

# Globalisation, Security and Civil Society-II

*Imagination is more important than knowledge*  
— Albert Einstein

## The Myth of Information Revolution

by Ahaduzzaman M. Ali

**It seems that mere technology cannot bring about real changes in society unless there is an effective social technology that ensures the proper use of technology and other resources for the greater good of human society. The unprecedented growth of technology cannot provide us cornucopia. The development of human values is dwarfed by the contradictions in the socio-economic order. It is time we thought about fair distribution of opportunities and socio-economic benefits.**

THE western media have given wide publicity to the 'Information Revolution' which refers to massive production and distribution of information that brings about great changes in our life. Information here is used in the sense of news and entertainment. The pattern of media ownership, distribution of information, distortion of information, agenda-setting, uninterrupted flow of superficial media entertainment, however, negate the claims made by the Western media in respect of the free flow of information. The information revolution is actually a myth. In contradiction to the revolutionary changes one notes the control and manipulation of societies and peoples through information. This article highlights the information order in global and Bangladesh contexts.

### Pattern of media ownership

The new media corporations get their products to the largest number of people. They aim at constructing very wide audiovisual spaces and markets and annihilate old boundaries of nationalities. Audio-visual geographies are detached from symbolic spaces of national culture. An international consumer culture grows by making onslaughts on indigenous cultures. In the existing media situation television without frontiers is the ideal and based on this ideal global corporations acquire power and reinforce along with other economic, political and cultural forces the process of globalisation which is to all intents and purposes a process of reinforcing inequality and imbalance.

In the process of globalisation the media moguls regard national frontiers as a remnant of antiquity. National identity matters little to the media corporations. The reality in media world is the market opportunity. What happens in the name of free flow of information is transnational corporate cultural domination. The media corporations like Sony, Time Warner, Matsushita, Walt Disney company and Rupert Murdoch's News are creating a media world in which they are the dominant and set rules. Powerful commercial channels like

CNN, and Cartoon network have emerged. Generic channels are growing rapidly. The growing super-highways will take us into the age of personalised media. However the individual choice is limited by what is available. In the mid-eighties we heard about global cultural convergence which was deemed favourable for the acceptance of a single product across a wide range of geography. Dallas, Star Wars indicate the growing homogenisation and standardisation of the market. In the nineties American movies like the *Flintstones* are reinforcing the same pattern. Satellite and cable channels are making standardisation a global process. CNN, which is symbolic of American cultural dominance, achieved spectacular success through worldwide circulation of a single news service. Star TV is integrating global ambitions with local dynamics. Global corporations are taking local credibility seriously in order to maintain hegemony, but local, it may be said, amounts to a multi-national region. The logic of globalisation lies in the creation of a few media giants.

### Cultural domination

The global dissemination of TV entertainment and flow of news is interlaced with the idea of cultural imperialism. Herbert Schiller regarded communications imperialism as a planned attempt by US military-corporation conglomerates. L.R. Beltran identified nine forms of U.S. cultural influence, such as, international news agencies, international advertising agencies, international public opinion, marketing and public relations firms, transnational business corporations acting as advertisers, exporters of printed and audiovisual programming materials, exporters of communication equipment and technologies, international telecommunications companies, the official propaganda agency and the official security agency.

The multinational corporations are the ideological apparatus of imperialism. The globalisation of production means the globalisation of cultural values. Mass culture becomes universal culture which makes possible the enslavement of each country's national

consciousness. The economic profitability of such a process is greatly enhanced by its ideological profitability. National culture in this era of globalisation has to guarantee the reproduction of the dependence of the upper classes on the USA at the same time as that of their own domination as the ruling class in a particular nation. The modern media enter the developing countries before the potential for production reaches anywhere near the level in developed countries. Television, for example, is used by these countries when they are not capable of producing adequate programmes. Cultural imperialism may be viewed as an absence of co-ordination between hardware and software growth of media. Several dimensions of media imperialism may be distinguished, viz., foreign ownership and control of media outlets, transfer of the metropolitan broadcasting norms and institutionalisation of media commercialism at the expense of the 'public interest'.

