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BOOK REVIEWS

The Economics of Climate Change, Nicholas Stern: Cambridge University Press, 2007

The economics of climate change is structured by the science. This book therefore starts with the science which determines the shape of the economic analysis and policies.

The climate change as a consequence of emissions of carbon dioxide and other green house gases (GHGs) that have accumulated in the atmosphere over a number of decades is mainly human-induced. The climate change is now considered a serious and pressing issue on the basis of scientific evidence. It warrants effective action to lower the rate of green house gas emissions around the globe and reduce the risk of detrimental and irreversible impacts on ecosystems, societies and economies. Hence climate change is a global issue that requires a global response.

This book illustrates the significance of Economics in assessing and managing the risks of climate change and has much to say about how to design national and international responses for both the reduction of emissions and adaptation to the impacts that we can no longer avoid. It also elucidates the use of economics to design cost effective policies at length. These policy initiatives and action enable societies' potential for well being to increase much rapidly in the long run than with no action at all, implying that green and growth can go hand in hand. Green economy reduces the risk of ultimately undermining the growth in the absence of green growth.

Following the introductory part I of the book, part II explains the implications of climate change on development. The implications are dealt essentially in terms of energy demand and emissions of the prospects for the economic growth over the coming decades, including the composition and energy intensity of growth in developed and developing countries. This section of the book and the next one that is part III cover the economic, social and environmental consequences of climate change in both developed and developing countries, taking in to account the risks of increased climate volatility and major irreversible impacts. The discussion about climatic interaction with other air pollutants as well as possible actions to adapt to the changing climate and the costs associated with them, is also included in it. It also pull together the existing modeling work that has been done to estimate monetary costs of climate change and also sets out the details of modeling work. Part IV looks at the principles of carbon pricing policies, focusing particularly on the difference between taxation and trading approaches. It also considers the practical application

of carbon pricing, including the importance of credibility and good policy design and the applicability of policies to different sectors. An interesting discussion about motivation for and design of technology policies is part of this section as well.

These policies are aimed at removing barriers to action, particularly in relation to the take up of opportunities for energy efficiency and at how policies can help to change preferences and behavior. Part V outlines key adaptation concepts and sets out an economic framework for adaptation. It examines the barriers and constraints to adaptation and sets out how government in the developed world can promote adaptation by providing information and a policy framework for individuals to respond to market signals. It also explores the particular issue of how developing countries can adapt to climate change. Developing countries lack the infrastructure, financial means, and access to public services that would otherwise help them adapt. It shows the importance of support from the international community and the need for investment in global public goods such as the development of resistant crops.

Section VI provides a framework for understanding international collective action, drawing on insights from game theory and international relations and sets out an overview of existing international co-operation in climate change. This section examines the challenge of creating a broadly comparable price for carbon around the world. Reader would realize what can be learned from the implementation of the Kyoto Protocol and looks at the scope for expanding and linking emissions trading schemes. It further explains how the transition to a global low carbon economy can be accelerated through action to promote the diffusion of technology and investment in low carbon infrastructure in developing countries and economies in transition. It explores current arrangements including the Clean Development Mechanism and considers how flows of carbon finance can be transformed to respond to the scale of the challenge. An analysis of how international co-operation can accelerate innovation in low emission technologies and technologies for adaptation is also part of this section.

This book very clearly establishes climate change as the greatest market failure the world has ever seen and it interacts with other market imperfections. Three elements of policy are required for an effective global response. The first is the pricing of carbon implemented through tax, trading or regulation. The second is policy to support innovation and the deployment of low carbon technologies. And the third is action to remove barriers to energy efficiency, and to inform, educate and persuade individuals about what they can do to respond to climate change. The highlights of this book include key elements of future international frameworks that will help each country to play its part as climate change demands an international response, based on a shared understanding of long term goals and agreement on frame work for action.

The book places great deal of emphasis upon required action on climate change across all countries and it need not cap the aspirations for growth of rich or poor countries. The costs of taking action are not evenly distributed across sectors and around the world. Even if rich world takes on responsibility for absolute cuts in emissions of 60 – 80% by 2050, developing countries must take significant action too. Carbon markets in rich countries are already beginning to deliver flows of

finance to support low carbon development, including through the Clean Development Mechanism. Action on climate change creates significant business opportunities, as new markets are created in low carbon energy technologies and other low carbon goods and services. These markets could grow to be worth hundreds of billions of dollars each year and employment in these sectors will expand accordingly.

