



# THINK SOUTH ASIA

## EDITORIAL



**António Vieira da Cruz**

Editor of **Think South Asia**  
Policy Advisor of South Asia  
Democratic Forum

***“Five hundred years after Vasco da Gama and seven hundred years after Marco Polo, we must peacefully rediscover the Indian Ocean and its trade opportunities.”***

Imagine the overall population of Europe and the Americas, all put together. Have you imagined that already? Well believe it or not South Asia, as a region, has even more people than that, which is reason enough to pay attention to its development and potentials. The western countries seem to be obsessed with the financial and economic crisis, but on the other side of the world there is a new land of opportunities asking for support and economic cooperation. Five hundred years after Vasco da Gama and seven hundred years after Marco Polo, we must peacefully rediscover the Indian Ocean and the trade opportunities within the SAARC countries that could help us in leaving the crisis behind. This time, the focus of Think South Asia is on India. It seems paradoxical to put the focus on such a big country,

and maybe it is. We will certainly have to come back to Indian issues, perhaps analysing them through the smaller realities at the state-level. But this time we analyse India as a whole, and we try also to see it in the international context.

One of the things that always impresses me is how this huge country with so many different people and potential tensions could be maintained and is growing with the institutional framework of a stable liberal democracy. Professor Subrata Mitra, whose reputation and authority on this issue is well-known, gives us an interesting perspective in his interview. For editorial reasons it will be published in two parts: this one here, and the second in our next issue of Think South Asia in January 2013.



***“Professor Subrata K. Mitra and Doctor Massouda Jalal are two of the 11 honourable guests of this Christmas Edition of Think South Asia.”***

This issue we have a small country profile of India, where we can check out the basic facts about the nation. The Executive Director of the South Asia Democratic Forum, Mr Paulo Casaca, goes further and analyses with precision the main issues around the Free Trade Agreement between the European Union and India.

Regarding India's relations, we have a piece on this topic from Ms Cátia Rodrigues (Policy Adviser in South Asia Democratic Forum) making reference to India's relations with China, while Dr Siegfried Wolf from Heidelberg University writes about India's relations with Pakistan after the last terrorist attack in Mumbai. Also concerning China there is a very interesting article from Mr Marco Rossi, who calls our attention to Chinese interests and movements in South Asia.

In the spotlight we have Doctor Massouda Jalal quoting C. S. Lewis with a very eloquent message about Afghanistan, analysing the situation deeply and also making recommendations to fix what is broken. The way Doctor Jalal begins could not be clearer: “democracy and talibanism cannot co-exist because they are antithetical to one another. (...) Thus, to assume that Taliban will embrace peace is an unforgivable mistake.”

Following Doctor Jalal's article, we have a short interview with Ms Cláudia Pera, who works as the administrative manager of South Asia Democratic Forum, giving her thoughts on women's issues and her experience while accompanying Doctor Jalal in her last visit to Europe. Ms Pera sets out the scenario in quite a comprehensive way I'm sure you will agree.

The issue of indigenous people's rights and their protection through the rule of law is very well explained by Mr S. M. Hasan from the University of Dhaka in Bangladesh. Finally, we have Professor Wolfgang-Peter Zingel alerting us on the issue of food security in South Asia and the concrete need for a deeper regional cooperation.

We hope you enjoy this edition of Think South Asia and we wish you a joyful season, especially for your children, who are the ones giving us the most complete perspectives of hope for our future, whether in South Asia, Europe, or anywhere else in the world. ■

***Merry Christmas!***

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# COUNTRY PROFILE

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## India



### António Vieira da Cruz

Policy Advisor of South Asia  
Democratic Forum

***“With a birth rate bigger than China, India is set to overtake its neighbour country as the world’s most populous nation by 2030.”***

The Republic of India is a country with 3.287.590 square kilometres of area and an estimated population of 1,24 billion people. Its borders are with Pakistan to the northwest, Tibet (under the Chinese administration), Nepal and Bhutan to the north, and Bangladesh and Burma to the northeast. On the Indian Ocean, India’s neighbours are the Maldives to the southwest and Sri Lanka to the southeast.

This numbers mean that India has a larger population than Europe (all countries together), or the Americas (North and South), or Africa. We can find an Indian identity, or at least an harmonic set of similar identities within India, making of it the most populous liberal democracy in the world. And, with a birth rate bigger than China, India is set to overtake its neighbour country as the world’s most populous nation by 2030, according to the latest United Nations projections.

With a GDP per capita of approximately 1.345,50 EURO and the Economy growing around 6,5% each year, India is strengthening its industrial and services power. On the same hand, India’s middle class is increasing rapidly, giving to millions the purchase power that is attracting the attention of many foreign investors and businesses. Culturally, we can say that India main religious

influence is Hinduism (approximately 80,5% of the Indians are Hindu) but also Buddhism (born in the region of Bihar, India), Islam (through the Mughal Empire) and Christianity (through the Portuguese and the English) were important influences to its unique cultural blend of different ingredients.

Politically, India is a federation composed by 28 states and 7 union territories, each of it with very characteristic issues, problems and challenges. As Editor of this magazine, I would like to stop here this very short country profile of such a big and complex reality and leave for the soonest future a deeper analysis done by experts, state by state. Generally, I would just reinforce the idea that India is a liberal democracy which respects the rule of law. Of course India has its problems to be solved, as other countries in the region have, but what makes of India a different country is the democratic tools they have to make Human Rights be respected within its borders.

This should be regarded as a hope for the western countries who want to engage in South Asia, as well as for SAARC countries to follow India’s example and find their own path to have stable democracies across the region. ■

## From conflict to cooperation? India-Pakistan relations and the shadows of Mumbai

After 65 years of animosity leading to four major armed engagements, numerous cross-border skirmishes and at least two serious 'war-in-sight crises', the relationship between India and Pakistan seems to be heading towards a more promising future. Today, there is no doubt that the politically utilised Hindu-Muslim antagonism, the subsequent development of two antagonised concepts of state ideology (The two-nation theory), the problematic conditions of state formation especially the traumatic, violent events during the partition of British India, and particularly the everlasting struggle over the territory of Kashmir can clearly be identified as the major reasons of the conflict between the two countries. In this context, India's refusal to divide financial and military resources of the British Raj according to the partition plan led to an intensification of tensions between an increasingly polarised 'Hindu India' and 'Muslim Pakistan'. The fact that the core and key elements of administration and infrastructure were situated on the Indian side furthermore increased the level of Pakistani frustration. These socio-political grievances combined with the fragmentation of century old economic structures (like the Jute industry of then East Pakistan), of which

Pakistan was affected disproportionately, sharpened the rivalry. All in all, it seems that unfortunate colonial legacies and the emergence of an existence-threatening situation for Pakistan led to the burden of a 'negatively formulated national identity'. In other words, the Pakistani elites were convinced that their country was everything India did not want to become - the embodiment of all principles that one has to reject. Consequently, fears of Indian dominance of the subcontinent and New Delhi's refusal of accepting the country's sovereignty increased in Pakistan. To sum up, the combination of threat perception, distrust, deprivational effects and diametrically opposed self-perceptions shaped the disastrous beginning of India-Pakistan relations and seems to diminish any hopes of a peaceful coexistence.

Nevertheless, several attempts to dismantle the hostility were made over time. One of the most essential and important steps towards rapprochement were the negotiations on regulating water-distribution of the Indus Basin in 1960 resulting in the so-called Indus Water Treaty. It did not however lead to extensive cooperation in the fields of economy or security policies. The negative implications of the Kashmir



**Siegfried O. Wolf**

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University, Germany.

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***“The Kargil conflict in 1999 – in which Pakistan launched a major (unsuccessful) military operation in Indian administered Kashmir - abruptly ended the bilateral talks and further negotiations were postponed.”***



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conflict and the sealing of borders as well as opposing national economy models hindered collaboration between Islamabad and New Delhi. Only after the liberalisation of the Indian economy in the 1990's and the so called “Delhi-Lahore-Bus-Peace-Initiative” in February 1999, trends of constructive economic and security policy based talks between both countries became political realities. But, the Kargil conflict in 1999 – in which Pakistan launched a major (unsuccessful) military operation in Indian administered Kashmir - abruptly ended the bilateral talks and further negotiations were postponed. Most surprisingly for many pessimistic analysts, only a few years later, probably the most far-reaching shift from conflict to cooperation was initiated by the former Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee in 2004 by launching a Composite Dialogue between India and Pakistan. This dialogue covers a relatively

broad range of issues comprising peace and security, including confidence building measures; territorial/border issues, namely Jammu and Kashmir, Siachen, Sir Creek and Wullar Barrage; terrorism and drug trafficking; economic and commercial cooperation; and promotion of friendly exchanges in various fields (people-to people contacts). But most important is the move of Pakistan to give up its insistence of a solution for the Kashmir conflict as a precondition for any negotiation in other fields. In order to soften further the traditional obstructive approach between New Delhi and Islamabad, in 2005 the rapprochement was declared irreversible by both governments, which marks an important turning point in their bilateral relations towards a new era of flexibility. But contemporary India-Pakistan relations are not only troubled because of the on-going Kashmir-conflict, the persistent cross-



border terrorism threat emanating from Pakistani territory, continued to cast a gloomy shadow over all advances. Nonpartisan expert would question that elements within Pakistan have used terrorism as a tool to challenge India not only in Kashmir but also in other parts of the region. For example, in October 2001 Pakistan based terrorist groups (Laskar-e-Taiba and Jaish-e-Mohammed) attacked the state assembly in Srinagar (Kashmir) and in December the Indian Parliament (Lok Sabha) in New Delhi, which brought India and Pakistan at the brink of war. However, the developments after 9/11 forced the political plexus in Islamabad to take a stand against transnational terrorism.

