

Report No. 6  
**HUMAN DEVELOPMENT IN SOUTH ASIA**

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**Centre for Policy Dialogue**

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*The Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD), established in 1993, is an innovative initiative to promote an ongoing process of dialogue between the principal partners in the decision making and implementing process. The dialogues are designed to address important policy issues and to seek constructive solutions to these problems. The Centre has already organised a series of such major dialogues at local, regional and national levels. These dialogues have brought together ministers, opposition front benchers, MPs, business leaders, NGOs, donors, professionals and other functional groups in civil society within a non-confrontational environment to promote focused discussions. The expectation of the CPD is to create a national policy consciousness where members of civil society will be made aware of critical policy issues affecting their lives and will come together in support of particular policy agendas which they feel are conducive to the well being of the country. The CPD has also organised a number of South Asian bilateral and regional dialogues as well as some international dialogues.*

*In support of the dialogue process the Centre is engaged in research programmes which are both serviced by and are intended to serve as inputs for particular dialogues organised by the Centre throughout the year. Some of the major research programmes of CPD include **The Independent Review of Bangladesh's Development (IRBD), Governance and Development, Population and Sustainable Development, Trade Policy Analysis and Multilateral Trading System and Leadership Programme for the Youth.** The CPD also carries out periodic public perception surveys on policy issues and developmental concerns.*

*As a part of CPD's publication activities, a CPD Dialogue Report series is brought out in order to widely disseminate the summary of the discussions organised by the Centre. The present report contains the highlights of the dialogue held on September 11, 1997 at the CIRDAP Auditorium, on the theme of **Human Development in South Asia.***

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## *Dialogue on* **Human Development in South Asia**

### **i) The Dialogue**

The Centre for Policy Dialogue organised a discussion titled Human Development in South Asia on 11th September 1997 at the CIRDAP auditorium, Dhaka. The dialogue was arranged following the publication of the Bengali version of the report on Development in South Asia, 1997. Former Minister for Finance and Planning, Government of Bangladesh Mr. A.M.A. Muhith, was the Chairperson of the dialogue. Among others the dialogue was attended by, Prof. Md. Yunus, Managing Director, Grameen Bank; Mr. Matiur Rahman, Editor, The Daily Bhorer Kagoj; Dr. Raunaq Jahan, Columbia University; Dr. Nilufar Ahmed, World Bank; Mr. Jamil Choudhury, Director, CPD and Dr. Khaleda Nazneen, Project Director, CPD were present at the discussion. A list of participants is annexed.

### **ii) The Human Development in South Asia and the Objective of the Dialogue**

The report on the Human Development in South Asia, 1997 was prepared by Human Development Centre of Pakistan under the supervision of Mr. Mahbub Ul Haq and the Bangla version of the report was prepared by Mr. Abdul Bayes. The report has thoroughly, discussed various aspects of human development in South-Asia, however, the CPD dialogue was focussed on some selected issues relevant to Bangladesh. At the beginning of the dialogue, Mr. A.M.A. Muhith talked about the real aim of the Bengali version of "Human Development in South Asia, 1997", which was to make the wide number of people aware of the actual state of human development in South Asia. He said that the objective of organizing the dialogue was to ensure free and frank discussion on various issues related to human development. He invited the participants to deliver their comments without any hesitation, and asked them to outline some forward planning strategies that would be relevant to human development even ten years from now, i.e. 2010.

Mr. Muhith informed the participants that in the Human Development Report, the present status of human development in South Asia has been discussed thoroughly and a 15 year development strategy has been chalked out there. The priority areas which were marked to be most important for development are, basic education, health care facilities, and problems arising from malnutrition etc. The report has also given a statistics for investment required for attaining the goals and has given some proposals about the ways of achieving the fund. Such proposals include the possible redistribution of financial allocation for different priority sectors. Mr. Muhith felt that government has an important role to play in case of human development. He thought that it was a frustrating factor that

only 19 per cent of our government expenditure was allocated for human development. While citing from the Chapter on East Asian Experience he pointed out that the report has discussed possible routes for development. There were two important ways to achieve success: i) increase the working capacity and skill of people and ii) involve more people in the economic activities of the country. He noted that the discussion should concentrate on the issues of women development, nutrition, security and role of the NGOs.

