary constituencies where the Muslim voters are deciding factor. The SP won eight seats, but lost 13 to the BJP due to acute communal polarization among voters.

A total of nine parties were in main contest with the BJP. The voting pattern shows that the minorities have voted the best possible candidate who could defeat the BJP, irrespective of whichever party he belonged to. But wherever there was a strong alternative candidate to the Congress they simply voted the Congress out of the contest. The Congress had to face hefty negative swings in those states, where there was some alternative present.

India's Muslims, 110 million of its 930 million people, had long supported Congress in general elections, attracted to its secular stance and its promises to protect their religion. That changed significantly after the destruction of a Mosque that had become a national political focus and the springboard to the rise of the BJP, many of whose followers insisted it was built on the birthplace of Rama. Analysts say the Muslims took the first opportunity to retaliate, dealing Congress a bruising blow at local elections across India last year by voting against it. "Many Muslims even voted for the Hindu nationalists," said social scientist Asghar Ali Engineer. They helped defeat Congress for the first time in Maharashtra, India's most industrialized state, which has Bombay as its capital.

Another trend of this election is the rise of Hindu fundamentalist in Indian body-politic. The rise of the Hindu Fundamentalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) signals the discomfort of India's majority Hindus with the legacy of Muslim rulers who ruled India for several hundred years before two centuries of British rule. The rise of the National Front-Left Front (NF-LF) alliance as a decisive force showed the political weight of low caste Hindus, many of whom switched from Congress.

BHARATIYA JANATA PARTY (BJP) GOVERNMENT

The electorate has passed judgement and the verdict is clear. No party in India today can be truly called a national party. The BJP emerged with its best ever performance in parliamentary elections securing 160 seats against 120 in the 1991 polls. It just could not win enough seats to form the government with its allies, leave alone going it alone.

Later, the BJP, which emerged by far as the largest single party, and the National Front-Left Front combination, which professed to demonstrate that it enjoyed the confidence of the majority despite being a minority by itself, staked their claims to take the reins of power.

India's first Hindu Fundamentalist government under the premiership of Atal Behari Vajpayee, 70, was sworn in as India's 10th Prime Minister on 16th May but was asked by the President Sharma to prove his majority in the Lok Sabha by 31st May 1996. Vajpayee later had to quit as he could not prove his majority.

During the short-lived government, the BJP has to bent down itself under the pressure of secularism. To their surprise, the mandate was fractured. The masses forced the *Sangh Pariver* to change their tone and language. The short-lived BJP government was everything minus *Hindutva*. This was the greatest climbdown in the history of the *Sangh Pariver*, a total surrender to the ethics and values of secularism and a total and complete approval of pluralism. The show of solidarity by the secular forces is highly commendable as it forced the *Sangh Pariver* to vacate the seat of power.

Later, President Sharma asked H. D. Deve Gowda, the leader of the United Front coalition to form the next federal government. The United Front is a loose conglomeration of 14 small and regional parties and is led by Deve Gowda. Its main component, the Janata Dal, has only 44 deputies in the Parliament. The Front mainly depends on the Congress support for survival. Gowda, former Chief Minister of the southern state of Karanataka, has taken over as India's 11th Prime Minister on 1st June 1996.

NEW GOVERNMENT OF DEVE GOWDA

India's new United Front government promised to give 'maximum autonomy' to Jammu and Kashmir and assured 150 million Muslims that their religious rights will be fully protected. Releasing the 'minimum programme' of the coalition government, Prime Minister H. D. Deve Gowda said that Article 370 of the Indian Constitution, which provides special status to the Jammu and Kashmir state, will be protected. The problem of the Jammu and Kashmir state will be resolved through giving the people of the state 'maximum degree of autonomy.' The Government of Pakistan and the Kashmiri Muslims do not accept this approach because their demand is not autonomy but right of Kashmiri people to join India or Pakistan the through plebiscite as laid down in the Resolutions of the United Nations.

Referring to demand of some political parties to abolish Muslim Personal Law, the Front Programme said "the personal codes of different religious communities will not be altered unless and until a consensus emerges in the religious community for bringing about a change." The United Front Government said that attempts by sectarian or communal forces to erode the multi-ethnic, multi-religious and multi-linguistic character of our society will be strongly resisted.

It promised Muslims that the 15-point programme for the minorities will be enlarged to ensure its implementation. "Special emphasis will be placed on finding solutions to the problems of the minorities in relation to education and employment opportunities."

The contentious Babri Masjid issue will be referred by the Indian Parliament to the Supreme Court under special provisions of the Constitution, the Common Minimum Programme (CMP) of the ruling United Front declared. The programme also said that stringent steps would be taken to implement the Protection of Places of Worship Act.

Following are the highlights of Common Minimum Programme (CMP) related to Muslim Minority :

1. The Babri Masjid issue to be referred to Supreme Court.
2. Strict implementation of the Protection of Places of Worship Act.
3. Maximum degree of autonomy for Jammu and Kashmir.
4. Back-log of all court cases to be cleared within three years.
5. Principles of democracy, secularism, federalism and social justice to be strengthened.
6. Foreigners issue in Assam to be resolved on the basis of Assam Accord.
7. Elections to Jammu and Kashmir Assembly soon.

CONCLUSION

To sum up, India's just-concluded Parliamentary elections delivered a message of significant and far-reaching importance to the Muslim Minority of that country, which it could ignore only to its peril and ruination. First, the threat of a rightist, revivalist Hindu party, openly advocating the domination of Hinduism and espousing its own brand of 'cultural nationalism', became a reality. Previously, the Muslims, who had grown accustomed to the belief that

such a version of Hindu militant nationalism would never gain dominance in the nation's public life, as they relied of too much on the letter and spirit of India's Constitution and depended heavily on the public pronouncements and assurances of India's political leaders, were suddenly faced with a stark reality. Although short-lived, the threat was there and they are bound to take a serious note of this and evolve a plan to deal, even co-exist with these elements, who are biding their time and may again become ascendant. *Hindutva*, thus, was not a distant threat, it was a grave reality. The forces, which were political pariahs so far, had gained a new respectability.

Another feature of this election was that the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) during its 13-day hegemony as the Party in governance, could not win a single member of Parliament of any other party to support it. Thus, at least, India's politicians, may be temporarily, displayed their loyalty to certain principles in the political life, which, after all, is a healthy trend. Not a single Member Parliament changed his loyalty and crossed over to the BJP.

Thirdly, the issue of corruption in the public life became all-too important and the common people at large registered their indignation at the rising corruption. For an ordinary Indian, corruption became an issue of vital national concern and they sent a clear message to their politicians that they could not more get away with it. Thus a Muslim group or the community as a whole has the tremendous opportunity to propagate the message of honesty, fairness and morality in the public life and win adherents to the ideology of corruption-free and value-oriented political life. Being the 'best nation evolved for mankind,' they owe to the Indian people at large to discharge this duty for which Allah has created them.

Fourthly, the days of the dominance of one party at the centre were finally over and an era of coalition governments at the centre had begun. The Muslim community is, therefore, called upon to strengthen its alliance with all depressed and down-trodden sections of the society in order to block the advocate of the Hindu Fundamentalists.

Fifthly, though the Indian electorate voted the Hindu Fundamentalist BJP the largest single majority party in Lok Sabha, the solidarity of the secular forces dealt a death-blow to the survival of a short-lived Hindu Fundamentalist Bharatiya Janata Party.

Sixthly, the claim of the importance of 'Muslim Vote-Bank' in the electoral system and in the formation of Indian Government was proved to be wrong. The Muslim community of India has to come out of their divisive and

fragmented cell and has to forge unity to live a better and decent life. As per the last statistics, Muslims, who constitute over 12 per cent of India's population, should have 81 Member Parliaments, but there are only 25. Thus, the community is very much under-represented and thus issues pertaining to them are unlikely to get attention. Seats should be reserved for Muslims, as is done for the Scheduled Castes, from where only members of the community can contest.

The Minimum Programme declared by the United Front government under the Prime Ministership of Deve Gowda within a very short period, through vague and sketchy, is commendable. But the main problem of this government is its coalition nature and the experience of coalition government in India is not very rosy. The question at this moment is : "how long will this government last?" is disturbing not only the Indian people but also the rest of the world. It is too early to comment on the future of this coalition government under the leadership of Gowda. But this Government gave way and the Foreign Minister, I. K. Isujrad took over as the Prime Minister. This government depends on the solid support of the Congress Party.

Fostering Trade Through SAARC

ABDUL RAOOF

and

ABDUL RAUF BUTT

Abstract

This study has explored problems and prospects relating to South Asian Preferential Trade Agreement, (SAPTA). Our analysis shows that Country-of-Origin paradigms through border disputes and economic structures and policies will tend to undermine the success of SAPTA. Economic leadership of U.S.A. in North American Free Trade Agreement and Germany in European Community may be comparable to potential regional leadership of India among South Asian countries. The success of SAPTA largely depends upon the resolution of Kashmir dispute between the main players, India and Pakistan.

INTRODUCTION TO SAARC AND SAPTA

South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation, (SAARC) was formed between India, Pakistan, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Maldives, Nepal, and Sri Lanka to foster cultural and economic cooperation among member countries. The member countries signed South Asian Preferential Trade Agreement, (SAPTA), at SAARC Summit in April 1993.

On one hand, there has been a serious need for increasing the regional economic cooperation to the benefit of member countries on the lines of other regional economic integration models. On the other hand, Country-of-Origin paradigms, economic structures and policies and disputes among important member countries may limit the scope of SAARC trade agreement. The goal of this study is to explore problems and prospects associated with SAPTA.

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SAARC AND OTHER REGIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION MODELS

Unlike the North American Free Trade Agreement, (NAFTA) members, the U.S.A., Canada and Mexico; and the countries of the European Community, EC, SAARC member countries lack strong democratic traditions in their political systems. Because of the political instabilities, the respective governments policies may risk the economic cooperation between SAARC member countries any time.

Some of NAFTA and EC countries have the world's highest educational and income levels, whereas the majority of SAARC member countries have the lowest. Consequently, the growth potential of many consumer product markets are very small in such SAARC countries. U.S.A. and Canada and major players in NAFTA, Germany, France and U.K. play major roles in EC. Similarly, India and Pakistan are main regional countries in the SAARC.

The economic leadership roles of U.S.A. in NAFTA and Germany in the EC may be comparable with that of India in SAARC. U.S.A., Canada and Mexico lack historical hostilities, whereas the countries of the European Community (Greer, 1992) and of the SAARC suffer from bitter past and present rivalries. The European Community has established institutions like the Council of Ministers, the European Parliament and the European Commission to obtain close economic integration. However, so far, NAFTA and SAARC Preferential Trade Agreement aim only at better economic cooperation.

The countries of NAFTA and the EC contribute to the major share of the world trade. Whereas South Asia currently accounts for only 0.8 per cent of the world exports and 1.3 per cent of world imports (Waslekar, 1994). The population of South Asian countries is about two billion that is more than six times that of the European Community and about four times that of NAFTA countries.

COUNTRY-OF-ORIGIN PARADIGMS AND THEIR IMPACT

Country-Of-Origin (COO), Country-of-Design (COD) and Country Of Assembly (COA) have effect on consumers' evaluation of a product and traditional price-quality relationship appears to be country specific (Chao, 1993). His research showed that consumer evaluations of design and product qualities are influenced by price, COD, and COA. Nagashima (1970) defined country image as :

"The picture, the reputation, the stereotype that businessmen and consumer attach to products of a specific country. This image is created by such variables as representative products, national characteristic, economic and political background, history, and traditions."

From the marketing perspective, Roth and Romeo (1992) defined country image as the overall perception consumers form of products from a particular country, based on their prior perceptions of the country's production and marketing strengths and weaknesses.

They have also defined the dimensions of country image: Innovativeness as use of new technology and engineering advances. Design as appearances, style, colours, and variety. Prestige as exclusive, status and brand name reputation. Workmanship as reliability, durability, craftsmanship and manufacturing quality. Roth & Romeo (1992) explored some product-country matches and mismatches. For example, Japanese auto and German watch are favourable product-country matches and Hungarian auto and Mexican watch are unfavourable matches.

The electric theory of international production posits that the pattern of foreign investments should vary by country of origin. Schroath, Hu and Chen (1993) found that Country-of-Origin effects are indeed present in foreign investment activities in China. In order for a firm to be induced to produce in foreign markets, whatever type of market inefficiency exists, it must have specific ownership advantages, assets or endowments, that exceed the costs of servicing a distant market in an unfamiliar environment and allow it to compete favourably with the indigenous industry. How the firm uses its ownership specific advantages, i.e., sells, leases or internalizes them to some greater or lesser degree, is dependent upon the economic rent derived from their use in conjunction with the resources available in the foreign market.

One of the distinguishing characteristics of firm-specific endowments thought to be attributable to Country-Of-Origin is economic, cultural or political relationship of the home country to the host country, which is thought to lead to close psychic distance and therefore a greater degree of exploitation of any other firm-specific advantage (Schroath, Hu and Chen, 1993).

Lee (1993) found that country's credit worthiness perceptions are largely based on a country's economic performances, which are expected to reflect long term political stability. In addition, the frequency of changes in regime and armed conflict both reflecting political instability, also affect the credit

ratings. Miller (1993) also supports the relevance of country-level assessments to political, policy, and macro-economic uncertainties.

Country-Of-Origin effects and SAARC Economic Cooperation : Comparative advantage is the main reason of trade between any two countries. However, in South Asian countries, there are very limited number of items which can be traded beneficially among SAARC member countries. For example, textile is the largest industrial sector of Pakistan but, both Pakistan and India compete internationally for textile goods. In fact, India as a source of cheaper textile goods has eroded the international competitiveness of Pakistan's textile sector. (EIU, January, 1994). Main exports of Pakistan are raw cotton, textiles and garments, rice, carpets and leather goods. India also has a similar range of export items.

However, on a comparative advantage basis, Indian exports include computer software; project and consultant services involving engineering, civil construction and skilled manpower; chemicals, and auto spare parts (EIU, March, 1994). Lack of proper copyright laws in Pakistan will restrict the Indian export of computer software to Pakistan. Political uncertainties, disputes and lack of funds will undermine the possibility of project exports to Pakistan and other SAARC countries.

Because of the lack of funds, the Mrs. Bhutto's Government in Pakistan abandoned the Peshawar-Islamabad section of national highway project and it intends to reduce the Islamabad-Lahore portion of the expressway from six to four (EIU, November, 1994). Nawaz Sharif Government has speeded up work on the Motor Way. Manufacturing goods from Japan, Germany, U.K., and U.S.A. enjoy favourable consumer evaluation all over the world and so do they in Pakistan and India. While, chemicals and auto spare parts from India will suffer from unfavourable Country-Of-Origin effects in Pakistan and other SAARC countries.

Armed conflicts and political and policy uncertainties have produced a great psychic distance (Schroath, Hu and Chen, 1993) between India and Pakistan that will discourage joint venture options that may be available to the firms of the two countries. Almost all the countries of South Asian region are suffering from political instabilities. This situation has negative effects on their credit worthiness. One of the functions of export promotion agencies of a country is to extend credit to foreign customer in order to increase the demand of its country's exports. Trading firm also may extend credit to their foreign customers in order to increase or maintain the demand of its goods in a foreign country.

However, in the event of political instabilities in SAARC countries, both the firms interested in regional trade and export promotion agencies may not afford credit to their customers in other member country and consequently may not maintain or increase exports.

All SAARC countries lack proper infrastructure, suffer from bureaucratic hurdles and experience political uncertainties. All these factors will reflect an increase in costs involved in a regional trade transaction. Because of this increase in costs, the exporting firm may not compete favourably with indigenous industry of the country of importing firm as indicated by (Schroath, Hu and Chen 1993).

ECONOMIC STRUCTURES AND POLICIES AND THEIR IMPACT

India and Pakistan together constitute 80 per cent of the region's GNP of more than US\$ 350 billion and the cooperation between them is crucial for the success of the trade agreement (Waslekar, 1994). Traditionally India has been showing unwelcome attitude toward certain kinds of international trade. Recently India has adapted a liberal trade policy. However, the business experience of foreign firms has been less than joyful. Equally applicable to the interested firms in SAARC member countries, the most serious complaints of foreign firms about the business operating conditions in India, according to EIU, July, 1993, include bureaucracy and corruption, poor custom policies and practices, financial difficulties, creaking infrastructure, poor quality of local supplies, poor labour productivity, and an unfair and slow legal system.

