

The problem of non-proliferation of nuclear weapons

Lessons from India and Pakistan

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ADAM and Eve ate the forbidden fruit. They were sent to Eden. But for mankind the earth is as good as Eden. As poet Rabindranath Tagore wrote "I don't want to depart from this beautiful earth...." Mankind ate the forbidden fruit for the second time when in 1945 American scientists exploded the first atomic device. The stockpile of nuclear weapons at present is reported to be so massive that our beloved "Eden" can be destroyed several hundred times over.

It is indeed a good news that the leaders of the Nuclear Weapons States (NWS) have realised that possession of nuclear power itself threatens the very existence of our wonderful Eden. So we have the Partial Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (1963), Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (1968), INF Treaty (1987), The START I and II agreements of 1990 and 1993 respectively, extension of the Non-Proliferation Treaty in 1995 and the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty in September 1996 after nearly forty years of sporadic negotiations. There were also growing talks about banning of the fission materials. It seemed that the good sense has dawned on the leaders of the NWS and the prospect of aversion of second "Fall" of mankind could be achieved slowly, gradually and incrementally.

Unfortunately the process of building the superhighway to nuclear-free world got a severe jolt by the nuclear tests of May 1998 by India and Pakistan. These tests have proved the enormity of building a nuclear-free world through the gradual process of reduction of existing nuclear arsenals and future non-proliferation.

The important question that looms large on the minds of saner people of the world is why did India and Pakistan reverse the process of denuclearisation of the world? What lessons can you draw from these Indian and Pakistani examples about the problems of nuclear non-proliferation? An attempt to answer these questions is the cardinal element here.

NWS's initial help and later connivance

First, the NWS themselves flouted the norms developed in the Cold War period. Although the Indian leaders often claim indigenous origins of their nuclear weapons the fact remains that the first nuclear reactor was made available to India by Canada, "most ally of United States of America. Even during the Clinton Administration, it was reported that nuclear sensitive materials were exported to India in exchange for promised liberalisation of Indian trade. Thus the West was partly responsible for India's "eating of forbidden fruit". Allegation of clandestine supply of nuclear know-how to Pakistan is too publicised. Moreover in the 1980s

nuclearisation. On the above grounds NWS cannot escape partial responsibility of nuclear proliferation in India and Pakistan. So the first lesson we can draw is that any transfer of nuclear know-how and nuclear fission materials should be strictly avoided by the NWS. Moreover, as India and Pakistan are by now nuclear states, the original Five NWS should bring all the pressures they can command on India and Pakistan not to sell or transfer their nuclear know-how and fission materials to any non-nuclear country.

National interest vs global interest

The third lesson is that the so

the large states like India, Brazil vis-a-vis the NWS. Indeed as a teacher and a researcher of South Asian States for the last 34 years, I feel strongly that India's decision to denote could be fruitfully interpreted in the context of political history of a sub-continent. From the very moment of her birth India has been suffering from what is called, a sense of "Status Discrepancy" in the international system.

India has long been deeply unhappy at her exclusion from the "Nuclear Club", as defined by the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty of 1968, which divides the world into haves -- the United States, Soviet Union, China, Great Britain and

concerns because we are poor and a non-nuclear power. In your eyes either having a bomb and making money is what matters. Well, money is difficult to make, bomb is not. "They want status, and they want it desperately," said Michael Krepon of the Henry L. Stimson in Washington.

While India suffered from the sense of status-incongruence vis-a-vis the world, Pakistan on the other hand suffers from the same feeling vis-a-vis India. With the gradual depletion of modern weapons that Pakistan acquired in 1950s and 60s and US sanction on Pakistan's acquisition of state-of-art weapons from the United States of America

nuclear proliferation.

Messianic leaders must be "hedged" with "compassion"

A further lesson can be learned from the Indian experience. The spread of "Hindutva" has given the Indian elite an apocalyptic vision and a missionary zeal. Such universal ideological-cum-religious movements by Khomeinies in Iran and Gaddafi in Libya or idiosyncratic megalomaniac leaders like Saddam Hossain are difficult to be hedged in. So relentless but "compassionate" attempt should be made by all concerned to stop the spread of nuclear weapons, know-how and fission materials by the international community as a whole.

