

# **Challenges of Peace building: Understanding War within War in Syria**

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## **Peace Building Perspectives**

Peace, in common parlance connotes a state of being characterized by absence of physical and or organized violence. However this is not to obliterate the fact that peace is a contested narrative within the academia and policy makers. There are questions of whose peace, at what cost and in what form. One understanding of peace by the parties in conflict who emerge vindicated from the conflict situation may be antithetical to the peace narratives cultivated by the party ending up as looser. It becomes, then, a dichotomous choice between victor's peace and loser's peace (Shurke et al., 2012). Similarly, mere absence of violence may, in many cases, not guarantee the absence of incompatibility and discontent in society. Durable peace warrants an equitable deal seen to be fair and just by the larger community. A pertinent distinction here can be, what Johan Galtung calls, negative peace and positive peace. "Whereas negative peace is the absence of direct violence (e.g., people being killed), positive peace also includes the absence of structural violence (e.g., dying as a result of poverty), and cultural violence (e.g., factors that blind people to injustice or allow them to rationalize it). Thus, while the negative peace of order and the cessation of direct violence may not be compatible with justice, the positive peace of reconciliation and psycho/social healing for the most part presupposes it" (Gawerc, 2006). The present paper presupposes such an understanding of peace and underscores the importance of peace building, unlike peacemaking or peace keeping, as a process to establish lasting peace. Peace building refers to a dynamic and multidimensional process covering a wide range of social, psychological and economic well-being aspects. The intention of peace-building is to create a structure of peace that is based on justice, equity, and cooperation (i.e., positive peace), thereby addressing the underlying causes of violent conflict so that they become less likely in the future. Peace building also recognizes that conflicts are seldom solved and peace building is a continuous and complex process. This leads us to another important concept, namely, conflict transformation instead of conflict resolution. Conflict transformation is a complex set of intervention

that includes (1) context transformation at the international, regional, and/or social level; (2) Structural transformation focused on the root causes; (3) Actor transformation through a change of leaders or the constituency, or by a drastic change in their beliefs and goals; (4) Issue transformation through a change in positions or the salience of issues; and (5) Personal and group transformation which is focused on changing "hearts and minds" (Miall et al., 2005). There is no one way to build peace as it involves broadest range of ambitions for justice, equality and participation. Other approaches of peace building include a school of thinkers who converge on conflict and peace as game. Another approach to peace building has been the unmet need school (Coser, Azhar, Gurr, Davies). Unmet need approach emphasize that conflict happen when people are denied the means to meet some or all of their needs for access, opportunity, security, dignity etc. If the patterns of unmet need coincide with ethnic and religious divides, than conflict is likely to be more complex and so is the peace building process. The present paper proposes to use the unmet need framework to explore the possibility of peace and conflict resolution, if not transformation, taking the case of Syrian Civil War.

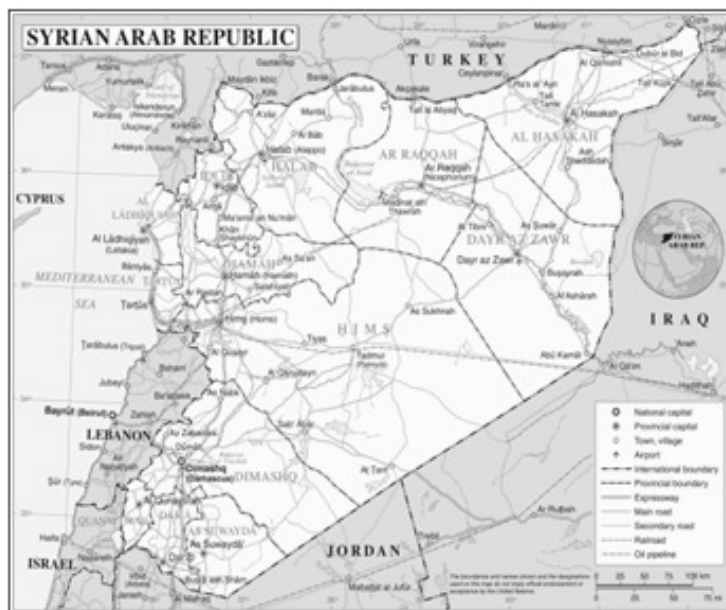
## **Methodology**

Conflict studies are complex exercises which has to deal with a combination of factors that go into making and probably unmaking of a particular conflict. The present piece of research work is descriptive in research design relying on data mostly from the secondary sources like books, magazines, unpublished work, personal correspondence, new reports, reports by international aid agencies, Syrian Observatory for Human Rights (SOHR), Amnesty International etc. The case of Civil War in Syria will be analysed here as a case study. The case study proposes to use Horizontal Inequality (HIs) as a theoretical framework in the analysis of the case and try to map the embedded challenges in this particular conflict for peace building in Syria. The Work particularly pursues following few research questions: (1) What is the backdrop of Conflict in Syria? (2) Who are fighting with the Regime and amongst themselves in Syria? (3) What is the Political economy of Conflict in Syria? (4) What is the Role of major world powers in Syrian Conflict? (5) What is the structure of social and political inequality in Syria? (6) Can HIs (Horizontal Inequalities) explain conflict in Syria? (7) What challenges for Peace building in Syria can be identified from the work?

## **The Context of Syria:**

Syria became an independent republic in 1946, from French occupation, although democratic rule was ended by a coup in March 1949, followed by two more coups

that same year (Little, 1990). The political history of Syria has been punctuated by coups and violent contestations, often facilitated by Cold War rivalry, besides new political experiments of briefly joining a United Arab Republic (1958-61). The Ba'ath Syrian Regional Branch government came to power in 1963 again after a successful coup by Army officers. In



In 1966, another coup overthrew the traditional leaders of the party. In 1970, again, General Hafez al-Assad, the then Minister of Defense, seized power in a "corrective revolution" and remained as President, until his death in 2000. Hafez Al Assad is also symbol of autocracy in Syria as he held on to power through repression (eg. He dropped, 1973, the Constitutional Requirement of President to be a Muslim, he himself belonging to the Shia Alawite minority community which is considered by many as unIslamic). Since then, the secular Syrian Regional Branch has remained the dominant political authority in what is virtually a single-party state in Syria; Syrian citizens may only approve the President by referendum and could not vote in multi-party elections for the legislature. Bashar al-Assad, who succeeded in 2000 after the death of his father as the President of Syria initially, inspired hopes for democratic and state reforms. Bashar al-Assad started with releasing political prisoners and allowed a liberal environment for Muslim brotherhood to engage in political activity and a promise to completely end more than 40 years of emergency. The period was characterized by the emergence of numerous political forums or salons, where groups of like-minded people met in private houses to debate political and social issues. The Damascus Spring largely ended in August 2001 with the arrest and imprisonment of ten leading activists who had called for democratic elections and a campaign of civil disobedience. From 2001 even reformists in Parliament had begun to criticize the legacy of stagnation since the rule of former President Hafez al-Assad; Analysts say, Bashar al-Assad has talked about reform but carried out very little, and he has failed to deliver on promised reforms since 2000.

### **Syrian Economy and Society:**

Syria is a multi-ethno-religious country where the majority (60%) of the population belongs to Arab Sunni sect. Other ethno religious groups living in Syria are the Shia Alawite (12%), Kurd Sunnis (9%), American and Assyrian Christians, Arab Druze etc. There is marked social and economic inequality along ethnic and religious lines. Political inequality between the majority Shia and minority Sunni community is very high. Being part of the Arab family of countries, there is a tendency that majority Shia population aspires for moderate Islamic rule with the heart of Arab Socialism. The Assad family comes from the minority Alawite religious group, an offshoot of Shi'ite Islam. It has maintained tight control on Syria's security services generating resentment among the majority Sunni Muslims. Ethnic minority Syrian Kurds have also protested and complained over ethnic discrimination and denial of their cultural and language rights.

Discontent against the government was strongest in Syria's poorer areas, predominantly among conservative Sunnis. These included cities with high poverty rates, such as Daraa and Homs, rural areas hit hard by a drought in early 2011, and the poorer districts of large cities. Socio-economic inequality increased significantly after free market policies were initiated by Hafez al-Assad in his later years, and accelerated after Bashar al-Assad came to power. With an emphasis on the service sector, these policies benefited a minority of the nation's population, mostly people who had connections with the government, and members of the Sunni merchant class of Damascus and Aleppo. By 2011, Syria was facing deterioration in the national standard of living and steep rises in the prices of commodities. The country also faced particularly high youth unemployment rates. According to a study of Dubai School of Governments Wolfenshon Centre for Youth Development titled Youth Exclusion in Syria: Social, Economic and Institutional Dimensions, 2007 the rate of unemployment among the youth stands at close to 26%. Gender divide in employment is also very large. Young women in Syria are half as likely as young men to participate in the job market.

Over the past ten months, the international community has gazed awestruck at how Syria's uprisings have swept through a nation once viewed as pacified by a repressive regime. An analysis solely focusing on the brutality of the Assad regimes, however, elides some of the economic roots of popular unrest, particularly those stemming from the rural poor. As a result of four years of severe drought, farmers and herders have seen their livelihoods destroyed and their lifestyles transformed, becoming disillusioned with government promises of plentitude in rural areas. In the disjuncture between paternalistic

promises of resource redistribution favoring Syria's peasantry and corporatist pacts binding regime interests to corrupt private endeavors, one may begin to detect the seeds of Syrian political unrest ([http://www.jadaliyya.com/pages/index/4383/sowing-the-seeds-of-dissent\\_economic-grievances-an](http://www.jadaliyya.com/pages/index/4383/sowing-the-seeds-of-dissent_economic-grievances-an)).

Syria has undergone through sever political repression for more than 50 years. The country was under emergency rule from 1963 until 2011, banning public gatherings of more than five people, and effectively granting security forces sweeping powers of arrest and detention. World Human Rights Report 2005, 2007, 2010 has documented the dismal record of Assad Regime, stating that he had failed to substantially improve the state of human rights since taking power, although some minor aspects had seen improvement (Human Rights Watch Report, 2010). Rights of free expression, association and assembly were strictly controlled in Syria even before the uprising. The social, cultural, political and economic rights of Stateless Kurds have been brutally suppressed by the ruling regime in Syria. The authorities harass and imprison human rights activists and other critics of the government, who are often indefinitely detained and tortured in poor prison conditions. Women and ethnic minorities have faced discrimination in the public sector. Thousands of Syrian Kurds were denied citizenship in 1962 and their descendants continued to be labeled as "foreigners". The successive governments of Hafez and Bashar al-Assad have been closely associated with the country's minority Alawite religious group, an offshoot of Shia, whereas the majority of the population, and most of the opposition, is Sunni.

The Syrian Civil War, declared such by the UN in 2012, is an ongoing armed conflict taking place in Syria. Pro-democracy protests erupted in March 2011 in the southern city of Deraa after the arrest and torture of some teenagers who painted revolutionary slogans on a school wall. After security forces opened fire on demonstrators, killing several, more took to the streets. The unrest triggered nationwide protests demanding President Assad's resignation. The government's use of force to crush the dissent merely hardened the protesters' resolve. By July 2011, hundreds of thousands were taking to the streets across the country. Opposition supporters eventually began to take up arms, first to defend themselves and later to expel security forces from their local areas.

### **Major armed opposition groups:**

The Syrian crisis is a typical case of rebellion by armed groups fighting against the ruling regime who are united by the purpose and opposed to each other by agenda.

Consequently it has snow balled into a sectarian situation where it is a free for all to kill each other in the fight against the State. The groups are divided amongst themselves on the basis of objectives, targets, ethnicity, and international support base or economic interest base that each enjoys. The conflict is now more than just a battle between those for or against President Assad. It has acquired sectarian overtones, pitching the country's Sunni majority against the president's Shia Alawite sect, and drawn in neighbouring countries and world powers. The rise of the jihadist groups, including Islamic State, has added a further dimension.

The armed opposition consists of various groups that were formed during the course of the conflict, primarily the Free Syrian Army, which was the first to take up arms in 2011, and the Islamic Front formed in 2013. In 2013, Hezbollah entered the war in support of the Syrian army. In the east, the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), a jihadist militant group originating from Iraq, made rapid military gains in both Syria and Iraq, eventually conflicting with the other rebels. The Syrian National Defense Force was formed out of pro-government militias. The force acts in an infantry role, directly fighting against rebels on the ground and running counter-insurgency operations in coordination with the army, which provides them logistical and artillery support. The force has a 500-strong women's wing called "Lionesses of National Defense" which operates checkpoints. NDF soldiers are allowed to take loot from battlefields, which can then be sold for extra money in locations dubbed the "Sunni market. The Shabiha, named a terrorist organisation by the US in 2012, are unofficial pro-government militias drawn largely from Assad's Alawite minority group. Since the uprising, the Syrian government has frequently used shabiha to break up protests and enforce laws in restive neighborhoods. As the protests escalated into an armed conflict, the opposition started using the term shabiha to describe any civilian Assad supporter taking part in the government's crackdown on the uprising. The formation of the Free Syrian Army (FSA) was announced on 29 July 2011 by a group of defecting Syrian Army officers. The purpose of the Free Syrian Army was to defend civilian protesters from violence by the state, and to bring the Syrian regime down. Many Syrian soldiers subsequently deserted to join the FSA. The FSA functions more as an umbrella organization than a traditional military chain of command, and was first headquartered in Turkey, but moved its command headquarters to northern Syria in September 2012. The Islamic Front is a merger of seven rebel groups involved in the Syrian civil war that was announced on 22 November 2013. The group maintains a distance from FSA and Syrian National Council, the political front of FSA. The group is widely seen as backed and armed by Saudi Arabia. The al-Nusra Front, being the biggest jihadist group in Syria, is often considered to be the most aggressive and violent part of the opposition. It is

group which is competing against Islamic State and maintains allegiance to al-Qaeda in Iraq. Al-Nusra Front is also opposed to indigenous Syrian opposition (FSA) even though al-Nusra Front has fought alongside the FSA in several battles and some FSA fighters defected to the al-Nusra Front. The Mujahideen's strict religious views and willingness to impose sharia law disturbed many Syrians. Needless to mention that though Al-Nusra Front and IS both have had their roots in Al Qaeda, Al-Nusra Front unlike the IS, is more gradualist in methods of enforcing sharia law. The Syrian Kurdish People's Protection Units (YPG), first entered this Syrian Civil War as belligerent in July 2012, by capturing a town, Kobane, that until then was under control of the Syrian Assad-government. Kurds consist of mostly Sunni Muslims, with a small minority of Yezidis. They had suffered from decades of discrimination and neglect, being deprived of basic civil, cultural, economic, and social rights having no State of their own. YPG is participating in the civil war in smaller numbers than their Syrian Arab Sunni counterparts. Consequently, violence and state repression in Kurdish areas has been less severe. In terms of a post-Assad Syria, Kurds reportedly desire a degree of autonomy within a decentralized state. (From Wikipedia and reports of leading News Agencies like BBC, Reuters, The Guardian, France Presse, Amnesty Internationals, Human Rights Watch Group, Al Jazeera, Al Akhbar, Al Monitor etc.). From among all the players, Islamic State happens to me most prominent and deadly. It is known for its brand of ultra-radicalism and believes in terrorizing the non-Arab and non-sunni people into submission by selective display of violence against humanity. Earlier it was Jamaat al-Tahwidwa-i-Jihad founded in 1999 and had a prominent role in fighting American occupation forces in Iraq along with Al Qaeda. In 2006 it became Al Qaeda Iraq and Islamic State Iraq in 2010. Abu Baqr Al Baghdadi took over the leadership and it got itself involved in the Syrian Civil War. Throughout late 2013 and early 2014, ISIS built its power base in Syria, establishing its stronghold in Raqqa, where it was able to seize total control after ousting all other rebel groups. Despite a counterattack by other factions sparked by its brutal tactics, ISIS was able to hold its positions and consolidate its power base. They effectively imposed control over areas by empowering their allies and crushing their enemies. Policies of divide and rule in fractious tribal areas helped them to sustain their hold on territory. On June 29, 2014, the first day of Ramadan, ISIS declared itself a caliphate and Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi as Caliph Ibrahim, calling for the immediate loyalty of all Muslims throughout the world (Special report: Islamic State, Clarion Project: 2015). By July 2014, ISIL controlled a third of Syria's territory and most of its oil and gas production, thus establishing itself as the major opposition force. By July 2013, the Syrian government was in control of approximately 30-40% of the country's territory and 60% of the Syrian population. The ideology of the Islamic State is that of Salafist-

jihadism (A group of ultra-conservative Sunnis with a reference to the earliest Islamic pious forefathers- Al Salaf or earliest followers of Prophet Mohammed). The Islamic State is not only a terrorist group. It is a political and military organization that holds a radical interpretation of Islam as a political philosophy and seeks to impose that worldview by force on Muslims and non-Muslims alike. Politically it has been learnt that they are building and consolidating State Institutions. They devote considerable attention to delivery of education, security and health services. Militarily they have captured a large part of Syria, though mostly desert and thinly populated but most importantly resource rich regions, in a short span of time. Tactically they use wholesale killing, intimidation, torture, rape, beheading, crucifixion to enforce sharia law & order. The ghastly beheading of American Journalist James Foley, Stephen Sotloff and British aid worker David Haines is still vivid in the mind of international community. Amnesty International in a report recounts the rape and sexual slavery of Yezidi Women in Sinjar Region, North western part of Syria in the following words:

In August 2014, IS fighters abducted hundreds, possibly thousands, of Yezidi men, women and children who were fleeing the IS takeover from the Sinjar region, in the north-west of the country. Hundreds of the men were killed and others were forced to convert to Islam under threat of death.<sup>5</sup> Younger women and girls, some as young as 12, were separated from their parents and older relatives and sold, given as gifts or forced to marry IS fighters and supporters. Many have been subjected to torture and ill-treatment, including rape and other forms of sexual violence, and have likewise been pressured into converting to Islam (Escape from the Hell, Amnesty International, December, 2014)

### **International involvement and Magnitude of the Humanitarian Crisis:**

What began as another Arab Spring uprising against an autocratic ruler has mushroomed into a brutal proxy war that has drawn in regional and world powers. Iran and Russia have propped up the Alawite-led government of President Assad and gradually increased their support, providing it with an edge that has helped it make significant gains against the rebels. The major parties supporting the Syrian Government are Iran and Hezbollah. Both of these are involved in the war politically and logistically by providing military equipment, training and battle troops. The Syrian government has also received arms from Russia and support directly from GRU, Main Intelligence Directorate of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation. The government has also enjoyed the support of Lebanon's Shia Islamist Hezbollah movement, whose fighters have provided important battlefield support

since 2013. The Sunni-dominated opposition has, meanwhile, attracted varying degrees of support from its main backers - Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Qatar and other Arab states along with the US, UK and France. Syrian rebels have received training from CIA at their bases in Qatar, Jordan and Saudi Arabia. Saudi Arabia happens to be one who mainly finances and arms the rebel group. However, the rise of hardline Islamist rebels and the arrival of jihadists from across the world has led to a marked cooling of international and regional backing. The US is now arming a 5,000-strong force of "moderate" rebels to take the fight to IS on the ground in Syria, and its aircraft provide significant support to Kurdish militia seeking to defend three autonomous enclaves in the country's north ([www.bbc.com](http://www.bbc.com)). Thus we can see that different international actors in the Syrian conflict have played carrot and stick strategy in keeping with their geo-political interest instead of showing any genuine interest in lasting peace in the strife torn nation. The armed opposition group itself is a divided house consisting different religio-ethnic groups who are competing with each other for political dominance. The United States of America itself was initially reluctant to support the rebel groups fearing indirect support to ex members of Al Qaeda who have eventually joined the coalition of armed forces to fight the Assad regime. US Policy so far have been overtly IS focused instead of working towards peace in this theatre of war within war in Syria.

International lack of interest or taking more partisan interest has led to one of the deadliest war in Syria in recent times. According to Syrian Observatory for Human Rights (SOHR) estimate (Up to June, 2015), more than 2,30,620 - 3,20,620 deaths has taken place in the more than four year old civil war in Syria. The estimates by UN for death stands at 2,20,000 (January 2015). International organizations have accused the Syrian government, ISIL and other opposition forces of severe human rights violations, with many massacres occurring. Based on news reports, activist accounts and Report of UN Enquiry Commissions, it has been found that Chemical weapons have been used many times during the conflict as well. The Syrian government is reportedly responsible for the majority of civilian casualties and war crimes, often through bombings. In addition, tens of thousands of protesters and activists have been imprisoned and there are reports of torture in state prisons. The severity of the humanitarian disaster in Syria has been outlined by the UN and many international aid organizations. More than 12 million Syrians have been displaced, almost 4 million Syrians have fled the country to countries such as Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, and Egypt and become refugees, and millions more have been left in poor living conditions with shortages of food and drinking water. A report published by the UN in March 2015 estimated the total economic loss since the start of the conflict was \$202 billion and that four in every five Syrians were now living in poverty- 30% of them in abject poverty. Syria's education, health and social welfare systems are also in a state of collapse.

### **External Conflict resolution Initiatives:**

With neither side able to inflict a decisive defeat on the other, the international community long ago concluded that only a political solution could end to the conflict in Syria. However, a number of attempts by the Arab League and the UN to broker ceasefires and start dialogue have failed. In January 2014, the US, Russia and UN convened a conference in Switzerland to implement the 2012 Geneva Communiqué, an internationally-backed agreement that called for the establishment of a transitional governing body in Syria formed on the basis of mutual consent. The talks, which became known as Geneva II, broke down in February after only two rounds. The then UN special envoy Lakhdar Brahimi blamed the Syrian government's refusal to discuss opposition demands and its insistence on a focus on fighting "terrorists" - a term Damascus uses to describe rebel groups. UN Secretary General Ban-Ki-Moon says the organisation's long-term strategic objective remains a political solution based on the Geneva Communiqué. The UN special envoy Staffan de Mistura has also proposed establishing a series of "freeze zones", where local ceasefires would be negotiated to allow aid deliveries in besieged areas. But his attempt to broker a truce in Aleppo has been rejected by rebels in the city, who fear the government will use it to redeploy its forces elsewhere and that IS militants will simply ignore it. The blood shedding refuses to stop. An externally aided loose coalition of armed opposition keeps fighting the unyielding, nonetheless, isolated, ruling regime with no chance of either party achieving decisive victory. The opposition group also fights on two other fronts; its own internal factions and to a less extent the fundamentalist forces called Islamic State. Islamic State sees a window of opportunity in this pandemonium of cross-cutting conflict to establish a pan Arabic Islamic Caliphate.