Other SAARC partner, Pakistan also faces most of the same problems as India does. These problems include inadequate infrastructure, a poor law and order situation, bureaucratic hurdles, political instability, and price controls.

The South Asian Preferential Trade Agreement has opened the door to India's consumer market. But the distribution is difficult and competition from other foreign firms and domestic firms is intensifying. Indeed, for any new entrant to this market, it will take considerable expense to establish the extensive distribution network required for national marketing and necessary marketing muscle to compete effectively with long-established domestic firms and multinational affiliates (EIU, July, 1993).

Both India and Pakistan are giving special attention to the agriculture and food processing sector because of income, employment and foreign exchange objectives. Indian exports of agricultural products have risen over the years

and they were Rs. 10 billion in 1993-94. Along with traditional exports of wheat, rice, spices and tea, India has started exporting fruits, vegetables, flowers and mushrooms. More of these exports are being traded to Europe and East Asia.

Obviously because of Indian government subsidies, price controls and related public investments in agriculture sector, regional firms will find it extremely difficult to compete with Indian indigenous firms and their agricultural exports to India are likely to be negligible.

India and Pakistan are making progress in competing for foreign private capital for infrastructure development. This way, their trade and especially imports will be related to the infrastructure development machines, services of foreign specialists, manufacturing goods and raw materials. Almost all the projects are being undertaken by the firms from U.S.A., Europe, and the countries other than the members of SAARC (EIU, November, 1994). This fact shows that most of the imports for both countries will be from the countries of origin of these firms or from other developed ones. Consequently, the trade among the SAARC member countries regarding the infrastructure development projects will be minimum.

Most of the SAARC member countries have revenue structures closely dependent upon custom duties. For example, the custom duties in Pakistan account for more than 40 per cent of its total tax revenue. Decisions on tariff reductions as promoted by South Asian Preferential Trade Agreement, may cause the government to face severe budgetary problems (EIU, May, 1994a) and (EIU, May, 1994b). Already the budget deficit in Pakistan is approaching 8 per cent of GDP (EIU, January, 1994). Therefore, the Government of Pakistan may not be in a position to reduce import taxes, to meet the goals of SAPTA, without finding some substitute means to compensate for the expected revenue loss.

Indian governments have been following protection policies for the domestic firms because of employment and growth objectives (Gosh, 1992). Similarly, most of the regional trading firms will lose their competitiveness against indigenous firms in Pakistan because of high tariff related taxes.

Besides high tariffs, Pakistan applies a variety of other charges to imports. For instance, all imports are subject to a 5 per cent education tax called *Iqra* Surcharge. Most imports are also subject to a 6 per cent import license fee, 12.5 per cent sales tax, and an import surcharge from 7 per cent to 10 per cent (EIU, May, 1994a). Because of their economic policies and

economic structures, the governments of SAARC member countries may adopt a cautious policy for carrying out the given regional trade agreement.

Furthermore, SAARC member countries lack regionally acceptable institutional support for the regional trade. Most of the financial institutions supporting the trade transactions are operated by the governments only. This situation may not be feasible to the trading firms of other regional countries. For instance, the insurance sector in India is operated by the Indian government. India nationalized its insurance sector 20 years ago Sidhva (June 4, 1994). Similarly, all the imports in Pakistan must be insured by domestic firms except the shipments financed by the U.S. Agency for International Development (EIU, May, 1994b).

DISPUTES AND THEIR IMPACT

Most of the member countries suffer from disputes because of one reason or the other. Relations between the two major players, India and Pakistan continue to be strained their dispute Kashmir. Two-third is under Indian control while the rest is administered by Pakistan.

Muslims on the Indian side have been waging a five-year armed struggle for independence. Pakistan denies Indian claims that it is providing armed support to the militants. Occupied Kashmir, is the only Muslim majority state, has been under president's rule since January 1990, when an armed insurgency erupted. Kashmiris have demanded the right to choose between India and Pakistan to solve a dispute that has run since 1947 (Bokhari and Sidhava, June 4, 1995).

The first three decades of Pakistan's history focused on India. Initial suspicion on both sides accelerated in the shadow of two-and-half wars. There were multitudes of complex and easy problems that faced India and Pakistan—from the division of national assets to the housing of its first officers (James and Roy, 1992). Bitterness between India and Pakistan prevails. On both sides officials deny what many suspect, that there is a clandestine policy of Karachi for Kashmir : Pakistan backing for the guerrillas in Kashmir and Indian backing for groups that turned Karachi, Pakistan's biggest city, into a virtual free-fire zone (Burns, July 15, 1995).

Normal trade between the two countries has been prevented by territorial disputes. A former governor of Sindh province in Pakistan, Mr. Ashraf Tabani, stated that businessmen worried about their goods and investments being seized if a war broke out between India and Pakistan (Waslekar, March 1994). In U.S.A. the Enemy Act prohibits U.S. companies to engage in trade

with enemy countries like Cuba and North Korea (EIU, December, 1994). In this respect, both India and Pakistan use import licensing requirements to restrict the trade with each other.

CURRENT ECONOMIC COOPERATION SCENARIO

Indian two-way trade with other SAARC countries is relatively minor, accounting for some 2 per cent of merchandise trade in 1991-1992 (GATT, 1993). Indian foreign investment is concentrated in 12 countries including America, Britain, the Republics of the former USSR, Malaysia, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Singapore, Nepal, Indonesia, and the United Arab Emirates (EIU, May 1995).

According to GATT (1992), Bangladesh had 5.7 per cent of its total imports from India in the year 1988-89. Pakistan bans its private sector from direct trade with India except in 571 listed items. Pakistan recently decided to allow its businesses to import 300,000 tonnes of cement from India, in the largest single deal between the two countries, which is seen as a significant move toward regional trade (Waslekar, 1994).

All the member countries of SAARC are facing balance of payment problems in international trade. Trade balances for India were -1.0, -2.2 and -1.4 US billion dollars, respectively for 1993, 1994, 1995 (EIU, July 1994). Similar figures for Pakistan were -3.8, -3.1 and -2.8 US billion dollars (EIU, January 1994). The balance of payments and trade deficit problems are obviously limiting the scope of regional trade.

SOME PROSPECTS

South Asia produces most of the world's cotton and tea exports, which can be one of the reasons for the member countries to link up. They can maximize the advantage by pooling their exports and collectively deciding the selling price (Waslekar, 1994).

Devinder Singh, President of Punjab Haryana Dehli Chamber of Commerce, estimates that smuggling and unofficial trade between India and Pakistan through third countries such as Dubai is worth as much as US\$ 500 million a year (Waslekar, 1994). SAPTA has provided an opportunity to streamline the smuggling as regular trade among the two main partners of SAARC.

SAARC member countries have foreign exchange reserve problems and because of this situation, the trade among them may not be supported.

Countertrade is most appropriate under the following objectives, as given by Neale and Shipley (January, 1989) :

1. To reduce balance of payment problems.
2. To gain access to new markets.
3. To trade substandard products.

All of the above conditions are present in SAARC member countries. Therefore, they may adopt countertrade practices as an initial and effective means of regional economic cooperation.

India already has some level of working trade relationships with Nepal, Sri Lanka, Bhutan, and Bangladesh (GATT, 1993). SAPTA is most likely to improve on the already existing trade between India and these countries, in the initial period of its implementation.

Both India and Pakistan are generally removing or lowering trade barriers, gradually dismantling currency restrictions and lowering personal and corporate taxes (EIU, January, 1994 and July, 1994). These trends will definitely improve the international and regional trade.

Sri Lanka may become a romantic location for becoming an export base. It is improving its Colombo Port facilities for increasing container traffic. Katunayake International Airport of Sri Lanka is probably the best in South Asia. In addition, to having a sound legal infrastructure, Sri Lanka last year announced a set of updated investment incentives. A low tax rate of 15 per cent is offered to firms investing in various export industries, tourism and other services, and both large-and-small-scale infrastructure developments. Since, 1989 the whole of Sri Lanka has become a free-trade zone.

Sri Lanka has highly literate and relatively skilled labour force. Knowledge of English is widespread and wages are low (EIU, March, 1995). Keeping in view, the ideal characteristics of Sri Lanka, the business firms from all the SAARC member countries, in general and from India and Pakistan in particular, can establish export processing industries in Sri Lanka and channel their trade through this third member country.

The Trade Marks Bill 1993 and the Copyright Bill 1992 are awaiting approval by Indian Parliament (EIU, May, 1994a). Similarly, a patent legislation draft was submitted to the National Assembly of Pakistan in late 1989. However, this legislation was remanded to the government for further consideration and has not been resubmitted (EIU, July, 1994). It is hoped that after the enactment of the proposed laws, business firms from India and

Pakistan may beneficially trade computer software, motion pictures and printed matters such as text books.

In the past, both India and Pakistan have often been in the same clubs, e.g., the Commonwealth. Shared family ties across the Indo-Pakistan border and the willingness, and the insistence, of families to move back and forth on visits, made it impossible for India and Pakistan to impose the geographical isolation of the population.

Except during times of actual wars, whenever and wherever border crossing was open, the visits continued (James and Roy, 1992). South Asian Preferential Trade Agreement may avail the love spirits between the two countries through more socio-economic exchanges.

CONCLUSION

This study reveals that South Asian Preferential Trade Agreement is a modest beginning toward an economic cooperation among the member countries. Like the countries of European Community, historical rivalries exist among SAARC member countries. As it took more than 25 years for European Community to approach the stage of close economic integration, one may expect that in the long run, SAARC countries too, will achieve some form of close economic cooperation.

Low income levels, lack of infrastructure and proper commercial institutions and disputes will undermine the prospects of SAPTA. Export processing zones of a third member country, Sri Lanka may offer acceptable channel of trade between India and Pakistan. Future of SAPTA and SAARC itself, depends significantly upon the resolution of Kashmir issue.

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A Study on the Local Autonomy and Decentralization System in Bangladesh

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Abstract

Local Government, especially in a developing country like Bangladesh occupies an important position in efforts towards the betterment of the life of local people. The organizational set-up of the local government, its nature, functional jurisdiction and relationship with the government are not only interlinked with each other but also closely related to the prevailing socio-political and economic system. Efficient and effective performance of local bodies is needed to face the growing challenges of local life. The present study examines the local autonomy system in a South Asian country Bangladesh which has a long tradition of local government with particular emphasis on its evolution, present features, some reflections on the influences of local autonomy and desirable forms. Over the past two decades and a half, Bangladesh has experimented a series of decentralization efforts in institution-building at the local level. All the ruling political regimes attempted to decentralize power and to develop institutions at the local level to build a political power base. All these efforts failed to produce substantial change in the autonomous status of the system of local government. The local bodies hardly enjoyed any kind of functional or financial autonomy. In fact, it has considered just as an extension of the national government.

INTRODUCTION

Local government has a long history in what is today called Bangladesh. Since 1971 successive governments in Bangladesh endeavoured to introduce, although without success policies and programmes aimed at decentralization of the administrative machinery of the country. Despite their avowed aim and rhetoric, manifested in reports of several commissions/committees on the

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administrative and local government problem and suggested reforms, successive governments remained highly centralized in practice, and carried out most of their activities through central direction and control.

Unlike its predecessors which confined themselves to the task of setting up commissions to only review the local government structure, the present government is currently engaged in the process of establishing a new structure of local government system both in rural and urban areas aimed at ensuring people's participation in local activities. Some of the basic elements of the impending reorganization are already done whereas others are still under process. In fact, the promulgation of the local government acts are seen by some observers as a practical demonstration and fulfilment of the present government's policy of giving 'power to people.'¹

Therefore, the Bangladesh local autonomy system began through the recommendations of the Local Government Structure Review Commission in 1992 under the auspices of the present government planned to reinstate.²

The present study aims at a critical review of the system of local government in Bangladesh in historical perspective. Only briefly some suggestions to reform the system are added as well.

DEFINITION AND CONCEPTS

Local government bodies enjoy authority to decide and to implement certain limited types of public policies. Their functions cover a defined range of services within a territory demarcated for these purposes by the central government. Humes and Martin have observed that local government units can never be more than junior partners in their relationship with the central government.³ Generally the term local government means the local institutions with the freedom 'to decide and act' whereas the local self-government possesses the power 'to determine and execute' within a definite area. To use the term 'self' perhaps gives an emphasis to the representative and more autonomous character of the local government.⁴ The term is also used to refer to representative or elected bodies which serve similar purposes in a locality, although the elected bodies are often distinguished by using the term 'local self-government'. But the term 'local state government' implies to the fact that this layer acts as an agent of central government which performs such functions delegated by the central government under its appointed official.

The terms of local government, local self-government and field administration are interrelated with and originated from the conception of

decentralization, deconcentration, delegation and devolution of authority which are generally used interchangeably in Bangladesh and throughout the study. The term 'decentralization' is also commonly used to describe the various arrangements.⁵ Devolution of authority is a form of political decentralization found in local government which involves some sort of locally established assembly with usually elected members and has a substantially element of autonomy from central government but deconcentration, a form of administrative decentralization is found in field administration which consists of officials appointed by the centre whereas posted to the field to act as central government's representatives.⁶ Mawhood also believes that 'decentralization' can only be meaningfully used when looking at local government.⁷

In the system of decentralization, the power and authority of decision-making is either delegated or deconcentrated from national level to sub-national and field level or devolved through constitutional sanction. Sometimes, in practice, the differences between centralization and decentralization are mainly quantitative but not qualitative or in categories. But, devolution, a form of decentralization, refers to the system where directly elected people's representatives operate at the local level with substantive authority and power, and responsible to the local people without direct central control. In this system, local autonomy and self-government is found.

It is evident from the analysis that a unit of local government must exhibit three qualifications : firstly, it must exist as an organized entity with some powers; secondly, it must have autonomy to perform day to day functions and must be accountable and thirdly, it must possess substantial autonomy to prepare a budget and raise the revenues necessary to meet its expenditure. Further more it is clear that local self-government places greater emphasis on the freedom of locality while administration of the locality is given importance in case of field administration or local state government. Local authorities are in a better position to ensure and secure people's participation in formulating plans of development particularly at the local level and their implementation.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT SYSTEM FROM HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

The stages of the local government growth in Bangladesh can be divided into five periods :

1. The establishment of the British Colonial Government from 1757 to 1947 and the period until 1971.

2. The nation building phase from 1971 to 1975.
3. The period from 1975 to 1982, which is called the stage of economic take off and construction of the national economy.
4. The period from 1982 to 1990, i.e., called the stage of military regime and experimentation of new local government system.
5. The period from 1991 onward which may be regarded as the stage of the democratic political government and introduction of directly elected Mayor in the City Corporation.

Local government in Indian Sub-Continent has been part of the administrative system for many years. It has an illustrious historic past as far as local level administration is concerned. Its shape, however, dates back to the time when a comprehensive system of locally elected councils managed various basic services for the benefit of the local community. This system existed in the ancient times and is popularly known a *Panchayet* system.⁸ During the Mughal rule in sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, local institutions were very active in the urban areas. Since the advent of the British colonial rule in eighteenth century, the indigenous local government system in Bengal went under a drastic change.

In fact, the present structure of local bodies in Bangladesh owes its existence to the British rule. Laws had been imposed by the British to regulate the provision of services devolved upon traditional chiefs in the rural areas. For example, the *Choukidari Panchayet Act* of 1870 created a five-member *Panchayet* system at the village level and the *Local Self-Government Act* of 1885 introduced three-tiers system of local bodies. But both the Acts failed to play an effective role.⁹ Later, several reform efforts were initiated under the Decentralization Commission of 1907 and the *Bengal Local Self-Government Act* of 1919 to set up the two-tier system of local bodies with Union Board at the grass-roots level and District Board at the district. During Pakistan Period, the *Basic Democracy Order, 1959* set up four-tiers system of local bodies from union level to divisional level.

But in the urban areas, municipalities were set up in big towns as early as 1688 in Madras followed by Calcutta and Bombay in 1726. These bodies were brought under formal legal basis with the promulgation of the *Municipal Act* of 1842 and the *Bengal District Municipal Improvement Act* of 1864 as well as the *Government of India Act* of 1935. During Pakistan period, the *Basic Democracy Order, 1959* and the *Municipal Administration Ordinance, 1960*

created Municipal Committee as the unit of urban local government. After the emergence of Bangladesh in 1971, all the successive governments stressed the need for an effective and decentralized local government system and they intended to establish a local government system with decentralization of power. In the process, a number of ordinances were promulgated with the ultimate aim of establishing a democratic local government system with directly elected local councils.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT STRUCTURE : EXPERIMENTATION AND CHANGE AFTER 1971

Since 1971, institutional development of an effective local government structure has always been a high priority with the government. The successive governments also experienced series of experimentation in institution-building at the local level and introduced different nature of local institutions for developing a new form of local government system.

