



Call for Papers

Seminar

on

Internal Changes in Southern Asia: Implications for India

**Southern Asia Studies Programme
School of Social Sciences and International Studies
Pondicherry University, Puducherry, India**

March 11-13, 2013

**Venue: Convention cum Cultural Complex,
Pondicherry University, Puducherry- 605014
India**

**Prof. N.K. Jha
Convener**

Director, Southern Asia Studies Programme

Pondicherry University

Pondicherry, now Puducherry, is a Union Territory with one of the highest levels of quality of life in the country with excellent physical infrastructure and almost a hundred per cent literacy level. The Pondicherry University was established at this beautiful town in 1985 by the Government of India through an Act of Parliament. The University is located in the serene surroundings on Coromandal coast and 10 km north of Puducherry. The campus is spread over 780 acres of land some of which is rolling down to the sea beach. The University is a member of the Association of Commonwealth Universities and has signed Memorandum of Understanding with several foreign universities / institutes. A recent survey reported by the UGC (University Grants Commission) and the NAAC (National Accreditation and Assessment Council) ranked this university as one of the best in the country.

Southern Asia Studies Programme

The UGC sanctioned this programme to the University during the 10th plan in June 2005. The chief objective of this programme is to promote policy oriented as well as theoretical research and publications in the field of Southern Asian Studies. The programme is also intended to promote cultural understanding in the region and build up library on the subject.

The Conference Theme

Southern Asian States are undergoing domestic changes of varying nature, dimensions and magnitude. To begin with Afghanistan, the announcement of the recent peace talks in a suburb of Paris in December 2012 has made it clear that the US and NATO have given up once and for all, the objective of defeating the Taliban. They have also tacitly admitted that the Afghan National Security Force will be incapable of ensuring security in the country after the withdrawal of the NATO forces in 2014. Hence, the roadmap for peace agreed at the Paris meet explicitly states that the Taliban will be included in the Afghanistan's power structure and given non-elective positions at different levels. This is despite the fact that currently an estimated 20,000 Taliban terrorist roam across Afghanistan and they killed 3,400 Afghan security men in the year 2012 alone and bombed a US military base in Kandahar in the same month in which the Paris talks were held. Obviously, Pakistan has emerged as a clear winner in Afghanistan, as Hamid Karzai has decided to throw in his lot with his 'brother' Pakistan. Islamabad, for all its protestations of not wanting the Taliban returning to power in Kabul, has been given the pride of place in Karzai's roadmap which confers key role on Islamabad in the whole process. Needless to add, the triumphant Taliban will certainly be aided by Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), Al-Qaeda, and by Pakistan as an Indian soldier's barbaric beheading in January 2013 on the Line of Control in Kashmir indicates. **Hence, the big questions are: how can India deal with the post 2014 Afghanistan, protect its interests and huge investments in Afghanistan.**

At the same time, Pakistan is overwhelmed with *jehadi* and terrorist outfits posing a serious challenge not only to India and the world, but also to Pakistan's civil society.

Despite the façade of civilian Prime Minister, military is controlling the Government and society informally as well as formally. At the same time, sectarian (Shias, Sunnis, Bohras, Ahmedias) and ethnic conflicts have erupted time and again in Pakistan resulting in violence and raising threat to Pakistan's existence as a united country, so much so that Pakistan is being dubbed as a 'failing State.'

Recent developments in Pakistan are particularly worrisome. Pakistan's fiery cleric Tahirul Qadri did organize a massive protest rally in December 2012 in Lahore demanding resignation by the Government and dissolution of National and Provincial Assemblies. He followed this with march to Islamabad with his huge followers on January 14, 2013 forcing the Government representatives to negotiate with him. While rally appears to have fizzled out with unexpected support extended by the opposition to the Government, Qadri has succeeded in delivering the strong message that a dysfunctional Government creates danger for itself. Again, there has been a headlong clash between the judiciary and the Government on account of the Supreme Court's order for the arrest of the Prime Minister Raja Pervaiz Ashraf because of his alleged involvement in corruption cases. This conflict is not conducive for stability and can lead to a volatile situation facilitating the entry of Pakistan's Army and ISI in the political arena.

These developments raise the question about the utility of continuance of the composite dialogue with Pakistan. Who is in charge there? Who is or will be effectively calling the shots? Whether a more muscular response to Pakistani aggressions on LoC will be prudent? Or that will only bridge the reported emerging differences between Jihadis and the Pakistani Army? Whether India needs to keep its diplomatic channels open even with Pakistan while trying to convince the US, Western countries (as well as China) about threats to their interests posed by Pakistan's war and terror machine? Is it not true that in the event of access of these terrorist elements to Pakistan's nuclear arsenal, they will not have even the slightest compunction about targeting India along with the US and Israel with nuclear strikes?