Gross racism of the early periods of American culture has diminished recently, but vestiges of it persist in the images of the Viet Cong and recently in the portrayal of Arabs and Islam. The expansion of global media has been a strong factor in the perpetuation of racism. The more insidious projection of Anglo norms on the world has been viewed by Dorifman and Mattelart. The underdeveloped countries exist only as a backdrop for the adventures and exotic vacations of the Whites. The global obsession with sports has been used by ruling elite as support for militaristic nationalism and capitalist aggression. Organised sports in the underdeveloped countries reinforce class, racial and sexual lines and divert the conflict into infantile opposition between localities and between nations. Viewers of American entertainment see a

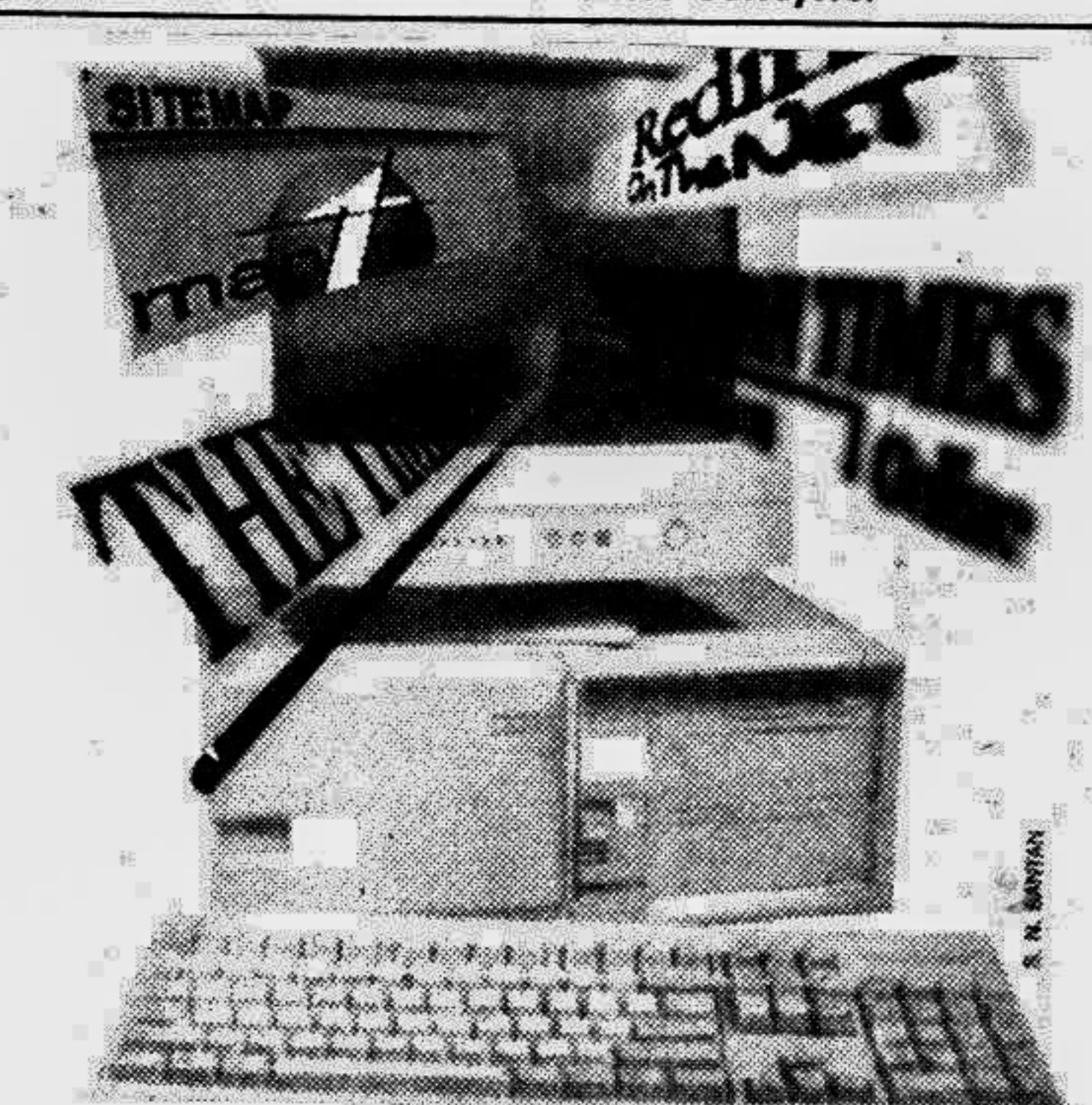
masculine world in which an individualistic ideology holds sway. The events on TV screen take place in a very affluent atmosphere of the upper class. And the audience shown on the screen is inconceivable to most of the viewers in the third world.