Expanding and linking the growing number of emissions trading schemes around the world is a powerful way to promote cost-effective reductions in emissions and to bring forward action in developing countries: strong targets in rich countries could drive flows amounting to tens of billions of dollars each year to support the transition to low carbon development paths. In-formal co-ordination as well as formal agreements can boost the effectiveness of investments in innovation around the world. Globally, support for energy R & D should at least double, and support for the deployment of new low carbon technologies should increase up to fivefold. International co-operation on product standards is a powerful way to boost energy efficiency. Very useful observations are made in this book as per the loss of natural forests around the world which contributes more to global emissions each year than the transport sector. Curbing deforestation is a highly cost effective way to reduce emissions; large scale international pilot programs to explore the best way to do this could get underway very quickly. The poorest countries are most vulnerable to climate change. It is essential that climate change be fully integrated in to development policy and that rich countries honor their pledges to increase support through information dissemination and financial assistance. International support is highly desirable in terms of improved regional information on climate change impacts and research into new crop varieties that will be more resilient to drought and flood.

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Together We Survive: The Eight Neighbours, Ajeet Cour and Noor Zaheer, (Editors)

The book under review is a collection of papers read at the SAARC Festival of Literature, 2011 organized by Foundation of SAARC writers and literature. Apart from a foreword, message from Indian Prime Minister Man Mohan Singh, message from Sonia Gandhi, Lyohpo Jigri, Y. Thinley who spoke as how to provide South Asian fraternity and FOSWAL's historical journey by Gursharan Kaur, the book is divided into 37 chapters. The purpose of the "Foundation of SAARC writers and literature" (FOSWAL) is to bring together the creative minds of eight neighbors under one roof. As Gursharan Kaur put into words that, "literature of a place is one of the best ways to understand the society", indeed it is and is the common thread that binds the creative fraternity together. He is so right in expressing that it is the need of an hour to understand and respect internal sensitivities, and also enjoy and cherish the diversity they bring along.

In the foreword by Fathimath Dhiyana Saeed Secretary General SAARC Secretariat, Katmandu applauded the efforts of Ms. Ajeet Cour, President of FOSWAL, for her constant efforts in promoting people to people contacts in the region through various activities organized by the foundation. She certainly need to be congratulated by us all more so as she is also one of the editor of the book. Congratulations are also to the co-editor Noor Zaheer. Apart from Folk culture, poetry and literature the participants did not stick to these but also gave their insights to Economic aspects of their countries. These vary from Economic Growth, sustainable development, structural transfers, gender discrimination to environment and one very important aspect of networking of SAARC libraries.

One of the important chapter by Nihal Rodrigo is on achievements challenges – Taking Stock of SAARC-25 years of SAARC. He is of the view that SAARC social charter which was adopted in 2004 is a significant achievement, considering the complex South Asian socio cultural matrix. Many of the delegates who drafted this charter are members of the civil society. The major concerns in the charter included poverty alleviation, protection of children, role of women and youth, health and nutrition and human resources development. This foundation FOSWAL is an apex body recognized by SAARC. He stressed the need to address the issue of climate change seriously that is, there are major issues "the seven E's" on which South Asian countries need to work closely in order to protect the mutual interests on environment, economic exigencies, energy issues, ecology, emigration, extremism and of course the security issues and terrorism.

Rest of the book/chapters are divided into five topics – Economic Growth and Structural Transformation, Gender Discrimination, Sustainable Development and Environment, Socio-Political Activities and mostly on Folk Culture, creative

writing and theater spanned over most of the book. FOSWAL is actually a foundation of SAARC writers and literature but the participants of this festival also covered the important economic aspects.