### **Making Sense of the Syrian Civil War- Horizontal Inequality Thesis:**

Given the complex nature of Syrian crisis there is a need for systematic explanation of the conflict in Syria. A cultivated distance by the international community, Poverty of information from the ground zero, multiple narratives of war propaganda, the urgency of humanitarian response help to obscure our understanding of what is happening in Syria. The present paper seeks to systematically analyse the conflict using a Horizontal Inequality (HIs) framework given by Frances Stewart (2008) and will examine challenges of Peace Building in Syria.

In the post-cold war era, conflicts all over the world are increasingly over identity rather than ideology. Horizontal Inequality framework explains such religious and

ethnic conflict in multicultural societies. Stewart, much like the Functions of Conflict by Lewis A Coser, says that mere religious and ethnic differences do not lead to conflict unless there are also major economic and/or political causes. Conflicts along ethnic and religious lines necessarily have horizontal inequality (HIs). Horizontal inequality refers to economic, political, social and cultural inequality between culturally defined groups. There are causal connections between different HIs, i.e., one HI can lead to other forms of horizontal inequality. HIs as drivers of conflict do not operate independent of the context. Any particular HIs may give rise to conflict depending on a. political conditions b. cultural demographic conditions c. economic conditions of a particular context. Political inequality in a democratic State may not provoke violent conflict. Similarly low growth economies with Economic HIs are prone violent conflict than high growth economies with economic HIs. Some of the assumptions here are, first, the group boundaries are clear and continuous over time. Secondly, the group boundaries are fixed with limited opportunity to switch group affiliation. The theory takes into account four broad categories of inequality and develops four hypothesis of violent conflict:

Hypothesis I: Conflict is more likely where there are significant political or economic HIs or both.

Hypothesis II: Political mobilisation is especially likely where there are consistent HIs, i.e., both political and economic HIs run in the same direction.

Hypothesis III: Lack of cultural recognition will be provocative while cultural inclusion will be ameliorative for Peace.

Hypothesis IV: Political mobilisation and possibly conflict will become more likely where HIs are widening.

Horizontal Inequality framework for conflict analysis has certain advantages over other theories. Firstly it applies to particularly multicultural societies like Syria. Secondly, instead of being overly deterministic, it says that whether HIs will provoke conflict is dependent on a number contextual factors and conflict can be caused by other factors where HIs are very limited. Lastly, Horizontal Inequality is an open-ended theory in the sense that HI is an, and not the, important source of violent conflict.

The curious case of Syria: Is the conflict in Syria a religious or ethnic one? A clean answer to the question will either be misrepresentation of facts or may be a wild

approximation. One of the bloodiest since WW II, or at least the largest in the middle east in terms of death and devastation and continuing since more than four and half years, the conflict has grown so complex, evolving, with each passing day, it is but natural that there is no straight answer to the question. There are, though, many theories around. One such convenient theory is that Syrian civil war is between the Shias and Sunnis. Another set of propositions talk of an anti-regime struggle inspired by pro-democracy Arab spring protest in the neighbourhood. Yet another theory makes a case of an international proxy war. None of the theories can be contradicted for paucity of evidence to the contrary. The Conflict started with a call for reformation/ resignation of President Bashar Al Assad and it grew garish towards democracy ultimately culminating in a violent conflict to remove the regime. Conflict in Syria is also approximately along the Shia-Sunni divide. It started with "All Syrians are one" and went through "Sunni blood is one" to "We did not hate the Alawis, Now we do" (Phillips, 2015 ). End of dictatorship by a string of democratic protest under the rubric of Arab Spring in Libya, Tunisia, and Egypt provides the immediate backdrop to Syrian Civil War. Different countries, based on their competing geo-political interest in the region, have supported or opposed the Assad regime or the Syrian National Coalition. International support has also gone well beyond political support to include training, financing, Arms and intelligence. Still these are not convincing. How can Syrians who believed the Assad regime to be a guarantee of stability in the face of seamless chaos in neighbours like Lebanon and Iraq, turn inimical to the same regime? The roots of conflict in Syria lie somewhere else. All the hypotheses above point only the sufficient conditions of conflict and not the necessary one. The real drivers of conflict in Syria are rooted in the accumulated political economic asymmetries of decades as a result of regime machinations to maintain its monopoly of power. The unrest is result of a combination of socio-economic and political problems that had been building for years and that affect especially Syria's large rural population. The drought of 2007-2010, high unemployment rates, inflation, income inequality, declining oil resources and pauperization of the peasantry all contributed to profound discontent on the part of the opposition movement. The accumulated discontent now finds a channel to come out as a violent conflict against the Authoritarian regime of Bashar Al Assad. However this is not to obliterate the ethno-religious edges of the conflict. It is the regime who itself, has over the years, maintained a discriminatory distinction between different ethno-religious formations, sometimes even a class of people across ethnoreligious groups, by selectively privileging few and excluding others. Therefore, Political, economic and socio-cultural inequality in Syria does have an ethno religious pattern. The Conflict in Syria is a case of ethicised political conflict aimed at change of Assad regime. The conflict might have had a united beginning. With the passage of time the ethno-religious

under currents of the conflict have clearly surfaced turning it more sectarian. Unequal ethno-religious identity groups are now adding more energy to the already violent war against the regime seen as monopoly of the other ethno-religious group.

Sectarian animosity, if not sectarianism is a historical product in Syria. Under the French Mandate (1902-1946), The French sought to appropriate the cultural identity differences to foster sectarian, class and communal separatism widening the gap between majority Sunnis and various minorities. Up to 1958 Syrian politics was about polarization, coup, and domination of the landed gentry. It is the temporary union with Egypt (1958-1963) that showed some beginning of consolidation of a socialist State through introduction of comprehensive agrarian reform law and nationalisation of economic sector. It also meant the end of political space for opposition and the foundation of one-party rule. The Arab Baath Socialist Party, also known as Baath regime (1963-70) that followed reversed the trend urban bourgeoisie politics in favour of rural and peasants. A Socialist transformation through promise of egalitarianism, modern agrarian revolution, and redistributive land reforms are some of the cementing sentiments that tied the alienated workers, peasants and farmers to the Baath regime. This also explains a privileged relationship that Syria came to share with the communist bloc. However the defeat in the Arab-Israel war (1967) fueled wrangling and polarisation within the Baath party and consequently paved the way for Hafez to seize power through a corrective movement (1970). From here starts the story of Authoritarian regime consolidation, appropriation of party machine to crush opposition, political privileging and alienation of the majoritarian Sunnis. Politically he filled the top party and State positions with his own loyalists and Alawi Officers and at the bottom sought to mobilise cross-sectarian and rural-urban constituencies through inclusive policies. Economically he introduced limited economic liberalization and changed the agrarian reform law to get back the support of rich business families and merchant class. Political opposition was ruled out by the 1973 Constitution which guarantees sole authority to Baath Party to represent State and Society. Control of the State was also ensured through expansion of bureaucracy and military intelligence services. However the drying up oil revenue, international aid from the Arab gulf and communist countries in 80s led further curtailing of populist national projects and warranted more privatization. Increasingly the business community and religious organisations made inroads into to party and State through selective co-option. This also shrank the regimes mass social base and broad based coalition that it put in place initially. Baath Party increasingly moved away from mass mobilization and relied more on its patronage by the business elites and the new bourgeoisie. Important economic sectors came to be dominated by family members of the President and bureaucracy including intelligence services

(eg., Rami Makhlof, President maternal cousin has monopoly of Mobile Phone Services, Private English language schools etc, others include son of Bahjat Sulaiman who was head of internal security). Political surveillance of the opposition and civil societies replaced mass contact. When Bashar inherited power on his father's death in 2000, he inherited a system that was stable but had fostered divisions. Although he enjoyed personal popularity, his reforms exacerbated and increased resentment towards the regime as a whole. Economic reforms alienated the Sunni Arab workers and peasantry, as Bashar moved to open up the economy more rapidly. Syria's GDP grew, but subsidies to Syria's poorest were cut and public sector employment decreased. Rather than genuine liberalisation, those close to power amassed huge fortunes through government contracts and monopolies. These new generations of crony capitalists were visibly excessive, and a disproportionately high number of this elite were Alawis, with Bashar making far less effort than Hafez had to balance the sect's privileged position by promoting prominent Sunni Arab families, fueling resentment among the formerly supportive Sunni Arab poor. The inner ruling circle was packed with loyal people from Assad clan. Important military and security services like Republican Guard and the fourth Armored Division are commanded by officers who belong to the President's own family and clan such as the Makhloufs and Shaleeshs (eg. President brother Maher commands Republican Guard and Fourth Armed Division, Brother-in-Law Asef Shawkat commanded Intelligence Agency). This kind of nexus between pro-regime capitalists and bureaucrats fostered an environment of alienation in Syria. Four levels of State bourgeoisie came to dominate the economy and network patronage: (a) Ruling family and their relations; (b) Officers of Army and notorious security services; (c) People from administration and bureaucracy; (d) Top level public sector officials (Haddad, 2012). With the shrinking of public sector the jobs for youth was drying up. Then one of the worst droughts (2006-10) crippled the countryside to no end. Drought itself is seen as a consequence of mismanagement of water resources and corruption manifest in Regimes push for strategic crops like wheat and cotton. Failure of the regime to handle water related issue pushed the peasantry into acute poverty. This started a huge wave of rural to urban migration to cities. All the cities are choked with environmental refugees with no basic amenities of health, drinking water, housing and food. There were already signs of rising rural poverty in Syria (Arab Development Challenges Report, UNDP, 2011). Drought hastened the process. This is testified by the fact the most persistent sources of opposition activity since 2011 have been in poorer religious Sunni Arab areas such as Deraa, Jisr al-Shughour, Homs, Idleb, Douma and Hama, and frustrated youth have taken the lead. Since the 80s the population pressure in Syria is increasing. Syria has one of the highest birth rates in the world. Consequently the pressure is transferred to shrinking job market producing

a staggering 26% unemployment rate. So a critical mass unemployed youth is readily available to carry forward the civil war.

**Discussion:**

The above discussion shows that there is an unholy alliance between the ethnicity, business and the regime. This creates exclusion among the Non-Shia population. Freedom of Speech, expression and political association is severely restricted in Syria. This creates political alienation among the Arab Sunni masses. Poor Sunni peasants are distressed from loss of livelihood, job and social protection which is seen as direct consequence of economic policy followed by the regime. The Regime itself is seen to be, and is, the monopoly of minority Alawites and selectively co-opted Sunni upper rich families having connections in the Governments and the Party. Large sections of the population who share a similar religious identity are left out of positions of power. However a minority from the same cultural group are benefactors from the regime. And these rich business interests though were slow to join the civil war, have also joined lately sensing the reprisals in case the regime collapse. So we can say that there definitely exists political inequality between two clearly distinct cultural groups. However, horizontality of this inequality is limited by instances of cross overs. The inequality may look like between the rich and the poor but it also fit into a pattern of minority Shia vs. majority Sunni. We also find the existence of many intermediate cultural groups (eg., Kurdish People's Protection Units, Islamic Front, factions within the coalition of Armed opposition etc. who are opposed to the regime as well as anti-regime groups) who are either poised to join the anti-regime coalition as polarisation picks up or continue to prolong the conflict as spoilers. People who suffer political inequality are also at the receiving end of a crumbling Syrian economy. So here political and economic inequalities are co-terminus and are often reinforcing each other. Though the face value of Syrian conflict is centered on a protest against collapse of the socialist economy, religious fault lines supply energy and propel the civil war. Cultural expressions are also constrained by denial of economic and political power. Cultural inequality, however less pronounced in the case of Syria it might be, is manifest in perception of Bashar regime as anti-Muslim and pro-American (in case of Joining UN mandated war in Kuwait, betraying the Palestinian cause etc.). The sense of cultural inequality is also getting heightened by the entry of radical groups like Islamic State into the conflict. The acceptance, may be powerless, of Islamic State by people in their search for greener pastures testifies to that. Obviously, the gap between the groups has worsened over the years and hope of any reversal looks distant, if not non-existent. We also see that some other contextual factors like pro-democracy protest wave

across the middle-east, Loosening, limited it might be, of the repressive State, Provocative handling of the conflict by the regime, geo-political importance of Syria as a key to many middle east conflict, by virtue of which international support in favour or against the civil war is readily available and the building up of a critical mass of youth as a victim group are also relevant in understanding the war within war in Syria. Horizontal inequality (HIs), however, remains at the heart of Syrian Civil War around which the conflict organises itself. Therefore any peace building initiative has to address the core issues of horizontal inequality first in order to make any head way.

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## **Does International Aid Contribute to Peacebuilding? Development Cooperation in Post-conflict countries**

**Vrinda Dar**

*“Human Development is about creating an environment in which people can develop their full potential and lead productive, creative lives in accord with their needs and interests. People are the real wealth of nations. Development is thus about expanding the choices people have to lead lives that they value. And it is thus about much more than economic growth, which is only a means—if a very important one—of enlarging people’s choices” (Sen, 2000).*

Amartya Sen defines development as “a process of expanding the real freedoms that people enjoy” (Sen, 2000).<sup>1</sup> Focusing on human freedom, Sen’s definition contrasts with views that identify development with the growth of GNP (Gross National Product), a rise in personal incomes, industrialization, technological advance, or with social modernization. Amartya Sen links the lack of freedom closely with the lack of public facilities and social care, such as the absence of epidemiological programs, or organized arrangements for health care or educational facilities, or effective institutions for the maintenance of local peace and order. Successful development programmes are those that contribute to lasting peace and improved well-being amongst people, especially in post-conflict environments. Based on the proactive participation of local stakeholders, such programmes aim to address the root causes of conflict, neither necessarily following donor strategies nor aiming for quick impacts.

Through an analysis of the major trends in international donor aid in the last two decades, this paper explores the role of development cooperation activities in peacebuilding in post-conflict countries. The paper highlights the critical importance of developing and implementing international aid programmes that are comprehensive and involve a range of measures aimed to address the causes of conflict, strengthen local capacities in conflict management, and reduce the risk, amongst target communities, of lapsing or relapsing into conflict, thus laying the foundation for sustainable peace and development.

## **1. Exploring the concept of Aid**

Before proceeding further, it would be useful to understand what international aid is, who the providers and recipients of aid are, what considerations and tools shape the design, implementation and evaluation of international aid programmes, the mechanisms and processes of international aid and the trends in this sector for the past two decades.

The commonly accepted definition of “Aid” or “Assistance” is the transfer of funds to poorer countries/individuals. Aid also covers other types of fund transfers, like the administrative overheads of development agencies and their efforts to advocate in favour of more assistance and on effectively targeting assistance. The Organisation of Economic Cooperation Development (OECD) and its Development Assistance Committee (DAC) define official development assistance (ODA) as the “concessional funding provided by its members to support the welfare and economic development of an agreed list of developing countries.” While the terms “aid” and “assistance” are often used interchangeably, aid is the wider range of development assistance of which ODA is one part. ODA is unique in its focus on poverty. In the aid framework, tax payer money in rich countries is used for development assistance, either on-lend or as grant money to poor country governments or non-government agencies who in turn implement programmes designed to advance development and reduce poverty. Depending on the economic situation of the country, donor countries - those within the “Paris Club”—can agree to cancel parts of the outstanding debt accumulated from continued public development credits.

To qualify as development assistance, as per the criteria of the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of OECD countries, the grant element in development credits must be more than 80%. Any credit with a grant element of less than 100% is usually considered as one that needs to be finally paid back. Despite considerable grant elements included in development credits, specifically in credits to very poor countries, many recipients of aid have repeatedly gone into debt serving difficulties and even debt crises. Debt-forgiveness or some non-concessional flows (like development bank financing) are also treated as “aid” even though these loans are never expected to be repaid.

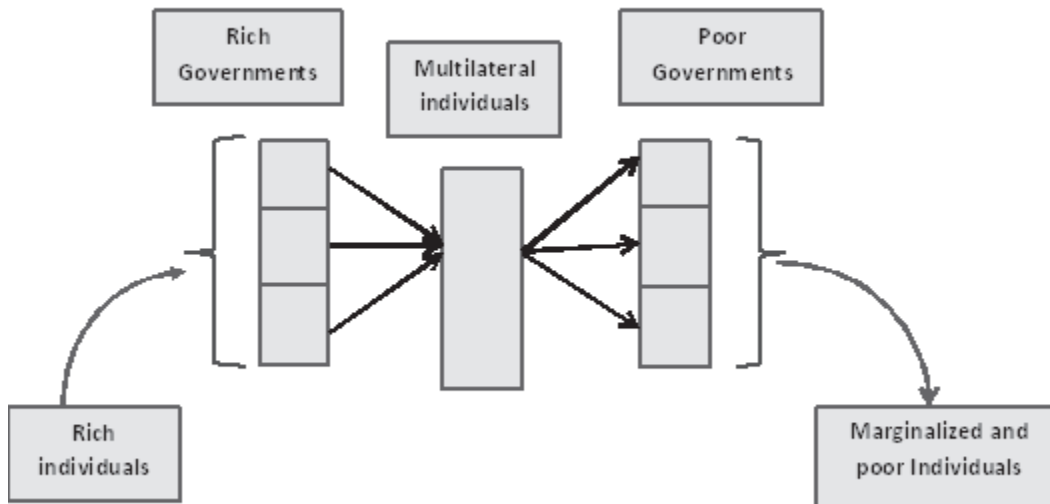
## **2. International Aid Architecture until 1990s**

In post-World War II, there was great support for helping Europe get back on its feet. Then, the assistance was limited to a single major donor, the US, providing

funds to a small number of European countries whose economies had been destroyed by war. By the 1960s, there were many potential donors. The International Development Association (IDA) was established in order to provide a framework for burden-sharing and to be an interlocutor amongst rich and poor countries. Donors provided funds to IDA which in turn vetted and funded development projects in developing countries. This basic system worked well in the early nineties. Several regional multilateral agencies and the United Nations system also helped expand the reach and scope of this multilateral network. Multilateral agencies operated to strengthen the fund transfer from donor to recipient governments and the design and implementation of good programmes and projects in the recipient countries,

**Figure 1: Aid Architecture in the 1960s (Kharas, pg.4)**

**Figure 1: Aid Architecture in the 1960s (Kharas, pg.4)**



This aid architecture is now under strain due to an explosion, on the supply side, of bilateral and multilateral agencies and private donors and, on the demand side, of a large number of NGOs. Official aid channels increasingly face criticism for favouring political ends rather than development concerns in the allocation of funds across countries and for failing to deliver results in many cases. With each additional player, the aid architecture becomes more complex. Often, the government, in both rich and poor countries, is seen as a source of problems rather than a contributor to the solution of problems of poverty (D. Dollar and L. Pritchett, 1998). Citizens and other private donors are considered to be more targeted and selective about programmes they are willing to support. Over the past few decades, private donors have

increasingly looked to channel their funds through private organisations rather than governments and feel that NGOs have a positive impact on reducing poverty (Homi Kharas, p.5). Other important players that have entered the sector of international aid are the non-DAC bilateral donors, like China, Turkey, Brazil, South Korea, which have a regional focus and pay attention to specific sectors. In response to these changes and trends, the aid architecture too has changed over the past decades. There have been calls for a new ODA definition that reflects the changing landscape of aid and the emergence of new providers, including 'emerging donors' (such as China and Saudi Arabia), private organisations, philanthropic foundations and non-governmental organisations.

The aid architecture is now growing more complex. There are now more bilateral donors (37 reporting to DAC and several others that do not) and more recipient countries (151 countries). There are now more multilateral agencies than donors or recipients (IDA, 2007) There are an increasing number of international NGOs receiving money from bilaterals and thousands of private sector groups engaged in aid, both as donors and implementers of non-government programmes. Accurate data on the growing contributions from the diverse range of philanthropic foundations, including increasingly in emerging economies, is not readily available. Efforts by a small but growing number of venture philanthropists – or impact investors – are promising (OECD, 2014) but they require careful scrutiny to assess the sustainability of their initiatives and potential for scaling-up. South-South cooperation (SSC) continues to rise in scale and importance, coupled with growing South-South trade, investment and regional integration. SSC is foreseen to continue its growth, as a proportion of international development cooperation, given the plans by large developing economies to increase SSC considerably over the next five years (OECD, Section IV)

### ***3. Facts, Figures and Trends in International Aid***

Three distinct phases of aid growth can be identified since the 1970s: (i) first phase of growth in aid through 1970s and 80s, peaking in 1991, largely dominated by bilateral aid; (ii) a period of "aid fatigue" wherein by 1997, aid had fallen by 22% - this phase was accompanied by increasing poverty, especially in sub-Saharan Africa and a growing number of failed states; (iii) a period of growth in aid, by nearly 50% (Kharas, pg.7), between 2002 and 2010, particularly in the Millennium Development Goals and especially for Africa. Global ODA grew from around US\$40 billion in the 1960s to US\$128 billion in 2012. However, the net Country Programmable Aid (CPA - calculated by subtracting aid agency costs, technical cooperation, debt-relief), is

much lower than total net ODA (Official Development Assistance). In 2005, the share of CPA in total aid had fallen from the 1975 figure of 59% to 37% (Kharas, pg.8).