### Bangladesh Context

Bangladesh as a peripheral country receives some of the benefits of the 'Information Revolution' that trickle down to it. But in accordance with the backwash and spread effects theory it remains backward. Against the backdrop of backwardness and other concomitant socio-cultural problems the media that may be taken into account are the press, for the electronic media are controlled. The newspaper owners are now much more conscious of the commercial aspects of the industry. Profit making is prioritised and newspapers are increasingly turning into commodities. Once the profit motive takes precedence over other issues, responsibility may be pushed into the background. It is true that in a society based on a competitive economy, the profit issue cannot be ignored. But there should be an integration between profit and public service.

### Coverage of News

With the establishment of democracy the media audience's expectations about more information on society, politics, economy, culture began to rise rapidly. But much of the important information remains unknown. It cannot be said that the newspapers, not to speak of the broadcast media, are doing the surveillance of the environment properly. Most of the newspapers have a tendency to highlight politics in a narrow sense. The concept of news no doubt lays emphasis on prominence as one of the important factors of news value. But undue importance given to



names may mar the quality of news. The front page is frequently filled with political speeches and statements that have little consequence. Findings of newspaper content analysis indicate an imbalance in the flow of information. The imbalance is particularly evident in the coverage of urban and rural news. Even in covering urban news the newspapers seem to rely on stereotypes. There are more important, interesting and useful information in the urban areas that are ignored by the reporters. The elements of news are found not only in the core, but also in the periphery. Prominence may acquire new meanings in the marginalized areas of society.

Politics is certainly a very important element of news, but the way it is treated in the press must be altered. Politics is not mere mud slinging and political harangue; it is a comprehensive

term that connotes overall human development, based on fair distribution of socio-economic benefits, popular participation in political and socio-economic processes and integration between tradition and modernity. Newspapers may play an important part in reflecting politics in this sense. At this stage when the nation is undergoing the process of democratisation, the newspapers by covering news from the nooks and crannies of the country, all areas of life may widen the horizon of the people.

### Objectivity in news

The need to present news as matter-of-fact, free of prejudice, impartial and true to reality is ever felt in view of the tendency of some newspapers to deliberately distort news. Many of the newspapers doing biased reporting. Partisan politics is to some extent responsible for this.

With the mushroom growth of newspapers in the country, there is an evident tendency to ignore the fundamental norms and practices. There is exaggeration and distortion. The prime responsibility of a newspaper should be to report news and not make news. Exaggeration of minor incidents is making news. Rumour stories are also manufactured news. The newspapers should concentrate on reporting the truth. They should not conceal what should be offered to the public. But at the same time the press should not unjustly damage an individual's character for the sake of a story. They should play fair with an individual against whom derogatory charges are made. Many of the newspapers do not stay within the bounds of decency. They intrude upon the individual's privacy. They hardly play fair with persons quoted in their columns. They seem to forget that news is read by young boys and girls, the mentally unstable and the old people. Stories, threats and advertisements published in our press often leave adverse effects on the readers. The newspapers tend to play up the negative aspects of life.

### Developing a democratic culture

The press may play a significant role in developing political culture through proper presentation of news and views. Even among the literate segments of the society there seems to be an absence of 'politeness' to a considerable degree. Politeness of political literacy is political knowledge, skills and attitudes, needed to make a person informed about politics, able to participate in public life and to recognise and tolerate diversity of political and social values. A strong democracy is largely dependent on a truly politically literate middle class and there the press may be helpful by informing and positively influencing the people. The press in Bangladesh are yet to play such a role.

There is an absence of proper communication and co-ordination between different segments of the society, such as, the government and the opposition, the bureaucracy and the party-in-power, the different departments of the government, the central and the local adminis-

tration, the generalists and the specialists. This absence of co-ordination affects the socio-political and economic stability of the country. The press which may through continuous flow of objective information and interpretation help bridge the gap between segments of the society is hardly playing its part.

