Conceptualising human security through identifying the issue areas or, so to speak, ‘naming the threats’ for which responses must be developed is a matter of value judgement. Therefore, the issue areas of human security will differ radically, depending on the socio-economic and politico-cultural background as well as the expertise and interest of the individual and collectives/institutions defining those issues. Similarly, concrete threats and their magnitude differ from country to country and from region to region. Even in a given society the magnitude of the threats to human security differs radically among the different strata of the same society. The same implies to the perceptions of the threats by diverse segments of interest groups at all possible levels. Thus, while focus on threats could be a conceptual basis for human security, it does not pay sufficient attention to the fundamental grounds by which threats are identified.

Nevertheless, defining the elements of human security in concrete terms through naming the threats is, indeed, a sine qua non for scholarly exploration and, more so, for the practical mitigation of threats to human security. Reasons are obvious. An explorative exercise on human security would remain incomplete without itemisation, categorisation or ‘naming the threats’ in one way or the other, since this would deprive all concerned of a concrete idea about the threat and its nature and magnitude. For the same reason, it would also make the process of the exploration on the response to face the threats difficult. Questions like, what sorts of policy responses could be considered to deal with specific threats to human security, what would be the ultimate policy option, who will implement the policy and how, and so on will remain far from clear until the threat is identified in concrete terms. In the circumstances, thus, defining the elements of human
security through naming the threats in concrete terms is, indeed, a *sine qua non* for constructing a human security index.

Thus, the dilemma faced by human security studies, in this regard, is that if we categorise the threats issue by issue calling them by name, a specific threat could be considered no more a threat depending on the changing circumstances. Hence, the fundamental grounds by which threats are identified could prove to be flimsy. On the other hand, any exploration of the concrete threats to human security and, more so, mobilisation and implementation of appropriate policy response to face these threats is virtually impossible without identifying the threats in concrete terms. It is in this backdrop that an exploration of the issue area of human security will be made in this section that is designed to facilitate subsequent exploration of the possibility of the construction of a human security index. In this regard, while a large number of issues may be considered, only those that surpass a threshold of severity could be labelled threats to human security, as has been asserted by Taylor Owen.

Our exploration of the issue areas of human security will be significantly based on similar endeavours by UNDP, the UN Commission on Human Security and a host of scholarly works discussed. In this regard, attention can also be paid to the country level and thematic papers conducted under the Research Project on Human Security of which the present volume is a part. The discussions that follow will be divided into two sections. The first section will review human security studies in South Asia. The Second Section will focus on profiling human security issues in the context of South Asia.

### 3.1 PROFILING HUMAN SECURITY RELATED INSTITUTIONS IN SOUTH ASIA

Human security studies *per se* is a nascent field of academic enquiry and policy pursuits which gained momentum following the publication of the UNDP report on human development. While some measurable progress has been made in different dimensions of human security in South Asia, other regions, groups of countries and individual countries elsewhere have made specific and tangible progress in human security studies. In this section, a profiling of institutions and individuals involved in human security studies in South Asia will be made.
There are no institutions and individuals specially dedicated to research, advocacy and policy planning on human security in South Asia. However, this statement may be qualified if issue areas related to human security are also considered as human security proper. For example, if poverty, human rights and environmental issues are considered as components of human security, then one can say there have been significant efforts in the region towards the study of human security. Moreover, there are a good number of institutions and scholars who have involved themselves in human security studies from time to time.

3.1.1 Mahbub ul Haq Centre for Human Development

The only institution in South Asia which has been working consistently and almost exclusively on human development issue since its inception in November 1995 is the Mahbub ul Haq Human Development Centre based in Islamabad. Haq himself in his chequered career was the architect of the UNDP Human Development Report. As a think tank and policy research institute, the Centre is committed to organising professional research, policy studies and seminars in the areas of human development with a focus on South Asia.

The Centre's current activities include the following:

- Preparation of annual reports on Human Development in South Asia, being published since 1997, which may be considered as the South Asian version of UNDP Human Development Report;
- Organisation of seminars and conferences on global and regional human development issues;
- Preparation of national reports on poverty alleviation strategies for South Asian countries. In particular, the Centre is actively involved in monitoring poverty in Pakistan, as part of UNDP's South Asia Poverty Monitor project;
- Preparation of research papers on human development issues for publication as Occasional Papers series; and
- Publication of the biannual Mahbub ul Haq Human Development Review.

The annual publication of the organisation, Human Development in South Asia has been widely acclaimed by governments, civil society and media, both in the region and throughout the world. Modelled on
UNDP Human Development reports, issues cover subjects such as education (1998), crisis of governance (1999), gender question (2000), globalisation (2001), agriculture and rural development (2002), employment challenge (2003) and the like.\(^1\) It is, however, notable that true to its name and objectives, the Centre's activities come closest to human security in its 'freedom from want' dimension. The Centre, of course, has been generating huge sets of data on poverty, economic and social development, which, otherwise may not have been available in compact form in one place.

### 3.1.2 International Centre for Ethnic Studies (ICES)

The International Centre for Ethnic Studies (ICES) was established in 1982 in Sri Lanka.\(^2\) It is basically a research organisation, which, in its research pursuits is directed at the enrichment of both conceptual as well as empirical understanding of ethnicity, ethnic conflict and conflict resolution. It also devotes special attention to problems concerning fundamental human rights, religion and language, constitutional arrangements, electoral processes, participatory democracy, legal systems, mass media, and sustainable development.

ICES has a large organisational body with two offices in Sri Lanka. Both offices have separate researchers, staffs and websites. Its staff is Sri Lankans and is multi-ethnic in character. Its Board of Directors, on the other hand, is international in composition. ICES's principal programmes and forms of activity consist mainly of research, workshop, publication, lectures, media programmes and documentation.

ICES frequently organises and conducts workshops on subjects and issues related to ethnicity and ethnic problems and associated questions. Some of these workshops are international, both in the scope of their subject-matter and in the character of their participants; others have been entirely Sri Lankan in character. The workshops are not meant to be an end in themselves. They are usually preceded by research which goes into the preparation of papers, and in many cases result in publications which present in permanent form the thinking and writing generated by the workshop.

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\(^2\) See, the website of the International Centre for Ethnic Studies (ICES), www.ices.lk/ accessed on September 2, 2009.
Apart from its scholarly work, ICES also has an active interest in educating public opinion towards more objective, informed and reasonable approaches towards ethnic problems. Its media programme, which is directed towards popular communication in Sri Lanka, is a major component of its activity. The Centre has developed impressive networking with regional and international research organisations and policy bodies. It has also earned high recognition for carrying out research and related activities at the international level. It has consultative status [Category II/Special status] with the ECOSOC/UN. Its Director, Radhika Coomaraswamy, was appointed as the UN Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women in 1994. Another Director, Neelam Tiruchelvam, earned worldwide reputation for being actively engaged with the efforts to develop the peace process in Sri Lanka. However, his active involvement was brought to a tragic end when he was assassinated by a group of Tamil militants.

ICES has actively taken part in organising the UN World Conference on Racism (February 17-22, 2001). In the World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance in South Africa, September 2001, ICES presented three substantive issue papers on the issues of race, ethnic and caste discrimination, gender, culture and race and youth, race conflict and exclusion. ICES's project on Ethnicity and the Politics of Identity in Asia and Africa is being pursued through extensive collaboration with the Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA). This project has involved reputed Afro-Asian scholars like Ashis Nandy, Arjun Appadurai, Jayadeva Uyangoda, Luc Sindjoun, Jibrin Ibrahim, Okwudiba Nnoli and many more. In another completed project on Multiculturalism and Modes of Ethnic Coexistence in South and South-East Asia, ICES worked in partnership with Sasakawa Peace Foundation, Tokyo.

In the field of gender issues, the organisation is, first of all, carrying out an OXFAM funded project on “Women Capacity Building in Conflict Areas in Sri Lanka”. Another larger ongoing project concerns “Women and Governance in South Asia,” involving research, human rights and women’s organisations from Bangladesh (Ain-o-Salish Kendra), India (Asmita and Ekatra), Pakistan (Shirkat Gah) and Nepal (Shrii Shakti). It has also developed another significant project concerning peace-building on “Gendering Peace Movements in the Context of Armed Conflict and Displacement in South Asia.”
The Centre has undertaken a large number of research projects, where conflict resolution and peace-building have often been the major focus. Its broader research areas include ethnicity and racism, conflict resolution, gender issues, governance, regional cooperation and minority protection. Some of the major research projects of the organisation include: “Post Conflict Peace-building in Sri Lanka,” “Ethnic Conflict, Ethnic Conflict Management and Resolution—International Experience and Lessons for Central Europe,” “Democratic Transitions, Regional Co-operation and Conflict Resolution,” “Electoral Process and Governance in South Asia” among others. Although the organisation has a regional focus, a significant portion of its research works has concentrated on conflict and governance problems in Sri Lanka.