The target of spending 0.7% of gross national income (GNI) on ODA was first adopted in 1970, and reconfirmed many times since, including in 2005 by the 15 EU member states. In 2012, five donors met this target- Denmark, Luxembourg, Norway, Sweden and the United Kingdom-but as a whole DAC donors achieved only 0.29% of GNI. Nearly two-thirds of ODA comes from five G8 countries that are consistently the largest donors by volume:the US, the UK, Germany, France and Japan. Multilateral aid has expanded in the past two decades. As per the UN Secretary General Report of 2014, after two years of falling volumes, the ODA rebounded in 2013 and reached its highest-ever level, with US\$134.8 billion in net disbursements (OECD, 2014). This marks a 6.1% increase in net ODA in real terms compared to 2012, with most increases coming from multilateral and humanitarian aid and increased debt relief. With this, Development Assistance Committee (DAC) donors provided 0.30% of their combined gross national income (GNI) as ODA, still far from the United Nations target of 0.7%. Seventeen amongst the 28 DAC members, (including aid flows from the Czech Republic, the Slovak Republic, Slovenia and Iceland) increased ODA, while 11 reported a decrease. The 2014 DAC forward-spending survey indicated that country programmable aid (CPA) rose by 10.2% in real terms in 2013 and is projected to increase slightly by 2.4% in real terms in 2014 and remain stable beyond 2014. (OECD, 2017)

Not all groups of developing countries have benefitted from ODA increases equally. Net bilateral ODA to Least Developed Countries (LDCs) rose by 12.3% in real terms in 2013 to about USD 30bn, although mainly due to exceptional debt relief to Myanmar. ODA to the African continent decreased by 5.6% in 2013, despite being considered an international priority for ODA allocation. In 2012, ODA to LDCs remained far below the United Nations target of 0.15% - 0.20%, at 0.09% of DAC GNI, met by only 8 countries (Denmark, Finland, Ireland, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and the United Kingdom). The share of ODA flows to LDCs has been decreasing in recent years, while allocations increased to upper middle-income countries. Similarly, commitments on overall aid for trade increased by 20% in 2012. Yet, the LDC share of total aid for trade fell by two per cent in 2012 (OECD, 2014, pg. 20). Given their poor MDG record and the fact that ODA still represents over 70% of total LDC external finance, (OECD, 2014), the prospect of decreases in flows of ODA to LDCs, especially in Africa, is worrisome (OECD, 2014)

### *Does International Aid Contribute to Peacebuilding?*

In 2011, the share of aid delivered by multilateral organisations reached almost USD 55 billion, equivalent to 40% of gross official development assistance (ODA) from OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) member countries (OECD Policy Brief 2013). There has been a steady increase in non-core funding, from 8% of total ODA in 2007 to 12% in 2010; for example, to the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) of the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), to emergency and relief-specific programmes of the World Food Programme (WFP), to the World Health Organization's (WHO) Polio Eradication Fund, and to the World Bank's Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund (OECD Policy Brief 2013). In 2012, European Union disbursed Euros 13.8bn to external aid worldwide, representing 9% of its budget (DG EUROPAID, 2013)

According to OECD (The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development), development aid rose by 6.1% in real terms in 2013 to reach the highest level ever recorded, despite continued pressure on budgets in OECD countries since the global economic crisis. Donors provided a total of USD 134.8 billion in net official development assistance (ODA), marking a rebound after two years of falling volumes, as a number of governments stepped up their spending on foreign aid. Aid to developing countries grew steadily from 1997 to a first peak in 2010. It fell in 2011 and 2012 as many governments took austerity measures and trimmed aid budgets. The rebound in aid budgets in 2013 meant that even excluding the five countries that joined the DAC in 2013 (Czech Republic, Iceland, Poland, Slovak Republic and Slovenia).

Aid to the African continent fell by 5.6% to USD 28.9 billion. Bilateral net ODA to the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) rose by 12.3% in real terms to about USD 30 billion. However, there was exceptional debt relief for Myanmar in 2013. The largest donors by volume were the United States, the United Kingdom, Germany, Japan and France. Denmark, Luxembourg, Norway and Sweden continued to exceed the 0.7% ODA/GNI target and the UK met it for the first time. The Netherlands fell below 0.7% for the first time since 1974. Net ODA rose in 17 countries, with the largest increases recorded in Iceland, Italy, Japan, Norway and the UK. It fell in 11 countries, with the biggest decreases in Canada, France and Portugal. The G7 countries provided 70% of total net DAC ODA in 2013, and the DAC-EU countries 52%. The US remained the largest donor by volume with net ODA flows of USD 31.5 billion, an increase of 1.3% in real terms from 2012. US ODA as a share of GNI was 0.19%. Most of the increase was due to humanitarian aid and support for fighting HIV/AIDS. By contrast US net bilateral aid to LDCs fell by 11.7% in real terms to USD 8.4 billion due in particular to reduced disbursements to Afghanistan. Net

ODA disbursements to sub-Saharan Africa fell by 2.9% to USD 8.7 billion. ODA from the 19 EU countries that are DAC members was USD 70.7 billion, a rise of 5.2% in real terms from 2012, and 0.42% of their combined GNI.

Another trend in aid is the emergence of new “vertical” funds such as Global Environment Facility, Montreal Protocol, etc. Non-DAC multilateral donors, foundations, NGOs, religious organisations and other private donors do not report on their activities. Unlike traditional donors, the non-DAC bilaterals give little in terms of emergency relief, debt relief or technical cooperation but give aid substantially in the form of projects and programmes.

#### **4. Aid to conflict affected regions**

Violent conflict has been recognised as one of the most significant threats to development, poverty alleviation and global security in the last two decades. A civil conflict costs the average developing country roughly 30 years of GDP growth; and countries in protracted crisis can fall over 20 percentage points behind in overcoming poverty. People in fragile and conflict-affected states are more than twice as likely to be undernourished as those in other developing countries, more than three times as likely to be unable to send their children to school, twice as likely to see their children die before age five, and more than twice as likely to lack cleanwater (WDR, 2011, pg.5). One in four people on the planet, i.e. more than 1.5 billion, live in fragile and conflict-affected states or in countries with very high levels of criminal violence. (WDR, 2011, pg.2). Approx. 50% of post-conflict countries have been observed as returning to a state of war within five years of signing a peace or cease-fire agreement (WDR, 2011, foreword). 90% of the last decade’s civil wars occurred in countries that had already had a civil war in the earlier 30 years. (WDR, 2011, pg.2)

In fact, aid commitments to the governance and security sectors received the greatest share of bilateral funding in 2011 with 13% of the total, followed by health and infrastructure with 12% each. (WDR, 2011, pg.2). Amongst recipient countries/regions, Sub-Saharan Africa receives the greatest proportion of ODA (35% in 2011), followed by South Asia (17%). Afghanistan was the largest individual recipient of net ODA in 2011 with disbursements of US\$6.5 billion - 6.9% of the total. (ODA, 2014)

The WDR (World Development Report) of 2011 emphasizes that the risk of conflict and violence in any society (national or regional) is the combination of the exposure to internal and external stresses and the strength of the “immune system,” or the social capability for coping with stress embodied in legitimate institutions. Both state

and non-state institutions are important. Institutions include social norms and behaviours—such as the ability of leaders to transcend sectarian and political differences and develop bargains, and of civil society to advocate for greater national and political cohesion—as well as rules, laws, and organizations. Where states, markets, and social institutions fail to provide basic security, justice, and economic opportunities for citizens, conflict can escalate. To break cycles of insecurity and reduce the risk of their recurrence, confidence needs to be restored amongst citizens and legitimate institutions need to be built for providing sustained level of citizen security, justice, and jobs—offering a stake in society to groups that may otherwise receive more respect and recognition from engaging in armed violence than in lawful activities, and punishing infractions scapably and fairly.

**Table 1: Security, Economic and Political Stresses**

<b>Stresses</b>	<b>Internal</b>	<b>External</b>
<b>Security</b>	Legacies of violence and trauma	Invasion, occupation External support for rebels Cross-border conflict spill overs Transnational terrorism International criminal networks
<b>Economic</b>	Low income levels, low opportunity cost of rebellion Youth unemployment Natural resource wealth Severe corruption Rapid urbanization	Price shocks Climate change
<b>Justice</b>	Ethnic, religious, or regional Competition Real or perceived discrimination Human rights abuses	Perceived global inequity and injustice in the treatment of ethnic or religious groups

### **5. Development Cooperation and Peacebuilding**

According to the United Nations, human development is much more than the rise or fall of national incomes. Their assistance activities aim to largely benefit marginalised and vulnerable groups (for e.g., the extreme poor, refugees, IDPs, women, youth, minorities, disabled) to better access basic services, access and own livelihood resources, to exercise basic rights, to bring across their voices to inform policy decisions, etc. By strengthening the livelihoods, food security, coping mechanisms and general well-being of the vulnerable and affected populations as well as contribute to greater equality, equity and justice among peoples, aid efforts help affected communities recover from conflicts and emergencies. Responding to these situations occupies a central place on the international agenda (Carnegie 1997).

Peace-building, as defined by the United Nations in 2007, involves “a range of measures targeted to reduce the risk of lapsing or relapsing into conflict, to strengthen national capacities at all levels for conflict management, and to lay the foundations for sustainable peace and development. Shedding its early definition as “post-conflict reconstruction,” the term “peacebuilding” has broadened its scope in the 1990s to encompass overlapping agendas for peace and development that support conflict prevention, conflict management and post-conflict reconstruction. To some extent all of the political, state-building, re-construction, and development work can be considered as peacebuilding work. Activities that more directly seek to promote peace have been defined from a theoretical perspective as political, structural, or social. Political peacebuilding is concerned with high-level political or diplomatic arrangements, usually to bring conflict to an end or to prevent an impending conflict. Structural peacebuilding focuses on creating structures, institutions, and systems that support a peace culture, and often involves promotion of more equitable and participatory systems of governance. Social peacebuilding seeks to influence attitudes, behaviours, and values by creating a social infrastructure or fabric which promotes peace. In practice, however, different forms of peacebuilding are often connected and overlapping in form and effect, and all seek to strengthen the prospects for peace, and decrease the likelihood of violence. (Waldman, 2008, pg17)

Peacebuilding strategies need to, therefore, be coherent and tailored to the specific needs of the country concerned, based on national ownership, and comprise carefully prioritised, sequenced, and relatively narrow set of activities aimed at achieving the above objectives. In order to contribute to peace in post-conflict countries, development cooperation actions thus need to address the causes and symptoms of conflicts and contribute to strengthening long-term peacebuilding. (Rossier, 2011,

p.20) “Although there is no single template for peacebuilding, or even a consensus operational definition, there is a clear shared goal: to reduce the risk of lapse or relapse into conflict.”(OCHA, 2007, pg.3) As recently recognised by the United Nations, High Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change, peace and security cannot be considered in isolation from development and human rights, especially in a world where the number of states suffering from civil war has increased manifold from approx. 15 instances in the 1960s to 30 instances in the past decade. (UN Report, 2004)

Recent experiences in war-torn societies have also taught that well-intended activities might have unintended outcomes and that development cooperation or humanitarian aid, risks non-neutrality in conflict situations, potentially entrenching unjust power structures and prolonging situations of conflict. The influx of resources can induce dramatic changes in the political and economic situation on the ground and cause turmoil in local markets. Equally dangerous are implicit messages conveyed by development or relief agencies and inappropriate or ill-reflected behaviour of the project staff which, often unintentionally, can fuel conflicts. (Schmelzle, 2005)

Anderson (1997), Smillie (1998), analyse that the nature of development cooperation programmes and projects, and their implementation, has exacerbated conflict dynamics as much as enhanced opportunities for sustainable development and peace. Efforts at assessing the impact of such projects through ‘lessons learned’ and developing ‘best practices’ have taken the form of individual programmes or project evaluations undertaken by the donors and, more rarely, through multi-donor evaluations of a broad range of responses to single situations or crises (Borton et al. 1996; Lautze, Jones & Duffield 1998).

Finding effective ways to help societies escape new outbursts or repeated cycles of violence is critical for global security and global development—but doing so. Since the end of the Cold War, peace and development have been seen as closely linked together. The United Nations and other international actors have attempted to address the twin imperatives of security and development through integrated policies and programmes.

The international community largely responds to conflict situations through support to short-term humanitarian assistance, long-term development aid, good governance, conflict resolution programmes, deployment of peace-keeping forces, etc. In addition to looking at the different levels, there is an awareness that if a peace agreement is to be lasting and effective, all parts of a community need to be involved including

government, NGO/professional, business, private citizen, research/education, activism, religion, funding, and communications/media. In fact, over the last five years, a significant and increasing amount of bilateral and multilateral funding in support of development aid has been channelled through non-governmental organisations (NGOs), especially for organisations with conflict resolution and peacebuilding mandates (Hoffman, 2003). The role of development aid (bilateral, multilateral) is becoming increasingly important for alleviating economic disparity, reducing social exclusion, improving health and access to basic services, creating enabling environments for justice, and promoting sustainable development.

In line with international initiatives to use development assistance for conflict prevention, the World Bank in 2001 broadened its approach from one of focusing on rebuilding infrastructure to one that “seeks to understand the root causes of conflict” (World Bank, 2004, pg. 8) This is evident even in the recommendations of the World Development Report 2011, on Conflict, Security and Development, that include: (i) institutional legitimacy as key to stability so that public confidence in basic collective action is restored; (ii) investing in citizen’s security, justice, and jobs, especially for women, as essential to reducing violence; (iii) work at all levels of development; (iv) awareness of the changing global landscape and need for more attention to south-south and south-north exchanges.

In the context of these developments and lessons learned from past interventions, development and humanitarian agencies are increasingly adopting a ‘do no harm’ approach to aid (Anderson 1997). Relief and development organisations working in areas affected by conflicts raise awareness of conflict-sensitive planning and seek to mainstream peacebuilding in their work. Also a number of donor countries (notably Sweden, Canada, Norway and the UK) and NGOs (CARE, Oxfam, Save the Children Fund) have started following a more holistic approach to funding cooperation activities in conflict countries, usually oriented towards mainstreaming peacebuilding within the more traditional mandates of humanitarian assistance, poverty alleviation and sustainable development. Whereas some humanitarian and relief agencies are interested in avoiding unintended negative impacts, others have engaged intensively in reflecting the impact of their strategies, desiring to contribute actively to peace processes and overcome the structures of violence. State and non-state actors have started to dialogue on how to combine strategies, methods and instruments of conflict resolution and transformation with traditional approaches and working programmes.

## **6. Post-2015 Development Agenda**

Promoting peace and justice is one of 17 Global Goals that make up the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Goal 16 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) aims to significantly reduce all forms of violence, and work with governments and communities to find lasting solutions to conflict and insecurity. Strengthening the rule of law and promoting human rights is key to this process, as is reducing the flow of illicit arms and strengthening the participation of developing countries in the institutions of global governance. An integrated approach is crucial for progress across the multiple goals. (UN ECOSOC, 2013)

A report published by the UN Secretary General, in 2014, (UNECOSOC Report, 2013) shares reflections on the need for a new narrative of development cooperation that fits the transformation envisaged in the emerging post-2015 development agenda. As reflected in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), peace, stability, human rights and effective governance based on the rule of law are important conduits for sustainable development. The world is increasingly divided, where some regions enjoy sustained levels of peace, security and prosperity while others fall into seemingly endless cycles of conflict and violence. High levels of armed violence and insecurity have a destructive impact on a country's development, affecting economic growth and often resulting in long standing grievances among communities that can last for generations. Sexual violence, crime, exploitation and torture are also prevalent where there is conflict or no rule of law, and countries must take measures to protect those who are most at risk.

All developing countries will need continued support to pursue sustainable development, but the kind of support needed will change over time. A different mix of financial support, capacity building, knowledge sharing and technology transfer will be required. An enabling macroeconomic environment and international financial cooperation and greater policy coherence between aid and non-aid policies (trade, debt, agricultural subsidies, financial and tax regulations, technology, etc.) are critical for all countries; yet these elements will carry particular weight in the growing number of less aid dependent countries. (UN ECOSOC Report, 2013, pg. 7)

Leveraging and blending public and private financing should be guided by development effectiveness principles, prevent drawbacks such as the lack of clarity on additionality and purpose; limited influence of donors and recipients on investment design and implementation; diminished transparency and accountability; risk of misalignment of private sector and country priorities; danger of increased debt

burden; inattention to small- and medium-enterprises; and the opportunity cost incurred when use of public money to mobilize private resources does not have the same or a larger development impact than if it had been devoted directly to a developmental purpose; and the risks of misappropriation. (UN ECOSOC Report, 2013, pg. 11)

The Accra Agenda for Action (AAA), of September 2008, hinges on three main themes: (i) Ownership - Countries determine their own development strategies by playing a more active role in designing development policies, and take a stronger leadership role in co-ordinating aid. Donors more consequently use existing fiduciary and procurement systems to deliver aid; (ii) Inclusive partnerships – wherein all partners (DAC donors, developing countries, new donors, foundations and civil society) participate fully; (iii) Delivering results that will have real and measurable impact on development

The Accra Agenda for Action (AAA) calls on donors to respect local priorities while encouraging developing countries to consult fully with their parliaments and civil society. Capacity development – to build the ability of countries to manage their own futures – with an emphasis on ensuring that countries set their own priorities for where they need to build their capacity. The AAA recognises the value of co-operation that reaches beyond traditional aid arrangements, such as among developing and middle income countries. It stresses the fundamental, independent role of civil society in engaging citizens. It emphasises the need to follow accepted principles of good international engagement in fragile states, especially in post-conflict countries. It stresses the value of sound, country-based action plans that are appropriately and regularly monitored. In doing all this, the AAA redefines the relationship between donors, developing countries and their citizens. (Accra Agenda for Action, 2008)

As elaborated in the World Development Report, 2011, there are five key lessons that all international aid programmes must remember and enact if they want to be successful in building peace in post-conflict countries:

- (i) support bottom-up state-society relations in insecure areas, for ex. community-based programmes for violence prevention, employment, service delivery, access to local dispute resolution mechanisms;
- (ii) support institutional transformation in the areas of security and justice. Early reform programmes could focus on simple basic functions (such as arrest procedures, basic investigation), focus on civilian oversight, vetting and budget

*Does International Aid Contribute to Peacebuilding?*

and expenditure transparency, link the pace of reform between the police and civilian justice system;

- (iii) create employment through community-based public works in violence-affected communities, simplifying and addressing infrastructure bottlenecks, access to finance
- (iv) involve women in security, justice and economic empowerment programmes, like the formation of women police, business training, knowledge and skills development
- (v) focus on anti-corruption initiatives that demonstrate good governance- transparency, accountability of public expenditures, community-civil society monitoring

The role of the international community in peacebuilding is increasingly becoming that of supporting the restoration or renewal of a social contract, and the return to stability through support to national capacities in 5 key areas: (i) safety and security; (ii) political processes; (iii) basic services; (iv) core government functions; and (v) economic revitalization. (OCHA, 2011, pg.3)

A key challenge for policy makers is to reconcile the demands of different groups of countries, arising from a more ambitious post-2015 development agenda. Today, the majority of people whose income or consumption is below the poverty lines of \$1.25 and \$2 are located in the heterogeneous group of middle-income and post-conflict poor countries. Even in 2030, MICs will perhaps account for between a third and a half of global poverty (estimated against the two respective income poverty lines), if inequality trends continue on their current trajectory (Sumner, 2012, pg. 40). However, at the same time, a core group of 30 or so low-income countries, many emerging from conflict, remain very vulnerable. Adopting a targeted approach to assist those living in extreme poverty and integrating those who were part of the existing or past conflict, will be critical to peacebuilding in post-conflict countries. By unifying poverty eradication and sustainable development and evaluating international aid programmes through the lens of effective peacebuilding, the post-2015 international development agenda can potentially contribute greatly to peace and security in the world, especially in post-conflict countries.

## Endnoets

1. Sen Amartya, *Development as Freedom*, Anchor Books, New York, USA, 2000; introduction
2. The Paris Club is an informal group of official creditors whose role is to find coordinated and sustainable solutions to the payment difficulties experienced by debtor countries. Paris Club creditors provide debt treatments to debtor countries in the form of rescheduling, which is debt relief by postponement or, in the case of concessional rescheduling, reduction in debt service obligations during a defined period (flow treatment) or as of a set date (stock treatment). The origin of the Paris Club dates back to 1956 when Argentina agreed to meet its public creditors in Paris. Since then, the Paris Club has reached 430 agreements with 90 different debtor countries. Since 1956, the debt treated in the framework of Paris Club agreements amounts to \$ 583 billion.
3. ODA is strictly defined by the Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development's (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC) as concessional funding provided by its members to support the welfare and economic development of an agreed list of developing countries.
4. ODA is unique in its focus on poverty. Aid is the wider range of development assistance of which ODA is one part. The target of spending 0.7% of gross national income (GNI) on ODA was first adopted in 1970, and reconfirmed many times since, including in 2005 by the 15 EU member states. In 2012 five donors met this target, but as a whole DAC donors achieved only 0.29% of GNI. Global ODA has grown from around US\$40 billion in the 1960s to US\$128 billion in 2012. Nearly two-thirds of ODA comes from five G8 countries that are consistently the largest donors by volume: the US, the UK, Germany, France and Japan. While ODA is only a small part of the overall picture, it remains the largest international resource flow for 43 countries with over 250 million people living on less than \$1.25 a day.
5. *Aid to developing countries rebounds in 2013 to reach an all-time high*, a news article published on OECD official website, <http://www.oecd.org/newsroom/aid-to-developing-countries-rebounds-in-2013-to-reach-an-all-time-high.htm>
6. This follows recent literature on state-building, notably North, Wallis, and Weingast 2009; Dobbins and others 2007; this learning is also reflected in recent policy documents of OECD.
7. Institutions are defined in the World Development Report as formal and informal “rules of the game,” that include formal rules, written laws, organizations, informal norms of behavior, and shared beliefs—as well as the organizational forms that exist to implement and enforce these norms (both state and non-state organizations). Institutions shape the interests, incentives, and behaviors that can facilitate violence. Unlike elite pacts, institutions are impersonal—they continue to function irrespective of the presence of particular leaders, and therefore provide greater guarantees of sustained resilience to violence. Institutions operate at all levels of society—local, national, regional, and global.
8. See <http://www.peacebuildinginitiative.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=page.viewpage&pageid=1765>

## *Does International Aid Contribute to Peacebuilding?*

9. Rossier observes that humanitarian action can contribute to the international peace and security agenda when its goals carry a political dimension and address its causes and symptoms.
- 10.
11. UN Secretary General's 2014 report on "*Trends and Progress in International Development Cooperation*", provides a brief overview of the preparatory process and how the process has underscored the need for a new narrative of development cooperation that fits the transformation envisaged in the emerging post-2015 development agenda. It reviews recent trends in international development cooperation, focusing on progress in and allocation of Official Development Assistance (ODA), plus trends in other sources of development cooperation – public and private, international and domestic resources – that will be needed to support implementation of an ambitious post-2015 development agenda. It also examines principles of quality and effectiveness of development cooperation. The report reviews South-South cooperation, in terms of principles, approaches and features, recent trends and challenges, explores features of a renewed global partnership for development and addresses how to strengthen mutual accountability and availability of user-friendly information, looking ahead to a global monitoring and accountability framework for development cooperation post-2015.
12. The AAA (Accra Agenda for Action) primarily calls for: (i) Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) - to play a dynamic role in making citizens' concerns and needs heard and help ensure that donors and developing countries fulfil their commitment; (ii) Donors - to improve their co-ordination and avoid duplicated efforts – thereby lowering costs and work together to balance their programmes so that all countries receive enough aid; (iii) Donors - to increase the value for money of aid by continuing to untie it – giving recipients the option of choosing where and from whom they will contract goods and services – and promote the use of local and regional procurement; (iv) Accountability - Developing countries should help parliaments keep track of their aid programmes by encouraging greater transparency in public financial management and Donors should disclose regular, detailed information on how much they invest, when they invest it, and where – and whenever available, the results of their investments; (v) Conditionality - Recipient countries are able to determine the conditions attached to the way aid funds are spent. Donors and developing countries must work from a small set of mutually agreed conditions, and make all these conditions public; (vi) Predictability - Developing countries should strengthen their capacities in budget planning. Donors should provide developing countries with regular information on how much aid they can expect, and when they can expect to receive it.