One may point to the danger to which the journalists are vulnerable and those items become news which correspond to their prejudices and predisposition, and make no difference between news and opinion. In the process of instrumental actualisation they tend to report those aspects of controversies which correspond with their views. There is a danger of growing ubiquity of the media and the changing nature of media ownership in Bangladesh may lead to a situation when the press and other media will create the sense of importance of news in the mind of the audience rather than the real importance of events induce the writing of news.

**Erosion of culture**  
Media culture reflects a sharp decline in the quality of content and form. There is an abundance of light and superficial content. Satellite culture has become a matter of grave concern. The mindless media programmes consumed by the audience regularly pose a threat to national culture. The infantilization of culture and eclipse of reason are becoming dominant characteristics of our culture due to the invasion of satellite culture.

### Conclusion

It seems that mere technology cannot bring about real changes in society unless there is an effective social technology that ensures the proper use of technology and other resources for the greater good of human society. The unprecedented growth of technology cannot provide us cornucopia. The development of human values is dwarfed by the contradictions in the socio-economic order. It is time we thought about fair distribution of opportunities and socio-economic benefits.

[The author is Professor of Mass Communication, University of Dhaka.]

## The Statelessness of the Rohingyas

Continued from page 6  
hinga forces but also for the Myanmar government, but then the fact of the matter is that both these theories tell little about the actual fate of the Rohingyas. That is, whatever may have been their origins, the Rohingyas, who have been living in the Arakan for years (many, in fact, before the country became independent in 1948), still pass their life as stateless people and there is no sign of Myanmar providing them the much coveted citizenship rights.

The Myanmar government, however, cannot be blamed totally for this. As is now well known and recorded in many scholarly writings that at the time of Burma's independence, the Rohingyas not only formed their own army but also approached the Father of Pakistan, Muhammad Ali Jinnah, asking him to incorporate Northern Arakan into East Pakistan. They continued with their demands even in the 1950s. The new State of Burma had no other choice but to consider them as non-Burmese and dissidents who were bent on wrecking the territorial integrity of the country.

With the possible exception of the pre-military days of early 1960s, the government of Myanmar at every stage of governance and national development has systematically denied providing the Rohingyas some kind of recognition, including the right to acquire citizenship.

The entire population of Myanmar is practically colour-coded! Actually, following the launching of the 'Operation Nagamin' (Dragon King) in 1977, which continued for over a decade, almost the whole of Myanmar's population was registered and provided with identity cards. These cards are all colour-coded, mainly for the easy identification of the citizenship status of the bearer. Those residing lawfully in Myanmar can now be divided into four colours:

**Blue**, those who are full citizens;  
**Green**, those who are naturalised citizens; and lastly, **White** (not surprisingly) for the foreigners!

The Rohingyas were quickly told that they do not fall under any of these four colours and that no such cards would be issued to them. Instead, a year after the Operation Nagamin began (that is, in 1978-1979) a huge number of Rohingyas, totalling around 250,000, was forcibly pushed into Bangladesh. But this was only the first major push. Some more small and big pushes preceded and followed Operation Nagamin. 1974 push and 1991 push, for that matter, are small and big pushes respectively. In fact, with all such pushes, LIC in the Arakan region and also beyond simply acquired a new dimension, without however having its 'intensity' transformed. More on this now.

### Dimension of the Conflict

One can without hesitation divide the dimension of the conflict into three. The first one relates to the *military intervention* in the Rakhine State, with the avowed intention of reproducing the power of the majority Burmans. It may be noted here that the majority Burmans follow Theravada Buddhism while the Rakhine Buddhists are mainly followers of the Manayana sect. In this context and also for having separate ethnic identities, the Burman-dominated military in the Rakhine State is at loggerheads not only with the Rohingyas but also with the Rakhine Buddhists. The testimony of this lies in the fact that between 1978 and 1983 as a result of Burman-led military atrocities in the Rakhine State a total number of 1725 Rakhine Buddhists were killed compared to 437 Muslim Rohingyas. Again, during the same period, 2715 Rakhine Buddhist women were raped compared to 1681 Muslim Rohingyas. The brutality of the majoritarian Burman military seemed to have fallen on both the ethnic minorities.

