

## **Seventh Sustainable Development Conference**

### **Troubled Times: Sustainable Development and Governance in the Age of Extremes**

The seventh Sustainable Development Conference (SDC), organized by the Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) between December 8-10, 2004 in Islamabad, helped policymakers, researchers and practitioners examine the interface and relations between various dimensions of sustainable development and governance.

Various speakers discussed how problems and issues in South Asia could be dealt effectively at various levels based on prior experience of successful policy interventions.

Today we are a witness to deteriorating indices, increasing inequalities and disparities. These include disparities in incomes, shrinking sources of livelihood, increasing poverty, escalating conflicts, inter- and intra-state violence, sham democracies and abuse of religion.

In this context, issues of governance and sustainable development take on distinct significance. These issues are of particular importance to the South Asian region that has been affected by global developments and heightened conflicts.

The conference looked at the progress made in South Asia vis-à-vis governance, especially the transparency in the government today than a decade ago and if the governments have kept their promises to the marginalized.

The conference provided an opportunity to discuss the global economy, new terms of trade, transfer of resources from the developing world to the first world and whether such moves are benefiting a few only.

A host of sub-themes including globalization, livelihoods, water issues, food security, health and environment, resource rights, education, refugee repatriation and integration, gender-based violence and peace and security were taken up.

The discussions on governance and development addressed the new conditions emerging for labor, women, minorities and other marginal groups. The conference highlighted the crosscutting linkages between diverse themes and the increasingly complex demands upon the policy arena to respond to these issues quickly and effectively.

Questions of governance and sustainable development were tackled at several inter-related levels: in the context of the third world; in terms of the relationship with first world institutions; and, within and between third world. The conference questioned whether there is sound governance around development and whether this is ensuring just development and whether there is more sharing of resources, including natural and institutional.

### **Opening Plenary**

"The idea of South Asia is clearly artificial and so probably its nation states...the term South Asia remains a compromise, a neutral terrain," maintained Ashis Nandy in his keynote address at the opening plenary of the seventh Sustainable Development Conference organized by the Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI).

"South Asia is the only region in the world where most states define themselves not by what they are but by what they are not...the region can be called a collective of

very reluctant states, which are afraid to say that positive self-definition will take them far," said Nandy, from the Center for the Study of Developing Sciences, India. He discussed how the usage of the term had frozen a cultural region geographically and allowed the Indian state to hijack the right over Indian civilization, forcing other states in the region to seek new bases for their political cultures and disown crucial aspects of their cultural repertoire.

Nandy said when political leaders talk about SAARC, they have in mind a compact within the format of the global nation-state, and not within the format of the cultural system within which they have survived for centuries. This, he felt, is the reason that leads to fear and paranoia of anything that might push South Asia towards a people's SAARC-free exchange of news, books, information, ideas, literature, art, films and above all free circulation of free thinking human beings.

Despite the age of extremes, Nandy saw a glimmer of hope: the building of another South Asia in reaction to the built-in bureaucracies of the states and the strident tones of the security community and political parties. The new South Asia, he felt, was taking shape at the ground level and on the basis of lowbrow exchange of cultural artifacts. Heralding the new South Asia are the electronic media and NGOs who have bypassed the existing state system to establish links among young activists. He said unlike America, South Asia and South Asians cannot and should not ignore the future since it is through "our children and grandchildren that we move forward and progress beyond the lines drawn across our borders."

Saba Gul Khattak, SDPI executive director, Shamsul Mulk, chairman Board of Governors of SDPI, and Major (retd) Tahir Iqbal, minister for environment, were present at the opening session, in which an anthology, *Sustainable Development: Bridging the Research/Policy Gaps in Southern Contexts*, was also launched.

Major (retd) Tahir Iqbal, the minister, acknowledged SDPI's outstanding record of academic and scientific leadership in sustainable development. The anthology, he said, was proof of SDPI's concern for translating specialized multi and transdisciplinary research into effective policy measures in the global South.

He assured the audience that sustainable development was at the heart of the government's approach, with systems and processes being put in place at the highest level to apply an integrated approach to environmental problems. "The ministry fully realizes that the environment is an equal partner to the triple bottom line, and so is doing everything it can to ensure that it has a key place at the table in our government's decision-making."

Saba Gul Khattak welcomed the community of likeminded thinkers, activists, intellectuals, and policymakers, bonded not only by friendship, humor, hope, shared experiences in different professional contexts, but also by ideas and visions for a future. She shared how choosing the conference theme had been both easy and difficult owing to the frustration that despite complex debates about sustainable development and governance nexus, little had actually changed at the macro level, be it Vision 20/20 or the Millennium Development Goals.

"Given the neoliberal economic policies and political formations that have characterized the world recently, where is the politics of the possible...is it possible to solve the issues that we face in a segmented manner? Must we look at everything sectorally? Or, is it possible to comprehend and resolve issues in all their complexity?"

"Indeed, is it possible for us to even lend some sense or logic to our dirty and sordid realities, that have politics and contested histories, with no linear logic running through them?"

She felt that in the present times our troubles appear to have undergone a change since in addition to the problems we faced previously, we now wonder if we might be producing terrorists and fueling the clash of civilizations in which we as a

community appear to be unwilling actors, forced to participate due to the sheer fact of being. It is important to “understand that the ways in which the current war on terrorism is defined will also define or redefine our issues and their solutions in a vastly changed international environment.”

Shamsul Mulk gave an overview of SDPI’s past, highlighted some of its current work and activities, and took a brief look at the Sustainable Development Conference series and its significance. He informed the audience about the institute’s strong research program and its involvement in over 50 research assignments in collaboration with regional and international partners.

He also highlighted SDPI’s efforts to raise awareness about globalization and WTO agreements, farmers’ rights, discriminatory laws against women, cement plants’ licenses, change of Master Plan of Islamabad, Freedom of Information Act, Save Murree Hills initiative and curriculum revision during the year.

He discussed SDPI’s involvement in South-South as well as North-South partnerships and collaborations with likeminded research institutions and academia, saying the approach was likely to have more credibility with the policy community, especially where regional and global issues were concerned. “North-South and South-South associations can help dispel misperceptions and identify converging interests that lead to win-win situations.”

He felt that the SDC was a unique platform for many of the North and South’s finest development thinkers and academics to present their perspectives and ideas. He hoped the conference would lead to effective strategies for overcoming extremes the South is facing presently.

He thanked the Department for International Development (DFID), the Gender Equality Project (GEP), Heinrich Boll Foundation (HBL), International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) and National Institute for Competence in Research (NCCR) for funding the conference.

## **Global Governance for Trade and Sustainable Development: An Agenda for the WTO**

### **Session I: Regional Agreements**

#### **Concurrent Session A-1**

Adil Najam, from the Tufts University, USA, in his presentation, *Is the global trading system disintegrating: is that good or bad?*, said the developing countries got many things they asked for in the World Trade Organization (WTO), but asked if it is good for them.

Najam said the WTO has a more Southern face compared to the exclusive club of Northern countries that negotiated the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), its precursor.

Its agenda is influenced by the South: by those demonstrating in the streets of Seattle and Cancun during the past WTO ministerial meetings and by “those without ties and socks,” according to Najam. He said they managed to put development issues on the WTO agenda – human rights, labor standards, and the environment. “Whoever disputes that the environment is a Northern issue should tell me whether the lead-poisoned child in Kasur is of no concern for the Pakistani society,” Najam asserted.

But, for Najam, the developing countries may become victims of their own success. The more the WTO agenda reflects Southern interests, the more the organization’s major players, the United States and the European Union, resort to regional trade agreements. These are characterized by a power balance in favor of the North, potentially marginalizing the developing world again.

Hernan Blanco, from RIDES, Chile, concluded his presentation, *South American perspectives on trade, environmental and sustainable development: WTO and beyond*, on a similar note, asserting that regional trade agreements do not provide the right forum to tackle sustainable development. He backed his assertion with an overview of regional trade agreements in South America.

For South America's rich biodiversity, trade in natural resources-based goods, such as mining and timber products, is vital. However, environmental issues are absent or poorly considered in the various trade agreements signed in South America. Blanco concluded that the current system of trade governance is biased towards obtaining products from the world's ecosystems rather than taking care of its proper functioning and conservation.

Focusing on the economic bottom line of sustainable development, Huma Fakhar, from Fakhar Law International, Pakistan, emphasized that successful regional trade integration is a question of proper preparation.

In her presentation, *An economic and legal benefit of regional agreements*, she said the planned South Asian Free Trade Area (SAFTA) still faces too many problems – competition between South Asian countries' major export goods, lack of a strong leading economy in SAFTA, and uplifting poor countries of the region. Fakhar maintained SAFTA would not be a better deal for the region than, for example, preferential access to Northern markets through the so-called Generalized System of Preferences. According to Fakhar, a South Asia moving towards greater regional trade integration has to do some homework. It includes better research and business advocacy.

The discussant, Faisal Bari, executive director of the Mahbub-ul-Haq Human Development Centre, Pakistan, disputed the panellists' pessimistic appraisal of the benefits of regional trade governance for sustainable development. Issues of regional interest, such as water disputes between India and Pakistan, may be better confronted at the regional rather than at the multilateral level. These regional concerns may provide a powerful incentive to bring countries to the negotiating table. Speed is warranted, according to Bari, because if agreements were delayed, they would only lead to weak institutions.

The audience pointed out that Najam depicted the WTO as representing Southern interests, a point it strongly rejected. Critical realities – WTO's impact on the livelihood of women, small farmers, and on access to scarce resources like water – were not mentioned in his talk. They were termed as major sustainable development concerns.

Najam clarified that he related to the rhetoric within the WTO rather than to its practical impact. As the South has moved the discourse forward, Najam feared, "people are moving out of the room". For him, the trend of regionalization in trade governance raised doubts about the future of multilateralism.

Haroon Sharif, associate economic adviser of the Department for International Development (DFID), Pakistan, chaired the session.

## **Global Governance for Trade and Sustainable Development: An Agenda for the WTO**

### **Session II: Trade and Sustainable Development: A Southern Agenda. Concurrent Session B-1**

Dawood Mamoon, from the Institute of Social Studies, the Netherlands, analyzed the relationship between international trade and various forms of labor in his paper, *Trade liberalization and wage movements of unskilled labor in the South*.

Mamoon's study points out that the processes of international trade are negatively biased towards the wages of unskilled labor as opposed to the wages of skilled

labor. This means that human capital accrued through trade contributes to exacerbate inequality, leading to welfare distorting outcomes.

Yousaf Haroon, from PTCL Academy, Pakistan, said Pakistan had liberalized its telecom sector but the issue of "digital divide" remained a bottleneck for access to necessary means of governance. In his paper, *Trade, telecom and sustainable development: are current telecom market trends leading us towards sustainable development?*, Haroon blamed reduction in tariffs for putting more burden on the domestic industry and users.

Shaheen Rafi Khan, from SDPI, Pakistan, argued that there was a need for the South to develop an agenda for multilateral trade negotiations for finding a convergence between Northern and Southern positions. In the paper, *The WTO, trade and sustainable development: A Southern agenda*, Khan analyzed various agreements under WTO and identified two principal negotiating premises for the South: persisting with sustainable development and injecting realism in their approach knowing that Northern MNCs are driven by profit motives.

Haoling Xu, senior deputy-resident representative at the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Pakistan, chaired the session and David Boyer of the International Institute for Sustainable Development, Canada, was the discussant.

## **Global Governance for Trade and Sustainable Development: An Agenda for the WTO**

### **Session III: The WTO Agreement on Agriculture**

#### **Concurrent Session A-8**

Nepalese farmers' cigarette consumption is a stumbling block for the kingdom's export performance. How's that?

Ratnakar Adhikari, from South Asia Watch on Trade, Economics and Environment (SAWTEE), Nepal, explained that traces of Nepali tea farmers' nicotine consumption are left on tea shipped to the European Community (EC), leading to rejection of these exports and causing losses to the country.

In his presentation, *Market access barriers on select agricultural exports of Nepal*, he said it is just one example of the barriers South Asian agricultural producers face when trying to access Northern markets.

He said South Asian countries are united in the critical role the agricultural sector has in their respective economies, adding that agriculture represents a source of livelihood for the vast majority of the population. South Asian economies are competing, however, in their efforts to convert this role into export income from Northern markets, such as the EC and America.

"Invisible brands" was a term coined by Parashar Kulkarni, from the Consumer Unity & Trust Society (CUTS), India, denoting the lack of visibility of Indian seafood products in the markets of industrialized countries in the presentation, *Producer-consumer linkage: the case of the Indian seafood sector*.

Kulkarni said India is the second largest exporter of seafood products worldwide but it has to tackle the poor quality of the ice used to keep fish and other marine products fresh if it wants to increase its revenues from trade in seafood. In the European market, he said India's products might be rejected because of resulting microbial contamination.

Three to five percent of India's seafood exports are denied access due to violations of such product standards. The fear of bio-terrorism in the United States leads to a requirement to register producers in the South, which is yet another hurdle for small fisher folk in Kerala and elsewhere.

Ultimately, as Kulkarni put it, the challenge is how to meet the twin goals of environmentally sustainable marine and agricultural production and the development of small producers' livelihoods through trade.

Agricultural subsidies in the North are a major impediment for competitiveness of Pakistani and other Southern producers.

Moeed Yousuf, from SDPI, Pakistan, warned that even if such subsidies would come down in progressive WTO negotiations, it might only benefit big farmers and actually widen the income gap between small peasants and big landlords in Pakistan.

In his presentation, *Potential impact on Southern farmers of reducing Northern subsidies: reflections from Pakistan*, he said one of the problems in pinpointing this threat is the lack of data about the equity dimension in international trade.

Adhikari pointed out that it is no longer mainly high tariffs in the North that prevent agricultural exports from developing countries. But other non-tariff barriers (NTBs), for example, hygienic standards for the products to be exported — the nicotine-free tea leaves — and prescriptions for the way they are produced, particularly under the World Trade Organization's agreements, give a headache to Southern producers.

Both the Doha Declaration in 2001 and the recent package of WTO framework agreements, the so-called July 2004 package, remain silent about NTBs.

Wahid Abdullah, from the East West University, Bangladesh, indicated that NTBs are not just a burning issue for market access of agricultural but also for industrial goods. His research, *Market access issues: EU-Bangladesh trade regimes*, revealed that they head the long list of obstacles for trade between Bangladesh and the EU.

Adhikari also outlined strategies for making agricultural producers in South Asia more visible on the world market. Internally, he recommended more research and development in agriculture to increase the sector's productivity and product quality. It is essential that better practices are passed on to the farmers, including smallholders.

Yousuf added that the inequity between small and corporate agricultural producers are to be tackled internally before South Asia can benefit more from agricultural trade.

Externally, developing countries should develop strategies to deal with the threat of NTBs. They should demand technical assistance available from the WTO to enable them to meet the requirements of its various agreements.

He quoted the positive example of Nepalese honey exported to Norway. Pesticide contamination made the sweet spread unsuitable for Norwegian consumers, leaving a bitter taste with the exporters deprived of their export revenues. However, Norway offered technical cooperation to help Nepalese beekeepers to meet their quality requirements.