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## **Globally Induced Conflicts and Their Ramifications**

**Binod P. Bista**

Conflict is a common issue that pervades our daily life, regardless of our country of origin and its location. Although not all conflicts are bad<sup>1</sup>, violent conflicts cause extensive damage to a country's development in its economic growth, social structure, and creative energies. Stunting people's creative energies is the most damaging, as society starts to stagnate. However, there is a need to segregate local, regional and global conflicts in spite of the assertions made by some scholars that local or regional conflicts are an integral part of global policies (politics) and actions. A frequently used term is "lost development decade"<sup>2</sup>, which signifies an irreparable loss faced by a country or a group of countries due to a prolonged conflict.

Whether a conflict first emerges as a local conflict and transforms into an international conflict, or a conflict emerges as a result of power struggle, over a scarce natural resource, the impact needs to be felt by many nations concurrently to qualify it as a globally-induced conflict. Whatever the reason, the existence of a conflict which could potentially turn violent in a nation, can neither be ignored nor taken lightly. Peace and stability becomes the ultimate casualty of a violent conflict. If such a conflict is left unattended, it not only attracts the attention of neighboring countries, but also the international community. Global issues are becoming more important, as seen by the interplay of globalization coupled with astronomical advance of information and communication technologies. With enormous exercise of power and infinite reach, it is not difficult to gauge the impact of any conflict induced at the global level.

Major global issues that seriously impact peace and prosperity in today's world are: danger of nuclear weapons, economic interconnections, environmental issues, world trade system, managing international debt, and politics of oil (Segal, 1991). Additionally, other non-traditional security threats of serious concern to the global community are: international terrorism, illegal drug trade, and epidemics, and other such issues. These non-traditional security threats also merit full attention and timely action.

Former Chairman of Interaction Council Helmut Schmidt<sup>3</sup> in early 1990s had made an informed assessment of global affairs in the post-cold war era on the following lines:

- National interest would move center stage with the disintegration of political units into smaller parts, further complicating and undercutting sovereignty of a larger entity by the quest of minorities for self determination;
- Mass migrations across sovereign borders leading to new types of conflict;
- Conflicts between ideologies, others originating from hunger, poverty or impoverished economic conditions;
- Nexus between population, development and the environment
- Growing disparities between the North and the South

Schmidt did not stop at just outlining the possible causes of conflict at the global level in the post old ar period, but also offered some suggestions that conflict required "effective intutions, mechanisms and instruments" to deal with the forthcoming challenges. He held the view that "leadership" would be most critical for a new global order. Judging by the conflicts of varied nature in the contemporary world, except those emerging from politically motivated actions of big powers, one must appreciate the wisdom found in the statement of Helmut Schmidt.

The global community had rejoiced when the Cold-War that ensued immediately after the end of Second World War in 1945, also ended with the disintegration of the former Soviet Union. The people of the developing countries were thrilled with the high hope of receiving the 'peace dividend'(Gupta et al., 2002) that the industrialized countries had promised. The resources spent in securing arms and ammunitions, as well as military build-up, was supposed to have been directed to development. Also, developing nations were supposed to receive most of resources from the peace dividend The dream of receiving the 'peace dividend' remains a mere dream even after twenty five years of post cold-war period. Several new conflicts culminating in full scale war in Afghanistan and Iraq, as well as fierce battles in Sudan, Libya and Syria seem to have absorbed all available resources that were freed after the end of the cold-war. As a result, poor people in the developed and developing world have been negatively affected by these new conflicts. Besides, a significant chunk of resources is also applied in fighting deadly diseases such as Ebola, SARS, and other epidemics. It is needless to state that this account does not cover the 'silent crisis' experienced by most developing countries on a continual basis. United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF) describes 'Silent Crisis' as hunger, malnutrition, and deaths from preventable diseases in developing countries, mostly in Asia and Africa.

The ever widening gulf between the rich and the poor nations is due to a variety of reasons such as exclusive control on international monetary and financial architecture through the Bretton Woods Institutions, agricultural subsidies, and suppressed price of commodities. With the emergence of new issues such as climate change requiring all nations to follow environment friendly technologies; wide spread terrorism necessitating additional security measures in supply-chain system, the cost of doing business in all developing countries have increased manifold. In addition, the newly emerging labor issues involving higher wages to labor force for so-called maintenance of dignified living standard where the rest of the population is living in less than two dollars a day, is making doing business virtually out of reach of most poor developing countries. Obviously, the lack of economic growth and development would cause more conflicts in most developing countries. Viewed from this standpoint the experts' contention of continued bad global policies causing local/national conflicts is not far off.

For a better understanding of globally induced conflicts, it would neither be sufficient to be aware of local/national conditions nor seek solutions within the conflict area. Conflict resolution experts always stress on a good understanding of the root causes of the problem in a conflict area. However, a good solution can be found only with excellent knowledge of regional and international forces at play. In general, study of following issues would help:

One can start with the acknowledgement of the nature of conflicts besetting a country or a region such as, "Is it ideological, based on religion, social structure or system of governance?" Or, could it be a result of lack of understanding or acceptance of human rights issues subject to the prevailing culture of a country? Or, does it have to do with migration and refugees causing conflicts between neighboring countries, and even far away countries as seen in the current migration taking place in Germany, Africa and the Middle East, especially Syria?. Then, there would be other types of conflicts arising from climate related issues including desertification, shrinking forests, growing greenhouse effect, acid rain and the like requiring collective efforts of all stakeholders, the developed and the developing countries. However, there is a general understanding between the industrialized and the developing countries, reached in international conferences, that global impact of climate change would have to be tackled with the principle of "common but differentiated responsibility"<sup>4</sup>. The direct and visible effects of food scarcity and famine, drug trade, plagues such as HIV Aids, viral hepatitis and SARS are relatively manageable threats compared to conflicts arising from ideological or human rights issues. Exceptions to these manageable threats are genocide and other cruel and inhuman punishments afflicted

on citizens by a state without legal sanction. Such threats must be remedied at all costs.

In a globalizing world, no one nation can claim that it will conduct business in its own fashion without giving any regard to other nations or international institutions. Since today's world runs on interdependence, close connectivity and cooperation between nations is crucial. The sole superpower has pronounced that democratic governance is essential to foster peace and stability in all parts of the world. Attempts to stunt democratic system will be taken as an affront to the US's security (and subject to action, if necessary). The Bush Doctrine lists four main points: Preemption, Military Primacy, New Multilateralism, and the Spread of Democracy for National Security Strategy (The Bush Doctrine, Constitutional Rights Foundation).

Cyber crimes are being increasingly recognized as another big threat to the maintenance of global peace and security. Illicit cyberactivities not only destabilize normal political order through the hacking and manipulation of sensitive defense information, but also could derail the established monetary system and other related economic activities. Misuse of today's powerful social media can cause untold misery and sufferings in targeted countries.

In addition, it might be necessary to take a deeper look into unchecked freedom exercised by the media, as well as the private sector in the name of open market and liberalization of economic policies. Most developing countries have very little or no regulatory mechanisms that are able to challenge, and if necessary, stop unethical media from functioning and unscrupulous business from operating. This unchecked privatization is playing havoc on the life of unsuspecting and simple citizens who are paying higher prices for basic commodities, but receive sub-standard goods in return. The problems with medical care providers such as bad hospitals and unethical pharmacists is the exorbitant costs for simple treatment, as well as lives being lost because of high cost of healthcare. The less said the better for hospitals which are hospitals in name only. Everyday conflicts thus are embedded in the societies of developing countries. It is a case of a conflict induced by the local authority owing to its negligence or indifference to the health of people.

It seems quite difficult to pinpoint the exact cause of conflict, whether homegrown or externally induced. The reason for such a situation is not beyond comprehension. Technology induced advancement in information and communication technologies, which has resulted in a huge leap in the past twenty five years, especially after the end of post cold-war, has removed physical barriers and brought people together

as introduced in the concept of 'global village'<sup>5</sup>. "Think globally and act locally" has become a catchword of present generation. The pace of globalization is unstoppable and technological marvels are keeping pace with it. Since these twin revolutions have affected the modern world in a very powerful way, the world community needs to address these twin revolutions for upcoming opportunities and threats. Conflict, whether a part of human nature or caused by unacceptable conditions such as poverty, lack of employment, flouted rule of law, disregard to human rights, cannot be allowed to exist for long. Rather than blaming each other for the causes of conflict, appropriate and timely action must be taken to resolve them. Obviously, depending on the nature and scope of a conflict, several types of solutions need to be worked out since "one size does not fit all". a combination of direct and indirect actors to be involved in conflict resolution. Often times, a collective effort would be required, such as in the case of climate change. The African experts seem to hold the view that the resolution to Africa's conflicts must necessarily be homegrown and home funded. For Asia, it could be homegrown but donors funded if the countries in question are unable to fund it. However, obviously locals, know the situation better and can devise solutions that can be lasting. That is what everybody is looking for-- a sustainable peace. Only with sustainable peace can a country progress towards economic development and prosperity for its citizens.

### **Endnotes:**

1. Conflict is viewed by many as something to be feared and avoided-even, and perhaps especially, in educational settings. However, if dealt with openly, honestly, and forthrightly, school conflict can provide students, parents, teachers, administrators, and communities with opportunities for communication, growth, and positive change (Ernest W. Walker, 1999, *The Journal of negro Education*)
2. "Lost Development Decade" is primarily understood as a decade (1997-2006) assigned to eradication of poverty by the UN but as the Decade is came to an end, U.N. stakeholders, analysts, and representatives of civil society and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) see the outcome as inadequate. The U.N. anti-poverty campaign was initiated following decisions made at the World Summit on Social Development held in Copenhagen, Denmark in 1995, where world leaders agreed to lay out national action plans in cooperation with the international community to fight poverty, unemployment and social exclusion (Lisa Sonderlindh). Besides, the Latin American Debt crisis of early 1980s, Japan's asset price bubble of the 1990s, and even the US economy, despite its healthy growth for most part of 70 years, got stagnated in the first decade of the Millennium, are known as "lost decade" although the cause may not be necessarily related to conflicts.
3. Helmut Schmidt, Chancellor of FRG, during 1974-1982. Interaction Council established in 1983 as an independent international organization with a view to mobilize experience,

- energy, and international contacts-develop recommendation & practical solutions for political, economic and social problems.
4. The principle of 'common but differentiated responsibility' evolved from the notion of the 'common heritage of mankind' and is a manifestation of general principles of equity in international law. The principle recognizes historical differences in the contributions of developed and developing States to global environmental problems, and differences in their respective economic and technical capacity to tackle these problems. Despite their common responsibilities, important differences exist between the stated responsibilities of developed and developing countries. The Rio Declaration states: "In view of the different contributions to global environmental degradation, States have common but differentiated responsibilities. The developed countries acknowledge the responsibility that they bear in the international pursuit of sustainable development in view of the pressures their societies place on the global environment and of the technologies and financial resources they command." "Similar language exists in the Framework Convention on Climate Change; parties should act to protect the climate system "on the basis of equality and in accordance with their common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities." (Extracted from World Summit on Sustainable Development, 2002, Johannesburg)
  5. Global village is a term closely associated with Canadian-born Marshall McLuhan, popularized in his books *The Gutenberg Galaxy: The Making of Typographic Man* (1962) and *Understanding Media* (1964). McLuhan described how the globe has been contracted into a village by electric technology and the instantaneous movement of information from every quarter to every point at the same time. (Extracted from Wikipedia, 10.2015)

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## **Media and Image of a Toddler**

### **A Study of an Image of a Lifeless Body that Changed History**

**Gaurav Shah**

Ubiquity and an unprecedented number of media channels have made it possible for single events to influence people's perception of politics and society. Media has been instrumental in building public opinion pivotal in changing the course of history not only of a society or a nation but sometimes of the entire world. The image of the death of Alan Kurdi, a three year old Syrian boy of Kurdish ethnicity, is a glaring example of the media's role in doing so. The dissemination of his image in print, electronic and social media compelled the world leaders to see the plight of refugees through a new and fresh perspective. The tragic image of the little boy gave rise to waves of compassion amongst people throughout the world. The image came as a jolt to governments of many European countries (Sinha, 2015). Countries that were once averse to taking in refugees are now willing to provide them with asylum. This monograph is about how an image of a three year toddler (found dead with his face-down on the shores of Turkey) through the media lens triggered the formation of public opinion and persuaded world leaders to address issue of Europe's worst refugee crisis post Second World War (Ibid).

In Syria, unbridled civil strife that started in 2011 has triggered the exodus of millions of Syrians to neighboring countries. To save themselves from the civil war escalating in Syria, a Syrian Kurdish family boarded a boat on 2 September, 2015, to reach the island of Kos in Greece. The boat capsized about five minutes after leaving a beach at Bodrum in Turkey. This resulted in the death of 12 persons on the boat, including three year old Aylan Kurdi, his five year old brother, Galip and their mother, Rehan. The image of Aylan Kurdi found dead on the shores of Bodrum, was taken by a photo reporter Nilufer Dermi around 6:00 a.m. on September 2. Nilufer works for Turkey's Dogan News Agency (DHA) and covers the migrant crisis in Aegean resort town of Bodrum. Soon the image got viral on social media and the next day it became a headline on the front pages of prominent newspapers across the world (Lee, 2015).

## **Argument**

The issue of the refugee crisis in Europe has been permeating international news media from quite some time (Erlanger and Smale, 2015) but it galvanized the public and governments into action after the diffusion of the image of Aylan Kurdi in print, electronic and social media. This shows the influence of media image. According to McComb and Shaw, "what we know about the world is largely based on what the media decide to tell us" (McComb, 2000). Walter Lippman says that "the news media are a primary source of those pictures in our heads about the larger world of public affairs, a world that for most citizens is "out of reach, out of sight, out of mind" (Lippman, 1922). Supporting Lippman, McComb argues that "the pictures in people's minds about the outside world are significantly influenced by the mass media, both what those pictures are about and what those pictures are" (McComb, 2000).

Agenda-Building-Media is often blamed for highlighting those issues that cater to the interests of media itself. Especially in the political arena, media is believed to set and build the agenda in favor of particular politicians (Scheufele, 2000). As the Agenda Setting theory of mass communication research says "the media (mainly the news media) aren't always successful at telling us what to think, but they are quite successful at telling us what to think about" (Cohen, 1963). For three decades, the notion of agenda setting (Walgrave and Aelst, 2006) has provided one of the most influential and fertile paradigms in media and communications research. Therefore in context of the image of Aylan Kurdi, researcher here argues that the media built up and gave priority to the agenda of the refugees in Europe, not for any vested interest but to form a public opinion that could ameliorate the miserable condition they are in.

## **Explanation and Research Question**

In order to enlarge our understanding of the developments in Europe, there are numerous questions we can ask ourselves. If we are to ask why an image of a small boy created so much stir across the world, McComb and Shaw's theory of Agenda Setting can be thought of as one of the plausible explanation. Why media gives so much importance to this image? Why this image appeals so much unlike others? Does the image able to build up a public opinion? To what extent, the image helpful in building a public opinion and influences various governments of Europe. To put it more specifically, the research question can be: To what extent does the image of the toddler help in the formation of public opinion, conforming to the Agenda setting theory of Mass Communication Research?

## **Agenda Setting Theory**

The term 'agenda-setting' was coined by McCombs and Shaw (1972, 1993). The core idea was that the news media indicate to the public what the main issues of the day are and that this gets reflected in what the public perceives as the main issues. According to Allison Adams, Allison Harf and Riley Ford "The Agenda Setting theory of mass media communication attempts to determine how the popular agenda of the media affects society and attempts to explain why mass media has gained so much power over the thoughts of people everywhere" (Adams, Allison and Ford, 2014). Supporting the above argument, McComb says that, "The power of the news media to set a nation's agenda, to focus public attention on a few key public issues, is an immense and well-documented influence" (McComb, 2000). In order to educate ourselves as to how pictures affect us and our mind through mass media and later on form a public opinion related to image, McCombs taking into account example of politics comprehensively enunciates:

The pictures in people's minds about the outside world are significantly influenced by the mass media, both what those pictures are about and what those pictures are. The agenda-setting effects of the mass media also have significant implications beyond the pictures created in people's heads. In the original, traditional domain of agenda-setting, the salience of public issues, there is considerable evidence that the shifting salience of issues on the media agenda often are the basis for public opinion about the overall performance in office of a public leader. In turn, the salience of a leader in the news also is linked with whether an individual holds any opinion at all. At the second level of agenda-setting, the salience of affective attributes intertwined with the public's cognitive pictures of these leaders represents the convergence of attribute agenda-setting with opinion formation and change. Beyond attitudes and opinions, the pictures of reality created by the mass media have implications for personal behaviors, ranging from college applications to voting on Election Day.

## **Plight of Refugees and The Image**

Aylan Kurdi is believed to have been born in Kobani, Syria. Kobani, a city in the northern part of Syria has been devastated due to fierce battle between ISIL and regional Kurdish fighters (Khan and Estrada, 2015). To escape from war and save

themselves from the atrocities of ISIL, Kurdi's family took shelter in Turkey for three years. The family returned to Kobani at the beginning of 2015, but returned to Turkey in June 2015 when ISIL attacked Kobani again. To keep himself and his family safe and to live a better life, Kurdi's father Abdullah Kurdi applied for asylum in Canada but his family's refugee application was rejected by the Canadian authorities. Abdullah then set out for Europe but the boat he was sailing in capsized before reaching Kos, the Greek island.

Refugees are individuals who suffer or fear persecution in their country of origin on account of their race, religion, nationality, political ideology or are escaping the ravages of war. While refugees have existed through the ages, at present we have a whopping 19 million people displaced from their homeland and seeking a place to live in safety, amongst which over 366,000 persons have entered Europe, having crossed the Mediterranean Sea. The refugees are currently fleeing war, political persecution or other kinds of violence in places like Syria, Libya, Somalia and Myanmar. Today, the Syrian civil war is undoubtedly the largest factor contributing to the growing number of refugees (Aiyanna, 2015).

The conflict in Syria between the government of Bashar al-Assad and various other groups, that broke in the spring of 2011, continues to cause displacement within the country and across the region. By the end of 2014, an estimated 7.6 million Syrian people were internally displaced and 3.7 million others had fled the country since the conflict began (OCHA 2014; UNHCR 2015a). The scope and protracted nature of the Syrian conflict has made the situation for Syrian refugees and their host communities exceedingly difficult. Syrian refugees face tension amongst host community populations and struggle to secure basic needs like security, food, and shelter. With the humanitarian situation caused by the Syrian conflict continuing to deteriorate, Syrians are increasingly seeking asylum in states outside the region (Ostrand, 2015).

In 2013, Syria became for the first time the main country of origin of asylum seekers in the 44 industrialized countries in Europe, North America, and the Asia Pacific region (UNHCR 2014d).<sup>4</sup> An estimated 56,400 Syrians requested refugee status in the 44 industrialized countries in 2013, more than double the number of Syrian asylum claims in 2012 (25,200) and six times the number in 2011 (8,500) (ibid.). In 2014, the number of Syrian asylum seekers in the 44 industrialized countries reached 149,600, the highest number recorded by a single group since 1992 (UNHCR 2015h). Steven Erlanger and Alison Smale from The New York Times, citing report from United Nations, say that 310,000 refugees and migrants have crossed the

*Media and Image of a Toddler : A Study of an Image of a Lifeless Body that Changed History*

Mediterranean to Europe, about 40 percent more than in all of 2014. Quoting Melissa Fleming, Spokeswoman for the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, they say that around 2,500 people have died trying to reach Europe this year (Erlanger and Smale, 2015). These figures show the enormity of the refugee crisis in Europe.