District Governorship Scheme under Mujib Regime

The local institution-building and experimentation in the upper tier of local government began with the introduction of the District Governorship Scheme in 1975 under the District Administration Act of 1975 (Act No. VI of 1975) by the Government of Sheikh Mujibur Rehman. Under the Act, the Governor of the district was to be the ex-officio Secretary to the Council. But, this system was discarded in August, 1975.¹⁰

District Development Coordinator (DDC) under Zia Regime

Another effort was made by the Government of President Ziaur Rahman in 1980 towards making the local administration at the district in the appointment of one member of the *Jatiya Shangshad* (Parliament) in each district as District Development Coordinator (DDC). The DDC is responsible to coordinate the implementation of development activities and schemes in respective of administrative districts as well as agriculture, literacy and so on. But it was abolished after the military coup in 1982.

Swanirvar Gram Sarker (Self-Reliant Village Government) under Zia

In 1980, a new institutional model called *Swanirvar Gram Sarker* (Self-Reliant Village Government) was initiated at the grass roots village level (below the Union Parishad). It was introduced under an executive order called *Swanirvar Gram Sarker* (Constitution and Administration) Rules of 1980 provided the legal framework of *Gram Sarker*. Accordingly 68,000 *Gram*

Sarkers were formed through consensus election headed by a *Gram Prodhhan* (Village Headman) and composed of eleven members (nine men and two women). Each *Gram Sarkar* asked to prepare a village plan based on the needs of the village development. But this system was abolished by General Ershad who came to power in March, 1982. The Government of Ziaur Rahman also experimented with a model where one local Thana from each district was chosen as a pilot area for development by the official of that area. This experiment continued for about a year and was found to be unsuitable and had been abandoned.

Upazila System under Ershad

When General Ershad assumed power through a bloodless coup on 24th March in 1982, he launched a local government decentralization plan. The plan was intended to effect a fundamental restructuring of the government machinery with the local government bodies at the newly created Upazila (Sub-District) level. During the period, politicization of military regime was started with the framing of different local government laws and ultimately introduced a local self-government institution at the Upazila level. The objective of the plan was to :

*Create a new kind of local government system that will bring about greater efficiency and productivity in the state machinery through the involvement of the people.*¹¹

After identifying the limitations of the existing machinery the Committee for Administrative Reform/Reorganization (CARR) provided the new system of the local bodies as more active institution. During the period, the institutional set-up of the Upazila Parishad (Sub-District) was introduced at the middle tier of local government. The Upazila Parishad was constituted with directly elected chairman, representative members, nominated women members and ex-officio members from the government officials. It was designed to work as the focal point of all administrative, development and nation-building activities.

The most remarkable feature of the Upazila Parishad was that the experienced mid-level government officials provide technical knowledge in programme implementation. At the Upazila, people's representatives and government officials worked together to implement local development programmes and to achieve the national developmental goal.¹² But other two local bodies, i.e., Union Parishad at the grass roots level, i.e., lower level

local government unit and the Zila Parishad at the top received little attention. Later, the Upazila system was discontinued in early 1991 by the present government due to lack of its internal resource mobilization and too much dependence on government grants.¹³

Since launching the decentralization, self-reliant and local autonomy plan since 1971, no sincere effort was made by any of the successive regime to establish local government as an institution. Accordingly, different regimes promulgated a number of acts and ordinances to fulfill their respective political will to establish different institutions in the name of ensuring people's participation in local government activities or decentralization of local authority at the field level.¹⁴

MAIN FEATURES OF THE PRESENT LOCAL GOVERNMENT SYSTEM

The objective of the local government reform by the present government is to create democratic local government institution. On November 25, 1991, the Review Commission on Local Government Structure was set up by the present government which submitted its report on August 30, 1992. Earlier, the Twelfth Amendment of the Constitution provided that local self-government be constituted by elected representatives and therefore the report of the Commission pointed out that all people should be enabled to participate in the decision making process and with regard to the local government administration, the intention was also to make them accountable to the elected functionaries.¹⁵ The Commission proposed that local government should be based on decentralization where local bodies get both responsibility and authority through constitutional sanction. Provisions were made in Articles 59 and 60 of the Constitution to devolve the responsibility for both development activities and administration into the hands of the elected representative of the local government bodies.¹⁶

At present, the country's public administration structure comprises a network of the units of administration consisting of six Administrative Divisions headed by Commissioners, 64 Districts headed by Deputy Commissioners, 460 Thanas (formerly known as Upazilas) headed by Thana Nirbahi (Executive) Officer (TNO) each functioning as the field establishment of central administration. Side by side, the local bodies are organized to correspond to the administrative units of the country as provided in the Constitution. There are two categories of local government bodies operating in the rural and urban areas functioning on the legal basis of their respective

Ordinances and Acts. In the rural areas, the local government system is based on two-tier structure, i.e., Union Parishad at the lower level which constituted with many villages at the grass roots and Zila Parishad at the top level local government tier at the District. There are 4,404 Unions which are composed of 85,690 villages.¹⁷ At present, only the Union Parishad at the grass roots level is functioning and the establishment of the Zila Parishad is yet to be announced. But in the urban areas, two forms of local bodies are functioning with their respective jurisdiction of area and authority, i.e., four City Corporations at the four metropolitan cities which are also divisional headquarters and one hundred and nine Pourashavas at the sixty district towns and forty-nine former Thana level urban centres. At the national level, the activities of local bodies are coordinated and controlled by the Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives. But for the tribal areas of Chittagong Hill Tracts, three special types of popularly elected local bodies are established under their respective statute.

Two major structural changes could be discerned from 1991 and 1994 reforms. First, the abolition of Upazila (Sub-District) as unit of local government. This abolition is not merely as a quantitative change but rather as a transformation of the system already established. But the Upazila as a tier of administration was continued. A coordinating body was created at this level now called Thana Development and Coordination Committee. Secondly, the establishment of two tier system of local government comprising Union Parishad at the lower level and Zila Parishad (District Council) at the top. This is in contrast to the three tier system which was in existence before the present government came to power in 1991.

PRESENT SITUATION OF LOCAL AUTONOMY

Hierarchical Structure of Local Governments

Local Governments in Bangladesh are created and changed with the administration of the policies and programmes initiated by the government. There are two categories of local governments operating in urban and rural areas. In the urban areas, the forms of local governments are comprising City Corporations at the metropolitan cities which are also divisional headquarters and Pourashavas (Municipalities) at the other urban areas located in the districts and Thana towns. But the units of local government working for rural areas are comprising Zila Parishad (District Council) at the district level and Union Parishad at the grass-roots village level. City Corporations are located at the four divisional headquarters (at the top level of field administration)

which are under the direct control of the Mayor elected by the people. Pourashavas are headed by the directly elected Chairman. These urban areas have a population of five thousand and above. In the grass-roots level, the Union Parishad which is a field level local government institution is also headed by a Chairman elected by the people. The nature of composition of Zila Parishad is yet to be fixed by the present government. But all the activities of these local bodies are administratively coordinated and controlled by the Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development Cooperatives (LGRDC). The Ministry of LGRDC has the power, and authority to supervise the activities of the local government institutions. In reality the local governments hardly meant self-governing and they operate more like branch offices of the government.

Financial Solvency of Local Governments

In 1993, the average level of financial solvency of local government was only 57 per cent and the average rate of national government grants to the local bodies was only 40 per cent. The real situation is that all the local bodies financially depend on national government for general and categorical assistance as well as development grants. It should be noted here that nearly all the local bodies are financially weak and the amount of internal financial resource is still insufficient for making local governments financially independent. Therefore, the national government is considering an increase of tax revenue to make them financially sound. For this reason it seems that local financial solvency can be improved through reformation of structure and exploration of new sources for local taxation.

INFLUENCES ON LOCAL AUTONOMY

In general, the failure of local autonomy since independence of Bangladesh was due to certain socio-economic factors such as, lower level of education of people, insufficient financial capacity, narrow scope of governing local affairs, excessive control by national government and political interference. The level of education of the general public is slowly increasing. But low financial solvency will only be improved by reclassifying national tax revenue with local tax revenue sources. This shows that national government will be affirmatively changing its attitudes towards local autonomy only when the local bodies are financially solvent. In this regard, the following factors may be cited.

Government Attitudes towards Local Autonomy

It is still valid to say that due to the low financial self-capacity of local government, local autonomy can not succeed in Bangladesh. In the past, the national government changed the local tax revenue sources in 1982, 1985, 1986 and 1992 to improve the local self-sufficiency. According to these changes some new sources of local revenue income was allocated to local tax revenue structure. The national government is still considering various methods to enhance the local financial capacity and internal resource mobilization.¹⁸ However, it should be said that the most important factor for the operation of local autonomy is the attitude of national government which gives discretionary power and autonomy to local government without any intervention of its day to day activities.

Maturity of People's Political Consciousness

Due to low level of education of the general mass and lack of political institution, local elections were sometimes fraud with corruptions and injustices including selling votes in the past. But in the later part of 1990 the people of Bangladesh had experienced the importance of participation through nation wide movements, such as the democratization movement which resulted in the peaceful replacement of military regime of General Ershad. Bangladesh also completed the most impartial and successful parliamentary election in February, 1991. With these experiences the people actively participated in the recently held local government election. It could be said that the local autonomy system provides people with an opportunity to participate in real democracy.

DESIRABLE FORMS OF LOCAL AUTONOMY SYSTEM

Local autonomy entails the devolution of power meaning the distribution of concentrated power of the national government to local bodies. Therefore, in operating the local autonomy, one of the most important points is to set up the ideal relationship between central and local governments.¹⁹ Compared with other countries, such as Japan, Canada and other Western Europe, Bangladesh has a far different tradition of local governments. Those countries which have a long history of local government, have to concentrate and coordinate the dispersed power of local governments in the process of modern state building.²⁰ Bangladesh on the other hand is experiencing a reversal of this process. From this perspective, it is very difficult for Bangladesh to make a feasible and desirable local autonomy system.

Numerous methods for structuring the local governments in line with decentralization of power have been suggested by both scholars and politicians.²¹ A feasible system in this present socio-political context will be proposed in this paper by considering the local self-governing units, the method for elections, the relationship between central and local governments and the local government's financial reform.

Units of Local Self-Governments

It is very important that people can experience the direct democracy through autonomy system. Local self-government system provides residents the opportunity to make government responsive to their own needs, and it enables people enhance public responsibility. Such local governments will be most productive if they are reorganized into a two tier local self-government system, i.e., Union Parishad at the grass-roots level and Thana Parishad at the Thana level. For urban areas, local bodies will be remained the same as it is presently operated. Under the proposed system the Zila Parishad would no longer be recognized as local government unit. In place of Zila Parishad, Thana Parishad would be constituted so that it can deal locally with the local development affairs. The Thana Parishad would carry out the functional duties and supervision of the projects implemented by the Union Parishad.

There are still several reasons behind selecting the Thana Parishad as the unit of local government instead of Zila Parishad. The Thana Parishad is closer to the grass roots level unit of Union Parishad. It is very easy for the Thana Parishad to provide adequate services to the local residents.

Election Method of Women Members/Commissioners

How to elect women members/commissioners is a determinant factor in operating local autonomy with the participation of women in development process. Currently, the women members/commissioners of local government in Bangladesh are not popularly elected by the people but rather are indirectly elected by the members/commissioners and Chairman/Mayor of the respective bodies. It follows that those who are indirectly elected tend to pay attention to their voter's interests rather than the interest of the local women communities in their administrative and development work. However, since the indirect election system doesn't work effectively for the betterment of the local women, the direct election system is desirable for inevitable local autonomy. Besides, directly elected local women can exercise their respective political views in policy making without consideration of the outside interest and they will take a

serious view of women resident's demand. Without the participation of political parties in the local election, democratic local autonomy can not function. For this reason, active participation of political party members should be allowed.

Functional Relations between National and Local Government

The new Local Government Act provides that local autonomous bodies deal with the local public matters and the matters delegated to the entity by Acts and Ordinances. But there is no detailed specified criteria to delegate functions. Among all self-government system, proper share of administrative affairs has not yet been assured. Accordingly, it is necessary to distribute as many functions as possible to the basic unit of local governments such as Union, Thana and Pourashave by making a clear criteria. For example, such public affairs like environment, labour and agriculture have to be considered as functions of local autonomous bodies. Not only these functions, but welfare administration such as health, social welfare and family planning have to be distributed as local public affairs.

Of course, local governments should operate in partnership with national government in such functions like integrated regional development plans and programmes. But for establishing the tradition of grass roots democracy, national government has to resist a policy of less intervention in local governments activities for ensuring local autonomy system. Thus, initiatives should also be popularly practised at the national level.

Proposal for Improving Local Financial System

The financial capacity of local governments is weak. In 1992, 40 per cent of the total revenues for local governments came from development grants and other sources, provided by the national government. Local governments still depend heavily on the subsidies from national government to supplement their financial shortage.²² The reason is that the present tax system puts more priority on national tax rather than on local tax. Therefore it would be necessary that some of the national tax items, such as income tax, telephone tax, and the amusement, eating and drinking tax, should be transferred to the local government bodies. But the most important thing is not to levy any new local tax on local people in order to ensure local autonomy. Rather than new taxes, a strategy for developing local autonomy should be considered by inviting manufacturing companies to set up their plants. And each local body should establish a long term financial plan. As well, management tools such as

computer analysis, organization and method, and management information systems should be introduced to local bodies in order to enhance efficiency and economy.

CONCLUSION

The structure of local government was frequently reviewed with a host of proposals to changing and reorganizing it since the independence of Bangladesh in 1971. All the successive governments attempted to develop institutions at the local level to have a political power base. But none of the attempts could bring about any significant and positive change in the quality of the local life and the local structure remained the same as it was. It is worthy to note that since launching the decentralization plan after 1971, no complete effort or action was taken by any of the successive governments to ensure people's participation at the district level. However, some laws were framed with the ultimate aim of establishing elected bodies at all the local units. Since 1971 all the local institutions were functioning under the political will of the respective regimes, therefore, effort to reorganize local government system failed.

In this regard, it is to be mentioned here that all the administrative reform committees under different regimes made efforts in the matter of decentralization to strengthen the local institutions and local autonomy in different stages of its development. However, considerable and substantial changes were made only in the internal structure of the body with more elected representative. Significantly, a study on local government observed that local government in Bangladesh was too centralized and consequently proposed that the system should be decentralized. Therefore, the history of local government during the period under review calls for three comments. Firstly, it seems that in Bangladesh the emphasis had been on local administration and not local self-government or local institution-building. It is no longer the local authority which performs the vital role in modernization or rural development. Secondly, successive government in Bangladesh have not realized that commitment to effective local government presuppose the acceptance of the philosophy of development from below. And finally, the performance of the local bodies are not helpful to local growth and fail to satisfy local demands due to lack of local resource mobilization and revenue.

The achievement of most of the bodies were limited to paying staff emoluments. Most local bodies have been unable to raise adequate revenue to support any meaningful development programme, but to depend on

government for their grant, giving the general expression that these local bodies were not financially solvent. In 1989-90, for example, only 5.6 per cent and in 1990-91 only 6 per cent of fund were allocated to development by City Corporations and Pourashavas. The provision of local amenities, streets lighting, roads construction and maintenance, water facilities, waste disposal, sanitation and conservancy by the local bodies was poor. When the local bodies were unable to finance development efforts, the local inhabitants became diversified and even more unwilling to pay the rates and fees imposed on them.

Since 1991, however, some changes have taken place in Bangladesh, especially the increase of people's consciousness and greater demand for a decentralization and democratization. This has had a great impact on people's political expectations. These factors tend to enable the people to ask for greater opportunities for participation in decision making processes and thus for the decentralization of power at the local level. People of the local level are beginning to work for local solution to local problems and are increasingly advocating broader delegation of power. The people want to participate in policy making processes, especially the development policy. In order to accomplish these policy objectives, it seems essential that desirable system and strategy for local autonomy should be one that encourages people to learn in localities. Based on a review of the context of Bangladesh local autonomy since 1971, it could be safely said that local autonomy is the best avenue for local participatory democracy and one of the best means to control population in local areas.