ICES publishes books and monographs, discussion papers, occasional papers, conference reports, periodicals and films. It has joint publication arrangements with commercial publishers to reach a wider audience. A large number of its publications are pertinent to the area of conflict resolution and peace-building, as can be seen from books such as “Conflict and Violence in South Asia: Bangladesh, India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka”, “Autonomy and Ethnicity: Negotiating Competing Claims in Multi-ethnic Societies”, “Gendering Humanitarianism: An Annotated Bibliography on Gender and Capacity Building in Armed Conflict” etc. However, its books are mainly on Sri Lankan issues rather than regional ones. The online journal of the ICES, The Ethnic Studies Report, however, covers a wider range of regional ethnic conflict issues.

ICES’s research and other activities have put it in a position from which it can contribute towards regional peace-building. However, its contribution would be even more substantial if it could expand its focus on more regional areas of conflict.

3.1.3 Women in Security, Conflict Management and Peace (WISCOMP)

Women in Security, Conflict Management and Peace (WISCOMP) is an initiative committed to the promotion of an alternative, gender sensitive, discourse on a range of issues related to peace and security in South Asia. The organisation is relatively new, but is among the few which

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focus exclusively on such dimension. It emphasises both research and training and also tries to pursue lobbying at the macro-level. The major target of the organisation is to highlight the effects of violence on women and their potentially enabling role in peace efforts and reconciliation. With such target, WISCOMP's Engendering Security Program aims at Professional Development and Academic Enrichment and Networking and Regional Initiatives. The organisation is supposed to be regional in its scope. However, so far, it has tended to concentrate mainly on India and Pakistan.

WISCOMP arranges regular symposiums, workshops and roundtables on issues such as conflict-management, women in situations of armed conflict, refugees, trafficking in women and children, arms proliferation, and environmental and food security etc. Some of the significant themes covered by WISCOMP include "Women's Initiatives for Peace in Nagaland and Sri Lanka," "Breaking the Silence: Women and Kashmir" etc. The training workshops seek to empower women and other groups such as students, young and mid-career professionals and NGO workers to harness their potential in building democratic public opinion against war and conflict. Its "Mentor and Internship" programmes are aimed at developing the skills of young entrants in the field of security and international relations with a specific focus on gender dimensions.

The organisation mainly publishes working papers, workshop reports and newsletters. The major themes of its publications are related to non-military issues of security (especially gender) and peace-building. WISCOMP maintains active linkage with various organisations working in the areas of peace-building and women's issues. It has been working closely with several initiatives based on The Hague Appeal for Peace. These include the following: The Women Building Peace Campaign, International Alert (London), Women Peacemakers Program, International Fellowship of Reconciliation (The Netherlands), Peace Education Campaign (The Hague), Abolition 2000, Nuclear Age Peace Foundation (Santa Barbara, USA) and The Coalition for an International Criminal Court (New York, USA).

A significant activity of the WISCOMP has been its participation in the women's peace delegation that visited Pakistan in March 2000 under the leadership of peace activist and former parliamentarian Nirmala Deshpande. The delegation had a three-point agenda: to work towards nuclear disarmament in South Asia and the world, initiate a dialogue on Kashmir and bring down the inflated defence budgets of
the two countries. At the end of the visit, several human rights and women's groups on both sides of the border passed a joint statement calling for a change in the educational curricula (particularly in schools) of both countries, freer access to each other's print media, relaxation in granting of visas, and greater responsibility on the part of the media when reporting on issues of contention between the two countries.

Many of the WISCOMP's programmes have not been fully realised. Some are in the process of being developed. In view of the fact that the organisation is still in its infancy, it is yet to be seen how it performs in the future in carrying out its agenda. The area which it is focusing on, however, appears to be a crucial but under-explored dimension of conflict and peace-building in South Asia. In exclusively exploring and understanding gender dimensions of conflict situations and gender issues facing peace-building process, the expertise of this organisation may prove to be handy.

3.1.4 South Asian Forum for Human Rights (SAFHR)

SAFHR is basically a human rights organisation which does substantial research on regional peace-building. It was initiated in 1993 in Dhaka, primarily as a public forum where interlinked human rights issues could be discussed. Its projects have ranged widely over a number of issues. SAFHR upholds a broad approach towards peace assuming that "peace is not simply the absence of war or the management of crisis but a fundamental value to be integrated in the programmes for realising peoples' security—that is, security of food, shelter, health and livelihood in a non-hegemonic democratic regional order." With such orientation, SAFHR's programmes address some of the core concerns of the human rights agenda—displacement of indigenous peoples and minorities, refugees and migrants, impunity, inter-state and intra-state conflicts and peace accords, militarisation and the strengthening of peace constituencies in civil society. The objective is to link these issues in a framework of human rights, peace, tolerance, governance and democracy.

SAFHR has a decentralised operational structure; its office is staffed by only a handful of people. Most of the research undertaken

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4 See, the website of the South Asian Forum for Human Rights (SAFHR), www.safhr.org/ accessed on September 2, 2009.
there is carried out by independent consultants and through partner organisations. The organisational structure includes the following:

- Council of SAFHR consisting of 35 members representing partner organisations
- A Governing Board, consisting of a maximum of 15 members nominated/elected by the Council for a term of four years, headed by a chairperson elected for a term of four years
- Standing Committee on Finance: A three members committee nominated by the Governing Board for a term of four years
- Secretariat headed by a Secretary General nominated by the Governing Board for a term of four years
- Programme Director, programme executive, researchers, staff and volunteers

Leading intellectuals, journalists and activists in the areas of regional conflict and peace-building such as I. A. Rehman from Pakistan, Tapan K. Bose, Ranabir Samaddar and Rita Manchanda from India etc. are involved with SAFHR.

The website of the organisation is impressive, providing a detailed outline of its activities, publications and programmes. It allows free downloading of all its working papers, seminar reports and e-briefings, which helps dissemination of important information. However, the website does not provide adequate information about some of its major programmes such as “Peace Audits” and also about its principal sources of funding and budget. SAFHR has developed several programme structures that can contribute significantly towards understanding regional peace-building issues. The programmes’ major focus, however, appears to be more on intra-state dimension of conflicts rather than inter-state ones.

SAFHR offers a Human Rights and Peace Studies Orientation Course for peace and human rights activists, media persons, researchers, academics and persons involved in policy work on conflict resolution. Thus far, three such courses have attracted participants from all over South Asia. A significant feature of SAFHR’s programmes is its regular “Peace Audits.” The audits draw participants involved in specific issues in an attempt to evaluate existing peace processes and measure the sustainability of possible justice. Previous SAFHR Peace Audits have examined the peace processes in Nagaland, the Chittagong
Hill Tracts, Sri Lanka and Baluchistan. The Peace Audits often are followed by a report that is included in the paper series.

It also offers regional dialogue on Women and Peace-building, which attempts to identify women's experience of conflict as a resource in conflict resolution and strengthen their capacity for peace-building and also investigate whether there is a gendered notion of peace and a gendered praxis of peace making. The other research and advocacy areas SAFHR is involved in include refugee and minority rights and promoting ‘peace journalism’ in the media. All these areas are significant concerns for enhancing the prospects of conflict resolution and peace-building in South Asia.

The publications of SAFHR further indicate its orientation towards peace-building. Its list of books cover minority and refugee rights, women's role in peace-building, a study on people, conflict and development in the Chittagong Hill Tracts region etc. The working paper series, coming out mainly from the regional dialogues and peace-audits, focuses closely on issues and problems of peace-building in South Asia.

The networking capacity of SAFHR is notable. It is currently working through a network of 40 partners and associates comprising civil society organisations. In South Asia it has collaboration/partnership with 32 organisations, some of which are grass-root level initiatives for peace-building in particular conflict situations like Naga Mother Association (Kohima, Nagaland), Naga Women’s Union of Manipur (Imphal, Manipur). Some of its international partners are Friedrich-Nauman-Stifting, Asian Human Rights Commission (Hong Kong), Minority Rights Group (London) etc. Various projects of SAFHR have been funded by Friedrich Naumann Stiftung, Peacefund Canada, CIDA, UNHCR etc.

Both, the impressive networking and research capability of SAFHR, have resulted in innovative research and campaign activities in supporting the cause of peace. SAFHR often takes the lead in comprehensively exploring specific issues in the context of South Asia. Examples are its past studies on women and conflict, refugee rights, and peace in Punjab, Kashmir and the Indian Northeast. Its programme on women and peace-building is one of the very few in the region that explores the gender dimension of conflict and peace. It has a record of investigating neglected but important conflicts in the region. For example, it is one of the few organisations that have researched the
issues of repatriation and compensation surrounding the forcible and violent eviction of Nepali-origin communities from Bhutan in the 1990s.

SAFHR seems intent on pursuing a comprehensive programme on peace-building in South Asia, blending research with advocacy in the process. Its focus on humanitarian and other non-military aspects of security indeed suits the South Asian conflict scenario, where durable peace can not be attained by focusing only on military aspects. The workshops and dialogues of the SAFHR involve cross-sections of civil society and professionals involved in policy making. Thus, it can play an important role in opinion mobilisation and can ultimately influence policy making.

