

# Newsletter

The Monthly newsletter of PDPA



Postgraduate Diploma in  
Public Administration

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### From One Legend to Another 90th Birthday Greetings to Nelson Mandela

*Glory to you, Nelson, who defended human dignity in the 25 years of solitary imprisonment you endured! Neither slander nor hatred could break your iron will. You held your ground and, unwittingly and unintentionally, you became a symbol of what is noblest in human nature. You shall live on in the memory of future generations, as will the Cubans who fell in defence of the freedom of their brothers in other lands of the world.*

Fidel Castro Ruz  
July 18, 2008

*South Asia has some of the best human resources compared to ASEAN and other developing regions (ASEAN, for instance, has so far not produced a Nobel Prize winner but South Asia has produced more than five). Yet the ideas that are generated at academic and private sector interactions hardly make an impact on the SAARC process. Why is this the case?*

Saman Kelegama  
(Himal August 2008)

The SAARC summit is now over. It is time for implementation. The distinguished delegates themselves have acknowledged that there is a significant gap between resolution and delivery. The resolutions have increased with each summit, since the inaugural one in 1985. If only some of them, particularly, the one relating to the South Asia Free Trade Zone was implemented, at least Sri Lanka would have seen its overall trade gap in the Balance of Payments disappearing. Think of a market opportunity multiplied by almost 75 times, from 20 million in Sri Lanka to 1.5 billion in the region.

There is a middle class in South Asia of about 400 million, enjoying average per capita income equal to what is obtained in the OECD countries. Most of these people are in India (about 350 million) and that is the reason why the US, Europe and Japan are trying to rush in there.

Unfortunately, the economic and political disparities, particularly between India and Pakistan, have become an insurmountable obstacle to a meaningful regional economic cooperation arrangement. Realizing these obstacles, member countries are trying out bilateral deals. The CEPA involving India and Sri Lanka, yet to be signed, is one of these.

There are, however, many other areas where mutually beneficial regional cooperation is possible. A number of meetings have taken place in a variety of fields, under the auspices of SAARC, involving professionals in the member countries. But there does not seem to be much enthusiasm in implementing most of the recommendations. Why?

Dr. Saman Kelegama thinks that this is due to the lukewarm attitude of officials in these countries to recommendations made by professionals. This is a challenge for the SAARC Secretariat and Sri Lanka now endowed with the mantle of SAARC Chairmanship, will have to ensure that this challenge is met.

Editorial

## SUSTAINABLE HUMAN DEVELOPMENT INDEX

It is now universally accepted that per capita GDP, even after correcting for purchasing power parity in different countries, is a poor indicator of human well being. For this reason, the UNDP has been improving almost annually since the 1990s, its calculation of the Human Development Index (HDI), which tries to capture other aspects of human welfare as well, into one composite index.

Even though the HDI provides a more composite index, incorporating life expectancy, adult literacy and school enrolment, with GDP calculated applying purchasing power parity (PPP) rates, it still leaves out many other factors that have a bearing on human welfare. Thus the UNDP has been working on a Human Poverty Index and a Gender related development index (GDI). There are attempts by other organizations as well, to produce new composite indicators such as the Human Planet Index incorporating environmental impact and as mentioned in an earlier Newsletter - Gross National Happiness.

Now we have a home grown product from the Ministry of Environment - Sustainable Human Development Index or SHDI, which takes into account "sustainability of development". The full report on the methodology of calculations prepared by Dr. Fuard Marikkar could be read in the Daily Mirror commencing Friday August 1st. What is interesting is that Sri Lanka fares better than most developed countries, as indicated in the Table below extracted from the Daily Mirror (1st August 2008).

Sustainable Human Development Index		
Country	SHDI	HDI
Brazil	1	70
Sweden	2	6
Sri Lanka	27	99
Japan	50	8
UK	55	16
India	59	128
Nepal	60	142
Pakistan	61	136
USA	94	12

*Learning without thinking is useless, Thinking without learning is dangerous.*  
Confucius

Development, however, is a very complex phenomenon which cannot be captured in a single composite index, especially if you agree with Amartya Sen - "Development can be seen, as a process of expanding the real freedoms that people enjoy....."