The rhetoric of the then head of state General Pervez Musharraf demanding a stronger grip on counter-terrorism attempted to accommodate the demands from the international community led by the US. However Pakistan's engagement against terrorism seems ambiguous. On the one hand, critics are claiming the existence of (in) formal networks between Pakistan's secret services, especially the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) and militant extremist groups accused of carrying out terrorist activities; and on the other hand it is hard to determine if, or to which extent, these groups are (still) used for external operations coordinated by governmental and/or non-governmental actors. Furthermore one has to raise the question whether the Pakistani government (especially the civilian one) knows about the control and manipulation of these Jihadi groups, and the activities/involvement of

security agencies and their cooperation with terrorist activities. The bloody events of the Red Mosque (Lal Masjid, which was stormed by Pakistan security forces) in Islamabad in 2007 – a place which was turned into a hub of militant extremism and anti-government activities by religious fanatics under the very nose of the ISI headquarter – shows the complexity of the situation. It did not only bring to surface the reluctance of Pakistan's security circles in addressing the challenge of dealing with fanatic elements, but also the obscure nexus between state agencies and Jihadism. Having this in mind, one can state the following: first of all, militant groups in Pakistan have increasingly tried to implement their own political domestic and internal agenda to challenge the state. Therefore, if they were guided by government authorities at some time, one must wonder to what extent they are still under the control of Pakistan's security agencies. Secondly, it seems that there is a puzzle regarding the ability and unquestioned commitment in implementing the 'expressed' political will of eradicating extremist groups as well as to tackle the fundamentalist tendencies among the radicalised sections of the country's society. Therefore one must realise that the Pakistani security forces see their main objectives in defending their country from India as well as maintaining the country's territorial integrity and not in combating domestic/international terrorism and militant (religious) extremism in order to protect the general public in Pakistan as well as the international community from extremism. Despite large scale military campaigns against

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‘terrorists’ on its western borders with tremendous casualties (more than 3500 deaths) for the Pakistan Armed Forces (PAF), transnational terrorism still remains one of the greatest challenges for India’s security, subsequently for substantial peace between both states. Basically Pakistan efforts in the context of the ‘war against terror’ are positive signals for New Delhi, but one has to put them in perspective. First, it seems that Pakistan’s military operations are intensively directed against separatism, and having less the character of counter-terrorist measures. Second, they are aiming at Pakistan-based Taliban and allies operating in Afghanistan (doubtless because of US-demand). However, additional goals of PAF activities in its Afghan border region are to undermine claims of Pashtuns on both sides of the boundary for a ‘greater Pashto tribal region’, in other words to prevent the creation of a new autonomous trans-border entity ‘Pashtunistan’.

Furthermore, it also aims to be better placed regarding its efforts to convince the Afghan government to accept the current common border (the so called Durand-Line). Consequently, it is obviously that the PAF finally realise the need to get their unsecure border with Afghanistan under control. In the context of India-Pakistan relations this is gaining momentum with focus on the ‘Af-Pak policy’ of the US-administration, which will be most likely continued since President Barack Obama got re-elected last week. The fact that India is partly integrated in the US outlook on Afghanistan raises serious concerns in Pakistan. Old fears are reemerging in Pakistan, that India is trying to encircle the country with destabilising impacts on tribal territories situated in Khyber Paktunkhwa (former

FATA) and Baluchistan, as well as using Afghanistan as a ‘second front’ in case of another armed confrontation (‘pincer movement’). Third, there are not much information or success stories about activities against terrorist groups targeting India. The never ending story of attacks on Indian cities with involvements of elements from Pakistan, like the attacks on New Delhi in 2005, Varanasi in 2006, Mumbai in 2006, 2008, and Jaipur in 2008 are evidence enough that terrorists groups are still operating from the territory of its western neighbor. Having this specific case of cross-border terrorism in mind, one must state that Pakistan’s troubled civil-military relations resulting in a nebulous, not-accountable decision-making process in the areas of domestic and foreign policies has been a crucial roadblock for improvements in India-Pakistan relations until today. It is evident, that policy making in Pakistan is characterised by the supremacy of the traditional security paradigm which dominates the definition of national interests since the country came into existence. But it seems that things are changing. There is also a rising awareness within the military top brass that they are increasingly involved in severe internal security missions. This is a fact which forces the PAF to face a ‘double burden’ and to undertake a new assessment of the national security situation.

On one side, the soldiers have to carry out unconventional anti secessionist and counter-terrorists activities; on the other side, they want to be able to deal with India in a conventional manner. Therefore, one could state that the Army’s hands are tied up and will definitely try to avoid an open confrontational policy towards India to ‘keep the eastern front quite’. In this

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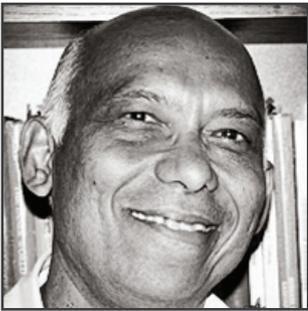
context, Pakistan's establishment has started to recognise that the notion that state survival is exclusively dominated by security matters needs to change, from security towards a more socio-economically guided perspective. The deteriorating commercial situation and economic imbalance with India is convincing Islamabad that it has to drive towards threat reduction, particularly in its relations with New Delhi. Furthermore, the civilians and military leadership perceive that the current revenues are just enough to cover the basic expenditures of the government administration and the defence expenditure. Here, it seems that there will be a new understanding of the importance of economic cooperation with India. Therefore a more narrow security view, especially a less India-centric one, on national interest is an essential condition. To conclude, the struggle for power between the military and civilians since the existence of Pakistan has not only hampered domestic political developments but also paralysed the rapprochement

with India. However, realising that the 'armed adventures' against India paid no dividend, today the military seems to be willing to grant civilians more room to manoeuvre in negotiating cooperation with New Delhi in fields which are not recognised as exclusive domains of the soldiers. Several events in 2012, like the reducing of trade barriers, the easing of the VISA regime, the latest visit of President Asif Ali Zardari in India, can be seen as expression of the political will to nudge at least socioeconomic matters. But besides the fact that Islamabad is obviously willing to break with historical paths, one must be aware that Pakistan's political system is in a perpetual transition, still experimenting, which makes every kind of twist and turn possible. Therefore it is most significant, that even the most dramatic terrorist attack on Mumbai in 2008, was only temporarily slowing down the 'peace process' but didn't completely check-mate it. This must be interpreted as the greatest, but also not the final, defeat of religious extremism in Pakistan yet. ■

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This is the first part of an interview with Professor Subrata K. Mitra in the University of Heidelberg, Germany, conducted by António Vieira da Cruz in the 19th of November 2012. The second part of the interview will be published in the January issue of Think South Asia.



## Subrata K. Mitra

Professor and Head of the Department of Political Science and Board Member and former Director of the South Asia Institute at the University of Heidelberg,

***“I had studied Politics in order to understand how society changes and what can the human being do as an agent of that change.”***

**Think South Asia (TSA): Thank you very much Professor Mitra for receiving me here in the South Asia Institute of the Heidelberg University. It is an honour to be here and to learn from your experiences again. Please tell us a little about your trajectory. How did the kid born in India reach Heidelberg?**

Professor Subrata Mitra (PSM): Thank you. Dear Antonio, thank you very much for making the trip to Heidelberg and thank you very much Dr. Siegfried O. Wolf for making this possible. To answer you first question, what got me from my village in Orissa, India, all the way to Heidelberg, I will be very brief.

I had studied Politics in order to understand how society changes and what can the human being do as an agent of that change, working within the framework of the structure in which one is placed. And in the process I discovered that Human Agency and the Structure Politics can collaborate for creating new structures within which post-colonial societies could realise their political dreams.

That had taken me from Orissa to Delhi, and beyond Delhi to the United States where I learned how to understand the theory of social change through the

theory of games and rational choice. After which, I have continued my quest in Paris, Berkeley, for a long time in England, and now for the past 18 years in Heidelberg.

Why Heidelberg? When I was a young student, I was very influenced by two thinkers, both of whom had worked in Heidelberg. One was Hegel and the other was Max Weber. My hope was to understand the global world sweeping theories of Hegel through instrumentality of human choice, which is where Max Weber is so very useful because of his concepts of the legal, the traditional/rational and the charismatic authority and the twin concepts of instrumental and value rationality. My work has been so far an application of what I learned in terms of the rationality of human choice and the transcendental character of values and tradition. So “Culture and Rationality” was the first book I did when I came here. And I applied that model to everything I’ve done since.

That was the long answer to a short question.

**TSA: Very well. Thank you very much. I would like very much to know better about your academic discoveries, mainly these thesis that**

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**you applied to all your work. In fact, you pointed Max Weber as one of your main influences... is there any room to apply his teachings on the dichotomy “ethics of conviction versus ethics of responsibility” in the analysis of South Asia politics?**

PSM: The important thing is to understand what is to be taken from Max Weber and where one should categorically reject Max Weber. What Max Weber does is to provide a framework within which we can understand the social change in Europe. Max Weber never saw the necessity of doing any fieldwork on India and Max Weber used India more or less, like Hegel, to give an empirical reasoning to his global model, and explain why India never really made it to the growth of capitalism?

That’s where Max Weber has his thinking of India essentially as a spiritual society where the material basis is used to enhance the spirituality. What I have done is to take from Max Weber the holistic design and set in right when he talks about the inability of Indian to develop capitalism.

The same thing happens in Sri Lanka and the reason I am talking about Pakistan and Sri Lanka is because both of them had the same institutional heritage as

India, because both came out of British rule. Sri Lanka in the first 10 years transformed Tamils into second class citizens by their Sinhala Only Policy. What India did within its first crucial decade after independence was first of all to – like Sri Lanka and Pakistan – to look for a national language, and Hindi fanatics claimed that Hindi should become India’s exclusive national language and the Tamils in Madras rose in rebellion against it.