According to Nilufer Dermi, the photographer who captured the image of Aylan, ""At that moment I saw the three year old Aylan Kurdi, I was petrified. He was lying lifeless face down in the surf, in his red t-shirt and dark blue shorts folded to his waist. The only thing I could do was to make his outcry heard." Earlier also many images related to the pathetic conditions of refugees (Syrian refugees) struggling to get into Europe have been in the domain of media but none of them were able to create so much impact as this image has done.

### **Media Stimulates**

The image of dead Aylan, have been published as the top headlines in almost all the major newspapers of the world and the image of drowned child has been extensively written about. Media takes on the image of the child to make it an agenda to stimulate people to express and form an opinion that can be heard and could subsequently change the global attitude towards the refugees. Indian express (Tobgyal, 2015) writes:

This is the point where a photographer's image, channelizes the world, its thoughts and opinions, its anger - and its hope - an outburst that brings about change. This time, the outburst has made the world to rethink the current humanitarian crisis in the Middle East and Europe. The single photograph of Aylan Kurdi, has given voice to all the other children, all the other stories of sadness and human tragedy, has validated each and every other photograph taken of the crisis, has invoked everything that has been forgotten or omitted in the last five years of the conflict.

Bryony Gordon of the Telegraph explaining pathetic condition of refugees says:

It all seems so laughable now, doesn't it? All that fuss about the people forced to spend a shocking five hours on a Eurostar train in sweltering carriages with no lights? The stories of passengers, terrified by the "migrants" climbing on the roof of the train, as if they were

zombies or vampires ready to suck the life out of everyone, rather than young men desperate for a life that doesn't involve beheading and raping?

Explaining the impact of the image, she is of the view that

These images have galvanised people. Some Labour leadership candidates have held up signs saying "Refugees Welcome". Hundreds of thousands of people have signed petitions calling for the Government to allow these refugees in to the country. All week we have (rightly) been talking about what we can give to these displaced people - can we buy them tents, jackets and sleeping bags? - but the more I see of this humanitarian crisis, the more I realise that these refugees have something incredibly valuable to give us. They can teach us about stoicism, humility, bravery and patience. They can teach us perspective. From these people we can learn that all that really matters is family, health and safety (Gordon, 2015).

Ross Douthat from The New York Times writes "The image of a dead Syrian boy washed up on a Turkish beach has inspired a wave of Western soulsearching, with much talk about how "the world" failed 3-year-old Aylan Kurdi, who drowned along with his mother and brother while trying to escape their country's civil war" (Douthat, 2015).

Live Mint praising the photographer who shot the kid with her camera, states that "Without Nilufer Demir, we wouldn't have woken up to the awful tragedy unfolding before our eyes as thousands of people risk their lives trying to cross the Mediterranean in search of a safer home for their families" (Khanna, 2015). Kim Murphy, the assistant managing editor of The Los Angeles Times for foreign and national news says "The image is not offensive, it is not gory, it is not tasteless - it is merely heartbreaking, and stark testimony of an unfolding human tragedy that is playing out in Syria, Turkey and Europe, often unwitnessed," she said. "We have written stories about hundreds of migrants dead in capsized boats, sweltering trucks, lonely rail lines, but it took a tiny boy on a beach to really bring it home to those readers who may not yet have grasped the magnitude of the migrant crisis" (Mackey, 2015).

The Washington Post reports that "The dramatic influx of refugees this year has led to handwringing in European capitals, heated protests from some on the right of

the political spectrum, and a great outpouring of support on social media" (Tharrior, 2015).

Social Media has also been very responsive as soon as the image of dead Aylan got uploaded on social networking sites like Facebook and Twitter. The hashtag "KiyiyaVuranInsanlik" - "humanity washed ashore" - became the toptrending topic on Twitter (Tharrior, 2015). The particular hashtag was used for 200,000 (Reuters, 2015) times within 24 hours of online publication of the image. Tweets like "Mankind has proven to be the most destructive species In the world..#AylanKurdi rest in peace you little angel..", "We must not avert our eyes from #refugees like #AylanKurdi who are dying in search of safety. We must act. youtube.com/watch?v=c6514o..." and "EU member states are establishing new refugee quotas following the death of #AylanKurdiyoutu.be/naN\_dGvAnx4?t=..." shows the sympathy and anger which the social media users expressed on the death of the little child (Twitter, 2015).

### **Impact of Image and Formation of Public Opinion**

The basic claim of agenda setting theory is that people's understanding of much of social reality is copied from the media (Shaw, 1979). When mass media emphasizes a topic, the audience/public receiving the message will consider this topic to be important (Cohen, 1963; McCombs & Shaw, 1972). Similarly policymakers follow reports by media as Stuart N. Soroka argues:

On one hand, the mass media are the primary conduit between the public and policymakers. Policymakers follow media reports on public opinion, and the media are the public's chief source of information on what policymakers are doing. In addition, the media are the principal means by which the vast majority of individuals receive information about foreign affairs, an issue for which personal experience is unlikely to provide much useful information (Soroka, 2003).

Britain initially allowed only 216 Syrian refugees to come to UK. Prime Minister David Cameron the day Aylan Kurdi drowned, insisted that Britain would not accept "more and more" migrants (Turner, 2015). But rally of one million Brits and signatures of more than 400,000 on the online petition 'Accept more refugees', forced Cameron to change his government's policy. Succumbing to public pressure he has now agreed to take in 20,000 refugees (Warburton, 2015). Thus we can see that at first media of UK was against the intake of refugees and was telling Britons to fear and

resist any immigration (Sinha, 2015) as for example the tabloid SUN of UK referred refugees as cockroaches but later Sun's front page and editorial urging the prime minister to help those in situations "not of their own making" saying: "Mr Cameron, summer is over ... Now deal with the biggest crisis facing Europe since WW2" (Harding, Oltermann and Watt, 2015). Here the agenda that Media builds up have a cumulative effect on formation of public opinion and subsequently on the policy makers of the nation.

Stefan Walgrave and Peter Van Aelst opine that "the alleged interplay between media and public opinion not only incites political actors to take on media issues but also stimulates them to embrace these issues as soon as possible. When pressing problems turn up "... whether or not feasible solutions are in sight. Action of some kind, even if it is merely symbolic, must be taken as quickly as possible" (Walgrave and Aelst, 2006). Be it Canada's prime minister calling the drowning of Aylan Kurdi as a truly "heart breaking situation" or Turkish President criticizing the western world for ignoring their responsibilities from refugees or emergency meeting of European foreign ministers, promptness of the world political leaders can be seen as soon as the image of Aylan Kurdi spreads across the media domain of the globe.

The impact that the image had in catching attention of world leaders can be seen as many nations like US got ready to take in 10,000 refugees, Australia to take in 12,000 refugees, United Kingdom to take in 20,000 refugees, France to take in 24,000 refugees (Ndtv, 2015), Canada to take in 10,000 refugees (Indian Express, 2015), Germany to take in 800,000 people (Harding, Oltermann and Watt, 2015), Hungarian authorities once impervious to intake of refugees eventually agreed to allow hundreds onto a train bound for the Austrian frontier (Ndtv, 2015).

However, blame on mass media for selecting issues, for more or less attention according to several pressures, especially those from interested elites, public opinion and real-world events (Mcquail, 2010), is reflected in the degree to which some media coverage has been given in other countries like Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey who have been dealing with this massive flow of Syrian refugees for a few years already. That's been written about but has never become a daily crisis story the way this one has (Erbenraut, 2015).

## **Conclusion**

Douglas Brinkley, a professor of history at Rice University says "Once in a while, an image breaks through the noisy, cluttered global culture and hits people in the heart

and not the head," Adding to Brinkley's thoughts, the documentary filmmaker and historian Ken Burns admits that he once worried that the still image had been devalued, "that a picture was no longer worth a thousand words because there were so many of them" The photos of Aylan Kurdi are a reminder, he says, "the power of the single image to convey complex information is still there. It has that power to shock and arrest us. To make us stop for just a second and interrupt the flow" (Wall Street Journal, 2015). Here we see the power of the image and how it becomes significant in changing the policies of various nations of west who earlier carried a myopic view of the refugees and were almost apathetic towards it. Walgrave and Aelst in their article quoting Schudson argue that the power of the mass media lies not in the direct influence of the mass media on the general public but in the perception of experts and decision makers that the general public is influenced by the mass media. Studies confirm that political actors tend to equate media with public opinion (Walgrave and Aelst, 2006).

Thus we see that public debate is represented by a set of salient issues (an agenda for action) and the agenda originates from public opinion in accordance with the Agenda setting theory of mass communication. Aylan Kurdi's image in death was widely published and broadcast and doing so served the larger good, and it did. As Tobgyal from Indian Express rightly says, "the power of one image has once again proved that there is still hope" (Tobgyal, 2015).

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*Media and Image of a Toddler : A Study of an Image of a Lifeless Body that Changed History*

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# **Resource Conflicts in India : Discourses and Practice**

**Suvrashree Panda**

## **Abstract**

Past few decades have witnessed an upsurge of protest movement in India around natural resources. Amid varied forms of resistance surfacing across different parts of India, some notable instances are: Chipko movement in Himalayas, Balighar Dam project in Kashmir, and over Cauvery dispute in South. The list is unending with people's protest in Jaitpur (Maharashtra), Narmada movement in Madhya Pradesh and protest over mining in Odisha and Singur unrest in West Bengal. How does one account for such widespread sway of people's struggle to claim their traditional rights over natural resources? Does it relate to the fault lines within development discourses, which are mostly spurred by the 'State' and capital-intensive impulses? Or, is it the failure of governance to project development as anathema to people's quest for livelihood and natural resources? This article grapples with these questions. This work spells out the concept of resource conflict in Indian context, identifies major issues and debates around grass root resistance against the untenable utilization of resources. It also attempted to track the role and impact of development interventions.

## **Introduction:**

Struggle for the preservation of environment and resources are not new in India. It dates back to pre independence period movements like Indigo revolution, Deccan resistance. The ecological history of colonial India was replete with references of interdependence between ecological and social changes raising critical questions on the use of forest and forest products. The historical description also relates to the changes brought in forest management during colonial period which altered the resource use pattern significantly disfavoring local inhabitants (Guha and Gadgil 1989).<sup>1</sup>

Commercialization and strategic utility of resources were given priority over social and environmental considerations during this period. It has been argued that the post-independence mode of development has been a carryon of the colonial patterns of resource exploitation.

Although in recent decades scholars and activists have questioned the conception of development, which is typically committed to only to economic growth and does not reckon with social and human indicators. It is commonly felt that conflicts over resources arise as pitfalls of development measures. More and more literature supporting association of conflict with development makes this contention even more robust (Vandergeest, Idahosa and Bose 2007).<sup>2</sup> This research recognizes emergence of conflict as an upshot of faulty development pattern. These conflicts revolve around issues like industrialization, modernization, making of special economic zones, privatization and denial of tribal rights etc.

### **Conflict over Development**

Ironically, a large number of these conflicts are associated with developmental projects. Many large industrial projects and mining projects (like POSCO, TATA in Nandigram, and Kasinagar) seemingly caused displacement, destruction of forest or agriculture land. These conflicts have potentially serious and adverse consequences in terms of environmental impact, livelihood and developmental goals and tend to aggravate existing social conflicts. Failure of the government to place all relevant data in the public domain and lack of transparency has ever raised queries about the intention of public policies in this realm. Indeed there is a strong felt need to explore different aspects of the problematic through research and field work.

At the outset one could see a wide spread and recurrent pattern of public protest against development projects questioning its rationale from political economy and ecological perspectives. One of the early examples of such protest was the Chipko movement which caught worldwide attention. The Chipko movement (act of hugging trees to protect them from falling) represents a remarkable movement, which, in course, inspired many similar protests to espouse people-sensitive policies based on justice and ecology. In 1970s the Chipko protests, led by Sunderlal Bahuguna accomplished a major victory in 1980 with a 15-year ban on green felling in the Himalayan forests of Uttarakhand. The Narmada Bachao Andolan (Save the Narmada Movement), conflicting around the construction of dam on the Narmada River is a significant example of civil disobedience. The two main protagonists, Medha Patkar and Baba Amte, follow the Gandhian critique of modern development projects and how the state can ignore the basic needs of its marginalized population. The Gandhian-style Satyagraha has also used fasting as a weapon, often with some success. Both these movements inspired local communities dependent on forest, common land, water and pastures that have long struggled for their claim on resources. More recently, people's agitation in Singur against Tata's NANO project, protest over industrial use of water in Hirakud, opposition of Vedanta in Odisha caught nationwide attention.

According to an evaluation report such conflicts over development projects have affected 130 districts during 2011 (Bhaduri 2012). Such growing resentment points towards the growing incompatibilities between the state and people over the salience of capital intensive development action. World Bank report also notes the growing concern about conflict against the state. Hence, social contradictions between people and administration have frequently appeared in the context of increasing contestation over resources.

These conflicts, which divide state and society vertically, can be factored as a major variant of internal conflicts (Ghani and Iyer 2010).<sup>3</sup> State's role is questioned since the state acts as contractor and distributors of resources (Narayanan 2008, 15-38).

Accordingly, the differential control of State over resource use and allocation emerges as the real bone of contention. Perceptions of relative scarcity and relational disparities in resource access provide ground for conflict escalation. Moreover, sweeping changes brought about by globalization efforts is alleged to generate conflicts over resources. Ever encompassing role of market and private players has taken away rights of local people over resources. Grassroots movements from different parts of India rising in opposition to neoliberal development and globalization bring out a new discourse in Indian democracy (Seth 2005). Development is seen as representative of global institutions and destructive of livelihood, community life (Seth 2005). These movements gained momentum in 1990s. According to Ashok Swain these pattern of development give rise to conflicts (Swain, Amer and O?jendal 2007).

### **Critical Discourses:**

Academic discourses have mostly analyzed resource based conflicts from political economy and ecological perspective. Political economy approach focuses on the contribution of political and economic variables including the development dynamics and the broad economic system in blaming the pro-capitalist character of the State. Political ecological perspective on the other hand examines causes of natural resource degradation in the wake of its unbridled and unsustainable use. It reveals how the negative sway of resource use process mediated by political power endangers ecological balance.

The linkages between the degradation of environment and natural resources, on the one hand, and development and poverty, on the other, are particularly relevant in the rural areas of developing countries like India. This in turn relates to the symbiotic relations between poverty and environment and how the non-mitigation of poverty might lead to environmental disruption through blind exploitation of resources.

The umbilical links between conflict, development, and environment have been well researched by several Indian authors including Vandana Shiva, Ramchandra Guha, and many others. In fact the traditional Indian wisdom as exemplified in the much-noted expressions of Mahatma Gandhi could also be instructive in this regard. Gandhi who famously proclaimed that "Earth has enough for everybody's need but not for every one's greed" had prescribed the maxim of 'simple living' to limit the boundless consumption and reckless exploitation of natural resources. He warned against the wrath of large scale industrialization and dangers of environmental degradation and urged for the upliftment of village economy and the utilization of labour-intensive process of production. Present day Gandhians therefore, advocate a sustainable pattern of growth, entailing use of renewable resources and minimum utilization of non-renewable resources. The ecology-friendly economics of Gandhi would rather see extreme poverty as the most severe polluter.

Following Gandhian traditions, J.C. Kumarappa exhorted over six decades ago that mankind should strive for establishing 'Economy of Permanence,' rather than reckless destruction of natural resources (Kumarappa 1958). This could be achieved by sensible use of the non-renewable resource, which can save them for future generation. This process indicates the need for adopting a productive system which supports natural restoration of natural resources or else violence would result as a consequence of a break in the life cycle of nature. Violence acts as limiting factor of growth and ends in destruction and waste. 'Self-interest and self-preservation demand complete non-violence, co-operation and submission, to the ways of nature if we are to maintain permanency by non-interference with and by not short-circuiting the cycle of life' (Kumarappa 1958, 2).

Gandhi's dictum of living in harmony with the environment influenced Arne Naess who used the term 'Deep Ecology'. The most prolific contribution came from Vandana Shiva who wrote profusely to bind together hitherto compartmentalized focus on ecological integrity, socio-economic justice, democracy, non-violence, and peace. She finds ecological movement, an outcome of development process, which arises as direct response to survival threats. Such movements seek to establish ecological stability. She explained the linkages between issues like genetic food engineering, cultural theft, and natural resource privatization with the rising tide of fundamentalism, violence against women, and planetary death. Shiva also wrote about the new kinds of wars waged around ecology and ethical limits to profit wherein the enemies are coercive free trade treaties, technologies of production based on violence, genetic engineering and nanotechnologies etc (Shiva 2000).

Conflicts over natural resources, as argues Vandana Shiva, are embedded in the current pattern of resource utilization. Such conflicts however, remain guised and become visible only when the communities thriving on such depleting natural resource interrogate the unbridled utilization of resources on the name of development and industrial progression leading to their unremitting degradation (Shiva 1999). In the recent past, drastic changes in resource control have been initiated to meet the international requirements and the demands of the resource intensive development leading to acute conflict among the diverse interests involved.

In the similar vein, Madhav Gadgil and Ramchandra Guha hold the same view and relate ecological conflict and environmental movements with the development process (Guha and Gadgil 1989). According to this analysis, resource conflicts bring to the front the issue of ecological sustainability and question the ideological base of the development pattern interrogating the distributive justice and economic efficiency.

### **Problematizing the conflict:**

Growing divergence of interest between people and the state in India, over development trajectories stimulate interests in exploring its generic causes and possible solutions. It has now been well established how unmanaged conflicts might lead to severe development consequences destroying resources, infrastructure and human lives; and how the scarcity of renewable resources, often a consequence of unbridled development, might produce irregular migration, ethnic clashes and insurgency. Unmanaged water issues, hydro-politics, climate change, and dams and diversion projects have lately assumed importance in the scholarly discourse. Seemingly, such differential practices to development in India arise from of neoliberal ideology and related global concerns and lead to marginalization and ensuing conflict (Swain, Amer and O'jendal 2007).

Another sphere of conflict is the inadequate legal remedy to prevent unfair use of natural resources. In India, the legal framework of natural resources relates to a rather complex property right regime, which is yet to be defined properly and makes contrary explanation. While the colonial government promoted for development of private property by introducing a registration process wherein only private property was to be registered, there are no registration provisions for properties like common water, common land, forest and grazing lands.

Sidelining legal pluralism embedded in manifold sphere of authorities on natural resource management creates conditions for conflict (Rout 2003) Natural resource

entails multiple uses. Its uses may range from satisfaction of basic needs, livelihood to commercial purposes, irrigation, so these differential interests are accommodated according to several sets of laws and normative laws. To acknowledge legal pluralism governments have initiated efforts like joint forest management, revision of forest act etc. National Forest Policy 1988 envisaged people's involvement. Similarly, National Water Policy 2002 and 2012 and Forest Rights Act empower the tribal and local inhabitants to control their resources (Government of India 2007). Commercialization of resources and increasing demand lead to pressure on resources and resource depletion (Hawksworth and Bull 2007). However, time and again Supreme Court judgments have recognized and upheld power of Panchayat to take decision on natural resource matters. For example in an historic judgment Supreme Court upheld the decision of Pally Sabha (village court) to block Vedanta Company to mine Niyamgiri Mountain in Odisha.

It is evident that most resource conflicts arise due to the absence of effective democratic, legal and administrative mechanisms to deal with the issue (Joy and Paranjape 2008). Natural resources like water, land, sea, and forest are common pool resources which make it difficult to distinguish from the property rights regime in Indian legal framework (Chopra and Dasgupta 2008). For instance the forests and grazing land defined as common pool resources also contribute to income and livelihood. Such ambiguities allow a variety of interpretations fulfilling different interests and needs. Changes brought about by development actions in the form of modernization or industrialization have further created conflictual situation. Resistance to encroachment of the commons on the name of development is thus seen as illegitimate (Maringanti, et al. 2012).<sup>4</sup> Conflict over Quarrying issue in Telengana is such an example of tragedy of commons. Granite quarrying too has caused ecological damage in this area.

Absence of proper institutional mechanisms is identified as one of the causes of such conflicts. In academic discourse on water conflicts, causes and contributory factors of water conflicts are discussed. The non-excludability of water, multiple uses and degradation of water quality are analyzed to be making it vulnerable to conflicts (Gujja 2006). In addition to it, lack of sufficient democracy and effective administrative mechanisms along with dissatisfactory governance can indeed engender and exacerbate natural resource conflicts as clearly revealed in the discussion above.

### **Differential Role of State**

Role of state is critical to understand natural resource conflicts. State has exclusive authority to frame development planning. However, the differential role of -State following colonial legacies allows arbitrariness in resource management.

The principal function of the state in the economic sphere is to develop economic and social infrastructures like irrigation, dam, power and industrial development. This process helps the state to manipulate distribution. State plays the role of developer as the state designs and catalyst of change (N. C. Narayanan 2008, 15-38) and implements development programmes. It makes development policies. Since development requires resources, state acts as the distributor of resources. Sometimes state policies along with arbitrariness of state aggravate conflict. States can acquire property for various development projects. It does so in the name of public purpose which is exclusively defined by the state. Further an action of prioritizing may lead to loss of livelihood and finally conflict. State's construction activities on the name of development can also result in transformation of social relations and deterioration of resources (Narmada movement over displacement). Conversely, the State is supposed to ensure access to acceptable, sufficient, accessible, and affordable for personal and domestic uses of basic resources available in the local region.

Another sphere of conflict is the issue of governance of natural resources where indirect linkages can be found between development and resource conflict. The preeminence of the state in controlling natural resources owes a great deal to the ambiguous nature of natural resource legislations (property rights) in India. Both open access system (public land, sea fishing) and common property along with private property system prevail in India.<sup>5</sup> It means open access property can be converted into private, common or public property by legislating to define rights and enforce them. Claims of the state also get powerful in the area of maintenance of natural resources like forests, irrigation water, land and dams. India had extensive irrigation networks, which require regular maintenance. And there is no private party, which can be held responsible for the maintenance. So it is imperative on the part of the state to play the role of provider. Governments also have constitutional and legal authority in the specific field of natural resource management and may, therefore, be legally obliged to intervene in cases of conflict. In most cases, the state remains one of the claimants to contested resources. Next, many unclear and discriminatory policies have been put in place, i.e., tenure systems for land and other resources that either reflect historical inequities in wealth and political power or have been recently modified to encourage large-scale industrial houses and capital investment. In the process, interests of small-scale and marginalized farmers are widely ignored. As a result, these people are drawn in disputes over resources that they have traditionally used or managed, but to which they have no legal claim. Such situations frequently arise as a direct result of government interventions intended to promote industrialization or forest plantations.