But then the question remains, why do we see more Muslim Rohingyas refugees arriving at the Bangladesh border? The answer to this probably lies in the fact that the latter, living near the vicinity of Bangladesh territory (incidentally, most Rakhine Buddhists live in the southern part of the Rakhine State), are in a better position to flee and take refuge in the 'friendly state' right across the border. Moreover, in contrast to the Muslim Rohingyas, the Rakhine Buddhists would be hesitant to take shelter in what is otherwise a predominantly 'Muslim state'. There is, of course, also the point that because most of the Muslim Rohingyas are in a position to flee Arakan, few of them get killed or their women raped. And it is this almost guaranteed sanctuary for the Muslim Rohingyas that has now become a serious source of tension in the border region of Bangladesh and Myanmar.

This brings us to the second kind of conflict related mainly to the *refugee status* of the Rohingyas. Two distinct types of conflict could easily be discerned here. One is the conflict between the Rohingyas refugees and the local population in the border region. In fact, there has been a marked shift in the attitude of the local population towards the Rohingyas refugees, from the time when they first arrived and the way they are looked upon now. A survey carried out in April-May 1998 demonstrates this point very clearly. While 35.7 percent of those surveyed 'felt threatened' or 'were concerned' when the refugees first arrived, but when asked whether the refugees were now (not physically but mentally), over 90 percent responded in the affirmative.

The reasons for the change in the attitude of the locals are mostly increase in crime rates and prices of essentials. At times, members of the two communities have clashed, with the police policing the conflict gainfully with increased role and power.

The second conflict in the wake of the refugeeization of the Rohingyas relates to the increased militarization of the pro-Rohingya political fronts (like, Rohingya Solidarity Organisation, Arakan Rohingya Islamic Front, etc.), including the militarization of the refugee camps. While the activities of the former have created a militarised situation in the jungle-packed no-man's land along the Bangladesh-Myanmar border, the militarization of the refugee camps has brought about further uncertainty to the repatriation of the Rohingyas and correspondingly to the state of relationship between Bangladesh and Myanmar.

The last kind of conflict is the most complex one and is also the least recognised one. This mainly relates to the not-so-voluntary repatriation of the Rohingyas refugees. In fact, the repatriation of Rohingyas is unique on two fronts. Firstly, there has been a subtle change in the UNHCR policy of voluntary repatriation of Rohingyas. This refers to the change in the UNHCR policy, from one of 'individual interviewing' before ascertaining one's repatriation to the promotion of registration through 'mass registration'. Critics have already questioned the principle of voluntariness in such repatriation, including the repatriation of Rohingyas. It is not surprising that given the involuntary nature of Rohingyas repatriation many of them are found returning and choosing the life of a refugee or illegal migrant in Bangladesh. Exodus, return and conflict all are recycled and reproduced once again.

Secondly, and this is more fundamental, the Rohingyas, once pushed out as *stateless* people, are now repatriated also as *stateless* people. No fundamental change has occurred to their life-long condition of forced labour, landlessness, victims of arbitrary taxation and above all, statelessness. In fact, the resolution of their fundamental problem, that is, not being able to acquire citizenship rights, remains stalled and marginal as ever. How did the Myanmar government succeed in keeping the fate of the Rohingyas practically frozen? The question merits close attention.

### LIC, Globalisation and the Marginalization of the Rohingyas

The Myanmar government needs to be credited for productively utilising both LIC and the agenda of globalisation; indeed, at a level and with such sophistication that only a few developing countries can match. The government knows very well that Myanmar has re-

sources - physical as well as cheap labour - to attract the pacesetters and real gainers of globalisation, namely the developed countries. To give one instance of government's confidence, even after 1990, when the military government refused to accept the leadership of Aung San Suu Kyi and hand over power to the elected representatives, more than a dozen petroleum companies undertook exploration in Myanmar.

Even with respect to the Rohingyas, the government of Myanmar succeeded in doing the same. That is, the government succeeded in attracting development funds from the developed countries, including international agencies, by way of agreeing to the repatriation of Rohingyas without, however, resolving the cause of their plight.

Three issues are critical here. Firstly, the government of Myanmar by reproducing LIC, with repeated exodus of the Rohingyas, has succeeded in impressing upon the donors that unless the region is developed such conflict and exodus would continue. Can we not dub this as a case where the government is using LIC, exodus and repatriation for attracting developmental funds for the Rakhine State and consequently for the Myanmar military with little or no concern for the stateless Rohingyas?