Following are the main Issues discussed during the Dialogue:

### **Concept of Security and its Bearings on the Allocation of Resources**

Mr. Matiur Rahman, Editor, the Daily Bhorer Kagoj, thoroughly discussed the concept of security that has changed considerably in the recent times. Security not only refers to state security, but at the same time it refers to security of public, security of an individual, security to achieve development, security at home, working place, roads and security of environment. However in South Asia, especially in Bangladesh, there was a large gap between the concept of security of the state and that of the public. Both these types of security achievements require huge amount of money. He noted that a poor country like Bangladesh, which does not have the capacity to meet all its needs, has to make a choice. Human development in Bangladesh largely depended on the proper adjustment of these two types of security expenditures. He observed that it was only ironic that while many in Bangladesh are dying of curable diseases due to lack of medical care, there were greater number of soldiers compared to the doctors. He added that 67 percent of the children were suffering from malnutrition, two-third of the adult population were illiterate, 52 percent of the people lived below the poverty line, and 55 percent of the people did not have the access to any sort of medical facilities. In spite of this dismal scenario of the country only 1.4 percent of national income was spent on health sector while 1.5 percent was spent on defence sector. In addition to this, cutting down from education or health sectors further increased the budget of the defence sector. The expenditure for defence sector could be even higher if all of the expenditures on BDR, Ansar and other such organisations were added. Taking all these factors into account, 18 percent of our national budget was found to be allocated to the defence sector.

Mr. Matiur Rahman further observed that from 1985/86 to 1996/97 there was a huge expansion in the budget allocation for the defence sector. During that decade defence budget had an average increase of 2.4 percent. Moreover from 1985 to 1994 there was 12.4 percent manpower rise in this sector. During the same period military holdings in Bangladesh recorded the highest growth compared to other countries of the South Asia,

which was 12.2 percent. Mr. Rahman thought that this kind of increased defence expenditure must be controlled by the government for the sake of economic development and human development. A balance must be struck between defence budget and budget for public security. He also thought that this was necessary for political stability as well. He observed that since the independence every government had stressed the importance of strengthening the defence sector and therefore had raised the budget allocation for this sector. He pointed out that during the regimes of Ziaur Rahman and Ershad, military expenditure had been increased at a greater pace to satisfy the military people because that had been the source of their power. Mr Rahman was disappointed by the fact that the democratic government after 1990 had also followed the same path of expanding military expenditure compared to education, health and other such sectors.

He recalled from the past that, the aim of President Zia's defence policy had been to make the defence sector strong enough to counter any sort of Indian attack at least for some days so that Bangladesh could get the attention of the international organisations to cease-fire.

President Zia had once told this to the eminent political scientist Dr. Talukdar Moniruzzaman. The latter has pointed out this comment in his article " Alternative Strategy of Defence for Bangladesh". Also in the same article Dr. Moniruzzaman has noted that such defence strategy of President Zia was not proved by history. President Ershad's defence strategy was to at least increase Bangladesh's military force up to 7 divisions. On 14th January 1990, Ershad stated this strategy while giving an interview to Mushahid Hossain of Pakistani magazine 'The Nation'. Mr. Matiur Rahman thought that following those two military governments; the democratic Governments run by both BNP and Awami League were also continuing the same defence strategy. The only difference was that no collision or war like situation has occurred with India during their regime. He noted that this particular strategy of strengthening the military base of the country was largely motivated by the fear of possible attack by India. This might be true but there might be other threat as well; even Myanmar could attack Bangladesh. The country might be under such threats because of its huge reserve of mineral resources. However Mr. Rahman was surprised to find that there was neither any security principle nor any defence policy in Bangladesh. Rather, increased number of manpower in the army and purchase of modern military hardware was taking place on an ad hoc manner. He mentioned that he had never heard our political leaders to be discussing the principles or morals of security aspect or of the defence strategy seriously. Also there was no document or proposal on these issues. However, experts sometimes discussed these things.