Development requires the removal of major sources of unfreedom: poverty as well as tyranny, poor economic opportunities as well as systematic social deprivation, neglect of public facilities as well as intolerance or over activity of repressive states".

Amartya Sen  
Development As Freedom, 1999

What would the world be once bereft  
Of wet and wildness? Let them  
be left,  
O let them be left, wildness  
and wet:  
Long live the weeds and the  
wilderness yet.

Gerard Manley Hopkins,  
Inversnoid

But this should not lull us into complacency since, as Dr. Fuard says, some of the development projects which are now in the pipeline, such as Kerawalapitiya, Norochchalai, Trincomalee and Hambantota power plants based on coal could add a further 11 - 12 million tons of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere. Similarly some of the major projects in the transport sector promoting increased vehicular traffic could add further emissions of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere, unless policies are implemented to reduce the use of fuel.

What it means is that, we should not abandon much needed infrastructure projects to propel economic growth, but every one of them should be subjected to the test of environmental impact assessment and precautionary methods implemented without impunity.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS - THE MALAYSIAN EXPERIENCE**

Ms. Patricia Yoon Moi-Chia, Secretary General of Colombo Plan delivered an interesting and informative speech on Administrative Reforms in Malaysia and Singapore on 22nd July at the PIM.

We, as participants in the Postgraduate Diploma in Public Administration found the speech very relevant to our study programme, particularly to the module covered by us on the 'Role of the Public Service'.

The lecture covered several dimensions of the development process in Malaysia, particularly in regard to human resource development and institutional restructuring in the public service, with the aim of making the country reach the status of a developed country by the year 2020. She explained the key role played in this regard by INTAN.

What was of particular significance was the explanation of the lead role played by human resource development in the administrative reforms process. She explained the nature of recruitment to the public service, the induction training programs, in particular the 3 months spent by management level recruits in the armed forces to inculcate discipline and organization ability. She also mentioned that the Malaysian Government allocates huge resources for senior management staff to obtain training abroad in prestigious institutions such as the Harvard, Yale and Oxford Universities.

Mr. Dhmmika Amerasinghe, Advisor to the President, explained the nature of the administrative reforms process in Sri Lanka and the performance appraisal system that is to be introduced. He said he was in favour of group assessment as against individual assessment which was more cumbersome and was not consonant with our work culture.

Dr. Uditha Liyanage emphasized that the private sector is the "engine of growth: and the role of the public service is to facilitate that role. Dr. Lloyd Fernando agreed with Dr. Liyanage but reminded the audience that the public service must be the "engine driver" and should not do what the private sector could do better. As such, he said, that the public service should learn to "steer" rather than "row".

Lasantha Gamage - Leader Group 3

MCQ Performance - July 2008	
Marks	No. of Students
100 *	01
80 - 100	76
60 - 80	45
< 60	05
Absent	14
Total	141

\* Congratulations! K P Dahanayake - Mon. Gr - 3



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Postgraduate Institute of Management  
University of Sri Jayewardenepura  
28, Lesley Ranagala Mawatha  
Colombo 8  
Sri Lanka  
General Tel No : +94 11 2689639 - 42  
Direct Tel No : +94 11 5740282  
Fax : +94 11 2689643  
E-mail : [dushyanthij@pim.lk](mailto:dushyanthij@pim.lk)

## **WE WISH OUR PARTICIPANTS 'A HAPPY BIRTHDAY!'**

Malani Chandralatha	03rd August
Pathmasiri Dahanayake	09th August
Priyanga Jayaweera	09th August
Subashini Abeykoon	10th August
Kalu Arachchige Gunawathie	11th August
Inoka Damayanthi	13th August
Lasantha Gamage	19th August
Renuka Bogahalanda	20th August
Jayawardena Bandara	22nd August
Nayana Neelamanie	25th August
Salanie Bandaranayake	25th August