Secondly, given the reproduction of LIC in the region, most of the donors, including international companies, would not mind investing in Myanmar in Yangon's terms so long such terms do not jeopardise the return from their investments. Put differently, globalisation, in so far it is bent on reproducing a precise global economy, ceases to have interest on things that are not its direct concern. This is precisely the reason why Myanmar in the midst of setting the pace of its entry into the global economy could go slow on democratisation and the like.

Finally, with an assured relationship between Myanmar and the global economy, the real victims of LIC are doubly marginalized - first, nationally; second, internationally. Unless ethics, justice and morality are brought into the picture and the government of Myanmar made to bear upon them, the fate of the marginalized, including that of the Rohingyas, is doomed for a long time to come. The other option, however, is to bear the consequences of such an outcome? Fonder, perse and pursue.

The author teaches International Relations at the University of Dhaka and is Executive Director, Centre for Alternatives, Dhaka.

## South Asian Security: Russia's Approach

Continued from page 6

cally blocked between Russian and China.

The two scenarios of the CIS regionalism are on the table now:

Implementing of a more narrow regionalism with Russia's participation - like Russia-Belarus Custom and Economic Union or 5-way custom union (Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan) - or without Russia: Middle Asian Economic Union (5 former Soviet Middle Asian republics), Ukraine-Moldova custom union, GUAM (Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, oldfold) economic union on the basis of Caspian oil transportation route;

wider integration with regional neighbour-countries and transnational corporations in construction of gas and oil pipelines or transportation corridors: Baku-Cheikhani pipeline from Azerbaijan through Georgia and Turkey to Europe; Kazakhstan-China oil pipeline; Turkmenistan-Iran gas and oil pipeline; another pipeline from Turkmenistan through Afghanistan and Pakistan to South Asia; Baltic-Black sea transportation corridor that could link Ukraine, Belarus, Poland and the Baltic states; a 'silk route' - that could link North East Asia and Europe through Caucasus and Middle Asia.

At the end of the 20th century, CIS regionalism is on a crossroads. Its future depends upon how successful will be Russia's economic development. If Russia succeeds in building a strong and modern economy it will be able to turn into a core of the CIS open regionalism. In this case, the first of the above mentioned scenarios could contribute to strengthening internal basis of the CIS integration while the second could play a role of bridge-unions connecting CIS market place with European and Asian markets. If Russia fails - the CIS regionalism concept will collapse finally. The former Soviet Caucasus and Middle Asian republics will have no other chance but to deepen integration with transnational petroleum corporations and geographical neighbours. Ukraine will look for entrance to NATO and the EU. Moldova - will think about not just closer ties with Romania but about unification with this country. Belarus will have to look for new opportunities in Poland, Ukraine and Lithuania.

### Russian arguments contra and pro globalisation

In Russia, policy-makers leave out of account globalisation-trend, as well as threats and gains it brings to Russia. Among policy-advisers and Russian intellectual community, there prevails negative approach to globalisation. The main arguments-contra are as follows.

**First** - globalisation lets

strong foreign countries interfere into home affairs of the weaker sovereign states that makes a risk that the latter can lose their independence.

**Second** - globalisation de facto means strengthening of American influence in world affairs, propagating of American values and mode of life, and pushes weaker countries to make political and strategic concessions to the USA.

**Third** - globalisation is far from Russian economic, social and political realities and gives Russia no benefits. The G-7 is reluctant to discuss economic and financial issues with Russia; the IMF and WTO demand too tough state budget and too much tariff cuts that are against interests of Russian domestic businesses; European and Asian integration do not take into consideration Russia's role and interests.

**Fourth** - globalisation is nothing more than a utopia or a dream that has nothing in common with nowadays' realities of the world.

However, it seems that the following arguments-pro could be adduced:

**First** - loss of sovereignty in not on the globalisation agenda today. Creation of a Single World on the basis of a single law-and-order is a target only on the final stage of globalisation, if ever, - so, it is not correct to use this argument-contra nowadays.

**Second** - if somebody wants to oppose rising American influence in the world affairs, is it not better to do it not by hiding behind national borders, but by active participation in work aimed at globalisation-development and creation of a Single World law-and-order? **Objectively, Russia is interested in such a single law-and-order and such a single World where Russia's traditions and interests are taken into account in a maximum degree.**

**Third** - Russia can gain and is already gaining to some extent from economic globalisation; that is economic and political interests of the West, understood in the light of globalisation, that give Russia a chance to attract international attention (followed by investments) to Russian domestic problems.