The discussant, David Boyer of the International Institute for Sustainable Development, Canada, also chaired the session.

#### **Governmental Structural Adjustments for Better Governance Towards Environmental Protection and Pollution Control in South Asia Concurrent Sessions A-4 & B-4**

Two sessions were held on environmental protection and pollution control in South Asia. Ali Tauqir Sheikh of Lead-Pakistan chaired both the sessions.

In the first session, Ram Charitra Sah, from NGO FUWS, Nepal, traced the formation of the Ministry of Population and Environment in his presentation, *Environmental regulation and its compliance status in Nepal*.

For him, a series of environment protection related acts, regulations, decisions, and various standards of air and water pollution control have been promulgated in Nepal, but implementation and monitoring of compliance remains a problem.

He said no serious attempt has been made to expand the required network for effective implementation of activities and strengthening the ministry. Instead of enforcing and compliance monitoring of the standards by the ministry, such responsibilities have been handed over to the Ministry of Industries, Supplies and Commerce in the name of coordination, where the prime aim is to promote industry, and not to penalize them for pollution, he said.

Sah maintained it is leading to continuous environmental degradation in the presence of specific ministry responsible for environment conservation, laws, regulations and standards. He demanded immediate compliance monitoring of the act, regulations, standards and environmentally friendly decisions made so far in Nepal.

Bharati Chaturvedi of Chintan Environmental Research and Action Group (CERAG), New Delhi, examined the handling of municipal waste management in the presentation, *Pollution control through planning for waste management: the case of Delhi*.

Chaturvedi said the Municipal Solid Wastes (Management and Handling) Rules, 2000 were made in isolation with no participation from any other agency or organization, leading them to a path of technology rather than governance while controlling what is essentially a social, cultural and infrastructural problem.

Musharaf Ali Talpur, from Sindh University, Pakistan, discussed the factors determining compliance of the environmental legislation by the industry by generally using simple mathematical model for pollution control policies.

In the paper, *Monitoring pollution under asymmetric information and enforcing environmental regulation: implication for NEQS compliance process in Pakistan*, Talpur maintained that a successful implementation of an environmental policy requires a proper enforcement, which involves costs, including mainly the cost of monitoring pollution. With proper monitoring, environmental regulation can be effectively enforced but the problem of asymmetric information between the polluting industry and the regulator may result in non-compliance.

In Pakistan, the enforcement of National Environmental Quality Standards (NEQS), in the wake of National Conservation Strategy (NCS) and Pakistan Environmental Protection Act, 1997, poses almost same problems of asymmetric information and poor compliance, he said. Environmental Protection Agencies, responsible for enforcing NEQS, are understaffed, under-equipped and unprepared. He said they are unable to fulfill their roles of monitoring pollution and enforcing environmental regulations.

Himayatullah of the NWFP Agricultural University, Pakistan, looked at the nexus between poverty, environment and development in the paper, *Poverty, environment and development: exploring the links between three complex issues with specific focus on the Pakistan case*.

He said environmental degradation could inflict serious damage on poor people because their livelihood often depends on natural resource use, and their living conditions may offer little protection from pollution of air, water and soil. Similarly, poverty-constrained options may induce the poor to deplete resources and degrade the environment at rates incompatible with long run sustainability. In such cases, degraded resources may precipitate a downward spiral, by further reducing the income and livelihood of the poor.

He said Pakistan should be careful when targeting both poverty and the environment, adding that more understanding on how poor people depend on, interact with, and use their environment in rural and urban areas is needed.

M Irfan Khan, from the Allama Iqbal Open University, Pakistan, emphasized an effective balance between developing new resources and managing the demand while addressing the water scarcity issue in his paper, *Improving governance for increasing water use efficiency in Pakistan*.

He said population growth, economic development, rapid urbanization and industrialization are applying significant pressures on water resources of Pakistan and it is fast becoming a country of water scarcity. He called for institutional reforms in irrigation sector to improve the governance of water.

The second session started with the presentation of Mahmood A Khwaja, from SDPI, Pakistan, on *Introducing Extended Producer's Responsibility (EPR) in Pakistan*. He stressed the idea of EPR, also called "producer take back", to support waste reduction, reuse, recycling and compositing. He said it is the manufacturer's primary responsibility to reshape product and process, and to pay the price for recycling by managing the product price.

Cai Kui, from Yunnan University, China, presented her paper on a survey of four sites representing different types of poverty in China, identifying close linkages between livelihood and environment.

Her study, *An assessment of development of environment linkage in village based integrated poverty alleviation project in Yunnan Province, P. R. China*, advocated a wide definition and concept of environment. She called for developing a strategy to improve poor communities' livelihood.

The paper, *Augmenting environmental regulation for effective environmental governance in India*, of Ravi Agarwal, from Toxics Link, India, argued for more holistic approach where regulation is a key component. But he added it needed to be augmented with information access and broader initiatives for long-term sustainable environmental change. He said it should help improve people's quality of life effectively and equitably.

In the paper, *Environmental mal-governance in depleting environment – a case in Sri Lanka*, Hemantha Withanage, from Center for Environmental Justice (CEJ), Sri Lanka, focused on international organizations' double standards regarding environmental decisions. He said their policies have become more powerful in environmental governance, regulations and decision-making. Withanage maintained that local people are losing their powers to make decisions about natural resources and environment in Sri Lanka.

Saiful Islam, from the Rajshahi University, Bangladesh, described the extent of environmental degradation in Bangladesh and the government's initiatives for its mitigation, including approval of a National Environmental Policy and Guidelines for Environmental Action Plan in 1992. His paper, *Governance related issues of environmental policy development and implementation in Bangladesh*, identified weaknesses of the current governance structure in environmental policies in Bangladesh.

During discussion, a participant from Germany said no environmental regulatory authority would make effective policies unless there is civil society's participation. The speakers mentioned local governments' system in their countries, saying they represent the local community and help in making regulatory policies.

About polythene bags being a dangerous waste, Withanage demanded a worldwide ban on them. The participants applauded when Saiful Islam revealed that in Bangladesh polythene bags were banned on January 1, 2003.

## **Gender in the Multilateral Trading System Concurrent Session C-4**

Karin Astrid Siegmann of SDPI, Pakistan, asked whether global services liberalization is in service of gender equality. Her presentation, *Global services liberalization – in service of gender equality?* assumed that liberalization, especially sellout of public utilities to private providers of basic services, might reduce relative female employment and access to basic services while increasing female workload.

Siegmann's focus was to assess the gendered effects of trade liberalization in services like education, health and water. She argued that women suffered most because of privatization and dismantling of public services.

During the Structural Adjustment Programs when the state fails to provide services, and families lack financial resources to buy goods, it is women who are to provide care, education, safe food and water for their families.

She said transnational corporations (TNCs) affect gendered access to services and employment in the services industry. According to Siegmann, technological superiority discourages female employment due to gender gap in education.

The motive of private firms is profit above other economic and non-economic objectives like employment creation and female access to employment. In other words foreign firms' advanced technological features relative to domestic companies require a well-educated workforce with technical skills, she said.

Gender gaps in education and women's weaker labor market attachment disadvantage female workers' employment in TNCs.

Hiramani Ghimire of South Asia Watch on Trade, Economics and Environment (SAWTEE), Nepal, said trade policies are not really gender neutral as they are sometimes supposed to be. His presentation, *Gender implications of Nepal's accession to the WTO*, maintained that the number of jobs for females may increase under trade liberalization but the quality continues to be poor. He said limited access to productive resources might even reinforce existing inequalities.

According to Ghimire, social and family relations might be affected due to this global phenomenon of trade liberalization. He looked for a government role in this context by acquiring and exercising state authorities. "For gender sensitive trade policies, the government should switch from gender efficiency to gender equity even at the cost of efficiency," he stressed. He pointed out need of institutional reforms to address gender specific capacity failure.

Irfan Mufti of South Asia Partnership, Pakistan, said Pakistani women, especially rural, are progressively deteriorating due to globalization in his presentation, *Globalization and rural women in Pakistan*.

Mentioning growing incidents of domestic violence, he said women are being exploited by globalization. His study was about illiteracy of rural women, changes in occupation, and female workload. But he was unable to satisfy audience.

Karamat Ali, director of Pakistan Institute of Labour, Education and Research (PILER), who chaired the session, questioned how these grassroots realities about gender issues are linked with liberalization. The analytical tools and research techniques applied by him were not able to explain the effect of globalization on rural women.

The discussant, Faiza Effendi, assistant resident representative and chief Gender Unit, UNDP, Pakistan, said women are being adversely affected by trade liberalization and globalization. She said more adequate policy interventions are required on the government, grassroots, and international levels to benefit women

in services and goods' sectors. Effendi said globalization or liberalization is beneficial when all can get benefit from it. She said gender equality is the state's responsibility and the governments should deal with it seriously.

### **Gendered Violence in the Subcontinent (Session-1) Concurrent Session A-7**

The first session on gendered violence had powerful presentations by Rubina Saigol, an independent consultant from Pakistan, Ritu Menon, from Women Unlimited, India, and Lubna Chaudhry, SUNY Binghamton, USA/SDPI. They spoke on extraordinary forms of violence: structural, state and sexual. They also discussed the intersections of patriarchy, community, economy and gendered violence.

Rubina Saigol's presentation, *Politics of the body and the body politic: gendered violence in Pakistan*, asserted that patriarchal practices run all the way from the family and community to the state and nation. She said the customary and traditional practices take on uniquely modern features that help to reinforce and maintain these practices.

She substantiated her argument with cases of violence like that of Mukhtaran Mai. She said the notion of honor is now being constructed in a political economy of conflict in which it is used as a cover for a lot of other reasons.

Rubina observed that there is a new construction of honor in which it is commodified and commercialized and used as an exchangeable commodity – one can lose it, regain it (by taking revenge), and it is transferable like any other commodity.

She said a state supposed to be modern and rational is in fact participating in discriminatory customary practices and it is slowly taking on tribal characteristics. Consequently, these practices are adjusting themselves to modern conditions and economy.

Based on the narratives of women, Lubna Chaudhry presented the findings and observations of her research at SDPI, *Women in Sindh and Punjab: experiences and constructions of multi-layered violence*. She talked about the politics underpinning extraordinary forms of violence – murder, rape and the violation of property rights that are inextricably embedded within the taken-for-granted processes of structural exclusion framing the everyday lives of so-called ordinary women and families.

She problematized the feminist deployment of conceptions such as agency and resistance when it comes to understanding violence in women's lives.

Ritu Menon specifically looked at sexual violence in her paper, *State violence against women: a consideration of Gujarat and Manipur*. She talked about state violence by looking at the Gujarat carnage of 2002 and the August 2004 rape and murder of a woman activist by the Indian armed forces in Manipur. Looking at the two events, she analyzed the role of the state in perpetrating sexual violence, its dangerous shift from protector to criminal violator, and its immunity from all laws against the violation of women.

She also pointed to the transition from being a "state above the law" to a criminal state where brutal violence is inflicted on women. At the end of her presentation, Ritu questioned if there is no distinction between the state and society as far as gendered violence is concerned, then what form of redress are women to look for and how can they theorize their responses to it?

During discussion, Saba Gul Khattak pointed to the fact that women are not a homogenous category because of their caste, class and other material contexts.

She suggested Saigol to consider the spectacle of violence in which women themselves participate or celebrate the violence perpetrated by the men of their class, caste or community.

Maria Rasheed commented that the Meerwala case has been discussed at length with reference to how the woman was victimized but the fact that the boy was sodomized as well has not received much attention in terms of implications of the incident on him and in terms of the state's and community's ineffectual response. She suggested Rubina Saigal to include in her paper this aspect of the case too.

Lubna Chaudhry stressed on the need to analyze and understand as Pakistanis that why any grassroots activism seems to be mostly around NGOs/CBOs? She was of the view that there is a particular politics that defines activism in Pakistan and thereby exacerbates the disjuncture between research, policy and grassroots.

Nafisa Shah, a nazim from Sindh, Pakistan, chaired the session while Emma Varley of SDPI, Pakistan, was the discussant.

### **Gendered Violence in the Subcontinent (Session-1I)**

#### **Concurrent Session B-8**

Kiran Ahmed, from SDPI, Pakistan, talked about honor killings in three main contexts: standpoints in the debate on honor killings, role of courts, and dynamics of policy making that have contributed to the state's inability to eradicate honor killings.

In her paper, *Honor killings in Pakistan*, also coauthored by Saba Gul Khattak and Kiran Habib, she said the state's inability to eliminate honor killings could not be understood without comprehending the dynamics that inform policy making. Talking about this failure, Kiran Ahmed pointed to the existence of social norms and cultures that live on in collective memory, informed by masculinist ideologies in the east and the west. She said such killings take place because there is tacit support for the practice at different levels of society.

The presentation underscored the lack of follow up and commitment on the issue of honor killings at four specific levels: heads of state and ministers, parliament, political parties (whose members become parliamentarians) and donor agencies (who influence the government through financing social sector development).

Kiran said it is wrong to label non-western, Muslim or tribal societies with honor killings because there is a long list of places like Africa, the Middle East, Asia, Europe, Latin America and Australia where a patriarchal structure is maintained that sanctions control over women's bodies, hence providing a basis for honor killings.

Masooma Qazilbash, from Rozan, Pakistan, said the newspapers are littered with headlines of cases of gender-based violence reported throughout the country. In her paper, *Honor killings and violence against women in Punjab, Pakistan*, she said the constitutional legitimacy of discriminatory laws like the Hudood Ordinance gives credence to such horrors and promotes acts of violence against women.

She said the governments have made promises to review such laws and re-constitute them to prevent their abuse, but have failed to deliver on this policy reform. In order to make some meaningful contribution to curb honor killing and other acute forms of physical and psychological violence, the actual extent of such actions must be determined, followed by the setting up of crisis centers and shelters where these women may seek refuge and receive counseling from trained professionals.

She said the problem must be analyzed holistically in terms of addressing poverty, girl-child education, gender empowerment, socio-economic equity and the role of

men to curb this act of violence. She said the civil society groups must organize mass awareness campaigns and the organizations working for gender equality should create mass mobilization to politically influence the decisions makers to end discriminatory laws.

Nausheen Ahmed, from ICI, Pakistan, discussed if the policing of women is only a consequence of underlying customary practice stemming from strong tribal and feudal structures or the customary practices and the cultural attitude are supported by state structure and laws

In her presentation, *Violence against women*, she reviewed the relationship between the underlying feudal and tribal structures and religious ideology. Whereas the Hudood Laws owe their justification to religious ideology, honor killing is rooted in customary practice. Both have the effect of putting women in a disadvantageous position.

She concluded that the structure of the state including law and courts are far from neutral and in reality because of their close linkage to culture and custom reflect the dominant ideology of the time. The various organs of the state converge to protect the status quo and since women remain excluded from the centers of powers, whether of the formal state law or of customary practice, their rights are neither safeguarded nor protected. She questioned given the imperatives of the state where it has to cater to tribalism and feudalism at one level and support Islamism at another level, if meaningful change is a possibility at all.

