

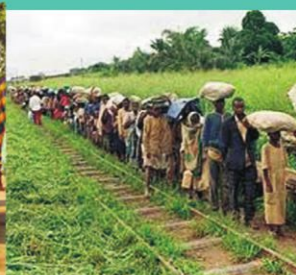


MAKAIAS Newsletter

ASIA CONNECT

Focus: States and Statelessness in Asia

Issue No.3, July-September 2014



Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Institute of Asian Studies, Kolkata

MAULANA ABUL KALAM AZAD INSTITUTE OF ASIAN STUDIES
(An Autonomous Body under the Ministry of Culture, Govt. of India)
5, ASHRAF MISTRI LANE
KOLKATA - 700 019

Tel. : 00-91-33-24862049
Telefax : 00-91-33- 2486-2049/2454-6961
E-Mail : info@makaias.gov.in

SALT LAKE OFFICE

AZAD BHAWAN
IB Block, Plot No. 166 Sector III
Salt Lake. Kolkata - 700106

Tel. : 23356629
E-mail: makaiaskol@vsnl.net

Website : www.makaias.gov.in

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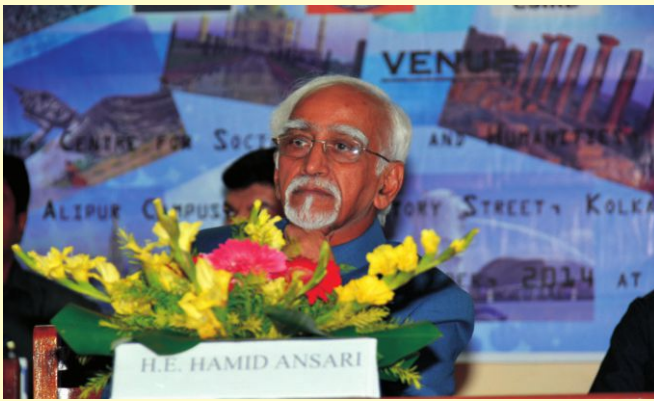
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Editorial team: Suchandana Chatterjee, Anita Sengupta ,
Arpita Basu Roy, Anjum Katyal.



HE Hamid Ansari, the Vice President of India speaking at the Conference on Europe and Emerging Asia



HE, Kesari Nath Tripathi, the Governor of West Bengal, September 13, 2014



'Stakeholders' Consultative Workshop on India- Bangladesh Economic Cooperation, July 18, 2014



MAKAIAS delegation with Ambassador Munshi Faiz Ahmad (Chairman, Board of Governors, BIIS)



Shri. Sitaram Sharma (Chairman, MAKAIAS) and Ms. Srimanti Sarkar with the Curator and Staffs of 32- Dhanmondi (Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's House where he was assassinated)



Mr. Subhadeep Bhattacharya moderating the Experts Panel Session themed 'Diverging Growth Trajectory and the contemporary environmental Paradigm' at International Relations Scholastic Conclave 2014, Jadavpur University



Dr. Sreeradha Datta (Director, MAKAIAS) at the Initiation Ceremony of the 2014, IRSC, Jadavpur University



Ms. Srimanti Sarkar moderating the Debate (Student's Participatory Event) themed "Internet serves as a 'Red Carpet of Sedition' for Global Citizens" at the IRSC 2014, Jadavpur University

From the Chairman's Desk

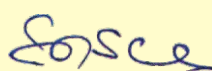


The focus of this issue of Asia Connect is Asia, the fulcrum of research in the Institute. Over the years the Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Institute of Asian Studies has underlined the significance of the study of Asia from social, cultural, economic and political/administrative viewpoints. In this, the Institute carried forward the traditional interest in the study of other regions of Asia that Kolkata imbibes. This interest was primarily based on awareness about civilizational exchanges that looked for new ways of learning about others. The study of South Asia's links with Central, Northwest and South East Asia are part of this cultural dialogue.

This issue of Asia Connect looks into one of the major questions that has proved to be problematic in post-colonial Asian states, the issue of borders and the subsequent problem of statelessness that has been faced by sections of people who have been left out of the definition of citizenship in a number of Asian states. Statelessness is therefore intimately related to states and borders that limit the individual's attachment to a definite territory. The lack of this attachment leads to discrimination both within the state and in the international arena. Statelessness has affected large numbers of people in Asia, though the United Nations accepts the Right to Nationality as a fundamental human right. However, as long as states are recognized as sovereign, in the matter of determining its citizens, there are bound to be people who are multiple nationals and others who are stateless.

This issue of Asia Connect looks at specific groups in Central, West and South Asia who face statelessness either due to the emergence of new states and disintegration of former state structures, non-recognition of their statehood by the international system, historical vagaries and friction between states that have left them stranded across borders or conflict that has led them to move across state borders thus becoming stateless refugees. There is both legality to the question of statelessness as well as a narrative and the articles take note of both. The stress is on the human tragedy that looms in the wake of statelessness and requires to be addressed by pre-emptive measures that look to securing citizenship and providing institutional representation to stateless people. While solutions seem to be largely circumscribed by political circumstances the significance of a debate on issue is important as Asia steps into a century that has been defined as the Asian Century.

Asia, comprising as it does the regions of West Asia, Central Asia, South Asia, South East Asia and East Asia is at the center of global events and the pivot of the global power shift. As such a number of issues require attention; implication of the rise of China and India; enduring conflicts in West Asia; access and control of resources of Central Asia. It has long been apparent that the 21st Century belongs to Asia given that history has moved its arc lights towards Asia. Building a New Asian Order would be critical to this century now already in its second decade. Since the contours of the Asian order will have considerable impact on the world order, it therefore becomes necessary to deliberate upon how this Asian order should look and be shaped. Over the years the Institute has examined various aspects of the Asian question through studies, seminars and publications which has included a seminar on the Asian Century as part of its Asia Perspective series. It continues this tradition with a seminar on The West and Emerging Asia in September this year which will be attended by academics from a number of countries.



Sitaram Sharma
Chairman

From the Editor's Desk



One of the most prominent features of the modern era has been the story of the struggle of land and people. Technological advancement and interlinked economies have connected people more closely than ever before. Yet, while the contemporary international system is clearly moving towards a borderless world, the lack of democratic equality amongst its members appears even more pronounced. On the one hand the world is grappling with the phenomena of globalisation and its consequences, while on the other governments are seen to be hardening their stance over issues of territoriality and sovereignty. Two distinctly contrary strands of development are evident within the nation state system. Increasing mobility and communication levels have decreased the gap in knowledge and access to common resources, but state centric approaches to issues of citizenship and the rights of nationalities are becoming increasingly rigid and narrow. A large number of people remain outside the rubric of citizenship and continue to languish within nation states.

Asia in particular houses large numbers of people who can be categorized as refugees; who, due to

threat or fear of their lives have been forced to move out of their state of origin, or internally displaced peoples who have been displaced within their own nation. There remains another category, that of the stateless people. Throughout history, borders have assumed a critical prominence from a state perspective, and paradoxically been made irrelevant by those people who have chosen to cross them at will knowingly and unknowingly.

The latest issue of Asia Connect, the MAKAIAS Newsletter, focuses on this sizeable population of the stateless within Asia, a group of people who, deprived of basic rights and privileges, continues to grow in numbers across the continent. They may have crossed an international border, or they may have never been the recipient of any national rights from the time of their birth, continuing to live within a nation without any of the political rights that emanate from statehood.

Clearly the problem is complex, and there has been a lack of both study and awareness of the issues involved. Unfortunately, in many cases reliable data are still unavailable. Moreover, the subject has not been able to make an impact on state authorities, who continue with subversive practices. Despite attempts at the academic level to understand the questions of statehood and citizenship rights, the conditions of the stateless population continue to deteriorate. The state finds very little incentive to address the problem, and the stateless people are unable to appeal for greater attention to their plight. The 1961 Convention on the Redressal of Statelessness has asked for rights of movement and residence, but when the responsibility of

bestowing these rights rests upon the state, apathy and reluctance result in inaction.

This issue of Asia Connect begins with an article providing a broad overview of the issues of state and statelessness in Asia, which attempts to explain the rights of stateless persons as enunciated in various human rights instruments. Problems associated with the process of identification of such persons, the lack of legal clarity and of an institutional framework, have also been discussed. In an article on Central Asia, the question of cross-border marriages is dealt with. The rigid governmental positions on the ongoing problem faced by Uzbek women who marry Kyrgyz men is studied. These women cease to be citizens of Uzbekistan but are not given the same rights in their new 'homeland'. This problem of 'border brides' is being faced by residents of other Central Asian republics as well. The lack of any legislation and unstable political conditions have aggravated this problem, leading to a situation where the next generation is being deprived of citizenship. The issue of stateless Palestinians came to the fore in the middle of the last century and continues to defy solution. The unanswered questions of identity and territoriality, and the lack of any middle ground between the two opposing parties, has led to the prolonging of violence. With no politically negotiated settlement in sight, the perpetuation of the statelessness of Palestinians continues. By the very definition of statelessness these people have no right to 'protection.' Undoubtedly, the plight of this group is worsened by their lack of security; they continue to be held hostage to the whims of the host state. The issue of the Afghan stateless people

residing both within Afghanistan and outside in neighbouring regions of Pakistan and Iran, who face forcible movement and relocation, has been discussed in an article in this issue. Narratives about stateless Chakmas from Bangladesh who have come to India have been well documented. The current article focuses on their flight from their homeland and their ongoing search for an abode in their host country. Despite intervention by the highest court in India to accord them citizenship, State action has been limited. The plight of stranded people in Bangladesh, namely the Rohingyas and Biharis, has been discussed in some detail in the final article. Despite the passage of over forty years the question of Biharis in Bangladesh remains unresolved. Although the next generation has been offered some rights, the status of the previous generation remains unclear. Rohingyas that fled Myanmar to seek shelter in Bangladesh continue to be deprived of any basic rights and live a life of despair and insecurity.

Apart from these articles, the newsletter offers the usual regular features such as reports on field trips, seminars and workshops, and MAKAIAS programme announcements.

We are grateful for your continued support and seek your feedback as we strive to achieve new milestones.



Dr. Sreeradha Datta
Director

States, Borders and Statelessness in Asia

Anita Sengupta



A growing number of Uzbekistani women who marry men from across the border in Kyrgyzstan are ending up citizens of neither, meaning they have officially ceased to exist.

(The Stateless Border Brides of Central Asia Eurasianet, February 21, 2012)

The line quoted above is from a study of stateless women in Central Asia, who married men of their own ethnicity from across the border. With the invalidation of their native passports and failure to register as citizens of the state where they now live they "officially cease to exist". Since the world is largely decentralized into nation states where each state maintains sole authority over its own domestic matters, nationality is the linkage of the individual to the territory and gives him the right to rights as defined by his state. Statelessness is defined by the UN as a condition where there is no legal bond of nationality/citizenship between the state and the individual. The ultimate cause of statelessness is rooted in the principle of state sovereignty and arises out of a conflict of nationality laws—where each state is permitted to determine under its laws who are its citizens and nationals and as long as states are allowed this right there will be certain people who are multiple nationals and others who find themselves stateless.

Stateless defined

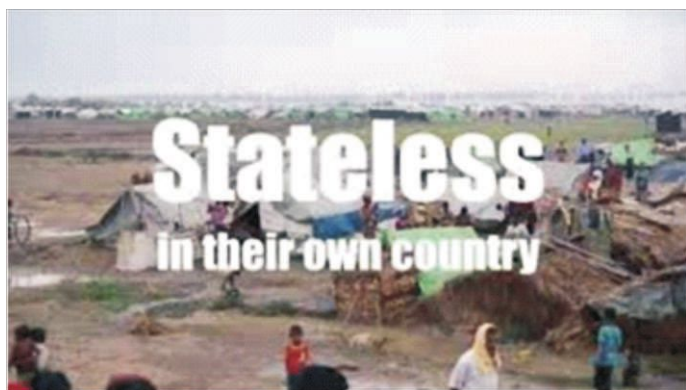
Globally there are between 12-15 million people who are stateless. This gap in estimation is not only because of a lack of systematic attention to collecting reliable statistics but also a lack of consensus on whom to include when counting stateless people. The UN in 1948 recognized right to nationality as well as right to change nationality but does not define how this responsibility for granting citizenship should fall on a particular state.

In 1954 the United Nations adopted the *Convention Relating to the Status of Stateless Persons*, which provides a framework for protection of stateless persons. Seven years later, the 1961 Convention on the *Reduction of Statelessness* was adopted, which contains provisions to prevent and reduce statelessness. In contrast to the 1961 Convention which focuses on reducing statelessness the 1954 Convention was devoted to protecting stateless people. In addition



there are other provisions like the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, the Convention on the Nationality of Married Women that seek to protect against statelessness. The right not to be stateless or the Right to a Nationality is recognized as a Fundamental Human Right.

The human right not to be stateless or the right to nationality is important because many states only allow their own nationals to exercise civil, political economic and social rights within their territories. Statelessness means that the individual lacks state protection and faces numerous difficulties in everyday life--- in movement, employment, access to health care,



schooling and is liable to arbitrary treatment and crime. He has no access to protection in the international system because only states are subjects of international law. His marginalization creates tensions in society and instability at the international level---including conflict and displacement. A stateless person also has no access to protection in the international system because only states are subjects of international law. Without identity papers a stateless person also finds it difficult to obtain political asylum. Stateless persons are also denied the right to leave and enter one's own country.

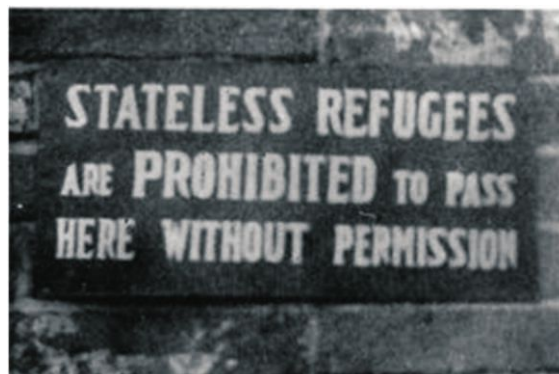
For a person to be stateless it is not relevant how the person came to be without a nationality or whether there is a possibility for the person to acquire nationality. It is also not relevant where he or she is located---it can occur in both migration and non- migration contexts. A stateless person may never have crossed an international border having lived in the same country his entire life. A stateless person can also be a refugee if in addition to not being considered to be a nationality of any state, he also meets the definition of Article 1 of the 1951 Refugee Convention (having fled their country due to fear of persecution) Generally stateless refugees are identified and treated as refugees so that in the UNHCR's definition of statelessness only non-refugee stateless populations are counted.

States, Borders and Statelessness

Statelessness is however, intimately related to states and borders that limit the individual's attachment to a definite territory. When states disintegrate citizens remain stateless till they are citizens of the new states that emerge. In some cases this has led to confusion and

complication and the Soviet disintegration in 1991 is a classic case. Large numbers of people with Soviet documents discovered that new nationality laws of emerging sovereign states left them out of the definition of a citizen though in most cases constitutions recognized all people living within its territorial boundaries as citizens. However, not all of them acceded to UN conventions on refugees and statelessness This was complicated by the fact that the history of borders in the region is problematic. Post delimitation the borders were left flexible within the broader Soviet system where people shared a common Soviet passport and movement and employment was unrestricted. This, of course, changed in the post 1991 period. In most cases, as in the Ferghana Valley where populations were mixed movements, trade, marriages continued unhindered. Since movement across the borders in the valley did not require documentation old Soviet passports were often not changed to new national ones. From 1999 and particularly since 2005 when borders (like the Uzbek-Kyrgyz or Uzbek-Tajik) were fenced and visa regimes were introduced large numbers of people found themselves stateless. Statelessness is not just the result of circumstances (like the border brides of Central Asia) but also the result of events like riots that leave people without documentation. There is therefore both legality to the question of statelessness as well as a narrative and both are equally important.

The first step towards addressing statelessness is to identify stateless populations, determine how they became stateless and understand how the legal, institutional and policy frameworks relate to those



causes and offer possible solutions. The best means of addressing statelessness is to prevent it from occurring. States are the principal actors responsible for the prevention of statelessness because they are responsible for determining how nationality can be acquired, changed and lost. Human rights treaties contain a number of safeguards but the most comprehensive set of standards in this domain is contained in the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness. The Convention establishes, for example, that children should acquire the nationality of the State in which they are born if they would otherwise be stateless, that individuals cannot renounce their nationality without having acquired another and that they cannot be deprived of nationality on discriminatory grounds. The Convention on Stateless Persons asks for the right of free movement and residence for stateless people and asks contracting states to provide identity papers and travel documents. Contracting states are also not allowed to expel stateless persons except on grounds of national security. Contracting states are however allowed to make reservations to specific provisions.

It is often argued that binary oppositions between citizenship and statelessness between national territoriality and its absence are not useful for thinking about the new configurations of space and new combination of factors that affect political mobilizations and claims. Rights and entitlements once associated with citizens are now becoming dispersed among populations who can include non- citizens. The difference between having and not having citizenship is becoming blurred as territorialisation of entitlements is increasingly made in spaces beyond the state. However, as long as states remain as ultimate arbitrators of domestic affairs the question of statelessness as defined by lack of attachment to a particular state will remain significant.

Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Dhaka University (DU) and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Institute of Asian Studies (MAKAIAS), Kolkata



A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Dhaka University (DU) and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Institute of Asian Studies (MAKAIAS), Kolkata, was signed on 18 August 2014 at the VC's office of Dhaka University. Dr. Sreeradha Dutta, Director, MAKAIAS and Treasurer of DU Prof. Dr. Md. Kamal Uddin signed the MoU on behalf of their respective organizations. DU Vice-Chancellor Prof. Dr. A.A.M.S Arefin Siddique, Chairman, MAKAIAS, Sitaram Sharma and DU Professors Dr. Imtiaz Ahmed of the Department of International Relations and Dr. Mesbah Kamal of the Department of History were, among others, present on this occasion.

Palestinians as Stateless

Priya Singh



A Palestinian Refugee camp in 1948

Palestinians are among the 12 million (UNHCR estimates) stateless people worldwide who need to become citizens. Since the exodus of 1948 (*al nakba*) statelessness has dominated and shaped the lives of generations of Palestinians. At present more than half of the eleven million (11.6 million) or so Palestinians are considered to be *de jure* stateless persons. The broad categories include the holders of the Refugee Travel Document issued by Syria, Lebanon, Egypt, Iraq and some other Arab countries, the holders of Nationalities of Convenience—mainly temporary Jordanian passports, holders of the Palestinian Passport issued by the Palestinian Authority (PA), which is considered as a travel document pending formation of a fully-fledged Palestinian state. Most Palestinians today are both refugees and stateless.

Legitimising statelessness

Israel / Palestine

All persons legally resident and registered, born or naturalised in Palestine under the British Mandate (1919-1948) were British Protected Persons, holders of British (Palestine) passports. Citizenship in both Jewish and Arab states proposed by the Partition Plan set out in UN Resolution 181 in 1947 was meant to be granted to all inhabitants. However, when the British terminated its mandate on 15 May 1948, it was left to the successor state Israel to determine entitlement to nationality. Israel in keeping with its official policy of creating and

consolidating a Jewish State aimed at increasing the number of Jewish immigrants and reducing the number of Palestinians. To ensure the fulfilment of its aim and policy of Judaisation, Israel issued three laws within four



A Palestinian Refugee camp in 2013

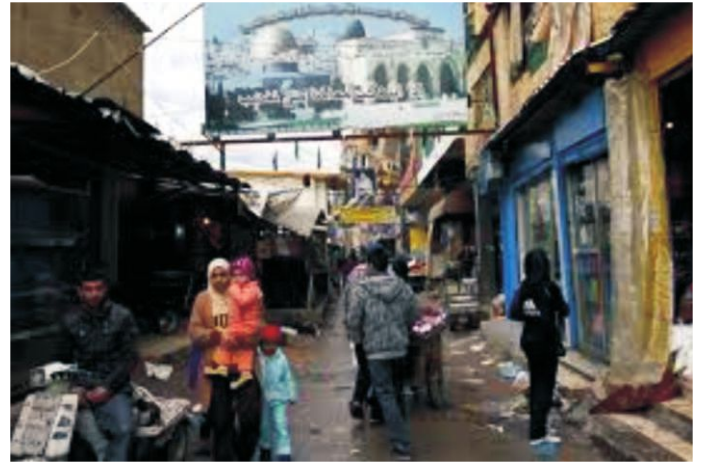
years of its foundation: The Absentees Property Law, The Law of Return, and the Israel Citizenship Law. These laws, by and large nullified the rights of the displaced non-Jewish population to return to their homes while endorsing the right of any Jew, regardless of place of origin, to unrestricted immigration and automatic citizenship. Similar policies were pursued following the occupation of West Bank in 1967. Israel considers all Palestinian inhabitants of the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT) as non-citizens and foreign residents. Some 2, 50,000 Palestinians who happened to be outside the OPT were not allowed to return. In 1967, Israel took control over East Jerusalem and its residents found themselves to be permanent residents but not citizens of Israel. The Israeli Ministry of the Interior has complete discretion over approval of citizenship applications.

The Arab world

Two main principles, set out in an Arab League protocol signed in Casablanca in 1965 had and continue to determine the treatment of Palestinian refugees in host Arab states: granting Palestinian refugees full citizenship rights but denying them naturalisation and issuing them with Refugee Travel Documents (RTD) in order to maintain their refugee status. The legal status, residency and civil rights of Palestinian communities in the Arab World are increasingly uncertain, particularly in



Yarmouk Camp in Syria



Palestinian refugees from Syria in Lebanon

Lebanon and Egypt where they are denied rights to secure residency, employment, property, communal interaction and family unification. Procedures to allow non-residents to apply for naturalisation in Lebanon, Egypt and Saudi Arabia do not apply to stateless Palestinians. Palestinian refugees in Jordan, the largest community in any of the host countries, have Jordanian nationality but are denied equal political participation. The Jordanian authorities do not offer naturalisation to those Palestinians who at the time of their displacement in 1967 did not hold Jordanian passports. Some 60,000 stateless Palestinians, mainly from Gaza and original holders of Egyptian RTDs were allowed to stay but denied civil rights and confined to a camp near the northern city of Jarash. In 2012, Egypt deviated from this practice by granting citizenship to 50,000 Palestinians, mostly from the Gaza Strip. Similarly in Lebanon, a shift in the employment laws in late 2010, granted some employment rights and removed restrictions, addressing decades-old discriminatory laws that banned them from working in all but the most menial jobs. However, at the time of writing this piece, it is in Syria, where the situation of the Palestinian refugees is particularly grim as a consequence of the crisis brewing in the nation in the aftermath of the Arab uprisings of December 2010. According to the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, at least 41 Palestinian refugees have died of starvation and a lack of medical treatment over the past few months in the besieged Yarmouk camp near Damascus. This is just the latest example of how Syria's Palestinian refugees have been subjected to what UNRWA has called "extreme human suffering" since the beginning of the conflict there. Approximately 500,000 Palestinian refugees lived in Syria prior to the fighting, but now more than half have been displaced, with at least 50,000 fleeing to Lebanon, 10,000 to

Jordan, 5,000 to Egypt, and smaller numbers to Gaza, Europe, and elsewhere. Jordan and Lebanon, overwhelmed by Syrian refugees and concerned with their delicate demographic balances, have applied strict procedures that significantly limit the entry of Palestinian double refugees. Furthermore, the UN system has exacerbated the misery of the Palestinian refugees. UNRWA is perpetually underfunded and has a limited mandate, while UNHCR refuses to account for the Palestinians based on jurisdiction. Overall, Palestinian refugees from Syria are not receiving the same level of humanitarian assistance as their counterparts.

The persisting predicament

The right to nationality is a fundamental human right. Article 15 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948 declares that "everyone has the right to nationality." Changing the status of people to non-citizens or threatening the security of their residency status generates insecurity and can have long term social and psychological impact. Stateless communities are the first to pay the price for political instability and insecurity in the countries where they find themselves. The marginalised refugee communities-notably the Palestinians constitute a major destabilising factor in the Middle East. Statelessness is a major 'push' factor leading to large-scale irregular migration. There is a clear correlation between statelessness and asylum seeking in industrialised countries. The majority of the Palestinians living in Europe today are stateless holders of Lebanese and Egyptian RTDs or expired Israeli ('laissez passer') travel documents. They sought asylum in Europe when their residency status in the host countries became increasingly insecure and, in most

cases, they were denied the right to go back to these countries. 80% of the 80,000 stateless Palestinians thought to be in Germany are RTD holders from Lebanon. In recognition of the miseries and hardship affecting his stateless compatriots, Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas broke with the leadership's policy when in 2005; he welcomed the naturalisation of Palestinians "if any of the host country chooses to do so." An opinion poll found most of the Palestinians concurred with him.

The mainstream Israeli point of view (although an alternative approach based on archival research is offered by the likes of Avi Shlaim, Tom Segev and Ilan Pappé, which is closer to the Palestinian narrative of the 1948 War) is that the Palestinians fled during the 1948 war on orders of Arab commanders or the by-product of a war foisted upon the new Jewish state. The Palestinian perspective is that they were expelled by Israeli military forces and fled in fear, hoping to return to their homes once hostilities ceased. Thus they contend that a sovereign Palestinian state within 1967 borders could act as a catalyst to resolve the refugee issue and put an end to Palestinian statelessness, which in turn requires a regional framework based on a comprehensive peace settlement that includes all host Arab countries and which gives Palestinian refugees the options of repatriation, compensation and full citizenship rights in their countries of residence.

Meanwhile the pursuit of a Palestinian state continues



A Palestinian in Beirut, Lebanon, holding a symbolic key during a commemoration of the dispersal of Palestinians when Israel was created in 1948

International Burma Studies Conference 2014



Dr Amrita Dey, Fellow MAKAIAS participated in the *International Burma Studies Conference 2014: Envisioning Myanmar: Issues, Images, Identities* at Pan Pacific Hotel, Singapore from 01 August- 03 August 2014 and presented a paper on 'Myanmar's Tryst with Democracy: Lessons from India.' The organisers were ISEAS and the Faculty of Arts and School of Social Sciences, National University of Singapore.

Stateless people of Central Asia

Dilorom Karomat



All the Central Asian States, with the exception of Uzbekistan, have acceded to the 1951 Refugee Convention and adopted national refugee laws, however the level of refugee protection does not always comply with international standards. No one knows how many stateless or undocumented people reside in the Central Asian countries. Often individuals are not registered as being stateless, data may be incomplete, or figures may be withheld for political reasons. Drawing on official figures, the UNHCR recorded 46,886 stateless persons at the end of 2009. Certain problems have been faced by stateless people. They lack access to education, health care, job market, are unable to travel and usually cannot register marriage or birth of a child, can't apply for social benefits and own property. The lack of citizenship papers makes women, minors and stateless persons who stay in nursing homes, mental hospitals, etc. more vulnerable. There are several reasons for becoming stateless in Central Asia.

Disintegration of the USSR and the emergence of new independent states

State dissolution and the formation of new states is one of several causes of statelessness in the world today. On the territory of the former USSR, stateless persons (mostly old people, residents of villages at periphery) are usually holders of old Soviet passports, who did not claim their nationality for various reasons and became stateless. For the replacement of old passport they are required to pay a large fine, which is charged because the document has expired and must produce a large number of different references (seven to fourteen). Some governments are already considering a new regulation to reduce the number of these inquiries, so that it becomes easier to obtain documents. Thus, for the period of 1 January 2009 to 1 January 2014 more than 27,641 people exchanged Soviet passports for passport of Kyrgyzstan.

But there are still about 10,000 people living within the borders of Kyrgyzstan (70% of stateless are in the southern region) without valid citizenship documents.



Along with outdated Soviet papers, many of them have lost their documents or have failed to renew identification papers as required by state legislation. Kyrgyzstan's problems with statelessness began with implementation of its citizenship law in 1994, which provided automatic citizenship for all those living on the territory at the time. For everyone else who had no *propiska*, or registration of residence, citizenship would have to be gained. The application process was so complicated that many individuals avoided it, citing numerous forms, a lengthy and inconsistent list of requirements, delays, and corruption. The 2010 ethnic riots in the southern part of the country increased the number of stateless persons and persons without citizenship. Thousands of people lost their identity documents. Also passport office in Nariman district, for example, has completely burned down together with the archive and as a result many Kyrgyz citizens are facing serious difficulties in obtaining new documents. The UNHCR, Government bodies and the Osh-based NGO Lawyers of the Fergana Valley Without Frontiers have worked to provide legal assistance to those seeking to restore their identities and to reintegrated some 375,000 people affected by the conflict

The legislation of the countries is not in accord with each other and the bureaucratic procedures are very, very difficult

A growing number of Uzbekistani women ("border

brides") who marry men from across the border in Kyrgyzstan are ending up citizens of neither, meaning they have officially ceased to exist. Most of them are didn't know that when they first came to Kyrgyzstan they should have registered with the Uzbek Embassy in Bishkek. After five years of residence outside Uzbekistan, the national passport of a person without consular registration becomes invalid as per Uzbek law. Kyrgyz officials cannot give them residence permits to



help them obtain the status of migrants or Kyrgyz citizenship: they don't have access to the naturalization process due to their invalid passports. There is no legislation in Kyrgyzstan to help these "border brides," and without valid passports they cannot go back to Uzbekistan to get their papers renewed.

The same problem of "border brides" is also faced by the residents of Tajikistan, who married citizens of Uzbekistan. In some cases, they have a photocopy of their former Soviet passports, certificate of statelessness from Uzbekistan, which was issued after marriage and old school records from the state archives, but due to lack of two crucial documents: written confirmation that they are not a citizen of Uzbekistan and a certificate showing that Uzbekistan was their last place of registered residence, they cannot restore their citizenship in Tajikistan. Some have been waiting for a decade and all that time they have been stateless or persons at risk of statelessness. Civil war in Tajikistan in the 1990s also resulted in thousands of individuals ending up without a nationality and becoming refugees or stateless in neighboring countries.

Stateless children

Stateless parents often fail to register the birth of children. Even parents, with documents in hand, fail to

seek registration of the child's birth. They simply do not understand the harm caused to their children. In Kyrgyzstan, until the law on citizenship was updated in 2007, only children of fathers who were citizens became citizens at birth. All others, despite being born on Kyrgyz soil or to Kyrgyz mothers, had to apply for it. Recently, in the countries which do not recognize multiple nationality a growing number of children have been recorded as stateless. In many cases their parents have taken foreign citizenship (in most cases - Russian) in order to facilitate their residence and work at new place. But in the petitions for Russian citizenship or Green Card they do not mention minor children, or mention only one-two and leave others out. There is thus legal conflict and as result the children of migrants become stateless. These children face several legislation problems and often they cannot attend schools.

The UNHCR, the government, NGOs and other civil organizations are working to reduce statelessness within the region. The UNHCR has also helped the Governments to revise their citizenship law. Thus, the Government of Turkmenistan has promulgated a new nationality law including the right of refugees to apply for naturalization. The Government has also agreed to waive citizenship fees for stateless people registered jointly by the authorities and UNHCR in 2011. *Roundtables on Statelessness* were organized by UNHCR at Dushanbe (Tajikistan) in April 2007, Ashgabat (Turkmenistan) in December 2009 and Almaty (Kazakhstan) in October 2013. They were aimed at looking at the phenomenon of statelessness in Central Asia, exchanging experiences and practices relating to statelessness determination procedures and law reform for the reduction and prevention of statelessness. The discussions during the Roundtables allowed the participants to see the residual challenges in the framework for the reduction and prevention of statelessness. During these events, the governments of Central Asia agreed to take steps to examine their nationality laws and administrative practices for further action in the area of prevention and reduction of statelessness and a number of positive developments have occurred across the region. Also a series of national workshops have been organized in Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Tajikistan.

Refugees and the Stateless of Afghanistan

Arpita Basu Roy



"Lack of protection" seems to be the crucial factor determining the status of both the refugees and the stateless worldwide. Some stateless persons are refugees while some refugees are stateless. Often, stateless persons can be considered as refugees, as they might have "a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, and are unwilling or unable to avail themselves of the protection of ... the country of habitual residence". Refugees who are not stateless are those who for the above mentioned reasons are unable or unwilling to avail themselves of the protection of the country of their nationality. Generally, refugees are de facto unprotected and stateless persons are de jure unprotected. It would moreover seem more appropriate to concentrate on the protection aspect, as nationality can be related to various forms of protection. In this respect the difference between "unable" and "unwilling" should be stressed: stateless persons are normally unable to invoke any protection, while asylum-seekers with a nationality are normally unwilling to avail themselves of the protection of their country of nationality. It is taken for granted that the relationship between a country and its citizens involves 'protection' in whatever form that may be. Afghans, in large numbers have either been refugees or stateless or both and therefore vulnerable and "unprotected" for a very long time now.

Statelessness and Refugee Status

Prior to the 1951 Convention there has frequently been no distinction drawn between 'stateless persons' and 'refugees', two classes of persons who were defined by the shared characteristic of being unable or unwilling to rely on the protection of the State from which they originated. The practice of making little, if any, distinction between stateless persons and refugees continued into and through the Second World War. The 1951 Convention represented a decisive break with this, its protection being restricted to a subclass of those

without the protection of a State, the subclass consisting in those who were outside their country of nationality or former habitual residence. In practice those persons who, whether or not they are stateless, are refugees within the scope of the 1951 Convention, in most cases have superior protections to any which are given to stateless people under the separate treaty regime relating to statelessness: the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless People and 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness. Statelessness is an enduring phenomenon, affecting at least 11 million



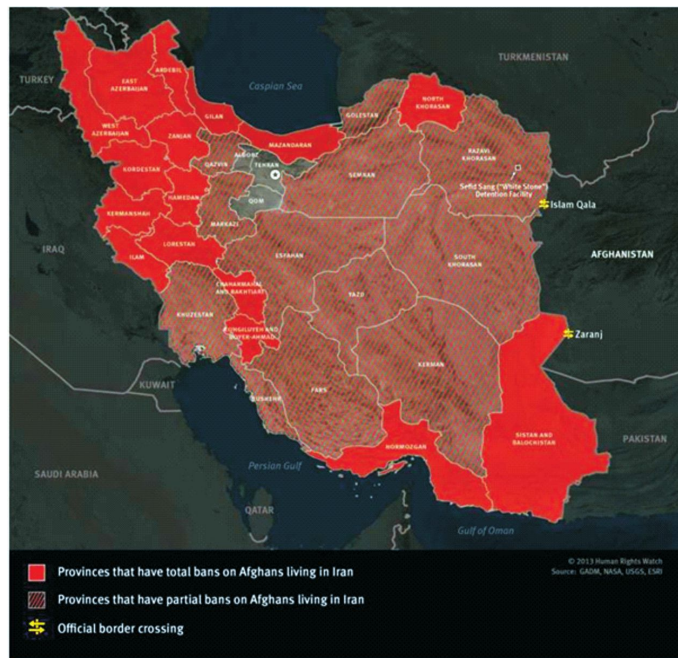
people worldwide today, and it is frequently important to be able to ascertain whether a stateless person qualifies as a refugee under the 1951 Convention.