To revitalize and innovate the local autonomy system, the national government should take proper actions on the basis of the following points :

- (a) Distribute powers and functions to local bodies in order to maintain real local autonomy.
- (b) Allocate industrial complexes to local bodies in order to generate local revenue for balanced regional growth.
- (c) Encourage people through a net work and information system to help people to participate in local development activities.

It is more important to keep it in mind that the operation of local autonomy does not depend only on the system. The people make it work. Those within power should take these difficult decisions in the larger interest of the people. In this regard the decision of the present government to hold

direct election for chief executive in City Corporation is a step in the right direction. Bold national policy is essential to strengthen the local government as a ... for the strong democratic political system in the Country.

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The Critical Role of Media Towards Child Labour in Pakistan

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In modern scientific era when every one has materialistic approach, every country is trying to surpass other countries and every one is trying to raise their living standard from other positively or negatively. So no one is interested to know about and care from those innocent children who are also struggling hard for progress. Although they are struggling very hard for their survival but they are in a worst condition and no one is paying any attention towards their miseries tears and signals. Today in every country of the world poor children are in a deteriorating condition not only economically but also socially, mentally and physically. This worst condition is more severe specially in developing countries. These children are really helpless due to poverty. In many countries children are the main source of industrial production and progress. According to the report of (I.L.O.) lot of work more than their capacity. About 150 years ago, the idea developed that the place of children is in school and not in the work place.

Now a days there is a lot of have are cry about the issue of child labour. By all measures of justification, this should rank on high agenda but in practice it is hushed up in sinister silence. It is very difficult to define child labour because this term, child labour, encompasses the concepts that are difficult to define child and work and labour. These three concepts can mean different times. However, in the context of child labour a working definition of 'Child' may be a person below the age of 15 years. Set by minimum age convention No. 138 (1973) of 18 years as set by U.N. conception of the right of the child (1989). Child labour is equated with exploitation deprivation of the children right to their health, education even their childhood.

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Hazardous and exploitative child labour violates the right enshrined in the convention on the rights of the child. Labour is exploitative if it involves :

1. Full time work at too early an age.
2. Too many hours spent working.
3. Work that exerts undue physical, social or psychological stress.
4. Work and life on the street in bad conditions.
5. Inadequate pay.
6. Too much responsibility.
7. Work that hampers access to education.
8. Work that undermines children's dignity and self-esteem.
9. Work that is detrimental to full social and psychological development

How many work

Over 250 million children between the age of 5 and 14 are working in the developing world — one out of every four — and many of them are at risk from hazardous and exploitative labour.

Forms of Child Labour

Domestic service, forced and bonded labour, commercial sexual exploitation, industrial and plantation work, street work, work for the family, and girl's work are among the varied forms of the child labour.

The case of child labour are multiple and are related mostly to compulsion of poverty, economics deprivation, insufficient school facilities. Lack of resources, population growth and preference for work over education by poor families. In countries like Pakistan where there is no social security system, high unemployment rate and low per capital income. There are numerous cases where children are the only bread winners of the family because their father became unable to work at a very early age due to some problems.¹

In the contest of child labour, children are usually employed in agriculture, begging, construction, child prostitution, drug manufacture, gas and water related jobs, factory work, hotels, industrial work and in transport.

According to the survey done in (1981) about child labour, the factual position emerged as under :

In Villages	In Cities
40.3 Million	18.5 Million the No. of boys working
4.5 Million	2.2 Million the No. of girls working

This above table tells us that majority of children are working in villages and are employed in agriculture and traditional family skill.

In unskilled child labour is usually divided in to three parts :

1. Wages Labour.
2. Apprentices Learning.
3. Business man Children.

1. Wages Labour :

Children working in hotels are wages labour. Most of these children are of 9 — 10 years old. Their working duration in form 14 — 15 hours. They have to work continuously without taking any rest.

Even Non-Governmental Organizations teams not paying attention towards these children. Probably due to this reason that this is one local problems so their struggle about this case would not be appreciated.

2. Apprentices Learning

Due to lack of employments, a majority of poor parents are sending their children to skilled or semi-skilled institutions for training. In this contest the NGO's teams working for child labour have difference of opinion.

The NGO's teams working for the benefits of children are agreed with this point that the children working in this institution, however they are gaining money from these institution but their main goal is to learn the skill or training. On the other side teams consider it child labour.²

3. Business Man Children

In the contest of child labour third category is business man children who sell newspapers, different things on roads and streets.

Their are also labour laws that prohibit the employment of underage children. The punishment is prescribed for defaulters.

Child labour can be eradicated by giving social education to the workers and by establishing a free afternoon and evening school for the working children.

The root cause of child labour in our country is poverty and because of this giant killer life is no longer a matter of choice for most of people. Rather than condemning child labour one must have a deep insight in the problems and all the practical measures should be aimed at eradicating the real cause.

A definite need of changing the infra structure of our society and putting better acceptable alternatives before our children exists. Consistent efforts through human right agencies, children right committees must be made for thorough awareness in the public.

A child is the dawn of hope and child labour is its negation.

TACKLING THE ISSUE OF CHILD LABOUR

Can the child labour be eliminated by a mere resort to legislations? A number of countries have enacted such laws but the issue still prevails rather it is on the increase. Hence, the elimination process needs some further actions. Some argue that the issue can be resolved by mounting national and in particular international pressure with a special focus on the 'exploiters.' The Harkin Bill introduced in the US Senate led to world wide campaign by the international Confederation of Free Trade Unions (CFTU) on the issue and advocating trade linkages with labour standards. However, the evidence suggests that a mere resort to the enactment of laws or combining it with the threat of withdrawal of GSP status/banning of import has led to a further marginalisation of the marginalised. The manufactures and exporters, if need be, throw out the child labourers to keep the export orders intact. And this did happen in case of Bangladesh. The Bangladesh Garments 'Manufacturers and Exporters' Association (BGMEA), resorting to the threats of cancellation of orders, simply kicked out the children from their factories. But this action led to a further marginalisation and exploitation of the children, a large number of them resorted to beggary and prostitution. Luckily, futility of such campaigns was soon realised and employers were asked not to take uneducated workers and those below 12 years of age, and also implement social programmes for the displaced children. It is thus clearly seen that neither enactment of laws nor application of pressure tactics alone can help in the meaningful resolution of

the issue. What is then essentially needed is evolving of a comprehensive strategy and the consequent action plans dealing simultaneously with the elimination and rehabilitation of child labour. Such a policy should then also address the core issues such as; poverty, unemployment, under-employment, working conditions, labour laws, education and training, and social security. Such a strategy should also clearly differentiate between 'Child labour' and 'Child work' as well as working children in the organised sector, hazardous occupations, informal sector, agricultural sector and domestic service. A separate sub-set should exclusively deal with the exportables. Further the action plan(s) should clearly identify : (i) steps to be taken in the short-medium - and workers' organisations, producers of exportables, and media, and (ii) modalities of an integrated and well-coordinated mechanism. What is then essentially being visualised is the building of a coalition between the state and members of the civil society for tackling the issue of child labour in such a way that it helps in not only in the restoration of 'childhood' to the children of South Asia but, importantly, creates conditions for sustainable human development as well utilisation of human resources. The policies and programmes thus evolved and implemented then should be shared amongst the South Asian countries through the institution of the SAARC. Coming to the more specifics in that firstly, all out efforts are needed for the immediate withdrawal of children from the hazardous occupations. This can be materialised by an effective implementation of the existing laws. The implementation can be ensured by forming tripartite committees not only at the national and provincial (state) level but going down to the city level as well as different localities and areas within a city, and also the rural areas. These committees should comprise of government officials (which also include representatives of trade and location-specific organizations and representatives of workers (which also include concerned citizens and elders/teachers in case of rural areas). In South Asia, social pressure and motivation has been found to be the most effective way of influencing an event of getting the desired results. The functioning of such tripartite committees will also ensure elimination of illegal gratifications and undue pressure normally exerted by the government officials. The media, print and electronic, can play an important role in highlighting the work of such committees as well as the ill-effects of the use of child labour in all activities and in particular those termed as hazardous.³

Secondly the elimination steps should accompany greater and easy access to education and training institutions, particularly the primary education. Given the size of the children involved and the functioning of labour market requiring flexible study hours. This would not be achievable by formal

education institutions. Hence, the non-formal primary education (NFPE) should be promoted with active involvement of local communities and members of the tripartite committee. The BRACS experience has clearly demonstrated the role of NGOs in NFPE with active involvement of local communities in Bangladesh. In useful case of vocational training again, a resort will have to be made to the traditional *Ustad-Shagird* system but with making certain improvements. In case of Pakistan, the Allama Iqbal Open University has successfully launched an 'Open - teach programme. The *Ustads* (master craftsmen) and owners are approached by the University through its field/regional offices in a cluster of an activity. Say automobile repairing and asked/motivated to (i) spare his *Shagird* (trainee/employee), (ii) provide a place for two-hours where working children can be assembled, and (iii) to act as a resource person. The University then arranges basic functional literacy as well as programme for upgrading the skills. The necessary funds are made available through *Baitul Mal* (an Islamic fund created for helping the needy and the under-privileged). The University, undertakes an examination and provides certificates to the successful students besides giving a tool-kit free of cost. This experience can be studied and replicated in other South Asian countries preferably by their respective Open Universities.

Thirdly, a mechanism will have to be evolved for caring the needy and under-privileged. South Asia, as yet, has to evolve a social security system which is meaningful and effective. In case of Pakistan, the social security system can be evolved by streamlining the function of the *Zakat* Administration and the *Baitul Mal*. The other South Asian countries also need to streamline their social security institutions or even to go for their establishment. Presently only India and, in particular, Sri Lanka allocate funds for social security purposes.

Fourthly, it is the hundreds of activities falling under the informal sector where children are found working. In the first phase, efforts need to be directed to bring improvements in their working conditions and environments. Further, employers need to be motivated and persuaded for not using children under ten years of age. Here again the proposed tripartite committees can be used to act as a necessary social pressure group. Further, there is a need to encourage the employers to allow their child workers to participate in the flexible NFPE programmes, may be in their clusters besides initiating the BRACS like programmes. In case of Pakistan AIOU can utilise its infrastructure for imparting functional literacy programmes. In the meanwhile, the government of the region need to continue with their own education

expansion programme and then make at least the primary education compulsory. The curricula of post primary education, I may be clearly tuned to the needs of the labour market. In the foreseeable future, informal sector, agricultural sector and rural non-farm sector will continue to dominate the employment scene. Hence, there is a need to impart such education which is required to undertake activities falling in these sectors. The curricula should include guide-lines on as how to : organise a business, open a shop/poultry farm, obtain a credit, manage a store, do the marketing, open a letter of credit, do the livestock farming/be keeping horticulture, prepare land, procure raw materials and so on. An increasing vocationalisation and commercialisation of the post primary education is expected to make educational relevant to the labour market needs hence would be attractive for parents and children. Such a process can be greatly facilitated by the electronic media specially Radio by designing/preparing school broadcasts on the related subjects.

Fifthly, it is the area of domestic child'servant. There is a misconception amongst a large number of such employers, as indicated in an earlier section, that their use of children as domestic aid is essentially a humanitarian act and hence a social service. Such a misconception needs to be removed by the use of media and the proposed tripartite committees. Further, the employees also need not to be worked on for improving working conditions and environment, and to spare the worker for functional literacy programmes.

Sixthly, it relates to the exportables. Here one needs to do the advocacy for evolving a registration and certification mechanism-indicating that the product is child free. Further programmes should be evolved not only for the elimination but rehabilitation of child worker as well. The success of "Rugmark" in India has clearly shown the advantages of such a mechanism which is also acceptable to the importing countries. In fact, the importers are also found willing to contribute towards the social programmes.

Seventhly, it is the governments and policy makers in South Asia, who have to take firm stand. They need to increasingly focus on the development of overall social sector and to see as how they can meet the SAARC Commitment of Elimination child labour from the hazardous occupation by 2000 and by 2010 complete elimination of child labour with universal primary education.⁴ The government need to find to tune their policies with the consideration of generating productive employment opportunities for all the able and willing to work, the civil society initiatives, particularly, they need to see as how to support the replication of experiments like Grameen Bank of Bangladesh which has successfully addressed the poverty issue by arranging small collateral free

loans on group guarantees for the promotion of hundreds of self employment activities. Moreover, the government promotion and manpower development plan, they also need to streamline the activities of the existing institutional machinery created for EP & MD whereby it responds more effectively and timely to the challenges.

Lastly it is the evolving of a meaningful cooperative mechanism amongst the SAARC countries. The cooperation, in particular should be directed towards : (i) pooling of knowledge and sharing each other's experiences, (ii) undertaking joint R & D activities especially directed towards those areas/activities which are labour intensive as well as productive, (iii) taking joint stands at international forums and (iv) building a caring and sharing South Asian society free of tensions. Huge resources unfortunately are presently spent on meeting the perceived internal and external security threats. But this is done at the cost of denying development needs of other sectors. Major casualty has invariably been the social sector. The real security threats in South Asia are no other than growing unemployment, poverty, ignorance and urban slums. They need to be addressed on priority basis. Adequate resolution of them would also result in child labour free society in South Asia.⁵

THE ROLE OF THE MEDIA

A key to the issue of the child labour is the level of motivation of the people and here comes the role of the media. They need to be educated and motivated. T.V., Radio and Print Media has the responsibility to produce effective audio-visual programmes for the purpose in harmony with our socio economics and cultural values. Similarly education sector will play an effective role in the education of this all important programmes. Media can play a role as a liaison between the people and those who want to settle this issue positively. The challenge of child labour is difficult but not impossible to manage. This issue can be seen in the light of rapid growth of population which is growing at a rate of 3.1 per cent. These are cold statistics staring us in the face and challenging us to act and act now in simple words. It means that even if we succeed in doubling our food out-put, our schools and colleges, our hospitals and our roads and highways and the number of housing units, the standard of living of our people would not have improved a bit at the end of the year 2014.

In view of this situation prevailing in population we have to appreciate the problems of child labour and come up with a remedy today. Tomorrow may be too late. We would have come the laughing stock of the world.⁶

According to the convention on the right of the child which unanimously adopted by the forty-fourth U.N.O. General Assembly on 29th November, 1989, the International Committee took a major step towards recognizing and ensuring the basic dignity and right of the world including their development.

This universal treaty is based on the principle that each child has the right to benefit from provisions aimed at securing his well being and development into an active and responsible member of society.⁷

It is the duty of the Media to create awareness among the masses about the difficulties and health problems of the children facing work. The Media must develop the thinking of the people representatives particularly at the level of Councilors which are good source and great helps to solve the issue at local level. They have been involved in Community level to observe personally right situation of the children.

Child labour is at once an important and sensitive undertaking. It has to be handled with case and dexterity and by encouraging people to think to bring about a change in their out-look.

This is one of the problems that Pakistan is facing. The people at large are aware of the problem and this is the encouraging sign which will help to solve the problem provided the actions are taken with due care and caution and through a planned manner.

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Book Review

Lawrance Ziring,

Pakistan in the Twentieth Century - A Political History,

Oxford University Press, 1997, Price Rs. 795.

In this comprehensive study spread over thirteen chapters, Dr. Lawrence Ziring provides a narrative of political development in Pakistan extending over the entire period of Pakistan existence as an independent state, and even before his earlier works, *Ayub Khan Era* and *Enigma of Policies of Pakistan* were also well-received and the scholarship of the author were given deep appreciation.

Before the beginning and the formation of Pakistan are the first two chapters in which he offers an indepth analysis of the events leading to the creation of Pakistan. But he makes a fundamental error of judgement when he states : "In essence, both the Congress and the Muslim League were nationalist and secular parties." Nationalism of the Muslim League as declared in the three main objectives of the setting-up of the League was the protection of the rights of the Muslims of India and this fact, right at the start, lent colour to the Muslim League which could be anything but secular. This assumption had influenced some of the ideas of the author about the subsequent history of Pakistan.

He discussed in detail the Radcliffe Award and noted injustice done to Pakistan when Murshidabad and Nadia, Ajnala Tehsil of Amritsar and Nakodar, Tehsil of Jullundhar were unjutly given to India. All of them had majority of Muslims. Kashmir has been sigularly stated as a glaring exercise of how India deprived Pakistan the state of Jammu and Kashmir against the wishes of the people.