3.1.5 Ain-o-Salish Kendra (ASK)

Ain-o-Salish Kendra (Law and Arbitration Centre),\(^6\) Bangladesh is a legal aid and human rights resource centre that provides legal aid to the disenfranchised. The organisation started its activities from 1986. The basic objectives of ASK was to create critical awareness among women, in particular of the importance of civil and human rights in a democratic society. Apart from legal aid, the organisation is involved in support services for security, basic needs, counselling; training to raise public awareness on rights-related issues; and investigating to supplement client's complaint with authenticated data, among others.

ASK has fourteen units that implement various programmes, developed through a consultative decision-making process. These units cover fields such as legal aid, field liaison and support; legal literacy and human rights awareness (child rights, training and popular theatre), fact finding (investigation and documentation), advocacy (local for gender and social justice, national and international) and research, communication and logistics support (administration and finance).

The ASK has organised numerous seminars and awareness raising programmes, staged plays and published books based on the research of its researchers. ASK provides training and workshops on family laws (Muslim, Hindu and Christian), women's rights, violence against women, constitutional laws and workshops on education and support services. In 2000, the training unit of ASK provided 86 training

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\(^6\) See, the website of the Ain-o-Salish Kendra (Law and Arbitration Centre), www.askbd.org/web/ accessed on September 2, 2009.
sessions on the issues mentioned above where a total of 3,148 participants attended. ASK has recently produced an oral history of women's experiences during the liberation war and a video entitled *Women and War*.

Over the years, ASK has developed strong ties with the policy making community of the country through its advocacy works. The organisation carries out its advocacy network at national, regional and international levels. It runs a Local Advocacy for Gender and Social Justice Programme through six partner NGOs that works as a local monitoring base to prevent and eliminate unlawful practices regarding human rights issues in the country. It has a research and documentation centre that undertakes research and documents in the areas of discrimination, denial of human rights and the impact of law and practices. ASK also publishes a yearly *Human Rights in Bangladesh*, which covers the issues mentioned here and also focuses on rights of ethnic or religious minorities and rights of migrant workers, the right to shelter and health, among other things.

Ain-o-Salish Kendra has been highly acclaimed for disseminating legal knowledge among citizens. It has a strong research base and has carried out a number of successful research projects in relevant fields. ASK has established its credentials with its viable infrastructure and strong national and international linkages. Thus, the organisation has developed partnership with Canadian International Development Research Centre (IDRC) on issues relating to legal issues pertaining to rights of ethnic minorities and women's condition in conflict situations. However, the organisation focuses exclusively on human rights and legal issues of Bangladesh and does not have any specific agenda about conflict and peace-building.

### 3.1.6 Society for Environment and Human Development

The Society for Environment and Human Development (SEHD)\(^7\) was founded in 1993 as a non-profit organisation dealing with the environment, development, ethnic issues, the impact of the policies of Multilateral Development Banks and human rights. It performs research, reporting, documentation, training and advocacy. The organisation specialises in investigating, exploring and publicising the

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\(^7\) See, the website of the Society for Environment and Human Development (SEHD), www.sehd.org/ accessed on September 2, 2009.
grievances of indigenous population groups in Bangladesh, which are important areas for peace-building research.

SEHD has developed an information base about human rights, development and environment issues in Bangladesh. Apart from projecting the problems and issues facing ethnic groups in the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT), SEHD’s activities pay special attention to other less explored or non-explored indigenous population groups such as Hajangs, Garos, Moghs and many more.

SEHD publishes various important books and monographs as well as an occasional magazine, Earth Touch, which deals with the issues of environment and human rights facing various groups of indigenous people. It also organises and supports in-depth investigative journalism in critical areas where national and international policy has been disrupting the life pattern of ethnic and tribal communities. Its training programmes mainly aim at journalists and activists. One of the declared principles of SEHD has been to avoid taking sides in politics. However, it engages in what it calls “constructive criticism” of certain policies of national government and donor agencies.8 SEHD’s critical approach has sometimes affected its relationship with the policy bodies. For example, some years back, Priscilla Raj, an independent researcher associated with SEHD’s activities and publications was arrested by the police for acting against national interest.

SEHD has cultivated links with other advocacy organisations dealing with the question of minority rights like Bangladesh Indigenous and Hill People’s Association for Advancement (BIPA), Coordinating Council for Human Rights in Bangladesh (CCHRDB) etc. Its NGO network includes among others, Unnayan Bikalper Niti Nirdharani Gobesana (UBINIG, Research on Alternative Development Policy), Nijera Kori (Self-help) and Association for Land Reform and Development (ALARD). It has successfully developed linkages with various grass-root level organisations of tribal population groups like the Tribal Welfare Association and also with key personnel from the ethno-tribal groups such as Raja Devisish Roy, the Chakma Chief.

SEHD is one of the leading organisations of its kind in Bangladesh and has expertise, experience and network to work closely with minority groups. In the CHT region, it has worked extensively with all tribal and ethnic groups and has developed a significant information

8 Earth Touch (An occasional magazine of SEHD), No. 6, June 2001.
and knowledge base. The expertise of SEHD can be of significant use in developing in-depth understanding about the minority problems and undertaking appropriate policy measures to facilitate peace-building.

3.1.7 Odhikar (Rights)

Odhikar\textsuperscript{9} was founded in 1994 to raise awareness on human rights and its abuses and to create a wider monitoring system that would ensure democratic process in the country. Its principal objectives are the promotion of human rights; advocacy and lobbying for incorporation and ratification of various international instruments by the government; in carrying out documentation, fact-finding, monitoring, investigation and research on human rights abuses, including custodial death, rape, torture, prison situation, violation of freedom of expression and political repression among others.

The organisation's activities revolve around the investigation, fact-finding and dissemination of information, media campaign, promotion of good governance, monitoring and observation of national and local government and monitoring of abuses perpetrated within this selection, regardless of caste, creed, gender or any other category. It has a documentation centre that collects information published in major dailies and publishes the findings on a monthly basis in newspapers. The organisation has a team of investigators who regularly monitor selected human rights situations and report the findings for documentation and publication. The researchers of the organisation undertake research on the issues that demand attention and also maintain liaison with national, regional and international organisations dealing with human rights situation in Bangladesh.

Odhikar engages people from the level of policy makers to politicians, human rights activists, NGO activists, lawyers, journalists and many more through holding frequent discussion meetings on human rights issues. The findings and recommendations of Odhikar's different researches have attracted significant attention at the policy making level. The organisation's report on the number of casualties in border skirmishes with India is often used by the Foreign Ministry of Bangladesh.

The organisation has country wide linkage with national organisations like the ASK, RMMRU, BLAST, Madaripur Legal Aid

\textsuperscript{9} See, the website of Odhikar, www.odhikar.org/ accessed on September 2, 2009.
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among others. It has membership status with World Organisation against Torture (OMCT), Geneva; Governing Board of South Asian Forum For Human Rights (SAFHR), based in Katmandu, Nepal; Executive Committee member of the Bangkok based Asian Network for Free Elections (ANFREL); and Bangkok based Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development (Forum Asia).

Odhikar has viable infrastructure through which it has carried out media campaigns and training programmes for human rights activists and launched internship programmes for students, researchers and activists. Given its performance and strong ties with the policy making community and with national, regional and international institutions and donor agencies, it can be assumed that Odhikar will be able to carry out large-scale research in human rights monitoring and in promoting and investigating any incidents of abuse. In this regard, its activities must not remain limited to peace-building issues only.

On the basis of the above survey, it may be concluded that in South Asia, human security related institutions span both ends of the spectrum—freedom from want and freedom from fear. Organisations concerning ‘freedom from want’ deal with a wide range of issues of human development, poverty alleviation and developmental issues. On the other hand, institutions dealing with ‘freedom from fear’ focus on human rights related advocacy work and peace-building activities in conflict situations.

3.2 MAJOR STUDIES ON HUMAN SECURITY IN SOUTH ASIA

3.2.1 Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies (IPCS)

Human Security in South Asia: Gender, Energy, Migration and Globalisation

In 2002, New Delhi based think tank, Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies (IPCS), organised a major conference on human security in collaboration with Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies (BIISS), Dhaka; Netaji Institute of Asian Studies (NIAS), Kolkata and Institute of Regional Studies (IRS), Islamabad; with financial assistance from the Japan Foundation Asia Centre, New Delhi. The volume mentioned above is the outcome of the joint Conference. It is based on a concept of security that extends beyond the conventional domain of military threats. According to the volume, non-

10 P.R. Chari and Sonika Gupta (eds.), op.cit.
military threats are rooted in social, economic, ecological and political choices made by the country but are usually left out in the decision-making process. Very often these threats jeopardise economic development, disrupt the social fabric and pose a challenge to political stability. Non-military threats covered in the volume are believed to arise from misgovernance, competition for energy resources, migration, the negative effects of globalisation and gender discrimination. The book maintains that by failing to protect its people adequately from these threats, the state endangers the overall security of its people.\footnote{Ibid.}

The important value addition of the volume has to be recognised because this is possibly the first volume on human security produced by South Asians in South Asia. The first two substantive articles make an attempt at providing a theoretical framework of human security.\footnote{I.P. Khosla, "Evolving a Theoretical Perspective on Human Security," in P.R. Chari and Sonika Gupta (eds.), Ibid.; and AKM Abdus Sabur, "Evolving a Theoretical Perspective on Human Security: The South Asian Context", in P.R. Chari and Sonika Gupta (eds.), Ibid.} In the process, the evolution of the concept has been covered in some length. However, the treatment of topics like energy, governance, globalisation, migration and gender seem to have come close to what has already been christened as non-traditional security (NTS). It may be mentioned here that the Ford Foundation initiated Asia-wide non-traditional security studies in 2000-2001.\footnote{Under the first phase of the Non-traditional Security in Asia sponsored by the Ford Foundation, three issues were covered: globalisation, governance and environment. For details, see, Abdur Rob Khan (ed.), Globalisation and Non-traditional Security in South Asia, (Dhaka: Academic Press and Publisher Limited, 2001).} Based on the experiences of Phase I, Ford Foundation, New Delhi initiated Phase II in 2003, of which the present project is a part. In 2006, Ford launched Phase III with the Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies (IDSS), Nanyang University of Technology, Singapore as the coordinating institute.