That’s where Jawaharlal Nehru discovered that you can rule a country like India only if you understand the causes of discontentment. And Nehru set up the Status Reorganisation Commission, which discovered that mother tongue can become the basis of regional state formation and very quickly India’s political geography was completely transformed and Tamils could discover that they could do part of their politics in the Tamil language or, as I say jokingly, they could pay their taxes in the Tamil language because the tax collector speaks to them in Tamil.

So, having given to Mother Tamil what Mother Tamil wants, they can give to Mother India what Mother India demands, which is loyalty to the territorial State. Through that, Indians could have it both ways: have mother tongue and still communicate

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# MAIN STORY

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***“I’ve discovered that one can have this modernity by marrying it to one’s own tradition and indigenous values.”***

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with other Indians with their different mother tongues. That was the three language formula.

I go on from there to talk about how India cooped its sub-national movements and this is called “first hit them hard over the head, and then show them how to play the piano”. Train the army to keep order, then after negotiation the rebel leader becomes the chief Minister of the new Indian region and that’s how India holds together.

The study that I have done most recently is to understand how one can think of modernity not only as an input and turn tradition into a clone of modernity. The modernity which Europe made up for itself from the Renaissance is a modernity which is empowered by methodological individualism. I’ve discovered that one can have this modernity by marrying it to one’s own tradition and indigenous values. This hybridisation of the modern institutions can become the basis of civility and ordinary rule on our western society.

Again it has taken the form of articles on hybridity – a jointly authored book on re-use the older politics of integration and anxiety where I am arguing how modernity finds a new space all over the world and most recent features applying the concepts of hybridity to policy making. In Political Science it’s

a very brave claim to say that one has discovered anything. All I would say is that I put what I was thought as a doctoral candidate to effective views in my own period as a political scientist and passed it on to other younger people who have learned with me and gone on to define new frontiers of the Political Science.

**TSA: With the economic boom of India in the 90’s and still today, it is a mystery for me how can India maintain the order, welfare and the security of identity, and we see the results. Maybe this can give us a tip on how India can play a role in regional cooperation with its own example among the SAARC countries. Do you think the process is identical concerning the common ground and other conditions necessary to economic cooperation? Can SAARC make of India an example to follow in this regard?**

PSM: Good. Back to Max Weber again. India, we know from new research, in the year I AD was responsible for 33% of the Gross National Product of the whole World, and this is recorded statistical data. Now that was possible because India had a sufficiently strong material culture to produce wealth. The question is “What happened? Where did that creativity go?”. The wrong answer is Max Weber’s, that because of spirituality

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Indians could not invest surplus capital in the creation of new capital, Indians built temples instead. Temples are built for political reasons, we don't need to go into that. What happened – and Max Weber completely ignores it – is that India lost political autonomy from the 7th century onwards.

India became a colony: first, a looting ground for Islamic invaders and subsequently for western colonial powers. As a result of which, India's native material creativity was no longer used for the enhancement of India's material wealth but for the enhancement of the colonizing or invading powers. That colonial stranglehold on creativity did not end with independence of the colonial rule. After independence India continued to have a kind of Marxist stranglehold of material creativity in terms of the planning mechanism.

What the 1990's did was to free up Indians ability and cunning to produce wealth to enterprise, entrepreneurship, trade and putting their relative advantage to good global use. That is the beginning of outsourcing, of new technologies of information and turning India into a kind of backroom business processing centre of the world. That also made it possible for the Indian Diaspora – 20 million of them which are located in rich powerful countries – to do simultaneously business in their host countries and in India. That is part of the story of the Indian boom and

that's how India got rid of what is called the Hindu rate of growth. Can India sustain it? What happens now?

One thing to remember is that growth has been uneven and India, in order to remain a democratic united country, must remember those who are under the poverty line. That is what is being done by coming up with new legislations, such as the "National Rural Employment Guarantee Act", just to give you one idea, which guarantees the right to work to all Indians. This is how India is trying to combine material creativity and productivity with meeting the legitimacy deficit. Now, this is a message I want to repeat, which is important for India as it is India's role in the SAARC countries. I told you already that the essential reasons for disorder is the denial of order, welfare and identity. Which is where I looked at incidences where poor Muslims rebel – now, one has to remember that at independence India was divided into India and Pakistan and the bulk of the Muslim middle class left India to go to Pakistan. A community, when its middle class goes away, it is deprived twice: its average welfare goes down, and it also loses exactly those people who could pull the rest of the community upwards.

These Muslims left behind in India (after independence) were not only poorer but also leaderless. It's this deprivation

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# MAIN STORY

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***“These Muslims left behind in India (after independence) were not only poorer but also leaderless. It’s this deprivation which often creates tremendous anger, not caused so much by Islam as by poverty.”***

***“Similar democratization is also necessary in Nepal, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Pakistan.”***

***“India has to do what Germany has to do in Europe, because both India and Germany suffer from the problem of relative bigness.”***

which often creates tremendous anger, not caused so much by Islam as by poverty. Which is why – contrary to the Indian Constitution which does not recognize religion as a marker of identity and therefore uses class as a basis of positive discrimination – Indian states have started using Islam also as a basis of positive discrimination, or extending to Muslim communities the same quotas which are already available to schedule castes and former Untouchables and backward classes. In other words, Indians are learning how to tackle the combination of denial of material welfare and endangering of the identities through the stretching of Indian liberal institutions. That’s a great discovery India has made and that is the discovery which India should promote in the surrounding countries. And how can India do it? India can do it by offering, first of all, to collaborate in terms of industry, trade, technology, education and water. Second, work with the neighbours for the reform of their political institutions.

India has achieved a lot because of the level playing field of democracy. Similar democratization is also necessary in Nepal, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Pakistan. But it cannot be done by exporting Indian democracy to those countries. It can be done by those countries imagining their own levelled playing

fields with active support and help of India. Wherever, India needs to go the extra mile to make it possible for them, like give Pakistan a fair share of river waters because Pakistani rivers start in India. Or, for that matter, give Bangladesh an extra help to build up Bangladeshi infrastructures and transport mechanisms before demanding transition rights between West Bengal and Tripura.

That is where India has to do what Germany has to do in Europe, because both India and Germany suffer from the problem of relative bigness. In this region, Germany has to do an extra effort to make sure that Greece remains within the European system, India has to make an extra effort to make sure that SAARC and the South Asian Free Trade Area make sense by making herself available politically, economically, diplomatically and morally.

**The challenge in front of me now is to act as a bridge between Europe and Asia, and to promote the message of democracy, human rights, peace and justice across the globe, in happy collaboration with the bright, committed people who have found a new, spiritual home in the SADE. ■**

# Afghan Women's Rights 2014: Hanging by the Thread?

## Introduction

Once again, Afghanistan is at a crossroads. Now, just when the country is beginning to slowly move forward, we are expected to put an end to a war that ten years of massive international support could not help win. Jalal Foundation publishes this Occasional Paper, vol. 1 to share the perspectives of those who are not being heard back home, shedding light on important issues that we face in relation to our security as we transition towards sustainable peace.

## Women's Views on the Peace Program

Our government's vision of sustainable peace is framed in a strategy with twin agenda: (1) to bring back the so-called 'moderate' Taliban into the mainstream of national life and (2) to grant political concessions to their leaders. Women have been excluded from the process of conceptualizing this strategy;. However, through informal channels, we have raised our issues relating to its wisdom and viability.

First, we know that democracy and talibanism cannot co-exist because

they are antithetical to one another. Democracy is based on the rule of law, human rights, co-existence and the protection of human life. Conversely, Talibanism is based on despotism, repression, tyranny and the glorification of violence. Democracy can only thrive where peace is present, while talibanism can only thrive under violent circumstances. Thus, to assume that Taliban will embrace peace is an unforgivable mistake. And further, to hope that they will make peace under democratic terms is to ignore their ideological makeup. Expecting Afghanistan to make peace with the Taliban is like expecting the world to make peace with the Al Qaeda. Have our foreign friends ever considered what it feels like to have Al Qaedans living in their very midst – in their neighborhoods, in local businesses, in government agencies, or in places of worship? Do they think that making peace with Taliban will bring about sustainable peace? If by now we do not realize that the concept of peace held by the Taliban and Al Qaeda is death to their antithesis, then we have missed the very essence of our quest for sustainable peace.



## Doctor Massouda Jalal

Minister of Women's Affairs from October 2004 to July 2006. The only woman candidate in the Afghan presidential election, 2004.

Doctor Jalal is a pediatrician, teacher at Kabul University, and a UN World Food Programme worker. She also is the head of the Jalal Foundation.

***“Democracy and talibanism cannot co-exist because they are antithetical to one another.”***

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***“To assume that Taliban will embrace peace is an unforgivable mistake. Every Afghan knows that there is no such thing as a moderate Taliban.”***

***“Long before our government even thought of reintegrating them into society, Taliban had already realized that mainstream society is the best tactical ground from which to launch terrorist operations.”***

***“The seed of talibanism flourishes in an atmosphere of poverty, hopelessness, oppression, and, most especially, weak leadership.”***

Second, every Afghan knows that there is no such thing as a moderate Taliban. Those who became members of Taliban went through processes in life that were as uniquely edifying and compelling as the experiences that made us lovers of peace and democracy. Nothing could genuinely convince a Taliban that terrorism is evil and democracy is good for the majority. To make peace with them is to allow them to erode the very foundations of democracy that in the past decade have allowed us to live in relative freedom and harmony.

