

Track II Diplomacy in South Asia

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Intraregional cooperation in South Asia is marked by high expectations and moderate achievements. The official process of South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) is muddling through its own cautious mood and measured pace and seeking to bridge the gap between the legitimacy of goal expansion and institutional effectiveness of its performance. The void created by the repudiation of "contentious bilateral issues" in the inter-governmental deliberation of SAARC has been filled by the "informal bilateral talk" during retreat of summit leaders and rationalization of free wheeling trade and commerce for harmony of interests. Still, it has sustained the political commitment to create South Asian community of political interests based on sovereign equality in which decision is reached by consensus. It is the Track II intermediary actors of the region who are using alternative political channels of communication and pulling the cooperation of Track I decision-making political leaders and Track III micro actors, the advertisers and distributors of benefits accruing from cooperation to the larger society.

Track I process refers to the diplomatic communication, constructive engagement and interaction of government officials at the higher level of authority representing national interest who seek

to foster self-preservation, common welfare benefits and resolve bilateral and multilateral problems and conflicts. The success of this track largely depends on the existence of a strong political will of the statespersons of the region. Track I actors have to develop a collective position to defend the space and environment and contain the spoilers of peace.

Track II actors involve in the interaction of unofficial or semi-official channel through business elites, major media figures, professors, retired government officials, think tanks, political leaders, legislators, research scholars and socially and culturally eminent persons cobbled together to provide new ideas, shape public opinion and provide lobby for policy adjustment on mutually beneficial cooperation. The guiding principle of this track is class-bridging horizontal network, association, partnership and linkage building than domination, control and maintenance of power hierarchy. The members of this track in South Asia demonstrate a manifest ability of social learning and adaptation to changing circumstances to accelerate the process of shaping a common future. The large-scale multi-track dialogues, such as Shaping South Asia's Future and South Asia 2010: Program of Action and formation of Group of Eminent Persons, and the Citizen Commission for South Asia, have defined the long-term integrated vision of South Asian cooperation,

highlighted the ways to mediate the differences of inter-governmental bodies and legitimized the dense web of interests of Track III actors working on joint projects as a means to overcome historically evolved restrictions and create a virtuous cycle of cooperation. This track has also prevented the possibility of dangerous polarization between the political interests of state leaders, entrepreneurs, bureaucracy, official media elites and intellectuals for regional economic integration and their lack of active interest in egalitarian thrust for social integration, social charter and social solidarity for creating level playing field for the under classes of society. Only recently, various civil society groups of the region through the initiative of South Asia Centre for Policy Studies (SACEPS) prepared Citizens Social Charter through a bottom-up participatory process (Khatri 2007) and complemented the social deficits of inter-governmental processes. It has urged regional leaders to reconsider the value of accountable politics. Growing gaps in the commitment of principles and policy outcome have evoked an element of pessimism as to whether the Track I SAARC effort will take off from its indolent stage. The emergence of a vibrant South Asian public (Dahal 2004) at the Track II level has nullified this pessimism as it has conceptualized the necessity of deepening regional cooperation as an inescapable option, providing policy inputs to the summit leaders and engaging the heterogeneous Track III leaders of society to enlist their effective support for cooperation from below and circulate the feedbacks to multiple audience.

Track III actors represent a dense array of grassroots groups, enlightened persons, cultural minorities, networks and popular movements who have marginal decision-making power, and are unable to achieve the requisite social change without external help. This track tries to influence government policies indirectly by transnational media advocacy, lobbying, citizen activism and anti-systemic challenges to society's dominant values—feudalism, paternalism, caste and class hierarchy, patriarchy, over exploitation of nature, excessive centralization of political and economic power and authoritarian rule. Rejection of prejudiced past is based on the formation of a new identity and articulation of an alternative worldview. Women's movement, for example, is constantly changing gender relations in terms of roles, values, images and structures. This is an important aspect of fostering social equality and political empowerment through regional institutional mechanisms and expression of worldwide demonstrations and conferences. The emancipatory spirit of social movements of Dalits,

social and cultural minorities, indigenous people, trade unions, artists, poets and human rights groups respect each other's immediate priorities and articulate alternative vision. They have formed a core of human networks worldwide to exert social pressure to contain selfish tendency of ruling elites, minimize the causes of social conflict and invent the concept of distributive justice. These movements have been crystallized beyond the conventional thinking about people as passive recipients of welfare assistance to active agents of change. The civic solidarity underlying the movement offers structural incentives for regional dialogues, cooperation and peaceful social transformation. Conflict transformation at the grassroots level lies with the peoples and communities directly affected by it (Lederach 2003).

