

Jakarta Expands Diplomatic Horizons

DEVELOPMENTS in recent months have reinforced the image of an economically strong Indonesia seeking to play an important role in world affairs.

Analysts have pointed to Jakarta's recent assertive and high-profile foreign policy, beginning with its move to restore its influence in the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) by gaining its chairmanship in 1991 and the diplomatic opening up to China and Vietnam.

Jakarta was also active in the Cambodia peace negotiations successfully concluded late last year. In the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN), Indonesia's preeminence is more or less tacitly recognised, according to analysts.

At the last ASEAN heads of government summit in Singapore in January, Jakarta made its presence felt by effectively blocking Malaysia's proposal for an East Asian Economic Caucus (EAEC).

Analysts see Indonesia's attempts to expand its foreign-policy swath as a continuation of efforts dating back to the late 1980's to make Indonesia a regional power in keeping with its size, resources and strategic location.

During a foreign policy seminar in Yogyakarta in 1988, Foreign Minister Ali Alatas said: "The level of our political consolidation and economic progress allows us to play a role that is more than just participation — a pioneering role, a role of leadership."

This theme has been echoed by the Indonesian media. Urged the Jakarta Post newspaper: "Indonesia should act as the prime manager of a regional order."

Preoccupied for much of the 1970's with domestic problems, President Suharto, one of the founders of NAM, took part in the Yugoslav Summit in 1989 after an absence of 15 years.

He followed this up with a visit to the then Soviet Union in what analysts saw as a campaign to lock Jakarta's chairmanship of the NAM. Suharto had realised shrewdly that normalising relations with Moscow would look good to the organisation's dominant pro-Soviet majority.

The collapse of the Soviet Union put paid to Suharto's

An economically-confident Indonesia moves to assert itself on the international diplomatic stage. Surya Gangadharan of IPS reports from Singapore.

ambitions of "pulling the movement back to the original ideals of non-alignment."

But North-South issues, ranging from the environment, human rights and development, have given new life to Indonesia's ambitions.

"Indonesia is determined to forge consensus on the economic challenges facing the Third World. This would necessarily entail taking up prickly North-South issues — the unresolved issues of our time," Alatas told NAM leaders recently.

Diplomats say that much of the disagreement between Malaysia and Indonesia in the January ASEAN summit arose from differences in approach to the issues affecting the Third World.

Suharto favours close cooperation with the North on these issues and is irritated by

Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad's combative stance, said an analyst.

But mindful of the sensibilities of its neighbours, Jakarta has preferred to work within and through ASEAN. At the last ASEAN summit, Indonesia's anxiety over a swift transition to a free trade zone led to its proposal of a 'common effective preferential tariff'. The suggestion was adopted by the regional body.

Again Indonesia's objections to the EAEC effectively shelved the issue. As Suharto saw it, the EAEC would drive a wedge between Japan and the United States, the chief trading partners of ASEAN, since it excluded Washington from its membership.

At a time when great power relations are in a state of flux, any lessening of US or Japanese commitment to the region would not be conducive

to regional stability, said Suharto.

For the same reason, Jakarta has not objected to ASEAN member-states offering naval facilities to the United States.

Indonesia's diplomatic hand has been seen in other areas. It has attempted to mediate a solution to the conflicting claims over the Spratly Islands in the South China Sea, claimed by seven ASEAN and non-ASEAN states. The fact that Jakarta has itself no claims to press has lent credibility to its role of honest broker.

The establishment of diplomatic ties with China in 1989, after 22 years of frozen relations, was intended to strengthen Jakarta's role as a leading light of NAM. Chinese Premier Li Peng's visit two years later came just before Jakarta took over the NAM chairmanship.

While China's formally staking its claim to the Spratlys has hardly added to Beijing's credibility, it is like to give further impetus to Jakarta's drive to carve out a bigger role for itself on the regional stage.

Non-Aligned Movement Summit

Continued from page 8
on the recognition of the UN as its universal framework, if rooted in the fundamental principles of the UN and organised on the precepts of sovereign equality and equitably shared responsibility of all nations. Hence, it is to the strengthening, revitalisation and democratisation of the UN that our movement must now contribute its concrete concepts and views and devote its active participation.

Safeguarding the true independence of Non-Aligned Movement member-states will demand our continuing vigilance, as long as unequal and dependency relationships remain entrenched and policies of military intervention, political interference and economic coercion persist.

Colonialism may be in its death throes through an institutionalised racism, such as exemplified by the abhorrent apartheid system, may be on the retreat. But in making their final, desperate stand or in assuming more subtle guises they still constitute the major adversaries of the Non-Aligned Movement. And the resolution of armed conflicts and ten-

sions in various regions of the world should indeed remain at the centre of our efforts.

However, it should be equally obvious that it is especially to the economic sphere, to the issues of development and international economic cooperation that our movements primary focus should now be directed, for which there has been a visible improvement in political relations across the erstwhile east-west divide, sharpening polarisation still characterizes the north-south equation. Hence, the need of the movement is to put these issues back on to the top of our priority agenda.