**Fourth** - it is true that today economic globalisation, understood as a synonym to Single World Economy, looks like utopia. However, economic globalisation as a tendency is an obvious reality. And it is in Russia's interests, as well as in interests of all the nations, which identify themselves as integral parts of One World, to promote this tendency to get additional resources and chances for survival and development.

**Fifth** - though globalisation brings threats and challenges to Russian finance, economy, infrastructure, it also pushes Russian businesses to think about how to increase domestic productivity, so to become internationally competitive, and how

to adjust to international standards of quality. From the political standpoint, globalisation raises a question yet to be answered. Will it not be, under certain conditions, easier and less expensive to solve domestic conflicts with the help of international community and with the use of international peacekeeping forces rather than rely upon domestic military power as it was in Chechnya?

On the other hand, globalisation makes Russian domestic developments internationally important. From this standpoint, deepening political and economic crisis in Russia creates **new threats** to international stability and security. However, they are not threats of a cold type - i.e., threats from militarily strong and ideologically and politically hostile Russia. Nowadays, **unstable Russia, first of all, is a threat to itself**, to its own citizens - but at a rebound, in a **ricochet effect**, Russia creates threats to its neighbours and to international community as a whole. These threats could be summarised as the following:

a threat of economic chaos and following social unrest, panic, further criminalization of Russia, mass emigration and uncontrolled escape of refugees to neighbouring countries;

a threat of dissolution of the Russian Federation as a result of inability of the Federal Centre to rule the country. If it happens the World will face, instead of one Russia, a number of new independent, and relatively small countries with weak economy but, at least in regard to some of them, with excessive military arsenal - as a heritage of a giant Russia;

a threat of losing a centralised control over weapons of mass destruction;

a threat of Russia's non-participation - because of political, ideological or financial reasons - in economic, political and security cooperation in Europe, in Asia, on the CIS territory and in the world as a whole. The threat of Russia's non-participation in regional or global integration is unlikely to hurt directly Russia's potential partners, but will decrease the efficiency of globalisation process.

To repel new Russian threats - to Russia itself, and, at a rebound, to international community - the world and Russia need, first of all, Russia's socio-economic recovery and political stability. Russia itself, for sure, is fully responsible for its own survival and development perspectives. Nevertheless, it is in the world's inter-

ests to assist a geopolitical heavyweight Russia to restore its economic potential to become an active agent of economic globalisation. To be ready to accept this assistance Russian authorities have to have a clear understanding of the following thesis. **Without a proper adjustment to economic globalisation and European and Asian regionalism Russia will not be able either to play an adequate role in European and Asian integration or to solve internal economic and social problems. While the world will continue facing the new Russian ricochet threat.**

Strong arguments against globalisation, which exist in Russia, make it so easy to incline Russia to become an active supporter of the globalisation concept.

### Security situation in South Asia against the background of globalisation and Asian regionalism

Analysing South Asian security in the light of globalisation and Asian regionalism, I would like to underline the following:

• Before nuclear and long-range missile tests in India, and later in Pakistan, the security situation in South Asia had no direct influence upon Asia Pacific and the world security. After the nuclear and missile tests, India demonstrated its claims to turn into an important regional and global power.

• Contrary to security situation in Asia Pacific, where, after the Asian financial crisis, economic components of international security prevail over military ones, in South Asia, the start of nuclear arms race gives priority to the military components of the international security.

• India seems to have the intention to play a more visible role in regional and world politics.

• 'Sticks and Carrots' the international community can use to prevent a wrong development of the security situation in South Asia could be as follows. First - implementation of Single World and Regional Security Codes that would stop the nuclear arms race in South Asia and would help ethnic and border disputes in the region. And second - international, I mean World and Asian leaders' efforts aimed at India's engagement into a deeper economic integration with Asia Pacific nations.

The topic of our next issue is: **Spacing Out Dhaka City**. Creative suggestions are invited from our esteemed readers. Please send your materials to: Dr Imtiaz Ahmed, Executive Director, Centre For Alternatives, Room No 431, Lecture Theatre, Arts Building, Dhaka University, Dhaka-1000. Tel: 9661900-19, Ext. 4550; Fax: (8802) 836769; E-mail: imtiaz@bangla.net.