In Nepal, political uncertainty created since the overthrow of the Monarchy in 2006 has not yet been resolved despite changes of several guards in Kathmandu and repeated extension of the deadline for drafting of the new Constitution. After the Constitution Assembly could not pass the Constitution and Supreme Court refused to grant any further extension, Prime Minister Baburam Bhattarai dissolved the CA. Now with CA dissolved, no Constitution is in place after four years of negotiations, ethnic regional, class political and caste rivalries plaguing Nepal, it is at the edge of a precipice. The big questions are: Is Nepal going to emerge from its crises or will it become a failed State? As India has vital stakes in neighbouring countries particularly Nepal with which it shares a long open border, India has to play a positive role in evolving a consensus among stake holders of Nepal not in favour of any one or other political party, but in favour of democracy, secularism and federalism. **But the moot point is how can New Delhi do so without being seen as an interventionist in Nepal's internal affairs?**

Political changes in Bhutan over last six years – the introduction of a democratic Constitution, the retreat by the fourth King and the coronation of his son, elections to Parliament which now has both a ruling and an opposition party, and governance being the prerogative of the elected Government – have triggered two opposite reaction generally. One school has hailed the vision of the Bhutanese monarch and its act of renunciation and has declared the democracy story to be a success. Others dismiss the

transition as being a farce, claiming that the King still call the shots and that Bhutan remains a tight autocracy. While the truth may lie somewhere in between these opposite views, the future of Bhutan will ultimately depend upon how its leaders will deal with the challenges of multiculturalism, dissent and devolution of power within this nascent democratic set-up. As regards its foreign policy, while it has had traditionally an excellent relations with India, implications of Bhutan's opening of trade and tourism with China needs to closely examined for interests of both Bhutan and India. Bhutan being a sovereign State, has every right to establish friendly ties with any country including China that may facilitate development of Bhutan, a lack of discretion may also lead to dumping of goods into that country, undermine its unique culture and affect the policy goal of "gross national happiness.

The internal political changes in Bangladesh are, of course, positive in the sense that Awami League Government led by Shiekh Hasina has moved the country towards realization of ideals of its freedom struggle. A considerable improvement has taken place in Bangladesh's ties with India. **But the challenge is how to institutionalize this growing bond of friendship, which lasts even changes of guards take place in Dhaka or New Delhi.** While the high profile visit of the opposition party leader, Ms Khaleda Zia, to India during October-November 2012 augurs well for future of Bangladesh, India-Bangladesh ties as well as regional environment; **the moot point is whether and to what extent this change of heart on the part the Bangladesh National Party leader, who had so far criticized the Hasina Government for pursuing a relatively secular policy at home and friendly ties with India, will prove to be real and durable.**

Once-in-ten year leadership change in China has generated debate about how this change is likely to usher in a new chapter in China's foreign policy in general and its policies towards India in particular. In view of China's rising power and its assertive diplomacy, it is pertinent to discuss **whether and to what extent China poses a challenge to India's security on the one hand, and it creates opportunity for India, on the other, to cooperate with this Asian giant on issues such as trade, climate change and terrorism.**

Looking towards India's south, three years after defeating the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Elam and eliminating it as a military entity, Sri Lanka is still struggling to emerge from the woods on some important fronts. Two issues are predominant. One is the nature of the peace, and the efforts by the Sri Lankan Government towards a political reconciliation between the Sinhalese majority and the Tamil minority. The military victory over the LTTE, and President Mahindra Rajapaksa's strength in Parliament, gave the Government an unprecedented opportunity to put in place a progressive political framework to heal the wounds of a 30-year war, and address Tamil grievances that predate the war. The second issue, which found strong voice in a documentary by a British television station, Channel 4, and in a United Nations report, has to do with the nature of the military operations in the final stages of the war in 2009. A new dimension is added to this problem by articulation of demands by Muslim minorities in the country. Further, the growing Chinese influence in Sri Lanka is indeed a matter of concern for India's geo-strategic interests.