3.2.2 BIIS·Ford Foundation Regional Research Project on Human Security

Under the BIIS·Ford Foundation Project on Human Security, it was decided to commission two types of research papers viz., country papers and thematic papers—each numbering five—that would cover as much human security issues as possible without sacrificing the quality of research done on the selected sub-themes. Country papers were expected to bring out the country situation with respect to broad three
areas—discourse, practice and policy proposition on human security. Five individual country papers were commissioned under the Project covering five South Asian countries, viz., Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

It was understood that instead of uniform general discussions on human security in these countries above mentioned, individual country papers would rather concentrate on some of the selected (or vital) aspects of human security situation in each of the individual countries. Thus, the issues dealt with in the country papers may be of diverse nature. Hence, these may not be uniform in all these papers.

In terms of scope, the general framework of discourse, practice and policy proposition was followed in the thematic papers as well. Five thematic papers were commissioned covering the sub-themes: (a) Constructing a Human Security Index for South Asia; (b) Violence, Terrorism and Human Security; (c) Ethnicity and Human Security; (d) Gender and Human Security; and (e) Marginalisation and Human Security. The thematic papers were expected to cover the sub-region of South Asia and undertake a comparative study of at least two countries of the region.

To sum up the review of organisations and studies on human security in South Asia, most of the organisations mentioned here are rather specialised bodies with focus on specific aspects of human security such as human development, human rights, ethnicity, gender, conflict resolution and so on. Almost all of them play important roles in advocacy and policy issues in the respective areas. However, we have not mentioned more general, more academic and perhaps, international studies related organisations in South Asia, which have been engaged mainly in traditional security studies. Interestingly, in response to paradigmatic shifts in security studies towards Non-Traditional Security (NTS) issues, these academic and generalist type organisations do take active interests in NTS, in general, and human security, in particular. As the review has suggested, major studies on human security, even if episodic, have been undertaken by these organisations and they indeed are part of the Asia-wide NTS consortium constituted to carry forward non-traditional security studies.\textsuperscript{14}

\textsuperscript{14} The five organisations from South Asia which are members of the Singapore-led consortium are: Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies (BIISS), Dhaka; Refugee and Migratory Movements Research Unit (RMMRU), Dhaka; Centre for the Study of Developing Societies (CSDS), New Delhi; Women in Security, Conflict Management and Peace (WISCOMP), New Delhi; and Regional Centre for Strategic Studies (RCSS), Colombo.
3.3 PROFILING HUMAN SECURITY IN SOUTH ASIA

In this section, an attempt has been made to provide a profile of major human security issues in South Asia, based primarily on nine major studies on different aspects of human security in the context of South Asia. Two types of studies were carried out under the Ford funded project: five country studies—Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka—and five thematic studies—terrorism, ethnicity, gender, marginalisation and a human security index, e.g. the present volume. As seen in the Table 3.1, there has been significant overlapping of issues and countries covered in the project.

The ten papers under review made attempts to address a wide range of issues within the realm of both fundamental human security concerns: 'freedom from want' and 'freedom from fear', though in individual papers, the emphasis varies depending on the country or theme. While exploring specific issues, the two fundamental concerns, namely, 'freedom from want' and 'freedom from fear', were viewed as interrelated and even interdependent. Thus, in addressing issues, such as governance and gender, neither could be ignored. Instead, what is required is an integrated approach synthesising both the concerns. The over-riding concerns of the authors have been poverty and related institutional/structural factors. Even in papers purporting to deal with fear, violence, terrorism and state repression, as was the case with Nepal and the theme paper on insurgency and terrorism, the fundamental problem of poverty and deprivation surfaced in a significant way. The Bangladesh country paper makes interesting theoretical arguments about the salience of violence and fear and structural linkages between the 'fear' and 'want' dimensions.

As far as the epistemological positions of the papers are concerned, most of them end with the salience of the state, although a number of papers start with citizens perspectives. The theme papers on ethnicity

### Table 3.1 Research Project on Human Security in South Asia: Issues Covered and Broad Findings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme of the Paper (Scope)</th>
<th>Human Security (HS) Issues</th>
<th>Broad Findings/Suggestions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Country Paper: Bangladesh</td>
<td>-Gender Issue: discrimination and violence against women; discrimination: economic and political dimension; Violence: domestic, rape, dowry, acid attacks, fatwa, trafficking,</td>
<td>Gender: Gender discrimination/violence is socially accepted and politically neglected; A gendered approach to policymaking is essential.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangladesh: Human Security in Environment, and Poverty and Marginalisation</td>
<td>-Environment: Water: scarcity vs. flood, pollution -Land degradation, Air pollution -Poverty and Marginalisation: Poverty: economic, political and social</td>
<td>Poverty and Marginalisation: Economic, political and social marginalisation are interdependent and interrelated; Mitigation: emphasis is on humane development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country Paper: India</td>
<td>-Economic Security: growth and poverty</td>
<td>Growth and poverty: Growth matters for poverty alleviation, but what matters more are the alternative agencies, channels and instruments of transmission of this higher growth into mitigation of poverty and inequality</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(contd.)
### Theme of the Paper (Scope)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country Paper</th>
<th>Human Security (HS) Issues</th>
<th>Broad Findings/Suggestions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nepal: Nepali State, Society and Human Security: An Infinite Discourse</td>
<td>(Mis)-governance: State versus People, Democracy and Human Rights, Discrimination along Caste Line, Gender Line; Violence: by State and by Insurgents; Economic security: Poverty, Food,</td>
<td>Good Governance: democracy, human rights, equity and participation; Security Sector Reform: Security of the people from the state is an important point; (these are interrelated and interdependent); economic security: equitable developmental process; conflict management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sri Lanka: Human Security and State Security in Sri Lanka: Paradoxes and Dilemmas</td>
<td>Tamil Insecurity: State Policies (Constitution, Education, Public Sector Employment, etc.), Anti-Tamil riots: (1956, 58, 77, 81), Sinhala-Buddhist Insecurity: Fears and Threats, Assaults and Depredations; and State Insecurity: Threats: Internal and External Assaults and Depredations; and resultant Vicious Cycle(s) of Insecurity</td>
<td>Virtuous Cycle(s) of Security: an 'ethnic compact' between all ethnic groups, constitutional reform, re-conceptualisation of state security, state security to be based on furtherance of human security of all citizens. formulation of an inclusive state security paradigm.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India and Sri Lanka: Constructing a Human Security Index for South Asia</td>
<td>UNDP and HDI; Canada and Middle Power Initiative, UN Commission on HC; Kanti Bajpai’s Proposed Index; Goals and Dilemmas; Human Security in South Asia: Dimensions and Boundaries</td>
<td>In constructing the index, issues to be taken into account: inherited insecurities; civil liberties and authoritarian discourse of power; gender issue; urbanisation, conflicts and new threats; security of property and economic initiative, identities and daily life, access to power, global community</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### The Predicament of Violence and Human Security in South Asia

| Causes of violence: Socio-Economic and Political (Development & Deprivation); Nature: Communal, Ethnic and Sectarian, Caste, Peasant and Tribal Uprisings; Form: Civil War, Guerrilla Warfare, Insurrection, Revolution, Terrorism and also State Violence; Country coverage: India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Nepal |

(continues...)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme of the Paper (Scope)</th>
<th>Human Security (HS) Issues</th>
<th>Broad Findings/Suggestions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ethnic Conflict and Human Security:</strong> The Case Studies of Bangladesh and Pakistan</td>
<td><strong>Ethnic Conflict:</strong> Causes: Political, Economic and Socio-Cultural Discrimination, Exploitation and Oppression, Lack of Institutional Mechanism for Mitigation; <strong>Manifestation:</strong> Discrimination, Violence; Human Rights Violation, Displacement; <strong>Bangladesh:</strong> CHT Conflict: Peace Accord, Implementation, Dealing with Human Security Challenges; <strong>Pakistan:</strong> Muhajir Issue: The Role of State and MQM, Human Security Challenges; A Comparative Analysis of Bangladesh and Pakistan</td>
<td><strong>Ethnic Conflict:</strong> <strong>Bangladesh:</strong> Peace Accord under implementation: Challenges of post-conflict peace-building <strong>Pakistan:</strong> no negotiation, no peace, intermittent violence; possible responses explored</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Countries covered: Bangladesh and Pakistan</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A Comparative Study of Women in Bangladesh and Pakistan