While quoting from the writings of political scientist Dr. Talukdar Moniruzzaman,

Mr. Rahman mentioned that Bangladesh did not need any permanent armed forces, rather the country needed a 'Citizen Army'. Where the entire citizen in the country should be given military education and they should be provided with arms only in time of emergency. Such 'Citizen Army' is in existence in Sweden, Switzerland and Coastarica. Mr. Rahman informed the participants that Dr. Muniruzzaman made these comments to Mr. Matiur Rahman during an interview published in 'Weekly Muldhara' of 31st December 1989. Dr. Moniruzzaman had also told there that as long as a permanent army was there, in a poor country like Bangladesh, the possibilities of military coup and military rule would always be there. He also thought that establishment of 'Citizen Army' in Bangladesh would be possible through the consensus of ruling and opposition political parties. Mr. Matiur Rahman referred that such ideas were also reflected out in the book "Bangladesh Punargathan, Jatyo Oikomotto" written by eminent writer A.M.A. Muhith. While referring to the chapter on security strategy and defence strategy of that book it was noted that Bangladesh needed to restructure its security system. The writer had also opined for banning regular army and had stressed establishing a National Militia by mobilising the trained people of the country.

Mr. Matiur Rahman thought that if our national leaders follow the alternative security strategy mooted by Dr. Moniruzzaman and by Mr. Muhith, a large part of the residual military budget could be used in health, education, nutrition and poverty alleviation. He also pointed out that some military people were opposed to the establishment of 'Citizen Army' or 'National Militia Force' considering these to be more expensive.

Mr. Matiur Rahman further added that our foreign policy should give importance to such diplomatic moves so as to maintain a friendly relationship with India, because present security strategy of Bangladesh had long been guided by the fear of Indian attack. Mr. Rahman also gave importance on initiating development activities through the growth quadrangle. Moreover he thought that diplomatic relationship within SAARC had to be improved among the member countries. He further noted that such move was possible only through improvement of relationship between India and Pakistan. He added that Bangladesh should take a specific defence strategy by considering its socio-economic condition, and development needs.

### **Absence of Discussion on Military Budget in the Jatyo Sangshad**

Mr. Matiur Rahman mentioned a peculiar feature of our budget debate where no discussion took place regarding the military budget. He thought that both the government and the opposition seemed to be on an unbreakable consensus regarding this issue. He questioned the fact that why our political leaders did not discuss on this issue. He mentioned that the monthly meetings of the parliamentary committee on defence matters,

only discussed the unimportant matters like 'Muktijoddha welfare trust' or Survey of Bangladesh. Moreover no reports or minutes of the discussion had ever been made public. He thought that like the previous government, present government had also established an ineffective Security Council, which did not convene any meeting at all. Moreover, there was no scope to discuss the defence strategy to ensure transparency. However, Mr. Matiur Rahman noted that while discussing with some retired and serving army personnel, he had found that they were eager to discuss defence issues (excluding strategic issues) directly in the parliament and parliamentary committee so that no confusion remained in the mind of the public about military expenditure. He pointed out that there was a 2-day fruitful seminar on similar issues organised at the Military Staff College in January 1997. He thought that this was the time to discuss the issues of human security and national security by the people from different walks of life. People at large should have the opportunity to discuss the issue and express their views to ensure their own security in their own terms. Illiteracy, lack of health care facilities, lack of nutrition and food, and unemployment could bring serious misfortune for Bangladesh. He stressed that such misfortunes could occur if there was no balance between social expenditure and military expenditure. He cited an example of the former USSR; its fall was largely due to lack of such an equilibrium. He also gave examples of Iraq, Somalia and Nicaragua, these countries which had failed to deliver proper social services to their citizen but they maintained their huge military forces. He was of the opinion that South Asian countries like India, Pakistan and Bangladesh should take lessons from the experiences of the above mentioned countries. He mentioned that the huge unplanned military expenditure in Bangladesh showed signs of impending doom, whereas necessary social service activities were overlooked thus creating pressure on foreign currency reserves and ultimately leading to a colossal debt burden on future generation.