Sohail Safdar from the Ministry for Women's Development, Pakistan, who chaired the session, said the government plans to set up 10 crises centers in 2005.

The discussant, Faqir Hussain, secretary Pakistan Law and Justice Commission, Pakistan, said the state must act wisely in meeting the challenges faced by people. He said the laws made in haste face challenges, as is the case with the Hudood laws.

## **Violence, Displacement and the Issue of Identity – 1947 Concurrent Session A-2**

The issue of identity was reviewed in the backdrop of the 1947 partition, especially of Punjab, and how the displaced people settled into new environments and adopted new identities.

In his presentation, *The 1947 violence and the migration and resettlement of Muslims from Amritsar*, Ian Talbot, from Coventry University, UK, examined the Muslim community's contribution to pre-partition Amritsar's demography and economy and its settlement in Lahore.

Though the violence started in March 1947, Talbot said it was not inevitable in the case of Amritsar as there were few communal riots in the city. Muslims, who were half of the Amritsar population in 1947, were not a community in conflict with other communities. They did not expect to be uprooted. According to Talbot, many migrants in Lahore told him they expected to go back after the violence had ended. He said the uncertainty about boundaries added to violence as people fought for territory even before the official Radcliff award was announced. Talbot said the inner cities in Amritsar and Lahore suffered immense destruction. At least 10,000 houses were destroyed in the walled areas of Amritsar.

Talbot said Muslims who left Amritsar settled in Lahore, unlike the Hindus and Sikhs who left Lahore and did not settle in Amritsar. Muslims had business links in Lahore, they had relations, and above all a big evacuee property of Sikhs and Hindus was available for them in Gawalmandi and Nesbit Road. Unlike Amritsar,

which remained backward because of proximity to border, Talbot said Lahore became a dynamic center of business activity.

Talbot said the comparative study of impact of partition on the people opens new vistas, taking us beyond the stereotypical portrayals. He said the partition brings in continuities and discontinuities, adding that when he talked to migrants on both sides of the border he felt that cultural continuity has not been destroyed.

Talbot said class and gender played a vital role in experiences of violence and efforts for settlement, adding that women were the chief sufferers.

He said all communities acted brutally to other communities and at the same time they had stories of heroic sacrifices to save others at the time of partition.

Ishtiaq Ahmed, from Stockholm University, Sweden, hoped that the recent peace moves between India and Pakistan may again bring Punjabis of both sides to probe chances of greater cultural amity and lessen the hold of religious identity.

In his presentation, *Punjabi identities before and after the 1947 partition of Punjab*, he said when communities are mobilized to political projects, which are nationalistic, lead to violent conflicts. He said every identity has political implications, but when it is given religious color, the minorities become second-class citizens and feel threatened.

He said political entrepreneurs could maneuver identity but only within the limits of the overall situation and context. In some situations the religious identity can be overriding and in others the linguistic-cultural.

Ahmed said in Punjab the religious identity dominated politics from 1940 onwards, leading to partitioning of the province through bloody and traumatizing displacement.

For him, the fallout on the religious basis was that Pakistani Punjab became the bulwark of conservative Islamic forces and on the Indian side communal politics polarized during the Punjabi Suba Movement of the 1950s and early 60s and later escalated into the Khalistan insurgency.

Pippa Virdee, from Coventry University, UK, said very little work has been done on comparing the experiences of refugee labor because of the 1947 partition of Punjab. Her work, *Migration and post-partition resettlement in Lyallpur: the impact of refugee labor*, is a case study, which is part of a wider comparative work on Ludhiana and Lyallpur. It focuses on the extent to which the migration of Muslim labor to Lyallpur (Faisalabad) in 1947 played a role in the city's economic importance as a center of textile manufacture.

Virdee said she used official documentation, supplemented by personal narratives of migrants from Ludhiana to Lyallpur, to highlight the relationship between the two cities before and after the partition.

The economy in Lyallpur changed dramatically in the post-1947 period, as the experience gained previously in Ludhiana by Muslims played a vital role in the settlement and prosperity of the migrants. The textile workers of Ludhiana found new opportunities in Lyallpur, as the needs of a new state saw rapid industrial and construction development in the city. Virdee shared personal narratives of the people who started from a scratch in Lyallpur, worked hard, and achieved prosperity.

She said the previous connections helped the refugees in making decisions about permanent settlement on both sides after the partition. However, she said the process of resettlement took years. She said the two cities – Lyallpur and Ludhiana – were sorts of winners out of the partition because they were able to prosper.

The discussant, Yasmin Saikia, assistant professor at the UNC-Chapel Hill, USA, said identity constantly changes and there is no stable Punjabiness, adding it is a construct, mainly that of the religion.

She said communities were destroyed and developed in the aftermath of the partition. "We are part of the engineering process of making who we are, and if we make ourselves elevated human beings...we will be one day a happy community without labels."

During discussion, the participants questioned why the identity and partition of Punjab was being discussed today, besides asking about the sources of the research, especially personal interviews. They also wondered if the two Punjabs have any chance of becoming one, citing the example of West and East Germany.

Talbot said it is the last opportunity to recover memories of the people, now very aged, who lived through the partition. Admitting that one has to be careful about the methodology, he said some of the old people have vivid memories about their homes, as they were able to recall minute details correctly. As identity changes constantly, he said it is vital to adopt historical approach to it.

Ishtiaq Ahmed said the traumatic events that have uprooted people would be questioned throughout history. Giving the example of Europe, he said the two Punjabs could come close, adding that nothing is final in history.

### **Violence, Displacement and the Issue of Identity – Post Partition Pakistan Concurrent Session B-2**

The historical literature on the 1971 War is mired in hairsplitting controversies of blame and the descriptions are restricted to nationalist discourses, maintained Yasmin Saikia, from UNC-Chapel Hill, USA, in her presentation, *Bodies in pain: voicing a people's history of 1971*.

For Saikia, the descriptions emphasize episodes of armed conflicts, military strategies, memories of enmity, which together create justification for violence and perpetuate narratives of hate for promoting differences and new conflicts.

Saikia said the experiences and sufferings of common people illuminating a human story for developing understanding are suppressed.

By probing into the memories and experiences of survivors, Saikia understood the gendered nature of violence, the multiple constructions of Muslim and Hindu identities in the subcontinent, and investigated the institution of postcolonial states.

She said the two wars fought in 1971 – the civil and international – have been interpreted and explained differently, although neither scholars nor veterans can decide who to blame and what for.

But few can deny that in the wars men fought and controlled, state violence, combined with ethnic and religious agendas, led to victimization of women who became the main casualty of "male warriors". The rape of women in 1971 is considered one of the most intense and widespread cases of brutalization of women in the 20<sup>th</sup> century wars. Saikia maintained it is not unique, but part of a familiar, though horrible, feature of wars. She said the recent examples of such horrors are Bosnia, Kosovo, Croatia, and Rwanda. She presented narrative stories of women from various ethnic, religious and socio-economic backgrounds who were victims of rape in 1971.

Hussain Ahmed Khan of National College of Arts, Pakistan, argued that feudal lords in southern Punjab used Sufism and Islam to strengthen their control over the region in his presentation, *Constructing identities through symbols in south Punjab*. He said the construction of Siraiiki ethnicity in conjunction with the ideologies of Islam might not necessarily represent, in a mimetic fashion, values, traditions and customary practices of southern Punjab, but their specific construction for the

effective mobilization of masses for the demand of regional autonomy and political independence.

Saba Gul Khattak of SDPI, Pakistan, said before analyzing the Wana operation without the immediate 9/11 context, there is a need to understand relationship between the state and the society in Pakistan. In her presentation, *Post 9/11: terror, terrorists and women in Pakistan's tribal area*, she said the relationship of the state with society needs to be problematized in its colonial and postcolonial contexts.

Saba said with Wana operation emerged a number of issues like identity, citizenship, displacement and loss of homes and livelihood, but added that there is no place in public discourse for them. In the context of the women of the area, she said the dual oppression of being tribal and being women is a structural issue that needs to be addressed on urgent basis.

She said the destruction of homes in all the different contexts ranging from being razed under locally applicable laws that are over a century old or targeted in the military action and looted afterwards, the issues of displacement and homelessness and marriage — whether quick and quiet overnight ones or of being married to foreigners and having children — are all problematic aspects about the lives of women that the state will have to contend with.

Already some moves are afoot whereby some women are demanding to know their husbands' whereabouts from the government, which has apparently arrested them. Most importantly, the development emanating from the current tension will impact the future options and arrangements of the state-society relations.

She said it is important to debate the Wana operation in Pakistan in view of the larger masculinist policy background.

One of the participants commented that a group of progressive women from Pakistan apologized to women who were victimized in 1971 War. The participants emphasized on the need to work separately on impact of war on next generation and the process of reconciliation.

Ian Talbot of the Coventry University, UK, chaired the session, while the discussant, Pippa Virdee, also belonged to the same university.

### **Communal Harmony in South Asia – Success Stories Concurrent session C - 1**

Speakers from Sri Lanka, India and Pakistan shared their views on communal harmony in their countries, particularly at the grassroots.

In his presentation, *Silence of the wolves: memories and anti-memories of a genocide*, Ashis Nandy of the Center for the Study of Developing Sciences, India, said the villains are only partly within one's own self and one does not have to seriously disown parts of the self complicit with the violence. He said communities are not dead in the contemporary South Asia, though they are under attack from the forces of urbanization and industrialization and it has its consequences.

He said according to a survey conducted by CSDS, 27 per cent of the 921 respondents interviewed — for many of whom the traumatic events of violence have turned them into ethnic or religious chauvinists — said they were helped by and often survived because of someone from the "enemy" community.

Some of the respondents say this reluctantly or apologetically, because in the meanwhile they have joined ethno-nationalist political parties and other revivalist formations. But they say it nonetheless. There were Muslims who were saved by Hindus and Sikhs, and vice versa.

He talked about an area in Kerala, India, where people belonging to diverse ethnic and religious groups are living in peace and harmony for the last 600 years.

In her paper, *Road for peace: A9 opening a road to peace - post-conflict transformation in Sri Lanka*, Nirmali Wijegoonawardana, from the University of Colombo, covered peace efforts between the Sri Lankan government and Tamil tigers and the outcome.

She said the colonial administrators of Sri Lanka adopted "divide and rule" strategy, and even the majority of politicians who emerged in post independent Sri Lanka ignored the need to seek avenues to prevent the alienation of communities. Until the recent ceasefire agreement, the protracted ethnic war for nearly two decades had instilled hatred, fear and suspicion among the young and the old. The opening of the *Kandy-Jaffna A9 Highway* after a hectic mine clearing and repair program is not only symbolic but also a "real" opening for peace, Wijegoonawardana said. The A9 has played a bloody role in the 20-year old conflict, with both sides trying to claim the strategic land route.

Professor Sikander Mehdi of Karachi University, Pakistan, covered the history of communal harmony in Sindh before the partition in 1947 in his paper, *Sindh: building peace through harmonious diversity*.

He said violence at the time of partition was a tragedy in Sindh but that was a short-lived phenomenon. He said communal disharmony after the partition particularly between the Mohajirs and other ethnic groups in Karachi was a direct consequence of military rules and dictatorships. For him, dictatorship always leads to disharmony. He, however, said communal harmony in rural Sindh is still persisting and Hindu minority is living in peace with the majority Muslim communities.

The paper, *Social and communal harmony: real stories of success*, by Mehboob Sada of the Christian Study Centre, Pakistan, was based on a study carried out after the Shantinagar incident in Punjab.

He said the promotion of social harmony is a daunting task in Pakistani perspective, where vested interests have created and are gradually widening the gulf between people of different faiths, races, nationalities and cultures. The minor differences between different communities are exploited which add to the difficulties of masses.

Unfortunately compared to Western media, he said Pakistani media present a negative picture of society. This increases communal friction. He claimed that in reality, the graph of religious and social harmony is high in Pakistan. On countless occasions people have put aside religious, regional, cultural, sectarian and linguistic differences and manifested genuine human values and emotions. He said our history is replete with stories of peaceful co-existence among various communities. He quoted from some of the case studies, saying harmony exists in diverse communities and they respect each other's religions and protect each other at the time of riots and violence.

Arshad Bhatti of Civil Junction, Pakistan, in his paper, *Future of disharmony in the context of history of harmony in South Asia*, said there are two strands of interest groups who contribute to "harmony" or "disharmony" as a catalyst of social cohesion or otherwise and who have a predictable preference for harmony or disharmony.

The "Power Group" (P-Group) could be represented by a powerful individual, an organized interest or an institution/set of institutions. It uses the tool of "harmony" or "disharmony" as it may fit the demands of a particular time for the consolidation and perpetuation of status quo benefiting this group in the social setting.

This group's preference is "disharmony". The group is mostly organized, and according to Bhatti, it is closely linked with the state or its proxies (also referred to as establishment).

The other group, "Peoples Group" (p-Group), has been, by and large, historically and traditionally, scattered and unorganized (this though is not quite the case anymore). This group opts "harmony" as preferred mode of social transactions. The members of this group are mostly common people or enlightened activists in the communities of common people.

They celebrate and value harmony but are not always inclined to project or portray it at mass level. Their motivational reasons are social, cultural and needs of attachment and pull of matching multiple identities. Bhatti said with advances in communication, the situation is changing. The group could also compete to promote harmony to counter disharmony.

Karamat Ali, director of Pakistan Institute of Labour, Education and Research, chaired the session.

### **Ideology, Politics and Education Concurrent Sessions D-4**

Krishna Kumar, from the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT), India, said education has a role to play in making South Asia a psychological and ethical reality.

In his presentation, *The role and significance of textbooks in South Asia*, he said the present system of education, customarily called modern, originated in the context of colonial rule. Independence from the colonial domination enabled the system to become "national" in the context of a distinct sovereign state, but the basic character remained unchanged.

One feature of the basic character was the centrality of the prescribed textbook in the pedagogic process. The new system of education marked a transition from indigenous traditions of learning, which emphasized orally communicated knowledge and the supremacy of the teacher's word.

Kumar said the quality of education in South Asia continues to be judged by the standard of textbooks rather than by the status and self-perception of the teacher. For making South Asia a psychological and ethical reality, he said the national systems of education should review the role of textbooks, both in terms of their present character and their potential.

Kumar said the role of the textbooks in India and Pakistan is troublesome. The full picture of the role textbooks have played in making South Asia an area of restless identity-battles would emerge if a large-scale project of textbook-analysis were to be undertaken on a collaborative basis. The project, according to Kumar, would show the ways in which the potential of a textbook-centered system of education could be realized in the interest of peace. Analytical research might pave the way for a shared endeavor to reform education, aiming at solutions to systemic weaknesses, which originated in the common, colonial past of the region.

Azra Razzack of Delhi University, India, discussed Indian and Indonesian educational discourse and the processes of schooling in her presentation, *The Indian and the Indonesian educational discourse: accommodating diversity?*

She highlighted the key issues of impact of schooling to formulate the national identities, impact of educational discourse on ethnic minorities and the understanding of curriculum in the context of different social groups of the two societies.