Being an economist I would first take the chapters on Economic Growth and Structural Transformation. G.K. Chadha started with the dissemination of the geographical facts about the South Asian region. The region has the 7th largest land area in the world, and about 23.0 percent of the world's, and nearly 40 percent of Asia's population. Also it is the third largest economic entity in the world after United States and China. These figures and facts are enough to highlight the importance of the region. The author has given a huge introduction of the region. He has given importance to rural parts and rural people to combine them into rural economy – most importantly to the agricultural countries like Pakistan. After a fruitful review he concluded that for the past two decades the South Asian Region has a fairly creditable growth record to its credit.

To add to this Sharmila Kantha begins with the social transformation that outstripped economic progress in the late 19th century. This was the time when the Reformist movement gained pace. She peeped into history and compared the pre-independence growth rates which were less than 1 percent. Per capita income was effectively stagnant during 1900-1947. While GDP for the first two decades of free India experienced the growth of almost 4 percent and jumped to 7 percent during 1990s. With these amazing figures she adds that the economic growth accompanied the communication revolution, which accelerated in India during the decade of 2000. Today 800 million cell phone connections in India reached to every very little hamlet that has transformed the connectivity of the average person to the outside world.

Gender Discrimination in SAARC countries by Ambika Soni – is the first topic taken after the Foreword and messages. Author begins with the statement by Kofi Annan, "There is no tool for development more effective than the empowerment of women" and by Emily Esplen, "Investing in women and girls is an important strategy for ending, poverty and transforming societies. However, the most important reason for investing in eliminating gender inequality is to transform women's lives, safeguard their human rights, and create a fairer world". Inspite of the above sayings, gender issues remain a complex challenge in South Asia. Male-female population ratio is skewed, discriminatory practices very common. While the girl child still deprive for nutrition and women for basic health care. Education opportunities lack for girls and employment opportunities for women. Even in the 20th century, the ground reality of gender disparities in the region includes the preference for sons in the family. These were the major determinants of gender inequality identified by the author.

In yet another chapter Ayesha Zee Khan throws light upon gender discrimination in Pakistan. Her analysis reveals that the literacy rate for females is at 39.6 percent whereas for males it is 67.7 percent. Although the objective of education policies is to achieve the equality in education between both sexes but the feudal practices and lack of democracy is the biggest obstacle in achieving this aim. This is the major cause that lead to other discriminations as well, importantly being

the practice of a women "marrying the Quran" in rural areas, women killed by male relatives who suspect them of adultery, and so on. She hinted to some of the instances against women that took place in Pakistan, Afghanistan and Nepal. She concluded with the note that, the attitude that results in widespread neglects needs to be 'treeted' and drained of social support. On the same issue of Gender Inequality Reena Marwah and Ameeta Motwani referred to the Noble Laureate Amertya Sen who invented the term "missing women" to refer to the phenomenon of less than thousand women per thousand males. In the recent decades in South Asia the population dynamics has shown a disturbing proportion between female and male ratio. They went on assessing the gender indicators in South Asian countries with a very useful table showing the trends. To summarize, women in South Asian countries continue to suffer from a range of socio-cultural vulnerabilities which also include early marriages, trafficking, dowry, and violence, of different types. It is thought provoking fact that issues like violence against women cannot even be captured by the UNDP indicators. Therefore, it is the need of time to formulate, adopt and implement the terms and policies carefully to reduce vulnerabilities.

Murlidhar C. Bhandare governor of Orissa had narrated his experiences he had gone through while visiting several environmental hotspots. The way he narrates the beauty of the nature is a must read. It is interesting to read how he had described the hatchings of Olive Ridley turtles emerging out of golden sands. The important figure he gave is that in the SAARC region 1-6 billion people live only in 4-8 percent of world's total land area. Agricultural economy dominates in this region, therefore demand of land is great/high. He went on by realizing that climatic change worldwide has been caused by the process of industrialization which begin more than a century ago, and the use of coal, hydrocarbons, electricity started. This has resulted in the concentration of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere and distorted the manner in which we receive heat from the sun. It's like super imposing a sort of blanket between earth and sun. However, he adds, it does not imply that industrialization should stop but while setting up industries we must keep in mind the environmental concerns, that is, use the resources in a way that human needs be met while preserving the environment.