Third, long before our government even thought of reintegrating them into society, Taliban had already realized that mainstream society is the best tactical ground from which to launch terrorist operations. If complex attacks with horrific results continue to occur, it is because the Taliban are now seamlessly assimilated into families, police departments, armed forces, businesses, the government, and perhaps even international agencies. Our government certainly does not need to spend large amounts of money to bring them back into society. Tactically, they are already within our midst and are quickly multiplying with skillful invisibility.

Fourth, the seed of talibanism flourishes in an atmosphere of poverty, hopelessness, oppression, and, most especially, weak leadership. We lack the kind of leadership that could inspire and draw support from all sectors. Our people will not support a president with a long list of credibility issues - ranging from election fraud, clandestine alliance with lawbreakers, graft and corruption, dishonesty and incompetence. We cringe at the thought that the substantial amount of money that the international community would provide to the

peace process will be channeled to a government that ranks third on the list of the world's most corrupt governments (Transparency International, 2011).

Fifth and most importantly, we believe that a peace process should be pursued from a position of strength. Today, it appears that our government has been granting concessions to the Taliban without receiving anything in return. If the Taliban are committed to the process, they should be asked to immediately desist from all armed hostilities. We need peace to make peace. Every concession that the government gives to the Taliban should be reciprocated with an equivalent act of peace. The first thing that our government should request of them is to immediately stop offensives, bombings, and all acts of violence while negotiations are taking place. They should agree to adopt a zone of peace, a peace moment or some rules of engagement that protect civilians from their hostile engagements.

### **Implementation of the Peace Strategy**

Flawed as it may be, the strategy supported by the international community is in place for now as there is no better option at hand. Despite the exclusion of many sectors, we need to stand as a united nation and support our government to give it the chance to succeed.

It might be of interest that there are currently several initiatives in support of this strategy. The Afghanistan Peace and Reintegration Program (APRP) reported that as of January 2012, it had already enrolled 3, 354 ex-combatants and has 442 new cases that are yet to be processed. The Afghan government also announced that in accordance with



the second component of its strategy, 15 individual taliban leaders have been de-listed from the roster of sanctioned international terrorists.

It is also noteworthy that as of January 2012 some US \$157.5 million has reportedly been deposited to the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund to support projects that include small livelihood grants to ex-combatants. Community-based policing is also being strengthened, with 11, 000 members having been recruited to serve as community police in 57 localities. Likewise, a survey of the UNDP showed 46 percent improvement in the public perception of the police force, compared to 34 percent in 2009. In addition, both the army and the police are reportedly on track in reaching their respective growth targets of 195,000 and 152,000 members respectively in 2012.

Within the South Asian region, President Karzai has received political support for an Afghan-owned, Afghan-led peace process, notably from the Presidents of Pakistan and Iran. During the NATO Summit in Chicago, he signed a framework for Afghanistan's security transition beyond 2014, which embodies a written commitment from NATO and the international community to continue their support for Afghanistan's peace and development initiatives, albeit on a bilateral basis.

Yet, some of our President's pronouncements and political actions bring confusion and discomfort to ordinary citizens. For example, he announced that he is already engaged in peace talks with the Taliban, but the veracity of this claim was vehemently denied in the media by Taliban leaders.

Likewise, amidst serious concerns of the Afghan population, he declared that he supports the setting up of a Taliban office in Qatar to enable it "to come to an understanding with other nations". The wisdom of supporting an office for Taliban, whether in Afghanistan or abroad, is extremely perplexing.

### **Women's Rights in the context of Sustainable Peace**

Amidst such developments, not only were the women's perspectives ignored, but the women's rights agenda was also marginalized. Through the Afghan Women's Network, consultations with women were conducted nationwide on the matter of conceptualizing the framework for sustainable peace. However, their recommendations were not incorporated into the final strategy for Afghanistan's security transition beyond 2014.

Given the continuing marginalization of our agenda, the question of where women stand in the process of pursuing sustainable peace arises. Our first major concern is the return of talibanism. To us, talibanism is a terrorist ideology perpetrated by violence and sustained by the oppression of women. The reason the Taliban is so adamant in its oppression of women is because women's oppression is the only key to inter-generational perpetuation of Taliban control. Oppressing half of the population is winning half of the war. Depriving women of education spawns generations of ignorant people who will submit to subjugation with uncomplaining docility. The use of domestic violence in order to control women and girls embeds in children at a very young age the very ideology that sustains talibanism. When women are scared, fear is handed down in

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***“When women have no voice, society learns that voicelessness is the norm.”***

***“Government has been systematically marginalizing women in consultations and decision-making processes because of its shallow understanding of the dialectics between women’s oppression and talibanism.”***

***“Another related issue is the strong possibility that women’s rights will be discarded in the name of peace.”***

magnified proportions from generation to generation. When women have no voice, society learns that voicelessness is the norm. The international community must recognize that the main issue is not simply a denial of women’s rights; it is the perpetuation of talibanism through the oppression of women’s rights which is a core issue in our transition to sustainable peace.

This core issue brings with it a number of related concerns, one of which is the exclusion of women from the peace process. Our government has been systematically marginalizing women in consultations and decision-making processes because of its shallow understanding of the dialectics between women’s oppression and talibanism. Like Taliban, the government does not respect the views of women, and they do not wish to recognize that women have perspectives that could enrich decision-making. In this particular case, the exclusion of women does not only represent a denial of women’s rights. More than anything, it is a rejection of the opportunity to benefit from perspectives that could substantially strengthen Afghanistan’s strategy for dealing with the Taliban.

Another related issue is the strong possibility that women’s rights will be discarded in the name of peace. Unfortunately, what Taliban value as a top bargaining chip appears trivial to our leaders. President Karzai demonstrated this when he supported a recent declaration of our religious council, which, among other provisions, directs society to adhere to a tenet of women’s subjugation and gives men the power to control women. And how do we protect the investments of the international community and the Afghan people in

the reconstruction process of the past decade? Despite enormous setbacks, we have made modest gains and are now optimistic about the future. We have been granted equality in relation to men, at least in law and through certain policies. Our girls and young women are back in schools; our professional women are, for the most part, employed; we can travel abroad and secure protection and services when we need them; we can participate in elections and public life; and we can dream of a better life. We are happy that there are episodes of peace, even if they are continuously disrupted. We are grateful that the international community has helped us restore democracy and human rights, even if they are not fully enjoyed by many. We are living because hope has been returned to our life. It is these very things that deepen our fear of a potential Taliban resurgence. Life continues to be enormously difficult for many Afghans, but it is a life far sweeter than one lived under Taliban rule.

### **Recommendations**

By all indications, the gains that we have made during the past decade are bound to be lost once our rights are traded off in the peace process. In order to prevent this from happening, we require the help of the international community in the following ways.

- Help us get our leaders genuinely committed to women’s rights as they apply to the peace process. Your senior diplomats and officials could help by communicating our issues to our leaders. There are several ways to do this. (1) send a joint communiqué (to be signed by various diplomatic missions to Afghanistan) to our President containing a ten-point women’s



agenda in the peace process; (2) organize a delegation (of the signatories to the communiqué) to meet with the President and senior peace officials for the purpose of adopting the recommendations; and (3) support a high-level technical meeting to work out the details of its implementation, funding and monitoring.

- Assist us in establishing an independent body (unlike the Ministry of Women's Affairs, which is subject to the authority of the President) to act as an oversight committee and hold our senior officials accountable for women's issues in the peace process. If this is not possible, help us request the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women to form a special task force within the Committee on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women to monitor and hear complaints on women's issues in the pursuit of sustainable peace in Afghanistan.
- Evaluate the achievements of the peace process at least every two years, including its achievements in building upon the gains of the past decade, particularly gains on the protection, promotion, and fulfillment of women's rights.
- Help us remove from power leaders who cannot serve as custodians of the people's trust. In the coming election, the international media should expose the track records of candidates and prevent the international community from providing logistical support to those who have records of human rights violations. More importantly,

consider how the politics of peace will change under the leadership of non-traditional politicians. Think about supporting female presidential candidates. And help us get a woman appointed as the next Vice President.

- Invest in ongoing capacity building and the sensitization of law enforcement and security institutions to women's rights in the context of sustainable peace. Educate high-ranking officials on the strategic value of women's empowerment to the eradication of talibanism in the country. Help us develop the tools needed to promote women's empowerment as a tactical weapon against the flourishing of Taliban ideology.
- Oppose any effort to amend the existing Constitutional provisions, laws and policies on gender equality. Withdraw support from projects that do not show clear contributions to women's empowerment. Call for the imposition of an indefinite moratorium to the adoption of new laws and policies that will alter substantive gender equality, especially in the name of peace and religion.
- Fund the development of a women's human rights watch report that could be published annually in order to provide evidence-based information on the impact of the security transition and sustainable peace on women. Assist in the dissemination of such information globally and help draw attention to the issues captured by the report.

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***“Help us get our leaders genuinely committed to women’s rights as they apply to the peace process.”***

***“Assist us in establishing an independent body (unlike the Ministry of Women’s Affairs, which is subject to the authority of the President).”***

***“Withdraw support from projects that do not show clear contributions to women’s empowerment.”***

***“Clive Staples Lewis once said that pain is a scream from God.”***

### **Conclusion**

English novelist Clive Staples Lewis once said that pain is a scream from God. He said that “God whispers to us in our pleasures, speaks to us in our conscience, but shouts to us in our pains. It is his megaphone to rouse a deaf world.” We live in a political climate where aspirations to democracy easily turn into tragedy. Nowadays, the rule of law exists only for the powerless, and those who have guns prevail through tyranny and despotism, very much like during the Taliban regime. Have we been abandoned by the international community of democratic nations? How could they introduce the concept of democracy in this country and then leave us alone to fight an unfinished battle against its enemies?