Yvette Claire Rosser, from the Austin University, Texas, USA, said the teleological nature of the civic responsibility to create patriotic citizens finds a flexible tool in the social studies curriculum where myth and fact often merge.

In her presentation, *Cognitive dissonance: confusing discourse in Pakistan Studies books*, she said Pakistan Studies textbooks are full of inherent contradictions. Discourses about Islam and its relationship to the ideology of Pakistan comprise the majority of them.

One textbook states that the government officers should "be honest, impartial and devoted [and] keep in view betterment of common people". Rosser said this discourse does not tally with reality, adding that several students complained that they felt cheated and pessimistic. A textbook published by the Punjab Textbook Board states, "The Holy Prophet (PBUH) says that a nation which deviates from justice invites its doom and destruction".

She maintained that with such a huge disparity between the ideal and the real, there is a great deal of fatalism apparent among the educated citizens and the school going youths about the state of the nation.

Rosser said there is also a certain amount of self-loathing in Pakistan Studies textbooks. The politicians are depicted as inept and corrupt and the industrialists are described as pursuing "personal benefit even at the cost of national interest". Ironically, she said textbooks are intended to create patriotism and pride in the nation, but here the country is ridiculed and despised.

During the discussion, some of the participants stressed to modernize the textbooks, but some opined that the "ideology" of Pakistan should not be removed. One of the participants criticized Rosser, saying she had only incorporated those results and comments of students who criticized the textbooks, but did not mention the percentage of those students who support the country's ideology and the current patterns of the curricula. The papers of Kumar and Azra were described as reflecting the true picture of South Asia.

### **Endangered Cultural Heritage Concurrent Session C-8**

The presentations focused on identifying factors responsible for endangering cultural heritage in Pakistan.

Ahmad Salim and Mohi ud Din Hashmi's paper, *On the record: archival issues in Pakistan*, addressed archival neglect in Pakistan and associated factors that need to be taken into account.

The paper made recommendations for developing mechanisms for archival protection and raising awareness about archives preservation and management. The authors talked about how archives are suffering from the government neglect and other hazardous circumstances in Pakistan.

They discussed how environmental threats and police raids have significantly endangered private and public archives. Similarly, the frequent change of governments has contributed to the neglect of cultural heritage, leading to disruption and discontinuation of protection policies.

They said public awareness about the importance of historical and cultural heritage is lacking in Pakistan. They recorded how an unenlightened attitude persists on the part of the state, owners of private archives and the public at large. They urged increased awareness about private archives through researchers and scholars.

Tahir Kamran of the Government College University, Pakistan, explored the role of oral traditions as a special form of cultural heritage in the paper, *Orality as a source of history: a case of Punjab*.

Orality was explored from the fact of "unwritten" sources and how preservation is possible by using the powers of human memory. He said in those parts of world where writing is not popular, oral traditions are the only available source for reconstruction of the past. Even in cultures where writing does exist, oral traditions have played an important role in passing on the heritage to next generations.

Kamran highlighted categories of oral tradition, based on categorization of E Bernheim, as narratives, legends, anecdotes, proverbs, and historical lays. These categories were accorded great significance in the wake of emergence of a new paradigmatic shift in the discourse of history.

Traditional paradigm that resonated the historical method, first employed by the Prussian historian, Leopold Von Ranke, emphasizing on the state archives and the written evidence stood completely nullified with the advent of Annales historians represented by March Bloch and Lucian Febvre in 1930s.

The shift in focus has opened new vistas of perception and analysis of societies where oral methods of preserving history had been prevalent for centuries. Punjab, definitely, is a case in point, he said.

Kamran noted that although *qissa*, *mahiya* and *dholla* are literary genres, they could be useful tool to give a new orientation to the history of Punjab, which would be articulating something radically different from the established view. He elaborated the discourse of orality to afford a new paradigmatic structure vis-à-vis the discursive fixation bequeathed by the colonial age.

He said with the establishment of the colonial state, the traditional government was displaced and new categories of power were brought in vogue by the British. To make their rule more effective and wholesome, the British resorted to appropriation of the indigenous knowledge. Serious efforts were deployed towards the preparation of district gazettes, ethnographical surveys and census reports etc. He said the local knowledge was re-inscribed and reinterpreted in the light of the standpoint of the colonial rulers.

Zubair Shafi Ghauri of the National College of Arts, Pakistan, discussed dangers for pre-historic settlements. These among many others include Mohinjodaro, Dhok Qaisarani, Vehova Dehran, Musa Khel, Taxila, Sarai Kula, Hathial, Pind Nishoni, salt range, Larian, Thar, and Harappa. He said although some preservation work has been done by the government, non-governmental and donor organizations, much remains to be done to protect the endangered sites in Pakistan.

The discussant, Amir Riaz of the Awami Jamhoori Pakistan, elaborated the role of print media in preserving cultural heritage. He said the situation is now changing in Pakistan as many civil society organizations are now taking interest in protecting cultural heritage. Ishtiaq Ahmed, assistant professor at Stockholm University, Sweden, chaired the session.

Pippa Virdee called for preserving archives in Pakistan and for more awareness in the people to play an important role in preserving heritage in all forms: literature, linguistics, archives and sites.

## **Governance Issues in Media**

### **Session I: Electronic Media**

#### **Concurrent Session B-7**

The speakers said there is a massive communication gap between the citizens and the local governments despite efforts by the National Reconstruction Bureau to rectify it through its Governance and Media Cell. They urged a strong local media involvement for awareness about the local government system.

Jahanzeb Aziz, a media analyst from UAE, in his paper, *Gaps between governance and the masses: the case of devolution plan*, analyzed the National Reconstruction

Bureau's media strategy and its impacts. He called for more independent, fair and objective studies to bridge the information gaps between the devolution plan and the citizens.

He shared that the NRB has equipped itself with many diversified tasks. The organization, though a part of the Prime Minister's Secretariat, does not have a practical, executable plan for advocacy and education regarding its role and functions.

According to his presentation, the Media and Governance Cell, devised to bridge the gap in governance issues among masses, keep people abreast of different activities going on at *tehsil* and district levels and dispel false impressions against the devolution process, has not been able to perform these functions.

He said only 12 percent of the people are aware of the local government system, 23 percent how *nazims* are elected, while a bare 2 percent have knowledge about Citizen Community Boards (CBOs). He said in the urban areas only 11 percent and in the rural areas 9 percent felt that the local governance was a better system.

Reviewing the mass media environment in Pakistan, he said only 5.3 percent of the people have access to newspapers, and 97 percent of these only read headlines, and 21 percent read columns, which is a healthy trend. His research indicated that magazine readership among women was higher compared to males. While 50 percent have television sets, only 5 percent have access to computers. Interestingly, he found that despite a 39-percent listenership of FM radio stations, 9 percent listen to the All India Radio.

He concluded that despite the fact that a worse kind of oligarchy was being created with the devolution system, it was still a good system. He stressed that the media needed to take greater ownership of the process to carry it to the people. "An independent, fair and objective study is required to know how much progress has actually taken place."

Syed Abdul Siraj Ahmed, from the Allama Iqbal Open University, Pakistan, in his paper, *Post-modernism and the mass media*, gave a comparative analysis of the pre and post-modernist media. He discussed how post-modernist society had become a visual society dominated by media reality. "We are living in a three-minute culture because reality is littered with video footage, computer games, advertising, film, television images and photographs."

He discussed how post-modernism was a set of literary and cultural movements emerging after the collapse of the division between the elite and mass/common cultures. He said the speed of communications had brought about the concept of "here and now". He felt that the remote control had given more control to the audience in the communication process. Siraj cited this as a key reason behind fragmentation and segmentation in the society. "This cauterization of audience has changed the very definition of mass communication."

Tragically, now more emphasis was on style rather than the substance and content. His presentation highlighted how advertising techniques are used to make or break a company, irrespective of the quality of the product. "A poor product can be successful due to great advertising while an excellent product can fail. People get influenced by brands when they buy things."

Matiullah Jan's paper, *District governance and the role of FM radio*, recommended that given the regulatory laws regarding coverage of public service messages, the districts should make best use of the FM radio channels. He said the district governments and FM radio were both a new phenomenon at the grassroots.

He felt that FM radio would be the ultimate tool of empowering people. "Aggressive news reporting, interviews, debates and discussions by an FM radio station will put life into an otherwise dull system of local governments."

He said a local FM radio could be a powerful instrument to bring people back to participatory democracy and draw them out of their houses on polling days. He identified various departments/sections (CBO activities) of the district government set up that ought to be covered by FM radio reporters to keep the community well informed.

Matiullah said the lacunas in the laws and by-laws of the district council legal framework prevented journalists from obtaining information and for this there was need for greater transparency on the part of *nazims*. Media personnel should have access to union council proceedings, he recommended.

The website launched by NRB to facilitate free flow of information was only used as an advertising tool to glorify the *nazims*, he said, and called for bringing the public into the mainstream political discourse.

The discussant, Eamonn Taylor, head of Development Section at DFID, reiterated that electronic media needed to work aggressively and strategically to bridge the gaps, as the government bodies failed to inform the public about the devolution process. He felt it was important for the state and the media to involve the citizens, adding that it was disheartening the citizens had such little information about CBOS, bodies designed specifically to work for them. He called for structural and behavioral reforms to move from "*notions of tabedaree (submission) to notions of barabaree (egalitarianism)*."

In the brief plenary, it was suggested to discuss and debate the issue of the "tyranny of reportage" under a military rule as well. A participant questioned how Pakistan could be called a country living in the postmodern era since we were neither a text age nor an audio visual one, given the rate of rising illiteracy. Moneeza Hashmi of PTV, Pakistan, chaired the session.

## **Governance Issues in Media**

### **Session II: Print Media**

#### **Concurrent Session C-7**

Shafqat Munir, from Action Aid, Pakistan, called for sharing results of scientific research and data on technical, economic, trade, socio-political, cultural and environmental issues through media.

In his presentation, *Media activism: right based approach to promote development issue*, he discussed how media activism could influence the policy making process in the interest of development issues with a rights-based approach, saving communities from hazardous impacts of bad policies on trade, economics, environment and livelihood. Not only does media activism influence policy, but also forewarns communities about the hazardous impacts of policies. He cited the WTO and agriculture related trade issues as an example.

Giving a theoretical overview of the libertarian and the social responsibility theory (SRT) of media, he said following the failure of the libertarian theory (LT), the SRT emerged with a rights-based approach to address real social problems facing various communities across nations. Under the LT, it was the owners and the operators in the press who had to decide what should go or be blocked in print/broadcast media. Criticizing the monopolies in media, he said the global media was largely protecting the rights of the rich multinational corporations (MNCs), compromising the rights of the people. Follow up or more news stories against the products of the MNCs normally do not get space in media because they provide large chunk of revenue to newspapers and TV channels.

The people's right to know needs to be recognized as the supreme right. It is the moral, social and professional duty of a journalist to be responsible towards society. Media persons need to focus on the development issues. However, if they are barred from

doing their duty or someone else decides for them what is worth covering and what is not, this is denying them their professional right, he emphasized.

With the emergence of worldwide rights movements, awareness of human rights and a rights-based approach to settle disputes and reduce vulnerabilities are gaining space across communities and countries. The trend is to give rights an explicit legislative basis and to incorporate them into a wide range of agreements and policies, including commercial contracts and labor agreements.

The concept of rights not only covers individual freedom of expression, voting and trade, but also basic needs – water and sanitation, food, housing, employment opportunities, a clean environment and increasingly gender and cultural rights, and security as the hardcore developmental issue. He shared that there is consensus among human rights groups that a rights approach helps reduce vulnerability, provided legal instruments support it. Ammara Durrani, from The News, Pakistan, in her paper, *Media and governance: bridging the rural-urban divide*, discussed how rapid urbanization has become a statistical fact – more than 40% of the country's population lives in urban areas. She questioned the notion of Pakistan chiefly being an agrarian economy, having a largely rural population.

The changing rural-urban ratios have given rise to issues of population, livelihood, human and environmental security etc. She shared how the population growth and intra-city and inter-provincial migrations had also altered Pakistan's ethnographic makeup, impacting its ethno-nationalist and sectarian politics, and regional cultures.

However, the issues of governance have become pressing, she said. Massive infiltration and pumping of international aid and the much-needed state intervention were leading the drive for good governance required to address and overcome these problems. However, the success of this drive was debatable in the absence of tangible results.

Pakistani media, by virtue of policy news, statements, analyses, criticism and outreach, occupies a prominent position in the ambit of governance debate, she said. "As a predominantly urban phenomenon, media in Pakistan has always been faced with the challenge of failure to penetrate the great rural mass, shackled by illiteracy and poverty. Its past inability to reach out to rural Pakistan has marginalized a majority of the population from the policymaking debate. But with urbanization on the rise, and with the development brigade having significantly covered the rural-urban disconnect, the national media is now responding to these realities in its own peculiar ways."

Her paper attempted to study how Pakistani media was responding to the development challenge. By focusing on governance as its main concern, she looked at how this idea was being played out, grasped and debated in the big cities, and how it was being taken to the rural areas in the name of development.

She cited the water crisis in Sindh and how the media had touted only the urban perspective, completely overshadowing the plight of the people of interior Sindh. Despite vernacular media taking up development issues, particularly in Sindh, city journalists still had no interest in small village issues. Hence, they were not being covered in national dailies, unless highlighted by international media houses first, cases of rape being one example.

She critically analyzed how journalists and media organizations were partaking in the process and consciously or unconsciously bridging/increasing the rural-urban divide. Notwithstanding issues such as work burden, poor working conditions, lack of awareness about modern information tools and time constraint, it is important to realize that development issues are no longer mutually exclusive and so the friction between local and city journalists needs to be studied. Both need to be sensitized through cross-fertilization.

Disagreeing with Shafqat's presentation regarding media coverage of development issues, Ammara said with the advent of globalization, there were more consumerist issues and ideas in the press than ever before, pushing back key social issues. She

identified the impact these processes were having on the public and the intervening government and non-governmental agencies, and also on the media itself.

She recommended capacity building of journalists on theoretical concepts to stop them from blindly following big money and ready-made piecemeal reports. There is space for partnership between mainstream and grassroots media for meaningful, productive work. Major newspapers need creative approaches to bring marginalized issues to the forefront. Follow-up investigative reporting could reinvent print media, she said.

In the question-answer session, the audience agreed that the dominant psyche of mainstream media was to follow big money and power, rather than work with a rights-based approach. It was stressed that the unwritten understanding between owners, editors and reporters to give 20 percent coverage to development issues needed to be increased through a legal framework. It was felt that the Freedom of Information Act was a highly flawed document and both the NGO and media community should protest against its impractical clauses such as its query response timings. A journalist remarked that the public also had a responsibility to give feedback on the work of journalists.

The discussant, Imtiaz Gul, a writer and a journalist from Pakistan, who also chaired the session, said there was no concept of human resource development within media organizations. Lack of fringe benefits, trainings, and good salary packages to journalists are liable to open doors to craft and cunning. Newspaper owners need to come up with innovative ways of providing news and information to the masses. PEMRA should make laws to bind owners to devote more space to development issues, he recommended.