The enormity of external funding and services for the activities of Track II actors has made them mobile, resource rich and entrepreneurial in activities. The dramatic increase of their international linkages has made them highly influential in exerting pressure to shift the state-oriented international relations to society-centric global ties (Dahal 2007). Ironically, the capacity of Track II actors to generate demands from the society is beyond the ability of statespersons to absorb and fulfil them. The rise of volunteerism at Track III has partially compensated this deficit, bridged the institutional divide, shored up popular mobilization for cooperative action and enlarged the urban-centric view of SAARC into rural areas.

The most frequently asked questions are related to this thin line. In this shifting paradigm, how is it possible to reconcile social-interest concerns of civil society with national-interest concerns of the state? Should civil societies take national interest as the collective expression of the democratic process or just remain rights-oriented and self-justifying bodies? How can the sectoral social action of the civil society contribute to the larger strategic public action of the state for the promotion of collective goods, such as security, order, peace, rule of law and welfare? How do they derive their legitimacy and become responsible to local, national, regional and global interests? More relevantly, do civil societies have the political will to build a coalition and effect a coordinated response for conflict prevention and conflict transformation in the region? The aim of this paper is to highlight key regional concerns, macro and micro perspectives on cooperation, rationale for Track II, shared identity, peace dividend and the contribution of external actors in South Asian cooperation.

Regional concerns

The founding of SAARC has helped the region escape the historical patterns of inter-state warfare. The construction of the region has nourished the concept of general will, the preservation and welfare of the whole and rendered war as a means to resolve conflict impossible. Conflict occurs when actors refuse to accept the systemic ties with the cooperation scheme. Still, South Asia presents an array of complex, multi-polar and hierarchical conflicts. These conflicts invariably crop up along seven basic patterns—inter-state conflicts, ideological conflicts, democratic deficits causing governance ineffectiveness, distributional struggle of under-classes of society, authority and legitimacy conflicts, identity conflicts stemming from positional differences of actors, and sub-national conflicts for national self-determination affecting the state and inter-state relations. In all the South Asian states, democracy has come to mean majority rule at the cost of a wider popular sovereignty and a number of the excluded groups are either alienated or have become non-state armed actors as they nourish a feeling that rule of law is a mere reflection of relations of power and increasingly challenge the security of property rights. Their activities have cross-border implications which cannot be solved by the efforts of national governments. Democratic shortfalls have also evoked popular revulsion among minorities and weaker sections of the society.

There is a basic disjunction between the Westphalian state system based on a legitimate monopoly of power and political aspirations of subjugated citizens to share this power and sovereignty to address the growing sense of structural injustice—exclusion, poverty, inequality, injustice and violence. South Asia is too diverse but this diversity is poorly mirrored in the public sphere—education, economy and governance.

The level of militarization in South Asia is high as defence expenditure is about 4 percent of national income. Reduction in defence expenditure, internal democratization of political parties and strengthening of parliaments can rectify some of the structural defects, exonerate Track I SAARC process from bureaucratic and technocratic inertia and sustain political will for long-term harmonization of interests. Only the consciousness of a common future and prospect for sharing benefits can enlist the support of minorities and the marginalized to the will of the majority.

Civil societies in South Asia have been demanding a strategic shift from the subordination and conformity of

diverse citizens to the state's sovereignty to a negotiated social contract and are demanding that the states reflect the collective will of all sections of citizens. The failure of mono-centric governance to cope with new conflict issues caused by the pluralization, regionalization and globalization of the political economy disconnects citizens from nationality and links them to post-national constellation (Habermas 2006). As a result of disharmony between the state and society and/or economy, citizens' struggle for liberation, entitlements and social opportunities largely remains unfinished in the region. The politics of Track III civil society actors in the region, therefore, involves the contestation of subjugation of citizens, creation of a rational ordering of the monopoly of power over society, socialization of citizens towards democratic principles, means and solidarity for a peaceful transformation of the public space.