The increase in violence directed at females – such as the poisoning of girls, the execution and assassination of women, and the victimization of women in domestic violence cases throughout the country- begs for the creation of a national mechanism that could act as oversight for the expeditious resolution of such cases. We call upon

our government to either expand the mandate of the Commission on Violence Against Women to include a quick, dedicated response to VAW cases or to create a supplementary mechanism that will work not only on policy recommendations, but also on case resolution. We also call for increased resources and training for community police in order to strengthen their capacity to combat crimes, particularly those directed towards women.

This ongoing violence confirms the magnitude of the challenge of protecting women and their defenders and securing their rights by the end of 2014. We call upon human rights groups and women’s organizations to look beyond traditional solutions. We simply cannot afford to do nothing as we continue to watch our sisters being killed incessantly. This is a matter of concern to all Afghans, women and men alike. Today it is they; tomorrow it could be your mother, sister, daughter or yourself. ■

***“We simply cannot afford to do nothing as we continue to watch our sisters being killed incessantly. Today it is they; tomorrow it could be your mother, sister, daughter or yourself.”***





**Cláudia Pera**

Administrative Manager of  
South Asia Democratic Forum

**Think South Asia (TSA): Dear Cláudia, personally you give an extraordinary spirit to South Asia Democratic Forum (SADF) everyday. How has been your experience working in SADF until now?**

Cláudia Pera (CP): Thank you very much for your compliment, it is a great honour and a pleasure to work here, for me it is a great experience because now I understand and I know that before I had little attention regarding the countries of South Asia. This knowledge made me grow up more in spirit and knowledge.

**TSA: Could you pick a moment of your SADF experience that you will never forget?**

CP: I pick two moments: when we received the Afghani delegation last October, and when I met Professor Mitra, last February.

**TSA: Last year you met the former Minister of Women' Affairs of Afghanistan, Doctor Massouda Jalal. How did her inspire you as a woman?**

CP: She inspired me a lot, with her courage, her strength and her believes, and I totally support her cause. I wish to see women in Afghanistan having the same rights that I have, for example. Dr Jalal is a person with passion, and she transmits wisdom and peace.

**TSA: A last word for the European policy makers. Which is in your point of view the most urgent issue to solve?**

CP: The economic problems in the European Union countries. Besides that, I would like that politicians could have the courage to take measures in order to defend women in Afghanistan and I really wish to see one day those women having the same rights that I have. ■

***“Two unforgettable moments in my SADF experience are when we received the Afghani delegation last October, and when I met Professor Mitra, last February.”***

***“Doctor Jalal inspired me a lot, with her courage, her strength and her believes, and I totally support her cause. I wish to see women in Afghanistan having the same rights that I have.”***

## How to Untangle the EU-India Agreement?



**Paulo Casaca**

Founder and Executive Director of  
the South Asia Democratic Forum

***“The European Parliament has threatened to introduce a clause regarding Jammu & Kashmir, a principality whose partition was not settled after independence and is now occupied or administered by China, Pakistan and India. This clause, awkwardly, was never raised with the other parties.”***

EU-India negotiations on the Bilateral Investment and Trade Agreement (BITA) which started over five years ago have stalled on a variety of issues of diverse nature and impact, with the last deadline for conclusion (November 2012) elapsing without significant advancement.

The European Union and India are the biggest democracies in the world. Different in many respects, they must be considered to be on a rigorous equal footing in order for any solid agreement to be achieved. Both of them are confronted with economic and political challenges of different natures but these could be much better confronted in partnership rather than in isolation.

If we take this approach, and if we therefore consider political agreements such as conventions and observation clauses in human rights to be based on such a rigorous equal footing, most of the existing difficulties can be put aside. Both India and Europe have vibrant and critical civil societies, and the establishment of talk shops where these organizations could freely interact on the critical appraisal of whatever issue might be on the table at the time would certainly be accepted as a sound basis for two open democratic societies to relate to each other.

Naturally, this also implies a need to inscribe all human fundamental rights on the basis of such an agreement, such as the right to life, materialized in food or health care security. No trade solution or scheme could be envisaged if it would not respect these principles. For instance, any rule that would place existing pharmacological products out of reach of poor citizens should be taken off the negotiation table.

It also means the European Union should understand that the implicit suggestion of any moral or civilization European superiority – incidentally, a notion that has more to do with ignorance of India than anything else – would be sufficient to ruin any possible agreement.

The European Parliament has threatened to introduce a clause regarding Jammu & Kashmir, a principality whose partition was not settled after independence and is now occupied or administered by China, Pakistan and India. This clause, awkwardly, was never raised with the other parties to the dispute when the European Union concluded trade arrangements with them.

Whereas the United Nations position on the issue is for all sides to organize a referendum – and none so far has shown any interest in doing so – the

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overall security, political and economic situation seems to redress itself slowly but steadily in the Indian part of the border, while in the Sino-Pakistani side, conflict and mass murder of religious minorities and tension with Chinese forces are mounting, most in particular in Gilgit-Baltistan.

Otherwise, if there is an open issue of nationalist rebellion where no peaceful solution is on the horizon and where a dirty war on a vast scale is rising, then it is in Balochistan on the Western side of Pakistan, but this has never been mentioned in any trade negotiations with the EU.

The bowing to lobbying pressures and vested interests such as those of an expatriate community in one EU member state should not be the concern of European Union external policy.

The European Union also has many territorial disputes either within its own borders or with its neighbors. Would the United Kingdom find it reasonable for India to demand that it sort out the dispute over Gibraltar with Spain before accepting a trade agreement? If not, then why does it demand a similar step from India? The same could be asked of the city overlooking Gibraltar: should third parties demand that the

European Union settle the dispute with Morocco over Ceuta in the context of bilateral agreements?

The second major political hurdle stemming from this superiority complex is global warming, where once again the European side positions itself on a pedestal overlooking an India that refuses to adapt carbon emission objectives, presumably because its people are deemed to be unable to understand the high moral standards of the European side of the argument.

Whereas Europe has embarked upon schemes of utter complexity and dubious practicability such as energy cross-subsidies and carbon emission permits trading – thought up by Al Gore in an era when auctions seemed to be the universal answer to all human problems – and decided to impose them unilaterally in the foreign air space, it has neglected the supply side of the issue, investing too little in fundamental and applied research on intelligent energy solutions.

For its part, India has been unable so far to dismantle or at least to phase out its huge subsidies to fuel and fertilizers that encourage energy waste. This would certainly be a simpler and more efficient way to diminish carbon

***“Would the United Kingdom find it reasonable for India to demand that it sort out the dispute over Gibraltar with Spain before accepting a trade agreement?”***

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***“Fundamental and applied research, coupled with ways to curb disincentives and promote incentives to intelligent energy, could be the means by which co-operation could contribute more to face fundamental problems for both sides.”***



emissions than carbon trade schemes whose implementation has been heavily twisted by vested interests.

Fundamental and applied research, coupled with ways to curb disincentives and promote incentives to intelligent energy, could be the means by which co-operation could contribute more to face fundamental problems for both sides – energy dependence and emissions with hazardous climatic impact – as well as to create employment and business opportunities while addressing vast environmental, health, energy and food problems.

A third and final stumbling block has been the growing protectionist sensitivity on both sides of the negotiation table, easily understandable if we take into consideration the fact that the calendar of the negotiations

has coincided with the global economic crisis. The only reasonable solution here is to consider strengthened and more frequently enforceable safeguard clauses.

Economic equilibrium in the agreement is a fundamental requisite for a fully successful negotiation between the EU and India.

Last but not least, trade is a very convenient instrument to start overcoming the conflicts that are currently disrupting South Asia. The EU-India BITA should be seen as the first step towards an EU-SAARC (South Asia Association for Regional Co-operation) agreement. The EU would gain much more that way than by unnecessarily fueling confrontations on issues such as Jammu & Kashmir. ■

***“The EU-India BITA should be seen as the first step towards an EU-SAARC (South Asia Association for Regional Co-operation) agreement.”***

# Food security in South Asia: Much needed regional cooperation

With 1.7 bn people, South Asia has more inhabitants than Europe, North and South America put together. In a few years time South Asia is expected to overtake East Asia and then will be the most populous region of the world. Unfortunately, it is also the poorest region. More people are going hungry than in Africa. Feeding better a rising population will be one of the most pressing needs of the years ahead (Zingel 1999, 2006).

There is substantial inequality within the region, especially in food supply. If South Asian cooperation is to become meaningful, more collaboration will be needed in ensuring food security.

## The State of Food and Nutrition in South Asia

South Asia is self-sufficient in food, at least on a net basis. Food production is enough for an average supply above 2.000 Kcal per head a day but that is the lowest of any world regions. Besides substantial inequality and insecurity of food supply, South Asia has a gender gap: Women and girls are the worst fed in the world. Compared by income groups, women and girls are less well fed in South Asia than in Asia.

As harvests fluctuate over the years, still depending on the seasonal monsoon rains, especially the poorer people suffer in years of bad harvests.

Amartya K. Sen has brought out that there are no famines in democracies. However, there still is hunger.

## SWOT: Strength and Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats

The greatest strength of South Asian agriculture is that it has been keeping the pace of population growth and even to grow a little faster, so that South Asia on average has been better fed by own production than in previous decades. Even in Bangladesh, we have been witnessing an unexpected rise not only of industrial, but also of agricultural production.