### **Women in Media: Problems and Prospects Concurrent Session B-6**

The speakers called for a self-regulatory non-governmental media ethics commission like those in the UK and Sweden to monitor insensitive reporting and ensure implementation of a gender sensitive code of ethics for print media.

Tasneem Ahmar, from Uks, Pakistan, discussed her organization's work to formulate a code that is gender sensitive, consultative and practical in her presentation, *Formulation and implementation of a gender sensitive code of ethics for the print media in Pakistan*. She said China, Canada and South Korea had such a functional code, but in South Asia steps were only being taken now to evolve it.

Sharing the methodology for developing the code, she said Uks used a participatory and conciliatory approach, working closely with the desk staff of various English and Urdu newspapers and magazines, including The Daily Times, Dawn, The Frontier Post and Herald.

The team provided on-desk training, going over sensitive and insensitive news clippings gathered by Uks with the staff. She said despite interactive and consultative meetings with the editorial staff of various newspapers, the response to the code was mute, especially by media bodies like Pakistan Federal Union of Journalists (PFUJ), All Pakistan Newspapers Society (APNS) and the Council of Pakistan Newspapers Editors (CPNE).

Responding to questions, she said the code stresses issues like cautioning against the victim's identification in rape cases, abduction, acid-throwing, sexual abuse of a child. About women's pictures, the code suggests that instead of displaying pictures of glamorous women, those who excel in their fields should be preferred wherever possible. It emphasizes that the pictures of the women attending an event or gathering, published by most newspapers without a caption, should be published with the permission of the subjects.

Sharing case studies of female journalists, she recommended that the working environment at newspaper offices should be made conducive for them, and stressed

strict implementation of regulations against sexual harassment. Female journalists should be encouraged to cover a variety of issues, she said.

Beena Sarwar, from GEO TV, Pakistan, in her presentation, *Pakistan: women in media*, looked at whether and how women's involvement in print, television, radio, advertising and feature films was making a difference to the status and representation of Pakistani women.

She said there were more women in media nowadays, particularly in the English print media and the relatively new TV channels, including females in top positions. At one stage, all three editors of The News in Karachi, Rawalpindi and Lahore were women.

Women also hold senior editorial positions in the news departments of private television channels and Pakistan Television. There are women directors of feature films as well as advertising agencies. The presence of women in these fields is as essential, she said, as the presence of gender-sensitive male colleagues. "It must, however, be noted that simply being female does not ensure such a perspective; what is more relevant than the gender of the media person is whether or not they subscribe to the dominant patriarchal discourse and framework," she stressed.

The greater visibility of women not only provides role models for other women but also creates and expands space for them in the public sphere, increasing their acceptability and militating against traditional biases that curb women's autonomy. In Pakistan, female journalists have specifically contributed to an increase in reporting on issues relating to violence, particularly karo-kari, besides education, health, sports, entertainment and economics.

But Beena said despite these positive changes, female journalists are up against more odds than their male colleagues, in terms of having to prove themselves more. They face a major problem when covering conflict areas such as lack of access to information, to the physical area under conflict, and to those affected by the conflict. However, she said women have the advantage of access to female victims of conflict, particularly in traditional areas where women might not feel comfortable talking to a male reporter.

She shared the findings of a study by the Karachi Union of Journalists that states: "Women doing daily reporting are few and exceptional, which while disproving that women do not do daily reporting, also show that there are structural barriers such as working late nights." The study found that "even those women who are ready to work as reporters are not encouraged by their editors or managers. Similarly, there are very few women news photographers in Pakistan."

Male colleagues still resist the integration of female colleagues, and women's own preference tends to be working in magazine sections or on soft features. Interestingly, the KUJ report observed "very few complaints against women journalists regarding corruption or black mailing". But the findings suggest they still avoid reporting on general crime and politics.

The discussant, Ayesha Haroon, editor The Nation, Pakistan, felt encouraged that efforts were being made to train reporters and journalists, and build their capacity not only on the environmental and social issues, but also on how to write and report sensitively based on moral, ethical guidelines, and not just facts or sensationalism. She, however, was dismayed by the fact that less than 5% of media students wanted to become journalists or even adopt any profession. She felt it was important to break this vicious cycle.

In the plenary, the majority agreed that the younger generation was depoliticizing its goals, and that aspirations had now shifted, especially for women a privatization of issues was rapidly taking place. It was felt that this shift was taking place due to the lack of space being given to youngsters since they were increasingly seeing decisions being made at the private level and not the public. It

was felt that the civil society had still not caught up with the English and Urdu media in terms of leading debate on controversial issues.

About media moguls, the majority stressed that editors becoming owners of newspapers was an unhealthy trend and needed to be checked by journalists themselves "who should be willing to critique internal governance issues plaguing the media as well as government policies."

Parliamentarian Sherry Rehman, who chaired the session, said the journalists should be aware of the postmodern environment and the shift towards "corporatization, commodification or tabloidization".

She said women need to break the glass ceiling, using the mainstream media to highlight more sensitive issues, adding that they also need to learn to use the Internet, which can open whole new vistas of information for them.

### **Alternative Realities: The Voice and Role of Fiction Writers Concurrent Session A-3**

Christina Oesterheld, from the University of Heidelberg, Germany, outlined the central features of the value systems implicitly expressed in the characters of three novels: *Rakh* by Mustansar Husain Tarar (1987), *Dil Bhatgayga* by Ahmad Bashir (2003) and *Ishq ke mare huay* by Zahid Hasan (2003).

In her presentation, *Visions and values: some recent Urdu novels*, she said at the political and social levels, the three novels could be read as stories of bad governance. They emphasize a need for change, which is implicit in *Rakh* and explicit in the other two novels. She presented excerpts from the works to illustrate her point.

She highlighted core concepts – peace, justice, equality, honesty and freedom of choice – in personal matters, as expressed in the characters of the novels. She explored the consequences of such attitudes in today's Pakistan, saying impact of such works on readers largely depends on the aesthetic quality or readability.

Ritu Menon, from Women Unlimited, India, covered non-fiction writings by Pakistani, Indian and Bangladeshi women on the events of 1971 and 1947 in her presentation "The dissenting feminist voice in a globalized marketplace".

Menon said the accounts of women on these events were important because they imbue the political with a different meaning. By removing the distinction between the personal and the political, and by demonstrating that in women's experience the personal is political, feminism has validated significance of the experiential dimension in any analysis. She presented extracts from Sara Suleri's essay *Dadi* and narrated other non-fictional accounts such as Ranjit Kaur's story about her six-month sojourn in Muzaffarabad in 1980s and Mantikuntala Sen's account of her involvement in rehabilitation efforts.

She said the globalization of media, and especially of book publishing, together with the dominance of English as a world language, makes the question of alternative voices and perspectives a particularly urgent one. Structures of wealth and control in publishing, in the production of knowledge, in the creation of intellectual capital, are now part of global publishing empires, and their policies are aimed at maintaining the status quo economically – keeping wealth in the hands of the few.

In the presentation, *The Pakistani English novel: tales of conflict and violence*, Muneeza Shamsie, a critic and a journalist from Pakistan, said the history and attributes of Pakistani English literature were different from other Pakistani literature because it is written in a language acquired by the East-West encounter. In Pakistan, its readership comprises an English speaking elite but it also reaches a wide Anglophone audience. She covered a wide spectrum, ranging from the work

of major novelists such as Ahmed Ali, Mumtaz Shahnawaz, Zulfiqar Ghose, Adam Zameenzad to Bapsi Sidhwa, Sara Suleri, Nadeem Aslam, and Kamila Shamsie. She asserted that Pakistani English fiction was neither literature of isolation nor social disengagement, adding that it had engaged some of the most crucial issues and through the decades held a mirror to Pakistan.

Lubna Chaudhry, the discussant from SUNY Binghamton, USA, said the East-West dichotomy could be challenged since this distinction was arbitrary. However, the colonial relations of power still hold. She said the fundamental question is the role of fiction and nonfiction writing in shaping alternative realities, in particular the function of fiction writing in decolonization of imaginations.

She asked how Pakistani writers have shaped the genre of novels and the subversive potential of women's writings. She questioned the notion of all women being in the margin, since women could not be seen as a homogenized group. She also compared the notions of politics of fulfillment and the politics of transfiguration.

Ameena Saiyid, managing director of Oxford University Press, Pakistan, chaired the session.

### **The Experience of Democracy in the Subcontinent Concurrent Session A-5**

The speakers explored democracy in diverse contexts. They delved into an alternative interpretation of the religious text, democracy and conflict in Pakistan, and analysis of gender quotas in Pakistani politics. They also discussed communal dimensions of political representation in India, and the creation of garrison states in the post 9/11 scenario.

Swarna Rajagopalan, an Indian writer, in her paper, *Epic roots: women, democracy and governance in the Valmiki Ramayana*, sought to chart an alternative path to the interpretation of Valmiki Ramayana, a religious story.

She described her paper as a counter study, giving an account of what Valmiki Ramayana tells about democracy and governance and what space does it afford women in this context. Pointing to the possibility of taking an alternative path in interpreting Valmiki Ramayana, she suggested reinterpreting religious texts and giving them a secularised meaning.

Swarna believes that there is still a great deal to learn from the epics and other traditional texts and discourses. She said by opting out of this discourse, scholars make it possible for the narrowest and most conservative interpretations of the texts to go unchallenged.

Rehan Ansari, from the Beaconhouse National University, Pakistan, in his paper, *The garrison state in Pakistan and India post 9/11*, talked about the shift in the state policies and the tendencies in India and Pakistan to become more garrison.

He said those who run the new garrison states want to maintain popular support, leading to politics of few ideas and restricted possibilities for dissent.

Ansari observed that just as India is a garrison state in case of Kashmir and the North East, so is Pakistan in the case of South Waziristan. He believed that for such evolving garrison states, civil liberty would be a luxury.

In his presentation, *Democracy and conflict in Pakistan*, Mohammad Waseem, from the Quaid-i-Azam University, Pakistan, focused on state formation in Pakistan and the way it has led to emergence of three dichotomous relations: civil-military, ethnic and the conflict between Islamic and the so-called mainstream modernist forces.

He observed that as the idea of democracy has unfolded in Pakistan so has the conflict pattern in these fields because there is a constant politics of exclusion going on. The state tends to privilege the majoritarian/dominant community, but in the pluralist

framework other communities get underprivileged, sidelined, marginalized and alienated. That has often led to ethnic conflict.

Shedding light on some of the peculiarities of the Pakistani state and some of the conflict patterns, he talked about the problematic dominance of the migrated population of India in the early years of Pakistan and that of Punjab in the later years.

Suggesting a balance of power, Waseem said the dominance of a community, province or an ethnic group must be avoided by the state, which Pakistan has failed to do in the past.

E Sridharan, from UPIASI, India focused on representation of Muslims in Indian elections and the relationship between democracy and Hindu-Muslim conflict in India in his paper, *Democracy and conflict: the communal dimension*.

Examining the representation pattern of Muslims in the Lok Sabha in India's electoral system in comparative context, he observed that Muslims are systematically underrepresented and more than half of the Muslim MPs were elected from non-Muslim majority constituencies (where Muslims were less than 20% in population compared to the areas where their population was between 20-50%).

He said there is no clear link between representation and communal violence and it all depends on the extent to which the civil society is polarized. He called for a strong regime of rights.

Farzana Bari, from the Quaid-i-Azam University, Pakistan, talked about gender quotas and democracy in Pakistan. She looked into the extent these quotas have empowered women and to what extent women have been able to impact public policy and reshape the political processes.

In her presentation, *Gender quotas and democracy*, she said before 2000 (when the quota for women in politics was increased to 33% at the local level and 17% at the national and provincial levels), the impact of women's representation in politics was insignificant because of less quotas, election modalities, financial constraints at the local level, and limited political space that was always captured by the elite women.

She asserted that within the patriarchal context of modern democracies when women enter into politics, they are unable to play a role to really shift the boundaries or radically change the sexual politics because they have to play on well-defined male terms.

About post-2000 scenario in the political context, Farzana observed that although women have become visible in politics due to a significant increase in the gender quota, looking at it in terms of the impact so far it seems that women are still struggling to make a space for themselves within this gendered democracy.

She asserted that the political empowerment of women through gender quotas is mediated through the wider political context, therefore, without the transformation of the gendered and feudal foundation of elite democracy in Pakistan, gender quotas cannot lead to political empowerment of women.

Nasim A Khan of Alternative Energy Development Board chaired the session.

## **Exploring the South Asian Security Dimensions: Military, Economic and Human Concurrent Session C-2**

Moeed Yousaf, from SDPI, Pakistan, analyzed 44 proposals presented on Kashmir between 1949-50 and 2004 in his presentation, *Streamlining the Indo-Pak negotiation agenda on Kashmir*.

For him, over a period of time some of the themes have gradually lost importance, which include plebiscite and the support for the United Nations as the sole international actor.

The key components identified after analysis pointed to two options for sustainable solution of the Kashmir issue. Option one includes autonomy, soft Line of Control, demilitarization, Kashmir part of negotiations and the role of international actors besides United Nations. The second option, besides incorporating the points of the first option, includes partition.

Yousaf emphasized that the negotiating agenda must focus on the key components, which according to him, could be seen in some of the recent developments on the issue.

Najma Najam, from the Fatimah Jinnah Women University, Pakistan, highlighted human security issues beyond the conventional physical concept in her presentation, *Human security issues redefined: the ant's view*.

Terming it as psychological domain, Najma defined security as the blanket that cocoons the infant into the warmth of safety, feeling of protection, the attachment and bonding for a secure future. But when taken away, it destroys lives.

Najma pointed towards the horrible consequences if the internal peaceful state of mind was shattered. Insecurity impairs everyday functioning and the social organizational structures in which the individuals function. Sometimes this results in turning apparently normal individuals into hostile and aggressive killing machines.

Solution, according to her, could be revitalization of society through healthy outlets for young people, by strengthening family ties and by raising awareness for creating an environment of trust through interactive dialogue.

Ejaz Haider, from Friday Times, Pakistan, said in the process of looking at how Pakistan's security culture had evolved, it was necessary to see how one defines security.

In his presentation, *The evolution of Pakistan's security fears*, Haider said Pakistan's security culture had developed structural problems primarily because of an over emphasis on "military security".

For him, the three broad factors that had shaped Pakistan's security culture are: the country's moving away from Jinnah's mission statement, the imbalance of civil-military relations and the inconsistent political system. To correct this imbalance, Pakistan needs to re-look at the three factors holistically. The current internal security threats Pakistan is facing were primarily because of how it had developed. Fighting these internal threats was not just a matter of using force, he said, rather it required a new state-society relationship.

Adil Najam, from the Tufts University, USA, said the concept of security needed a revisit in his presentation, *Taking security seriously: security for whom, from what, why, and how*.

Najam organized the concept of insecurity as interstate war, institutional failure, civil strife and human insecurity. He argued that human security was fast becoming major threat to state security in many ways in most parts of the world, including South Asia. He emphasized that it was important to ensure security but not at the cost of insecurity.