Maldives, has though seen the dawn of democratic era, it is facing grave challenges to its security by environmental degradation and rising sea level. The rise of fundamentalism after the ouster of the Naseed Government in February 2012 has created ripple in politics of this otherwise tranquil country. Moreover, decision of the new Maldivian President, Mohammed Waheed, to terminate the \$511 million contract

awarded to Indian construction major GMR has generated debate about New Delhi's failure to use diplomacy for protecting its business interests. While Maldives has expelled the Indian company, China is pursuing the idea of building another airport in Maldives. **Whether this shows that India's obsession with improving its ties with big neighbours like Pakistan and China has led it to neglect its smaller neighbours like Maldives?**

While it is debatable as to whether and to what extent Indian diplomacy has contributed to complications in its ties with her neighbours, what is undisputed is that India being central to South Asia in the sense that this is the only country in the region, which shares geographical as well as societal boundaries with all its South Asian neighbours, domestic turmoil and the challenges of State and nation building in India's neighbouring States have serious implications for its security as well as its relations with these countries in particular and overall foreign policy capability in general. The problem of military's stronghold and religious fundamentalism in Pakistan, for example, forces Pakistani rulers to develop cold feet in wholeheartedly reciprocating India's offer of peace and friendship. This strengthens hardliners within India and complicates the process of normalization of relations between the two estranged neighbours, though geography, history and societal linkages bind them. As regards Nepal, any political crisis in that country can affect India not only because it has a long open border with Nepal and deep societal linkages, but also because more than 5 million peoples of Nepali origin are currently in India. While Bhutan and now Bangladesh have given an example of good neighbourliness by expelling insurgents acting against India from their soil, the developing bounds of friendship need to be given institutional shape to make it durable. In the case of Sri Lanka, though the LTTE has been defeated, it can get a new life again if aspirations of autonomy, safety and dignity of the Tamil minority are not addressed by Colombo, which obviously will create problems for India as it has to ensure the security and dignity of the Tamil minority within the united framework of Sri Lanka.

This task has been more complicated due to the dawn of coalition era in India where the federal Government has to depend upon the support of regional political parties. If the coalition experiment at the Union has strengthened Indian federalism and multi-culturalism, it has produced challenges before the makers of India's foreign policy. The challenges are how to reconcile the Tamil aspirations and sympathies at home with their brethren in Sri Lanka. As regards Maldives, threat to its security by the rise of sea level can be addressed only by a coordinated international efforts including India.

India, though a much more stable and vibrant democracy, which has just completed 65 years of its independence, yet it is not free from the challenges of internal changes. To cite only a few examples: while problem of insurgency and separatism is still plaguing India's regions such as the North East and Kashmir, Naxalites movement is gradually gaining strength. Suicide by farmers, recurring acts of terrorism, violence against women, and so on clearly manifest challenges confronting the Indian nation. Apparently, these developments appear to be domestic issues, but they have vital implications for not only India's security and foreign policy, but for overall peace and cooperation in the sub-continent. Above all, a major challenge confronting our foreign policy makers is how to build a national consensus on India's foreign policy options.

It is, therefore, high time to have an in depth discussion on the above-mentioned theme to find out implications of internal changes in India's neighborhood for India's own security and over all national interest. This exercise will help in formulating a suitable foreign policy response by the Government of India to meet the challenges of domestic transformations in Southern Asian periphery.

Accordingly, the proposed Seminar is intended to bring together leading academic experts, policy analysts, defence personnel, and members of media and think tanks from different parts of India and Asia to deliberate upon the above-mentioned and related questions and come out with valuable policy inputs for the Government of India.

The Conference may mainly focus on, but not limited to:

1. Internal Changes and Foreign Policy—A Theoretical Framework
2. Afghanistan: Ensuring Peace and Stability after American Withdrawal
3. Pakistan: Coping with Challenges of Religious Fundamentalism and the Military's Perpetual Dominance
4. Nepal: Confronting the Challenges of Peace Process and Constitution Making
5. Bhutan: Democratic Transition and Subtle Shifts in Foreign Policy
6. Bangladesh: Sizing the Opportunity of Democratic Governance
7. China: Challenges and Opportunities for India
8. Myanmar: India's Balancing Morality, Military and Market
9. Sri Lanka: Rebuilding the State and Nation in the Post LTTE Era
10. Maldives: Coping with Political Instability and Environmental Challenges
11. India: Imperatives of Building Consensus on Foreign Policy Options

Paper Submission

Participants willing to present paper are requested to follow the schedule and guidelines given below:

- Abstract (not exceeding 250 words) should be submitted on or before **February 15, 2013**. Abstract should include the name of the author(s), their affiliation and address (postal and e-mail)
- Two copies of complete paper (one hard copy and one soft copy) not exceeding 20 pages should be submitted. While one soft copy may be sent through email on **ugcsasp.pu@gmail.com**, another soft copy may be sent in CD along with the hard copy on or before **February 28, 2013**.
- Paper must not be previously published or currently under review for publication elsewhere.
- The following style sheet may kindly be used.