Linking macro and micro perspectives

International regime is essential to overcome the anarchy of international system through shared goals, institutions, means, behavior and proportional sharing of benefits so that even smaller states and weaker societies feel that they have sufficient stake in its maintenance. The erosion of the autonomy of states has embedded them into the networks of regional and global civil society.

In response to the changing global conditions and complexity of tasks, the SAARC Secretariat has provided affiliation to many horizontal organizations of businessmen, lawyers and accountants. This affiliation provides them information, visibility, linkage, access and recognition. Thirteen regional organizations of media, architects, university women, management development institutes, insurance companies, town planners, diploma engineers, teachers, writers, cardiologists, radiologists, surgeons, dermatologists, venerologists, leprologists, etc. provide space for articulation of different, partly competing and conflicting interests, and complement the official willingness to foster people-to-people relations and build regionalism from bottom-up (Behera 2008).

The initial impetus for regional cooperation in South Asia has been provided by four major Track II initiatives: the Committee on Studies for Cooperation and Development in South Asia, which identified complementarities of interest for the justification of cooperation in a number of soft areas; Independent Group on South Asian Cooperation, which identified

how cooperation can move into core economic areas; Coordinating Group for Studies on South Asian Perspectives, which conducted multi-thematic studies on the role of democratization, monetary issues, transport and communication linkages, confidence building between government and people, media, technical and professional education, employment and poverty issues, collective self-reliance, and negotiating strength for deepening cooperation (Khatri 2007).

Most of the studies have highlighted higher benefits than costs in cooperation and sensitized the decision-makers and the public about the global, regional and national imperatives of cooperative action. The Coalition for Action on South Asian Cooperation (CASAC), for example, was instrumental in combining Track I and Track II by involving ministers, former and serving secretary-generals of SAARC, related ministries, etc. for policy inputs, implementation of concrete ideas, task expansion and recommendation about reform in the institutional structure of SAARC and enlisting the cooperation of the international community. The recent Track II initiative for the establishment of a South Asian University is expected to produce a critical mass and contribute to knowledge innovation, socialization, policy contribution and rationalization of regional cooperation.

Many non-governmental organizations in South Asia continue to organize significant dialogues and publish a variety of materials to advocate the benefits of not only economic cooperation, but also cooperative solutions in managing population pressure, climate change, depletion of natural resources, desertification, water scarcity, havoc of flood and cyclone, pollution, ecological stress and depletion of valuable genetic resources. The rising price of energy is seriously undermining the regional order and, therefore, civil society groups are suggesting that their governments utilize alternative energy sources. The environment protection movement, especially to protect the ecological system of the Himalayas in the Hindu-Kush region, will run up against the institutional constraints of states as they will act to avoid the growing risks of conflicts over food, water, energy, and the rights of indigenous communities over natural resources.

Rationale of Track II

Globalization is breaking the boundaries of disciplinary knowledge compartmentalized into economics, political science, sociology, culture, literature, etc; disciplinary constitution and institutions based on hierarchy of

power; and the disciplinary structure of society based on social, economic and gender division of labour. This breaking process has dismantled the historically evolved social contract between capital and labour, deregulated the economy from constitutional control and restructured organizations around the network of financial flows to bridge the gap between investment needs on access to land, water, seeds, credit and technology for the poorest. It is also compelling the horizontally formed South Asian public to have inter-subjective and international perspectives and create an open space for the networks of civil society groups to meet and organize joint activities to cope with the globalization challenges and rectify structural inequity of the global economy.

The post-cold war order has made governance polycentric where neither order, security, development and peace are the sole prerogative of the state; nor is conflict exclusively confined to the inter-state domain. With the transfer of sovereignty from the mono-centric governance of the past to disparate groups of citizens organized into various federations and institutions, such as the state, the market and a myriad of voluntary associations, networks and movements that constitute the civil society, governance has become a process of redistribution of power among them. The responsibilities of socializing tendency of heterogeneous civil societies have increased in policy making, advocacy, mediation of power and the management of distributional conflicts. The states are subject to common external constraints of international laws. But, the performance of core state functions pertaining to national security, rule of law and collective national welfare remains with the states.