### **Land Acquisition:**

In the context of growing protest, to make the land acquisition process more transparent and fair, the government framed Land Acquisition Act 2013 (Government of India, 2013). This act covers acquisition of land for public undertaking and strategic purposes. It also include land for infrastructure projects or industrial corridor, agricultural, any government administered purposes and development purposes. It aims at empowering the village panchayat. It defines affected family as those whose land has been acquired plus those who used to work in the acquired land. It may include forest dwellers and families dependent on the acquired resource. Following are the main highlights of this act which stipulates a notification stating the intent for acquisition, a declaration of acquisition, and compensation to be given by a certain time. This act warrants the concerned authority to prepare plan for Social Impact Assessment survey, before acquisition. Similarly all acquisitions require rehabilitation and resettlement to be provided to the people affected by the acquisition. Compensation for the owners of the acquired land shall be four times the market value in case of rural areas and twice in case of urban areas.

In case of acquisition of land for use by private companies or public private partnerships, consent of 80 per cent of the displaced people will be required. Purchase of large pieces of land by private companies will require provision of rehabilitation and resettlement. The provisions of this bill shall not apply to acquisitions under 16 existing legislations including the Special Economic Zones Act, 2005, the Atomic Energy Act, 1962, the Railways Act, 1989, etc.

It is however not clear whether Parliament has jurisdiction to impose rehabilitation and resettlement requirements on private purchase of agricultural land. The requirement of a Social Impact Assessment for every acquisition without a minimum threshold may delay the implementation of certain government programmes. Projects involving land acquisition and undertaken by private companies or public private partnerships require the consent of 80 per cent of the people affected. However, no such consent is required in case of Public sector undertakings.

### **Conflicts in India:**

These conflicts in a way problematize the survival needs of people who are deprived of their life supporting resources, naturally perceive such mindless development projects as an existentialist threat and thus rise in revolt. Conflicts, in most cases, are a direct response to forceful displacement, land grabbing and dispossession on the name of development actions. Threat perception is also aggravated by factors

like loss of bio diversity engendered by science and development process. Recently, land acquisition by TATA for the proposed Nano factory at Singur (in Hooghly district of West Bengal ) faced massive opposition from the project affected people who were forcefully displaced by the project. Along with displacement this project caused loss of livelihood of farmers who are dependent on cultivation on the land (Nigam 2007).

### **POSCO and Vedanta:**

The tension and subsequent conflict over POSCO has been instructive from the current research perspective. POSCO, a South Korean company which aspires to launch its company in the Jagatsinghpur district of Odisha, has been entangled in controversies over land acquisition and ecological damage. Anti land acquisition leaders along with other environmental activists and leaders organized under Posco Pratirodha Sangram Samiti (PPSS) to oppose the setting-up of the plant. It witnessed large demonstrations by the local people who feel their livelihood threatened in the forest destruction and land acquisition by the steel giant (Dixit 2013).<sup>6</sup> Dissenting voices against large industrial projects are growing and visible.

### **Mahan Coal Block Case:**

More recently, opposition against Essar Company by displaced people on its failure to fulfill assurance given during land acquisition (Rangan 2015).<sup>7</sup> People dependent on forest of Singrauli area worried about mining which involve destruction of forest. Local villagers are fighting for their rights over forest resources which are their livelihood. There are also development issues like unemployment, lack electricity and health care facilities. Failure to avail fruits of development compelled the villagers to stand against excessive mining. Collective livelihood insecurity emanating through development activities has again led to conflict haunting the villagers. Involvement of NGO like Greenpeace has brought the case into international attention.

### **Vembanad conflict**

Vembanad Lake has become cause of clashes around livelihood and environmental issues.<sup>8</sup> Vembanad Lake has been a source of livelihood and food security. This wetland is source of fishery as it is linked to Arabian Sea. The lake system is also useful for rice cultivation because of deposition of rivers flowing over there. States decision to develop rice centric economy in the reclaimed land of Lake Vembanad has been a cause of contention between fisheries and agriculture. To make it suitable for agriculture state government has embarked on reducing salinity. This action has

become a threat to fish population and a cause of livelihood insecurity for fishers' community. People who depend on fisheries for their livelihood are opposed to closure of incursion of saline water, as it has led to depletion of fish stock and fish species (M. A. 2011). Saline water is supposed to be useful for shells and Lake Ecosystem. This reduction of salinity has also affected mangroves and inland navigation (Narayanan 2008, 98). People are opposed to reclamation of land for agriculture, which involves destruction of the biodiversity and reduction of water quality and quantity of Vembanad Lake System (M. A. 2011). Apart from reclamation of land, other issues such as water pollution through industrial effluents, agricultural wastes, sewage water accumulating in the Vembanad Lake are adding to the environmental degradation and have become cause of people's irritation. Environmental insecurity through tourism, mining and industrial disposal, chemical fertilizers and sewage have largely contributed to imbalance in the natural system and insecurity of fisher folk. This conflict of interests between fishery and agriculture can be attributed to state intervention in development needs of different sections.

### **Conclusion:**

What is being sought through people's struggles is a pro-people approach to ecological conservation and appreciation based on mutually gainful relations between nature and society. By highlighting identity and culture inherent in the nature and local environment, it harbors ecological sanctity cohabitation embedded in the local living pattern. Hence, natural resource related conflicts whether Narmada movement or Chipko movement aspire for alternative development pattern through sustainable use of resources. State's development intervention is often blamed for the arousal of conflict. Forceful deprivation of rights from local resources to make sure corporate driven development constitutes main cause of people's dissent and grass root action. Projects like Special economic zones (SEZs) or development and industrial projects, which involve land acquisition without prior permission and rehabilitation mechanisms for displaced, culminates in serious consequences and give rise to conflicts.

### **Endnotes :**

1. According to Ramchandra Guha and Madhav Gadgil, ecological movements are an outcome of development process and arose as direct response to ecological history of colonial India. It gives an insight into the interdependence between ecological and social changes that came during colonial period. Colonial government neglected the ecological use and management of forests.
2. According to Vandana Shiva, environmental conflicts are an outcome of faulty development process. Intersection of conflict and development through displacement, disruption and livelihood loss and relationship between particularities of neoliberalism and displacement

is well discussed in the book edited by Peter Vandergeest. Political economy factors embedded in the neoliberal development give rise to a conflict prone development process. Anant Maringanti has discussed in the context of Telengana the negative impact of development in India. See, (Swain, Amer and O?jendal 2007). Also see, (Maringanti, et al. 2012).

3. According to Ghani and lyre (2010), internal conflict can be classified into two broad categories. The first category is conflict against the state and the second category is about if people to people conflict.
4. Inadequacy of law has created problems in Telengana over granite quarrying. Industries in Karimnagar are supplied with resources such as sand from the water bodies and stone from hillocks. It is considered to be damaging to local economy and the prevalent property regime. It has given rise to multiple claims on local resources. The environmental implication of mining like ecological damage, pollution of water bodies through waste water from mining has caused tension in the region.
5. Some resources are in the nature of common pool resource implying multiple users and some are excludable or privately owned. But rules and regulation of resources fall in the domain of government. See, (Vaidyanathan 2006)
6. Similarly Vedanta's alumina refinery and mining project is also getting stiff resistance from local inhabitants of Kalahandi district of Odisha. See, (Hillpost 2012).
7. Electricity generating company located in Singrauli district of Madhya Pradesh uses coal from Mahan coal block. Recently conflict has erupted over people's dissatisfaction around issues of displacement and environmental destruction.
8. Vembanad is part of Kattanat region, a low lying area of kerala. It is famous for back water. It is connected by Arabian Sea and subject to tidal deposit of salt which make this area a good place for fishing. Side by side silt deposition by rivers like Pamba, Manimala and Meenachi and other streams make it very useful for rice cultivation. This analysis is heavily drawn on the case presentation of N.C. Narayanan. See, (Narayanan, Water Control Structure and Conflicts in Lake Vembanad 2008)

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## **Reservation : Boon or Bane?**

**D. Surender Naik**

The issue of reservation in India has always been a bone of contention between those who support it and those who don't. It has two connotations positive and negative. Modern day reservation in India can be defined as democratic principle to provide representation to the castes hitherto remained unrepresented in the various spheres of life. The history of reservation in India is as old as caste system. The caste system was also based on reservation to higher castes. The difference between the reservation under caste system and modern day reservation provided under the scheme of constitution is that the former was based on negativism and latter is on positivism. The policy of reservation cannot be understood or complete without going into the question of caste in India. The issue of caste system is of historical and contemporary relevance in the context of reservation.

It is well known that India is a caste based society; many studies have been done on the caste system of India. It is the most divisive and discriminatory system. It had been survived and still surviving on the basis of contempt and hate towards other castes. The creators of caste system leave no stone unturned to preserve it intact. Caste discrimination is caused by 'cognitive bias', that is, harm caused by an actor who is aware of the person's caste and who is motivated (consciously or unconsciously) by that awareness (Neil J & Paul B, 2001). The discrimination and oppression under caste system led to social exclusion of lower castes that are now called as Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward Classes. They were denied basic rights like choice of profession and education.

The brutality, which caste system unleashed on a large section of lower castes prompted several scholars to think upon it and in the process they made very scathing comments on it. S.V. Ketkar, said that 'as long as caste in India does exist, Hindus will hardly intermarry or have any social intercourse with outsiders; and if Hindus migrate to other regions on earth, Indian caste would become a world problem (Ketkar, 1909). Caste system had prevailed for so long not because people of lower

castes wanted it but the higher castes that benefitted the most from it produced and reproduced the inequalities by and through the religious scriptures, cultural practices, discrimination, oppression, dominance, exploitation and the state power at their disposal. Privileges are 'systematically conferred on individuals by virtue of their membership in dominant groups with access to resources and institutionalized powers that are beyond the common advantages of marginalized citizens (A. Bailey, 1998).

Many benefits can be accrued from being privileged. It enables to possess disproportionately large share of positive social value or all those material and symbolic things as for which people strive. Examples of positive social value are such things as political authority and power, good and plentiful food, splendid homes, the best available health care, wealth and high social status (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999). Young's five faces of oppression, that is, exploitation, marginalization, powerlessness, cultural imperialism and violence, are completely true of Indian caste system (Young, 1990). Caste system provides abundant social capital to higher castes (Loury, 1995). Social capital refers to value an individual receives from membership in a community, such as access to information networks, mentoring and reciprocal favours. The gap, caste system creates between higher castes and lower castes, is projected as something natural. It is upheld as a natural system rather than a created system. The belief about social hierarchy under caste system as being natural provides a rationale for social dominance and absolves dominant groups from responsibility to address social inequalities (Gould, 2000). It is not only those higher castes make efforts to preserve it, but also feel and believe that they have inherited the characteristics that place them at advantageous position or they consciously ignore the socially constructed basis of their hegemony (Wonders, 2000). The sense of being entitled to be respected, acknowledged, protected and rewarded is so much taken for granted that, they are often shocked and angered when it is denied them (Rosenblum & Travis, 1996).

Connell extends this sense of entitlement to gender relations. In her key note address to men and relationships forum, said that 'from a long history of gender relations, many men have a sense of entitlement to respect, deference and service from women. If women fail to give it, some men will see it as bad conduct which ought to be punished'. She also points out that some men will regard women's challenge to male entitlement as a threat to their masculinity (Connell, 2000). Over a period of time, sense of entitlement got internalized among higher castes and developed prejudices against lower castes and women.

Christian missionary during colonial rule, Charles Grant, said that, Indians should embrace Christianity for salvation because the people of India lived in a 'degenerate' condition because of Hinduism which was the source of such evils as dishonesty, perjury, selfishness, social divisions, the low position of women, sexual vice, and etc.(Jha, Ancient India in Historical Outline, 2006). James Mill was harsher in his words about Indian Culture. He equated it with barbarianism and anti-rationalism. He characterized Indian rulers as despotic who upheld such barbarian social system and sought British legislation to reform India (Jha, 2006). British rulers addressed the ill effects of caste system by way of providing reservations to various castes. They began with reservations to Muslims in educational institutions after the recommendations of the Hunter Commission in 1882. Later they converted into caste reservations in educational institutions and jobs (Chalam, Caste Based Reservations and Human Development in India, 2010). The first Dalit boy applied for admission into a government school in Dharwar, Bombay Presidency in 1856, had created a furore in the administration which in turn attracted the attention of British rulers, who then formulated an educational policy in which it is stated that all government schools should give admissions to all sections without any distinction of caste, religion and race. But British did not implement this until 1872. Mahatma Phule contested this discrimination before the Hunter Commission. This led to enactment of Caste Disabilities Act of 1872. The movements and efforts of Mahatma Phule and Narayan Guru had a great impact on British (Chalam, 2010). Along with British rulers, Indian rulers of princely states also implemented reservations to lower castes. ChhatrapatiShahujiMaharaj of Kolhapur, Maharaja of Mysore and Baroda were among them.

Finally when India got its independence in 1947, the issue of reservation to lower castes, that is, Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward Classes, had once again a bone of contention among members of Constituent Assembly mostly dominated by Congress and Brahmins. Upliftment and empowerment of lower castes had always been the concern of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar. He strongly felt that in view of India's unequal and undemocratic social fabric, there should be a strong protective mechanism for the benefit and welfare of lower castes. In such a social context, Indian Constituent Assembly was mandated to prepare a constitution for the future of India.

Expectations were very high from Constituent Assembly. The issues of democracy, equality, social justice, poverty and a host of many other issues were to be looked

at and dealt with. It was challenging to deal with such a plethora of conflicting and contradicting issues and bring about a constitution which caters to the needs and live up to the expectations, aspirations and dreams of millions. Given the age old oppressive, discriminatory and exploitative caste system we have, there was unanimity among all members of the Constituent Assembly, though with variations, to take certain measures to bring about a level playing field in the society so that none is left behind.

Granville Austin, in his master piece on Indian constitution said that one of the goals of the constitution is to bring social transformation (Austin, 2000). Whether the constitutional mandate of social transformation has been achieved or not, is a matter of debate. Christophe Jaffrelot counters what Austin had to say about social transformation. Citing the debates of Constituent Assembly, he says that Indian constitution reflects the conservative views of the majority members. Ambedkar's main concern was to have substantial equality rather than formal equality. To achieve this end he put forth many arguments and proposals for the serious consideration of Constituent Assembly. In the sub-committee on minorities, Ambedkar, the chairman of Drafting Committee, suggested that non-Scheduled Castes Hindu candidates should, before being declared elected, poll a minimum number of the minority communities, including the Scheduled Castes. He was the only person to support it in the committee. Congress members opposed it on the ground that it may lead to divisive tendencies. Congress members like K.M. Munshi, Seth Govind Das, Rajendra Prasad and SardarVallabhbai Patel rejected it tooth and nail (Jaffrelot, 2008). After the rejection of sub-committee, the same issue was again raised by one of the Ambedkar's disciples, S. Nagappa in the Constituent Assembly session with a slight variation. According to the scheme proposed by Nagappa, the winning candidate from the constituency reserved for the scheduled castes should poll more than thirty five per cent of the untouchables. He felt that such a system would give more legitimacy to the Scheduled Castes representatives (CAD, 1947). SardarVallabhbai Patel was the most critical of the proposal moved by Nagappa. He said:

To the Scheduled Castes friends, I also appeal, : 'Let us forget what Dr. Ambedkar or his group have done.' Let us forget what you did. You have nearly escaped partition of the country again on your lines. You have seen the result of separate electorates in Bombay, that when the greatest benefactor of your community[Gandhi] came to

Bombay to stay in Bhangi quarters it was your people who tried to stone his quarters. What was it? It was again the result of this poison, and therefore I resist this only because I feel that the vast majority of the Hindu population wish you well. Without them where will you be? Therefore secure their confidence and forget that you are a scheduled caste [...] those representatives of the Scheduled Castes must know that the Scheduled Castes must be effaced altogether from our society, and if it is to be effaced, those who have ceased to be untouchables and sit amongst us have to forget that they are untouchables or else if they carry this inferiority complex, they will not be able to serve their community (CAD, Speech on 28 August, 1947).

Patel was literally threatening Nagappa of being wiped out for having moved amendment in the Constituent Assembly. The tone and tenor of Patel's language was absolutely threatening and dominating. He wanted all marginalized communities to negate their assertion and autonomy claims and be part of Hindu society which throughout condemned them as sub-humans. He tried to equate the humble efforts of Scheduled Castes representatives for self-respect and dignity with partition. Such was the intensity of opposition to the measures moved by Scheduled Castes representatives in the direction of Ambedkar's dream to establish substantial equality.

The concept of reservation was not only confined to political arena. In fact, the Indian constitution envisages a comprehensive scheme of reservation which extends to (a) quotas in government jobs and educational institutions (b) provision of certain expenditures, services and ameliorative schemes such as scholarships, grants, loans, land allotments, health care and legal aid to Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, Other Backward Classes and women. (c) Special protections that safeguard vulnerable groups from oppression and exploitation (Acharya, 2008). Marc Galanter takes it to a lesser extent to issues like the distribution of land allotments, housing and other scarce resources (Galanter, 1984). Ambedkar's emphasis was more on reservations in administrative posts as he felt; it could really empower the lower castes. Access to the corridors of power is made easy through reservations in administrative posts (Jaffrelot, 2008). As a result several provisions were made in the constitution.

Apart from Ambedkar and Nagappa, there were others who argued for the reservation in administrative posts. Punjabrao Deshmukh, a Constituent Assembly member from

Maharashtra, introduced an amendment in which he came up with an idea of administrative posts to be allotted on the basis of population. He also said it is imperative for the advancement of India (CAD, VOL. IX, P. 603). Reservation was supported by many scholars and leaders on the ground that it is necessary to remedy the past injustice. One of the socialist leaders, Ram ManoharLohia, wholeheartedly accepted and supported the idea of reservation to lower castes. According him, five thousand year old Indian caste system is selective about abilities. As a result, 'certain castes have become especially gifted', such as the Saraswat Brahmins in intellectual pursuits and the Marwari Baniyas in industry and finance. He thought it is absurd to talk about competing with these castes unless others are given preferential opportunities and privileges for three to four decades. Later he changed his position at the third national conference of the socialist party held in 1959, where he declared that, 'until the caste system is totally destroyed, the reconstruction of India should have, instead of ability, preferential opportunity as its basis (Shrivastava, 2014). He gave slogan which goes like this: 'pichdepawesaumeinsaath' (backwards should get sixty out of hundred) (Editorial, 2014).

#### **Justification of Reservation:**

As, it has been made very clear, at the outset, that the issue of reservation is bone of contention between those for and against it. In view of the historical and social context of the caste it becomes inevitable to have reservation in India. In addition to that it is necessary to ensure productivity. In Manusmriti, a law book and the guiding force of caste system, all laws were based on caste and no merit was ever considered. Wealth, political power, spiritual leadership, education, ownership of land and trade and other lucrative aspects of life were reserved purely for the higher castes.

BrajRanjan Mani in his 'Debrahminising History' explains how Brahmins were given supremacy in Manusmriti. 'Thousands of words were invented to uphold Brahminical supremacy and glorify Brahmins: brahmajnani, vedagya, acharya, upadhyaya, devavani, shastragya, pandit, manushyadeva, bhudeva and jagatguru, etc. On the other hand many derogatory words were coined to abuse the Shudras: danav, daitya, rakshas, pishacha, chandala, mleccha, kshudra, nikrishta and dwijadasa, etc. The Manusmriti strictly instructs the Shudras to adopt names which should breed disgust, repulsion and hatred' (Mani, 2005). Manu says that caste is the creation of God, and the Brahmins, who are at the pinnacle of caste hierarchy, are the living

embodiments of God on earth. To use his words, 'a Brahmin is a great god whether he is learned or imbecile', and the Brahmins should be respected even if they commit crime. Manu has nothing to offer Shudras and Women, and places them on almost same status. He says that greatest religion of Shudras and Women is to play the role of willing victims and slaves, ever ready to be manipulated and exploited without a murmur of protest. Manu places women of all castes on same footing, expects them to surrender body and soul to men (Mani, 2005).

Manu also instructs the king to safeguard the supremacy and prestige of Brahmins. He says that the supreme duty of the king is to uphold this unequal social order under guidance of Brahmins. A king how mighty he may be is inferior to even a Brahmin child. The relationship between them is like that of father and son, of the two Brahmin child is father (Mani, 2005). This is how Caste system was enforced by Manusmriti with special emphasis on Brahmins.

The reservation under Manusmriti is negative in the sense that, it deprived a vast majority from having access to avenues of social and personal development. It was nothing but a social tyranny unleashed on lower castes. People were deeply divided along caste lines and had no sense of oneness and therefore, India had been subjected to numerous foreign invasions and aggressions, from Alexander to British.

Despite having been enjoyed cent percent reservation for near about three millennia, higher castes that were at the top of social ladder could not develop India but on the other hand they made it hostage and vulnerable to foreign aggressions and invasions. In spite of being one of the oldest civilizations and a place of many inventions, India could not emerge as a power to be reckoned with on the global stage. India owes this tragic state of affairs to cent percent reservation provided to the higher castes in general and Brahmins in particular. In ancient India merit had always been compromised. Selective reservation to only higher castes was at the expense of merit.