Sheel Kant Sharma also gave the views on Environment concerns of the SAARC region. After reviewing the SAARC meetings chart the author moves on appreciating the publication, "A South Asia Environment Outlook 2009", with the collaboration of SAARC and UNEP. The objective is to give an account of the state of environment in South Asia, the challenges faced. Audience were also informed about the SAARC process. Such process would only be fruitful if various environmental challenges being confronted by the region by effective and efficient adaptation of framework of SAARC institutions to address diverse aspects of environment and natural disasters, for the environmental conservation and sustainable development.

The theme of Karan Singh's paper is words, cultures, identities and South Asian Dialogues. While discussing the importance of dialogue and communication, he pointed out that as residents of this region all SAARC countries share the neighbourhood in more than one ways. All share roots and legacy, history and philosophy, faiths and languages. Not only this but also food, clothes, the way of dressing, customs, social moorings and cultural artifacts are common. Three

religions mainly shared by eight neighbors, Islam, Hinduism and Budhism. The Dargah of Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti in Ajmer in India is visited by millions each year regardless of their religions affiliation. He stressed the need to understand the importance and power of language – As wordsmith – the cities, academics, readers should take active part in this process.

Mahasheter Deni at 80 plus must have amazed the audience by his wonderful witty way of expressing herself. She first went on describing herself rather her way of perceiving things at this age. Then she described the traits practiced in India, the attitudes of people, the behaviors of different people that clearly shows the class differences. Then came up with the dreams of India to be, no more third world and backward India, but First where all children are educated, women empowered, poverty no more, and so on. No one without light and water and hang roof above every head. To more progressive end no more satis, dowry deaths, honour killings, etc. Dream is big but not impossible, she expressed.

Kapila, Vatsyayan talked about Pluralism and Diversity in South Asia. Interestingly the author notices that paucity is not uni-dimensional – it is multi-dimensional and multi-valued, then add that the eco-cultural phenomenon cannot be synonymous with political state boundaries. Culture should reflect development or inclusive growth. "A search of the conscience", is the topic of Tara Gandhi Bhettacharjee. The author first defined the word conscience that it is the supreme guide for this life, then shared some of his observations that include beautifully narrated interaction with a young girl in Bangladesh. Regarded the young girl a symbol of the soul of Bangladesh, concluded with a note that, the history of the world is the history of its mother. Gowher Rizvi in his paper identifies that the experience of past five, six decades has shown that the challenges and problems facing the South Asian countries are transnational and transcended the boundaries of the state – issues like poverty, food security, women trafficking, environmental degradation all incapable of solving by a single state.

Ibrahim Waheed looked at the constraints to the Development of creative writing in the Maldives. Among other, one basic constraint pointed out by the author is the lack of proper publishing facilities. In another chapter Margret Alesa required our attention to a common trend that television, internet, computers are slowly and gradually taking the place/substituting of folklore. Abhi Subedi is of the view that all eight neighboring nations should seek the elasticity of the idioms of performance culture from the perspectives of spatial, corporal, spiritual and aesthetics. Anis uz Zaman writes that the spirit of tolerance, non-violence and respect for others should be the central focus to the culture of piece. The writer of more than 60 books Tissa Kariyawasam raised a point that even after independence, national consciousness could not be reached. Moreover in the result of inability the country had to undergo various problems. Writer also identified the emerging difficulties which needs attention:

1. Unemployment
2. Education
3. Indian workforce living in Sri Lanka as immigrants or as temporary permit holders.

These problems need to be resolved soon.

Kaiser Haq referred Professor Yunus who has been reiterating that SAARC should graduate into something like the EU. In order to support this the author gave the examples of two scholars, Shahid Suharwardy and Humayun Kabir. The former when became Pakistani after partition, was gradually forgotten in his hometown and his works went out of print in India. Same is the case of Humayun Kabir whose ancestral home was Bangladesh but opted for India.