- **Gender Discrimination:** (Employment, Political Participation); **Critical Issues:** Violence Against Women, Harmful Customs and Traditional Practices, Women Trafficking, Discriminatory Laws
- **Health:** Pattern of Disease Burden, Communicable Diseases, Water-Borne Diseases, AIDS/HIV The Projected Pattern of Disease Burden in 2020 Health care Infrastructure
- **Marginalisation of Women:** Unrecognised and Marginalized Employment; Violence: Domestic, Dowry, Trafficking, Rape, Vulnerable to and Worst Victim of Other Forms of Conflict (e.g., Ethnic and Caste Conflict), Fatwa, Devdasi, Suttee, Missing Girl Syndrome, IDPs and Refugees: Assam, Development Induced Displacement; Environmental IDPs

**Policies of Women:** Policy Initiative on Gender issues, the role of donor agencies, the rise of women's movement and its role, civil society initiatives/NGO interventions

**Policy Recommendations:** Health insecurity and the Marginalisation of Women are linked with inequality and class structure, and gender discrimination; To ensure health security, common people must be put on centre-stage of health policy; to overcome the marginalisation of women, women should be empowered through a wide variety of measures.

and terrorism, however, mince no word and argue that state role is essential in ensuring human, and for that matter, security of ethnic groups. Other papers, of course, take the position that state itself is a major source of human insecurity.

A close look at the papers shows that the issue of governance or rather misgovernance and the concomitant issues of democracy or lack of it (political rights and participation), intra-state conflicts along the horizontal as well as the vertical divide, particularly violent ones and development or lack of it (growth, equitable distribution etc.) figure quite prominently. Other issues that have found prominence are economic security (poverty, marginalisation), human rights, gender issue (discrimination and violence against women) and environment.

Lack of democracy, deprivation of political freedom and participation, abuse of human rights, and related issue have been the central theme of the country papers on Nepal and to an extent on Pakistan. While the same issues were discussed in some other papers e.g., the country papers on Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and the thematic papers on terrorism, gender, and ethnicity, these issues have been identified as the most cardinal challenges to human security in the country papers on Nepal and Pakistan. Both papers were written from an anti-establishment perspective and emphasised the importance of ensuring physical safety and guarding the broader political rights of

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19 Dhruba Kumar Shreshtha, op.cit.

20 Ibid.


22 Shaheen Afroze and Abul Kalam Azad, op.cit.


24 Ajay Darshan Behera, op.cit.


the citizens from the state. Both of them aimed at probing into the multifarious conflicts, particularly violent ones, that Nepal and Pakistan are undergoing and the resultant human security challenges. In this regard, both the papers ventured to locate the causes of conflicts in the nature of the state and the ruling elites, the policies adopted by successive regimes, and the forces challenging them as well as the long-standing process of socio-economic and politico-cultural development of these two countries.

The authors of both papers agree that deprivation and oppression of the vast majority of the populace by small but powerful coterie interest are at the root of the ordeal that Nepal and Pakistan are undergoing. With regard to a way out of the prevailing situation that has been assessed by both the authors as being frustrating, the emphasis was on good governance. Concrete suggestions included strengthening/recreating democratic institutions and processes, political freedom, rights and participation, equitable developmental process and so on. With regard to the prospects for improvement in the human security situation, while the paper on Pakistan projects a ray of hope, that on Nepal is quite pessimistic about the future, at least for the near future.27

Intra-state conflicts, particularly violent ones, and the resultant challenges to human security are the main themes of three other papers. While the thematic paper on violence and terrorism deal with violent conflicts, in general with a focus on India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Nepal,28 the thematic paper on ethnic conflict and the country paper on Sri Lanka deal with ethnic conflicts. While the paper on Sri Lanka focuses on that country alone, the thematic paper on ethnic conflict focuses on Bangladesh and Pakistan.29 All these three papers attempt to locate the underlying causes of violence or violent conflicts in socio-economic and politico-cultural processes. The main emphasis in them is on exploitation, discrimination, deprivation, oppression and the lack of any viable mechanism to redress the grievances of the aggrieved sections. While in general, these aggrieved sections could be any group

27 The conclusions of the paper on Nepal, however, have been preempted by the turn of events in Nepal through re-ushering of democratic process and radical relegation of monarchy to the background. See, Post-script in Dhruba Kumar Shreshtha, Nepali State, Society and Human Security: An Infinite Discourse, (Dhaka: The University Press Limited, 2007).

28 Ajay Darshan Behera, op.cit.

of people bound by identity or interest e.g., ethnic, religious, caste, tribal, class and the like, but in case of ethnic conflict, these are certainly ethnic groups.

Depending on the participants, the nature of such conflicts vary widely e.g., communal-religious, ethnic, caste, sectarian, peasant, tribal and so on. Similarly, depending on the ways and means of waging the conflict in violent form, these can take varied forms, like, civil war, guerrilla warfare, insurrection, revolution, terrorism and, no less important, state violence.

While dealing with possible responses to human security challenges emanating from violent conflicts, including ethnic ones, all the authors stress the importance of addressing the root causes of respective conflicts. In this regard, specific references are made on the need for democratisation of the state, society and polity; improving the human rights situation; equitable rights and participation in the socio-economic and politico-cultural processes; and sustainable and equitable development.

While ensuring the security of aggrieved or belligerent groups is emphasised in all the papers, the necessity or even indispensability of ensuring state security in order to ensure human security is also emphasised. Emphasis on ensuring state security as a precondition for promoting human security has been indeed an anti-thesis to the country paper on Nepal, which viewed the state as the principal source of insecurity of the people. The country paper on Sri Lanka as well paid attention to the necessity of ensuring state security, but it emphasises the importance of transforming the prevailing vicious cycle(s) of insecurity into a virtuous cycle(s) of security through synthesising state and human security. The ways and means suggested in this regard, are as follows: (i) to create an ‘ethnic compact’ between all the ethnic groups; (ii) legal/constitutional reforms; (iii) formulation of an inclusive state security paradigm wherein state security would be based on furtherance of human security of all citizens.

While dealing with gender as a thematic issue, the concerned study touched upon three major dimensions of human security, namely, human development, human rights and some of the critical security concerns for women in Bangladesh and Pakistan. Gender security has

30 Dhruba Kumar, op.cit.
31 Gamini Keerawella, op.cit.
been dealt with from three major standpoints: (a) women's security as ensured/threatened by the state; (b) women's security and cultural norms; and (c) women's security at the family and community level. While violence against women is universal, the extent and forms of violence vary from society to society. While discriminatory laws, and harmful customs and traditional practices are discussed in the context of Pakistan, *fatwas* affecting women's lives, acid attacks etc. are explored in the context of Bangladesh. However, the lack of political commitment, political instability and frequent policy changes, and trafficking are considered as a common security threat to women in both the countries. At the macro-level, growth-oriented rather than equity-oriented development policies in Pakistan and Bangladesh affect women more adversely than men.

We have examined two cases of ethnicity/ethnic conflicts in two different countries of South Asia, with a view to highlighting human security values, security threats, and the sources of threats. The idea behind selecting the two particular cases was to examine one example of a unitary and near homogeneous state and another of a multi-ethnic, federal state. The two cases have both similarities and dissimilarities.

While Bangladesh is a near-homogeneous country with a unitary political system, Pakistan is a multi-ethnic society with a federal political structure. The two ethnic communities explored have had different experiences in their respective cases in terms of their contribution in both state formation and state building. While the contribution of the CHT hill people in the creation of Bangladesh and its state building process may be said to have been minimal, the contribution of the Mohajir community in the establishment of the state of Pakistan and piloting the nature of the state in that country has been of crucial importance.

However, the ethnic communities under review have some significant similarities. These relate to their ethnic identity and the type of nationalism they adhere to, and the nature of human security values, threats and sources of threats. The tribal people of the Chittagong Hill Tracts do not belong to the same tribe. There are as many as 12 major tribes as well as some minor tribes living there, but they are collectively taken as one group for the purpose of analysis and also for identifying them *vis-à-vis* the majority and dominant Bengali ethnic community. The same applies in case of the Mohajir community as far as their group identity is concerned. Both the ethnic communities
espouse civic, territorial nationalism in their respective countries, although the Mohajir community veered towards ethnic nationalism at a later point in time to protect their separate identity and to ensure their rights. Both the ethnic communities in their respective countries have employed peaceful and violent methods to attain their political, economic and cultural security. In the case of Bangladesh, it is the state that threatened the human security of the CHT hill people, while in Pakistan both the state and Sindhis did so. In both cases, the belligerent ethnic groups indulged in violence killing their opponents and innocent civilians. Both sides destroyed properties and indulged in crimes, producing many IDPs.

What is interesting to learn from the case studies is that even relative deprivation can cause ethnicity and ethnic conflict, threatening people’s security. In Pakistan, the position of the Mohajir community may be characterised as a shift from dominance to relative marginalisation or relative deprivation. The state in Pakistan has played multiple roles depending on time and situation. The state first identified itself with the Mohajir community, then took some affirmative measures that led to their deprivation, used the community in political games rather unscrupulously, and finally, took steps to curb the power and influence of the Mohajirs.