The so called warrior, of Mahabharata, Arjuna was also a product of reservation at the cost of extraordinary Ekalavya. Warriorship and valourship were imposed on Arjuna who in fact was not a natural warrior like Ekalavya. The reservation in ancient India was not meant to enhance productivity but to suppress real talent from being exposed. Present day reservation is about Social Justice which is part of comprehensive scheme of liberation- social, political, economic and spiritual. It is

meant to serve dual purposes of creating a level playing field and also to enhance efficiency and productivity. It is representative in nature. It ensures representation to all sections of the society. Representation leads to diversity, diversity leads to talent, talent leads to efficiency, efficiency leads to productivity, productivity leads to progress and progress leads to prosperity. Today India, having implemented reservation for Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward Classes since independence, is aspiring to become a super power. It is one of the fastest growing economies of the world. A state like Tamil Nadu is implementing reservations more than Fifty per cent, a limit stipulated by Supreme Court, is doing well on all parameters. Most developed countries like United States of America and China are looking forward to clinch agreements with India on wide range of issues. Reservation proved to be a boon rather than a bane, to a nation as well as marginalized sections hitherto deprived of basic and minimum standard of living. It democratized Indian society as well as politics, though to a lesser extent.

But unfortunately some right wing forces in the country are polarizing people on the caste lines and fomenting the age old caste divisions among the people. They portray reservation in such a way that it is killing merit and snatching away the due meant for non-reserved category people. They never talk of reservations being provided to corporate sector in the form of tax concessions, land at cheaper rates and electricity at subsidized rate which cost lakhs of crores to the state exchequer every year. Recent scandals that rocked the nation's conscience and led Congress's defeat in the recently held general elections, that is, 2G Spectrum and Coalgate scam substantiate the Government's leniency towards corporate sector. Government often justifies these measures on the pretext of encouraging industry so that they can withstand competition with Multi-National Companies. Right wing forces never question government's soft corner towards big corporate houses. Unlike cent percent reservation under caste system, now we have reservation for Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward Castes to the tune of only 49.5 per cent which is again disproportionate to their population. On the top of that, these 49.5 per cent reservations are not being implemented properly. Had the reservations been implemented properly, Ambedkar's dream of creating a social democracy would have been achieved by now. Instead of not implementing reservations properly, the government should see to it that reservations are implemented properly. Still thousands of backlog vacancies are to be filled in various departments.

Given Indian society-specific conditions and situations in most of the parts, reservation is absolutely needed and it is the most efficient way to achieve social

justice. It can be justified in the context of Indian society's innate inabilities to be just and fair to its own citizens. Social transformation and economic equality are impossible without reservation as our country is so orthodox, so archaic in its thoughts and its social structure that very few could even attempt to think of it. According to Ambedkar, "whichever action brings the people together is the right action and insistence on such action is satyagrah... Satyagrah is thus bringing people together". Social justice aims at proportionate empowerment and reservation secures it. Social justice doesn't mean technical equality or formal equality but real and substantial equality. Caste is a vicious circle in which innocent human beings are trapped by birth over which he or she has no control and from which he or she cannot freely exit because the exit is blocked by a cruel and arrogant caste society. Past injustice done to the backward classes for centuries is still continuing and that injustice is required to be remedied. In addition to that developmental concerns also required to be met. Reservation is the only way ahead.

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# **Structural Violence as a Cause of Naxalism in India**

**Nivedita Mishra**

## **Abstract**

According to Galtung, rather than conveying a physical image, structural violence is an "avoidable impairment of fundamental human needs. . Johan Galtung refers to 'the type of violence where there is an actor that commits the violence as personal or direct, and to violence where there is no such actor as structural or indirect'. Direct and structural violence are interdependent forces and, although direct violence tends to be more visible and easily perceived, 'there is no reason to assume that structural violence amounts to less suffering than personal [direct] violence.

Maoist "People's War" has remained an inspiration for a large number of revolutionaries throughout the world. Revolutionary groups in Vietnam, Thailand, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Peru and Nepal have all, in varying proportions, modeled their struggles on a " People's War." . It is therefore not surprising that except for Vietnam and to a certain extent in Nepal, Maoist insurgents all over the world have been unable to achieve their political goals.

India is a country exemplified by diversity- over one billion people are spread over approximately 3.1 million square kilometers of territory. The people of the country speak 16 major languages, in over 200 dialects. There are about one dozen ethnic groups, seven major religion communities with several sects and sub-sects, and 68 socio-cultural sub-regions. When a sociopolitical and socioeconomic equilibrium is maintained in such a scenario, there is unity in diversity.

But if there is even the slightest imbalance, we have more diversity and less unity. This has been a hallmark of India's history and it has always been exploited by external elements. As 2008 drew to a close, Maoist movement had emerged as the single biggest internal security threat to India by all measures- level of violence,

area covered and complexity. It is bloody engagement for Indian security forces in the mineral rich heartlands, in the tribal and poorest region, stretching across states, and against armed insurgents who rise from the common crowd and disappear into it with ease. It indeed looks like India's Long War. .Naxalites have different names in different places, in Nepal-Maoist, in North East- insurgents .Naxalites are distinguish by spatial or relating to place where they belong to. Where ever they avoid, they try to use different methods of violence, that, they make them in limelight. . Naxalism is any ideology or political act far outside the perceived political Centre of a society, or otherwise claimed to violate common moral standards. In Indian democratic set-up, individuals or groups that advocate the replacement of democracy with a more authoritarian regime are labeled naxalites. Though Naxalite has different connotations, India is facing the highest threat to its national security through the rise of Left Wing Extremism.

### **Introduction**

Structural violence is a term commonly ascribed to Johan Galtung, which he introduced in the article "Violence, peace & peace research" 1969. It refers to a form of violence where in some social structure or social institution may harm people by preventing them from meeting basic needs. Institutionalized, autism, ageism, classism, elitism, ethnocentrism, nationalism, racism and sexism are some examples of structural violence as proposed by Galtung (Galtung, Johan. 1969). As it is avoidable, structural violence is a high cause of premature death and unnecessary disability. Because structural violence affects people differently in various social structures, it is very closely linked to social injustice. Structural violence and direct violence are said to be highly interdependent, including family violence, gender violence, hate crimes, racial violence, police violence, state violence, terrorism and war. As a particular expression of direct violence, armed violence causes damage and promotes conditions for structural violence. It also weakens a society's capacity to resist or adapt to other life-threatening harm. Focusing on the impact that both types of violence have on the human security of individuals and communities, without prejudicing one over the other in terms of strategic, political or economic significance, allows a more effective focus on the basic needs of individuals, compared to the security needs of states as expressed in more traditional national security thinking (Ho, Kathleem, 2007).

However, most tend to ignore the specific structural conditions and political environment, which shaped and eventually led to Mao's success in China. The propensity to apply a successful model is often far too strong to resist and generally

leads to neglect Mao's implicit and in some cases explicit guidance to model struggles in existing social and cultural contexts.

In India Naxalism derives its name from Naxalbari, a small village in Siliguri district of West Bengal where in 1967 a few landless farmers supported by followers of the communist party rose against the exploitation of landlords. This movement started spread over among youth in India particularly in West Bengal and Bihar and later it spread other parts of country like Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and south of Chhattisgarh and Orissa. In India, similar inaccessible areas constitute a thin piece of the total geographical space. They are confined to isolated pockets of backwardness in different states in north and West India, and concentrated in a slender passageway running from Bihar in the North-East, through Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh in the center, down to Orissa and Andhra Pradesh in the South, It is this corridor that has become operational field of the Indian Naxalites. It is hilly and forest belt, as well it is plains, which are marked by extremely distressing socio-economic conditions, favor them with a secure and popular base. The most affected territory is situated in the triangle of the bordering regions of northern Andhra Pradesh, Western Maharashtra and Orissa. This area stretches over 400 sq km and is largely cut off the state power. Figures concerning the controlled respectively affected areas vary. In India, the progress of socio-economic development among major states is not uniform. . Development is a multi-dimensional phenomenon. Some of its major dimensions including the level of economic growth, level of education, level of health services, degree of modernization, status of women, level of nutrition, quality of housing, distribution of goods and services and access to communication etc. Economic disparities have created social tensions, urban unrest, rural upsurge and youth disenchantment. Problems of deprivation, poverty, hunger and food storage, lack of housing, degradation of basic amenities have given rise to anger and crime.

Naxalism initially arose from the basic factors of social inequality, economic injustice and the failure of the system to redress grievances of large sections of the society, socio - economic causes that have given rise to naxalite politics, disregard the essential humanism that motivates the naxalite endeavor, and dismiss it. Summarily as an "extremist" movement. However, simply extrapolating these structural reasons for causes of naxalism would be an oversimplification. At the politico-ideological level, Naxalism is also a reflection of an increasingly insensitive society, where ideals of equality and justice are being subverted for personal greed and power. The Indian Ministry of Home Affairs puts the number at 223 districts in 20 states, covering an area of 40,000 sq. km. in total with a combined population of 2.5 million

inhabitants. Left Wing Extremism became a threat to internal security with ever-growing violence and attacks on security forces and civilians. With the increased numbers of cadres, improved weaponry, and guerrilla tactics, the Maoists challenge to the state stretches across 16 of India's 28 states, affecting its economic growth. India's Naxalite movement has been described by the Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh as "the single biggest internal security challenge ever faced by our country." The year 2008 brought home the reality of Naxal threat in very bold terms- that the armed guerrillas are spreading across the states, many parts of country are under their firm control and it is a far more complex insurgency to fight than any that Indian security forces have fought until today. It is deeply entrenched in the socio-economic realities of the poor, enjoys wide support among the locals and is drawing strength from the inefficient government structures present in their areas of influence.

This movement is primarily spearheaded by a Maoist party, i.e. the CPI(Maoist) started in 1969. The Naxalite faced splits and fratricides almost for two decades (1970-1980). The two major Maoist blocks-MCC of Bihar and CPI(ML) of Andhra Pradesh. MCC which was once known as the Maoist Centre of Communist Revolutionaries, had also launched a parallel guerrilla movement in West Bengal in the early 1970s that later expanded to Bihar & Jharkhand. The two major Maoist blocks MCC of Bihar and CPI(ML) Andhra Pradesh, these groups merged to form a new unified Maoist group, the Communist Party of India or CPI(Maoist) in short, in 2004. The CPI (M) is the biggest & most violent LWE group in the country. A united revolutionary Maoist party has been a strong desire of the Maoist ideologues since the setbacks suffered by the Naxalbari uprising. In the decades since the late 60s uprising in West Bengal, the men and women who believe in the power of violence had split and splintered several times, but the 2004 merger has brought about cohesion among the Maoist ranks and improved capability.

The Communist Party of India-Maoist (CPI-Maoist), since its formation in 2004, has been responsible for majority of these killings, conventional analyses have mostly focused on big and small incidents that produced these victims. While such methods are useful in terms of attempting to grasp the growing or declining capacity of the outfit, it is also useful to analyse the unceasing violence as upshot of an ideology that has for decades underlined the necessity to shed the enemy's blood to bring about a change in social and political order.

Three leaders-Charu Mazumdar, Kanu Sanyal and Kondapalli Seetharamaiah dominate the discourse on Naxalism, which began in the 1960s. Mazumdar, in his

'Eight Documents'in 1965, exhorted the workers of the Communist Party of India-Marxist (CPI-M) to take up armed struggle against the state. He underlined that action and not politics was the need of the hour. Such calls resulted in a number of incidents in which the CPI-M workers started seizing arms and acquiring land forcibly on behalf of the peasants from the big landholders in Darjeeling. These incidents went on to provide the spark for the 1967 peasant uprising.

Following the formation of the All India Coordination Committee of Revolutionaries (AICCR), that emerged out of the CPI-M in November 1967 and was renamed as All India Coordination Committee of Communist Revolutionaries (AICCCR) in May 1968, Mazumdar further reiterated his idea of khatam or annihilation of class enemies. Although incidents of individual assassinations influenced by khatam resulted in repressive state action targeting the naxalite cadres, the Communist Party of India-Marxist-Leninist (CPI-ML), which was formed in 1969 breaking away from the CPI-Marxist, continued professing violence as the key tool of revolution.

While Mazumdar's preference for using violence to overthrow existing social order and seizing state power remained the CPI-ML's mode of operation till 1972, a counter ideology with a stress on agrarian consolidation preceding an armed struggle was reiterated by KanuSanyal following Mazumdar's death. Sanyal was not against the idea of an armed struggle per se. However, he opposed mazumdar's advocacy of targeted assassination.

In the subsequent years, the CPI-ML split into several factions. Although Sanyal himself headed a faction, he gradually grew redundant to the extreme left movement and committed suicide in 2010. Towards the last years of his life, Sanyal maintained that the CPI-Maoist's reliance on excessive violence does not conform to original revolutionary objectives of the Naxalite movement. On more than one occasion, Sanyal denounced the "wanton killing of innocent villagers". In a 2009 interview, Sanyal accused the CPI-Maoist of exploiting the situation in West Bengal's Lalgarh "by using the Adivasis as stooges to carry forward their agenda of individual terrorism." (Sharvan 2001 March). In Andhra Pradesh, since the 'Spring Thunder' of Srikakulam in 1970, KondapalliSeetharamaiah, was responsible for the growth of the Naxalite movement under the aegis of the CPI-ML. After leading a faction of the CPI-ML and forming the People's War Group (PWG) in 1980 Seetharamaiah oversaw a regime of intense violence, thus, earning the outfit the description of "the deadliest of all Naxal groups." Even after the expulsion of Seetharamaiah in 1991, the PWG and its factions remained the source of extreme violence targeting politicians and security forces in the state.

KanuSanyal's reluctant support for armed violence was, thus, somewhat an aberration. Playing down the importance of mindless bloodshed remained a peripheral of the Naxalite movement. Each transformation of the movement thereafter in terms of splits, mergers, and formation of new identities escalated the ingrained proclivity to use violence as an instrument of expansion and influence. The CPI-Maoist represented a natural progression of this trend. And as the fatalities data reveal, each passing year, since its 2004 formation through a merger of the Maoist Communist Centre (MCC) and the PWG, it became more and more reliant on violence, rationalizing the strategy as a defensive mechanism essential to its existence.

In 2009 Koteswar Rao alias Keshenji, who led the outfit in West Bengal termed the violence as a "struggle for independence." Ganapathy, the CPI-Maoist general secretary, reiterated in his February 2010 interview that the violence is only a "war of self-defence" or a "counter-violence" in response to a "brutal military campaign unleashed by the state." Maoist Spokesperson Azad, who was later killed in controversial circumstances, rejected the appeal for abjuring violence by them Home Minister P Chidambaram in April 2010 indicating that such a move would allow the "lawless" security forces "continue their rampage." Azad also maintained that while the outfit generally avoids attacking the non-combatants, "the intelligence officials and police informers who cause immense damage to the movement" cannot be spared.

Thus understood, few conclusions can be drawn, in contrast to beliefs that a peaceful resolution of the conflict could be possible. Its current frailty notwithstanding, regaining capacities to maximize violence would be a priority for the CPI-Maoist. It will continue to reject other methods of social and political change and maintain an unwavering faith in the utility of violence. Even while realizing that a total victory vis-à-vis the state is unattainable, the outfit would remain an agent of extreme violence in its own spheres of influence.

In the context of Naxalism in Jharkhand, the social conditions of the dalits and the tribes are deeply conditioned by the agrarian and social structures. The agrarian structure is determined by the pattern of land holding, access to land and other productive assets and social relations evolved on that basis. Jharkhand is one of the poorest states in India, with a lack of basic facilities and infrastructure. It is located in the eastern part of India and north of Andhra Pradesh.

Jharkhand was carved out of Bihar on Nov 15, 2000. As compared to Naxalite affected states, the literacy rate is 41% and poverty is higher than 50% among the tribal in Jharkhand 59%. Jharkhand is rich in natural resources minefields. Naxalites are active in 18 out of 24 districts of Jharkhand and has population of 32.96 million, consisting of 28% tribal people. Jharkhand has a total of 18 out of its 24 districts affected by Maoist violence. This can be traced directly to over 100 MoUs signed for exploration of minerals in this mineral rich state leading to large scale displacement of tribal population. In gauging the State's responses, in addition to a fundamental governance deficit, the main identified problem is a lack by the state and central government to diagnose the problem. Since 2001, however, the government has followed a two pronged strategy of carrot and stick. The stick end of this comprises police action in the worst affected areas while simultaneously deploying an inclusive development programme in the same. The area encompassed by the Red Corridor tends to have stratified societies, with caste and feudal divisions. Much of the area has high indigenous tribal populations, including Santhal and Gond. Jharkhand has caste and tribal divisions and violence associated with friction between these social groups. Jharkhand is a mineral rich area. Chhattisgarh, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Odisha and Jharkhand account for approximately 85 percent of India's coal resources. Exploitation of the natural resources for the economic progress of the country with entry of the state and private/public sector companies in this area has been a source of tribal dissent, which has been exploited by the Naxalites.

## **Conclusion**

In order to bring Naxalites into mainstream, the state Governments have their own surrender and rehabilitation policies. The Additional Central Assistance (ACA) for the Naxal affected districts, being implemented by the NITI Aayog and it plans to launch road requirement plan (RRP)-11, on the lines of RRP-1 initiated by the UPA government in 2009. RRP-11 will be for inter-state connectivity. I always believed that a two-pronged approach is required to end Naxal violence: one is security operations and the other is development. (The Hindu 26/9/2015)

Besides, two skill development related schemes, namely, 'ROSHNI'. (ROSHNI is a special initiative launched in June 2013 for training and placement of rural poor youth). Government should also implement schedule 5 and 9 in its bid to resolve Naxal problem. By this Government has resolved land distribution problem in West Bengal. Because Naxalites demands only for Jal, Jungle and Jameen. At the same time, a comprehensive socio-economic strategy must be evolved to treat the root causes of this malaise that is gnawing away at the nation', Sinnard.

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## Commentary

### Peace Building in India and the World

Anita Sodhi - Dey

*Peace is not an absence of war; it is a virtue, a state of mind,  
a disposition for benevolence, confidence and justice.*

----- Baruch Spinoza

There is no Peace in the world today. The Armageddon of technological disaster looms large. Religion is unable to counter the spiritual crisis raised by the biological and geological discoveries. Political thought is marked by crippling partiality. Man has turned so egocentric that he is indifferent to the survival of Humanity. One is disturbed by the human tendency to splinter the world into factions. The ending of human adventure on Earth is a possibility we have to reckon with. Faced by such a challenge our differences of race, religion, class, caste, colour, nation and ideologies become irrelevant.

The mind of a child is like a fertile, plain field and the thoughts and ideas sown therein are like seeds which have to be nurtured. These thoughts become the actions which when repeated become the behaviour of the child. The behaviour which is practised regularly develops the character of the individual.

***Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of Peace must be constructed.***

Preamble of the constitution of the United Nations, Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

Education is the main means of reaching out to the Human mind today and ensuring that the future of Humanity is in stable hands, so Peace Education is thought to be a philosophy and a practise. This involves developing life skills like listening, reflecting, problem solving, cooperation and conflict resolution. The process involves empowering people with skills attitudes and knowledge to have a safe world and build a sustainable environment for the future. Peace Education also seeks to

transform the Human situation by “changing social structures and patterns of thought that have created it.” Peace Education has lately caught the eye of architects of the future world order and an effort is being made to teach it at many levels from Nursery through Primary School, Middle School, and Intermediate level right up to college.

One of the main aspects of Peace Education lies in Inter Religious Peace Building.

In the world as we know it today, for billions of people religion and Faith form the very core of their existence. Even if we want to one cannot walk away from TUL— which in Indian parlance means importance- Tolerance, Understanding and Learning. Religious Faith is crucial to the culture and identity of people all over the world. This plays either a positive role by encouraging peaceful co-existence among people of different faith standing together in Tolerance, Respect, Understanding for each other's Ethos. Having their own distinctive identity but co-existing happily with others of different identity, otherwise a negative role, opposing co-existence, dividing Humanity into compartments of different or no faith. What is the legacy we are going to leave for our children, the future Global Citizens?

For ensuring such a future world we need to shape education as a guiding hand which encourages faith to play a positive role in shaping values. Rescuing it from “extremist and exclusionary forces within religion - as exemplified by acts of terror perpetuated in the name of God. What is Peace Education? **Peace education is the process of acquiring the values, the knowledge and developing the attitudes, skills, and behaviours to live in harmony with oneself, with others, and with the natural environment.**

The question is **HOW to inculcate this life-skill in the world today through Peace Education?**

Examining some of the advocates of Peace education of our times. Let us first consider the research by Paulo Freire whose life was dedicated to the study of education oriented towards the world's oppressed classes. The “banking education system” or a system by which the teacher is the giver of knowledge and the student a passive receiver as defined by Friere would not work, even though in India it is still being seriously followed. What may work would be the “problem posing- education” that would make them critical thinkers....Problem posing education bases itself on creativity and stimulates true reflection and action upon reality, thereby responding to the vocation of men as beings who are authentic only when engaged in inquiry and creative transformation. The teacher needs to respect the local knowledge of

the students and make them transform that to the Global perspective. Problem – posing education as advocated by Friere encourages students to be active in thinking about their world and acting, relying on dialogue and critical consciousness. A democratic teacher-student relationship needs to be developed so that co-creation of knowledge through interaction takes place and a curriculum grounded in students' interests and experience is developed not as an additional subject but a necessary life-skill.

*Preventing conflicts is the work of Politics; establishing Peace is the work of Education”*

Maria Montessori is most typically associated with child led learning. By this she believed that human beings are natural learners and that if students, even those who were considered much younger than traditional methods advocated, were immersed in environments rich with puzzles and problems to explore, they would learn instinctively, similar to Vygotsky's theory (as cited in Van Der Veer, 1994). In her model, the Teacher facilitates the student's learning, but the student's passion and imagination are what lead, as she details in *Education and Peace* (1949). Her results were astounding: children thought to have significant mental challenges were successful learners. As most educators know, her methods gave birth to a movement in education which thrives globally today, with thousands of Montessori Schools. Throughout North and South America, Europe and Asia. She is however, popularly known by some as a founder of Peace Education although this is not universally accepted.