He said the insecurities of Pakistan and India were of far more profound nature at the human level than at the state level. The states as well as the inter-state insecurities are likely to be dealt in a better way if human dimensions of insecurity are taken more seriously than the military dimension.

Giving example from the current situation of human insecurity in the region, he said the total number of Indians killed in all conflicts since independence between the two countries will be far less than the total number of children who would die in Delhi in any one month because of unsafe drinking water. Similar kind of statistics will be true for Pakistan.

Mushahid Hussain of Pakistan Muslim League (Quaid-i-Azam), who chaired the session, talked about a study in September 1998 by the foreign office to analyze how

many options were presented on the Kashmir issue soon after Pakistan and India went nuclear. According to the study, 52 options were put on the table for the Kashmir resolution.

Referring to Haider's presentation, he said mostly the important decisions are taken by a few individuals. Quoting from an interview of Tom Freedman in an Israeli newspaper, Haaretz, on May 12, 2003, Hussain said the American decision to attack Iraq was solely done by a group of 25 persons working in five blocks next to each other in Washington DC. He said sometimes in democracies decisions are secretly made by a group or groups of individuals.

Hussain said Pakistan needed to redefine its national security including civilian concepts -- rule of law, constitution, education, economy, political parties, provincial autonomy, federal framework, and all areas that bind population together.

For Hussain, nuclear power was one of the reasons for the march towards peace, which now worked as a balance of power in South Asia. However, some of the participants did not agree with him.

The institutional structures in the two countries, according to some of the participants, were the primary cause of insecurities in the region.

### **Human Trafficking in South Asia Concurrent Session B-5**

Tristan Burnett, from the International Organization for Migration Mission, Afghanistan, presented an overview of her organization's first project - a research assessment together with the basic information regarding trends of trafficking in Afghanistan.

In the presentation, *Trafficking in persons: an analysis of Afghanistan*, she said the study's aims were to assess the level of trafficking in Afghanistan and among Afghans abroad, to define trafficking in Afghan context and finally giving recommendations for the situation. The methodology was literature review of number of reports, documents, academic papers and media. Survey distribution included organizations in Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iran, which focused on issues like human rights and child labor.

According to her findings, trafficking cases ranged from abductions for forced marriages, forced marriages for debt release, exchange of women and girls for dispute settlement, abductions for domestic and sexual servitude to forced prostitute and forced labor.

Burnett pointed out armed conflict, lack of internal security, effects of drought and socioeconomic reasons as factors responsible for trafficking. She described lack of reporting of the cases, inability of women to access the judicial system and insecurity as prime obstacles to counter trafficking.

She recommended the Afghan government's participation in regional dialogues to end human trafficking along with the ratification of international instruments and joint monitoring mission.

Shahbaz Bokhari, from SDPI, Pakistan, called for effective poverty eradication programs, saying it was the root cause of child trafficking in Pakistan. His presentation of the report, *Trafficking in children for labor and sexual exploitation in Pakistan*, coauthored by Saba Gul Khattak, Saleem Shah and Kiran Habib, looked at the nature and magnitude of trafficking in children for different exploitative purposes, including child labor and sexual exploitation.

The findings showed that before 1985 child trafficking was considered as a curse but from 1995 onwards parents actually knew what their children were going to do, as they were the earning hands of their families. As many as 54% of the children who were willing to go abroad to earn money knew they had to support their families

financially. The children being trafficked – 65% males and 35% females in the SDPI survey – were employed as camel jockeys, sex workers and dancers.

Shahbaz said the government must implement child labor policy and strongly enforce trafficking law and demanded immediate ban on annual camel race in Cholistan. He said NGOs, CBOs and INGOs should launch an effective advocacy campaign, and help in development of strong rehabilitation centers. Local journalists should be trained on trafficking issues.

A K Masud Ali, from INCIDIN, Bangladesh, shared a new paradigm of thinking on trafficking in Bangladesh in his presentation, *Trafficking in persons: towards an inclusive paradigm*.

He said the macro level factors that lead to trafficking include domestic violence and discrimination against women, low prospects of employment, lack of opportunities, low levels of education, complicated migrations policies of other countries, conflicts and natural disasters and impacts of globalization.

The inclusive paradigm of Bangladesh considers gender lens, global context, migration policies, and the issue of agency involved as important factors while looking at trafficking. Giving example of the gender lens, he said men are predominantly seen as migrants while women and children are typically seen as victims of trafficking, though men are also trafficked but the issue is almost absent in Bangladesh.

Calling for redefining the concept of trafficking, he said the “actual outcome”, various tortures and threats used to ensure the person’s compliance with the new situation and the evolution or temporal nature of the event as trafficking need redefining because it has multiple manifestations.

For him, the important components of trafficking included involvement of the third party – the demand side that has so far been ignored – time factor, commercial gain, mobility and most importantly violation of rights. Highlighting the emerging risks in trafficking, he mentioned global restrictions, arm-twisting, discourse of disempowerment and knowledge gap.

The discussant, Waheed Chaudhary of the Quaid-i-Azam University, Pakistan, said it was important to analyze the data on trafficking but only after its validation.

He said the South Asian countries are facing almost similar kinds of problems in terms of trafficking, adding that moral poverty is the most important issue. He said most of the parents were aware of what their children would be doing once they are trafficked.

During the question-answer session, Saba Gul Khattak argued that the loss of agency was not correct as in most cases parents knew what their children were doing. She termed the definition of trafficking a problem area, asking what were the parameters of deciding trafficking and how to differentiate it from local customs.

She said this was quite a problematic concept in the context that what degree of exploitation was involved, how did we interpret what was exploitation, and whether the person at the other end also regarded it as exploitation.

The participants also discussed the question of morality. It was easy to teach morality in a situation when one had decision-making power and choices in life, but it was difficult where there were no choices.

Saifullah Chaudhry of International Labour Organization, Pakistan, chaired the session.

## **Afghan Refugees/DPs in Pakistan: A Sustainable Solution?**

### **Concurrent Session C-5**

Nasim Ashraf of the National Commission on Human Development, Pakistan, chaired the session and Nancy Dupree, from ACBAR, Pakistan, was the discussant.

Afrasaib Khattak of the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) and Ewen Macleod of the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) made presentations on Afghan refugees.

Afrasiab Khattak, in his presentation, *Afghan refugees/DPs in Pakistan: a sustainable solution?*, asked Afghanistan and Pakistan to develop more forums where people's aspirations could be asserted.

Khattak said the creation of refugees is a manifestation of social, religious and military conflicts. He pointed out that Afghan nomadism is an old phenomenon but the recent conflict that almost destroyed Afghanistan created an enormous number of refugees.

He said Afghanistan could be seen as a low-pressure zone, as it was in the midst of other societies that had modernized. This also led to several invasions like the ones by Soviet Union and America.

Khattak said there was no legal framework in Pakistan for refugees, adding that General Ziaul Haq used the garb of the analogy of Ansar and Mujahideen and failed to come up with a concrete policy for the rehabilitation of refugees. This legal vacuum had, in the long run, seriously undermined the interests of refugees. The year 1995 was a particularly bad time as international assistance dried up.

In 2000-2001 Pakistan began to push the refugees forcibly to Afghanistan. Some analysts believe that aside from the lack of resources, an additional factor behind this policy was Pakistan's support for the Taliban government. Pakistan wanted to show that the circumstances were normal in Afghanistan and the refugees can go back.

However, in the process international standards were not observed, and the UNHCR has not played the role it should have. The lack of proper infrastructure development or even basic facilities led to a situation where at least half of the refugees came back to Pakistan.

Khattak said presently any defocusing from the problems confronting Afghan refugees would be catastrophic. Moreover, Afghanistan's informal economy is robust. Thousands of Pakistanis have gone there as plumbers, construction workers etc.

Khattak maintained that Afghanistan is emerging as an economic partner. Enhancement of the socio economic development of Afghanistan will ultimately contribute to the development of the region as a whole.

In his presentation, *Afghan refugees in Pakistan-sustainable solutions in an era of change*, Ewen Macleod stated that over the last 20 years the displacement of people from Afghanistan has largely been viewed as a refugee problem. Since 2002, he said, about 2.3 million Afghans have returned to Afghanistan. This led to the expectation that the solution of the refugee problem was nearing. He said it also garnered support for the policy of voluntary repatriation as the ideal solution.

However, Macleod said the demographic composition of the Afghan population in Pakistan, circumstances of exile and the nature of cross-border movement have changed. There is growing evidence that shows the significance of transnational networks and mobility to the future economic and social potential in Afghanistan. Moreover, Afghanistan's politics, economy and social structure have also been affected by long-term conflict.

For Macleod, all these developments present challenges that require new frameworks and approaches for sustainable solutions. He proposed that an understanding of migratory processes, contemporary livelihood processes and poverty alleviation are

critical in framing policies. He suggested that the future management of population movements should be done within normal bilateral arrangements.

Nancy Dupree said there had been remarkable changes in terms of refugees' rehabilitation, but there was still a lot to be done. She pointed out that semantics, such as the term "facilitated repatriation" were deceptive, because they take attention away from the fact that there are real lives and people behind statistics and numbers.

She said decisions had not been made about basic issues such as the land ownership problems. Basic facilities should have been in place before any steps were taken to repatriate refugees. Dupree said there are other agencies that UNHCR could have asked to help in facilitating this process. She said sending people who are not in a position to earn a living led to increasing frustration. This has caused an inflow of such people into Kabul.

She asserted that repatriation should have been put on hold till there was enough rebuilding and reconstruction. Pakistan and UNHCR had put a lot of effort into imparting skills and training to refugees, but now that effort was going to waste since there are no opportunities for Afghans to practice those skills.

Responding to a question about solutions of poppy cultivation crisis, Mcleod said at the moment there was too much emphasis on farmers. He said measures at the level of policing and security were also needed to tackle this problem. About the future commitment of UNHCR to Afghan refugees, he said the commission has a mandate to protect refugees and in theoretical terms Afghan refugees will continue to enjoy that status.

On back flow of refugees, he said the commission was concerned and had approached the Afghan government about this problem. However, bilateral negotiations between Afghanistan and Pakistan were probably the best solution for curbing it, he said.

Nasim Ashraf said security would continue to be the most important issue in Afghanistan. If there was semblance of security provided to the Afghan people, they would be able to get back on their feet soon. In the short run there has to be a close and extended role for aid workers, but even that was dependent on the security situation, he said.

## **Health Care Finance and Delivery**

### **Session I: International Experience**

### **Session II: Regional Experience**

### **Concurrent Sessions B-3 & C-3**

The first session was devoted to international experience in health care finance.

Professor Peter Coyte, from the University of Toronto, Canada, deconstructed health policy discourses in health care finance that are often taken for granted in his paper, *(Un)masking policies of health care finance*. He also discussed post-structural posture for the identification of "exclusionary" health policies. Such policies are supposed to offer universal benefit, despite yielding adverse effects for significant segments of society.

Coyte discussed how private finance for health care is sometimes described as being designed "for all", but frequently benefits only a subset of the population.

He said for financial policies in health care, their intended and unintended effects and the circumstances under which such policies are created, maintained and enforced, should also be taken into account. Such policies may be explicit representations of power in society or may be subtle in providing for individual "choice" and "freedom" that, in turn, yields separation (or segmentation) as an outcome.

The paper outlined implications for South Asian countries. It was specifically suggested that if those who benefit from financial policies of partition are numerous and obtain significant advantage as compared to those who are adversely affected are scarce/hidden (or perceived to suffer only marginally), then partition more likely becomes a "legitimate", but exclusionary, instrument of health care financial policy.

Siripen Supakankunti, from the Chulalongkorn University, Thailand, discussed how health care and delivery system in Thailand faces severe inequities and inefficiencies. In his presentation, *Thai health system in transition: achieving universal coverage*, she said if the universal coverage program is to reach its full potential, the policy will require several revisions and changes. This may include changing the structure of the system to encourage patients to utilize health care facilities, or to require physicians to prescribe generic drugs when available. Long-term projects would need to undergo cost-effectiveness analysis to ensure that they are worth the significant time and investment.

With constant evaluation and monitoring, Thailand will reap benefits not only through improved health of its citizens, but also through increased productivity and subsequent economic development.

She discussed how South Asian countries intending to move towards public provision of universal health insurance should understand that there is no plan in the system that can treat every illness for every person.

Before policy implementation, and even prior to policy proposals, a study of the current health status of the population and the existing health care system in place should be carried out. Analysis will highlight the areas in which the population is lacking services, as well as allow policymakers to see which programs should have the largest impact on the health of the population.

Hasbullah Thabrani, from the School of Public Health, Indonesia, showed how the process of Social Health Insurance (SHI) has evolved in his country.

In the presentation, *Establishing Social Health Insurance in Indonesia: concepts, processes and lessons*, he said the general understanding is that SHI is not pro-poor, hence the hurdles that are being faced in its implication.

In the late sixties, the scheme was introduced in Indonesia that covered only government employees and their family members. The SHI program did not expand or increase its coverage. It was in the 1990s the Ministry of Health in Indonesia introduced and promoted the concept of commercial health insurance schemes modeled after the Health Maintenance Organization (HMO) of the United States.

With assistance from the German Technical Cooperation (GTZ), the concept of SHI was introduced as PROAKSI, (an Indonesian acronym for Social Health Insurance). More recently, the Indonesian parliament amended the constitution to mandate the government to establish a social security system for all. The concept of Social Health Insurance then flourished quickly and has now been integrated in the Bill of National Social Security.

Paul Rueckert and Friedeger Stierle, from German Technical Cooperation, Germany, in their paper, *Universal coverage and equitable access to health care: lessons learned from the German health insurance system for low and middle-income countries*, discussed the process of social health insurance currently taking place in many low and middle-income countries.

They said the countries can learn from the 120 years old German health insurance system. However, a simple system import will not succeed without considering the historical development, economic situation and cultural values. The German health insurance system is based on three principles: solidarity, decision-making at the lowest level possible, and free choice of providers.

The ethical policy is that everyone should have access to the same benefit package and the same quality of care on equal terms.

Health insurance in Germany initiated from small, voluntary, community financed health insurance schemes called "sickness funds". Germany still has a pluralistic, decentralized system. The concept of SHI and continuing experiences in Germany, therefore, may provide interesting examples for policymakers in many other countries.

Anne Austen, a health and population adviser at DFID, Pakistan, chaired the session. In the second session, a range of issues on health care financing in Pakistan were elaborated and discussed.

Fazl-e-Hakim Khattak, from the Ministry of Health, Pakistan, stressed that the overall health care system in Pakistan was inadequate to meet the needs of the people largely due to public expenditure in this area being less than 1% of the budget.

In his presentation, *Health care financing: overview and prospects for Pakistan's forthcoming five-year plan*, Khattak discussed how Pakistan has to improve its utilization of social sector funds and make this process more transparent.

Shafqat Shahzad, from SDPI, Pakistan, emphasized that the healthcare costs were on the rise and currently public expenditure was unable to meet these costs in her paper, *Alternative resource mobilization strategies for Pakistan's health care*.

Other reasons adding to the stress of the health care system in Pakistan, she said, are poor utilization of health care facilities due to poor quality and inadequate funds. Shehzad discussed ways to finance health care that may improve health outcomes in many developing countries.