Afghans as refugees and illegal migrants

More refugees originate from Afghanistan than any other country in the world. Repeated bouts of armed conflict—the Soviet military intervention, the mujahedeen response to it and more recently the increasingly violent battle between the Taliban and the Afghan government and the international troops—have driven millions of Afghans to become refugees and illegal since the 1980s. Pakistan and Iran have been the primary host to the Afghans while the Central Asian States, India, Germany, USA and a few other countries have hosted considerable number of Afghan refugees. The huge number of Afghans seeking refuge outside of Afghanistan has placed significant political, economic, and social burdens on Iran and Pakistan. Millions of other Afghans have also fled violence and insecurity, as well as loss of livelihood, but for various reasons have not registered as refugees or have sought other protective status, or lost their status at some point. These

undocumented migrants have also settled overwhelmingly in Pakistan and Iran, or have spent extended periods of time in these countries as part of a regional and cyclical economic migration. However the Afghans who mostly arrive illegally are susceptible to a lot of vulnerabilities. As of 2014, the vast majority of Afghan refugees, according to UN data, lived in Pakistan and Iran, with roughly 1.6 million registered in Pakistan and around one million registered in Iran.

Pakistan currently hosts the largest protracted refugee situation globally. For Pakistan the groups of people of concern still remain the Afghans who have fled due to violence and persecution at various times, of which close to 40 per cent are living in refugee villages and close to 60 per cent in urban and rural host communities throughout Pakistan. The overwhelming majority of Afghans in Pakistan are ethnic Pashtuns who are known to live and work on both sides of the



Map of Iran showing the provinces where Afghans are allowed to reside

Afghanistan or have faced executions for offences.

Stateless in Afghanistan

Among the "stateless" residing within Afghan territory, mention could be made of two vulnerable groups namely the Jogis and the Bangriwalas or Vangawalas. Both these groups lack identity documents and suffer the usual vulnerabilities of the "stateless".

Jogis are an isolated minority living across Afghanistan for decades without Afghan citizenship. They are originally from Central Asian countries like Uzbekistan and Tajikistan and most of them have crossed the border via Bukhara in Uzbekistan to seek asylum in the northern parts of Afghanistan. In recent times, humanitarian organisations have conducted surveys on this group residing in the Mazar-e- Sharif region and have argued in favour of granting them identity, social protection and development. Their lack of Afghan identity deprives them from access to schools, employment, receiving assistance from government and international aid organisations. They survive in very difficult conditions and are forced to move from place to place. Since they cannot purchase or rent a house because of their lack of an identity card – so they live in isolated locations around Mazar-i-Sharif. They also suffer from social ostracization and are refused jobs of labourers as they are considered "dirty" and "dangerous" making them



Afghan Refugee Children in Pakistan's Refugee Camps

Afghanistan–Pakistan border. Over the years governmental control on refugees has resulted in numerous returnees, primarily because Pakistan had banned extension of visas to all foreigners, including Afghans.

Afghans in Iran are mostly refugees and illegal immigrants who fled Afghanistan since the 1980s Soviet war. It also includes a small minority of traders, businesspeople, workers, students, diplomats, tourists and other visitors. The ones designated as refugees are under the protection and care of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), and provided legal status by the Government of Iran. Afghan refugees cannot obtain Iranian citizenship or permanent residency, and live in Iran under time-limited condition of stay. There have been instances when Afghans were forcefully deported back to

further vulnerable to poverty and unemployment. They survive as beggars and fortune-tellers and are found in significant numbers around the blue mosque in Mazar-e- Sharif. The Yogi children learn begging or fortune-telling at a very young age for their own survival.

Another group of people in eastern Afghanistan –



Bangriwala/Vangawala Girl (Left)

known to the authorities and others as Bangriwala or Vangawala– have reported recently been forcibly relocated because of their lack of identity documents or *tazkera*. These people lead a nomadic lifestyle, following economic and trading opportunities and are generally seen as culturally different from the rest of society, because women often go outside the house for work or to beg, while men stay at home. The high number of begging women in the bazaars in Jalalabad and Kandahar was reportedly bothering local citizens; it was eventually resolved that the so-called Bangriwala were not Afghans and that they should be removed to an unknown location, possibly neighbouring Pakistan. For Bangriwalas (or other nomadic populations) , neither they nor their local elders are officially registered which makes it impossible for them to vouch for *tazkeras*. And without the *tazkera*, people deemed inconvenient by the authorities can easily be relocated or sent out of the country.

Protection and Rights

Afghanistan's constitution states that all Afghan citizens should be treated equally, without discrimination. The citizenship law issued in 2000 rules that a person who has been living in the country for more than five years, has not committed any crimes and is aged over 18 can apply for citizenship; furthermore, it explicitly states that

children born inside Afghanistan to parents with unclear citizenship status have the right to apply for citizenship. Thus citizenship rights for "stateless" groups with the Afghan territory and the issue of protection and opportunities to the Afghan refugees and the repatriated refugees are pertinent issues facing the Afghan government. As mentioned earlier, "protection" thus becomes the most important requirement of these vulnerable groups within Afghanistan or those forced to migrate into the neighbouring lands.

Announcement

ASIA CONNECT

Issue No.4

October- December 2014

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad

National Seminar

Tribal Handicraft- An Option for Livelihood of Tribal Community

30-31 October 2014 (proposed)

Ziro, Arunachal Pradesh

Coordinator:
Arpita Basu

The state of being stateless: Experience of the Chakmas in Arunachal Pradesh

Mrinal Kanti Chakma



Meaning of being Stateless

Statelessness and experience, these two words have a reinforcing bond that implies different meanings to different people. While statelessness connotes the legal framework of relationship between the state and individual, experience bears an imprint of violence, conflict, deprivation and denial of entitlement of being a citizen of any state as per as the subject is concerned. Without consulting the nitty-gritty of international legal framework of statelessness, in ordinary sense we can say, to be stateless means living without citizenship, hence, no legal bond of nationality between the state and individual. The consequence of such situation is lack of access to livelihood, education, health care, property rights and ability to move freely as we find in case of about 65,000 Chakmas and Hajongs of Arunachal Pradesh, India. The obvious question that follows is: what led them to such a deplorable situation? The answer to this question is linked to horrid past of post colonial state formation of Indian sub-continent.

The background

In 1947, the Chakmas, an indigenous Theravada Buddhist tribe of Chittagong Hill Tract (CHT), wanted their ancestral territory to be part of India. However, against their will their territory was included to East Pakistan, currently Bangladesh, violating the norms of partition. The incident is often referred as "Radcliffe Award" in the annals of colonial history of this region. The subsequent years were marked by state repression of various forms as the post-colonial state of Pakistan identified them as pro-Indian tribe. In 1962 in the aftermath of India- Pakistan war, Kaptai hydro-electric power dam was constructed across the river Karnaphuli, the main river of CHT. This resulted into inundation of a vast fertile valley of CHT and displacement of a large number of Chakma tribe without any significant compensation and plan of rehabilitation. This ultimately triggered them to cross international border and take shelter in India.

On the way to Arunachal Pradesh

In many of my trips to Arunachal Pradesh, whenever and wherever I got the opportunity, I made efforts to record the oral history of their migration. Their oral narratives speak about the devastation of their homes by the dam and the ruined memories of childhoods, their pangs and sorrows and their hopes and aspirations associated to a long journey of more than thousand kilometres to reach a new land called NEFA (North Eastern Frontier Agency), currently Arunachal Pradesh. As the narrative goes and also official document reveals, after crossing the international border the Chakmas were given shelter at Demagri transit camp, presently in Mizoram State and given a new identity card – "Chakma refugees" in the name of head of the family and mentioning the names of family members. With this new identity card as their only prized possession, they were taken to Silchar town, walking through a long perilous forest mountain tract with many halts. They were totally ignorant of their fate and final destination, while the high officials of Government of India kept on debating about the possible location of their settlement. Finally, it was decided that being a pro-Indian tribe, the NEFA or present day's Arunachal Pradesh would be the most suitable place for settlement of the Chakma refugees. It may be noted that, such decision was taken in the aftermath of Sino-Indian conflict of 1962. It is an irony of life that, while one violent incident made them displaced from their ancestral homeland another violent conflict came to be an active factor of a half-hearted settlement in NEFA. By 1964, the Chakma refugees from East Pakistan were given settlement in many phases to different locations of NEFA. The Chakma refugees were taken to NEFA using all modes of surface transport such as trucks, buses and railways and even sometimes a long journey on foot.

What went wrong in the subsequent years?

Interviewing many elderly community leaders of different indigenous tribes such as Khamtis and Singphos I came to know that, initially there was no enmity or conflict between the local indigenous tribes and the hapless new migrant Chakmas. Local Khamtis and Singphos and the migrant Chakma community follow Theravada Buddhism. Hence, in terms of religious faith and practices there was no conflict. However, in 1986, trouble started blowing up when a large number of refugees from CHT began to take shelter in Tripura state because of human rights violation in CHT. Stories of more and more Chakma migration into

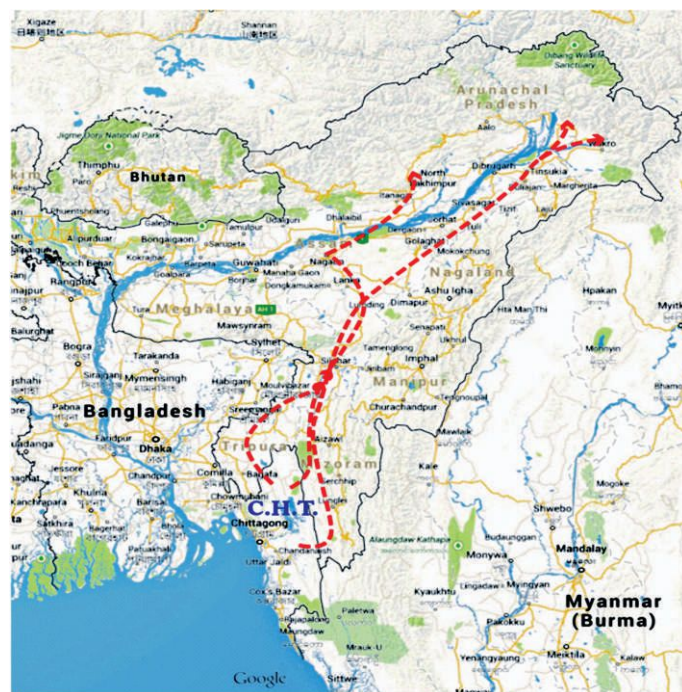
Arunachal Pradesh were in circulation in Arunachal Pradesh. This created a fear psychosis among the local tribes of being submerged by more Chakma migration. In 1987, the earlier NEFA region was given a state status and thus 29th state of India called Arunachal Pradesh was born. The diverse regions of the state contain at least 30 tribes and possibly as many as 50 distinct languages with many dialects but without having any pan- Arunachal identity. In a context like this, a slogan like, "Kick out the Chakmas from Arunachal Pradesh" became a handy tool to develop a pan-Arunachal political identity. A section of political leadership of the state also used the young student forces to gain political mileages out of this. This resulted into mass boycott of the Chakmas by the local indigenous tribes. Thus, the terrible experience of statelessness turns into a full circle for the Chakmas of Arunachal Pradesh.

Response of the State and the current status of the Chakmas

In the years of post-1990s, news media reports began to emerge reflecting the terrible situation of ethnic conflicts that resulted into a condition of lack of access to livelihood, education, health care, property rights and ability to move freely for the Chakmas of Arunachal Pradesh. The Chakmas of Arunachal Pradesh have raised their concerns to the government of India. In the early 1990s, the Committee of Citizenship Rights for the Chakmas of Arunachal Pradesh (CCRCAP) was formed to raise their demand for citizenship rights. The CCRCAP repeatedly informed National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) about the threat to the lives and property of the Chakmas and demanded for citizenship rights of the Chakmas and Hajongs. As the State Government was inordinately delaying to inform on the steps taken to protect the Chakmas and Hajongs, the NHRC, headed by Justice Ranganath Mishra, approached the Supreme Court to seek appropriate relief filing a writ petition (No. 720/1995). The Supreme Court in its interim order on 2 November 1995 directed the State Government to "ensure that the Chakmas situated in its territory are not ousted by any coercive action, not in accordance with law."

By the years of 1998, all the Chakma refugees of the 1986 batches who were sheltered in Tripura went back to CHT in accordance of the CHT Peace Accord signed between Parbattya Chattagram Jana Samhati Samiti (PCJSS, the political party that fought for autonomy in CHT) and

Government of Bangladesh on 2nd December 1997. This led to ease out the fear of giving settlement of fresh batches of Chakma refugees. Recently a Committee under the Chairmanship of Joint Secretary (North East), Ministry of Home Affairs has been constituted to examine various issues relating to settlement of Chakmas in Arunachal Pradesh including the possibility of grant of citizenship to eligible Chakmas and to recommend measures to be taken by the Central Government/State Government in this matter. This year, the Chakmas of Arunachal Pradesh celebrated 50 years of their migration to this state with the memories of their pangs and sorrows and also new hopes and aspirations. They also made an appeal to live in peace and harmony with all the local communities and express their loyalty and affiliation in development endeavours of this state. A small fraction of them also got voter identity cards and cast their votes in this year to elect the members of the Legislative Assembly and the members of Parliament. Most of the elderly members of the Chakmas who migrated from CHT in 1964 have passed away, the new generations who are born and brought up in Arunachal Pradesh cannot think of their home anywhere other than Arunachal Pradesh. Like many other migrant communities in this world, perhaps, this newly settled land would be their home while the memories of ancestral land will continue to remain as reference point of their origin.



State and Statelessness: Plight of the Rohingyas and the Biharis in Bangladesh

Srimanti Sarkar



While much of the contemporary literature on 'nation-states' critique the earlier correspondence between nations and states—'nations' are now often conceived as socially constructed in many different ways. Increasing connections among nation, state, territory, sovereignty, history and identity are all problematized; as a result of which renewed conceptions about nations without states and older diasporic nations comprising of a host of new transnational communities come into view before our eyes while older ones disintegrate. Nations have become more fluid, malleable, and unpredictable than ever before. It is in this context, one needs to understand the issue of 'statelessness' that challenges



A view over where unregistered Rohingya refugees live at Kutupalong Refugee Camp, Bangladesh

the conceptual rubrics of the 'nation-state' in a significant way.

Everyone has the right to a nationality and 'statelessness' precisely refers to that state of denial by

virtue of which an individual or a group of individuals loses their identity as nationals in a particular country. To be stateless not only means lack of effective nationality or lack of formal recognition by a state but it also means negation of the basic civil, political, economic, cultural and social rights of the people who are victims of this legal anomaly. However, the intricacies of 'statelessness' runs deep as the magnitude and scope of this phenomenon is largely indefinable. By its very nature, statelessness is not always well understood; as a result of which in many countries its scope is ignored. Nevertheless statelessness impacts the daily lives of over 12 million people all around the world. Most often the stateless people lead 'invisible lives' on the margins of society. They frequently lack identity documentation and are often subject to discrimination that adds on to the plight of this vulnerable section of the population. Stateless people are found in all regions of the world. Bangladesh—being the world's eighth most populous country has a burgeoning population of over 160 million people. The historical legacy of the country has been a testifier of two bloody partitions and a major civil war out of which the independent nation of Bangladesh was born. It subsequently faced the frequent bouts of economic exigencies, political daze and tests of combating famines and other forms of natural disasters. All these combined forces along with the demographic contingencies of the region had led to massive internal displacement of various sections of the population as well as trans-border migration and infiltration to and from the neighbourhood region. Bangladesh hosts a significant number of Rohingya refugees infiltrating from Myanmar in its eastern region and a large number of Urdu-speaking minority groups who are called the 'Biharis' or 'Stranded Pakistanis' living in various camps across Bangladesh.

Rohingyas in Bangladesh

The Rohingya ethnic minority of Myanmar is one of the most persecuted and at the same time one of the largest stateless groups in the world. They endured decades of abuse, harassment and discrimination by the government of Myanmar which stripped off their citizenship in 1982 forcing them to flee their own country and live in exile in the adjoining neighbourhood. Since 1991 there has been a mass exodus of more than 250,000 Rohingya refugees



Ukhiya Cox's Bazar: Rohingya refugee camp in Kutupalong, Bangladesh

who infiltrated Bangladesh. Living in temporary camps and completely dependent on the aid and support provided by the United Nations (UN), the Government of Bangladesh (GOB) and various other non-governmental organizations (NGOs); the Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh have been leading a life of delude whereby they are afraid of returning to Myanmar on one hand and uncertain about their permissible stay in Bangladesh on the other. About 29,000 Rohingyas live in official refugee camps in Bangladesh whereby they are provided legal and humanitarian supports for sustenance. But another 200,000 Rohingya refugees reside in unofficial camps and villages where they do not get any

support for their existence. Tensions over scarce resources such as water and firewood, malnutrition, physical and sexual violence especially against women and girls, lack of security and no access to the police or justice system add significantly to the plight of these Rohingya refugees rendering them a life of utter impoverishment.