### **Balance of Social and National Security**

Mr. Matiur Rahman pointed out that throughout the world there remains a tendency to reduce army expenditure. In this regard he gave examples of China, Russia, Vietnam and USA. Moreover he noted that about half of the military people in El Salvador, Namibia, Nicaragua and Mozambique were moved back to normal civilian jobs. However, in this regard he made a point that such budgetary cut on the defence sector of Bangladesh, without creating alternative job opportunities, will create more problems. He further added that the army should be engaged in national and international social activities like relief works; transport of food and fertiliser, construction of roads, dams or culverts etc. Bangladesh armed forces have already participated in such activities, he said that through involvement in such social activities, military people could earn a large part of their income. This would in turn reduce pressure on national budget. In this regard he gave examples of China where military people were running different industries or renting

shops constructed at their place etc.

He pointed out from Bangladesh experience that already; a part of the income of military forces, engaged in United Nations' peace mission had gone to national treasury. *This amount was 29.3 million dollars. Besides, Bangladesh would receive from the United Nations an additional amount of 15.2 million dollars as salary earning and 24.9 million dollars on arms use.* Thus Bangladesh military was earning a part of their own budget expenditure. Our military people could take part in construction activities under different ministries on a competitive basis; they could even take part in construction of primary schools through tenders. He thought this would put an end to the prevailing terrorism and toll-seeking activities related to such works. Mr. Matiur also proposed that military forces could be used in forest development activities and they could use their trucks in transportation of food and fertiliser. They could even earn through renting out their lands. He believed that many such steps could be taken to use the army and its resources in development works which would in turn reduce pressure on national budget and therefore, making it possible for the remaining amount to be used in health, education and nutrition sectors. He also mentioned that government could reduce some of its expenditure by using the national security force in social services like mass education programme, health care facilities in rural areas, family planning programmes etc. Mr. Rahman, finally, invited NGOs, media people and civil society to take initiatives to convince government for taking steps towards striking a balance between state security and public security.

Mr. Sohrab Hasan of the Daily Sangbad also agreed with Mr. Matiur Rahman that in Bangladesh there should be no controversy about the role of armed forces and budgetary allocation. He thought that our political leaders should overcome their mental block towards the defence issue. He also noted that when any political party accuses the government of selling the country to another country, it indirectly triggers the tendency in them to further expand and strengthen the armed forces. Therefore such practices should be stopped. Mr. Sohrab further added that in the South Asian countries general people were being tortured in the name of state security. He gave examples of the harassment and coercion on local people of Chittagong Hill Tract in Bangladesh, repression on Tamils in the name of maintaining undivided Sri Lanka. He said that the tendency to oppress the minority people within any country should immediately be stopped.

Mr. Sohrab praised Mr. Mahbubul Haq's view that military budget should be reduced and armed forces should be engaged in more productive and constructive work. But he seemed to be critical to Mr. Mahbubul Haq about the fact that once Mr. Haq was an employee and advisor of the military government of Pakistan, especially of President

Ziaul Haq and was now advocating the reduction of military expenditure. Mr. Shafi Ahmed from Jahangir Nagar University was also disappointed by the regular increase of military budget in Bangladesh. He viewed that, a self seeking group has managed to create a panic among Bangladeshi people that India was going to attack Bangladesh at any moment and therefore military power should be raised and thus they ensured their market for selling arms. However the allocation for human development activities like health care, access to education could be made to a greater extent by reducing military budget. Such reduction would be possible only when both the ruling party and the opposition have a joint consensus with the civil society. He also added that the armed force should not be treated like the enemies, but there should be reduction of military budget for the sake of the present condition of the country. Non-government social organisations could play an important role to mobilise the public opinion in this regard.