The major weakness is distribution. Markets work quite efficiently; there is hardly any need that South Asian governments engage themselves in the physical distribution besides investing in the necessary infrastructure for transport and communication. What is needed is a distribution of incomes and wealth, so that people have the



**Wolfgang-Peter Zingel**  
M.A. and a PhD in Economics  
Professor at Heidelberg University

***“Feeding better a rising population will be one of the most pressing needs of the years ahead.”***

***“The greatest strength of South Asian agriculture is that it has been keeping the pace of population growth and even to grow a little faster.”***

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***“The greatest threat comes from an overuse of the natural environment, from an irresponsible price policy in the power sector and a non-sustainable use of irrigation water.”***

***“Most of the bilateral trade goes via third countries, especially Dubai, blamed in India and Pakistan as “smuggle”.”***

necessary means either to produce enough for their own consumption or to purchase the quantities needed for a healthy subsistence.

The greatest threat comes from an overuse of the natural environment, from an irresponsible price policy in the power sector and a non-sustainable use of irrigation water.

### **Regional Cooperation**

Saarc was established in 1985. The idea was that South Asia might be united like Europe in the European Union or the Southeast Asia in ASEAN. In that hope, a South Asian Preferential Trade Area (Sapta) and a South Asian Free Trade Area (Safta) were established. Afghanistan joined Saarc in 2007. A number of states have observer status. It was hoped that the regional cooperation would help to overcome hostilities among neighbours as in Europe and in Southeast Asia. South Asia, however, is different, mainly because of the tense relation between its two major partners, India and Pakistan.

Although India and Pakistan are founding members of the WTO, they have used all possible excuses not to

open their borders for bilateral trade. Most of the bilateral trade goes via third countries, especially Dubai, blamed in India and Pakistan as “smuggle”. The trade between Pakistan and Afghanistan also mostly goes unaccounted, helped by Afghanistan’s transit rights through Pakistan and the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) being a virtual free trade zone.

The situation between India and Bangladesh is not much better: There are only a few crossings; paperwork easily takes days and Indian entrepreneurs are blaming the Indian government more than the governments of the neighbouring countries of obstructing trade and transport.

When in 1965 bad weather resulted in a steep decline in production and India and Pakistan were on the brink of famine, the subcontinent was saved by large scale ‘wheat loans’ of the USA and other exporters that later were turned into grants. ‘Food power’ as the then US Vice-President called it, had become a mighty weapon. For Indira Gandhi, who then became Prime Minister, it was a clear signal that India had to become independent in food supply at any cost.

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Since then, India has been pursuing a policy of price control, procurement and public food distribution. Indian stocks of food grain became the largest in the world. The main argument for a cautious food policy is that a huge country like India cannot hope to simply close a production gap by imports from the world market.

The situation was very different in neighbouring Bangladesh that usually imports around one tenth of food-grain requirements. In previous years, imports used to come from Thailand and other countries, now they come from India. The Bangladeshi government had the greatest difficulties to remind the Indian exporters to stick to prices agreed on earlier.

The seven Saarc members outside India together have not more than one third of the population of India. In case of need, they could only supply a small fraction of food what would be needed in India. The other way round, India would be in the position to meet almost all requirements from her neighbours.

Where cooperation is urgently needed is in resource management. Pakistan

and Bangladesh are lower riparian of the Indus, Ganges, Brahmaputra and Meghna/Surma and all their tributaries. In 1960, Pakistan and India signed the Indus Water Treaty that gave exclusive rights to three rivers each to the two countries. It has been a blessing politically. In the case of the Ganges, such a solution has not been possible, although there is a bilateral agreement between India and Bangladesh on the use of the Ganges water, the most important factor has not been addressed: Water all over South Asia is highly subsidized. Governments bear most of the construction and running costs of the irrigation networks, fuel for diesel and for electric pumps are provided at below market prices, if not free of charge. The resulting overuse of irrigation water means that hardly any water arrives at the lower stretches of the large rivers; in the case of the Ganges less and less water is left to be distributed.

Regional Cooperation leaves much to be desired. The problem is political. If the countries of South Asia come to a partnership and build cooperation there will be hardly any people starved. ■

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## Constitutional and Human rights of Indigenous people in Bangladesh



**S. M. Hasan**

Student of International Relations in the University of Dhaka

***“Day after day the indigenous people are being deprived of different rights.”***

***“By born the state Bangladesh is a democratic state. But it excludes non-Bengali communities from recognition.”***

*‘We want to include us in the constitution of country (Bangladesh), just a place for us, just recognition of our nationality since we are the citizen of country. Surprisingly, we did not get, even we have been treating as the secessionist’.*

An indigenous youth of Bangladesh

This is not the concern of only a youth but is the concern of 45 Indigenous communities (3 million indigenous people) of both hill tracts and plain lands, as well as the some people all over the country even beyond the country. Day after day the indigenous people are being deprived of different rights and being exploited by the ‘state’ (!) in fact. They have no place in the constitution as the indigenous community. State-centric Assimilationist Nationalism is the bone of contention for the culturally diverse and enriched communities. By born the state Bangladesh is a democratic state. But it excludes non-Bengali communities from recognition. Since the independence, Bangladesh has been carrying out the policy of its ancestor i.e. West Pakistan. The indigenous communities tried to include their recognition when the constitution was formed. Secondly, besides constitutional rights their basic human rights condition also vulnerable. They are suffering from many sorts of violation like lack of right to self-determination, killing, physical abuse, torture, lack of education etc. As a result their situation is being deteriorating day by day.

### **Constitutional rights: target to recognize**

Bangladesh adopt its constitution in 1972. Despite the request of indigenous communities, the father of the nation and then president of the country Sheikh Mujibur Rahman only recognized Bengali nation. Even the government denies to recognize them as Indigenous. But in different laws and government proceedings indigenous people is recognized as different names. Such as ‘Indigenous Hillman’ in Chittagong Hill Tract Regulation-1900, The Indian Income Tax act of 1922, The Indian Finance act of 1941, The Forest act of 1927 etc. However, government used both indigenous and Upajati (small tribes) in different gazettes of Government, policies. More interestingly, the government do not observe ‘World Indigenous Day’ by arguing that there is no indigenous community in Bangladesh. On the other hand, Bangladesh signed and ratified ILO Convention (107) which is related to indigenous rights and International Labor Law (169). In the latest amendment of Constitution in 2011 it is said “The culture of tribes, small ethnic groups, ethnic sects and

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communities. The state shall take steps to protect and develop the unique local culture and tradition of the tribes, minor races, ethnic sects and communities.” But government did not recognize them as the indigenous group. However, indigenous communities get support from the republic under different provisions of the Constitution. Such as, 5% quota for tribal in every government job as the ‘backward’ community. Moreover, they have the rights of getting privileges according to article 28(4) of the constitution. In the article 25, the state enunciates that it shall ‘respect for international law and the principles enunciated in the United Nations Charter...’ But its legal position become fictive and dubious when state itself violates its constitution by not ensuring rights of indigenous people according to international law ratified.

### **Human Rights: an unfulfilled promise**

Though Bangladesh signed and ratified different international legal regimes for protecting human rights, even created national bodies like, National Human Rights Commission, however human rights situation of indigenous communities is rampant. They are the most vulnerable in terms human rights condition. State sponsored Muslim settlement in the special region of indigenous community changed the demography of tribal concentrated area. In 1959 the tribal people was 90.39% but they are only 51.34%. Tribal area was heavily militarized and even there was 13 Massacres happened only in the Hill Tracts after 1971. Attacks by settlers against indigenous communities continue unabated with the implicit

consent of the military. According to Parbattya Chattagram Jana Samhiti Samiti (PCJSS)(the Chittagong Hill Tracts Peoples’ Solidarity Association), from 1998 to 2009 in total 4755 people experienced human rights violation, where, 127 were killed, 1333 were tortured, 358 were arrested and 373 people were harassed and, 204 persons get lodged case. There are 675 house got fire, another 1129 were looted and destructed, and 48 were searched. The 54 women were raped and another 32 women were sexually harassed. In addition, 314 were kidnapped and 114 were the victim of land grabbing. There was 13 communal attack occurred from 1999 to 2011 from where two were in 2011. In plain lands they are forcefully evicted from their ancestral land. In 1947 the landless ethnic was 20-25% but now is more than 90%.

### **Way forward: in lieu of conclusion**

State is primarily responsible for human rights condition within its border. The indigenous people of Bangladesh have been suffering from rights violations since the emergence of the country. Bangladesh is bound to recognize them as distinct community, while Bangladesh ratified related legal instruments. Injustice anywhere is the threat to justice everywhere. This denial of rights of some people creates threat to provide rights for other people. Bangladesh should immediately recognize them, ensure their right to self-determination etc. It should respect to human rights. By ensuring constitutional and human rights of indigenous communities, the state should be more egalitarian not in just by constitution but by in nature. ■

***“Indigenous communities get support from the republic under different provisions of the Constitution.”***

***“Injustice anywhere is the threat to justice everywhere.”***

## West across land and sea: a Chinese ‘grand strategy’ and future prospects for South Asian security



### Marco Rossi

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***“Ports like Hambantota in Sri Lanka ports and Marao in the Maldives might be subjected to an upgrading of their military facilities.”***

Among the many developments recently witnessed across the Asian geopolitical chessboard, the widening of China's influence in South and Central Asia, as well as its bid to establish a ‘footprint’ in the Indian Ocean it's certainly the more eye-catching. Indeed, in the course of the last ten years, China has managed to secure a physical presence in different states alongside the most strategic maritime routes – the so called ‘Sea Lines of Communications’ (SLCs) - connecting the Asian giant with its commercial partners and main providers of energy sources in the Middle East and Africa. This feat has predictably awakened old fears among the Indian political and military community, according to whom China's manoeuvres might eventually undermine India's influence in the region and favour historical rivals like Pakistan. However, a careful analysis would show that none of the two powers has interest in entering a ‘Cold war’ over the control of the region's sea routes. Instead, a strategic partnership between the two countries to protect common commercial and security interest in the area might turn to be the most likely outcome.