Biharis in Bangladesh

Somewhat similar to that of the Rohingyas, the Urdu-speaking minorities called the 'Biharis'—who migrated to the former East Pakistan after 1947 and have been stranded there since its independence as Bangladesh and separation from Pakistan in 1971—are also considered 'stateless' as neither Bangladesh nor Pakistan recognized them as citizens until very recently. It was in May 2008 that the government of Bangladesh recognised their right to be registered as citizens which can be considered as a significant human rights achievement. Since the inception of the



Bihari Refugees at the Kurmi Tola Camp in the Mirpur district of Dhaka

state of Bangladesh at least 200,000 to as many as 500,000 people from this community lived in camps and squalid urban slums/settlements with limited access to health care. They were denied legal identity along with associated rights to be educated, to work

and to participate in various aspects of public life. In spite of sharing a common religion, 'Islam', and a common language, 'Bangla' with the majority of the Bengali population in Bangladesh, the Biharis endured the vanity of political indecision on the part of both Bangladesh and Pakistan regarding their citizenship status. As a result of which, insidious discrimination in terms of identity, nationality, social, economic and political status has been levied upon this community adding to their toils.

The historical legacy and subsequent social and political circumstances defining the state and fate of the Rohingya and the Bihari communities in Bangladesh thus buttress a few crucial points. The Rohingya refugee influx from the Rakhine state of Myanmar into the Bangladeshi soil highlights the increasing difficulties of a modern nation-state to maintain its territorial sovereignty while dealing with transnational communities. Here the stateless Rohingyas with their diasporic presence pose a threat to the demography of the state of Bangladesh which it cannot resolve easily on humanitarian and other inevitable grounds. The case of the Biharis, on the other hand, point out how historical and political factors internal to the Bangladeshi state itself renders a certain section of the population 'stateless'. The undefined national identity of the Biharis therefore metes out a direct challenge to the state which fails to define a significant section of its own populace within its own territory. Therefore in the final conclusion, one may state that the plight of these two minority communities of Bangladesh—viz., the Rohingyas and the Biharis, needs a careful re consideration because their, so called 'artificial', 'invisible' and 'stateless' discomfitures are likely to have an inevitable impact on the state system of Bangladesh.



On 15th August, the national flag was hoisted by the Chairman of the Institute, Shri Sitaram Sharma at Azad Bhavan, Salt Lake and the Museum Building, Ballygunge

Travel

Iran's Afghan Policy and Imperatives for Cooperation

Arpita Basu Roy



There is an understanding that Iran--once dubbed a member of the "axis of evil" by former US President George W. Bush - could play a key role in the post-2014 strategic milieu and coalesce around stabilizing Afghanistan. Iran as a key player in the Afghan imbroglio will prepare for a greater role as the US draws down by the end of 2014 but what approaches it would adapt is worth analysing. Iran's foreign policy since its 1979 Islamic Revolution has been shaped by Ayatollah Khomeini's ideology and Islamic solidarity, and strongly influenced by the country's relations with the United States as well as by the wider geopolitical changes in its

newly elected President, Hassan Rouhani, and after the proposed withdrawal of foreign troops in 2014, it remains imperative to analyse Iran's interests, apprehensions and policies on Afghanistan. There is a clear need for cooperative policy approaches based on better understanding of the interests of Afghanistan and its neighbours.



With Prof. Abdol Majid Eskandari



With the Indian Ambassador HE DP Srivastava

region. Iran's policy on Afghanistan over three decades has been broadly constructive and often substantial, although not consistently transparent. Therefore, its Afghanistan strategy is complex, multifaceted and quite pragmatic and Iran has remained supportive of Afghanistan's democratization and stabilization. In order to draw some conclusions about the Iranian government's foreign policies on Afghanistan under its

The perceptions that I wanted to gather during my trip as part of my project on *Afghanistan and Regional Security* was whether the drawdown could alter the long-term regional stability of the region, the major security concerns that Iran apprehends from instability within Afghanistan and the possibilities of Indo-Iranian cooperation on Afghanistan. Other obvious queries were whether the US presence in the region is perceived only as hegemonic or there are possibilities of US-Iran rapprochement and its possible effects on regional security. Iran's perception about the Afghan Presidential elections, the issue of re-integration with the Taliban and political transition process within Afghanistan were also to be addressed. There were questions related to the kind of projects, confidence-building measures and assistance that Iran was trying to promote in Afghanistan. The complementarities of interests that exist between India and Iran and the possibilities of bilateral cooperation on Afghanistan were also explored.

On the basis of my interaction with scholars, academics, bureaucrats and former government officials certain inferences were deduced by me. Having invested

heavily in Afghanistan over the last 34 years, Iran will undoubtedly seek to maintain, if not strengthen, its political, cultural and social influence over its eastern neighbour in order to secure its own national security and geopolitical position. Cooperation between the two Islamic republics is expected to increase after 2014.



With Professor Heshmat Moinfar, Head of the Department of Indian Studies, Faculty of World Studies, Tehran University

This will support Iran's goal of consolidating itself as a regional power and could facilitate its role as mediator in the reconciliation process between the Afghan government and insurgents. President Rouhani is in a strong position to cooperate constructively with the international community, and especially the USA, on the stabilization of Afghanistan and its neighbourhood. Indeed, it could act as a facilitator for engagement with the international community on a number of broader political issues of mutual concern.

Iran is also willing to cooperate with India on a number of issues and the Chabahar port could act as one of the most important investments for India having the potential to change the regional dynamics. The port is expected to play an important role in the economic reconstruction and development of Afghanistan. India and Iran had decided on the project in 2003, but the venture failed to make much headway because of US sanctions on Iran, even though port construction was exempted from the sanctions. Afghanistan is keen on India going ahead with the project as it could lead to a big boost to its trade. While India can currently source goods from Afghanistan through Pakistan, trade in the opposite direction is not allowed, leaving landlocked

Afghanistan dependent on its neighbour to the east, with which it shares a lawless border region ridden with Islamist terrorist groups. Chabahar will not only provide India a shorter trade route to Afghanistan, it can also use this to import minerals from Central Asia.

Although Iran and Afghanistan currently have good diplomatic relations and increasing economic ties, several issues complicate their relationship. On Tehran's side, these include Iran's longstanding hostility toward the United States, the uncertain status of almost two million Afghans living in Iran, and the security threat presented by the uncontrolled drug trade across its border with Afghanistan. Kabul's concerns are more inchoate, but include the difficulty of maintaining U.S. support without alienating Iran (and vice versa) and fears of Iranian "cultural imperialism." Important ethnic and regional considerations also come into play for Kabul. Iran shares the closest ties with groups (Shiite Hazaras and Persian-speaking Sunnis) and regions (Herat and western Afghanistan) that have opposed Pashtun-dominated governments in the past.

Iran's disapproval about the return of the Taliban, its concern about the drug economy affecting its citizens,



Iman Khomeini Square or Naghsh-e Jahan Square, Isfahan

and its plans to expand trade ties with Afghanistan and Central Asia make it a potential ally in bringing stability to Afghanistan because none of these goals can be achieved without it. These are all areas in which, if the United States and Iran agree, could serve as the basis of cooperation. More important for Iran, the sooner stability comes to Afghanistan, the more likely international forces are to depart. Of all Afghanistan's neighbours, Iran is also the only state that has the ability

to balance Pakistan's influence in Afghanistan with a comparable presence. Afghanistan has always proved to be more stable when it has been able to offset the influence of outsiders seeking influence through competition.

The possibilities of cooperation between MAKAIAS and the research Centres at Tehran and other cities of Iran were also explored during the trip.

Highlights of the trip:

- Meeting with the Indian Ambassador in Iran HE DP Srivastava and other officials at the Indian Embassy in Tehran
- Possibilities of MAKAIAS collaboration with institutions like the Department of Law and Political Science and the Faculty of World Studies, Tehran University, Department of Law and Political Science, Isfahan University and Iran and Eurasia Research Centre (IRAS), Tehran
- Professor Bahram Amirahmadian expresses his interest on doing a joint project with MAKAIAS on Iran and India cooperation with special focus on the Chabahar port
- Meetings with Prof Abdol Majid Eskandari, International Office, University of Tehran, Prof Kamran Taremi, Center for Graduate International Studies of the Department of Law and Political Science, Tehran University, Prof. Heshmat Moinfar, HOD, Department of Indian Studies, Faculty of World Studies, Tehran
- Discussed possibilities of cooperation with Dr. Mandana Tisheyar, Deputy Director, Institute of Iran and Eurasia Studies (IRAS) and interacted with Sirous Amerian, a researcher at IRAS.
- Met Iranian social activist Nahid Tavassoli and exchanged notes on social and political issues
- Interaction with Professor Ali Omid at the Department of Law and Political Science, University of Isfahan.
- I was interviewed by IRAS on issues related to Indian foreign policy, Afghanistan and Iran-India cooperation published on their website: www.iras.ir
- Also interviewed by one of the leading websites of Iran www.khabaronline.ir conducted by Mr. Mohammad Reza Naroozpoor of khabaronline (Programme: Café Khabar)

Iran is one of the most distinctive countries in the world -- a place where dazzling architecture is set amid desolate expanses of desert or steppe- where tombs, temples, castles, and mosques bespeak the richness of the Persian past.



With Indian Musical Instruments at the Department of Indian Studies, Tehran University



With Social Activist Nahid Tavassoli



The Carpet Museum at Tehran

The dress codes for Iran "obeying Islamic rules including Hijab or Islamic dress" was something that kept me bothered before the visit as websites offering tips to women for travel into Iran stressed on strict Islamic dress code for women which was supposedly to take effect when my airplane crossed into Iranian airspace. However I was surprised that no such announcement was made in the aircraft even after landing. When inside the country, I found that hijab ranged from being loose to strict- a loose headscarf and long-sleeved dress was perfectly all right.



With Professor Bahram Amirahmadian



Traditional Iranian meal at the AmirAhmadian household

Iran is famous for its legendary hospitality and I was testimony to the experience. The old Persian proverb says it all: "Guests are friends of God."



Chehel Sotoun (The Palace of Forty Columns), Isfahan

Esfahan or Isfahan is famous for its Islamic architecture, with many beautiful boulevards, covered bridges, palaces, mosques, and minarets. A Persian proverb says "Esfahān nesf-e jahān ast" or Isfahan is half of the world. The Naghsh-e Jahan Square in Isfahan is one of the largest city squares in the world and an outstanding example of Iranian and Islamic architecture. It has been designated by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site.



Esfahani Pottery: Esfahan is the Iranian city of craftsmanship



The Armenian Vank Cathedral at Isfahan

Iran has a cultural fabric woven of many threads – Persian, Turkic, Kurdish, Baluchi and Mongol

International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Workshop

**Water futures:
A dialogue for young
scholars and professionals**

27 October-6 November 2014

**MAKAIAS in collaboration with
Jamia Millia Islamia
and University of Dhaka**

National Seminar

***Trail of Living Buddhism
in Arunachal Pradesh***

**29 October, 2014
Maulana Azad Centre for
Research on North East India,
Rajiv Gandhi University,
Itanagar, Arunachal Pradesh**

Sponsored by MAKAIAS, Kolkata

**Coordinator:
Prof. Sarit Chaudhuri, RGU, Itanagar**

Travel

Tajikistan: a few fragments of frescoes

Dilorom Karomat



Uzbekistan and Tajikistan are countries which have changed significantly since my early childhood. As precious moments of my research life I remember my Ethno-musicological field trips in the 1980s and 1990s in villages of both countries. Then (about 25 years ago), with a group of folklorists from the Fine Arts Research Institute (on the way to Kuliab) we went through two mountain passes named Shahrstan and Ayni (also named as Anzob pass) and it took more than 10 hours! From the people who were waiting for Tajik Visa near Embassy of Tajikistan in Tashkent I learn that I can reach



Anzob pass

many times by small Ilushin-18 aircraft from Tashkent to Dushanbe and reached only in 45 minutes. Since 1991-1992 no passenger aircraft from Uzbekistan flies to Tajikistan and there is no train or bus service either. Travelling and visiting relatives on both sides becomes very difficult. From the people near the Embassy of Tajikistan in Tashkent I learnt that they have been waiting for 6 month and more for clearance from Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Tajikistan to visit relatives. Most of them have relatives (ethnic Uzbeks) just across the border. There are two ways (third one is from Fergana valley) to go to Tajikistan. Closest one from Tashkent is through Bekobod (Farkhod or Oybek checking posts) and the farthest is through Saraosiyu. The last often remains closed for and can be accessed only if there is an urgent telegrams (death or marriage). Even with a valid visa for Tajikistan, the border may be closed and entry denied. This can prove to be inconvenient considering that fact that often one travels about 10-15 hours to reach the closest destination by train (or by flight till Termez) and then by taxi till border.

Checking out from Farkhod I enter Tajikistan early in the morning. After changing shared taxi at Istravshan I found myself waiting for other passengers inside the car with a young girl (ethnic Uzbek) from Spitamen. I learnt that she is a student of the Institute of Sport at Dushanbe and trained for Karate at Spitamen and has already participated in many competitions of CIS countries. Her brothers and most of relatives are in Russia and working near Moscow. If the first part of our conversation about her sport talent surprised me (I never met girls from small places of Tajikistan, who wanted to be sportsperson), then the second part were very typical for modern Tajikistan, where most of the population is working in Russia as "gasterbayter."

The beauty of grass and snow covered mountains is a very pleasant sight as the car moves forward. I look out of the window eagerly trying to remember and notice changes which have taken place in the last 25 years on



Dushanbe in just 4 hours from Khodjent (Leninabad) or Istravshan or Spitamen. The long distance was shorted by the help of three tunnels, which were built by Chinese (the first and third) and Iranians (second, incomplete). It is well known, that Tajikistan is a country where mountains cover 93% of its territory and most popular mountains are Pamir and Fan (3373m high is Anzob pass).

The communication between Uzbekistan and Tajikistan were well established before the disintegration of USSR and the Civil War in Tajikistan. As a child I have traveled



Nostalgia for USSR

the Anzob pass. The high serpentine road has become much easy, thanks to the building of tunnels and road traffic has subsequently increased. Near tunnels which were built by Chinese can be seen boards with several scripts (included Chinese). Between tunnels I saw nameplates written only in Chinese. Our driver and the man in the front seat softly discussed the matter of Chinese workers in the country and places taken on rent by the Chinese. They spoke almost continuously and I guess, in the course of the trip covered all matters related to country, crisis at Ukraine, business, work at

machine covered by a scarf. Past and present were together almost everywhere intertwined with each other.

The car has dropped us at a place named Vodanasos and we rushed for our destinations in Dushanbe. My maternal grandmother Lyubov Ivanovna Kiyamova (originally from Moscow) and grandfather Shamsi Kiyamov (originally from Samarkand) have lived and worked in Dushanbe. They were trained in the Institute of Cinematography at Moscow and left their marks in the history of Theatre and the Tajik film studio. My grandmother passed away at the age of 91 and my mother in her personal diary has pointed to a remarkable situation at a small church during her burial:

And here we stand with the candles in hand around the coffin. The young priest is chanting prayers with



The view from Park Ghalaba, Dushanbe

Russia and more excitedly – how it was good when it was USSR. I saw this nostalgia for USSR in Dushanbe too, even ice-cream was named "Plombir USSR" and old soda machine has a plate "Gazirovka CCCP 50 d" (soda water USSR, 50 diram) with the girl operating the



The National Museum of Tajikistan, Dushanbe

a pleasant baritone. Next to us with the candles are my mother's old colleagues from the studio, my friends ... my classmate Svetlana with her two brothers (the same as we are – the children of two nationalities), the relatives of our sons-in law from Kulyab and Pamir, and the neighbors. And no one even thought that apart from us and Tania (our close and beloved neighbor), everyone else was Muslim by faith, as they stood with candles and quietly listening to the voice of the priest. And behind the church lie in their graves Russians, Tajiks, Jews,



Dushanbe (Stalinabad), 1954. The houses on Lenin Avenue, which were demolished this year

Armenians, Tatars and Germans...

These feelings of internationalism are still alive in the hearts of Tajik people, although not many Russians (apart from officers and families of the "201" division")



Dushanbe (Stalinabad), 1945. The territory near the Opera and Ballet Theatre named after Ayni – past and present

can be seen in the streets of Dushanbe. Many of them, along with educated Tajiks of Dushanbe, left the country at the time of tragic events of the Civil War. This fact very significantly changed cultural and academic life of Dushanbe. Coming back from Park Ghalaba (which offers the best views over the city), situated on small hill I

saw traditional Russian houses and Tajik women and children chatting and playing near by. Before Civil War Nagorka (as it was named before) were settled by Russian families (workers). During the Civil War many citizens of Tajikistan applied and got Russian passports and thus double nationality was accepted by the



Modern Dushanbe

Government of Tajikistan. Although, during my return to Uzbekistan, one Tajik lady was asked to show both her passports (according to new rule).