However, total spending on health varies sharply across countries. In many developed countries, populations enjoy universal access to health services financed through general tax revenues, social insurance, private insurance and user charges, but in many low-income countries, financial protection against the cost of illness is still incomplete.

The proportion of population's sharing risk is low, and differential between access to health care services among the rich and poor is very wide.

The paper presented evidence on current practices of Pakistan's health care finance and delivery, and suggests ways through which alternative resource mobilization strategies can be devised for health care. Some of the suggested measures included improving efficiency of existing health care services, reallocation of resources within the health sector and reallocation of resources from other sectors.

She discussed advantages and disadvantages of alternative health care financing systems and how they need to be chosen against the criteria of ease of system, revenue-generating ability, effects on service provision and community participation.

Sania Nishtar, from Heartfile, Pakistan, introduced the concept of public-private partnership in her presentation, *Public-private partnership in health: a global call to action*. She highlighted how this was a viable solution of health care financing in Pakistan. The private sector, whether non-profit or for profit, in conjunction with the public sector was a better alternative for financing health care, but ground rules had to be internationally set up before such a venture could be successful.

Finally, Talib Lashari, from The Network for Consumer Protection, Pakistan, discussed the health care system in Kerala, India, as the most successful in the region in his presentation, *Health care financing in Kerala: lessons for South Asia*. He said the Kerala government always prioritized health and education.

Despite over a decade of fiscal crisis, Kerala managed to improve its health care system. Today, figures on life expectancy, literacy, and immunization indicate that Kerala is in a stronger position than the rest of India and other regions of Southeast Asia.

The discussant, Kaiser Begnali, managing director of Social Policy and Development Centre, Pakistan, discussed implications for Pakistan of both regional and

international experience of health care financing. He called for looking at health care provision in the larger social development framework. Peter Coyte chaired the session.

**Sustainable Livelihoods in South Asia**  
**Session I: General Livelihoods**  
**Concurrent Session D-5**

In his presentation, *Local resource use, market access and livelihood strategies in the highland-lowland context of the NWFP, Pakistan*, Bernd Steimann, from the University of Zurich, Switzerland, presented some preliminary findings from a baseline survey on rural livelihood strategies.

The explorative study focuses on local people's dependency on various livelihood assets: natural resources (forests), access to local and regional markets as well as to formal and informal institutions (local government bodies).

Special attention is given to gender disparities. It especially analyzed potential differences in strategies between the highland and lowland contexts.

Abid Suleri of Oxfam/SDPI, Pakistan, chaired the session. Stefan Schütte of Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit, Germany, Sikander Brohi of Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum, and Tahira Sadaf and Karin Astrid Siegmann of SDPI, Pakistan, also presented their papers.

Steimann said forests are key resources for rural livelihoods in the NWFP highlands, but due to scarce resources the people are adopting alternative livelihood strategies. Highland forests are locally available and the demand for energy resources is high but the alternative energy resources (gas, electricity, kerosene oil etc.) are expensive. Consequently, the pressure on forests is increasing.

Rural livelihood strategies differ widely between the highland and lowland contexts, Steimann said. For example, on communal, household, and individual levels, the range of possible cash income sources is much wider in the lowland, while people living in the highland often depend on one source of cash income only.

The low agricultural productivity in mountains and difficult access to markets result in high dependency on labor migration. This leads to a much higher vulnerability in the highland, while households in the lowland can cope with crises more easily.

Stefan Schütte addressed problems of urban vulnerability and livelihoods in Afghanistan in the presentation, *Exploring urban livelihoods in Afghanistan*. He discussed the findings of a three-month qualitative study conducted in 2004 in Kabul, Jalalabad and Herat.

Schütte pointed out four forms of urban vulnerabilities: income failure, food insecurity, poor health, and social exclusion/disempowerment. He discussed the asset vulnerability in terms of human, financial and social assets. Rapid urbanization due to refugees returning and rural-urban migration, insecure tenure, weak financial and physical resources, lack of vertical social relations, and formal education are some of the factors contributing to urban vulnerability in Afghanistan.

Vulnerability is a function of available asset base and its composition, and it affects different social groups in different locations in similar ways. However, inside certain groupings, differences do exist, and it is not the social group per se that is vulnerable, but certain households and individuals belonging to these groups, Schütte concluded.

Sikander Brohi presented a case study of Gwadar deep seaport in his presentation, *Mega development sans local concerns: a case study of Gwadar deep seaport*. Gwadar, which is about 460 km from Karachi, has immense geo-strategic

significance but is highly deprived district with severe lack of drinking water, poor infrastructure and lack of educational facilities.

Brohi criticized the Gwadar project, saying there is complete lack of local community's participation in it. He also pointed out large-scale displacement of the local communities and degradation of their natural livelihoods because of the project.

The project's plan was never presented to either district or provincial assemblies and most of the agencies involved with the project directly report to the federal government.

He said fishing is the only source of livelihood for the local people, but there is a massive displacement of the fisher folk due to the project. Alternative land allotted to these people is far away from the sea where they don't have any livelihood option, Brohi said.

He said the project would bring massive environmental degradation and drastic changes in the livelihood of the local people.

He recommended that the local participation in the project must be assured and immediate steps should be taken for local human resource development. Brohi demanded a comprehensive displacement plan, and an environmental impact assessment of the project with the participation of the local community.

Karin Astrid Siegmann and Tahira Sadaf in their paper, *Gendered livelihood assets and workloads in Pakistan's North West Frontier Province (NWFP)*, explored the gendered access to livelihood assets (human, environmental and financial) and gendered workload in the province.

They said males have more access to financial resources (in the forms of savings and cash income) than females. Access to environmental assets is also characterized by distinct gender division.

More than 78% of the women in the study village could not read or write. Restrictions on women's mobility, rather than lack of educational institutions, is the main cause of gender gap in schooling. If women don't acquire basic skills of reading and writing, they will have poor chances of gainful employment.

## **Sustainable Livelihoods in South Asia**

### **Session II: Forestry and Livelihoods**

#### **Concurrent Session A-9**

Researchers from the Pakistan Research Group of the NCCR North-South, an international research program funded by the Swiss government, discussed the implementation and implications of the forestry reform process in Pakistan on national, provincial and local levels. Abid Suleri of Oxfam/SDPI chaired the session.

Andreas Rothen, from the University of Zurich, Switzerland, in his presentation, *Role of various international regimes in setting forest policy in Pakistan*, observed a general lack of awareness of international norms at national level.

According to the researcher, one of the reasons was non-binding character of international forestry norms as well as the absence of any international institution being able to promote such norms. Thus, national governments would take them as "nice suggestions" rather than useful guidelines. The result was a striking lack of capacity within the government to promote such norms.

Even top forest officials would not know the most basic international agreements on forests, or the main institutions such as the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). The formulation process of the new federal forest policy, which started in 2001, was a good example. "The

longer the process went on, the less participative the procedure became," Rothen said.

It was only after the intervention of IUCN that the needs of local communities in forests were taken into consideration. The researcher located an urgent need for institutional capacity building within the government structures to promote international norms and recommendations. As they were useful tools full of expert knowledge, "international agreements should be understood as a chance rather than a burden," Rothen concluded.

Babar Shahbaz, from the Agricultural University of Faisalabad, Pakistan, explained aspects of participatory forest management in his presentation, *Participatory forest management in North West Frontier Province of Pakistan and livelihood strategies of local people*.

According to his studies in several villages in Swat and Hazara, 45% of the local residents were using forest resources in a partly illegal way. Bribing forest officials or cutting timber without any official permit were the strategies observed.

This was one fact among others indicating that the acceptance of local institutions established in the course of the Forestry Sector Project (FSP) – Village Development Committees, Women Organizations or Joint Forest Management Committees – was still very low.

The survey's results would show that people's trust in such organizations was far below than their trust in the traditional institution of *jirga*. The same could be observed in terms of participation, whereby the new institutions additionally would tend to exclude the poorest people. "The effectiveness of the steps undertaken by the Forestry Sector Project has to be doubted," Shahbaz concluded.

Muhammad Awais, also from the Agricultural University of Faisalabad, Pakistan, underlined these findings in his presentation, *A futuristic study of institutional changes and livelihood assets of forest users*.

He said the traditional and well-respected institution of *jirga* should be included in the FSP reform process on local level. Having studied an "ideal village", where the reforms started some time ago, Awais confirmed that already a partial improvement of the local people's livelihood security could be observed. Newly established committees such as the above mentioned would strengthen people's social capital and their access to natural resources such as forests. Yet those capitals were already well developed before the reform process started, so that the impact on the livelihood security was rather limited. Other underdeveloped capitals such as literacy, health, or job security would not be improved by the FSP's approach.

Awais termed the reform as not holistic. He suggested to specify the responsibilities of the various committees and to empower women organizations, adding that a regular evaluation of the committees' activities was needed.

Urs Geiser, from the University of Zurich, Switzerland, in his presentation, *State actors' livelihoods and acts of translation*, said the often-observed tendency to blame the forest department for the deplorable state of affairs was too simple. He called for more distinctiveness, building on the fact that the department consisted of thousands of individuals on different hierarchical levels. Just as the rural population, these individuals had to secure their own livelihoods, too, by using their often-limited assets. This approach would help to better understand the shortcomings of the ongoing reform process in the NWFP.

Giving the example of the department's field staff, Geiser explained that foresters and forest guards had to earn their livelihoods under very difficult circumstances. With low salaries and few incentives "they have to represent a state which

doesn't support them at all," he said. Taking bribes and bypassing existing laws should be interpreted as a survival strategy of a highly vulnerable group rather than simply be condemned as "corruption".

On the other hand, foreign experts working with the Forest Department were limited in their range of action, as their contacts were often confined to the upper levels of the department.

Being absorbed in the provincial capital both by their job and their families, their contact with field staff and forest users was minimized, so that the "ground realities" remained unclear to them. Understanding such individual limitations and constraints would help to cope with the actual problems of the new forest policy's implementation, Geiser said.

Sanaullah Khan, the discussant from Forest Department, Pakistan, asked for more patience with the forestry reform process, as it was still in its beginning and needed more time to become fully functioning. He thanked Urs Geiser for his distinctive approach, adding that there were many factors beyond the reach of the department: poverty, population increase, or climatic change.

### **Food Security Concurrent Session B-9**

Abid Suleri, from Oxfam/SDPI, Pakistan, shared the findings of World Food Programme-SDPI collaborative study, *Rural food security of Pakistan: assessment and way forward*, painting a bleak picture of food security in rural Pakistan. He said the aim of the study is to inform the donor and UN agencies about where they should focus their intervention when they talk of making Pakistan a food secure country.

Terming the study the first of its kind carried out at the district level, he said the food security has three dimensions –availability, access and absorption.

He said of the 120 districts of Pakistan (including AJK, FATA, and NA), 72 are deficit in wheat production, adding that the 29 surplus districts are trying to meet the requirement. The districts were divided into low and extreme deficit districts. Similarly when the study saw the rural population of the districts in the context of per capita per day consumption versus production of all food, 74 districts were found deficit. On access to food, he said the study looked at income per capita, adult literacy rate, landless laborers, marginal cultivators and roads per area. Under this head, 95 districts were found deficit and only 16 had reasonable access to food.

Infant mortality rate, immunization cover, safe drinking water, female literacy rate and health and services facilities were the indicators for food absorption for rural population of Pakistan. Out of the 120 districts, 91 were with low food absorption while only 11 had reasonable food absorption.

Looking at the situation holistically, he said 50 million people making up 52 percent of the rural population in 80 districts are food insecure. Suleri said Tharparkar in Sindh is the most food insecure district in Pakistan, followed by Dera Bugti, North Waziristan, Musak Khel, Kharan, Shangla and Kohistan.

Rajanpur in Punjab, Shangla in NWFP, Tharparkar in Sindh and Dera Bugti in Balochistan are the most caloric deficit districts. He said the southern districts known as "wheat basket" or "wheat belt" are also caloric deficit – in other words the production of wheat does not guarantee that they are food secure.

Suleri said it is time to work on the factors affecting access, absorption and availability of food in food insecure areas. He said maximizing production is not the answer, as food insecurity is a function of more than one parameters.

For achieving food security, he called for political will to change the status quo, rights-based approach for just distribution, people-centered development activity, protection to subsistence, landless farmers and farm workers, and improving social security nets.

However, he insisted that food sovereignty is much more important, adding that food is being used as political weapon.

Sahib Haq, from the World Food Programme, Pakistan, presented the state of urban food insecurity. In his presentation, *Urban food security in Pakistan*, he maintained that the urban areas are completely food insecure in the sense that they don't produce food, rather they import it from rural areas, provinces, or from abroad. He said there is a great deficit between consumption and requirement of food.

Jehangir Khan Khalil, from the Food and Agricultural Organization, Pakistan, said household food security is judged by its nutritional security in his presentation, *Food security and nutrition*.

He said food security affects nutritional security at the macronutrient and micronutrient levels and contributes to higher maternal and child mortality. Nutritional status data is therefore used as an indicator of the food security or insecurity.

From the four national nutritional surveys conducted in Pakistan during 1960s, 1977-78, 1987-1988 and 2000-2001, it is evident that the nutritional status of the population has not improved and the number of malnourished people, mainly children and their mothers, have increased due to an increase in the population from around 35 million in 1947 to 259 million in 2004.

Khalil said the nutritional data reveals that Pakistan will not be able to reduce the number of malnourished people to half by 2015 as committed during the World Food Summit 1996 and may not achieve the targets set by the Millennium Development Goals of 2000. The widespread incident of malnutrition suggesting a poor state of food security requires courageous steps to address nutrition and food security through an holistic approach and concerted efforts from government, international agencies and civic society.

He said food composition databases have become so important that hardly any nutrition conference goes without emphasizing the importance of accurate and reliable food composition data for settling food and nutrition issues. But the current food composition table of Pakistan has some ambiguities that require updating the table using the guidelines of the International Network of Food Data Systems (INFOODS). He said the Nutrition Cell of the Planning and Development Division needs to be strengthened and should establish a technical wing in the form a Food and Nutrition Board to formulate, guide and supervise nutritional activities because nutrition security is the ultimate aim of food security.

Iqtida A Zaidi, the discussant from the Ministry of Commerce, Pakistan, said more emphasis on distribution of food could help improve food security. He said the district governments could play a vital role in better distribution of food, calling for decentralization of power and planning.

During discussion, it was suggested that early sowing of wheat leads to more production, but in Pakistan late sowing is a normal practice.

Karamat Ali of PILER, who chaired the session, emphasized on an in-depth research on the plight of poor farmers and small producers in an era of globalization.

### **Farmers' Rights to Livelihoods in WTO Era Concurrent Session C-9**

Mita Dutta, from the Consumer Unity and Trust Society (CUTS), India, gave a brief overview of the genetic resource profile of India, saying traditional medicinal plants are important in the conservation of biological diversity. Her presentation, *A study to prepare a national database on medicinal plants available in Himalayan region (Indian part)*, covered four states of central and northeastern Himalayan.