China's success in building what analysts have sometimes defined as its ‘string of pearls’ comes on the heels of

a skilful use of economic leverage and commercial diplomacy between China and the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) countries – estimated at 362 billion dollars in 2011 - has been growing considerably in the last decade. If this trend continues, it would rapidly turn ASEAN into China's main trading partner by 2015. Such prosperity of commercial exchanges has brought tangible results on a strategic level, allowing China to establish its presence in a series of South Asian countries, in the form of either maritime civil infrastructures or, more rarely, of embryonic military installations. In the vast majority of the cases, China's initiatives and investments have focused on the creation of ‘strategic corridors’ and facilities for its imposing commercial fleet sailing West, as well of the oil tankers on their sailing back from the Persian Gulf. This is the case, for example, of the port of Sittwe in Myanmar and of the Bangladeshi coastal town of Chittagong - for which China announced a major step-up in investments in 2010, with the aim of creating a deep sea harbour, a bridge and new highways. However, ports like Hambantota in Sri Lanka ports and Marao in the Maldives might be subjected to an upgrading of their military facilities, which would include

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refuelling and reparation structures for the People Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) units, as well as electronic intelligence devices.

On the Western extreme of Chinese SCLs, the deep-water seaport of Gwadar in the Pakistan province of Baluchistan represents the last and, according to many observers, the most precious and controversial of all the Chinese 'pearls' along the SCLs. A strategic crossroad located little more than 500 kms away from the Strait of Hormutz, Gwadar has been at the centre of China's attention since the early 2000s. However, Chinese involvement in the development of the port has reached a turning point in September 2011, when the Pakistani government and the shareholders of the port announced the takeover of the harbour by the state-owned China Harbour Engineering Company (CHEC), takeover which has been recently rectified. The takeover bears remarkable strategic implications. Not only the harbour, in which China has invested some 250 million dollars, would constitute an energy terminal for oil and gas transportation from the Gulf and, on the long term, Afghanistan. Potentially, Gwadar's new facilities would allow the transit and the refuelling of its warships and submarines, giving China an unprecedented military access to the Indian Ocean and a chance to deploy armed units along the region's most important routes.

As for China's approach to Afghanistan, it has been more pragmatic and somehow more careful than the one adopted toward other Central Asian

actors and Pakistan. Since 2001, the country has never openly intruded in Afghanistan's internal affairs, showing, on the opposite, a certain reluctance to step into a destabilised context hardly conducive for great investments. Up to 2012, China has limited itself to prevent potential spill overs from the war-torn neighbour, while signing few but strategic agreements for the exploitation of Afghanistan's rich raw materials deposits, like the copper mines of Aynak (2008) and the gas deposits of the Amu Darya River Basin.

It is however clear that the reason why China's 'grand strategy' has gained widespread attention on the international stage lays in what would eventually become its most illustrious victim: India. Historically speaking, India's 'siege complex' has relatively recent origins. Diplomatic relations between the two countries have been strained since the times of the Sino-Indian conflict of October 1962, which saw China breaking through the Line of Actual Control (LAC) and penetrating Indian territory to obtain a swift tactical victory, but have experienced a slow and constant improvement during the 1990s. As of 2012, China and India have settled on a level of 'reluctant cohabitation', contested at times but accepted on both sides for eminently pragmatic reasons. While India has not ceased to see with suspicion Chinese penetration in its traditional sphere of influence, creating a latent Cold War centred around the South Asian theatre and the Indian Ocean is not seen as an appealing option. As a matter of fact, India has little interest

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***“India has promoted joint naval exercises with Japan and Vietnam - a country which has recently been involved in an harsh diplomatic confrontation with China upon disputed waters.”***

***“China would find extremely difficult to guarantee a far reach to its warships by relying only on its numerous but momentarily unequipped seaports in countries such as Myanmar, Sri Lanka and Maldives.”***

in acquiring an aggressive stance against a threat which, albeit perceived by a portion of its political and military establishment, is yet to assume concrete forms. Up to this point, India has promoted joint naval exercises with Japan and Vietnam - a country which has recently been involved in an harsh diplomatic confrontation with China upon disputed waters – and improved its bases in the strategic islands of Port Blair and Car Nicobar.

However, the hypothesis of militarily risky confrontation appears as the remotest of the options. With the second most powerful military navy in the world and a superior Intercontinental Ballistic Missile (ICBMs) arsenal, China would tactically dwarf its rival, a fact the Indian military is well aware of. Conversely, it must also be observed that, for all its naval and, more in general, military superiority, China would find extremely difficult to guarantee a far reach to its warships by relying only on its numerous but momentarily unequipped seaports in countries such as Myanmar, Sri Lanka and Maldives. Those countries, on the other hand, might be resilient to grant China an unrestricted access for a confrontation against India, still a close neighbour and long-time partner. It must also be added that a more assertive Chinese naval policy in the South Asian seas would most likely induce India to further strengthen its alliance with the US, a realistic scenario following the positive outcome of the third US-India Strategic Dialogue of June 2012. This potential shift represents an evolution that China is certain keen to avoid in the long term. The assumption that China's involvement in Central

Asia and Afghanistan could be read as part of a gradual plan for India's encirclement is also highly disputable and finds little ground in either facts or declarations on the part of Beijing. There is no doubt that China's much contested investments in the Pakistani seaport of Gwadar since 2001 facilities are closely linked to the need of creating further terminals for the CNPC's gas and oil pipelines which will likely depart and run across Afghanistan after 2014. However, it is also true that India's role in what scholars like Francois Godement have labelled as the 'new great game' for Central Asia and Afghanistan's resources and land routes has been and remains, up to this point, fairly marginal if compared to that of China. While India entered the Beijing-led Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) as an observer in 2005 and has since then been encouraged to take its position within the organisation a step further, the country hardly identifies it as a priority and still considers the region an area of predominantly Sino-Russian pertinence.

In the current state of affairs, predicting the long-term outcome of the Chinese strategy in the South Asian seas and in the Indian Ocean, as well as its repercussions on the relations with more or less powerful neighbours – India at the head - remains an arduous task. At the moment, China's sustained economic growth, greater military resources as well as an extremely refined and well-honed diplomatic tactic make this country the leading regional actor on the volatile South Asian chessboard, where the careful building of alliances and networks counts as much as sheer financial or logistic power. Given the

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success of the initiatives undertaken in the course of the last decade, it is unlikely that China will give up its projects to expand its alliances and increase its ground presence along the SLCs. In this regard, China's capacity to diversify its energy sources and achieve greater energy autonomy will play a pivotal role in defining its strategy. At the moment, imported oil accounts for more than 50% of China's consumption, roughly a half of it being transported along dangerous sea routes from Middle Eastern countries, as well as African producers like Angola and Sudan. In those conditions, it will be imperative for China to militarily protect this constant flow from piracy or local instabilities and, if completely upgraded, strategic seaports like Gwadar would play a vital role in allowing China to better fulfil this objective.

Yet, China will not be able to maintain such a position without taking into account India's legitimate interests in the area and fostering more effective forms of cooperation in the area which, in the foreseeable future, would benefit both partners. The joint institution in 2011 of the Shared Awareness and De-confliction (SHADE), which enables China, India and Japan to share naval assets and military intelligence to counter piracy in the Gulf of Aden, is but one example of the willingness of both countries to effectively cope with common issues. On the other hand, little advantage would come to either China or India in perpetuating a state of latent conflict in South Indian region. The developing countries within the ASEAN community and India itself are and will remain a formidable exporting basin for China in the near future – as

underlined by Chinese president former president Hu-Jintao in March 2012 - particularly taking into consideration India's steady demographic growth. Moreover, China, while highly proactive in pursuing its South Asian strategy, has never prevented India from deepening its commercial and strategic links with other ASEAN countries, the majority of which still consider India as their privileged and historical partner.

In conclusion, it is likely that the situation in South Asia and the Indian Ocean will result, at least on the short term, in a 'balance' of interests which should then evolve in a more long lasting form of cooperation. While certain regional issues, such as the Chinese bid over disputed waters in the South China Sea and the long-standing China-India quarrel regarding contended Northern borders, will certainly endure, none of the two main regional actors has interest in fuelling ulterior tensions. On the opposite, a China-India strategic partnership over selected objectives - such as guaranteeing the security of the region's strategic sea routes - would give birth to an enduring model of regional cooperation, much to the advantage of both players. ■

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## China: will new leaders bring new attitudes?



**Cátia Rodrigues**  
Policy Advisor of South Asia  
Democratic Forum

***“Expansionism has been a landmark of the contemporary communist China.”***

In November, China confirmed the change in its leadership. Xi Jinping replaced Hu Jintao, China’s former President. The country’s change of leadership brings both uncertainty and hope for change. Jintao did not live up to the world’s expectations of reforms in China, leaving now the focus and expectancies on Jinping.

Many in the World are guessing whether Mr Xi will have a different leadership style than his predecessor, whereas some are trying to grasp whether the new leadership will be able to build on the enormous successes in economic development and rise of Chinese prosperity; daunting tasks include controlling corruption, liberating Chinese minds, building a state of law, assuming its responsibility to play its part in global economic and environmental regulation and above all, subduing the imperial tendency of the regime.

Globally, the past three decades have been dominated by the rise of China at an astonishing rate, to a large extent copying the earlier successes of Japan and the Asian tigers, but at an incommensurable scale and with incommensurable geopolitical consequences.

In particular, from the geopolitical point of view, the consequences are decisive, since whereas the ancient Middle Kingdom strived by the strength of its civilisation rather than through bullying his neighbours, expansionism has been a landmark of the contemporary communist China ever since its creation.