Traditionally Dushanbe is a very compact city, with beautiful alleys and two-three storied buildings. As a child I remember that, just by walking through the center with me my mother would have met all her friends and discussed all the problems and found out all last news. When I was in Dushanbe one decade before, during the last shoot out between the government and the opposition, the city was dim and because of mass settlement from villages has looked more like a big village. This time I found Dushanbe bigger, with many storied modern houses and smart citizens.

When I had once expressed my doubt about the quality of buildings that had been built so quickly with my friend our taxi driver (ethnic Tajik) with big beard (according to Islamic tradition) objected in excellent Russian "the builders knew their job!" ... I left Tajikistan, but nostalgia for the compact green city between mountains and warm and open-hearted people remains with me.

Travel

Three Kazakh destinations Differing frames



Suchandana Chatterjee

I undertook my field trip to the northern and western parts of Kazakhstan in the peak of Central Asia's dry summer. Predictions of intermittent rain had enlivened my spirits. The aim of this trip was to go beyond the library and university setups and focus on site-visits filled with memories of Horde legacies, Russian colonization, Revolution and War, Soviet deportation and post-Soviet transition. A major attraction was local museums (some of them open air museums) that have sprung up in recent years and are prominent repositories showcasing Kazakh success stories. The idea was to get a sense of provincial dynamics of Akmolinsk oblast, considered to be a major pull factor of foreign investment in Kazakhstan.

The specificities of this oblast are the following: (a) Middle Horde (*Orta Zhuz*) and Younger Horde (*Kishi Zhuz*) legacies (b) resource-centric projects in the Caspian basin conducted through the *Ak Zhaik* (Ural River) which is the main Asia-Europe connector. Added to this was the urge to catch up with the Tsarist and Soviet pasts. Taking into consideration the fact that northern and western Kazakhstan were among the first to encounter Russian colonization and that a Russianized environment was fairly pronounced in these regions, I thought this visit would be worthwhile in terms of a comparison with southeast Kazakhstan.

The plan of the 11-day trip was to visit three destinations—(a) Astana which is projected as Central Asia's global capital (b) Kokshetau (*The Blue Mountain*) is the regional centre of Akmolinsk oblast and is a living memory of not only the Middle Horde tribal heritage but also boasts of the intellectual greatness of Chokan Valikhanov, the Kazakh orientalist of the Tsarist era who died at a very young age (c) Atyrau which is the oil hub of western Kazakhstan that attracts a series of business houses from Western Europe. Tengiz Chevroil (TCS) is the main operator controlling the transportation of

refined oil along the Ural River to Aktau and also to other ports on the Mediterranean and Black Seas.

The destinations were three in number—but my journey into the continental landscape was fairly longer— with about 700 kilometres of road travel (from and to Astana) along the northern belt that was vibrant with memories of Cossack fortresses, railroad connectivity represented by the legendary trans-Siberian Railway (its southern arc passing through this region), a vast grassland territory interspersed with tundra vegetation that overlapped with regions of South Siberia and above all memories of the valiant chief Abylai Khan in the Akmola oblast. In fact, as I travelled along the rain-soaked highway towards Kokshetau, the regional centre of Akmola oblast, I crossed hamlets along such bordering regions of Siberia and Kazakhstan namely, Akmol, Omsk, Pavlodar, Petropavlovsk, Karaganda. The entire region reverberates with narratives and folk tales of Middle and Younger Hordes. The enigma of Abylai Khan who gave leadership to motley of tribes has a lingering effect on people's minds. This role of Younger Horde chieftains as heads of warrior clans was in stark contrast to the



The New National Museum, Astana

diplomatic role played by leaders of the Greater Horde.

Astana-the global city

On the night of 10th August, I stepped into the glitzy world of Astana, the Kazakh capital. The series of landmark events and vision statements (*Vision 2030, Vision 2050, Kazakh Mangalik Yel, Expo 2017, Silk Way*) make Astana Asia's most sought-after global capital. The grandiose and stylish buildings of the brand state are comparable to Macao's casino hub, *The Wynn*.



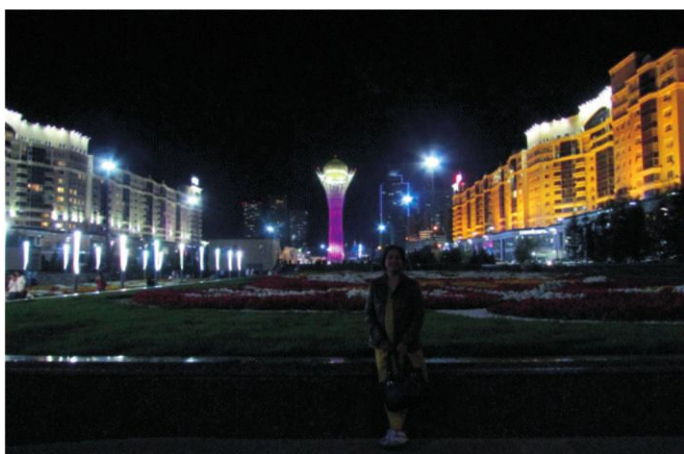
Independence Square, Astana

Architectural designs of the Pyramid and the Palace of Peace and Reconciliation reflect the desire to recreate the magic of the Louvre in Paris.



Hazrat Sultan Mosque, Palace of Independence: view from National Museum

way since its inauguration on Astana Day, i.e. on 6th of July 2014. Most of the artefacts in this museum are from the restoration work that the Kazakh Government has conducted all over the steppe country. Some of these artefacts have also been directly brought in from the Central State Museum in Almaty or from the already existing Museum of the First President of the Republic of Kazakhstan. The new museum has 12 rooms and the maintenance of the exhibition is supported by Kazakhstan's national oil and gas company, KazMunaiGaz. The Museum commemorates the heritage of the Silk Route and the transition from Akmolinsk to Tselinograd to Astana. Also interesting are galleries portraying ancient settlements of the city of Astana that have been unearthed—e.g. Bozok



Nurzhol Boulevard, Astana

I could not afford to miss the view of Astana's night sky from the Left Bank--lit up by neon lights along Nurzhol Boulevard on which stand a galaxy of the city's skyscrapers—Baiterek Tower, the Fountain, *Ak Orda* (the President's Palace) and the twin House of Ministries, the Senate House, the Ministry of Justice, Nursaya apartments where the elite families live. The Khan Shatyr Entertainment Centre with its elliptical base also lit up by bright violet arc lights shimmered at a distance. The shimmering white dome of *Nur Astana Mosque* has a magical effect for which Astana's Left Bank is worth a visit at night.

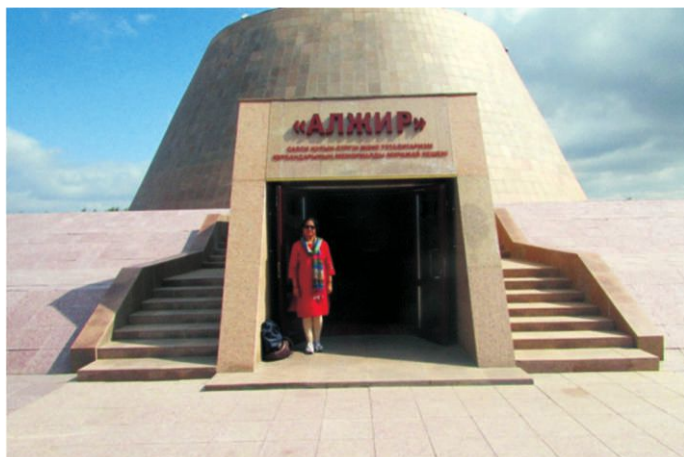
The latest addition to the cultural bonanza this year is the National Museum which has been advertised in a big



Ak Orda (President's Palace), Astana

settlement and Botai settlement. Charming new projects like the Green Belt around the city of Astana are projected through laser beams.

I visited Independence Square on a hot sunny morning. The Palace of Independence, like any new architecture in Astana is jumbo-size with three floors, each floor



ALZHIR Memorial Complex, 40 kilometres from Astana

having a spacious Congress Hall, a Ceremonial Hall and a Press Centre with an attached mega-size restaurant respectively. A major characteristic of the building was the exhibition floor—with criss-crossed galleries filled with classical and new age paintings by Kazakh artists.

It did not take me long to wake up from the reverie of the grandiose cityscape of Astana. Instead I decided to proceed on my museum-scouting missions. The best experience I had was in ALZHIR memorial complex—which is the Akmola Deportation Camp for Wives of Traitors of the Revolution. It was a Stalinist deportation camp within the gulag system and had several high profile prisoners, artists and actresses—most of them women of aristocratic backgrounds who were identified as traitors or wives and companions of traitors of the Revolution. Situated in Malinka village about 40 kilometres west of Astana, the Memorial Complex bears testimony to broken families and sorrows of women and children of Kazakh, Uzbek, Azeri, Polish, German, Korean backgrounds who were forced into a life of seclusion in this camp in the Kazakh steppe in the 1930s.

Kokshetau and Burabai: Blessed with the past



Lenin's Statue, Kokshetau Park



City Museum, Kokshetau

An unusual journey was to Kokshetau and Burabay—about 300 kilometres from Astana in Akmola region in northern Kazakhstan. Kokshetau is a quaint provincial town in Akmola oblast. The city reminds its people of its glorious Soviet past, immortalized through Kokshetau's Soviet patrons of music, sports and art. The



Lake area, Kokshetau

Burabay National Nature Park is tucked away in the town of Schuschinsk—about 50 kilometres away from Kokshetau town. Burabay is the pearl of Kazakhstan and has gorgeous pine forests and cliffs and rocks that are interspersed with serene lakes. The eco region *Burabay* was created in August 2000 and is under the supervision of the Administration of Presidential Affairs. The location is a part of the Kokshetau steppe, a mixed steppe and forest and hilly upland. Every rock here has its own legend. The location is a huge mineral reserve. Among them are: Okzhetpes cliff (Inaccessible to Arrows) with a peak resembling an elephant calf and the Zhumbaktas cliff (Mysterious Stone) resembling a mysterious sphinx. Burabay is a name that is treasured by all Kazakhs,



Abylay Khan's Memorial, Kokshetau

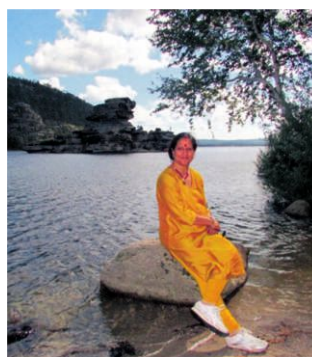
referring not only to the famous lake that lies in the middle of the mountains, but to the whole Burabay-



Chokan Valikhanov Square, Kokshetau

Kokshetau National Park.

A series of Kazakh legends epitomises Burabay. The legend of the region's formation tells how God granted the Kazakhs this wonderful landscape. Another legend of the fighting spirit of a *batyr* who lost his eye fighting



Zhumbaktas Rock, Burabay



The woods, Burabay

the Zhungars is also very popular. There are legends about Abylai Khan fighting the Zhungars in the 18th century while his warriors wanted to marry a local princess. The princess was brought to Burabay who agreed to give her hand to the first warrior who could shoot an arrow to the top of Okzhetpes. All failed, hence the name Okzhetpes which means 'Unreachable by Arrows'. The distraught princess then drowned herself in the lake, thus creating *Zhumbaktas* (Mysterious Stone). *Polyana Abylay Khana* (Abylay Khan's Clearing) is a location in the heart of the meadows where the warrior hero is thought to have reputedly once assembled his forces during his Zhungar campaigns. A tall, eagle-topped monument, stands in the clearing; a large, flat-topped rock known as Abylay Khan's Throne hides in the trees behind.

A tiny little museum is perched in the land that commemorates the valiant struggle of the *batyrs* of the Middle and Younger Horde.

Atyrau-Oil and more

Atyrau is a region from where the river (Ural) flows into the sea (Caspian). This city in western Kazakhstan is a major draw for most of the oil companies from the west



Ak Zhaik (Ural River) from Pedestrian Bridge, Atyrau

but it is China and its oil companies CNPC, SIMOCO that are in the driver's seat. Major competition is from TengizChevrOil (TCO, the Kazakh-American multinational giant) and its Caspian variant—KASPICHEVROIL. My interaction with engineers and language consultants of TCO gives me

old city are thriving in the city museum. Here, like in Kokshetau, people are nostalgic about their Horde legacy--that of the Younger Horde. The 1941 Victory Square immortalises the victory of the Fatherland. No less are their pride about the trading genius of the 17th century Russian trader Gurev and his caviar business that gave Atyrau its identity as a fishing settlement in the Caspian, and the Ust-Zhaisky fortified town which once



1941 Victory Square Memorial, Atyrau

the impression of a dual force in this oil-rich zone which aspires to have an identity of its own and not only be regarded as Astana's prize catch or as western investors idealize as 'a geologist's dream'.

Uniquely poised as a location that is stretched between Europe and Asia due to the Ural River (*Ak Zhai*k) that flows through its midst, Atyrau has a life of its own. That life belongs to the people who live in the old part of the city—the Zhilgorodok and the Balarshe. Memories of the



Oil Refinery, Atyrau

belonged to the Cossack warriors. Today the buzz about Atyrau is not only about its fishing area but also about its oil refineries, petrochemical plant, metalworking and construction-material industries and ship-repair yards which have attracted a large section of foreign entrepreneurs. The other point of attraction is the longest pedestrian bridge on the Ural River. But a very interesting feature is Atyrau's old railway station—that brings in local goods from various parts of CIS to Atyrau to be carried by cargo ships along the Ural River to Europe.

My visit was all about differing frames of Kazakhstan - a Disneysque Astana, the eco-region Kokshetau and finally the oil-town Atyrau.



Tengiz Chevroil, Atyrau

*Study Trip Report***Visiting Repositories in Delhi****Mili Ghose**

I have been doing research as a Fellow at the Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Institute of Asian Studies (MAKAIAS) for almost one and a half year. My project title is Cyclone and Societies in South Asia: Bengal 1737-2009. I went to Delhi for my first study trip from 7th August to 21st August, 2014. I was very nervous because I never went anywhere outside Kolkata, my home town, alone. At the same time I was very excited and enthusiastic. Delhi is not only the heart of India; it is also a city with a rich history and as a student of history I was aware of it. When I researched in Delhi, the temperature was almost 44 degree Celsius and it was not very comfortable. I thought that it would rain during the monsoon time, but there was not much rain in Delhi. In connection with my research primarily I went to National Archives of India, New Delhi for several days. The employees of National

*Nehru Memorial Museum & Library, Teen Murti House, New Delhi*

Teen Murti, New Delhi is also very resourceful for my subject. I worked at this library for two days. I was able to search out both primary and secondary sources from this library. I was very glad to find many valuable books and journals relevant for my work.

I had the opportunity to visit and work at the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), New Delhi and National Institute of Disaster Management (NIDM), New Delhi and I found both the centres are full of rich

*National Archives of India, New Delhi*

Archives were very helpful and cooperative. I collected many valuable documents from the National Archives which are relevant to my project.

I also found that the Nehru Memorial Museum & Library,

*National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), New Delhi*

holdings. I found many of books in this centre. They also have, in their collection, some important journals containing valuable articles on my subject. The staff in this centre are very kind and supportive. They gladly briefed me regarding the nature of researches undertaken by them. They had many books and journals

on disaster management.

I also went to Jawaharlal Nehru University Library, New Delhi, Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses (IDSA), New Delhi and the Indian Institute of Public Administration (IIPA), New Delhi. All the repositories were very useful for my research work. Jawaharlal Nehru University Library has many important primary and secondary sources. I worked there for three days. The Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses has many books and journals regarding water management. Indian Institute of Public Administration has a very good collection on natural disaster. I purchased books from IIPA. These books are relevant for my ongoing research project in MAKAIAS. I purchased five books, namely



National Museum, New Delhi

Global Warming: Its Impact on India by Vinod K. Sharma, Drought in Rajasthan by L. C. Gupta, Vinod K. Sharma, Drought in Gujrat by L. C. Gupta, Vinod K. Sharma, Gujrat Earthquake: 26th January 2001 by L. C. Gupta, M. C. Gupta, Anil Sinha, Vinod K. Sharma and Disaster Management, ed. by Vinod K. Sharma. Many other valuable books are available in this centre.

I went to visit National Museum on 17th August. I returned home very late at night on 21st August, 2014.

Seminar

An Appraisal of India's Neighbourhood Policy: Way Forward

6-7 November 2014

MAKAIAS

Coordinator:
Dr Arpita Basu Roy
Fellow, MAKAIAS

Seminar

Visions of Indian modernity and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad

10-11 November 2014

Co-ordinators:
Dr. Dilorom Karomat,
Dr. Rafique Anwar,
Dr. Tapas Ray

Conference and Workshop Report

Research Methodology Workshop in Asian Studies, 23-27 June, 2014

Organized by
Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Institute
of Asian Studies

Workshop Coordinator: Sk. Aktar Ali

International Food Festival
Coordinator: Dr. Amrita Dey

This five day programme on Research Methodology in Asian Studies was coordinated by Sk. Aktar Ali. On the first day, the Director of MAKAIAS, Dr. Sreeradha Datta delivered her inaugural speech to point out the importance of research methodology in the field of Asian Studies.

The workshop comprised of eight primary modules. Each module was taught by the Fellows of this Institute.