"Poor with the Bomb"

It has been reported by an authority like Philip Talbot that "maintaining the American nuclear capability cost the United States just under \$5.5 trillion." It is the strong impression of the present researcher that given the abysmal poverty of the great majority of the people of India and Pakistan, Indian and Pakistani ruling elite can be persuaded by the leading security experts and diplomats of the world to solve Kashmir problem and to freeze their nuclear programme and the money saved could be used for economic development for the respective countries which, as the examples of Germany and Japan show, are the real currency of power and status. After all the collapse of the Soviet Union was hastened by the nuclear arms race with the United States of America.

Empathic leadership

Finally it seems that there is a perception gap among the political leaders of the developed world and the late developing countries towards the problem of nuclear proliferation because of the level of difference in the stage of development process in the "two blocks" of the world. The developed world has passed the phase of industrial revolution and entered into the technological and digital revolution. War has become irrelevant for them. The developing countries are still in the process of completing the period of capitalist revolution (roughly the 19th century to the beginning of the World War II) where an inner law of developmental process brought the Capitalist countries into long drawn international wars. That is why the weapons of mass destruction which were the strength of present-day technological states have now become crucial as deterrence for the "underdogs". That is why "Outsiders [NWS] underestimated India's and Pakistan's ability to break out of attempted strangulation of the nuclear option and overestimated their own capacity to coerce them into submission."

To conclude, the "Fall" of our dearest "Eden" may be difficult to prevent but, I would argue, is not inevitable.

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Dr. Rubaiul Murshed

All health information to keep you up to date

Children first

What is Pneumococcal disease?

As a parent or guardian you should know the facts about this disease, the illnesses it can cause, what the symptoms are, how the disease is transmitted and how you can help protect your child against it.

Pneumococcal (pronounced New-mo-cockle) disease is caused by the bacterium *Streptococcus pneumoniae* (also called pneumococcus), a leading cause of serious illness in young children worldwide. It can cause meningitis, bacteraemia, pneumonia (with and without bacteraemia) as well as otitis media.

What are these illnesses?

Pneumococcal Meningitis is an inflammation of the membranes that cover the brain and spinal cord. Your brain and spinal cord are responsible for everything you feel, think and do.

Meningitis can cause serious and sometimes permanent disabilities including hearing loss, paralysis, mental retardation and death. Symptoms include fever, lethargy or drowsiness, vomiting and stiff neck or legs.

Bacteraemia, sometimes referred to as 'blood poisoning' occurs when bacteria enter the bloodstream and cause infection of the blood. Bacteraemia can also develop into meningitis. Symptoms include fever, irritability, rapid breathing and lack of ability to console your child.

Pneumonia or inflammation of the lungs. Symptoms include cough, chest congestion, production of phlegm, fever and chills/shaking. These illnesses can emerge rapidly. Identifying symptoms early and acting quickly is vital.

Otitis Media or Middle Ear infection can also result from infection with *Streptococcus pneumoniae* although there are several other causes of this illness. Symptoms include earache, fever and frequent tugging of the ear.

How do children get Pneumococcal disease?

The pneumococcus bug is commonly found in the nose and throat of healthy adults and children. Most children become carriers at one time or another, but not all will become sick. It can be passed from one child to another through droplets that are released in to the air by sneezing and coughing.

The colonisation of the pneumococcus bug in young children is very common since children lack the right type of antibodies to fight the bacteria. Children are therefore both major carriers and at high risk of pneumococcal disease.

Risk factors for invasive pneumococcal disease in infants and young children

Anyone can get pneumococcal disease, but some groups are at particularly high risk.

! Age<24 months.

! Recent day-care attendance.

! At least one recent course of antibiotics.

! History of recent ear infection.

! Other groups at high risk include indigenous children aged under two years and children with chronic disease or those who are immunocompromised.

Treatment and Prevention

Antibiotics are the usual treatment option, however over recent years some bacteria have become resistant or stronger than the antibiotic treatment. The impact of this resistance may make treatment more difficult and may result in longer hospitalisations and more expensive alternative treatments.

Vaccination can prevent the disease as well as possibly reduce antibiotic resistance, vaccines that help prevent pneumococcal disease are available for both infants and young children as well as adults.

Pneumococcal disease can impact both a family and a child's quality of life by causing absence from work, the need to visit the doctor and to take medication, including the possible hospitalisation and medical care associated with invasive pneumococcal disease.

Find out more about how you can protect your child from pneumococcal disease.