Focussing the attention on the constitution-making in Pakistan, he highlights the problems which the framers of the constitution faced. He notices the difficulties posed by the demands of autonomy by East Pakistan. He develops the narrative and roaming through Ayub Khan, of which he had special knowledge, he had accurately assessed his contribution : "Ayub was told that all that he had contributed to the political evolution of Pakistan would have to be scrapped." The Presidential system and the Basic Democracies were

wrapped up and the Parliamentary forms of government once again occupied the main stage of the political life of Pakistan.

The dismemberment of Pakistan in 1971 finds extensive place in this work. National Elections of 1970, role of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, six points of Awami League has been pretty accurately analysed. When the civil war broke out, the new situation was abundantly clear. However, it was expected that the campaign was going to be a brief one. But it proved fatal when it extended beyond expectations.

Aftermath of debacle of Dacca brought Mr. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto in power. But his "defiant and conciliatory" attitude failed and Army once again took over power under General Zia-ul-Haq. The people's attitude on this take-over has been well-stated : "Martial Law had become a customary and not unexpected feature of Pakistani political life."

He goes on to provide to postponement of the promised General Elections, Islamization, New Political Order of General Zia and his death in an air-crash. He gave an accurate assessment of Ghulam Ishaq Khan as "the pivotal actor in Pakistan after Zia."

Ziring gave a clean chit to Mr. Moeen Qureshi, the Prime Minister for the interim period : "Playing the role of the white-knight he exposed years of corruption when he issued a public list indentifying 5000 loan defaulters." Corruption is still the issue which occupies the centre of political discussions in Pakistan and this was for the first time that it was given due place by Mr. Moeen Qureshi.

Events leading to the dismissal of Benazir government on 5th November 1996, the second time and this time by Mr. Farooq Legari, the President of Pakistan, have been described dispassionately.

He concluded this study with a cool prediction on the future developments : "Pakistan will survive only if the people who inhabit the region believe they are a community, that, in spite of their peculiar diversity, they are, after all, one people."

Pakistan had come to stay and the nuclear Pakistan, it may be stated with full faith and conviction had definitely come to stay. The Muslim India had willed Pakistan into being and it is this will that confers continued existence on the state of Pakistan. God had given everything to the people of Pakistan and over the fifty years, the faith of the people of Pakistan had frustrated all the ill-designs of the enemy. Indeed, God has bestowed eternal living to Pakistan. What mostly the Western scholars miss in the judgement is the God's hand in the making of the world.

Statements

SOUTH ASIAN REGIONAL COOPERATION

July to December, 1995

SAARC MINISTERIAL MEETING ON WOMEN : TOWARDS THE FOURTH WORLD CONFERENCE ON WOMEN IN BEIJING

Dhaka, Bangladesh : July 29-30, 1995

The SAARC Ministerial Meeting on Women was held in Dhaka on 29-30 July 1995 in preparation for the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing. Delegates from all member countries attended the meeting. Secretary-General, Y.K. Silwal and Director, Ahmed Latheef represented the SAARC Secretariat at the meeting.

The two-day meeting was inaugurated by the Prime Minister of Bangladesh, Begum Khaleda Zia. In her inaugural address the Prime Minister highlighted the particular challenges, issues and concerns facing the millions of women of the SAARC region, such as social inequality between men and women in every sphere of life, lack of social security, curse of poverty, and violence against women. She also emphasised on the necessity of ensuring education, health and nutrition and said "investment in women development is far more profitable than in industry or in trade."

The Secretary-General, Y. K. Silwal made a statement at the inaugural session in which he emphasised that SAARC as a regional organisation comprising one fifth of the world's population needed to strengthen its common position for projection at the World Conference on Women in Beijing.

In their presentations, the heads of delegation highlighted the policies and programmes being carried out as well as the achievements made by their

These Statements have been prepared by Syed Karim Haider, Pakistan Study Centre, Quaid-i-Azam Campus, University of the Punjab, Lahore.

respective countries aimed at improving the status of women and girl child. The meeting adopted the "Dhaka Resolution on Women" which emphasised the key concerns of member states and decided to forward the document to the Fourth World Conference on Women, as additional input from SAARC countries.

The Dhaka Resolution on Women recognised the highest priority given by member states to the issue of persistent and increasing burden of poverty on women, and the imperative need for the national efforts for poverty eradication to be reinforced by a favourable international economic environment. The Resolution called for a categorical commitment from the international community to new and additional resources to the strategies and objectives identified under the draft Beijing Plan of Action.

The Resolution highlighted that mainstreaming of gender perspectives and empowerment of women at all levels in the economics, political and social process is essential for the upliftment of the status of women. This would require appropriate changes and commitments at all levels, including involvement of women in the decision making process. It further call for strengthening national machinery for women and girl child.

The Resolution also call for the reiteration at the highest level the commitment to the needs of the girl child particularly to the elimination of all forms of discrimination against her and expressed the need to strengthen the efforts of member countries to tackle incidence of violence against women and the girl child. Member countries were urged to provide equal access to educational opportunities as well as health care services and nutrition.

SAARC AND UNDP ENTER INTO COOPERATIVE RELATIONSHIP

SAARC and UNDP have signed in August 1995, an MOU agreeing to a cooperative relationship in pursuit of their common objectives. SAARC Secretary-General, Y. K. Silwal and UNDP Administrator, James Gustave Speth signed the MOU on behalf of SAARC and UNDP, respectively. The two organisations have through this MOU agreed to :

- (i) Identify ways to support the efforts of their member states in promoting sustainable human development through their programmes and activities designed to attain poverty elimination, preservation and protection of environment, regeneration of natural resources, employment creation, and the goals of women in development.

- (ii) Inform each other of their initiatives and plans of regional relevance and undertaking periodic consultations to identify and elaborate joint activities in agreed fields.
- (iii) Develop, implement, and publish studies based on priority concerns identified by government of their member states in fields such as environment, employment, trade, social mobilization, and gender issues.
- (iv) Exchange, on a regular basis, analytical reports, technical publication, and other relevant documentation.

SAARC AND UNDCP SIGNED MOU

SAARC and the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) have signed a Memorandum Of Understanding (MOU), agreeing to enter into a cooperative relationship with the objective of implementing their drug control related mandates and coordinating their respective activities.

After its signature by the Executive Director of UNDCP, Giorgio Giacomelli in Vienna, the SAARC Secretary-General, Y.K. Silwal signed the MOU at the SAARC Secretariat on 18 August 1995.

Present on the occasion were Carroll Long, Resident Representative of UNDP and Amanullah Khan, Resident Coordinator of UNDCP in Kathmandu.

INDIA RATIFIES SAPTA

India : August 22, 1995

Agreement on SAARC Preferential Trading Agreement (SAPTA) has been ratified by the government of India on 22nd August 1995. India is the fifth SAARC member state to ratify the Agreement. The original instrument of ratification from India has been deposited with the SAARC Secretary-General. Nepal, Sri Lanka, Bhutan and the Maldives had earlier ratified the SAPTA Agreement. The finalization of the consolidated national schedules of concessions under SPATA in April 1995 has paved the way for member countries to take necessary action to ratify the Agreement.

The Council of Ministers at its fifteenth session urged member states to operationalise SAPTA preferably by 8th November 1995. The Council also

agreed that the full and timely realisation of the benefits of regional economic cooperation required (a) the implementation of other related measures such as the removal of para-tariff, non-tariff and other trade control barriers within the specific time-frames, and (b) eventual progression to the creation of a free-trade area in the region. Subsequent to the completion of the SAPTA process, efforts will be made in the direction of examining measures to be taken in order to establish a free trade area in the SAARC region.

The Heads of State of Government at their New Delhi Summit in May this year reiterated their firm belief that the operationalisation of SAPTA would herald the beginning of a new and significant process of regional cooperation and would lend strength to SAARC as an institution for promoting the welfare of the peoples of South Asia.

SECOND SPECIAL SESSION OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE

New Delhi, India : August 25-26, 1995

The second special session of the Standing Committee was held in New Delhi on 25-26 August, 1995 to : (i) Review institutional mechanisms and activities of SAARC including, *inter-alia* : (a) Evaluation of the functioning of Technical Committees; and (b) Amalgamation/alteration of the mandate of the Technical Committees; (ii) Review the role of the SAARC Secretariat, and (iii) Consider the SAARC Youth Awards Scheme.

While reviewing the institutional mechanism and activities of SAARC, the Committee decided, *inter-alia*, that the Technical Committees should formulate their activities by incorporating targets and quantifiable performance within appropriate time-frame to facilitate objective evaluation of the achievement of those Technical Committees. It was also decided that the SAARC Secretariat should periodically prepare progress reports assessing whether the goals and targets have been achieved within the given time-frame. It further decided that the second meeting of Chairperson of the Technical Committees be held at the SAARC Secretariat during the last week of November 1995 in order to review progress on the implementation of the recommendations of their first meeting and suggest measures to further strengthen inter-sectorial coordination.

The Committee considered the amalgamation/alteration of Technical Committees and decided to merge Technical Committee on Environment and

Meteorology and designate it as the Technical Committee on Environment and Meteorology with effect from January 1, 1996. It also decided to rename the Technical Committee on Health and Population Activities as the Technical Committee on Health, Population Activities and Child Welfare.

While reviewing the role of the SAARC Secretariat, the Committee felt that the guidelines and procedures on rationalising SAARC activities recommended by the first special session of the Standing Committee be fully complied with and that there should be periodic review of the progress of their implementation. The Committee also decided that SAARC recognised regional apex bodies should keep the Secretariat fully informed of their activities and recommended that such apex bodies invite the Secretary-General or his representative to attend their annual meetings.

The Committee discussed various aspects of SAARC Youth Awards Scheme and decided that the national focal points should examine the scheme during the scheduled second meeting of the Chairpersons of the Technical Committees in Kathmandu.

WORKSHOPS/SEMINARS HELD DURING JULY — SEPTEMBER 1995

Workshop on Foot and Mouth Disease - Production of Biotechnological Vaccines and Diagnostics, July 3—7, Bangalore.

Seminar on Waste Recycling Based on Bio-Gas Technology, July 18—20, Dhaka.

Training course in the areas of ISO-9000 Software Quality Assurance, Standards and Calibration-Practices and Principles, Mass Soldering Techniques, & Surface Mount Technology, July 17-25, New Delhi.

- *Workshop on Small Group Approach to Rural Development, August 23-25, 1995, Colombo.*
- *Expert Group meeting for the establishment of Networking Arrangement in the field of Bio-technology and Genetic Engineering, August 30-31, New Delhi.*
- *Workshop on Small Group Approach to Rural Development, August 23-25, Colombo.*

**PRESIDENT OF SRI LANKA INAUGURATES SOUTH
ASIAN BUSINESS LEADERS' FORUM****Colombo, Sri Lanka : 31 August — 1st September, 1995**

The meeting of South Asian Business Leaders' Forum was held in Colombo on 31 August - 1st September 1995 to discuss ways and means of forging greater economic cooperation and harnessing the economic potential of the SAARC region.

The meeting was inaugurated by the President of Sri Lanka, (Mrs.) Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga who delivered the keynote address. Minister of Foreign Affairs of Sri Lanka, Lakshman Kadirgamar also addressed the Forum. SAARC Secretary-General, Y.K. Silwal in his address emphasised once against that "It was the right time for intensification and consolidation of cooperation among the countries of the region in diverse economic fields which are to be discussed in the meeting." He expressed his confidence that the deliberations of the meeting will result in better exploitation of the trade opportunities provided by SAPTA which was going to be operationalised by the end of this year.

The meeting organised jointly by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Sri Lanka and the Ceylon Chamber of Commerce focused on promoting regional cooperation in the field of industries, agriculture, services, tourism, fisheries, infrastructure, energy, investment and trade, and human resources development by forming committees for each of these sectors.

NEW DIRECTOR FROM BHUTAN

(Ms.) Kunzang C. Namgyel has been nominated by the government of Bhutan to join the SAARC Secretariat as Director from Bhutan. She will be succeeding (Ms.) Nima Ome who served the Secretariat as the first Director from Bhutan from January 1991 to June 1995. Namgyel will be joining the Secretariat in the third week of October 1995.

As a career diplomat since 1980, Namgyel has served in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Bhutan and has held several responsibilities including her postings in the Royal Bhutanese Embassy in New Delhi and the Permanent Mission of Bhutan to the United Nations in New York. Most recently she served as Director (SAARC) in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Bhutan.

**TECHNICAL COMMITTEE ON PREVENTION
OF DRUG TRAFFICKING AND DRUG ABUSE****Islamabad, Pakistan : September 19-20, 1995**

The tenth meeting of the Technical Committee on Prevention of Drug Trafficking and Drug Abuse was held in Islamabad on September 19-20, 1995. Representatives from all member countries participated in the meeting. The SAARC Secretariat was represented by Director, Ranjith P. Jayasooriya.

The meeting was inaugurated by Maj. Gen. (Retd.) Nasir Ullah Khan Babar, Minister for Interior, Narcotics Control and Federal Investigation and chaired by Director, Drug Demand Reduction Directorate of Anti Narcotics Force of Pakistan, Shakil Durrani.

Following reports of the activities held since the last meeting of the Committee, were presented by the respective host member countries :

- (i) Training workshop on the role of NGOs in the treatment and rehabilitation of drug addicts.
- (ii) Workshop on preventive education with emphasis on curriculum development for schools.
- (iii) Presentation by Bangladesh of the report on SAARC Forum on the role of NGOs in drug demand reduction.

The Committee reviewed the progress in the implementation of its earlier decisions on the following subjects :

- (i) Exchange of information on programme of Drug Abuse Control and Prevention.
- (ii) Development of local and indigenous methods/modalities for treatment and rehabilitation and exchange of information.
- (iii) Additional information to be included in the Directory of NGOs identified to facilitate interacting and coordination in drug abuse prevention, treatment and rehabilitation.
- (iv) Training and transfer of know-how, expertise in law enforcement, rehabilitation and preventive education.

- (v) Assignment of drug liaison responsibilities to diplomatic officers in the SAARC missions in the region.
- (vi) Expeditious implementation of Global Programme of Action (GPA) and the formulation of multi-year master plans.

While discussing the implementation of the SAARC Convention on Narcotics Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, mechanisms and strategies for implementation, consolidation and harmonization of national drug legislation, the delegates from all member countries apprised the meeting of the policy decisions to bring their laws in conformity with the SAARC Convention.

The Committee reviewed of functioning of the SAARC Drug Offences Monitoring Desk (SDOMD) and requested all member states to forward a concise country report containing the current drug trafficking situation and trends for incorporation in the annual bulletin which would be prepared by SDOMD. It was also felt that there was a need for a review of the existing Initial Report Form (IRF) and Detailed Report Form (DRF) and requested Sri Lankan delegation to undertake this review.

The Committee expressed its satisfaction at the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding between SAARC and UNDCP. It also endorsed cooperation with Colombo Plan Bureau regarding the SAARC Forum on the role of NGOs in Drug Demand Reduction and establishing a working relationship with the SAARC Secretariat.

SAARC SECRETARY-GENERAL CALLS ON PRIME MINISTER OF NEPAL

Nipal : September 24, 1995

Secretary-General, Y.K. Silwal called on the Prime Minister of Nepal, Sher Bahadur Deuba at the latter's office on 24 September, 1995 and expressed his warm felicitations to the Prime Minister on his appointment to the high office.

During the meeting, the Secretary-General apprised the Prime Minister regarding on-going activities of SAARC, in particular, the operationalization of the Agreement on SAPTA by November 1995, which he added would clearly demonstrate the commitment of member states to work together in the field of trade and economy to better the lives of the peoples of the region.

Prime Minister Deuba expressed satisfaction on the progress SAARC has made since its inception said that he keenly looked forward to the commemoration of the Tenth Anniversary of SAARC in December 1995. The Prime Minister confident that the next decade would result in further concrete achievements for the benefit of the South Asian people. The Prime Minister assured the Secretary-General of fullest support and assistance of His Majesty's Government of Nepal in the SAARC process.

NEW EDITION OF SAARC IN BRIEF

A new edition of *SAARC in Brief* has been published by the Secretariat. This updated edition highlights the achievements of the organization in promoting of regional cooperation in South Asia during its first decade. The information on recent developments relating to the expansion of cooperation in the core economic and trade areas, SAPTA, poverty eradication as well as collaboration with international and regional organisations is also include in this edition. The organisational framework of SAARC has also been revised and included in the publication.

EXPERT GROUP MEETING ON SOUTH ASIAN DEVELOPMENT FUND

Kathmandu, Nepal : September 26-27, 1995

A meeting of the Expert Group on the establishment of the South Asian Development Fund (SADF) was held at the SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu on September 26-27, 1995.