Structural and direct violence on women due to policy biases, gender ideologies that disadvantage women and relegate them to inferior status, the rise of right wing ideologies and their implications for women, macro-economic policies resulting in high levels of poverty, women’s unequal role and representation in the governance structure as well as state bureaucracies and higher level management positions in both countries, are issues that need serious consideration and immediate interventions in addressing women’s insecurities in south Asia.

Gender issue within the framework of human security has been dealt with in the country paper on Bangladesh and thematic paper on Gender and Human Security, as well as in the thematic paper on health, shelter and marginalisation. In this regard, the central theme has been the insecurity of women emanating from deprivation of and discrimination and violence against them. Discrimination and deprivation have many facets: economic, social, political and cultural.

32 Saba Gul Khatak, Kiran Habib and Foqia Sadiq Khan, op.cit.
These cover a wide range of areas such as employment (low pay, unrecognised and/or marginalised labour), political participation and representation, educational opportunity, harmful customs and traditional practices (dowry, fatwa, devdasi, suttee\(^{33}\)) and discriminatory laws to name a few. Violence against women is widespread and can take many forms. These include domestic violence, rape, acid attacks, trafficking, and the missing girl syndrome. Women are also vulnerable to and the worst victim of other forms of conflict (e.g., ethnic, communal and cast conflict). The worst side of all these is the fact that deprivation of and, discrimination and violence against women is often socially accepted and politically neglected.\(^{34}\)

To address the issue of the insecurity of women, a wide range of policy propositions have been made in the papers. These include a gendered approach to policymaking. This implies that overall policymaking in a country in terms of socio-economic and politico-cultural development should take into account the insecurities, needs and requirements of women and policies should be designed to address these needs and requirements. Key issues, in this regard, should be identified and special policy initiatives should be launched to deal with them. Along with national governments, women’s movement, civil society/NGO interventions and even the role of donor agencies have been advocated.\(^{35}\)

For the country papers on India,\(^{36}\) Bangladesh and Nepal, main emphasis has been put on issues of economic security e.g., poverty and marginalisation, food, shelter and energy. This is also true in case of the thematic paper on health, shelter and marginalisation.\(^{37}\) An attempt has been made to locate the root causes of poverty in the pattern of growth and distribution as well as that of marginalisation in the process of socio-economic and politico-cultural development.

\(^{33}\) *Fatwa* in Islam means an edict by Islamic jurisprudence. Devdasi in Hindu religion means a women dedicating to the service of deities in a temple; Suttee is an old Hindu custom of burning the wife live along with the dead body of the husband.


\(^{35}\) Saba Gul Khatak, Kiran Habib and Foqia Sadiq Khan, op.cit.


\(^{37}\) Monirul Hussain, op.cit.
It has been argued that growth is indispensable for poverty alleviation although it does not automatically translate into poverty mitigation. Hence, along with high growth, the emphasis should be on developing alternative agencies, channels and instruments designed to transform the higher growth into mitigation of poverty and inequality.

With regard to the underlying causes of marginalisation, the focus has been on the prevailing class-caste structure. Long-standing dimensions of marginalisation such as social, economic and political have been identified and analysed. Attempts have been made to gauge their extent regarding specific cases. It has been argued that different dimensions of marginalisation are interrelated and interdependent. Hence, the emphasis should be on comprehensive and integrated policies to address the challenge. In this regard, concerted efforts at human development have been a significant point.

Conjunction between environmental conditions and security interests generate the condition necessary for environmental security. Conflicts over natural resources as well as degradation of the environment undermine security of people, communities and the state at large. At the local level, more practical security concerns of the people in their daily lives are related to health, physical safety, poverty and deprivation. Many environmental issues lead to conflicts at different levels. For instance, the disputes, between the southern states of India, namely, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka, and among three northern states, namely, Punjab, Haryana and Rajasthan, over the access to the waters of Cauvery river, and Ravi-Beas rivers, respectively have proved to be quite intransigent ones.

At the international level, several such concerns, including the trans-border environmental injuries to displaced population crossing state boundaries and conflicts created by global warming to natural resource based tensions are discussed and highlighted in the discursive contexts. For a country like India surrounded as it is by a range of external geographical features, political systems, natural resources distribution, trading practices and internally characterised by a contrasting distribution of natural resources, socio-cultural traditions and development dynamics, environmental security has in it very strong elements of security at global and regional levels.

Natural disasters, mostly, floods, cyclones, earthquakes and landslides have been recurring and devastating phenomena in India. Meteorological, hydrological and agricultural droughts affect the
central, northern and western states. Deforestation and flooding regularly impact on the north-eastern states. An added problem is the displacement of people because of damage to environment, much of which is contributed to by different development projects. There are no national policies and legal-institutional frameworks to deal with the Internally Displaced People (IDP). In addition, the cross-border environmental damages ensuing from some of the water-related projects both within and outside the country have also become major sources of controversy and continuous imbroglios. Nationalist tendencies along with strong involvement of social organisations have been observed to exert resource regionalisation of water resources. Secondly, these have the potentials of leading to a much greater and deeper shape of conflicts. Two immediate examples are the Tipaimukh Dam in Assam (with Bangladesh) and the Baglihar Dam in Jammu and Kashmir (with Pakistan).

Thus, the country paper on India has dealt with a wide range of issues that include demographic pressures and agriculture, depletion of forest resources, air pollution, greenhouse effect, water resources, big dam controversies, genetic resources and patents. An important aspect of the paper on India is the attention paid in it to the multifarious conflicts generated by the environmental issues, or so to speak, environmental conflicts. These conflicts have been evaluated in a number of their ramifications. Along with environmental conflicts at the local or national levels, conflicts at the regional level e.g., between Bangladesh and India, India and Nepal have been dealt with. Thus, though designed as a country paper it has regional implications.

Food security has been one of the three issues pertaining to human security dealt with in the country paper on India, the other two aspects being energy and environment. Food security has been defined in terms of the following components: availability of food to meet the present need and the need of the future generations; accessibility to food of all irrespective of class, gender, ethnic, racial and age differentials; cultural acceptability of food; adequacy at all levels—production, distribution, consumption and waste management; and a competent agency involved in the policies and processes that enable the achievement of food security. To ensure sustainable food security as viewed above, assessment of present and future needs and capability, and concomitant

38 Mahendra P. Lama, op.cit.
39 Ibid.
measures in the areas of production, storage, distribution, waste management and others have been suggested.

In dealing with energy security, a detailed assessment of energy resources (coal, lignite, oil reserves, natural gas reserves, hydroelectric potential, nuclear resources, renewable sources of energy) has been done in the country paper on India. Attempts have been made to locate the energy security challenges in the field of energy conservation, energy subsidies, and energy sector reform prospects: electricity, oil, coal, power shortage, environmental fall outs, greenhouse gas emissions, energy and carbon intensity, high dam controversies and others. With regard to managing energy security the emphasis has been on renewable energy, refining capacity, regulatory and legislative framework, infrastructure expansion, substitution possibilities, hydropower options, nuclear power options, captive power, renewables and rural electrification, gas hydrates, ocean energy, other fuels, improving energy efficiency, diversification of sources of oil imports, investment in oil equity abroad, regional energy co-operation. While the emphasis is presumably on regional energy co-operation and environment induced regional conflicts, the paper also discusses issues pertaining to human security at the regional level. 40

The country paper on Bangladesh deals with four pressing security issues of Bangladesh, e.g., gender-based discrimination and gender-based violence, socio-political violence, poverty and marginalisation and environmental insecurity. In that respect, the paper significantly overlaps with the Indian country paper and the thematic papers on gender, terrorism and violence as well as the thematic paper on marginalisation. The issues have been discussed in the light of a human security definition based on two cardinal elements—freedom from fear and freedom from want. The discussion in the paper on the four issues is, in effect, rationalised by their relevance in contemporary Bangladesh society.

In a country where a vast majority of the population lives in abysmal poverty, the classification of wants should be done differently from the procedures observed in case of the countries that are rich and developed. In the latter case, wants may manifest themselves in non-availability of few luxury items like cars, air-conditioners, computers etc or in non-affordability of resources to fund weekends or vacations. In contrast, in Bangladesh it is the very lack of access to the basic

40 Ibid.
necessities of life that constitutes poverty. In a similar vein, the dimension of fear finds its variation according to contexts and situations. In case of Bangladesh, the fear factor is evident due to a number of reasons. If the issues undertaken in our discussion are taken into consideration, it will be found that fear is entrenched in all of them. In fact, the element of fear keeps all the issues spirally bound with each other. Thus poverty has a silent threat generating fear among the masses and suggesting that an explosion into open conflict may take place any time. Again the nexus between poverty and environment may lead to resource depletion and loss of human lives and property with the potentialities of increasing social and political tensions in unpredictable but potentially dangerous ways. Women who already constitute a marginalised and discriminated section of the society are more vulnerable to such odds, and hence, vulnerable to more discrimination and violence against them in various forms, as discussed earlier.