The annexation of both East Turkestan and Tibet came practically together with the communist victory in 1949, soon followed by the Chinese direct involvement on the North Korean take-over bid over South Korea, in the Korean War that lasted up to 1953. During the 1950s, China engaged in new territorial disputes on the borders of the new acquired territories (East Turkestan and Tibet), both with the Soviet Union and India, in disputes that developed into large scale wars with these neighbours in the following decade, with yet another dispute with Vietnam evolving into war in 1978.

China’s involvement in other territorial disputes continued and extended to virtually all of its neighbours. Regarding North Korea, a country with which China had concluded an agreement in 1963, disputes resumed soon after and included sporadic armed conflicts in

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1968 and 1969. Even today, disputes and skirmishes exist with virtually all Chinese maritime neighbours, Malaysia, Japan, Philippines, North and South Korea, Vietnam and Brunei.

Heavy pressure (through supporting guerrilla activity of groups defined on an ideological, ethnic or religious basis or by economic and migration heavy-handedness) has been widely used to bend neighbours into submission, with Burma being the last case in point where the abuse of these tactics eventually backfired and led to an anti-Chinese overturn.

Other than the vast Chinese oceanic disputes and the specific case of Bhutan, India remains the only country against which China has remained outspoken on its territorial ambitions. India considered the attack it suffered from China in 1962 to have been carried out without warning, and was heavily traumatised by the defeat it suffered. Most of India's intellectuals consider that the country failed to understand the Chinese mindset and strategies regarding the protection of its borders. For instance, when China entered Tibet in 1950, India did not foresee the threat it posed to them; even when the

Chinese started building roads nearby at the borders with India, it took them too long to acknowledge what was in fact happening and bring it to the attention of the Parliament. Moreover, India tended to consider Pakistan its greatest rival and did not pay sufficient attention to what extent China (which built up close ties with Pakistan after the war and divided with it the control of a substantial part of the former principality of Jammu and Kashmir) was really behind it.

Ever since then, voices have been raised stating that India needs to step up its game, in order to understand and prepare itself for the Chinese domination strategy. Especially after what Indians consider the betrayal of China in 1962, Indian general attitude is extremely suspicious of Beijing's acts. China has stepped up its partnership with Pakistan, it has increased its presence on the Pakistani side of the former Jammu and Kashmir principality that both countries occupy, it has upped international pressure on the rest of the territory and heavily invested in strategic infra-structure in Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Nepal and most recently the Maldives, challenging the links of these countries with India.

***“Even today, disputes and skirmishes exist with virtually all Chinese maritime neighbours, Malaysia, Japan, Philippines, North and South Korea, Vietnam and Brunei.”***

***“Most of India's intellectuals consider that the country failed to understand the Chinese mindset and strategies regarding the protection of its borders.”***

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***“China is, since 2008, the largest economic trading partner of India (the trade amongst them reached 60 billion US dollars this year and is expected to almost double by 2015).”***

More importantly, China is the prime suspect for the support provided to a large string of guerrilla activities through the Northeast of India and the so-called Red Corridor along the Eastern shores of India, in a much unwelcome destabilising effort.

China’s economic rise has only been matched to a lesser degree by India’s growth, and the same can be said about growth in both country’s military and political capacities. Otherwise, China is, since 2008, the largest economic trading partner of India (the trade amongst them reached 60 billion US dollars this year and is expected to almost double by 2015). This means that through their economic partnership India is following the same path of interconnection with the Chinese economy observed elsewhere.

One week after the new Chinese government took power, the Indian Embassy in Beijing protested formally against the new Chinese passports in circulation since the beginning of 2012 where a Greater China, including Indian areas of Aksai Chin and Arunachal Pradesh as well as its vast Oceanic claims are proudly stamped.

The change of leadership is indeed a crucial moment when China could assess the benefits and costs of its present strategies. The present model of export-led growth and heavy investment indoors seems to be attaining its economic limits and China should consider whether an open conflict with potentially devastating consequences in South Asia will serve its long term goals of reassuming itself as the central global power. ■

***“The change of leadership is indeed a crucial moment when China could assess the benefits and costs of its present strategies.”***



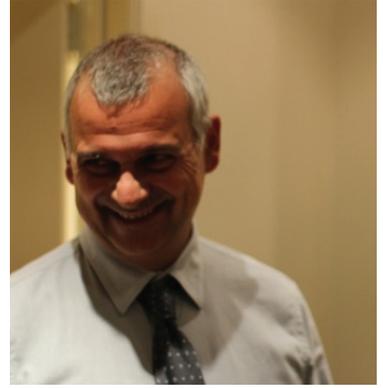


# THINK SOUTH ASIA



*South Asia Democratic Forum wishes you a*

## Merry Christmas



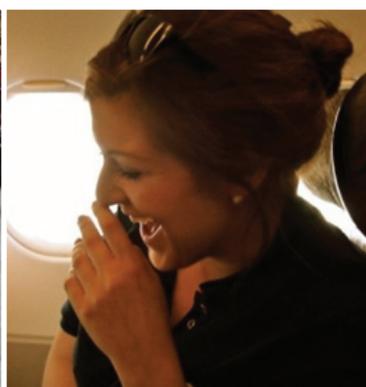
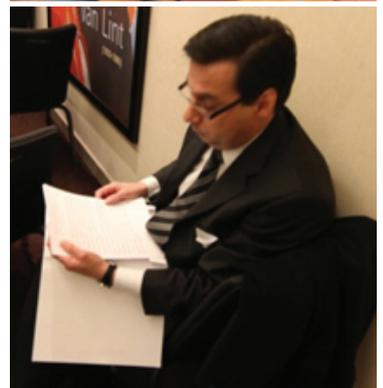
And we dare to quote Doctor Massouda Jalal message for this season, signing below her very actual wishes for 2013:

*Jalal Foundation greets the Christian world a joyous yuletide season and a bountiful new year. It is a season for forgiveness, love, reconciliation, gift giving, and peace; a time to reflect on the purposes of life and embrace new commitments to make the world a better place for everybody.*

*The armed conflict in Afghanistan brought us deep friendships and valuable support from many organizations and individuals around the world, many of whom are Christians.*

*It is proof of the universality of kindness, the greatness of human spirit, and the passion for peace. We thank all of you, our Christian friends, as we honour your contributions to the betterment of Afghan women's life.*

*We wish you renewed energy and prosperity. May all the blessings of the season bring you more success in your undertakings, safety, and happiness in the company of people who make your life even more meaningful through the years.*





**Anne Flanagan**  
Policy Advisor of South Asia  
Democratic Forum

## **Afghanistan**

According to a new UN report, a 2009 law on the Elimination of Violence Against Women has been implemented to a partial degree, but women in Afghanistan remain failed by the justice system in this regard. Reporting of violence against women has actually increased in that timeframe, although this may be explained by greater awareness and willingness to report. Afghan police are still reluctant to pursue perpetrators who may have strong criminal linkages or who may be open to influence. Women who try to flee violent domestic situations continue to be wrongly accused of running away from home.

## **Bangladesh**

Violent protests and street clashes which have seen at least two people dead and scores injured, broke out in Bangladesh amid calls for an independent body to be set up to oversee next year's elections. The previous system under which caretaker officials oversaw elections, was abolished by the government last year. An independent system was then set up but it has since been abolished, with no sign of any replacement.

## **Bhutan**

Bhutan's Gross National Happiness measurement attracted interest at the recent UN climate change conference in Doha. Bhutan has been touted as a developing country which prioritises environment as a factor of wellbeing which is therefore as important to the national economy as economics themselves. The country pledges to remain carbon neutral in this regard. A panel in Doha investigated what lessons it might learn whilst not necessarily replicating the Gross National Happiness model.

## **India**

Opposition politicians have called for an investigation into lobbying activity by the gigantic American retailer Walmart in India. India's government decided in September to allow 51% foreign direct investment in multi-brand retail, in a move designed to boost the economy. The new law which passed through both houses of Parliament in early December was strongly criticised by both the opposition and small independent indigenous business owners. Lobbying is particularly controversial in India where anti-bribery laws are strong. Hence, Walmart, which does not



currently trade in India, is being asked to account for how it spent some US \$3 million in 2012 on efforts to enter the India market.

## **Maldives**

The Commonwealth has expressed a commitment to remain working with the Maldives government to help them improve the institutional framework of the country and adhere to the Commonwealth's values and goals. Elections will be held in the Maldives in 2013 and the Secretary General of the Commonwealth, Kamalesh Sharma, has pledged commitment to assisting with a hospitable environment in which these should take place. He was speaking after a conversation with the Maldives Foreign Affairs Minister Abdul Samad Abdullah.

## **Nepal**

Maoist rebels fought a bloody 10-year civil war in Nepal that ended in 2006 and this week hundreds of former Maoist fighters have camped outside in Kathmandu demanding that retired fighters be treated equally. They have camped outside the party's headquarters demanding recognition for their past efforts.

## **Pakistan**

Malala Yousafzai, a 15 year old girl who was shot in the head by a Taliban gunman and who is undergoing treatment in Birmingham, UK, has been visited in hospital by President Asif Ali Zardari. He met with her family and thanked the Queen Elizabeth hospital for the care it was providing. Malala's plight has become famous the world over since the incident on October 9th, with many thousands of people calling for her to receive the Nobel Peace Prize.

## **Sri Lanka**

The Chief Justice Shirani Bandaranayake has been found guilty of three charges of misconduct in a report issued by a Sri Lankan parliamentary committee which accuses her of financial wrongdoing. It remains to be seen if she shall be impeached when the matter is investigated more thoroughly in January. The US embassy in Colombo has expressed its concern at the proceedings and is adamant that the Sri Lankan government follow the law exactly in going forward with the investigation, especially given reports that her supporters insist the attempted impeachment is politically motivated.

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