Since the early decades of the 20th century, “peace education” programs around the world have represented a spectrum of focal themes, including anti-nuclearism, international understanding, environmental responsibility, communication skills, non-violence, conflict resolution techniques, democracy, and human rights awareness, tolerance of diversity, coexistence and gender equality, among others. Some have also addressed spiritual dimensions of inner harmony, or synthesized a number of the foregoing issues into programs on world citizenship. While academic discourse on the subject has increasingly recognized the need for a broader, more holistic approach to peace education, a review of field-based projects reveals that three variations of peace education are most common: conflict resolution training, democracy education, and human rights education. New approaches are emerging and calling into question some of theoretical foundations of the models just mentioned. The most significant of these new approaches focuses on peace education as a process of worldview transformation.

### **Peace Education and Peace Building in Conflict Resolution-**

A conflict is more than a mere disagreement, it is a situation in which people perceive, a threat-physical, emotional, power related, status related or others and these are experienced at personal, inter-personal, family, community, ethnic, state and even international level. As such it is a meaningful experience in people's lives. Conflicts are inevitable and often enriching. Participants in conflicts tend to respond on the basis of their perceptions of the situation, rather than its objective review. As such people filter their perceptions (and reactions) through their values, culture, beliefs, information, experience, gender and other variables. People want different things from the same situation. Conflict responses are both filled with ideas and feelings that can be very strong and powerful guides to our sense of possible solutions and improvement of the situation. An important need is one of analysis or the process of examination that leads to better understanding of the conflict. Conflict analysis is a practical process of examining and understanding the reality of a conflict from a variety of perspectives. This understanding forms the basis on which strategies can be developed and actions planned. It is at this point that we need to focus on a very important aspect in effective conflict resolution and that is the role of education and peace studies.

The development of peace education is a central component of peace building and provides an opportunity both to embed the core values of conflict resolution around non-violence and emancipation and to define a transformative cosmopolitan model which seeks to apply these values in peace-building. The literature on the effect of civil war on Education and the importance of education in post war peace-building is conclusive. At the World Education Forum held in 2000 in Senegal all the problems of the impact of war and humanitarian emergencies on children's education in its aftermath were discussed and unanimously there was a call for support of educational programs to address the need to promote mutual understanding, peace, tolerance and to help prevent violence. In spite of this in a study by Marc Sommers it was found that primary level children had no real hope for education in war affected areas, the boys stood a better chance of obtaining the education over the girls and the youth had no hope of any education beyond the primary level. There was a tremendous pressure or coercion to join the aggressive militias. Sommers conclusion makes a powerful statement for a major investment in education as a necessary component of post –conflict peace building. Trends show that the provision for the development of education and educational resources is increasingly a component of peace agreements. Four main themes emerge in these agreements, respecting and implementing the right to education, resuming education services, responding

to conflict creating issues within the education sector and actively reforming the education system as a way to address the issues generating conflict.

Peace education defined in this way carries within it the core values of resistance to war and violence. Peace education and peace building in conflict resolution is a complex and multi level process involving a diversity of actors, professional expertise. The need of the hour is to introduce understanding and development of the life-skills necessary, within the education system and strive to make it a part of basic education empowering the future generations and preparing them for transformative conflict resolution.

### **HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION**

Moving closer to a peaceful global community, Peace education programs centred on raising awareness of human rights typically focus at the level of policies that humanity ought to adopt. There should be a commitment among participants to a vision of structural peace in which all individual members of the human race can exercise their personal freedoms and be legally protected from violence, oppression and indignity

Participants should be familiar with the international covenants and declarations of the United Nations system; train students to recognize violations of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; and promote tolerance, solidarity, autonomy and self-affirmation at the individual and collective levels. At a young age students, whether in formal or non-formal education should be made aware of their rights. This is a debatable point as in many instances it was seen that becoming aware of ones right too leads to a conflict situation.

In one practitioner's view:

*“Human rights education does not work in communities fraught with conflict unless it is part of a comprehensive approach... In fact, such education can be counterproductive and lead to greater conflict if people become aware of rights which are not realized. In this respect, human rights education can increase the potential for conflict”*

To prevent these outcomes, many such programs are now being combined with aspects of conflict resolution and democracy education schools of thought, along with training in non-violent action.

## **World View Transformation**

According to Prof. Priyankar Upadhyaya, citing the example of the city of Varanasi and studying the Ganga-Jamuni tahzeeb or the harmonious co-existence of two major, diverse, religious communities, the Hindus and the Muslims. Though disturbed intermittently by minor differences, but mostly contributing to a peaceful coexistence in the form of economic interdependency, sharing the joys and sorrows, celebrating each other's festivals. Existence of sites of common worship, Masjid and Temple in close proximity, with peoples' police to ward off any problems. Among the children too one can see children of different religions, regions, community attending the same school, coaching, going on picnics or spending weekends at the Mall.

But the question is if this is sufficient to ensure a society free from riots, clashes, hatred, intolerance and peacefully co-exist? Experts from all over the world believe that **education is the key** to such a peaceful co-existence, where there will be no hate, terror and disharmony but society itself would transform and inter-religious peace building take place as an outcome of this transformation.

Peace education includes proven practical traditional methods and new innovative modern programs which address the rapidly changing situation in the world. Transformation through peace education is both possible and vital for global peace. Without this initiative we will not learn from our violent history and repeat the mistakes of the past which will ultimately lead to our own destruction. It is imperative to seek ways of transforming military training and peace education for aligning with the ultimate goal of world peace.

To sum up, the seeds of non-violence, peace-building, harmony and compassion for fellow humans need to be sown in the ever growing impressionable mind of Humanity so that the negative-feelings are not nurtured in the world of tomorrow. Eventually this peace movement through education will rid the world of terrorism in all its forms and go to build a world order with lasting peace. What seems a utopian idea can be a reality realised through Peace Education.

## **Commentary**

# **Disaster Risk Reduction : The Hyogo Framework For Action 2005 - 2015**

**Manoj Kumar Mishra**

### **Introduction**

Every year, more than 200 million people are affected by droughts, floods, cyclones, earth quake, wild fire and other hazards. Increased population density, environmental degradation and global warming adding to poverty make the impacts of natural hazards worse. Government around the world has committed to take action to reduce disaster risk, have adopted a guideline to reduce vulnerabilities to natural hazards, called the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015 (HFA). (ISDR, 2007 version)

The past few years have reminded us that natural hazards can affect anyone, anywhere invariable of class, status, rich or poor. From the Indian Ocean *tsunami* to the South Asia earthquake, from the devastation caused by hurricanes and cyclones in the United States, the Caribbean and the Pacific, to heavy flooding across Europe and Asia, hundreds of thousands of people have lost their lives, and millions their livelihoods, to disasters caused by natural hazards. While many know the human misery and crippling economic losses resulting from disasters, what few realize is that this devastation can be prevented through disaster risk reduction initiatives.

The HFA assist the efforts of nations and communities to become more resilient to, and cope better with the hazards that threaten their development gains. Disaster risk reduction should be part of every-day decision-making: from how people educate their children to how they plan their communities and cities. The Hyogo Framework for Action is the key instrument for implementing disaster risk reduction. Its overarching goal is to build resilience of nation and communities to disaster, by achieving substantive reduction of disaster losses by 2015-in lives, and in the social, economic and environmental assets of communities and countries. Before going into any details of the Hyogo Framework for Action, it would be in the fitness of things to clarify some of the definitions coming under the ambit of this article.

## Disaster Risk Reduction - What is it and why do we need it?

Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) is the conceptual framework of elements considered with the purpose of minimizing vulnerabilities and disaster risks throughout a society in order to avoid (prevention) or to limit (mitigation and preparedness) the adverse impacts of hazards, and facilitate sustainable development. (ISDR, United Nations Guidelines) Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) measures are designed to protect livelihoods and the assets of communities and individuals from the impact of hazards by:

- **Mitigation:** reducing the frequency, scale, intensity and impact of hazards.
- **Preparedness:** strengthening the capacity of communities to withstand, respond to and recover from hazards, and of government, implementing partners and to establish speedy and appropriate interventions when the communities' capacities are overwhelmed.
- **Advocacy:** favorably influencing the social, political, economic and environmental issues that contribute to the causes and magnitude of impact of hazards. DRR is often a complementary or integral part of other programmes such as micro-finance, food security, promoting agricultural diversity, or capacity building. On occasions, particularly with preparedness planning and advocacy issues, it can be a stand-alone activity. The **disaster risk** (of a region, a family, or a person) is therefore made up of two elements:

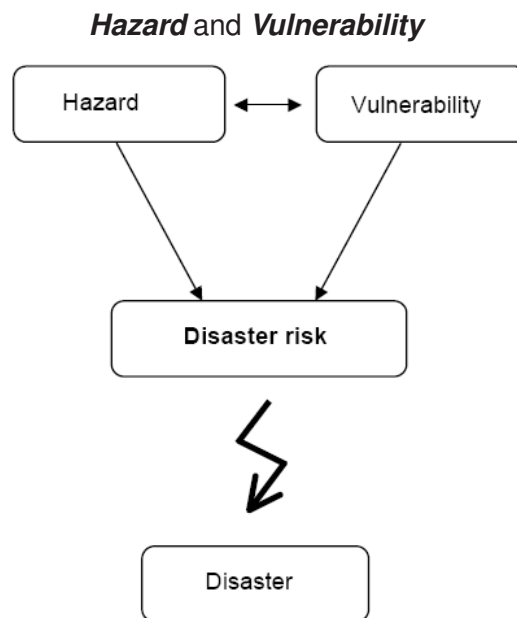


Fig.1: Components of Disaster Risk Reduction  
Source: GTZ, Eschborn 2001

### **Definition of ‘disaster’**

*“A serious disruption of the functioning of society, causing widespread human, material or environmental losses which exceed the ability of affected society to cope using only its own resources.” (UNU-EHS)*

### **Hazard**

Hazards are extreme natural events with a certain degree of probability of having adverse consequences. The following formula is used to calculate disaster risk: ([www.unisdr.org](http://www.unisdr.org))

### **Disaster Risk = Hazard x Vulnerability**

In this equation risk is the product of the two factors, hazard and vulnerability. Therefore, it is clear that a risk exists only if there is vulnerability to the hazard posed by a natural event. For instance, a family living in a highly earthquake-resistant house would not be vulnerable to an earthquake of 6 on the Richter scale. So, they would not be at risk. If the hazard approaches zero, because, for example, buildings have been constructed in areas far away from continental plate seduction zones and tectonic faults, a house built with minimum precautions will be a safe place for the family, because they would only be vulnerable to very extreme events.

### **Vulnerability**

Vulnerability denotes the inadequate means or ability to protect oneself against the adverse impacts of natural events and, on the other hand, to recover quickly from their effects.

### **The Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015 (ISDR, 2007 version)**

The Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters, was adopted by 168 Governments at the World Conference for Disaster Reduction held in Kobe, Hyogo, Japan in January 2005. The goal of the Hyogo Framework is to achieve a “substantial reduction of disaster losses, in lives and in social, economic and environmental assets”.

Since the adoption of the HFA, many global, regional, national and local efforts have addressed disaster risk reduction more systematically, much however, remains

to be done. The United Nations General Assembly has called for the implementation of HFA, reconfirmed the multi-stakeholder ISDR System and the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction to support and promote it. The General Assembly of the United Nations has encouraged Member States to establish multi-sectoral national platforms to coordinate disaster risk reduction in countries. Many regional bodies have formulated strategies at regional scale for disaster risk reduction in line with the HFA, in the Andean region, Central America, the Caribbean, Asia, Pacific, Africa and Europe. More than 100 Governments have designated official focal points for the follow-up and the implementation of the HFA (March 2007). Some have taken actions to mobilize political commitment and establish centers to promote regional cooperation in disaster risk reduction.

## **Hyogo Priorities for Action**

### **1. Make Disaster Risk Reduction a Priority.**

Ensure that disaster risk reduction is a national and a local priority with a strong institutional basis for implementation.

Strong national and local commitment is required to save lives and livelihoods threatened by natural hazards. Natural hazards must be taken into account in public and private sector decision-making in the same way that environmental and social impact assessments are currently required. Countries must therefore develop or modify policies, laws, and organizational arrangements, as well as plans, programmes, and projects, to integrate disaster risk reduction. They must also allocate sufficient resources to support and maintain them.

This includes:

- Creating effective, multi-sector national platforms to provide policy guidance and to coordinate activities;
- Integrating disaster risk reduction into development policies and planning, such as Poverty Reduction Strategies; and,
- Ensuring community participation, so that local needs are met.

### **Collaboration is Key**

Madagascar's National Platform for Disaster Reduction includes: Government departments, such as Education, Water, Transport and Communication, Agriculture and Livestock, Land and the Office of the Prime Minister; NGOs; the media; the

donor community; and the UN. It carries out disaster reduction training, and has enhanced disaster preparedness by constructing cyclone refuges. It is also finalizing Madagascar's Early Warning System and updating the country's Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) to link disaster risk reduction with poverty reduction.

## **2. Know the Risks and Take Action**

Identify, assess, and monitor disaster risks – and enhance early warning.

To reduce their vulnerability to natural hazards, countries and communities must know the risks that they face, and take actions based on that knowledge. Understanding risk requires investment in scientific, technical, and institutional capabilities to observe, record, research, analyze, forecast, model and map natural hazards. Tools need to be developed and disseminated: statistical information about disaster events, risk maps, disaster vulnerability and risk indicators are essential.

Most importantly, countries need to this knowledge to develop effective early systems, appropriately adapted to the unique circumstances of the people at risk. Early warning is widely accepted as a crucial component of disaster risk reduction. When effective early warning systems provide information about a hazard to a vulnerable population, and plans are in place to take action, thousands of lives can be saved.

### **Early Warning Saves Lives**

Advance warnings mean the difference between life and death. Cuba is one of the best-prepared countries in the Caribbean for the hurricane season.

72 hours before a storm makes landfall, the national media issues alerts, and civil protection committees check evacuation plans. 48 hours before expected landfall, authorities target warnings for high-risk areas. Twelve hours before landfall, homes are secured, neighbourhoods are cleared of loose debris, and people are evacuated.

This early warning system has proven its effectiveness. During 2004, when Hurricane Charley hit, 70,000 houses were severely damaged and four people were killed. When Hurricane Ivan struck the following month, over 2 million people were evacuated. No one was killed.

## **3. Build Understanding and Awareness**

Use knowledge, innovation, and education to build a culture of safety and resilience at all levels.

Disasters can be reduced substantially if people are well informed about measures they can take to reduce vulnerability-and if they are motivated to act. Key activities to increase awareness of disaster prevention include:

- Providing relevant information on disaster risks and means of protection, especially for citizens in high-risk areas;
- Strengthening networks and prompting dialogue and cooperation among disaster experts, technical and scientific specialists, planners and other stakeholders;
- Including disaster risk reduction subject matter in formal, non-formal, and informal education and training activities;
- Developing or strengthening community-based disaster risk management programmes; and,
- Working with the media in disaster risk reduction awareness activities.

#### Local Knowledge is Critical for Disaster Reduction

On the island of Simeulue, off the coast of Sumatra, from a population of 83,000 people, only seven people died in the Indian Ocean tsunami. On the nearby mainland, in Aceh, more than 100,000 people were killed.

The people of Simeulue have maintained their own local knowledge of earthquakes, which they call *smong*. Each generation teaches the early warning signs of natural hazards to the next.

“In 1907 a tsunami already happened here in Simeulue, and so our Grandmothers always gave us the following advice: if an earthquake comes, we must go and look at the beach: if the sea is at low tide the *smong* or *tsunami* will be coming and we must look for higher ground”, opined Mr. Darmili Bhupati, Simeulue Island.

#### **4. Reduce Risk**

Reduce the underlying risk factors.

Vulnerability to natural hazards is increased in many ways, for example:

- Locating communities in hazard-prone areas, such as flood plains;
- Destroying forests and wetlands, thereby harming the capacity of the environment to withstand hazards;
- Building public facilities and housing unable to withstand the impacts of hazards; and,
- Not having social and financial safety mechanisms in place.

Countries can build resilience to disasters by investing in simple, well-known measures to reduce risk and vulnerability. Disasters can be reduced by applying relevant building standards to protect critical infrastructure, such as schools, hospitals and homes. Vulnerable buildings can be retrofitted to a higher degree of safety. Protecting precious ecosystems, such as coral reefs and mangrove forests, allow them to act as natural storm barriers. Effective insurance and micro-finance initiatives can help to transfer risks and provide additional resources.

### **Building Resilience Protects Communities**

Unsafe buildings and the lack of non-enforcement of building codes often cause more deaths than natural hazards themselves. In Bam, Iran, more than 30,000 injured, when an earthquake struck the city on 26 December 2003. A major factor contributing to the high death toll was that traditional mud brick buildings crumbled, suffocating the people inside. Practically all of the survivors were left homeless, as 85% of the city's buildings collapsed.

“The houses killed the people, not the earthquake”. Mr. Mohamed Rahimnejad, Civil Engineer, Iran was of the opinion.

### **5. Be Prepared and Ready to Act**

Strengthen disaster preparedness for effective response at all levels.

Being prepared, including conducting risk assessments, before investing in development at all levels of society will enable people to become more resilient to natural hazards. Preparedness involves many types of activities, including:

- The development and regular testing of contingency plans;
- The establishment of emergency funds to support preparedness, response and recovery activities;
- The development of coordinated regional approaches for effective disaster response; and,
- Continuous dialogue between response agencies, planners and policy-makers, and development organizations.

Regular disaster preparedness exercises, including evacuation drills, are key to ensuring rapid and effective disaster response.

Effective preparedness plans and organization also help to cope with the many small and medium-sized disasters that repeatedly occur in so many communities. Natural hazards cannot be prevented, but it is possible to reduce their impacts by reducing the vulnerability of people and their livelihoods.

### **Disaster Preparedness Takes Practice**

Japan prides itself in being well-prepared for earthquakes. On Disaster Prevention Day, held in Japan every year, many people all across the country participate in disaster preparedness drills, involving both emergency workers and the general public.

“It is extremely important for all of us to prepare for such an occasion (natural hazards). Not only public institutions, but also each and every one of us must think about and manifest in our daily lives preparedness for disaster prevention. The government will do everything in its power to further develop Japan into a country with capacity to cope with disasters. However, at the same time, I ask that all of you do your utmost by predicting various damages that could occur and considering rescue efforts that will be required so that you will be prepared for emergency situations”. said Prime Minister of Japan, Junichiro Koizumi.

### **Who is responsible for implementing disaster risk reduction and the HFA?**

Collaboration is crucial to disaster risk reduction: states, regional organizations all have a role to play. Civil society, including volunteers and community-based organizations, the scientific community, the media, and the private sector, are all vital stakeholders. Following is an indication of the variety and diversity of actors and their core responsibilities.

#### **States are responsible for:**

- Developing national coordination mechanisms;
- Conducting baseline assessments on the status of disaster risk reduction;
- Publishing and updating summaries of national programmes;
- Reviewing national progress towards achieving the objectives and priorities of the HFA;
- Working to implement relevant international legal instruments; and
- Integrating disaster risk reduction with climate change strategies.

**Regional organizations are responsible for:**

- Promoting regional programmes for disaster risk reduction;
- Undertaking and publishing regional and sub-regional baseline assessments;
- Coordinating reviews on progress toward implementing the HFA in the region;
- Establishing regional collaborative centers; and
- Supporting the development of regional early warning mechanisms.

**International organizations are responsible for:**

- Encouraging the integration of disaster risk reduction into humanitarian and sustainable development programmes and frameworks;
- Strengthening the capacity of the United Nations system to assist disaster-prone developing countries with disaster risk reduction initiatives;
- Supporting data collection and forecasting, information exchange, and early warning systems;
- Supporting States' own efforts with coordinated international assistance; and,
- Strengthening disaster management training and capacity building.

The ISDR (The International Strategy for Disaster Reduction) system is responsible for:

- Developing a matrix of roles and initiatives related to the HFA;
- Facilitating the coordination of actions at the international and regional levels;
- Developing indicators of progress to assist States in tracking their progress towards implementation of the HFA;
- Supporting national platforms and coordination mechanisms;
- Stimulating the exchange of best practices and lessons learned; and,
- Preparing reviews on progress toward achieving the HFA objectives.

**Conclusion:**

All countries are encouraged to establish National Platforms for Disaster Risk Reduction. At the regional level information sharing and coordination among existing bodies are promoted by the UN/ISDR secretariat and partners as Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction.

The Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction is the main global forum for Governments, United Nation agencies, international financial institutions, regional bodies, civil societies, the private sector, the scientific and academic communities. It is possible for raising awareness and reiterates commitments, for sharing experience on implementation among stakeholders and Governments, addressing

gaps, and for providing strategic guidance and coherence for implementing HFA. Thematic clusters, groups and platforms work on specific topics of the disaster risk reduction agendas, such as: climate change adaptation, education, urban risk, early warning, recovery and capacity development.

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## CONTENT

<b>Challenges of Peace building : Understanding War within War in Syria</b> <i>Chitaranjan Das Adhikary</i>	1-17
<b>Does International Aid Contribute to Peacebuilding? Development Cooperation in Post-conflict countries</b> <i>Vrinda Dar</i>	18-34
<b>Globally Induced Conflicts and Their Ramifications</b> <i>Binod P. Bista</i>	35-40
<b>Media and Image of a Toddler A Study of an Image of a Lifeless Body that Changed History</b> <i>Gaurav Shah</i>	41-51
<b>Resource Conflicts in India : Discourses and Practice</b> <i>Suvrashree Panda</i>	52-64
<b>Reservation : Boon or Bane?</b> <i>D. Surender Naik</i>	65-74
<b>Structural Violence as a Cause of Naxalism in India</b> <i>Nivedita Mishra</i>	75-82
<b>COMMENTARY</b>	
<b>Peace Building in India and the World</b> <i>Anita Sodhi - Dey</i>	83-88
<b>Disaster Risk Reduction : The Hyogo Framework For Action 2005 - 2015</b> <i>Manoj Kumar Mishra</i>	89-98