India ratified the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and has a biological diversity act in place. She said there is management administration at national

and local levels, as *punchayat* deals with local communities in India. However, she emphasized to strengthen these institutions, saying there is a need for raising awareness among farmers to help them interact with the implementation committees at national level.

She also urged the Indian government to promote proper policy mechanism for conservation and cultivation of medicinal plants and demanded legislation for farmers' rights. This will ultimately help the farmers towards sustainable livelihood and development.

Qasim Shah of SDPI/UN THIP presented Pakistan's case about implementation of prior informed consent, access benefit sharing and TRIPs agreement.

In his presentation, *TRIPs, CBD, and PIC: access, benefit sharing: options after TRIPs*, he said Pakistan is party to at least five international covenants where prior informed consent and access benefit sharing are an essential part. FAO ITPGRFA, and CBD are two such important agreements. However, for long implementation on most of these commitments is under question.

He said Pakistan is actively pursuing the implementation of various obligations under the TRIPs agreement, and the Protection of Breeders Rights Act is a case in point. Pakistan drafted the first PBR Act in 2000. The civil society organizations condemned the draft on the grounds that it did not carry even a single clause about farmers' contribution. However, in the latest version of PBR Act, which is still to be approved by the federal cabinet, contains a clause about farmers' right to save and exchange seeds.

He said there is another draft act, "Law on Access and Community Rights 2004", prepared by the Ministry of Food Livestock and Agriculture, which not only fixes various conditions for access to plant genetic resources and community knowledge but also provides legal mechanism for benefit sharing with the custodian communities. He said the civil society should demand promulgation of this act first than the PBR act.

Chamali Kumari Wickramaratne, from LST, Sri Lanka, in her presentation, *Access, benefit sharing, prior informed consent and Intellectual Property Rights*, talked about the affects of TRIPs on agro biodiversity in Sri Lanka.

She said the continuous selection of plant varieties with special traits, which suit different uses and agro climatic conditions, and the availability of a wide range of agro-ecological conditions, have led to creation of a high wealth of agro biodiversity in Sri Lanka.

However, the intellectual property rights regime as embodied in the TRIPs agreement, especially article 27(3) b, could lead to private monopolistic rights by the North over biological resources of the South.

While rejecting the TRIPs agreement, the developing countries heralded the CBD and the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture as conventions favorable to farmers' rights.

She said the access and benefit sharing occur between large corporations in the developed world who would be the recipients of the biological material and the governments of the developing countries would be the providers. She maintained that access is given to profit-oriented corporations for commercial purposes and invariably there is an inherent danger in doing so as nothing much can be expected from the altruistic impulses of these corporations.

Ratnakar Adhikari's presentation, *Access, benefit sharing, prior informed consent and Intellectual Property Rights*, looked at why access and benefit sharing regime is important for a least developed country like Nepal.

From Pro-public, Nepal, he highlighted the international legal instruments that facilitate or impede access, prior informed consent and benefit sharing – their

challenges and conflicts, practices being followed in other countries and regions and existing legal regime (or lack of it) in Nepal.

He said while access to genetic resources and benefit sharing can be a useful means for poverty alleviation in Nepal, several other factors should be taken into account while preparing policies and legislation. Having recently acceded to the World Trade Organization, he said Nepal should cautiously look at TRIPS. It is also necessary to closely observe the direction in which the current debate is heading towards to ensure that the domestic policy regime of Nepal does not conflict with its international obligations.

In the discussion, it was felt that the interpretation of the CBD and TRIPS decides whether they contradict or support each other. People in the government have no coordination with each other, when to sign, ratify and register for such treaties. However, by providing the biodiversity information we are making resources more vulnerable. Need of good governance, democracy and good institutions for more research for indigenous species was also felt.

Pradeep Mehta of CUTS, India, who chaired the session, said the policies should be biased towards local farmers while offering equal access and benefit sharing.

Multinational companies should acknowledge local knowledge and resources by mentioning their names. But Mehta said history shows that it was not happening. Ethiopia never gets recognition for coffee, which is famous and used in the world through different brands.

Mehta said the weakness lies in us because we never expressed ourselves internationally. He called for strengthening institutions and economy to get recognition and rights internationally.

### **Resource Rights and their Governance Implications Concurrent Session D-6**

Adil Najam, from the Tufts University, USA, highlighted the importance of governance in relation to issues of environmental insecurity. In his paper, *Resource rights and wrongs: the governance dimensions of environmental insecurity?*, Najam said governance was a critical aspect of the nexus between environment and human security. He said improvement in governance could lead to concrete steps towards redressing environmental insecurity.

Patricia Moore's presentation, *Whose rights? who's right?: customary and statutory law for managing natural resources in the Northern Areas of Pakistan*, talked about the importance of customary law in managing natural resources in the Northern Areas. From IUCN, Thailand, she argued that customary law would have to be formally recognized by incorporating it into statutory law to arrest natural resource degradation.

Sultan-i-Rome, from the Government Degree College Matta, Pakistan, provided a historical background of forest management in Swat and analyzed the changes in forest management. The findings in his paper, *Governance of forests in Swat in historical perspective*, pointed out that continuous forest degradation was a consequence of the lack of proper implementation of rules and inefficient management, and not the absence of the rules per se.

Urs Geiser, from the University of Zurich, Switzerland, argued that both formal rules and rivaj (informal rules) exist with regards to forest management in North-West Pakistan, adding that both restrict forest use by locals without providing them alternatives or compensating them for the foregone benefits of natural resource use. His presentation, *State laws and rivaj exist, but what about enforcement – debating forest institutions and their structural intentions in the North-West of Pakistan*,

maintained that changing forest regulations without providing alternatives is not likely to improve enforcement.

Shaheen Rafi Khan, from SDPI, Pakistan, dealt with the issue of natural resource management in northern Pakistan and analyzed resource dependence of local communities on forest resources. His paper, *The impact of deforestation on local communities and its economic and institutional dynamics: evidence from Pakistan*, argued that there was a need to understand the present institutional set up to determine the pros and cons of the current system. He stressed to alter institutional arrangements to "incentivize" sustainable natural resource management

### **Pakistan's Energy Future: Is Nuclear Energy the Answer? Concurrent Session A-6**

Pervez Tahir of the Planning Commission, Pakistan, explained that nuclear energy was not the unique answer but one of the options to address power shortage in his presentation, *Energy planning and policy in Pakistan*.

He said two nuclear power plants produce electricity in Pakistan – Kanupp is running for the last 32 years and Chasnupp, the second one, began to operate in 2000.

Tahir said today nuclear energy represents only 0.9 percent of the electricity produced in Pakistan, which is far below other countries like China, and feared power shortage in the coming years. He said the energy supply per capita is very low compared to the world average, thus the demand of electricity is expected to increase widely. He hinted at different options: domestic coal, imported gas and oil or nuclear power. But he added that the answer would depend on environmental and economical considerations.

He said development of nuclear plants is part of the government plans, adding that the construction of Chasma II is under discussion, as six nuclear power plants projects are envisaged. According to Tahir, nuclear energy has environmental advantages compared to conventional thermal power plant because of the absence of toxic emissions of carbon dioxide and sulfur oxides. But, he said the investment cost is very high and the construction time extensively long.

Tahir said nuclear energy could not meet needs in the short run, as it is still in its infancy in Pakistan, adding that the share of nuclear energy will stay marginal compared to other sources.

Saeed A Durrani, the discussant, said Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission promised 20 years ago to construct a new nuclear power plant every year, but only two have been constructed.

The two main reasons given to implement new nuclear power plants were the low cost of the electricity produced and the absence of harmful emissions compared to conventional energies.

However, a research by A H Nayyar and Fahd Ali, from SDPI, Pakistan, on *Economics of nuclear energy in Pakistan* showed that nuclear energy is more expensive than conventional thermal energy. It said the levelized cost of nuclear energy is 10.5 cents per unit compared to 8.2 cents per unit for thermal energy. Nuclear energy is hence not an affordable response to energy deficit.

Surendra Gadekar, from Anumuki, India, discussed the reliability and safety of nuclear plants in his presentation, *The human cost of nuclear energy: some gathered evidences*. Theoretically, he said in a nuclear power plant, the safety measures ensure that no accident should occur. But in India several accidents have already occurred.

Gadekar said the performance of Indian nuclear reactors was poor, sharing results of a research conducted in 1999. He had noticed a higher degree of incidences of

deformities and cancers in a village next to a power plant than in other villages in the same area. These diseases were due both to the power plant installed in the neighborhood of the village and the mining of nuclear fuel. On average, the number of deformities was 20 times more than the national level.

Nasim A Khan of the Alternative Energy Development Board talked about plans to meet demand for electricity in his presentation, *Renewable energy options in Pakistan*. He said the board would meet the growing demand of electricity with renewable sources such as wind energy, adding that 880 MW would be produced thanks to private investment by 2010. He emphasized the fact that no investment of the government will be needed.

However, Durrani questioned the optimistic plans of the board, saying the political will of the government to promote renewable energies is weak. He said the Alternative Energy Development Board lacks political capacities compared with the ministries of water and power, and the oil and gas.

He said solar energy is another possibility. An institute of solar cells, created in 1994, has tremendous equipment but lacks adequate funding since most of the funds go into feasibility studies.

### **Philanthropy and Law in South Asia (PALISA) Concurrent Session C-6**

Pakistan Centre for Philanthropy (PCP), in collaboration with Asia Pacific Philanthropy Consortium, launched the research study, *Philanthropy and Law in South Asia* (PALISA). The book is the companion volume of an earlier publication, *Philanthropy and Law in Asia* (PALIA) that covered ten East and Southeast Asian societies. The study contributes to the knowledge about the legal and regulatory framework for nonprofit sector in Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

PALISA provides analysis on the legal and regulatory obstacles to further development of the philanthropic sector in these societies. The study provides benchmarks for non-profit legal advocacy efforts at the national, regional and international levels. It also attempts to suggest a series of generic policy actions that should help to improve the enabling environment across South Asia, addressing regulation, taxation, accountability and a range of other legal issues relevant to the philanthropic sector in the region. An enabling environment is crucial for enhancing NGO sector's contribution to social development. The successful operation of this sector is dependent on governance laws relevant to nonprofit organizations.

In her presentation, *Background, APPC and philanthropy and law in Asia*, Shahnaz Wazir Ali of Pakistan Centre for Philanthropy introduced APPC and its objectives, mission, programme of work and touched upon the baseline for PALIA that subsequently led to PALISA.

Sumiyah Khair, from the University of Dhaka, Bangladesh, talked about existence of accountability measures of nonprofits (NPOs) at two levels: accountability to government and internal governance in her presentation, *Bangladesh: registration and regulatory law*. She maintained that the NGO sector in Bangladesh has become a booming business and a large source for employment. However, progress in this sector has not always been easy. There have been allegations that the non-profit sector lacked transparency and accountability and engaged in partisan politics. These developments have given the government an impetus for imposing greater restrictions on NGO activities ostensibly to curb these deficiencies.

She said although the procedures for registration and incorporation were fairly simple and easily available to those who sought them, the process is made

somewhat complicated by the formalities involved. Some of the tedious registration procedures and complicated formalities are convoluted language in legal enactments, exploitation by registration officials, scrutiny by National Security Intelligence, manipulation by implementing authorities etc. This results in protracted procedures, which are essentially more of a strategy adopted to extract money from registration seekers.

While the sector is an advocate for public accountability of the government, Khair said it is equally important for it to ensure democratic internal governance, self-regulation and financial disclosure to increase the credibility of the non-profit sector and gain enduring trust of the constituencies it serves.

The challenge for both the government and the non-profit sector, as identified by Khair, is to engage in open discussions to delineate the bottom line against which the performance of each may be measured.

Qadeer Baig, from the NGO Resource Centre (NGORC), Pakistan, discussed the importance of an enabling environment crucial for enhancing NGO sector's contribution to social development in his presentation, *Pakistan – Legal framework for nonprofit organizations*.

Although the Pakistani non-profit sector consists of about 45,000 active organizations, ranging from unregistered neighborhood/village community-based organizations to nationwide organizations, their contribution to economy remains largely unnoticed. It is important to realize that further successful operation of the sector is dependent on the governance laws relevant to the nonprofit organizations. Baig categorized the Pakistani nonprofit organizations into four main groups: the policy research and advocacy organizations at the national level, the umbrella organizations through which national or regional programmers, projects and schemes are implemented, the Rural Support Programmers (RSPs) that aim to reduce poverty on the principles of self help, and the foot soldiers — the citizen-based organizations, normally known as CBOs.

These categories of NPOs are governed under 22 laws that direct the registration, operations and existence of organizations engaged in philanthropic activities. These laws are considered to be irritants in character because they are found out-dated, ambiguous, and not implemented with a true spirit. However, the essence of these laws is often overlooked, hindering the potential benefit that could be duly received by the nonprofit organizations. Secondly, the laws do not cater to the needs of the present nonprofit sector.

**Rapporteurs:** Babar Shahbaz, Bernd Steimann, Kiren Habib, Kiran Nazir Ahmed, Karin Astrid Siegmann, Mehreen, Moeed Yousaf, Saleem Shah, Sarah Siddiq, Shereen Rehmat, Shahbaz Bokhari, Shahid Minhas, Shafqat Shehzad, Shagufta, Sonia Lioret, and Tahira Sadaf.

## SDPI's recent PUBLICATIONS

### **Sustainable Development Bridging the research/policy gaps in Southern Contexts**

- **Volume 1 Environment**  
*Pages 296*  
*Rs. 395\**
- **Volume 2 Social Policy**  
*Rs. 495\**  
*Pages 424*

The two-volume book results from the SDPI's concern for translating specialized multi and transdisciplinary research into effective policy measures in the global South. For this purpose, SDPI organized its 6<sup>th</sup> Sustainable Development Conference titled, *Sustainable Development: Bridging the research/policy gaps in Southern Contexts*, in December 2003 where researchers, academicians, creative writers, theorists, activists and policymakers from different regions of the world met in Islamabad to debate and discuss issues such as translating research produced in the third world contexts into effective policy for sustainable development, sustainable development as a question of reorienting research/policy connection, and claiming and putting value into the fragmented and disparate work that speaks to and about the third world.

The two-volume book is an end product of the conference papers that were reviewed and approved for publication. The book was launched at the SDPI's seventh Sustainable Development Conference, which was held in Islamabad from 8 to 10 December 2004.

The first volume on **Environment** examines the issues in the context of the natural environment and its impact upon human life.

Specifically, the first section in this volume looks at the environmental dimensions of human security and livelihoods, at natural resource management and its interface with governance issues, at the design and enforcement of environmental quality standards in South Asia, and renewable energy.

The second volume on **Social Policy** addresses trade and sustainable development, globalization and the WTO in the context of people's livelihoods, and governance issues.

Contributors to the second volume examine the complex interlinkages between gender issues and labor policy, peace and conflict, migration, education, language and identity, mass media and its control, population policy and the pressures to conform to global agendas. Most interestingly, this volume also contains a section on the voices and role of fiction writers in the production of alternative realities.

- **Available on 25% Discount**

Bulletin Ends.....