Style Sheet

1. The paper may be composed in MS-Words format, Times New Roman font with heading in Font Size 14 and the remaining text in the font size 12 with 1.5 spacing.
2. Notes should be numbered consecutively, superscripted in the text and attached to the end of the article.
3. Spelling should follow the British pattern: e.g. 'colour', NOT 'color'.
4. Quotations should be placed in double quotation marks. Long quotes of above 4 (four) lines should be indented in single space.

5. Use italics for title of the books, newspaper, journals and magazines in text and end notes.

6. In the text, number below 100 should be mentioned in words (e.g. twenty eight). Use “per cent”, but in tables the symbol % should be typed.

Citing References

Book

Leo E. Rose and Richard Sission, *War and Succession: India, Pakistan and Creation of Bangladesh* (New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1990), pp. 102-5.

Citing an article from an edited book

A. Appadorai, “On Understanding Indian Foreign Policy,” in K. P. Misra, ed., *Studies in Indian Foreign Policy* (New Delhi: Thompson Press, 1969), pp. 113-17.

Citing an Article from a journal

Nalni Kant Jha, “Implications for India of an Unstable Nepal,” *Nepali Journal of Contemporary Studies* (Kathmandu), vol.6, no.1, March, 2006, p.36.

Citing an article from a Newspaper

Shekhar Gupta, “Pakistan’s Civilian Deal,” *Indian Express* (New Delhi), August 30, 2008.

Registration Form
Seminar
on
Internal Changes in Southern Asia: Implications for India
Southern Asia Studies Programme, SSS&IS, Pondicherry University

Name (in Block Letters) :

Designation :

Institution :

Address for Correspondence :

Phone : Mobile:

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E-mail :

I will participate
(Please tick appropriately) : () without presenting a paper () and present a paper

Title:

Authors(s):

Accommodation Required : Yes No

Mode of Arrival : By Air By Train
(Specify Train No.
Flight No. etc.)

Arrival : Date: Time:

Departure : Date Time:

Delegate Fee : Rs. (per person)

Bank: DD / Cheque No.: Date: Amount:

Place:

Date:

Signature

Note: Delegates who need accommodation should intimate in advance, the companions of the delegates should also pay the delegate fee. It may not be possible to accommodate who fail to send the fee in advance.

- In case of need, please photocopy this form for multiple applications.

Participation Fee:*

Out Station Participants : Rs. 2000.00*

Research Scholars &

Local Participants : Rs. 1000.00

Students : Rs. 500.00

Foreign Delegates : US \$ 250.00*

* The participation fees will cover high tea, lunch and conference materials **only**. For foreign delegates, the fee includes accommodation in moderately priced hotel during **three-day Seminar**. Subject to availability, modest accommodations may be provided to out station Indian participants also in the Government / Ashram guest house. Subject to availability of fund, a few selected paper writers may be paid limited fare as per Pondicherry University rules.

DD or Cheque should be drawn in favour of Dr. N. K. Jha, Director, Southern Asia Studies Programme, payable at Puducherry and same should be sent to the Seminar Director. Those who send outstation cheque should add Rs. 50/- more towards bank charges.

List of Hotels and Guest Houses

Please find a list of hotels and guest houses that we think are proximal to the Seminar venue. For the convenience of the delegates, we have sorted three categories, luxury, moderate and budget accommodation.

Category A: Luxury

1. Hotel Anandha Inn
2. Hotel Mass
3. Hotel Atithi
- 4 Lotus Comfort Hotel
5. Hotel Ashoka

Category B: Moderate

- 1.Hotel Surguru
- 2.Hotel Jayaram
- 3.Hotel Ram International
4. St. James Court
- 5.Soorya International Hotel

Category C: Budget

1. Park Guest House
2. New Guest House
3. Orissa Guest House
4. Tourist Home
5. Garden Guest House

Approximate cost in Indian Rupees: Category A: Rs. 3000 -7000/-; Category B: Rs. 3000/- and below and Category C: Rs. 1000/- and below. Kindly visit <http://www.justdial.com> for details and booking.

Visa to India

Visa to India can be obtained at Indian Embassy / High Commission functioning in the respective country based on our invitation letter with other relevant documents prescribed in the application form. **Invitation letter will be sent on receipt and selection of the abstract.**

Organizing Committee

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- Communication
and Reception** : Ms Shyna V V
- For any other matter**
- Mr Sumit Kumar (09488128359), Mr Khursheed Ahmad Wani (09488867471)

Dates to Remember

Submission of Abstract: February 15, 2013

Submission of Full Paper: February 28, 2013

Seminar: March 11-13, 2013