Mr. Shawkat Hossain Masum of the Daily Ittefaq expressed that the army should be made aware of the need for reduction of military expenditure as well. He questioned whether we should wait for WB or IMF to come and give the condition of reduction of military expenditure for Bangladesh. Dr. Rounaq Jahan of Columbia University also supported this view.

### **Food, Security, Health, Nutrition and Education**

Dr. Nilufar Ahmed from World Bank, discussed on the issues of public security. She pointed out that security of state was different from that of public. She expressed that state should ensure security of food for every household, and that security of health care and education should be prioritised and people should have the freedom of choice. She stressed security at micro level, i.e., security of all individual. In this context she referred to the work she had presently been carrying out under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. The task was to find out how health care facilities could be provided through public participation.

Regarding nutrition of people she pointed out that about 93 percent of our children were suffering from malnutrition, while most of the people are not aware of the basic health tips. She thought that quality of education has declined much in recent time, therefore, rich and even middle class people send their children abroad or to private schools, colleges or universities or at least providing private tutors for them. She added, the government should make sure that not only schools are set up but also its quality of education is maintained. She further pointed out that public health care facilities should also have to be increased.

Dr. Khaleda Nazneen, Project Director, CPD, was of the opinion that if government

considered human resource development in terms of people's development in health, education, nutrition etc. then military power should be a marginal issue and she thought that budget allocation would follow that conception.

Dr. Najma Sadiq, of UNDP, opined that people were not getting proper diet or nutritious food not only for lack of money but also for lack of knowledge. She also mentioned that there was vast reduction of some essential micronutrient in our soil. The reduction was so acute that 70 percent of our people are suffering from iodine deficiency, which ultimately reduces working capacity.

### **Human security or security of individual**

Dr. Najma Sadiq pointed out that we should be more concerned of human security. In case of poverty alleviation, human security is an important factor. She opined that poor people did not have any incentive to save because they are always afraid of losing their savings, which could be taken away from them by 'mastans' or other such miscreants.

Dr. Sadiq thought that it was a wrong practice to accuse police or other body of state security for their failure to provide security. Although they might be responsible in some cases, but mostly they were used by the political parties, mainly by the ruling party, to fulfil their interests. She thought that such practices of political parties impede economic development.

### **Security of Women**

When Mr. Muhith raised the issue of security of women in Bangladesh, Dr. Najma Sadiq opined that problem of lack of security of women in Bangladesh is acute. She pointed out that our women did not dare to go outside alone after dusk. Even if they went they were always at the risk of attacks by hijackers and others. She added that women in our country were often being killed for dowry. Sometimes women commit suicide just to end the misery inflicted by her husband or in-laws. In this regard Dr. Najma referred to Yasmin's case. She thought that the mental attitude towards women should have to be changed, otherwise women development would never be achieved.

Ms. Quazi Sufia Akhter of Alokpat raised the issue of women empowerment. She thought that lack of security is one of the major hurdles that women folks have to cross where empowerment is concerned. In rural area, parents were found to be afraid to send their girl child to schools, fearing that they can be raped or can become a victim of acid throwing. She thought that when government and civil society were talking about bringing women in the mainstream of development activities, it was their responsibility to ensure security for women first. In this regard she referred to the rape and killing of

Sheema under police custody, further adding that the tortured women even do not have the security to get proper medical treatments. She accused the government and the civil society for not properly carrying out their responsibility towards ensuring security for women. She thought that the policy makers should consider this issue seriously. As women constitute the half of human resource in Bangladesh, development could not be achieved by keeping them away from the mainstream. There should also be amendments in existing laws, which in many instances deprive women of their rights.

Dr. Khaleda Nazneen pointed out an age-old custom of our patriarchal society; it is always seen that nutritious food plus a major portion of it are given to the male child. This happens across poor and rich family, because people believe that the male child would bear the responsibility of the family in future. Even in a rich family the birth of a male child is welcomed more cordially compared to that of a female child. The attitude of considering women as commodities and treating them as mere sex objects should change and people should learn to accept the concept that women can take part in the development process just as the male. The women should be considered as human beings first, and then as daughters, wives and mothers. She praised the activities of NGOs, involved in women development and urged for more such attempts.