Next: Around the world

Rehabilitation of sick industries

Bold and thoughtful initiative needed

ABMS ZAHUR

SICKNESS in industries is not a new phenomenon. There may be many factors leading an industry to become sick. There may be industries shown in the list of sick industries which are not really sick. To be recognised as sick sometimes is paying. Usually the following reasons mainly may be identified for becoming sick industries: (a) bad investment; (b) poor management; (c) sudden emergence of cheaper substitute; (d) poor infrastructure; (e) lack of entrepreneurial skill; (f) obsolescence of production technology; (g) lack of working capital; (h) chronic labour unrest; (i) low productivity due to labour inefficiency; (j) inefficient power supply or high cost of fuel; (k) sanctioning of loan on projects not viable; and (l) large scale smuggling.

Around two thousand industries in the country have been reported to be sick so far. This has a significant impact not only on the employment sector, it has also a lot of economic implications. A large number of sick industries are located in the north and western part of Bangladesh. Compared to eastern part of the country fewer industries are located in north and western Bangladesh. But these industries becoming sick has particularly placed a large number of retrenched workers in extreme financial difficulty. It is unfortunate that despite existence of democratic regimes for more than a decade no appropriate or serious effort has been taken to solve this intricate and sensitive problem. It is regrettable that after lapse of more than three decades our major political parties are fighting each other on the question of 'founder of the nation', 'declarer of independence' or 'true and genuine patriots' etc. To show their strength they resort to adopting destructive tactics in the name of establishing democratic right. This has resulted in high growth of corruption and awful state of law and order situation.

There is no bureaucratic solution to the problem of rehabilitation of sick industries. It needs political commitment. The previous government set up a number of committees to look into the matter. No appreciable progress could be made by these committees in solving this issue. Thus this government will have to do a little of hard thinking to find some acceptable solution. Without correctly and accurately

identifying the peculiar problems no effective solution is possible. The people to be engaged to find out the problem must have adequate knowledge and experience about the peculiar situation of industry in Bangladesh. In fact what is needed is a study not just survey or ordinary bureaucratic report. Such a study should reveal interesting facts such as whether some of these industries are sick just because there is excess capacity in that particular sector, because the owners have siphoned off a large part of their earning to other industries or trade or to real estate or service industries. An in-depth study will enable the government to take decision as

desh. They prefer soyabean and palm oil to mustard oil because of price differential mainly. There is also huge excess capacity in edible oil sector;

* Because of urbanisation and change in lifestyle people consume less *chira* (flattened rice or *muri* (parched rice) or puffed rice. Setting up of too many small rice husking and flour mills has resulted in unhealthy competition. Thus the less efficient ones should be out of business.

Due to industrialisation and expansion of urban areas we are losing precious agricultural land every year. It may be a good idea to arrange selling the unutilised land of

the sick industries to the prospective new entrepreneurs. The government may play the role of a negotiator. If the owner of sick unit is a defaulter, government may recover the amount outstanding with the defaulter from the sale proceeds of the unit. Replacement of industries in such cases may help rehabilitation of local workers (unemployed due to closure of the unit or retrenchment) to a considerable extent and the local people will welcome the setting up of new industries because of prospective economic benefit to the local people.

The land occupied by these industries are substantial from the point of view of industrialisation. As acquisition and development of new plots for industrial use needs fairly long time establishment of new industries in place of certain sick industries which should be closed will (a) save the owners from future loss; (b) generate employment and (c) increase the economic benefit of the local people.

Industries being sick may not be seen with undue concern. Change of phase of industrialisation results in such a phenomenon in the industrial field. What is frustrating and

The unemployment problem is acute in Bangladesh. Already we are facing great problem in RMG sector. Our prospect both for mid- and long-term investment does not appear to be bright. Due to high unemployment and porous border smuggling is rampant. In Bangladesh it has thus become critical for government to look into the problems of the existing industries in right earnest not only to save them but also to attract foreign investment.

to, (a) which of these industries are to be scrapped; (b) which may be reactivated; (c) which may be considered for BMRE etc.

We are aware that a large number of saw mills, brick fields, oil mills, *chira* mills, rice or flour mills have become sick. There is hardly any justification to extend any monetary assistance to these industries because of the following reasons:

* We have very limited use of timber now because of its high price and otherwise dominance of cheaper products such as Partex, Acrylic sheets etc. Instead of supporting saw mills the government may increase its support to manufacture of high quality furniture (mostly non-wooden) of international standard because we have prospective buyers for quality furniture in Europe, USA, Australia and Japan;

* Because of non-availability of cheaper fuel a large number of trees are destroyed to operate brick fields in north and western Bangladesh. With the adequate availability of stone from the local mine consumption of bricks in construction work hopefully will considerably decrease.

* There has been a change in the food habit of the people of Bangla-

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