The world economy remains shrouded in uncertainty and generally marked by sluggish and uneven growth. Most developing countries are no better off today than they were during "the last decade" of the 1980s they are still

added debilitating debt burdens, strapped for development finance, denied fair access to the markets of the developed countries and frustrated by secular decline in commodity export prices.

The Uruguay Round is still bogged down, despite recent

signs of forward movement in some key areas, failure to achieve its balance and timely conclusion will inevitably result in increase protectionism and aggravate constraints in relations between the industrialised and the developing countries. Expectations that with the end of east-west confrontation a substantial "peace dividend" could accrue to the particular benefit of the developing countries have yet to materialize. It is now also evident that the wide-ranging transformations in the central and western European economies and the formation of powerful economic groupings among developed countries could, aside from their positive aspects, also negatively affect the trade and development prospects of the

developing countries.

These adverse developments have tended to deepen the sense of uncertainty and unpredictability in the world economy and have further compounded the difficulties confronting the developing countries. In this context, the prolonged critical socio-economic situation in Africa is assuming alarming proportions and cries out for resolution concrete action.

In the light of these realities, the need to forge a new global consensus and commitment to strengthen international economic cooperation and to accelerate the development of the developing countries assumes added urgency. In a setting of growing interdependence among nations and interlinkages among problems, this goal can only be pursued through consultation and negotiation.

Success in Development

Continued from page 8
coming decades.

We also face the problem of uneven population distribution throughout the country. About 108 million, or some 60 per cent of the total population live on the island of Java which constitutes only about seven

per cent of Indonesia's total land mass.

However the population growth rate has dropped and is approaching 1.9 per cent, although the mortality rate is also dropping. During the last 20 years, the crude birth rate has declined from 44 to 29 per 1000. The total birth rate, per woman has declined from 5.6 children in the period of 1967 to 1970, to 3.3 in the period of 1985 to 1989.

One of the important keys to what we have been able to achieve is political commitment. Immediately after signing the population declaration in 1976, President Soeharto immediately took steps to develop a national population policy. The first step was to make leaders and prominent members of society aware that the population question was central to national development.

The success of Indonesia's efforts in its control of population growth thus far can not be separated from the support provided by the United Nations and its organizations, and also the assistance both financial and in the form of ideas, which we have received from friendly countries and other international bodies.

In February, 1991, President Soeharto was awarded the World Health Organization (WHO) "Health for All" gold medal for his contribution toward implementing the goal of health for all by the year 2000.

WOMEN MARCH AHEAD...



Women's labour has been considered as without value since time began, but it is 'vital' for the society: Women washing clothes in Sumatra.



Young women learning to use pesticides at a workshop organised in Sumatra, in October, 1991 by the UN Development Fund for Women.



WITH BEST WISHES FROM Societe Generale de Surveillance S. A.,

Wherever in the World, Whatever in the World, SGS is there to protect your interests.

SGS, the World's largest control and inspection company Offering you a wide Range of Quantity and Quality Checks and Related Technical Services.

Global Head Office : Geneva-Switzerland

SGS (Bangladesh) Ltd.
19, Dilkusha C/A, (2nd Floor)
P.O. Box-197,
Dhaka-2
Tel: 861110/232385/862244
Telex: 642433 SGS BJ
Cable: SUPERVISE Fax: 880 2 863275

SGS (Bangladesh) Ltd.
20, Ahsan Ahmed Road
P.O. Box-20
KHULNA
Tel: 23076, 21825
Cable: SUPERVISE
Telex: 633338 SGS BJ
Fax: 041 61258

SGS (BANGLADESH) Ltd.
Sundarban Hotel Extension
Madrasah Road - Holding No.69
Mongla, Dist. Bagherhat:
Tel: (080-402)570
Telex: 633338 SGS BJ
Fax: 041 61258

SGS (Bangladesh) Ltd.
"A. MAJID ARCADE"
1376/A C. D. A. Avenue
East Nasirabad (ASIAN HIGHWAY)
P. O. Box-496
CHITTAGONG
Tel. 206057/212694
Cable: SUPERVISE
Telex: 66245 SGS BJ
Fax: 031 - 225386

S G S LABORATORY
104 Motijheel C/A,
GLOBE CHAMBER(1st Floor)
DHAKA.
Tel. 232125
Telex: 642433 SGS BJ
Fax: 880 2 863275

Warmest Felicitations to the Govt and the People of the Republic of Indonesia on their National Day



BARLAW COMMERCIAL COMPLEX (PVT) LTD.

Dhaka Office :
House No 62, Block-E
Kemal Ataturk Avenue
Banani Model Town, Dhaka-1213
Phone : 884542, 882555
Telex : 671215 BASTL BJ
Fax : 880-2-883097, 880-2-893526
P. O. Box No : 6103

Chittagong Office :
Hotel Saint Martin Building
25, Sheikh Mujib Road
Agrabad C/A, Chittagong
Phone : 502486, 505961-62 Extn : 168
Telex : 633292 ALARAB BJ
Fax : 880-31-225248