Literature is powerful. It can upturns the virgin soil, makes the invisible visible, names the nameless, give voice to the silenced etc., etc., are the worthy views of Satehidananden. Author Abdul Wakil Sulaman Shinwari highlights the challenges before literature of SAARC countries. After discussing some of the challenges namely politics, censorship, translation and market he stressed the need to provide the art and literature, a status by assessing and experimenting with it locally before introducing it in the international market. Taslima Nasreen, most profound feminist writer in Asia. She raises the questions that when a child is born to a communist, is not labeled a communist but when a child is born to a hindu, Christian, Muslim why he should be called hindu or Muslim or Christian. Why can't a child choose his own religion when grows old enough to understand? She is happy that she has chosen her own religion none other than humanism and she should not be mistaken for a 'Muslim Reformer'. With all due respect I would ask what is Islam what Islam teaches us? As far as I understand it teaches us humanity thus a religion of 'humanism'. Rest of the papers are by Jaya Jaitly, Syed Shamsul Haq, Irfan Shah, H.K. Kaul, Syed Manzoor ul Islam, Partaw Naderi, Ram Dayal Rakesh, Ranuka Singh, Kiran Bashir Ahmed. All these eminent writers, poets, fiction writers, scholars, political thinkers from Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, Afghanistan, Nepal, have written wonderful papers narrating their experiences, observations which cannot be expressed but one is sure to enjoy while reading. The expression in their writing could only be felt, could not be put into words. The common objective and aim of all of them is to develop culture and creative writing and finally aim at achieving “culture of piece”. I would like to add/inform the readers that India and Pakistan have already started working on this front. Both countries do programmes and invite literary persons, poets, singers, etc., under the name/foundation of “Aman ki Asha” and since few years this exchange of cultural activities are successfully taking place. This is the gist of all the above mentioned papers that all SAARC members should interact, bring their people together.

Rani Messery reviewed the contemporary SAARC women's writing, worth mentioning are the books, novels and short stories by Syeda S. Hameed, currently member Planning Commission of India, who in her book realistically depicts real life stories of women who were brutally abused and violated by men in her book “They hang twelve women in my portrait gallery (2006)”. Then there is an Anthology “And the World Change”. It is a collection of contemporary stories by Pakistani women (2005)”, edited by Muneeza Shamsi. The short story “The Daughters of Aai” by Fahmida Riaz, (Pakistan's first feminist, poet, is a haunted tale of innocence, sexual abuse and the resourcefulness of women. Rani Messery tried to portrait that women writers have evolved as writers overtime who could speak their minds forthrightly, these have certainly embarked on a new journey towards the

empowerment of women by voicing their opinions and most importantly by offering insights as examples through their own lives as well as other women's lives.

“Knowledge is the most vital resource which should become increasingly and freely available to the people in SAARC countries”. “Libraries have remained repositories of knowledge in the past and with new emerging trends can become irrelevant if not modernized”. These are the true and practical words by H.K. Kaul. In the current phase of globalization and world of information technology revolution the barriers should be removed that exist in SAARC between knowledge and people. The best and appropriate way is to remove these barriers is to work on networking of issues among the SAARC countries. In the words of Charles Savage this is “The process of consuming and recombining one another's knowledge, experiences, talents, skills, capabilities, and aspirations in even changing profitable patterns”. The author has also given a record (Table) very informative as of how many and what types of libraries are in each SAARC county.

The final papers of the book are from the two editors Ajeet Cour and Noor Zaheer. First, both these editors need to be congratulated on providing such an informative and interesting readings, and obviously it is a food for thought for all SAARC members. Ajeet Cour in her paper tells about her success story after all the efforts she made in order to give due importance and to include culture as one of the main activity of the SAARC charter. How good and heartening it is to learn about her several visits to our country Pakistan. She tells about what is included in cultures and what things/habits are parts of cultures in different countries from mummifying the kings after their death or buying and selling slaves as a component of human culture in certain parts of the world. Finally the paper by co-editor Noor Zaheer, unfortunately the last pages of the book not properly printed and some text in each line is missing. However, the gist of his paper is that even after three decades thirty years unable to achieve and explore the complete potential of SAARC as cannot move around in the region freely and till today need to acquire currency exchange. The point the author raises has lot of weight with a big question mark. With all the odds we are trying to be together and live peacefully in the region. Future is ours but we need to be clear in our minds what we want? And need to be honest with ourselves. Without these it is hard to achieve what is desired and expected by eight neighbors.

What all the eminent authors want, even exchange programmes like “Aman ki Asha” taking place in India and Pakistan cannot do much.

In the end I would like to congratulate Ajeet Cour for her successful journey and wish her good luck in all her future endeavors.

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