Mr. Aminul Islam of UNDP also supported the view that women should be considered as human beings and that the mental block towards women should also be changed. He stressed on the importance of women education saying that only education can integrate women into the decision making process. He thought that it was not enough to have a female Prime Minister and a female opposition leader, women to a greater extent should be brought into decision making process. Dr. Raunaq Jahan, mentioned that in recent times female participation in open discussion has increased compared to the 1970s. She thought that this was a great advancement that women could speak frankly today. Dr. Raunaq argued that not only educated women could speak better than many males but also pointed out that many rural women are articulate and better conversant than many rural males.

### **Economic Development and Skill Development**

Mr. Aminul Islam of UNDP quoted from the human development report that 30 years ago the economic tigers of the East Asia were at the same socio-economic level like Pakistan or Bangladesh. However they have won the race and we lagged behind. Mr. Islam thought that the main reason for this huge gap between East Asian development and South Asian development, was that South Asia had not invested on education, science and technology and skill development like that in East Asia. South Asia had spent more on defence than on human development. Mr. Islam thought that economic power of

a nation is more important than military power in the present world. In this regard he gave the example of Japan, where the main source of power is economic development. He urges the government to think of the security of our trade and commerce and realise whether our balance of trade with the outward world will assure future security and development or not.

Mr. Islam also sought attention of the policy makers on the issue that urbanisation in recent time is moving at a faster rate. Therefore, our education and economic policies should keep pace with that factor. Education system should give more stress on skill development. He stressed the need for rural based technical centres instead of big universities for the development of Bangladesh. Also resource mobilisation should be directed in this path. Another participant pointed out that along with the initiation of new technologies, old but economically valuable technologies should have to be maintained.

### **Environmental security**

Mr. Aminul Islam raised the issue of environmental security. He particularly drew attention to the threatening issue that within the next 20 to 50 years, a larger part of Bangladesh will go under water as a result of global warming, and asked the policymakers to take proper long term strategies addressing this issue.

### **Role of State and Role of People in the Process of Development**

Dr. Md. Yunus, of Grameen Bank elaborately discussed this issue. To him mankind has enormous internal power and capacity, and man throughout his life uses a very negligible part of this power. The extent of use of that power depended on our economic condition, social status etc. Dr. Yunus believes that the main responsibility of a society was to create opportunity to flourish that inner capacity of the people so that a person can find out, in his own way, what potential he has. The less a society could provide this opportunity, the poorer it became. It is said that Bangladesh is the poorest country of the world, however we have never tried to utilise our full potentials. He thought that if we could find and use those potentials we would no longer remain poor. Dr. Yunus pointed out some factors hindering full realisation of peoples' potentials.

Firstly, people in our nation are in such an apathetic situation that they believed that they did not have the capacity to change their condition.

Secondly, our people do not help or co-operate with each other. They have no tolerance towards others views or opinions. People are not even ready to give others the opportunity to co-operate with him.

Dr. Yunus pointed out that we have lack of security in both individual and organisational levels. The local government should have the supreme power to make decisions on local matters. Therefore, he thought that the establishment of a powerful local government was essential for our society. He found that in the individual level a person in one profession shows no respect for others in other professions. At the organisational level, people in the government maintains such a view that as if only their decision was right and no one else's were worth counting. According to Dr. Yunus often government's initiative to ensure security had been the cause of insecurity for the people. He considers the government to be a great "Mastan". As long as "mastani" of government was not controlled other such misgivings will not stop. He believes that people of Bangladesh were always under unjustified pressure from the government. Instead of maintaining the law and order situation, the government was creating chaos. Dr. Yunus' frustrations often leads him to believe that it would be better if there were no government. He further noticed that an individual should be given the opportunity to flourish in his own way. A person should not be marked as a political conspirator if his remarks and ideology does not coincide with government's idea. Government should stop playing negative roles. He believes that the transformation of government from playing negative roles to positive ones, largely depend upon the urgent need to build up powerful but small local government. He opined that this only could relieve the people from their negative attitudes towards the powerful central government.