These modules are as follows:

1. Conceptual foundations of Research
2. Introducing Asia as a field
3. Contemporary Politics, Societies and economics of Asian Studies
4. Importance of field work in Asian Studies
5. Importance of Religion in Asian Studies
6. Importance of Qualitative and Quantitative Research Methods in the field of Asian Studies
7. Techniques of Research Reporting
8. Importance of Language in the field of Asian Studies

In the third and fourth day of the workshop, the International Food Festival was also organised by Dr. Amrita Dey, Fellow of this Institute. The Burmese and Indonesian food counters were present on 25th June



Group Presentation by the Participants



*Certificate Distribution by
the Director*

*Participants in the Food
Festival with the Coordinator
and French Delegates*

2014 while the French food stall was present on 26th June, 2014.

In this event, Poster Presentation on Asian Studies had also been coordinated by Dr. Amrita Dey. Pratinashree Basu, Sanjana Chatterjee and Shrimanti Ghosal received special appreciation and both the teams have been selected for publishing papers in an upcoming Institutional Publication.

At the end, participants submitted their feedback forms along with their suggestions on this workshop and the participants received related study material at the end of each academic session.

The feedback of all the twenty three participants carries an affirmative tone for the utility of the workshop for their research. They were motivated to take up Asia as their field of research as new arenas of knowledge were

presented to them for future exploration by expert scholars with the experience of their respective field. Knowledge of quantitative and qualitative research techniques was a wealth that the participants imbibed from the workshop. The participants were of the view that South and South East Asia could have been given more focus. The inclusion of historical methodologies, techniques of research on gender, culture and more numerical techniques could have made the workshop more resourceful. 86.96% of the participants were of the view that they had gained confidence to pursue research in Asian studies after attending the workshop. The participants were gratified with the faculties of the subjects- their expertise, and methods of teaching. They all expressed their eagerness to participate in workshops of similar kind organized by the Institute in the future.



Group Photograph with the Director

Suhita Saha
Srijayee Bhattacharjee

Azad Memorial Lecture

11 November 2014

Azad Bhavan MAKAIAS

Play on Maulana Azad

11 November 2014

Coordinator: Sk. Aktar Ali

Conference and Workshop Report

International Seminar: Water Resources Cooperation between India and Nepal on 17 and 18 of June, 2014, Himalayan Horizon Resort at Dhulikhel, Nepal



Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Institute of Asian Studies (MAKAIAS), in collaboration with B. P. Koirala India-Nepal Foundation, Nepal organized an International Seminar on Water Resources Cooperation between India and Nepal on 17 and 18 of June, 2014, at Himalayan Horizon Resort at Dhulikhel, Nepal. Dr. Sreeradha Datta, Director, MAKAIAS welcomed the H.E Mr. Ranjit Rae,



Ambassador of India to Nepal Embassy of India, Prof. Dr. Govinda Raj Pokharel, Hon. Vice Chairman of Nepal's Planning Commission. Dr. Datta eloquently expressed the importance of cooperation between India and Nepal in the field of water resource utilization in the coming years. She stressed the aspects of water based cooperation as building blocks for solidarity between these two friendly states. The seminar was inaugurated by H. E. Mr. Ranjit Rae, Ambassador of India to Nepal Embassy of India, Chairperson, B. P. Koirala India Nepal Foundation, Nepal. H.E. Mr. Rae in his inaugural speech put the stage in its proper perspective by stressing the importance attached by the new Government in Delhi to its neighbour states generating new optimism of inclusive regional growth. H.E. also stressed that India can grow stronger only when these neighbours are developed. He identified the areas of cooperation in irrigation, hydro-power and other sectors of economic cooperation where India and Nepal can forge stronger bondages. He also identified the long drawn process of implementation of projects from initiation to completion and suggested that less controversial projects should be taken up. He informed the house that some movements are initiated on Mahakali-Pancheswar projects. Prof. Dr. Govinda Raj Pokharel delivered the Key note address on hydro-potentials of Nepal river basins and noted the incoming effects of climate change aspects over these potentials. Dr. Pokharel pointed out the benefits of cyclic use of water and advised that detailed studies are required for sustainable use of this important resource through cooperation between India and Nepal. Mr. Dwarika



Dhungel delivered a speech on Water Resource Cooperation Between India and Nepal in its past and present scenario. In his speech, Nepal and India have to live and engage with each other in many spheres: social, economic and political. One such sphere is the water, the most valuable natural resource of Nepal. Because most of Nepal's water resources have yet to be tapped and harnessed, the development of hydropower, irrigation, and flood control structures on Nepali rivers in the next fifty years will have significant implications for both countries and the entire South Asian region. Nepal's water potential and its implications for the South Asian region have attracted substantial attention from international development agencies, such as the World Bank's Ganges Basin Strategic Assessment, 2012 (GBSA), that are attempting to influence cooperation and optimal use of available resources. In this seminar the speakers examined several challenges of bilateral hydropower development. Although multipurpose projects promise an array of benefits, the prospect of hydropower is what attracts these two countries to engage in bilateral water agreements and security. In this light, the reform measures initiated by the government of Nepal (GoN) in the power sector, especially hydropower and problems and prospects of power exchange and trade between Nepal and India on the basis of the existing arrangements are discussed here.



Monika Mandal

International conference

Towards a New Communication Order in the SAARC Region

**MAKAIAS
in collaboration with
University of Burdwan**

19-20 November 2014

**Coordinator from
MAKAIAS
Dr. Tapas Ray**

Conference and Workshop Report

American Withdrawal from Afghanistan in December 2014: Post Withdrawal Puzzle of Policy Options for India, Pakistan and Afghanistan

Organized by VPM Centre for International Studies, Mumbai and sponsored by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Institute of Asian Studies (MAKAIAS), Kolkata

29th July to 31st July, 2014,

Venue: VPMCIS, Mulund, Mumbai

The VPM Centre for International Studies (affiliated to Mumbai University), Mumbai organized a three-day national seminar on "American Withdrawal from Afghanistan in December 2014: Post Withdrawal Puzzle of Policy Options for India, Pakistan and Afghanistan" at Mumbai, from 29th to 31st July, 2014. On the opening day of the seminar, after the welcome address by Prof PM Kamath, Director of VPM Centre, the inaugural address was delivered by Ambassador Rakesh Sood. In his address, Ambassador Sood mentioned the contribution that India is making in the reconstruction mission in Afghanistan. He informed the gathering that India is constructing dams and buildings and also is supplying the country with biscuits rich in nutrition. He said that several Afghans are coming to India with scholarships and that is how India is developing people to people contact with Afghan nationals. In his key note address, Professor Bharat Karnad referred to the history of Afghanistan and mentioned the resilience of the Afghans who have been the victims of transition and conflicts which, according to him, started in 1973. He opined that the Americans will not 'zero out' of



Inaugural Session: Prof PM Kamath, Prof. Bharat Karnad, Amb Rakesh Sood, Justice H. Suresh and Ambassador Ashok Sajjanhar (left to right)

Afghanistan but will stay back even after 2014. He also mentioned the strategic importance Afghanistan holds for India, especially in the context of Central Asia. Ambassador Ashok Sajjanhar, in his President's Remarks, said that all the neighbours of



Dr. Arpita Basu Roy speaking on the Myth and Realities of the Regional Peace Building in Afghanistan

Afghanistan want stability in the country and prevent the return of the Taliban and also suggested that Afghanistan has changed radically and it is not possible for it to get back to 1990s period.

The national seminar was co-sponsored by Maulana

Abul Kalam Azad Institute of Asian Studies (MAKAIAS). Dr. Arpita Basu Roy and Mr. Subhadeep Bhattacharya, Fellows of MAKAIAS, were the representatives of the Institute at the seminar who also presented papers. Dr. Basu Roy spoke about the myth of the regional peace building initiatives where she discussed the convergences and contrasts in the interests of various regional actors in Afghanistan. Mr. Bhattacharya discussed the possible impact of the post 2014 Afghanistan on the bilateral relations of two rising powers of Asia, India and China, who are the major stake holders in Afghanistan.

The seminar discussed wide range of issues on Afghanistan like the analysis of the roles of the external powers involved in the country since 2001, the shape and the future of democracy, the role of Afghanistan's neighbours and the role of India, Pakistan and USA in Afghanistan's future.

The Presidential Address at the closing session was delivered by Dr. Ramesh Babu while the valedictory address was given by Dr. Gautam Sen and the vote of thanks was delivered by Prof PM Kamath.



Mr. Subhadeep Bhattacharya speaking on the role of India and China in Afghanistan

Subhadeep Bhattacharya

International conference

Protest and the State in Eurasia and West Asia

**Symposium I
Can protests be replicated?**

**Symposium II
Ukraine and its aftermath**

**26-27 November 2014
Azad Bhavan
MAKAIAS**

**Coordinators:
Dr. Anita Sengupta,
Dr. Suchandana Chatterjee,
Priya Singh**

Conference and Workshop Report

MAKAIAS DELEGATION TO DHAKA, BANGLADESH ON 17-19 AUGUST, 2014

A delegation visit to Dhaka, Bangladesh was embarked upon from August 17-19, 2014 by Shri. Sitaram Sharma (Chairman, MAKAIAS), Dr. Sreeradha Dutta (Director, MAKAIAS), Dr. Mrinal Kanti Chakma (Fellow, MAKAIAS) and Ms. Srimanti Sarkar (Research Assistant, MAKAIAS) of the Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Institute of Asian Studies (MAKAIAS), Kolkata. The Bangladesh Institute of



1. MAKAIAS delegation at BISS (Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies), Dhaka.

From right to left: Dr. Sreeradha Dutta (Director, MAKAIAS), Shri. Sitaram Sharma (Chairman, MAKAIAS), Major General S. M. Shafiuddin Ahmed (Director General, BISS), Ms. Srimanti Sarkar (Research Assistant, MAKAIAS) and Dr. Mrinal Kanti Chakma (Fellow, MAKAIAS).

International and Strategic Studies (BISS) at Dhaka hosted the delegation under the aegis of Major General S. M. Shafiuddin Ahmed (Director General, BISS) which culminated into the successful signing of a MoU between MAKAIAS and BISS on August 17, 2014. This was followed by signing of another MoU between MAKAIAS and Dhaka University (DU) following a meeting between the Institute's heads and Dr. A.A.M.S Arefin Siddique (Vice Chancellor, Dhaka University) on



Signing of MoU between MAKAIAS and BISS.
Dr. Sreeradha Dutta (Director, MAKAIAS) and
Major General S. M. Shafiuddin Ahmed (Director General, BISS).

August 18, 2014. It was a significant endeavor to reinforce cooperation and improve academic research through the provision of mutual exchange of information, experts and researchers for various academic programs.

The members of the delegation also participated in an International Seminar on 'Contemporary Thoughts on Bangladesh-India Relations: Challenges and Opportunities' organized by BISS on August 18, 2014. Shri Sitaram Sharma (Chairman, MAKAIAS) delivered his address on the theme 'Towards Achieving New Heights in Bangladesh-Indo Relations: Prospects and Challenges' in the Inaugural Session of the seminar whereby he comprehensively outlined the broad canvas of India-Bangladesh Relationship. Dr. Sreeradha Dutta (Director, MAKAIAS) in her presentation titled 'Connectivity, Transit and Border Management: Creating a Shared Bi-lateral Framework dealt in great details the various issues concerning trade, transit, connectivity, security and border-management that affects the relations between the two neighboring countries significantly. Among the various other aspects that were extensively discussed in the seminar were issues pertaining to non-tariff barriers facilitating trade and investment; role of the government, society and mass media affecting cultural exchange and cooperation; prospects and constraints of security cooperation; and key challenges to India-Bangladesh bilateral relations pertaining to trans-boundary water sharing. The seminar also saw the active participation and presence of various military officers, renowned diplomats, ex ambassadors, academicians and a number of media personnel. It got a wide coverage

over both the electronic and print media throughout the country.

Other academic activities undertaken by the delegates during the course of their visit to Dhaka included: a meeting and interactive session at the office of the United Nations Association of Bangladesh (UNAB); and a Special Lecture delivered by Dr. Sreeradha Dutta in the Department of International Relations, DU. The viewing of a Bengali Stage Drama written by the renowned Bangladeshi playwright and theatre artist Selim Al Deen on the occasion of his birth anniversary at the Shilpakala Academy, followed by the Chairman's visit to the house of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman at '32 Dhanmondi' in the immediate aftermath of the 'National Mourning Day' of August 15 added to the cultural significance of the visit further.



International seminar on 'Contemporary Thoughts On Bangladesh-India Relations: Challenges And Opportunities' at BISS

Srimanti Sarkar

Conference

Indian Studies in Vietnam and Vietnamese Studies in India

Hanoi
20-24 November 2014

Coordinator from MAKAIAS
Dr. Tapas Ray

Conference and Workshop Report

International Conference on 'Europe and Emerging Asia'

12- 13 September 2014

The 21st century is being termed the Asian Century owing to the rapid rise of few economies in Asia, particularly the economies of China and India; the two most populous countries of the world. Along with Japan, these three Asian giants are projected to occupy the centre-stage of international system sooner rather than later. Europe on the other hand is experiencing a plateau in its economic growth and the US's supremacy as the biggest economy is under threat from China. There are both positive and negative prognoses about the rise of Asia in the international community. In existing literature the positive prognosis comes mainly from Asian scholars who see the rise of Asia as regaining Asia's pre-seventeenth century economic status that was lost to the West due to the industrial revolution and urbanization in Europe. The (re)emergence of Asia in the 21st century is occurring in the background of another kind of revolution called globalization and the developments in one continent, either positive or negative, are bound to affect the other parts of the global village.

At the beginning of this century, while Asia is attempting to emulate the 20th century West and trying to integrate their economies regionally and sub-regionally, Europe seems to have hesitations on its monetary union which has developed infirmities that can be set right with even greater integration. Feuds among the major powers have marked the past and the same is the case with major Asian powers – North and South Korea, China/Japan, China/India, and India/Pakistan. Will the international system of the present century be a mirror reflection of the past? Are the inter-nation tensions in Asia problematic and make the 21st century more dangerous than the 20th century? Are there lessons to be learnt from Europe's past to steer the 21st century international system in the path of peace and cooperation? And what role in this will be played by the non-resident power in Asia, namely the USA? How is emerging Asia viewed in the West and vice-versa? Is it viewed only as a commercial opportunity? If there is eventually a transition of power centre from the West to the East, how is the West going to react to it? Can Emerging Asia and Europe make common cause to limit the unilateralism of the United States? Are they even interested to develop such a common cause?

These were some of the questions that were addressed at a two day conference entitled "Europe and Emerging Asia" on 12 and 13 September 2014 at the Alipore Campus of the University of Calcutta. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Institute of Asian Studies (MAKAAS) in association with the Institute of Foreign Policy Studies (IFPS), Calcutta University; Centre for Studies in International Relations and Development (CSIRD) and the European Centre for International Political Economy (ECIPE) organised the conference. Shri Krishnan Srinivasan, Former Foreign Secretary and Dr. Binoda K Mishra, Director, CSIRD convened the conference.

The conference was gratified by the presence of HE Shri M. Hamid Ansari, Hon'ble Vice President of India. Professor Suranjan Das (Vice Chancellor, Calcutta University) delivered the Welcome Address in which he emphasized that the paradigm of Human Security ought to be brought into any discussion of engagement with and within Asia. It was followed by the special addresses by Professor Krishna Bose (Chairperson, Netaji Research Bureau) who emphasized the importance of keeping the channels of communication open with the rest of the world. While she stressed upon the need of developing the spirit of humanity, solidarity and freedom to attain Asian universalism, concerns over the nature of this Asian universalism was expressed by Shri. Keshari Nath Tripathi (Hon'ble Governor of West Bengal). Nevertheless, it was agreed on a common ground that the resurgence of Asia need not be viewed against the backdrop of a weakening Europe; but on the contrary, the successful realisation of an Asian century lies only through constructive and sustainable growth. He stressed on a road map for the 21st Century.

H.E Shri Hamid Ansari while delivering his Inaugural Address stressed on the historical links between the two



HE The Vice President of India, Shri Hamid Ansari delivering the Inaugural Address (With HE the Governor of West Bengal, Shri Keshari Nath Tripathi, Prof Suranjan Das, VC, CU, Krishna Bose and Shantanu Chakraborty, Convener, IFPS)

continents of Asia and Europe. He stated the need for a viable understanding of the internal and external dynamics of Asia and Europe and mentioned that India is committed to working with Europe for world peace, security and stability and hence cooperation and dialogue was very important. Like the Vice Chancellor, he also stressed on the importance of the models of Human Security and human dignity. He raised critical questions on how a cohesive Europe could engage with a diverse Asia and pointed out that the role of USA would be pivotal to both Europe and Asia.

The Inaugural Session was followed by a discussion where Mr. Ravindra Kumar (Managing Director and Editor, The Statesman) was in conversation with Ambassador Iftekhar Chowdhury (Former Foreign Minister of Bangladesh) and Dame Veronica Sutherland (Former British Ambassador and resident of Lucy Cavendish College, Cambridge) who deliberated exhaustively on the theme 'Europe and Emerging Asia'.



*Professor Hari Vasudevan chairing a panel discussion.
The Panelists were Mr. Fredrik Eixon Ms. Evi Fitriani
and Dr. Binod Mishra*

This session was followed by a Panel Discussion which was chaired by Professor Hari Vasudevan (Department of History, University of Calcutta). The speakers were Mr. Fredrik Erixon (Founder Director of ECIPE, Brussels), Ms. Evi Fitriani (Director of the IR Department, Jakarta University) and Dr. Binod Mishra (Director, CSIRD, Kolkata). The theme of the second panel discussion was 'The Asian Challenge: Relations with Europe and other Power centres'. It was chaired by Shri Sitaram Sharma (Chairman, MAKAIAS) and speakers were Prof. James Mayall (Emeritus Professor of IR, Cambridge), Ambassador Krishnan Srinivasan (Former Foreign Secretary) and Prof. Wang Yiwei (Remnin University, Beijing).