In a country like Bangladesh, both fear and want seem to exist concomitantly, affecting the lives and security of people. Thus, a person who lives in want has a morbid fear in him about his possible exclusion from society or his/her exposure to traumas of nature. Finally, in an extreme case, his/her total extinction from the earth due to lack of food and medical facilities cannot be excluded. Thus, a person who lives in want also lives in fear. In this way, both want and fear keep the person in the gyre of perpetual insecurity, ultimately putting his/her vital core under question. It may be mentioned that the elements of vital core are fundamental human rights which all persons and institutions are obliged to respect or provide, even if the obligations are not perfectly specifiable. The rights and freedoms in the vital core pertain to a life which consists of guaranteed livelihood, dignity and safety. If one's security is threatened by fear of violence, the freedom to earn a living cannot be secured with any certainty. For example, women belonging to the marginalised section of the society can not earn their living freely. They are subjected to various forms of discrimination at all levels of society. At home, they remain vulnerable to torture, deprivation of proper meals, negligence to health etc. At the community level, they sometimes become the subjects of fatwa that may encroach upon their freedom of work and movement. At the national level, there is avowed discrimination against women with respect to job opportunities and wages. Under the circumstances, a woman can not afford to overcome
the cycle of want by taking any form of employment whatever due to persistent fear in her about the harsh and unforeseen consequences that may confront her anytime. Even in a familiar working place, a woman remains perpetually exposed to risks of sexual harassment and violation of different kinds. Thus, the insecurity generated by violence is expressed in fear, which is "the institutional, cultural and psychological repercussion of violence", and has been identified as an outcome of destabilisation, exclusion and uncertainty. Although perceptions of insecurity cannot be reflected in statistical evidence, they fundamentally affect well-being. The ability of people to access resources for survival ("livelihood security") is closely linked to violence, relating not only to spatial, economic and social constraints imposed by endemic violence but also to the failure of the state to provide protection.  

3.4 PREVAILING DISCOURSE AND POLICY PROPOSITION ON HUMAN SECURITY IN SOUTH ASIA

Profiling human security in South Asia is certainly a complicated task. State inherited by South Asian countries from the colonial past has been 'strong states' deeply involved in not only the political but also the economic management of society, down to the very grassroots. With an omnipotent state at their disposal, the ruling elites in South Asia embarked upon a development strategy with overwhelming preponderance of security considerations over human development. While this implies mostly to the two major actors in South Asia, India and Pakistan, others countries were also significantly influenced by similar perceptions. Exceptions were of insignificant consequences. Even, Sri Lanka, which, among South Asian countries, gave the highest preference to human development even in the Cold War era, ultimately turned out to be a 'security state'.

South Asia still remains unresponsive to the changes at the global level in this respect. Traditional security issues still dominate the security thinking and practical policy of regional states. Conflict between India and Pakistan over Kashmir, the intense arms race, particularly nuclearisation, the Kargil War and subsequent

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41 Shaheen Afroze and Abul Kalam Azad, op.cit.
developments indicate this trend.\textsuperscript{43} The process of a thaw in Indo-Pakistan relations that surfaced in early 2003 is far from bringing any qualitative change in either the bilateral relations between the two countries or in the overall security environment in the region.\textsuperscript{44}

Concrete evidence also suggests that in the post-Cold War era, South Asia continued to be further militarised and, thus, moving against prevailing trends in the contemporary world. Global military spending declined by about 37 per cent during the period 1987-94, while that in South Asia increased by 12 per cent. During the same period, global standing armies were reduced by 17 per cent. But in South Asia, they increased by 7.5 per cent. Similarly, military holdings declined by 14.5 per cent in the world, but in South Asia they increased by 43 per cent.\textsuperscript{45} India and Pakistan are almost solely responsible for the militarisation of the region. The share of India and Pakistan in the total military expenditure of South Asia is 93 per cent and in total armed forces personnel it is 87 per cent. Notwithstanding colossal human deprivation, India maintains the fourth largest army in the world and Pakistan the eighth largest one.\textsuperscript{46} After nuclearisation and the Kargil War, military spending in India and Pakistan has been witnessing a spiral of rather dramatic increase.\textsuperscript{47}

The overarching emphasis on national security as against human security over the last five plus decades has had an adverse impact on the security situation in South Asia and has significantly increased the security concerns of the regional states, those of India and Pakistan in particular. More importantly, it has transformed South Asia, one of the most developed and most promising regions in the developing world at the moment of decolonisation, into one of the poorest and most deprived regions of the contemporary world. In 1949, the average per capita


\textsuperscript{44} A.K.M. Abdus Sabur, "Security Scenario in South Asia: An Overview", paper presented in the Seminar on South Asian Security and Sino-Bangladesh Relations organised by Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies, Dhaka, Bangladesh March 02, 2005.


\textsuperscript{46} Ibid., p.81.

\textsuperscript{47} A detailed analysis is done on the issue in, Munim Kumar Barai, "Economic Impact of nuclearisation: Challenges for Bangladesh", in A.K.M. Abdus Sabur (ed.), Nuclearisation of South Asia: Challenges and Options for Bangladesh, BISS Papers, No. 17, (Dhaka: Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies, December 1998), pp.44-49.
income in Sri Lanka, India, Pakistan and present Bangladesh was almost the double of that in the Philippines, South Korea and Indonesia. What may sound now almost unbelievable, per capita income in Japan at that time was less than double of the average per capita income in these four South Asian countries. But the question is: where does South Asia stand now?

In terms of per capita income, South Asia has already become the poorest region of the world barring Sub-Saharan Africa. With a population of 1.4 billion in 2002, South Asia is home to 22.58 percent of the world’s total population of 6.2 billion. Nonetheless, South Asia’s Gross National Income (GNI) in 2002 amounted to only US$ 640 billion that is only 2 percent of the world GNI. Nearly 40 per cent of the world’s absolute poor, numbering 500 million in 1993, live in the region. Its adult literacy rate of 48 percent is lower than that of any other region. Nearly half the world’s illiterate population are South Asian. There are more children out of school in South Asia than in the rest of the world and two-thirds of them are females. A striking contrast to the perceptions at the global level, it is not Sub-Saharan Africa with 30 percent of underweight children, but South Asia with almost half of its children underweight remains the world’s most malnourished region. The extent of human deprivation in South Asia is, thus, colossal. About 260 million people lack access to health facilities; 337 million have no safe drinking water; 830 million have no access to basic sanitation facilities. The list of deprivation could go on and on, further exposing a kind of monumental failure on the part of South Asian ruling elites to face the challenges of development that has put the region at the bottom of the world’s regions, if adjudged by most development indicators.

Human security situation in South Asia is, therefore, one of the worst in the world and is characterised by a high degree of both want

50 Ibid.
52 Ibid.
53 Ibid.
and fear. The threats to the safety and security of the individual and people generated by violent intra-state conflicts, non-democratic rule, violation of democratic and human rights, misgovernance, corruption, crime, terrorism, gender violence, trafficking in women and children and others are so many that people remain in a constant state of fear. On the other hand, human deprivation caused by consequences of underdevelopment, poverty, hunger, deprivation, inequality, illiteracy, diseases and health hazards, overpopulation, environmental degradation, natural disaster, overuse and misuse of natural resources and so on in the region is more acute than in any world region, barring drought-ravaged Africa. Therefore, while dealing with human security, both in theory and practice, both the fundamental issues, ‘freedom from want’ and ‘freedom from fear’, are equally important, as neither can go without the other.

On the basis of the above discussions and relying on a host of literature reviewed in the process of conducting the study, an attempt has been made in Table 3.2, to identify concrete human security issues in South Asia. In this regard, the prevailing reality in South Asia has been taken into consideration. Along with identifying the concrete human security issues/threats in the region, attempts have also been made to pinpoint possible responses to and methods of mitigation of such threats as well as identify the concerned actors/agencies that could take the responsibility. While identifying issues, a ‘maximalist’ approach has been undertaken. A large number of possible issues were, thus, included. This may lead to a loss of focus. However, a ‘minimalist’ approach involves even greater risk of not emphasising adequately either ‘freedom from fear’ or ‘freedom from want’, as is the case with the UNDP and Canadian approaches. The intensity of different threats to human security, of course, varies from society to society, from country to country and region to region. Even a particular threat in a given society may affect different strata of society with varying intensity. Therefore, a broader agenda would allow us to encapsulate a larger spectrum of threats to human security in South Asia. Such an agenda will also keep provisions for studying human security situation in a particular country or countries with a focus on specific issues that are relevant to the context.
3.5 MEASURES TO COUNTER HUMAN INSECURITY IN SOUTH ASIA

While both, ‘freedom from want’ and ‘freedom from fear’, are equally important, the scope or even necessity for the compartmentalisation of human security issues under both the broader themes is undeniable. First of all, it would be virtually impossible to focus equally on all these issues at a particular point of time due to competition for attention and resources. There is also no pressing necessity for paying equal attention to all these issues at the same time. The issues are quite dynamic and the threats to human security generated by them also fluctuate. Therefore, while the most pressing issues could be brought to the forefront, others could be temporarily put in the back burner.