Presently, the state no longer monopolizes the security function. It has to share its responsibilities with the public, private and voluntary civic associations, even for self-defense. The main security challenges can be found at the domestic level rather than at the international level (Wagner 2006). Afghanistan, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Nepal need measures to stabilize the states, establish public lawful conditions and strengthen their capacities for service delivery. This requires the Track II civil society organizations to act maturely and in a responsible manner to avoid the conflict of adjustment between defense and development needs which generated the security dilemma. This actor transformation has also led to the transformation of discourse, context, issues and rules of the game. New issues such as ecology, gender justice, human security, controlling terrorism, human

trafficking, and peace have broadened the concept of security. Overcoming the moral failure of South Asian ruling classes entailed the coordination of law-enforcing agencies in the region. The domain of politics has also marked a shift from high politics—war, security, diplomacy, power, influence and foreign policy—to low politics that deals with the conditions of daily life such as basic needs, identity, social movements, democracy, human rights, good governance, cultural interactions, etc. Modern politics is couched in the language of rights (Tuck 1999). Participation rules have also marked a shift from top-down elite to a bottom-up stakeholders' participatory process. The coming of humanism has altered the freedom of ancients embedded in the collective power of civitas to a set of individual rights. As a result, there are countless thematic forums and networks at the horizontal level in the region and abroad formed by natives and diasporas to work for the well-being of the region.

The multi-layered identity of South Asian citizens, defined by region, religion, language and culture does not restrict regional governments in resolving their common challenges. Multi-polar and multi-layered engagements of Track II actors have increased new opportunities for the citizens of South Asia to build access to policies and garner benefits from the resources of states and international community. For example, Indo-Pakistan Track II dialogues on strategic issues contributed to building confidence among key actors of both the countries. The Indo-Pakistan "Bus Diplomacy" that followed the travel of people from both sides has become an emblem of the hope for peace and friendship between the two countries born in a spasm of religious hatred in which about one million Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs died. Although this initiative has been hamstrung by militants, there are hundreds of Track II and Track III conferences, dialogues, seminars and civic activities that have fostered conference diplomacy and social capital for public communication, consultation, cooperation and peace.

Many regional dialogues conducted by Track II civil society organizations in South Asia have contributed to trust building, opportunity for network activities, foci for connections and provided policy-relevant inputs to the inter-governmental level of decision-making for multi-structured communication and corresponding feedback loops between state components and network-based civil society. Track II actors have sufficiently identified solutions of the regional problems, alerted the media and policy makers and packaged their recommendations in a timely and dramatic way

to draw public attention. What is needed is their implementation. Track II actors perceive the current weariness of regional governments as a chance to cautiously complement their interests without overstretching the mandate of SAARC. This has made the summit leaders receptive to the creative ideas springing from Track II initiatives.

The linkages of civil societies across national borders have grown exponentially along with the post-national constellation of the state and market forces. The growing shifts in basic conditions, actors, rules, issues and processes have rendered the logic of collective action heterogeneous. Still, foreign, defence and monetary policies are the prerogative of the nation state and it will continue to retain considerable authority and legitimacy over them. Civil society organizations, on the other hand, have to recognize this legitimacy even while they take up the responsibility that is their due. This is an area that needs tact and wisdom in tackling system change. But, many of the Track II initiatives suffered discontinuity and a lack of institutionalization due to the shifting nature of fund, emergence of new issues and the rejection of club model of the groups which prevented the induction of fresh blood into their initiatives. There is also a competition among key donors for supporting their ideological priorities. Many of the initiatives proved less credible as they maintained a distance between vibrant discourse and practice and failed to concert action on key priority areas.

Shared identity

A common fear of marginalization from international political economy has provided South Asian elites a sort of common purpose to work together on matters of mutual interest. Similarly, Track II civil society actors are fostering a strong regional consciousness and multi-layered identity rooted in the appreciation of others in their own otherness. The incipient regional identity upheld by South Asian civil societies, especially those specializing on policy areas, human rights, environment, trade unions and women mirror their perception and adoption of post-state-centric policies so that conflict arising from the actual and perceived weakness of the state is contained. Economic societies of the region are better organized and have evolved a cooperative strategy of long-term rationality of economic integration—free trade, monetary union and South Asian community.