Shri Sitaram Sharma (Chairman, MAKAIAS) highlighted a few significant points while chairing the Panel Discussion

on 'The Asian Challenge: Relations with other Power Centers'. While reiterating the fact that the 21st century is the much accorded century belonging to Asia, Mr. Sharma argued that contours of this New Asian Order are embroiled in a great geo-strategic flux. Asia's geo politics is therefore largely shaped by these emerging powers along with the several other global and extra-regional powers that play a dominant role in the continent. Mr. Sharma raised a few critical questions. The key to foresee a bright future of the Asian century perhaps lie in determining, most importantly, how the major emerging Asian powers perceive the notion 'Pivot of Asia'. What significance does it behold for USA and what is India's position in this pivot. He also questioned whether the US presence in East Asia is more stabilizing or destabilizing and whether we could expect Australia to ever become a significant player in Asian security. Whether an security mechanism can ever develop in Asia and the flashpoints resolved among conflictual nations in Asia is another important point that he delved upon.



*Shri Sitaram Sharma chairing a session on "The Asian
Challenge: Relations with other Power Centers"
with speakers - Prof James Mayall, Shri Krishnan Srinivasan
and Prof. Wang Yiwei*

The Valedictory session was chaired by Prof. James Mayall who in conversation with Ambassador Joao Cravinho (EU Ambassador to India), Dr. Swapan Dasgupta (Political Analyst and Senior Journalist) and Professor Rudrangshu Mukherjee (Vice Chancellor, Ashoka University) reflected extensively on the entire theme of the conference.

Arpita Basu Roy
Srimanti Sarkar

Conference and Workshop Report

'Stakeholders' Consultative Workshop on India-Bangladesh Economic Cooperation: Trade and Investment, Prospect and Challenges with reference to West Bengal and Northeast India'

July 18, 2014; Azad Bhavan, MAKAIAS

A Brainstorming Workshop themed 'Stakeholders' Consultative Workshop on India-Bangladesh Economic Cooperation: Trade and Investment, Prospect and Challenges with reference to West Bengal and Northeast India' was organized by the Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Institute of Asian Studies (MAKAIAS), Kolkata in association with the Centre for Policy Research (CPR), New Delhi on 18 July, 2014. The Inaugural session was chaired by Shri. Sitaram Sharma (Chairman, MAKAIAS) while Dr. Sreeradha Dutta (Director, MAKAIAS) welcomed our honorary guests which included Ambassador Krishnan Srinivasan, H.E. Ms. Abida Islam (Deputy High Commissioner, Bangladesh) and Dr. Rajiv Kumar (Senior Fellow, CPR).

The day long workshop was divided into 3 academic sessions and 1 special session. The first session was themed 'India-Bangladesh Economic Cooperation: Bangladeshi Perspective'. It was chaired by Dr. Rajiv Kumar (Senior Fellow, CPR) and the panelists from Bangladesh included Dr. Monzur Hossain (Senior Fellow, BIDS, Dhaka), Dr. Khondaker Golam Moazzem (Research Director, CPD, Dhaka), Ms. Fatima Tuz Zohora (SANEM, Dhaka) and Mr. Sajjadur Rahman (Senior Business Correspondent, Daily Star, Dhaka). The panel exhaustively deliberated on the various aspects of bilateral trade between India and Bangladesh. In doing so it brought out the multiple challenges—structural, political and social—that affects economic cooperation between these two nations. This session was followed by a Special Session in which Mr. Jiten Chaudhuri (Hon. Member of Parliament and Chairman of Tripura

Industrial Development Corporation, Agartala, Tripura) delivered a talk on 'Development of Northeast India, Connectivity and Trade and Investment Potentials' where he comprehensively narrated the state of economy in the North East Region (NER) of India.

The second session was titled 'Northeast India-Bangladesh Economic Cooperation' and was chaired by Dr. Mrinal Kanti Chakma (Fellow, MAKAIAS). The panelists of this session were Mr. Aunav Goswami and Mr. Prasanta Rajguru (CDPS, Guwahati, Assam), Prof. Ashish Nath and Prof. Indraneel Bhowmik (Tripura University) and Mr. Jayanta Bhattacharya (PTI, Agartala, Tripura) who pondered upon the trade and connectivity issues between Bangladesh and the bordering states of Assam and Tripura. The final session of the workshop was titled 'West Bengal-Bangladesh Economic Cooperation' and was chaired by Dr. Sreeradha Dutta (Director, MAKAIAS). The panelists of this session were Prof. Ajitav Roy Choudhuri (Jadavpur University), Ms. Keya Ghosh (CUTS International) and Mr. Pratim Ranjan Bose (Bureau Chief, Business Line, Kolkata) who exclusively deliberated the scope and challenges of economic cooperation between the state of West Bengal and Bangladesh. The one day long Brainstorming Workshop thereby concluded with the closing remarks and vote of thanks by Dr. Mrinal Kanti Chakma (Fellow MAKAIAS)



Srimanti Sarkar

Special Event Report

ASEAN-India Eminent Person Lecture Prof. Dr. Nguyen Xuan Thang President, Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences (VASS) 13th August, 2014, ICCR, Kolkata

The ASEAN-India Centre (AIC) at the Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS) with support of the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), Govt. of India and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Institute of Asian Studies (MAKAIAS) and Confederation of Indian Industries (CII) hosted the Eminent Person Lecture Series, 2014 at Jamini Roy Hall, Rabindranath Tagore Centre of the Indian Council for Cultural Relations in Kolkata on 13th August, 2014. The opening remarks of the lecture were delivered by Ambassador Krishnan Srinivasan, followed by Prof. Prabir De and remarks by Mr. Alope Mookherjee, past Chairman, CII Eastern Region, Kolkata.

In his opening address, Ambassador Srinivasan said that India and Vietnam share unique friendship marked by mutual affection, trust and support for each other. He referred to the visit of the Indian Vice President Md. Hamid Ansari to Vietnam in 2013 to mark the end of the India-Vietnam Friendship year and said that the visit of Prof. Nguyen Xuan Thang was vital. Ambassador Srinivasan said that Vietnam has been a strong supporter of India in the international forum and mentioned that both the countries agree on the right to freedom of navigation in the South China Sea and resolution on the restraint of force in the solution of the maritime dispute there. Talking about bilateral trade between the two countries, Ambassador Srinivasan remarked that the current trade is very small in amount, of only \$17 billion but said that the target is to meet \$50 billion by 2020. He said that the biggest investment of India in Vietnam is the Tata Power which is of \$ 1.8 billion and also mentioned about the involvement of India's ONGC (Oil and Natural Gas Corporation) in energy exploration mission in Vietnam. He also talked about India's in Vietnam's computer and jet air service. Prof. Prabir De, in his address, expressed his gratitude to the CII, ICCR, MAKAIAS, MEA (Govt. of India) the ASEAN-India Centre and ASEAN Secretariat for making the programme possible.

Mr. Alope Mookherjee of CII, in his address, referred to Pt. Nehru's prophesy about India's future role in Pacific world and said that India's Look East Policy is placed in Nehru's vision. He said that India-ASEAN relation is the cornerstone of the Look East Policy of India. He said that in the coming years Japan will be replaced by India, Vietnam and other

East Asian countries and said that Look East Policy has the potential to make India-ASEAN region merge as an important free trade area in the world. He said that in this context India and Vietnam can become important partners.

The Eminent-Person lecture was delivered by Prof. Dr. Nguyen Xuan Thang who is the President of the Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences and also a member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Vietnam. Prof. Thang spoke on the 'Recent Policy Actions of East Asian Countries and Regional Security Environment'. In his address, Prof. Thang referred to the relation between India and Vietnam under Vietnamese leader Ho Chi Minh and also mentioned the affection Kolkata had for him. He said that India made a lot of changes in the field of globalization. He pointed out the sectors like information and technology (IT) where India made progress. He said that India is considered as the 'office of the world' and said that in the field of pharmaceuticals, where India gained achievement, the country has a lot advantages. Referring to the India-Vietnam relations, Prof. Thang referred to the small trade amount between the two countries but hoped that the policy of the new government in New Delhi will help trade with his country to reach \$20 billion in few years. He said that his country looks towards India for investment in medicine, IT, pharmaceuticals and said that India can train Vietnam to create IT experts. He also said that India offers big market for Vietnam said that Vietnam can export textile goods as well as rice to India. He also talked about defence and military cooperation between the two countries.

Prof. Thang spoke about the regional conflict and cooperation in East Asia, the US return to Asia-Pacific and the "reality" behind China's 'peaceful rise', called for "institutional change" amid complex economic globalization and increased involvement of benign powers like India and BRICs countries, the ASEAN Regional Forum and the ASEAN Community to compete and contain the balance of power situation arising in the region—this being more evident in the maritime arena, where China aims to break the US 'ring of islands' to built its own, while attempting to gain sovereignty over the South and East China Seas. Referring to the issues of East Asia like ethnic conflicts, inter-state competition for natural resources, which he termed as challenges to global institutions also, he urged the East Asian countries to deal with these issues. He emphasized to understand the emerging change in the balance of power.

Amrita Dey
Subhadeep Bhattacharya

Visit to MAKAAS



Dr. Farinaz Etminan
Ancient Iranian Culture and
Languages
Islamic Azad University, Tehran, Iran

e-mail: etminan.farinaz@gmail.com

Lecture: "Introduction to Pahlavi, the
Middle Persian language"

Date: 16 July, 2014, 2.30 p.m.
Azad Bhavan, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad
Institute of Asian Studies, Salt Lake

Chair – Dr. Rafique Anwar

Book launch



**17 June, 2014,
Himalayan Horizon Resort
at Dhulikhel, Nepal.**

Indo-Nepal relations

Edited by Dr. Monika Mandal

Publication: KW, New Delhi on 2014
Released by: H. E. Mr. Ranjit Rae,
Ambassador of India to Nepal
Embassy of India,
and Chairperson, B. P. Koirala India
Nepal Foundation, Nepal.

Press Corner

Mistrust about India among Bangladeshis growing: experts

United News of Bangladesh
Dhaka

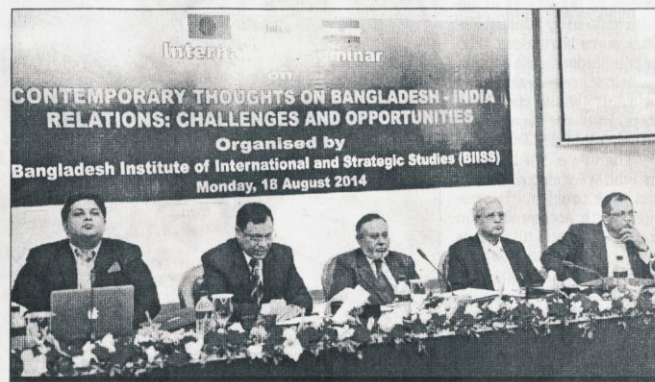
EXPERTS at a seminar in Dhaka on Monday observed that mistrust about India among Bangladeshis was growing as various important bilateral issues, especially the Teesta water sharing deal and ratification of Land Boundary Agreement between the two neighbouring countries, long remained unsolved.

They said both sides, especially India, should come up to immediately address the issues, including stopping killings by Border Security Force of India along the border, to remove the mistrust and anti-Indian sentiment.

Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies arranged the international seminar, titled 'Contemporary Thoughts on Bangladesh-India Relations: Challenges and Opportunities', in the city.

Experts from both Bangladesh and India took part in the daylong seminar held at BIISS auditorium.

Addressing the seminar, Sitaram Sharma, chairman of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Institute of Asian Studies, said India needed to play a more important, proactive and leading role



Guests attend an international seminar on Bangladesh-India relations organised by Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies in Dhaka on Monday.
— New Age photo

in improving, strengthening and consolidating bilateral relations with Bangladesh.

'India should look for an equal partnership, not insisting on special relationship,' he said adding, 'It's Delhi's challenge to reassure Bangladesh... and to do so in a way that builds the largest political consensus for mutual trust. Anti-India feelings have existed in Bangladesh to some extent since the Independence struggle, especially in its military circles.'

Sharma said the Indo-Bangla trade issues need to be bilaterally discussed

in a holistic fashion saying that continuous trade deficit with India led to perception in Bangladesh that it was the result of India's interest in preservation of its market by discouraging exports from Bangladesh.

Maj Gen (retd) Abdur Rashid, executive director of the Institute of Conflict, Law and Development Studies, said practical approaches were needed to remove problems and mistrust that lie in the bilateral ties.

About trans-boundary rivers, he said, 'Time has come to take a regional approach for the management

of the river basins.'

Senior Bangladeshi journalist Zaglul Ahmed Chowdhury said India should stop killings along the border. 'The firing on the friendly border leaves impacts on the people of Bangladesh,' he said.

MAKAIAS director Radha Datta made a presentation on 'connectivity, transit and border management' and said the achievement of goals would not be possible if Bangladesh did not address the core issue of security concern. India has now realised that they are keeping very silly guts in the

hands. They need to open transit for Bangladesh.'

Former ambassador Muhammad Zamir said India cannot divert the water flow of common rivers and kill people on the border as per international laws. 'You can arrest them, catch them, but don't kill them. They aren't anti-Indians. It's totally unexpected,' he said pointing at Indian authorities.

Registrar of East West University Ishfaq Ilahi Choudhury made a presentation on Bangladesh-India security cooperation.

To address the security concern along the border, he suggested implementation of LBA, joint patrol by the border forces on both sides to curb smuggling and trafficking, working out how to legalise cattle trade, relaxation of visa regime to encourage people to travel with valid documents, joint patrol over maritime boundary to check piracy and smuggling.

BIISS chairman ex-ambassador Munshi Faiz Ahmad presided over the opening session of the seminar, while BISS director general Maj Gen SM Shafiuddin Ahmed and ex-ambassador Farooq Sobhan, president of Bangladesh Enterprises Institute chaired the two other sessions.

Dr. Arpita Basu Roy participates in a panel discussion on Pakistan's internal turmoil in Bangla news Channel 24 Ghanta, September 1, 2014, (8-9 pm)

Dr. Arpita Basu Roy was interviewed by Sirous Aremian at Iran and Eurasia Studies Centre. Interview available at www.iras.ir, June 9, 2014

Dr. Arpita Basu Roy was interviewed by Mr. Mohammad Reza Naroozpoor of khabaronline, leading news website of Iran. www.khabaronline.ir (Programme: Café Khabar), June 10, 2014



In Retrospect

20 Years ago: The Rohingya Refugee Influx in Bangladesh MAKAIAS Newsletter Vol 2, No 2, Nov 1995

The Rohingya Refugee Influx in Bangladesh

It has been noticed in the recent period that armed conflict happens to be the immediate cause for the refugee influx in many Afro-Asian countries. The United Nations High Commissioner on Refugees, (UNHCR) Mrs. Sadako Ogata has pointed out that besides armed conflict, other factors responsible for refugee movements today are gross human rights violations and severe economic deprivations.

Since the early 1980s, South Asia has also witnessed some refugee exodus in various parts of the region primarily arising out of ethnic conflict. The ethnic minorities like Nepalese in Bhutan, Tamils in Sri Lanka, Chakmas in Bangladesh and Rohingyas in Burma (Myanmar) claim that they are politically suppressed and economically deprived by the majority communities in the respective countries.

Among all the refugee movements in South Asia, Rohingya influx in Bangladesh has probably drawn the maximum attention of the international community, because of the magnitude of the problem. Rohingyas, the name given to the ethnic muslim minority from Arakan (currently renamed as Rakhine state) region of Burma started to cross into Bangladesh at the end of 1991. By September 1992, the number of refugees reaching Bangladesh were around 2,50,000 but unofficial sources put the figure at 3,00,000. Rohingyas claim that they had been forced out of their homes by ethnic majority Burmese troops. Various international reports also indicate that the refugee movement is the fallout of increased militarisation of the Muslim inhabited northwestern Arakan region. Since 1991, the ruling military junta of Burma is alleged to have instituted a reign of terror against the Rohingyas including loot, arson, rape, forced conscription, summary executions and so on. At any rate, the influx of the refugees continued unabated throughout 1991-92 with about 5000-6000 Rohingyas crossing the Burma-Bangladesh border everyday along the Naaf river. The refugees were given shelter in twenty make-shift camps in the Cox's

Bazar and Bandarban districts of Bangladesh.

The Burmese military junta has however reacted sharply to this mass exodus of refugees. The military junta immediately mobilised 55,000 troops along the 281 km. long Bangladesh-Burma border. The situation in the border region took a turn for the worse on December 21, 1991 when Burmese border guards *Lunthin* launched a sudden attack on a Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) outpost in Bandarban district. In this incident, one BDR personnel was killed and several civilians were wounded. On 31 December 1991, a flag meeting was held in Burma's border town of Mongdu between BDR and *Lunthin* to defuse the tension in the border region.