The meeting was chaired by the leader of the Indian delegation, R.M. Roy. The Expert Group consisted of Members of the Council of SAARC Fund for Regional Projects and the national focal points of SAARC member states. The SAARC Secretariat was represented by Directors, Ashok K. Attri and Tahir Iqbal Butt.

At the opening session, Secretary-General, Y.K. Silwal drew the attention of the delegates to the fact that the SAARC Leaders had already endorsed the establishment of a three-window SADF with the merger of SAARC Fund for Regional Projects, SAARC Regional Fund, and a third window for Social Development and Infrastructure Development. He stressed that SADF has the potential of becoming an effective instrument of economic and social development in the SAARC region.

The Expert Group finalised the terms of reference, operational modalities and composition of the Governing Board of SADF. It was decided that the umbrella fund would have three windows, *vis*, Window for Identification and Development of Projects; Window for Institutional and Human Resource Development Projects; and Window for Social and Infrastructure Development Project.

CUSTOMS ADMINISTRATIONS MEET ON HS NOMENCLATURE

New Delhi, India : October 16-18, 1995

A Meeting of the Customs Administrations of the SAARC Countries on the Implementation of the revised HS Nomenclature was held in New Delhi on October 16-18, 1995.

The Meeting attended by representatives from all Member Countries was chaired by Tarun Roy, Chairman of the Central Board of Excise and Customs of India. Director, Ashok K. Attri represented the SAARC Secretariat at the meeting.

The Meeting provided a platform to the Customs administrations of the SAARC Member States to discuss the nature and scope of the HS-1996 version and evolve a coordinated approach towards its implementation. The delegates exchanged views on the difficulties experienced and the methodology adopted for the implementation of the Revised HS Nomenclature.

The Report of this meeting has been approved by the Sixth Meeting of Committee on Economic Cooperation, which also agreed that the representatives of Customs Administrations should meet regularly to discuss issues of common concern.

The implementation of the revised version of Harmonised Commodity Description and Coding System (HS) is expected to begin from 1st January 1996.

TECHNICAL COMMITTEE ON RURAL DEVELOPMENT MEETS

Kathmandu, Nepal : November 6-7, 1995

The Fourteenth Meeting of the SAARC Technical Committee on Rural Development attended by delegates from all Member States was held in Kathmandu on November 6-7, 1995. Minister for Local Development of Nepal, Kamal Thapa inaugurated the meeting, which was chaired by Uday Raj

Soti, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Local Development of Nepal. SAARC Secretariat was represented by Director, Ahmed Latheef.

The Committee considered details for establishing the Shelter Information Network — 'SHELTERNET' among the Member Countries.

Regarding the preparation of Research Studies on Rural Housing and Transfer of Technology, the Committee noted that India would complete the Studies and convene a Workshop on Rural Housing and Transfer of Technology during the second quarter of 1996.

The Committee reviewed the progress on the networking arrangements among institutions in Member Countries dealing with appropriate Rural Technology, and compilation of the SAARC Directory of Experts on Rural Development. It decided that Bangladesh would complete the compilation of the Lists of Institutions and Directory of Experts by mid 1996.

The Committee reviewed the implementation of the Calendar of Activities for 1994-95 and proposed new activities for 1996. The proposed Calendar for 1996, which includes workshops/seminars, covers areas such as production credit of rural women, enhanced role of NGOs in rural development, poverty focused rural development, and functioning of local institutions.

SAARC FOCUSES ON GIRL-CHILD IN ESPECIALLY DIFFICULT CIRCUMSTANCES (GCEDC)

Colombo, Sri Lanka : November 1-3, 1995

A SAARC Workshop on Girl-Child in Especially Difficult Circumstances (GCEDC) was held in Colombo on November 1-3, 1995. The workshop was held in pursuance of the decision of the Eighth SAARC Summit (New Delhi, May, 1995) which had recognised the serious threat faced by GCEDC and directed that an urgent Appraisal be prepared and specific recommendations presented to the Ninth SAARC Summit.

The Workshop deliberated in detail on the serious threat faced by certain groups of Girl Children in Especially Difficult Circumstances (GCEDC) in South Asia who are subjected to sex trade, bonded for work, exploited as labourers orphaned, disabled, etc.

The Workshop, which was held with the assistance of UNICEF under the Memorandum of Understanding signed with SAARC, was attended by delegates from all Member States representing the government and NGO

sectors. SAARC Secretariat and UNICEF were represented by Director, Ahmed Latheef and Regional Urban Adviser, Leo Fonseka, respectively.

Country appraisals were presented at the workshop, which also benefited from a recent five-country study commissioned by UNICEF.

The Workshop identified several common key issues and concerns affecting the Girl-Child, both directly and indirectly. These relate to the existing Discriminatory Laws and Attitudes, child labour, bonded labour, trafficking of girls, their abuse and violence against them, inadequate budgetary allocations and poor utilization of resources for social sector programmes, low school enrolment and retention rates, antiquated vagrancy acts and laws, etc.

The deliberations of the Workshop led to a set of recommendations on policy and programme issues relating to GCEDC, with focus on the needs of Girl-Child in Especially Difficult Circumstances, particularly the three worst affected groups, i.e., female child labourers, girls who are being trafficked within and between countries, and girl-children out of school.

COUNCIL FOR SAARC FUND FOR REGIONAL PROJECTS MEETS

Islamabad, Pakistan : November 15-16, 1995

The Tenth Meeting of the Council for SAARC Fund for Regional Projects (CSFRP) was held in Islamabad on November 15-16, 1995 with the participation of Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal and Pakistan.

The meeting was inaugurated by the Chairman of the National Development Finance Cooperation (NDFC) of Pakistan, Muhammad Munawar. The SAARC Secretariat was represented by Director Tahir Iqbal Butt.

The Council reviewed the progress relating to the thirteen feasibility studies now carried out by Member States. The Council took decisions to complete the studies in time and to remove the procedural bottlenecks to ensure smooth functioning. It urged Member States to give special attention to the identification of sponsors/financiers for the projects whose studies are nearing completion or completed and found viable. The Council also considered the Report of the Experts Group Meeting on the establishment of

South Asian Development Fund and decided that CSFRP will continue to work, carry out its functions and hold its regular meetings till such time SADF becomes operational.

The Council elected Pakistan as the next Chairman of CSFRP beginning from January 1, 1996, as Nepal's term would expire on December 31, 1995. The Council also decided that the next Meeting of CSFRP would be held in Bhutan in May, 1996.

TECHNICAL COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT CONVENES ITS THIRD MEETING

Colombo, Sri Lanka : November 22-23, 1995

The Third Meeting of the SAARC Technical Committee on Environment attended by all Member States was held in Colombo on November 22-23, 1995. Minister of Transport, Environment, and Women's Affairs of Sri Lanka, Srimani Athulathmudali, inaugurated the meeting, which was chaired by Secretary, Ministry of Transport, Environment and Women's Affairs of Sri Lanka, Cecil Amerasinghe. The SAARC Secretariat was represented by Director, Liaquat Ali Choudhury.

The Meeting considered the status of implementation of various recommendations made in the two SAARC Studies, viz : (a) Regional Study on the Causes and Consequences of Natural Disasters and the Protection and Preservation of Environment, and (b) Regional Study on Greenhouse Effect and its Impact on the Region. The Committee also explored the possibility of new initiatives in the form of activities to be undertaken by the Member States in such areas as Environmental Legislation and Management, Bio-diversity, Transport and related Environmental Issues, Wildlife Management. etc.

COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC COOPERATION HOLDS ITS SIXTH MEETING

New Delhi, India : November 16-17, 1995

The Sixth Meeting of Committee on Economic Cooperation (CEC) comprising Commerce Secretaries of SAARC Member Countries, took place in New Delhi on November 16-17, 1995 under the Chairmanship of Tejendra Khanna, Commerce Secretary of India. The meeting was attended by all Member States. SAARC Secretary-General, Y.K. Silwal and Director, Ashok

K. Attri represented the Secretariat. The Meeting was opened by the Secretary-General.

The Committee recommended that with the operationalisation of SAARC Preferential Trading Arrangement (SAPTA) with effect from 7th December 1995, it was desirable to work towards removal of para-tariff and non-tariff barriers, widening and deepening the tariff cuts and expanding the list of products to be included for intra-SAARC preferential trade under SAPTA. It reiterated that the South Asian Free Trade Area (SAFTA) was a clear eventual goal, at the same time it noted that the progress towards it may have to be in gradual stages. To push the SAPTA process forward, it recommended that the Inter-Governmental Group on Trade Liberalisation be reconvened in early 1996 to conduct the Second Round of Trade Negotiations under SAPTA and appreciated the offer of Sri Lanka to host its first meeting.

The Committee also recommended that the first Meeting of the Committee of Participants of SAPTA may be held in the third quarter of 1996 to review the progress in the implementation of the Agreement.

The Committee also decided that each Member Country will notify the SAARC Secretariat and the SAARC Chamber of Commerce and Industry about their overseas bulk purchases on a voluntary basis for timely sharing of information. A Group of Consultants from Research Institutions of Member States has been mandated to conduct a tripartite study involving governments, business and academic sectors to accelerate the process of eventual progression to the creation of a free-trade area in the region.

Other important matters considered by the Committee included Meeting of SAARC Commerce Ministers; SAARC Trade Fair to be held in New Delhi in January 1996; promotion of intra-regional investment and establishment of joint ventures catering to national, regional and international markets; Project Proposal of ITC Geneva on promotion of intra-SAARC trade; and the Report of the Consultant on Transport Infrastructure and Transit Facilities.

Another noteworthy feature of the Meeting was that for the first time, the President of SAARC Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Salman F. Rahman of Bangladesh was invited to this Meeting along with other office bearers of the Chamber to give private sector's feedback on the SAARC economic and trade cooperation. The President of the SAARC Chamber will continue to be invited to the future meetings of the Committee for similar interaction.

TECHNICAL COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORT MEETS IN KATHMANDU

Kathmandu, Nepal : November 21-22, 1995

The Fourteenth Meeting of Technical Committee on Transport attended by delegates from all Member States was held in Kathmandu on 21-22 November 1995.

Acting Secretary, Ministry of Works and Transport of His Majesty's Government of Nepal Varun Prasad Shrestha inaugurated the Meeting, which was chaired by K.B. Khadgi, Senior Divisional Engineer, Ministry of Works and Transport of Nepal. SAARC Secretariat was represented by Director Prabal S.J.B. Rana.

The Committee reviewed the progress in the implementation of its earlier decisions. It noted that the next updation of the Compendias of Information on Roads and Railway by India and Sri Lanka respectively fell due in 1995 and requested Member States to furnish the latest data in these areas as early as possible. Similarly, Member States were also requested to furnish the required information for preparation of Directories on (i) Centres of Excellence and (ii) Consultants and Experts in the field of Transport. Other Member States were requested to furnish the required information, preferably within three months.

Regarding the concept paper of Nepal on Consultancy/Contracting Joint Ventures in the Transport Sector in the SAARC region, it was noted that the comments from all Member States had still not been received.

As for Sri Lanka's proposal to establish joint venture operations to provide Container Liner Shipping Services for Long Haul Trade Routes, the Committee considered the Report of the Meeting of Working Group held in Colombo on 16-17 March 1995 and decided to examine further the recommendations contained in the Report.

The Committee reviewed the status of implementation of the Calendar of Activities for the year 1995 and also formulated the new Calendar for 1996.

MEETING OF DIRECTORS OF CIVIL AVIATION

Colombo, Sri Lanka : November 28-29, 1995

A Meeting of the Directors of Civil Aviation under the Transport Sector was held in Colombo on November 28-29, 1995 to discuss regional

cooperation in areas of mutual interest in the field of civil aviation and review the progress of Sub-Committees on Air Transport and related matters.

The Directors of Civil Aviation of the Governments of Bhutan, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka participated in the meeting. The meeting was inaugurated by M.L.U. de S. Malalgoda, Director-General of Civil Aviation of Sri Lanka and the keynote address was delivered by the Minister of Media, Tourism and Aviation of Sri Lanka, Dharmasiri Senanyake.

The meeting reviewed the functioning of all the Sub-Committees namely (i) Sub-Committee on Air Traffic Control and Communication; (ii) Sub-Committee on Marketing and Scheduling; (iii) Technical Sub-Committee. The meeting also discussed the concept of flight safety oversight programme and the possibility of joint ventures in the area as referred by the Fourteenth Meeting of Technical Committee on Transport. The concept of Regional Cooperation in the field of Flight Safety Oversight was agreed to in principle. However, the meeting felt that since the modalities of execution of the programme should be looked into further by the respective Civil Aviation Authorities and the Governments, the issue may be brought up for detailed discussion at the next meeting of Chief Executives of Civil Aviation Authorities.

SEMINAR ON DRUG MONEY LAUNDERING

Islamabad, Pakistan : November 29-30, 1995

The SAARC Seminar on Drug Money Laundering was held in Islamabad on November 29-30, 1995. The Seminar was attended by delegates from Bangladesh, India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. The Seminar discussed all aspects relating to the problem of money laundering in the SAARC region as well as counter measures taken at the international level to curb the menace.

The Seminar specifically addressed issues relating to transaction of drug money laundering in the respective countries, implementation of the provisions of Vienna Convention of 1988 with regard to measures for countering money laundering in the SAARC region, and problems and bottle necks being faced by the Member Countries in this regard. The Seminar also focused on the areas of cooperation among the Member States for effective implementation of money laundering counter measures.

**PROGRAMMES/ACTIVITIES FINANCED UNDER
SAARC-JAPAN SPECIAL FUND**

Calcutta, India : December 5 - 8, 1995

Seminar-cum-Workshop of Tropical Cyclones and Forecasting

The SAARC Seminar-cum-Workshop on 'Tropical Cyclones and Forecasting' was organised by the Regional Meteorological Centre, Calcutta on December 5-8, 1995. Delegates from Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka participated in the Seminar. The inaugural session was presided over by Dr. N. Sen Roy, Director-General of Meteorology of India. The Seminar-cum-Workshop provided a useful forum to share among the Member Countries, the technical and scientific expertise including operational facilities for cyclone detection, tracking and method of forecasting existing in the region. Apart from benefitting from the lectures delivered by the renowned experts in the respective fields of tropical cyclones, the seminar provided its participants an opportunity to interact with experts and exchange ideas/views, and discuss practical problems on various aspects of the subject. Arrangements were also made for practical classes. The participants were shown around the Regional Meteorological Centre and Cyclone Detection Radar facilities in Calcutta to make them familiar with the activities of the Area Cyclone Warning Centre, Disaster Warning Dissemination System, capabilities of Storm Detecting Radar, etc.

**Workshop on Popularising and Teaching Astronomy and
Space Science through Telescope Making and Planetary Education**

A SAARC Workshop on Popularising and Teaching Astronomy and Space Science through Telescope and Planetarium Education for SAARC Countries was held in New Delhi on October 7-27, 1995 with popular participation from all Member States.

The Workshop provided the participants consisting of young science teachers, communicators and students from schools and Planetarium/Science Centres of SAARC Countries, to learn the basic fundamentals and concepts of Astronomy and Space Science through practical process of learning such as making the high power telescope and using of the same for observations of celestial objects.

The participants were encouraged to popularise the subject in their respective countries using existing planetarium and or portable and mobile

planetarium which can be taken to rural areas for the benefit of the common folk.

SAARC Expert Group Meeting on Cultivation/Utilization of Medicinal and Aromatic Plants

The SAARC Expert Group Meeting on Cultivation/Utilization of Medicinal and Aromatic Plants was held in Colombo, on October 18-20, 1995 with the participation from Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. The Minister of Science, Technology and Human Resources Development of Sri Lanka, Bernard Soysa inaugurated the meeting.

During the meeting participants exchanged information on the present status of the Medicinal and Aromatic Plant Industries in their respective countries. The meeting provided a useful forum to promote cooperation among scientists of SAARC region through the development of programmes for technical cooperation, technology transfer, investment promotion in the areas of phytopharmaceutical flavour and fragrance industries. The meeting also discussed ways and means of improving the economic utilisation of the regional resources in this respect.

The Expert Group highlighted the need to compile a regional list of medicinal and aromatic plants used for industrial purposes, initiate dynamic research and development thrust in the multidisciplinary aspects of the industry, conduct research studies on the growth and reproductive behaviour of those species on the verge of extinction, and to develop national policies in Member States, leading to a regional policy of utilisation and conservation of medicinal and aromatic plants.