Both dimensions of human security, ‘freedom from want’ and ‘freedom from fear’ are equally important in ensuring the security of the individual as well as the community. It is also crucial for ensuring the national security that the Realist/Neo-realist school of security thinking is so much obsessed with. ‘Freedom from fear’ is meaningless, if ‘freedom from want’ is not ensured. More importantly, persistence of underdevelopment, poverty, inequality and large-scale human deprivation is certain to generate socio-political turmoil leading to violent intra-state conflicts with cross-border repercussions. This remains a stark reality in South Asia. As a matter of fact, the transformation of intra-state conflicts into inter-state ones remains, perhaps, the most important threat to violent conflicts in South Asia. Owing to a host of deeply entrenched historical, geographical, ecological, socio-economic and politico-cultural factors the situation is likely to remain the same for some time to come. Therefore, addressing the security concerns that fall within the purview of ‘freedom from want’ in South Asia, in a way also constitutes preventive action designed to thwart the deterioration in the field of the want dimension of human security.

On the other hand, ‘freedom from want’ is impossible to achieve or sustain without achieving ‘freedom from fear.’ Moreover, violent conflicts and all other varieties of ‘fears’ always deteriorate the situation in ‘want’ dimension of human security. As has been amply demonstrated through the whole 2003 Report of the Human Security

Commission, wars and violent conflicts are always accompanied by economic insecurity, poverty, hunger, malnutrition, diseases, lack of education and so on.\textsuperscript{55} Similarly, studies conducted under the BIISS-Ford Foundation Project on Human Security also amply demonstrate that in all five South Asian countries, viz., Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka, the deterioration in the 'fear' dimension of human security, violent conflicts in particular, has further deteriorated the situation in the 'want' dimension that is reflected in increased poverty, hunger, diseases, illiteracy and so on.\textsuperscript{56}

3.6 CONCLUSION

The survey of human security issues in the context of South Asia makes it evident that both the "want" and "fear" dimensions of human security remain interlocked and enmeshed. Deprivation, marginalisation, repression and violence, often go hand in hand. The interlocking nature of human security issues makes the conception of human security based on severity rather than functional basis of issues more logical. Once we have that kind of fusion between the two streams—narrow and broad—of human security, it becomes convenient as well as imperative for us to explore issues related to the construction of a human security index.

The discussion in this report clearly suggests that even in ensuring human security, the role of state is of crucial importance. It is everywhere and it figures as the most prominent actor since the state in South Asia is virtually omnipotent. Its power is hardly controlled or diluted by the effective functioning of civil society. Notwithstanding globalisation and privatisation, it still controls and, by all indications, will continue to control a significant part of economic resources in very poor societies. It is not only the agent of political order but also responsible for socio-economic development and, in practice as well, remains deeply involved in the management of economic life, down to the grass roots. Finally, the state in South Asia still remains highly interventionist both by nature and by compulsion. Therefore, in facing challenges to human security the state is destined to play a crucial role.

\textsuperscript{55} Sadako Ogata and Amartya Sen, op.cit.
### Table 3.2: Human Security Issues in South Asia and Possible Responses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Human Security Issues</th>
<th>Possible Responses/Methods</th>
<th>Concerned Actors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Economic security</td>
<td>Development policy and activities; creation of employment and conditions for self-employment through investment (domestic and foreign); foreign trade and aid</td>
<td>State; private enterprise (domestic and foreign); regional co-operation; UN; international developmental agencies; developmental NGOs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(assured basic income)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Food security</td>
<td>Increasing food production; improving distribution mechanism; poverty alleviation; particularly, income generation for vulnerable groups</td>
<td>State; peasantry; private enterprise; NGOs; regional co-operation; UN; international/multilateral organisations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(physical and economic access to food)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Health</td>
<td>Forward-looking and viable health policy; protection against pandemic diseases, including HIV/AIDS; ensuring economic and physical access to health care.</td>
<td>State; private enterprise; NGOs; regional countries; UN; International/multilateral organisations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Education</td>
<td>Commitment to universal basic education; knowledge and skills to empower people; nurturing human security friendly values through education</td>
<td>State; private enterprise; NGOs; regional countries; UN; International/multilateral organisations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Globalisation and disparities in development opportunities</td>
<td>Development policy and activities; reform of the state sector; private sector development; foreign direct investment; co-operation at the sub-regional, regional and international levels; overseas development assistance; wider market access; improvement in terms of trade; foreign debt management</td>
<td>State; private enterprise (domestic and foreign); regional co-operation; UN; international development agencies; international/multilateral organisations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Population control</td>
<td>Forward-looking policy; access to maternity and reproductive health services; normative and attitudinal change</td>
<td>State; civil society; NGOs; regional co-operation; UN; international/multilateral organisations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Environmental degradation</td>
<td>Dealing with causes and consequences; sustainable environmental management; devising and implementing policy options through concerted efforts; capacity building</td>
<td>State; civil society; NGOs; regional co-operation; UN; international/multilateral organisations;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Misuse, overuse and scarcity of crucial natural resources</td>
<td>Dealing with causes and consequences; sustainable resource management; capacity building</td>
<td>State; private enterprise; UN; international/multilateral organisations; civil society; NGOs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Natural/man made disasters</td>
<td>Dealing with causes and consequences; disaster prevention and management; capacity building</td>
<td>State; civil society; NGOs; regional countries; UN; international/multilateral organisations;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(contd.)
### Freedom From Fear

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Human Security Issues</th>
<th>Possible Responses/Methods</th>
<th>Concerned Actors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Personal security of the individual from violence or harm (violent conflicts within and along borders)</td>
<td>Legal and physical protection of people in conflict/insurgency/war zones; conflict prevention; management and resolution; post-conflict peace-building; arms exports control; humanitarian reaction; normative and attitudinal changes</td>
<td>State; regional countries; civil society; NGOs; international/multilateral organisations;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Good governance: democracy, human rights and, transparency and accountability (corruption issue)</td>
<td>Ensuring representative form of government and democratic governance; constitutional/legal and juridical protection of human rights; ensuring transparency and accountability in terms of discharging politico-administrative and economic power by concerned individuals and institutions; normative and attitudinal changes</td>
<td>State; civil society; NGOs;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Rights of ethnic and religious minorities</td>
<td>Constitutional/legal and juridical protection; minority rights articulation; normative and attitudinal changes</td>
<td>State; civil society; NGOs; UN; international/multilateral organisations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Gender Issue (Discrimination against and abuse of women and children)</td>
<td>Constitutional/legal, and juridical protection of the rights of women and children; effective measures against trafficking in women and children; appropriate mechanisms for ensuring the rights of women and children; normative and attitudinal changes</td>
<td>State; civil society; NGOs; regional countries; UN; international/multilateral organisations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Terrorism and Crime, (national and international)</td>
<td>Law enforcement measures; dealing with the causes and consequences; controlling the proliferation of small arms; capacity building; normative and attitudinal changes</td>
<td>State; civil society; NGOs; regional countries; UN; international/multilateral organisations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Migration and refugees</td>
<td>Legal and physical protection of migrants and refugees, humanitarian reaction; resolving the cause of forced migration; normative and attitudinal changes</td>
<td>State; civil society; NGOs; regional countries; UN; international/multilateral organisations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Drug abuse</td>
<td>Law enforcement measures; curtailing production, trafficking and use; dealing with causes and consequences</td>
<td>State; civil society; NGOs; regional countries; UN; international/multilateral organisations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Nonetheless, the role of NGOs and civil society organisations is also indispensable in ensuring human security. The referent object of human security is the individual and people. In other words, human security is the security of the individual and people as against the security of the state. Therefore, NGOs and civil society organisations
have a vested interest in ensuring human security. An important point in this regard is that the state often encroaches upon the security of the individual and a wide diversity of collectives, and this makes the role of NGOs and civil society organisations crucial in ensuring human security.

While some of the challenges to human security may be domestic in nature, most transcend national boundaries. Some of them are global in nature. For instance, violent conflicts, even intra-state ones, often assume an inter-state character because of cross-border movements of dissidents, refugees, insurgents, arms, and so on. The same observation applies to crime and terrorism. With the increased pace of globalisation, even diseases travel the whole world and, indeed, so do very fast. Due to increased economic interdependence, economic woes, such as economic-financial crises, poverty, hunger, famine, and so on in one country impact on the rest of the world. While increased interdependence in a large number of fields is a contribution of globalisation, interdependence of global environment is as old as the world itself. Another important factor, even a number of threats to human security of purely national character, requires regional or even international cooperation for effective mitigation. To sum up, the wide diversity of threats to human security are interrelated and interdependent. Most of them transcend national boundaries.

Therefore, while some threats to human security can be dealt with at the national level, others need cooperation at the regional level. For dealing with some of such threats, international cooperation is indispensable. It is in this backdrop that there has been a significant emphasis on the UN and other regional, international and multi-lateral organisations as shouldering the significant burden of mitigating threats to human security. Such concern has also been motivated by the fact that most countries facing severe threats to human security are unable to deal them without assistance from the UN and other international/multi-lateral organisations. Finally, it needs to be emphasised that in order to deal with the large number of diverse threats to human security what is more important is cooperation among nation-state, sub-state/non-state actors as well as regional and the multilateral/international organisations.