Bangladesh has made its position clear on the Rohingya issue to Burma that the influx of refugees in the two southern districts is posing serious socio-economic and security problems for the country. Burma on the other hand holds that troops being deployed along its border to chase the militant Rohingyas who has been harbouring an idea to establish an independent homeland in Arakan. The insurgency factor has made the refugee crisis more complicated as the Burmese military junta suspects that some of the rebels are operating from Bangladesh. Militant Rohingyas claim they were forced to take up arms because of the acute human deprivation committed against them by the successive regimes in Rangoon.

Bangladesh has proposed a tripartite agreement involving Burma and UNHCR to work out a formula for speedy, safe and voluntary repatriation of the refugees. The Burmese military junta however, seemed reluctant to involve UNHCR in the repatriation process. According to it, the exodus is a purely bilateral issue between Burma and Bangladesh. Burma signed a repatriation agreement with Bangladesh on 28 April, 1992, providing for safe and voluntary return of the refugees to their homes in Arakan. Both the parties agreed that the refugees would start returning to their homes in

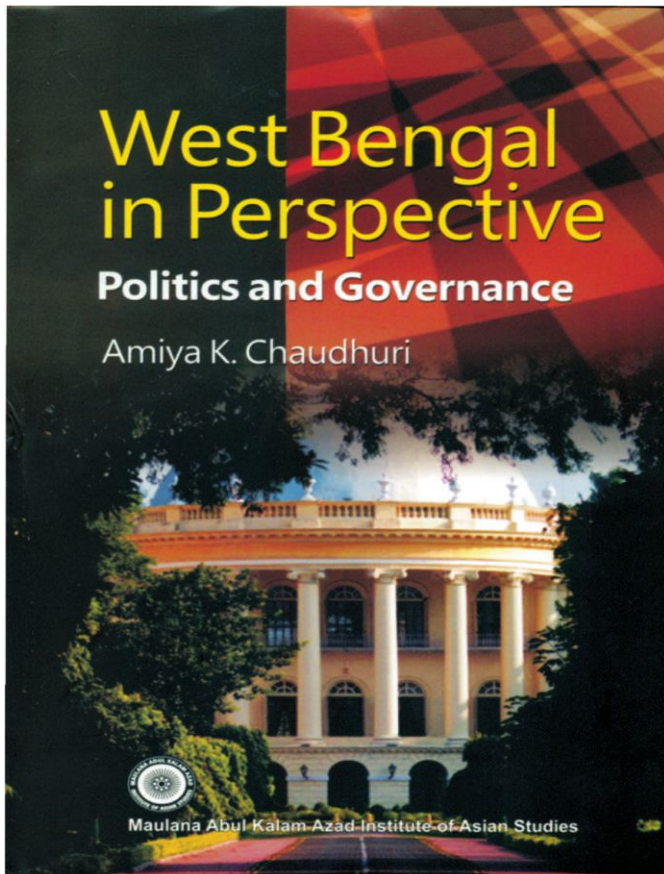
Burma by 15 May, 1992.

The bilateral agreement has however failed to deliver expected results. The major hurdle has been the military junta's refusal to allow the UNHCR to monitor the repatriation process inside Burma, a pre-condition set by the refugees to return. As a result, less than 10% of the refugees had returned home as of late 1993. Such a slow pace of repatriation compelled Bangladesh to seek assistance from UNHCR and other international agencies. UNHCR has responded positively by allocating an initial grant of \$100,000 from its emergency fund for urgently needed supplies. In addition to this, World Food Programme has also approved an emergency food assistance worth about \$1.9 million for the refugees.

The repatriation of the refugees continued at a snail's pace throughout 1992-93 and UNHCR accused Bangladesh of coercing the refugees to return. Bangladesh stepped up its diplomatic initiatives to end the row with UNHCR. The UNHCR Ms. Sadako Ogata arrived in Dhaka on May 12, 1993 for a four day visit and signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Bangladesh. By this agreement Bangladesh had formally approved the UNHCR's free access to the refugee camps and a full partnership in the repatriation process.

Burma finally succumbed to international pressure. In November 1993, its military junta agreed in principle to allow the UNHCR to monitor the safe return and rehabilitation programmes in the Arakan region. The involvement of UNHCR inside Burma has very slightly accelerated the pace of repatriation. By April 1995, about 190, 173 refugees have returned to their homes out of a total number of 250,877 refugees registered with the authorities. Current reports indicate that the rate of repatriation could be stepped up from the current level of 4,000 per week. The UNHCR is hopeful that all the Rohingyas would be repatriated by the end of 1995.

Rupak Bhattacharyya

MAKAIAS Publication

West Bengal in Perspective: Politics and Governance By Amiya K. Chaudhuri

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About the book

This study of West Bengal since the Partition in 1947 is not a theoretical discourse on politics intertwined with socio-cultural issues and political economy. The present study is a historical narrative and a modest attempt to trace the historico-political process of a truncated state over the last sixty-four years. There are various stages of development to this history. From 1947 to 1966 there was a dominant party i.e. Congress rule, which electorally reappeared in 1942. During the intervening period the idea of a United Front of the Left parties was experimented with. Finally, the Left Front of the same parties ruled the state for 34 years from 1977 till May 20, 2011. Electorally the Left Front coalition seemed to be a permanent fixture but was demolished in 2011 by the Trinamool Congress led by Mamata Banerjee. Over this period, the unique electoral process in the state, its mode of politics and the ensuing process of governance came to play a significant role, as traced in this book.

About the author

Amiya K. Chaudhuri is a former Professor of Political Science. His research of and teaching career in colleges and Universities spans more than four decades. Presently, he is working on a project on the 'Perceptions of Democracy and political Culture in Bangladesh' as a Senior Fellow. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Institute of Asian Studies. He has to his credit several research volumes, both in English and Bengali, and has contributed widely to books and journals both in India and abroad. He is a regular feature and post-edits writer in Bengali dailies and magazines.

Other Publications by Researchers at the Institute, 2014

1. Anita Sengupta, "Image and Influence: The Politics of Nation Branding in Uzbekistan", in Birgit N. Schlyter (ed) *Historiography and Nation Building Among Turkic Populations*, Istanbul: Swedish Research Institute in Istanbul, Paper 5, 2014.
2. Anita Sengupta, "Islam and Popular Sovereignty: The Turkish Experience", in Kingshuk Chatterjee and Priya Singh (eds) *The Dilemma of Popular Sovereignty in the Middle East*, New Delhi: Knowledge World, 2014.
3. Suchandana Chatterjee, "Encounter and Engagement: Vignettes of the Trans-Himalayan Region," *Journal of Indian Research*, Vol 2, No 2, April-June 2014, pp. 30-35 (ISSN: 2321-4155).
4. Arpita Basu Roy, "The Greater Central Asia Partnership Initiative and its Contemporary Relevance" in Rashpal Malhotra, Sucha Singh Gill and Davinder K Madaan, *CRRID*, Chandigarh, 2014 (ISBN 978-81-85835-69-1).
5. Arpita Basu Roy, "Afghanistan beyond 2014: Regional Security Concerns for India and Central Asia", in PL Dash, Anita Sengupta, Murat M. Bakhadirov (eds.), *Central Asia and Regional Security*, Knowledge World Publishers, New Delhi, 2014, pp.125-146 (ISBN 978-93-83649-07-5).
6. Arpita Basu Roy, "Afghanistan's Energy Potential and its Implications", in Sreemati Ganguli (ed.), *Strategising Energy: An Asian Perspective*, Knowledge World Publishers, New Delhi, 2014, pp.133-150 (ISBN 978-93-81904-93-0).
7. Priya Singh, Suchandana Chatterjee, Anita Sengupta and Arpita Basu eds., "Beyond Strategies: Cultural Dynamics in Asian Connections," New Delhi: Knowledge World Publishers, New Delhi January 2014.
8. Kingshuk Chatterjee and Priya Singh eds., "The Dilemma of Popular Sovereignty in the Middle East: Power from or to the People," New Delhi: Knowledge World Publishers, March 2014.
9. Priya Singh, "The shift: The 1990s and Beyond", in Kingshuk Chatterjee and Priya Singh (eds.) *The Dilemma of Popular Sovereignty in the Middle East: Power from or to the People*, Knowledge World Publishers, New Delhi, March 2014.
10. Monika Mondal, "India's Connectivity with ASEAN: Challenges and Opportunities" *FPRC Journal* 2014(1), New Delhi, 2014 (ISSN 2277 – 2464).
11. Monika Mondal, "Hydro Power Cooperation between India and Nepal" *FPRC Journal* 2014(3), New Delhi, 2014 (ISSN 2277 – 2464).
12. Sayantani Sen Mazumdar, "North East India's Tourism Prospect Through Mekong Ganga Cooperation: Utilizing Opportunities Into Advantages" *JAIR Journal of International Relations*, ISSN: 2348-7496, Bharati Publication, New Delhi, June 2014.
13. Sayantani Sen Mazumdar, "Mekong-Ganga Cooperation Initiative in India-ASEAN Cooperation," *World Focus*, pp. 86 – 92, ISSN 2230-8458, June 2014.
14. Sk. Aktar Ali, "Re-thinking Conceptual Understanding of Learning Society with Special Reference to Maulana Azad's Values Education" *Indian Journal of Adult Education*, Vol 75, No. 3, July-September 2014.
15. Amiya K. Chaudhuri, "Coalition Politics in West Bengal" (ed.) E. Sridharan. *Coalition Politics in India*, Academic Publishers, New Delhi, July, 2014.
16. Dilorom Karomat, "Hip Hop Music in Afghanistan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan", in Priya Singh, Suchandana Chatterjee, Anita Sengupta, Arpita Basu Roy (eds.) *Beyond Strategies: Cultural Dynamics in Asian Connections*, Knowledge World Publishers, New Delhi, 2014, p.p.95-110.
17. Dilorom Karomat, "Music as Catalyst of Regional Rapprochement", in PL Dash, Anita Sengupta, Murat M. Bakhadirov (eds.) *Central Asia and Regional Security*, Knowledge World Publishers, New Delhi, 2014, pp.205-222 (ISBN 978-93-83649-07-5).
18. Dilorom Karomat, "Parda-s of Persian Music in Poetry of Amir Khusrau Dehlavi (based on one Masnavi from Qiran-us-sa'dain)", in Shakeel Hossain and Aga Khan Trust for Culture (eds.) *Jashn e Khusrau 2013: Celebrating the Genius of Amir Khusrau*, Aga Khan Trust for Culture Mapping Publishing, 2014. ISBN: 9781935677437.

International and National Seminars, Conferences, Symposiums and Panel Discussions, July-September, 2014

July 18	Stakeholders' Consultative Workshop on "India- Bangladesh Economic Cooperation: Trade and Investment, Prospect and Challenges with reference to West Bengal and Northeast India" organised by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Institute of Asian Studies (MAKAIAS) in collaboration with Centre for Policy Research (CPR), Delhi
July 29 - 31	National Seminar on "American Withdrawal from Afghanistan in December 2014: Post Withdrawal Puzzle of Policy Options for India, Pakistan and Afghanistan" organised by VPM's Centre for International Studies, Mumbai in collaboration with Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Institute of Asian Studies (MAKAIAS)
September 9 - 10	National Seminar on : "Ecology and Progress in North-East India: Anxiety, Hope and Belonging in the Literary Consciousness" organised by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Institute of Asian Studies (MAKAIAS) in collaboration with North Eastern Hill University (NEHU), Shillong
September 12 - 13	International Seminar on "Europe and Emerging Asia" organised by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Institute of Asian Studies (MAKAIAS) in collaboration with Calcutta University (CU), Centre for Studies in International Relations and Development (CSIRD), Kolkata and European Centre for International Political Economy, (ECIPE), Brussels
September 17	Symposium on "Biographical Museum and its Relevance"

Fellow's Presentations, July-September, 2014

July 11	Dilorom Karomat, Fellow	<i>"Russian 'Afghan' Song as a phenomenon"</i>
August 22	Amrita Dey, Fellow	<i>"Democratic Transition in Myanmar? Observations from ISEAS Conference."</i>
August 29	Rafique Anwar, Fellow	<i>"The Concept of Man, Sufism and Maulana"</i>
September 26	Priya Singh, Fellow	<i>"Rhetoric and Politics in the Arab Uprising – Egypt"</i>

Special Events, July-September, 2014

August 13	Jamini Roy Gallery, 3rd Floor, Rabindranath Tagore Centre, Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR), 9A, Ho Chi Minh Sarani, Kolkata 700071	Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Institute of Asian Studies (MAKAIAS) in collaboration with ASEAN India Centre (AIC) at RIS, Confederation of Indian Industries (CII), Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) organised a Lecture by Prof. Nguyen Xuan Thang, President of the Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences (VASS) and a member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Vietnam (CPV)
August 17 - 19	The Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies (BIISS) at Dhaka hosted the delegation under the aegis of Major General S. M Shafiuddin Ahmed (Director General, BIISS)	A delegation visit to Dhaka, Bangladesh by Shri. Sitaram Sharma (Chairman, MAKAIAS), Dr. Sreeradha Datta (Director, MAKAIAS), Dr. Mrinal Kanti Chakma (Fellow, MAKAIAS) and Ms. Srimanti Sarkar (Research Assistant, MAKAIAS) of the Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Institute of Asian Studies (MAKAIAS), Kolkata
August 18	The Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies (BIISS) at Dhaka	The members of the delegation participated in an International Seminar on 'Contemporary Thoughts on Bangladesh-India Relations: Challenges and Opportunities' organised by Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies (BIISS). Shri Sitaram Sharma (Chairman, MAKAIAS) presented a paper 'Towards Achieving New Heights in Bangladesh-Indo Relations: Prospects and Challenges' and Dr. Sreeradha Datta (Director, MAKAIAS) also presented a paper 'Connectivity, Transit and Border Management: Creating a Shared Bi-lateral Framework'
September 18	Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Institute of Asian Studies (MAKAIAS), Maulana Azad Museum, 5, Ashraf Mistri Lane, Kolkata	Shri Sitaram Sharma, Chairman, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad of Asian Studies (MAKAIAS) and Dr. Sreeradha Datta, Director, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad of Asian Studies (MAKAIAS) held a press conference to report various activities of the Institute and generate awareness about Maulana Azad

MoU's July-September, 2014

August		Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Institute of Asian Studies (MAKAIAS) signed MOU with Kyrgyzstan -Turkey Manas University
August 17 - 18		Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Institute of Asian Studies (MAKAIAS) signed MOU with The Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies (BISS) and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Institute of Asian Studies (MAKAIAS) also signed another MOU with Dhaka University(DU)
September 9	North Eastern Hill University (NEHU), Shillong	Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Institute of Asian Studies (MAKAIAS) signed MOU with North Eastern Hill University(NEHU)

Interactions, Lectures, and Talks, July-September, 2014

July 16	Dr. Farinaz Etminan, Ancient Iranian Culture and Languages, Islamic Azad University, Tehran, Iran	"Introduction to Pahlavi, the Middle Persian language"
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Field Trips, July-September, 2014

July	Sk. Aktar Ali – Delhi (13.7.2014 – 18.7.2014)
August	Arpita Basu – United Kingdom (London, Oxford and Cambridge) (4.8.2014 – 22.8.2014)
August	Mili Ghose - Delhi (7.8.2014 – 21.8.2014)
August	Suchandana Chatterjee – Kazakhstan (Astana, Kokshetau and Atyrau) (9.8.2014 – 19.8.2014)
August	Sk. Aktar Ali – United Kingdom (10.8.2014 – 23.8.2014)
August	Jayanta Kumar Ray – Israel (14.8.2014 – 27.8.2014)
August	Mrinal Kanti Chakma – Bangladesh (16.8.2014 – 1.9.2014)
September	Sayantani Sen Mazumdar – Singapore (8.9.2014 – 16.9.2014)
September	Subhadeep Bhattacharya – Singapore (8.9.2014 – 16.9.2014)
September	Amrita Dey – Myanmar (14.9.2014 – 22.9.2014)

Other Academic Activities of the Fellows, July-September, 2014

July	<p>Arpita Basu Roy presented a paper on "Afghanistan and Regional Peace Building: Myth and Reality" organised by VPM's Centre for International Studies, Mumbai, July 29 – 31, 2014.</p> <p>Subhadeep Bhattacharya presented a paper on "Post 2014 Afghanistan: Possible Effect on Indo–China Relations" organised by VPM's Centre for International Studies, Mumbai, July 29 – 31, 2014.</p>
August	<p>Amrita Dey presented a paper on 'Myanmar's Tryst with Democracy: Lessons from India' organised by the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies (ISEAS) and the Faculty of Arts and School of Social Sciences, National University of Singapore, August 1 – 3, 2014.</p> <p>Sk. Aktar Ali taught Research Methodology Course in Social Sciences in Department of Politics and Civics, University of Mumbai, August 24-27, 2014.</p> <p>Srimanti Sarkar moderated the 'Debate Session' themed "Internet serves as a 'red carpet for sedition' for the Global Citizens" at the 4th International Relations Scholastic Conclave 2014, organized by the students of the Department of International Relations, Jadavpur University, August 26 - 27, 2014.</p> <p>Subhadeep Bhattacharya moderated the Expert Panel Session of the 4th International Scholastic Conclave 2014, organized by the students of the Department of International Relations, Jadavpur University, August 26 - 27, 2014.</p>
September	<p>Mili Ghose, presented a paper on " 'Wild' Northeast and the Perception of British Raj" organised by North Eastern Hill University (NEHU), Shillong, September 9 – 10, 2014.</p>

Compiled by Mili Ghose