The SAARC Chamber of Commerce and Industry's proactive engagement with Track I actors contributed to

the signing of SAFTA. But their roles across the region are glued by pre-state economic needs for capital, labour, infrastructure development, communication, transport and trade than post-state democratic needs—such as civilization imperatives, human security, environment preservation, social justice and peaceful resolution of conflict. Fair market competition requires level playing field for weaker states and classes of people. The regional investment strategy for economic growth and the effective utilization of SAARC Development Fund are critical issues for poverty alleviation, social development, uniformity in the mode of production and reduction of national differences concomitant with the technological and economic condition of modernity. But, obligations, interaction and information sharing among civil societies across national boundaries must be coherent and conceptualized to nourish a sense of shared political destiny among South Asian citizens. The vision of a South Asian community can be shaped together by a single market founded on convertibility of currencies, free movement of goods and people and freedom of commerce.

The soft-state nature of South Asia (Myrdal 1972) renders its ties with the society very weak as the states depend on the fragile consent of citizens manufactured by periodic elections, media and the vibrant public sphere shaped by cosmopolitan values. The statespersons, on their part, consider civil societies fragmented, sectoral, egoistical and competing with each other for donors' favour rather than developing the practical capacities of the states for welfare delivery. The challenge for South Asian leaders is to remove the disjuncture between the states' need for security and stability and civil societies' demand for greater democratization to minimize the private ambition of leaderships to stick to power life-long and even evolve a dynastic succession. The propensity of the states, the markets and civil societies to construct often dissimilar, interest-bound knowledge, goals and institutional means have yet to be synthesized to set the links between ideas and policy outcomes. Similarly, these actors should be properly coordinated so that they can work together for the common good of citizens of the region. Coexistence and collective action have to be stabilized by means of pursuing commonly acceptable democratic and development policies for the consolidation of international regime.

Political ethics needs to be reformulated to achieve human governance at all levels of society from individual to the world, and connect purpose with

values. The willingness of South Asian governments and civil society to take action in acute emergencies, such as earthquake in Pakistan, tsunami in India and Sri Lanka and flood disasters in Bangladesh and Nepal, demonstrates the synergy of collective action. The South Asian diaspora and workers have become life-blood for the economic resilience of the region. Track II actors have recently recommended the SAARC leaders to form a Task Force on South Asian Migration in order to identify problems and protect and monitor the rights and social security concerns of regional workers abroad. The migration of South Asian workers in the Gulf region has created a win-win situation as it maintains supply-demand equilibrium. Outside actors, such as Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, Ford Foundation and Japan Foundation have shown greater interests in confidence building, social and economic cooperation scheme and are supporting Track II and Track III actors to harmonize media laws, deepen economic integration, seek social stability and contribute to a South Asian community based on democracy, human rights, social justice, peace and ecological balance.

Peace dividend and human security

Common fear of insecurity and common problems faced by South Asian citizens demand a collective rationality of public good that binds all the tracks of cooperation by shared values rather than exclusive self-interests. Many Track II actors are fostering the concept of cooperative security in South Asia. Democratic peace requires equality before the law and, therefore, adjudication of conflict should be based on the merits of the case rather than strength and bargaining position of powerful actors. Because of their non-hierarchical networks of organization and communication, civil society actors continue to play a special role in seeking a lasting solution of violent conflict by means of integrating the interests of diverse stakeholders of the society and creating a legitimate space which underpins social and cultural transformation. The role of civil society lies in communication, mediation and coordination of demands, payoffs and actions of conflicting parties. Only collective rationality can transform geopolitical, direct, structural, perceptual and cultural conflicts of the region into durable peace. Conflict resolution in the divided societies of the region requires a rational, comprehensive, cooperative and non-traditional perspective on the part of each state so that each includes others' perspectives to reach an understanding, consensus and social contract and learns to think as a member of the same South Asian community.

The remarkable proliferation of civil societies and social movements in South Asia is a response to the national and global social crises. They are pressurizing the regional states towards the conceptualization of the "human security" perception that can transcend the traditional security dichotomy, and achieve a reflective equilibrium based on their reciprocity and synergy. Contrary to the political realist's overriding concern to replace the "state of nature" by the reason of state, civil societies tend to project societal interests into political power by enforcing transparency and accountability in the latter in its dealing with human needs, freedom and entrenchment of property rights. Negotiating a new social contract requires a new mode of conflict resolution that is not imperial, muscular and hegemonic, but genuinely democratic rooted in what Immanuel Kant called the objective conditions of perpetual peace (Hastie 1891). It should be equally counter-hegemonic, especially with regard to the neo-liberal global order, and transformatory in nature. Subsuming caste, gender and ethnicity as a complex composition of classes, the Coordinating Group of Maoist Parties and Organizations in South Asia is articulating anti-institutional "inversionary discourse" (Apter 1993) and visualizing a new federation of South Asian people in the region. These mechanisms are, however, ideological in underlying the need for cooperation. Many of its components, including Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist), are already participating in state politics. These groups, however, highlight the system's unfairness and accord primacy of the justification for collective choice over the purposive rationality of individual preferences.