SAARC Seminar on Essential Drugs Programmes

A SAARC Seminar on Essential Drugs Programmes was held in Thimphu November 28-29, 1995 with participation from Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. The Seminar was inaugurated by Dasho Sangay Ngedup, Secretary of Health Services of Bhutan.

Discussions during the seminar focused on issues such as access to medicine, rational drug use, quality, safety and efficacy of pharmaceutical products. The recommendations made at the end of the deliberations included those relating to strengthening primary health care including the delivery systems, and exchange of information and expertise among Member States on essential drugs, through various means such as seminars and training programmes. Working towards regional self sufficiency and strengthening

regional cooperation among the Member Countries in the pharmaceutical production, marketing and research also featured among the recommendations.

In addition to above Workshops/Seminars, the following two activities were also held under SAARC-Japan Special Fund :

- (i) Short-term Training on Computer Application in Library and Information Activities for the Information Professionals, New Delhi, November 6 - December 6, 1995.
- (ii) Second Meeting of the Panel of Experts on : (a) Agro-Meteorology; (b) Climatology and Data Exchange; and (c) Instrumentation, Karachi, November 21-23, 1995.

DELEGATION OF SAARC CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY

December 7, 1995

A delegation from SAARC Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) led by its President, Salman F. Rahman visited the SAARC Secretariat on December 7, 1995. The delegation held discussions with the SAARC Secretary-General, Y.K. Silwal and Directors of the Secretariat on the measures to be taken for expanding cooperation in the region in the field of trade and economic areas. The delegation was briefed by the Secretary-General and Directors about the activities of the Secretariat being undertaken in various fields.

The visit of the delegation coincided with the launching of SAARC Preferential Trading Arrangement (SAPTA) with effect from 7th December 1995. Secretary-General Silwal appreciated the efforts of the SAARC Chamber in disseminating information about SAPTA.

He also expressed his hope that the SAARC Chamber would make further contribution for implementation of SAPTA.

COMMEMORATION OF TENTH ANNIVERSARY OF SAARC

India : December 8, 1995

SAARC will complete its first decade on December 8, 1995. To make this occasion, the Council of Ministers had decided to meet in a Commemorative Session in India in December 1995. The Session would

review the progress and achievements of SAARC during its first ten years and evolves strategies and priorities for the future course of action to further accelerate and strengthen SAARC process. It further decided that the theme of the commemorative session would be 'SAARC - Vision for the Second Decade'.

At the SAARC Headquarters, the Secretary-General would host a special reception on 8th December 1995 to celebrate the occasion. In addition, a Photographic Exhibition would be organised at the Secretariat from December 1-7, 1995 focusing on achievements of SAARC during the past decade.

Member countries will also be organising various programmes/activities in their respective countries to commemorate the Tenth Anniversary of SAARC.

SIXTEENTH SESSION OF THE PROGRAMMING COMMITTEE HELD

New Delhi, India : December 14, 1995

The Programming Committee held its Sixteenth Session at New Delhi on December 14, 1995 under the Chairmanship of S.M. Gavai, Joint Secretary (SAARC), Ministry of External Affairs of India.

The Committee considered the Report of the Fourteenth Meeting of the SAARC Audio Visual Exchange (SAVE) Committee held in Islamabad on September 25-27, 1995 and recommended it for approval by the Standing Committee.

It reviewed the implementation of the Calendar of Activities since its last Session and recommended for approval by the Standing Committee the proposed Calendar of Activities for the year 1996.

The Committee examined the Estimated Financial Statement of 1995 and Budget Estimates of the Secretariat for the year 1996, and submitted the same to the Standing Committee for approval.

STANDING COMMITTEE CONVENES ITS TWENTY-FIRST SESSION

New Delhi, India : December 15-17, 1995

The twenty-first Session of the Standing Committee was held at New Delhi on December 15-17, 1995 under the chairmanship of the Foreign

Secretary of India, Salman Haidar. The Committee considered and approved the Report of the Sixteenth Session of the Programming Committee held prior to the Standing Committee.

While reviewing progress in the implementation of the Integrated Programme of Action (IPA), the Committee considered the Reports of the Meetings of the Technical Committees on Agriculture; Environment; Prevention of Drug Trafficking and Drug Abuse; Rural Development; Tourism; and Transport, which met since the last session of the Standing Committee. In this context, the Committee decided that (i) in formulating recommendations on cooperation with international organisations, Technical Committees should prepare detailed project proposals and submit them for consideration by the Standing Committee, (ii) Member States should ensure publicity and projection of activities of Technical Committees to a wider audience; and (iii) Member States may endeavour to promote closer interaction between the Technical Committees and relevant public and private sector organisations. The Committee also reiterated the need for Technical Committees to monitor and effectively implement their programmes.

The Committee also considered and approved the Report of the Second Meeting of the Governing Board of SAARC Documentation Centre (SDC).

While reviewing progress in the implementation of SAARC Regional Convention on Suppression of Terrorism, and the SAARC Convention on Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, the Committee emphasised on the need for regular flow of relevant information to enable the SAARC Terrorist Offences Monitoring Desk (STOMD) and the SAARC Drug Offences Monitoring Desk (SDOMD) in Colombo to function effectively.

Regarding the establishment of a three-window South Asian Development Fund (SADF), the Committee recommended to the Council of Ministers that the first meeting of the Governing Board of SADF may be held in Bangladesh.

While considering matters relating to economic and trade, the Committee welcomed the entry into force of the Agreement on SAPTA with effect from December 7, 1995, within the mandated schedule. It decided to host the Meeting of IGG on Trade Liberalisation in the first half of March 1996 in Sri Lanka, to initiate the Second Round of Trade Negotiations.

The Committee reviewed the implementation of activities under the SAARC-Japan Special Fund, and expressed satisfaction at the progress made in

1994-95. It approved additional activities for 1995-96, which include workshops/training programmes on Integrated Forestry Management, Women and Family, Library automation, and environmental impact assessment for tourism development.

The Committee reviewed SAARC's cooperation with international and regional organisations such as UNCTAD, UNICEF, UNDP, UNDCP, UNFPA, ITU, ITC, APT, ESCAP, EU, etc. It authorised the Secretary-General to sign the Memorandum of Understanding with the European Commission. On SAARC-ECO cooperation, the Committee decided that the Secretary-General may continue his informal contacts with the Secretary-General of ECO at the forthcoming meeting of the Executive Heads of Sub-Regional Organisations in Asia and Pacific Region and ESCAP at Tehran.

The Committee also reviewed the progress made by the SAARC-recognised regional Apex Bodies i.e. SAARC Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI), and SAARCLAW, and appreciated the work done by these bodies. It also examined the question of granting Observer Status at SAARC meetings.

The Committee took note of the World Conference against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children, to be held at Stockholm from August 27-31, 1996.

The Committee emphasised on the projection of SAARC activities within and outside the region. It advised the Secretary-General to examine the possibility of establishing SAARC Information Centres within and outside SAARC region.

COMMEMORATIVE SESSION OF THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS HELD TO MARK THE FIRST DECADE OF SAARC

New Delhi, India : December 18, 1995

The Council of Ministers met in a Commemorative Session on December 18, 1995 in New Delhi, to mark the First Decade of SAARC. During the Session the Ministers focused on the theme "SAARC - Vision for the Second Decade."

Prime Minister of India and current Chairman of SAARC, P.V. Narasimha Rao inaugurated the Commemorative Session. In his inaugural address, the Prime Minister stressed the need to consolidate the gains of

SAARC during its First Decade and further strengthen interaction among Member States to realise the full potential of their cooperation during the next ten years.

The Foreign Ministers of Member States, in their statements recalled the significant achievements made during the First Decade of SAARC and acknowledged that SAARC has evolved into a viable institution. They agreed that a landmark of economic cooperation has been the operationalisation of SAARC Preferential Trading Arrangement (SAPTA), and hoped that it would lead to the eventual realisation of South Asian Free Trade Area (SAFTA). The Ministers also reiterated their commitment to the eradication of poverty by placing the people at the centre of all development efforts. They felt that during the Second Decade, SAARC should consolidate the achievements of the past and build on them to achieve further progress in economic integration, poverty eradication and people-to-people contacts in the region. In their vision for the Second Decade, the Ministers emphasised on the need to harness the resources of the region in economic and social sectors.

SIXTEENTH SESSION OF THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS HELD

New Delhi, India : December 18-19, 1995

Following the Commemorative Session, the Foreign Ministers of Member States met in New Delhi on December 18-19, 1995 at the regular Sixteenth Session of the Council of Ministers. The Session was chaired by Pranab Mukherjee, Minister of External Affairs and Leader of the delegation of India.

The Council considered and approved the reports of the Second Special Session (New Delhi, August 25-26, 1995) and the Twenty-first Session (New Delhi, December 15-17, 1995) of the Standing Committee. It also approved the report of the Sixth Meeting of the Committee on Economic Cooperation (CEC).

The Council expressed its satisfaction at the entry into force of the Agreement on SAARC Preferential Trading Arrangement (SAPTA) with effect from December 7, 1995 and hoped that this would make an important contribution to the promotion of intra-regional trade in the SAARC region. The Council agreed that Member States should strive for the realisation of South Asian Free Trade Area (SAFTA) preferably by the year 2000 but before 2005 A.D.

While reviewing follow-up action taken on the Summit decisions, the Council noted the actions taken by Member States to observe 1995 as the 'SAARC Year of Poverty Eradication,' and reiterated the crucial importance of continuing actions at all levels to achieve the goal of poverty eradication preferably by 2002 A.D.

The Council recalled the decision of the Eighth SAARC Summit regarding the establishment of a three-tier mechanism to act as a forum for exchange of information and experiences on poverty eradication programmes in Member States, and noted the first-tier of this mechanism consisting of the Group of Secretaries concerned with poverty eradication and social development, and the second-tier consisting of the Finance/Planning Secretaries met in New Delhi from September 6-7, 1995 and September 8, 1995, respectively. It also noted that the third-tier comprising Finance/Planning Ministers would meet in New Delhi during the first week of January 1996.

It also reviewed the progress in the implementation of earlier decisions of the Council, including formulation of collective positions for presentation at major international meetings. It noted that the Ministerial Conference on Women held in Dhaka in July 1995, played an important role in projecting the collective position of Member States at the Beijing Conference on issues of vital concern to women and children.

The Council stressed the importance of formulating a collective position by Member States on issues before the World Food Summit scheduled to be held in Italy in November 1996, and decided to hold a preparatory meeting in Pakistan in 1996. Similarly, the Council decided to hold a Conference of Housing Ministers in Sri Lanka to formulate a collective SAARC position prior to the World HABITAT-II Conference, scheduled to be held in Istanbul in June 1996. It also reviewed SAARC's cooperation with international, regional and other organizations.

The Council of Ministers appointed Naeem U. Hasan as the new Secretary-General of SAARC, and commended the out-going Secretary General Y.K. Silwal for his valuable contribution towards strengthening regional cooperation in South Asia during his tenure.

As regards the scheduling of its next session, the Council decided to convene its Seventeenth Session in India in 1996.

NEW SECRETARY-GENERAL OF SAARC APPOINTED

New Delhi, India : December 18-19, 1995

The Council of Ministers at its Sixteenth Session held in New Delhi on December 18-19, 1995 has appointed Naeem U. Hasan from Pakistan as SAARC Secretary-General for the period January 1, 1996 to December 31, 1997.

The new Secretary-General assumed his office from January 1, 1996 and replaced Y.K. Silwal from Nepal who completed his tenure on December 31, 1995. As a career diplomat of Pakistan, Mr. Hasan has served in several countries including Turkey, Iraq, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia and Saudi Arabia. He also worked at the OIC Secretariat in Jeddah. Before joining the Secretariat, Mr. Hasan served as Ambassador of Pakistan to the Syrian Arab Republic.

REGIONAL PLAN OF ACTION FOR WOMEN

INTRODUCTION

Evolving a SAARC Regional Plan of Action for the development of women has been one of the long term objectives of SAARC. Pursuant to the decision of the Second SAARC Ministerial Meeting on Women in Development in Islamabad, the Technical Committee on Women in Development at its sixth meeting decided to formulate a Regional Plan of Action for Women. Accordingly a framework for Plan of Action for Women has been prepared.

OBJECTIVES

This Plan of Action will focus on strategies for :

1. Improving the socio-economic condition of women.
2. Eliminating, health, nutrition, employment.
3. Assessing women's equitable access to resources and services.

ACTION PLAN IN OUTLINE

1. Each member country of SAARC should develop a national policy on Women in Development if it is not done already for integration into the national development plan.

2. Ministries connected with women development should spell out women's programme distinctly.
3. Sustained efforts should be made to enhance the effectiveness of national women's machineries.
4. Qualified women should be given key positions at policy and decision making levels in economic and Planning Ministries.
5. Special training programmes in gender awareness should be made available to senior policy makers and planners in all Ministries.
6. Development planners should seek to provide equal opportunity to men and women based on equitable sharing of resources.
7. National statistics should be presented in gender disaggregated form, covering both the formal and non-formal sectors.
8. Educate the public both men and women, about the role of women in Women in Development and objectives of the Government WID concept should be incorporated in the syllabus of the educational and training institutes.
9. Appropriate laws be enacted and where such laws exist they be enforced to ensure that marriages of girls take place according to the legally prescribed age and all marriages be registered in terms of law.
10. Appropriate laws be enacted and where such laws exist they be enforced to prohibit dowry of all forms.
11. Special agency may be created for settling marital dispute for facilitating counselling and providing legal assistance.
12. Women must have access to health, nutrition and family welfare facilities. Family welfare includes motivation in family planning, education regular supply and availability of family planning materials at door steps specially in rural areas.
13. The environment for movement and work of the women must be secured against miscreants and hooligans and all possible heinous acts.

14. Measures should be taken to improve coordination among government, NGOs and other agencies to facilitate the implementation of their plans and programmes.
15. Measures should be taken to include gender responsive training in youth programmes.
16. Regional cooperation should be emphasised in respect of training and Human Resource Development including exchange of experts.
17. Intensive motivational programmes followed by planned steps should be undertaken for imparting formal education as well as vocational training to illiterate women of rural areas between the age of 14-30 so that they not only become confident but also be capable of becoming self-reliant.
18. Credit facilities need to be extended, on easy terms, to women for self employment by using their knowledge and skills.
19. Social mobilisation through advocacy and awareness raising activities like holding of meetings, posturing, use of media should be extensive and forceful for achieving the development of women in general.