Dr. Yunus did not believe that government should arrange everything for people and in return people would direct their lives as per government's will. He did not even believe that everything should be controlled by market or by profit motives of the entrepreneurs. However a balance should be struck.

Dr. Yunus did not support the idea that everything should go under private sector, and moreover private initiative should not be motivated by profit only. He thought that social consciousness building was very important and private initiative should be, in his term, market exposition of social consciousness. For this social consciousness building, a man should at first realise his huge inner potentials and he should recognise the fact that life was not only for eating and working for food and survival, life consists of much more than this. A person should feel confident of his potentialities to work and capacity to create and he should try to use those potentialities as much as possible. For such realisation, Dr. Yunus, gave importance to education in general, not only schooling but education with a deeper meaning i.e., a person should be aware of his position, his surroundings, his neighbours, the process of co-operating with others etc. Dr. Yunus also highlighted the importance of technology in the process of consciousness raising and other social activities. In this regard he mainly referred to communication technology. He

pointed out that technological development was a crucial factor with regard to state and public security.

While summarising Mr. AMA Muhith highlighted two major issues i.e., perception towards public or human security vs state security. He also pointed out various strategies, which can be recommended in, or to address the issue of security. He welcomed the discussion around the possible role of local government where it was suggested that a strong local government could tackle the problem of human security more efficiently than the central government. He thanked the participants for their valuable comments. He specially thanked Dr. Yunus and Mr. Matiur Rahman for their elaborate discussion. He hoped that the participants, specially the media people would make the people aware of the perception regarding the issue of security and would highlight the hindrances towards achieving security in a broader sense. With regard to transit issue he suggested that people should have a vision about what is going to happen in the next twenty years. If Bangladesh does not keep pace with the changing global scenario, it will stay far behind.

In his concluding remarks, the Chairperson, Mr. A.M.A. Muhith stated that the present report on human development in South Asia should be considered with much importance. This should be published and circulated to a wider readership. However, the basic elements discussed in the present report would remain almost same, only some new elements could enrich future reports. He urged the participants to give their inputs to this report, to initiate more discussion on the issues presented here and influence the policy discourse.

**List of Participants**

(in alphabetical order)

Dr. Nilufar Ahmed	World Bank
Mr. Shafi Ahmed	Jahangirnagar University
Mr. Manzurul Ahsan (Bulbul)	The Sangbad
Ms. Kazi Sufia Akhter	Alokpat
Prof. Abdul Bayes	Jahangirnagar University
Mr. Profulla Kumar Bhakta	The Sangbad
Mr. Jamil Choudhury	Director, Centre for Policy Dialogue
Mr. A. Hannan	UNDP
Mr. Syed Azizul Haq	Dhaka University
Mr. Anisul Haque	The Bhoerer Kagoj
Mr. Sohrab Hasan	The Sangbad
Mr. Shawkat Hossain (Masum)	The Daily Ittefaq
Mr. Aminul Islam	The Bhorer Kagoj
Mr. M. Aminul Islam	UNDP
Mr. Morshedul Islam	Film maker
Dr. Rounaq Jahan	Columbia University
Mr. Majumder Jewel	The Sangbad
Ms. Ismet Z. Khan	UNDP
Mr. Naser Khan	East West University
Ms. Nadira Kiron	Dhaka University
Mr. A.M.A. Muhith	Former Finance minister, GoB
Mr. Muniruzzaman	The Sangbad
Dr. Khaleda Nazneen	Research Fellow, Centre for Policy Dialogue
Mr. Abdur Rahman	The Financial Express
Mr. Kawser Rahman	The Janakantha
Mr. Matiur Rahman	Editor, The Bhorer Kagoj
Dr. Najma Sadiq	UNDP
Mr. Sajjad Sharif	The Bhorer Kagoj
Ms. Tahera Yasmin	OXFAM
Dr. Mohammad Yunus	Managing Director, Grameen Bank

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