Inter-religious dialogues and peace movements of civil societies in South Asia have a manifest desire to end insurgency and counter-insurgency operations in the region. Adherents to these movements have been mobilizing public opinion and political parties in opposition, religious societies, school children and volunteers, and mustering strong popular support among the victims of conflicts to turn the region into a peaceful community. These movements have laid the foundation for a region-wide opposition against direct, structural and latent violence and mainstreamed conflict sensitivity and peace building into a range of Track II and Track III civil society projects.

South Asian cooperation needs inter-regional institutional mechanism for crisis prevention and conflict resolution. The retreat organized during the SAARC summit to discuss bilateral disputes is essential for confidence building, but not sufficient to resolve

them unless institutional mechanism at the regional level is created to sustain the process.

External actors

The diverse and pluralistic societies and states of South Asia have opened the possibilities for contact, communication and cooperation with external actors. The geopolitical realities of South Asia have offered opportunities to external actors for strategic cooperation in avoiding security risk, building confidence, participating in growing economy, managing the environment, democratic transformation, good governance, social adjustment and justice among states. All the observers of SAARC—the United States of America, the European Union, China, Japan, South Korea and Iran—agree on diplomacy to avert all forms of security risks in the region. Comprehensive security and development in South Asia without the commitment of these powers is virtually impossible. The growing interest of external actors to participate in South Asian developments can contribute to beef up favourable macro political environment for confidence-building and cooperation. But, it has to develop a regional forum like that of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations in fostering dialogue and consultation on political and security issues of common interest at the multi-track level, and reorient them to regional priorities.

Conclusion

SAARC is founded on the principle of national sovereignty than constitutional and ideological affinities. Inter-societal, inter-state and inter-people cooperation facilitated by regional states, markets and civil societies has generated hopes for the institutionalization of democratic peace. Integrated and coordinated studies and response of civil societies to the conflicting parties have amply demonstrated the costs of conflict and the benefits of peace. It is, however, important to synthesize the various types of disciplinary knowledge and perceptions produced by the states, the markets and civil societies and prepare a common ground for addressing the structural causes of conflicts in the region. The sphere of civil societies is located in the opinion forming, early warning and response system. In this sphere, community life, experiences, grievances and needs are articulated and conflicts are mediated and resolved through peaceful communication and negotiation.

Track II civil society actors in South Asia have been

instrumental in protecting openness for social groups, associations and networks for competing needs, aspirations, opinions and representation of the diversity of voices. And, basic constitutional guarantee of a public sphere also provided the space for the radicalization of rights and transformation of people into public. The lines of convergence between societal self-organization and the organization of state power are, however, still significant enough to enable the Track I political class to convince the society of its aims, and create harmony between themselves for a peaceful South Asian public order founded on the institutional incentive for reciprocity and deliver a proper account of its principles to govern regional peace.

A number of multi-track initiatives are relevant for the deepening of regional cooperation in South Asia: the SAARC Secretariat must be strengthened by legislative and executive powers if it is to

foster a community capable of assuming regional development initiatives and executing political decisions; common negotiating positions of SAARC countries should be formed not only on issues of trade, economics and environment, but also on security and monetary matters; a SAARC Task Force on migration of regional workers should be created and positions of the governments should be harmonized through foreign and labour ministries; regional governments and economic actors should create a mechanism to ensure basic needs and energy, and effectively implement the SAARC Social Charter; capacity building of Track III is essential to implement the recommendations and articulation of demands emerging from the South Asian public; and strengthening the role of regional media is an imperative in socializing the benefits of cooperation and disseminating success stories of social development projects of individual countries for learning, reflection and replication. ■

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South Asia Watch on Trade, Economics & Environment (SAWTEE) is a regional network that operates through its secretariat in Kathmandu and 11 member institutions from five South Asian countries, namely Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. The overall objective of SAWTEE is to build the capacity of concerned stakeholders in South Asia in the context of liberalization and globalization.

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