**SUBJECTS AND IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE FOR
PLAN OF ACTION FOR WOMEN**

Issues	Action	Implementing Agency	Time-frame
1. Lack of appropriate development plan for women in the national development plan.	Incorporation of gender issues in the policy and programmes of line Ministries.	Concerned Ministry Department/Agency of the respective country.	1995
2. Ministries entrusted with responsibilities of development do not spell out the specific share for WID in all programmes of the Government.	Concerned Ministries should not marginalise women's programme. Focal points should be selected in Ministries for expediting the task.	Concerned Ministry/ Department/Agency of the respective country.	1994
3. Capable women are not given opportunities to work at policy and decision making levels.	Women organisations should try to sensitise top political leaders and executive hands for placing capable women in key positions of the government.	Concerned Ministry/ Department/Agency of the respective country.	1995

Issues	Action	Implementing Agency	Time-frame
4. Gender specific training facilities are not always available for senior policy makers and planners in all Ministries.	Training on Gender And Development (GAD) and Women In Development (WID) will have to be organised with the help of local and foreign experts for senior policy makers and planners.	Concerned Ministry/ Department/Agency of the respective country.	1994-2000
5. Equal sharing of resources by men and women are not provided by development planners.	This discrimination could only be eliminated if development planners are sensitised about Women in Development and Gender and Development.	Concerned Ministry/ Department/Agency of the respective country.	1994-2000
6. Gender desegregated national statistics are not always available in the government department and other development agencies.	It is necessary to conduct intensive survey for collecting gender desegregated national data.	Concerned Ministry/ Department/Agency of the respective country.	1994-2000
7. Enough steps have not yet been taken to educate the public, both men and women about the role of women and mainstreaming them in development channel of the government.	Sensitising public, elected representatives, government officials, policy makers and NGO's about women in development through social mobilisation.	Concerned Ministry/ Department/Agency of the respective country.	1994-2000
8. Marriages : (a) Marriage before prescribed age. b) Problem of dowry.	Punishment must be made mandatory for those parents who arrange marriage of their daughter before prescribed age. Proper measures should be adopted for compulsory marriage registration. Birth registration must be made compulsory. Deterrent punishment should be enforced strictly.	Concerned Ministry/ Department/Agency of the respective country.	1994-2000
9. Conflict between husband and wife often leads to broken homes. (Children suffer mostly because of this problem).	It is necessary to set up local committees for reconciliation and legal assistance for setting marital disputes.	Concerned Ministry/ Department/Agency of the respective country.	1994

Issues	Action	Implementing Agency	Time-frame
10. Women are not getting adequate facilities for health, nutrition and family welfare, specially in rural areas. Family Planning materials are not delivered regularly to them.	Health clinic should be set up in rural areas. Field workers of these clinic will deliver health and family planning assistance to village women. Field workers should hold meetings in rural areas to impart knowledge about nutrition, primary health care, non-formal education and environment.	Concerned Ministry/ Department/Agency of the respective country.	1994-2000
11. Insecure environment for working women. Miscreants very often harass and assault girls and young women in their working place or on their way to working place.	Special laws should be formulated for punishing these miscreants and it should strictly enforced.	Concerned Ministry/ Department/Agency of the respective country.	1994-2000
12. Lack of effective coordination between government machineries, NOGs and other agencies who are working for women development.	Efforts should be initiated for setting up a high level coordinating body headed by the Head of the Government/ State who are working in area of women in development.	Concerned Ministry/ Department/Agency of the respective country.	1994
13. Lack of gender responsive training programmes training materials and curricula for youth.	Training curricula for youth should include Gender and Development and Women in Development related information.	Concerned Ministry/ Department/Agency of the respective country.	1994
14. Regional action plans and their implementations are not studied properly while repairing training programmes and Human Resource Development activities.	It is necessary to study regional training programmes for different groups and planning for Human Resource Development. This could be done through exchange of experts.	Concerned Ministry/ Department/Agency of the respective country.	1994-2000
15. Illiteracy and lack of knowledge about income generating activities among rural women.	Non formal education and vocational training should be arranged for these rural women.	Concerned Ministry/ Department/Agency of the respective country.	1994-2000

Issues	Action	Implementing Agency	Time-frame
16. Lack of little access to loan facilities from banks or financial institutions as women cannot provide any collateral. Due to this they cannot utilise their training.	Women should be allowed to get loan on easy terms from banks and financial institutions. Project for income generating activities for women should keep provision for loan facilities.	Concerned Ministry/ Department/Agency of the respective country.	1994-2000

Note : This document was approved by the Standing Committee at its Eighteenth Session held in December 1993 at Dhaka. The member states are in the process of implementing its Plan. The status of its implementation is reviewed periodically by the Technical Committee on Women in Development during its annual meetings.

SAPTA ENTERS INTO FORCE AND TIME SCHEDULE SET FOR LAUNCHING SOUTH ASIAN FREE TRADE AREA (SAFTA)

Subsequent to ratification of the Agreement by all Member States, the SAARC Preferential Trading Arrangement (SAPTA) entered into force with effect from December 7, 1995. The Consolidated National Schedules of Concessions containing the lists of products and the tariff concessions are being disseminated to the business and trading communities in the region for enhancing the quantum of intra-SAARC trade.

A Group of Experts has been mandated by the Council of Ministers to examine action required towards the realisation of a South Asian Free Trade Area (SAFTA). The Group would make concrete and detailed recommendations towards the realisation of this objective. In this endeavour, the Council directed the CEC to take into account the special concerns of the least developed and land-locked Member States. The Group of Experts would consist of officials from Member States and would associate industry and research bodies in its work as required.

VISITORS TO THE SAARC SECRETARIAT

Executive Director of UNICEF

Executive Director of UNICEF, Carol Bellamy, visited the SAARC Secretariat on December 4, 1995 and held extensive discussions with the Secretary-General of SAARC on different aspects of SAARC-UNICEF collaboration, particularly focusing on further widening the scope of SAARC-

UNICEF interaction to make significant progress in ameliorating the condition of children, women and girl child in South Asia. The presence of UNICEF Country Representatives in the SAARC countries and other high officials of UNICEF Regional Office in South Asia (ROSA) during the meeting, greatly enriched the discussions on the occasion. The Executive Director once again reiterated the commitment of UNICEF to carry forward its various programmes and make them more attuned to the needs of children and women in South Asia.

Ms. Bellamy's visit to the Secretariat coincided with Tenth Anniversary celebration of SAARC.

DATABASES ON TRADE AVAILABLE IN THE SECRETARIAT

The following Databases have been installed in the SAARC Secretariat :

1. *CD-ROM TRAINS* : Developed by UNCTAD; (Trade Analysis and Information System), version 2.0 : contains information, *inter-alia*, on trade and trade control measures of fifty countries of the world including five SAARC countries.
2. *CD-ROM PC-TAS* : Developed by International Trade Centre (ITC), UNCTAD/WTO : contains statistical data (Import Tabulation System) with five-year time-series and trend analyses based on COMTRADE Database of United Nations Statistical Office. Coverage of data in this CD-ROM includes : import/export/re-export data for five year from 1989 to 1993; data in respect of 46 reporting countries and territories, most members of OECD and NICs; all partner trading countries, products, imports, exports, minimum value. Data can be transferred to other computer programmes for the file management and statistic and graphic analyses. Out of SAARC countries India and Pakistan have been covered as the Reporting Countries and all other SAARC countries figure as partner countries.
3. *DBI (Doing Business with India)* : Developed by the Government of India : gives information, *inter-alia*, about why and how to invest in India. DBI also gives relevant information about all States and Union Territories of India.

4. *Revised Harmonised System Nomenclature* : Developed by World Customs Organisation, Brussels. - applicable from 1st January 1996.

Information and data contained in the above trade databases is being disseminated on a regular basis to the business and trading communities, economic researchers, consultants and other concerned institutions/individuals, on request. For further information please contact SAARC Secretariat at Tel. No. 221692; Fax 22703991; Telex 2561 SAARC NP; E-Mail saarc@mos.com.np.

The Secretariat is in the process of obtaining similar relevant databases from other international organisations and Member Governments of SAARC. As part of its new responsibilities towards the implementation of SAPTA and eventual realisation of SAFTA.

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SAARC

جاوید قاضی - سارک مسائل اور ارتقاء حصہ دوم - لاہور
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Chronology of Important Events

SOUTH ASIAN REGION

July to December 1995

BANGLADESH

- July 2 :* The main opposition party Awami League demanded the resignation of the entire Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) government headed by Prime Minister Khaleda Zia, 90-day ahead of the general elections.
- 3 :* Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia said "the government would set up a National Council for children to monitor and guide the implementation of programmes taken up for the welfare of children."
- 8 :* Begum Khaleda Zia reminded that the Present Political crisis could only be settled within the ambit of the constitution and said the government would not allow for a constitutional vacuum in the country.
- September 19 :* Prime Minister Khaleda Zia's ruling Bangladesh Nationalist Party offered fresh talks with the opposition about ending the country's long running political crisis.
- October 8 :* Bangladesh opposition leader Sheikh Hasina Wajjad told Bangladeshis to prepare for a stormy campaign to force the government from power.
- 13 :* Bangladeshi Muslim alliance announced it would send some 100000 "mujahids," to Bosnia to drive out Christian Serb forces.
- 25 :* It was stated that Bangladesh government and tribal rebels fighting for self-rule in the South East had extended a truce until next year.
- 25 :* The Vice-Chairman of Bangladesh Nationalist Party, Nazamul Huda, said that the government should defuse the National Political crisis by handing power to the Chief Justice to ensure free and fair elections.

- October 26* : Bangladesh Prime Minister Khaleda Zia returned from the United Nations 50th Anniversary celebrations to confront a new round of opposition demands for the resignation.
- November 5* : Bangladesh faced a worsening political crisis, when Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia again turned down opposition demands for elections under a neutral caretaker administration.
- 22 : Bangladesh Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia had asked the opposition to take part in upcoming by-elections to pave the way for an interim government and national polls early next years.
- 24 : Earlier, Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia had asked the President to dissolve the Parliament.
- The Bangladesh President Abdur Rahman Biswas dissolved the Parliament.
- December 3* : Bangladesh Chief Election Commissioner A.K.M. Sedeque told that the Bangladesh sixth parliament election would be held on January 18, 1996.
- 15 : It was reported that the Bangladesh general elections postponed from January 18 to February 7 in the face of an opposition pledge to boycott the polls.
- 17 : Bangladesh opposition parties cancelled national strike planned after general elections set for January 18 was to postponed to February.

INDIA

- July 3* : Former Karnataka Chief Minister Veerappa Moily said "Secular Forces and Persons should join hands with the ruling Congress Party to fight against communal parties.
- Uttar Pradesh state's new Chief Minister, Mayawati, announced that her government favoured a 15 per cent reservation of government jobs for Muslims.
- 16 : India's Supreme Court called Prime Minister P.V. Narasimh Rao for non-payment of personal travel bills owed to the Defence Ministry and asked the government to investigate.
- 26 : The ruling Congress Party Chief P.V. Narasimh Rao said the party had lost touch with the masses and convince the people about the government's policies.
- August 6* : Indian Prime Minister P.V. Narasimh Rao had stressed the need for India - Pakistan dialogue.

- August 9 :* It was reported that the Indian Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao had written to U.S. President Bill Clinton to express concern about a proposed US arms sale to Pakistan.
- October 2 :* Chairman of the Pakistan's Kashmir Committee of the National Assembly, Nawabzada Nasrullah Khan said in London that it was the moral responsibility of the United Nations to resolve the Kashmir conflict as soon as possible. Without the Kashmir issue being part of the agenda, no talks between Pakistan and India could be meaningful.
- 4 :* Pakistan's Foreign Minister Sardar Asaf Ahmed Ali, while speaking at a dinner hosted in his honour by Pakistan's Ambassador to the US Maleeha Lodhi, said in Washington that Pakistan had the capacity to counter adequately the 'Prithvi' missile deployed by India.
- 14 :* Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto accused India of fueling factional fighting in Kabul.
- 19 :* Pakistan rejected Indian Prime Minister Narasimha Rao's remarks in response to Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto's reference to Kashmiri people's right to self-determination in the 11th Non-Aligned Summit in Cartagena.
- 26 :* Indian Home Minister S.B. Chavan came out with a blistering attack on the US Administration, accusing it of "aiding, training and providing assistance" to Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) for carrying out subversive activities in some neighbouring countries, including India.
- November 23 :* According to a senior naval official in Karachi, an Indian reconnaissance aircraft violated Pakistan's air space which was detected by the crew of a Pakistan Navy surface ship near Ormara. He said that "We are lodging a protest with India over this gross violation."
- 29 :* Indian Minister for External Affairs Pranab Mukharjee, addressing the Parliament's Upper House, expressed concern over the US assessment that Pakistan was not involved in the ongoing popular uprising in Kashmir.
- December 6 :* Pakistan's Foreign Minister Sardar Asaf Ahmed Ali said that he could not understand India's unhappiness with a recent improvement in Pakistan-US ties. The Pakistan's Foreign Minister was commenting on New Delhi's reaction to Washington's easing of military and economic sanctions against Pakistan.
- 18 :* The Parliamentary Secretary of Foreign Affairs George Clement expressed concern over the reports that India intends to carry out a nuclear test in Rajasthan. He said that consequences of such a test would pose a threat to security and peace of South Asia.

- December 20* : Pakistan threatened that it would respond to the Indian missile programme within the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) and stated that Islamabad had "no reason" to accept the Indian denial of the American press reports that it was preparing its second nuclear explosion at Pokharan in Rajasthan, close to Pakistan's Sindh border.
- 21* : Pakistan called upon the international community, particularly, big powers, to stop India from resuming nuclear testing. A Foreign Office spokesman told the weekly press briefing in Islamabad. "It is our hope that international community, particularly the major powers who have been endeavoring to promote the cause of nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament would do everything to prevent India from resuming nuclear testing."

NEPAL

- September 22* : A Nepal's Royal Palace communique said, Nepal's Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba brought into the Cabinet, 13 members of the Rastriya Prajatantra Party (RPP), Coalition Partner of his Nepal Congress Party, and one from the Nepal Sadbhavana Party, which is also in the coalition.

SRI LANKA

- July 2* : It was stated that President Chandrika Kumaratunga had set up a council of war mostly comprised retired security chiefs to assist a current military drive against Tamil guerrillas.
- 3* : Sri Lanka newspapers criticised the National Military for its failure to repulse last week's Tamil rebel attack on a northern island that left more than 100 soldiers died.
- 3* : A human rights group said, Sri Lanka's Tiger rebels used children as combatants.
- Sri Lanka hopes for an early victory in the battle against Tamil Separatists.
- 7* : It was reported that Sri Lankan army is dismantling several small camps in remote areas in the embattled east as Tamil rebels vowed to take over more territory in the sprawling region.

- July 7 :* A military official said, clashes between government troops and Tamil Tiger rebels in north-eastern Sri Lanka killed one soldier and 11 guerrillas.
- October 3 :* The Sri Lankan army said at least 245 people were killed as Sri Lankan troops and Tiger rebels were locked in heavy fighting on the northern Jaffna Peninsula for the third day.
- 20 : Sri Lanka's Deputy Defence Minister Anuruddha Ratwatte said Tamil Tiger guerrillas launched Pre-dawn rocket attacks against the main crude oil depot and the refined oil storage form in the capital.
- 21 : It was stated that Sri Lanka's Tamil Tiger rebels shot and hacked 73 villagers to death in the east and sparked a firefight in the capital, diverting attention of the armed forces from a Northern push against the guerrillas.
- 27 : Sri Lanka's Junior Defence Minister Anuruddha Ratwatte told Colombo-Based Ambassador that the army's aim was to capture Jaffna, the head quarters of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) and restore civil administration.
- 29 : The Sri Lanka analyst said the President Chandrika Kumaratunga was risking her political future with a military campaign which could crush Tamil separatists or plunge Sri Lanka in to more chaos.
- November 2 :* The military source said, Sri Lankan security forces captured a sophisticated three-storied underground hospital which also doubled as a command and control centre of Tamil Tiger guerrillas.

SAARC

- October 24 :* Pakistan's President Farooq Ahmed Khan Leghari signed the Instrument of Ratification of SAARC Preferential Trading Arrangement (SAFTA) Agreement in Islamabad.
- November 17 :* The member states of SAARC, during a two-day session of the sixth meeting of the SAARC Committee of Economic Cooperation (CEC) in New Delhi, decided to take steps to evolve South Asian Free Trade Area (SAFTA) as a follow up to the SAARC Preferential Trading Arrangement (SAFTA) Agreement which would become operational from 7 December.
- 28 : Pakistan's President Farooq Ahmed Khan Leghari, talking to outgoing Secretary-General of SAARC, Y.K. Silwal in Islamabad, said that Pakistan was against the hegemony of any member country of the SAARC and wanted all the member countries to play their due role as

equal members of the Association. Mr. Y.K. Silwal appreciated the very useful role played by Pakistan in the SAARC.

December 19 : South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) decided to create a South Asian Free Trade Area (SAFTA) preferably by the turn of the century but before the year 2005. The decision was taken at the end of the special session of foreign ministers of SAARC held in New Delhi on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of SAARC.

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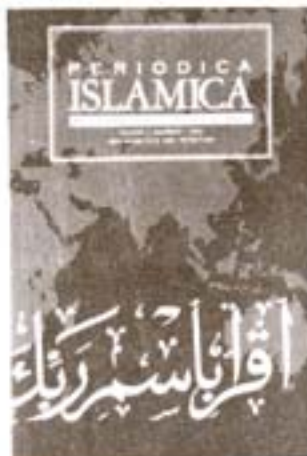
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Bibliographies and footnotes should be placed at the end of the article. Footnotes should be numbered consecutively, and bibliographies should be arranged alphabetically. Foreign words should be underlined.

Bibliographical references should be completed in respect of the title of the book, the name of the author, the year and the place of publication.

Utmost care should be taken to prepare statistical data for publication. All headings, columns, rows, symbols, units of measurement, periods, political and geographical areas, and sources should be clearly stated in each statistical table, instead of giving such explanations in the text.

Tables, maps, and diagrams should be numbered and given at the end of the article, each on a separate sheet of paper. They should be clearly drawn so that they are suitable for photocopying as submitted.

Abstracts

Authors should submit abstract of their articles, not exceeding 100 words. The first page of the paper should include the title of the paper as well as the name and institutional affiliation of the author.

The Editor reserves the right to make editorial revisions.