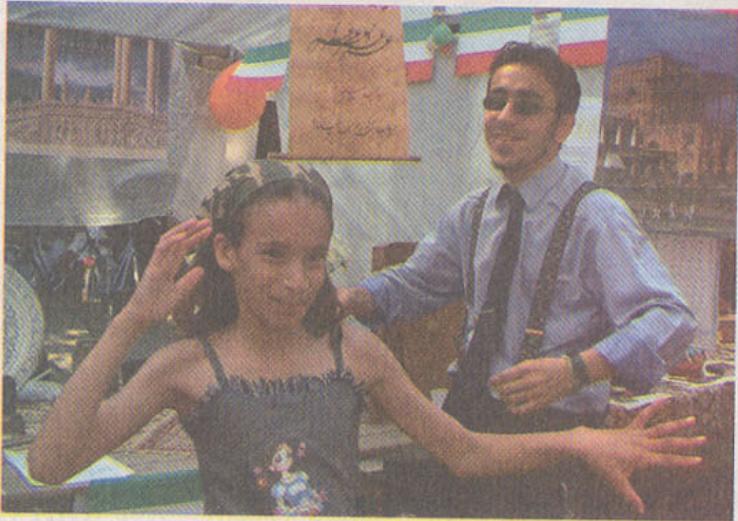




culture that can spark violence and tensions." It is thus isolation and parochialism that leads to conflict.

The third principle is related to, and an outcome of, the second principle. "Diversity thrives in a globally interdependent world when people have multiple and complementary identities and belong not only to a local community and a country but also to humanity at large." (p88) So while being the citizens of a state which has its own culture(s) we should not forget that we are also the citizens of the world. This can be expanded to include shared values, communication and commitment. "Cooperation among people and nations with different interests is more likely when all are bound and motivated by shared values and commitments. Global culture is not about the English language or brand name sneakers; it is about universal ethics based on universal human rights and respect for the freedom, equality and dignity of all individuals." (p90) This may seem ironic if we look at the inconsistency in power and wealth between nations. The final principle addresses that issue: "asymmetric power". Economically



powerful cultures tend to spread and less economically powerful ones wither. The report gives a number of examples: "Powerful corporations can outbid indigenous people in using land rich in resources. Powerful countries can out-negotiate weak countries in recognition of traditional knowledge in World Trade Organisation (WTO) agreements. Powerful and exploitative employers can victimise defenceless migrants." (p91) In our own part of the world, the booming Bollywood industry has pushed Dollywood into a corner. This has not only resulted in Hindi CDs and DVDs flooding the market but has helped the linguistic ability of our young generation to evolve. In Bangladesh, the English language

that has been taught since primary school has failed to give our young people communicative fluency, yet many are growing up with a better understanding of Hindi without any formal training.

The UNDP report ends with emphasis on choices and these choices are to be made not just by states, communities and institutions but also the individual. For states and communities the options are to be totally "culture bound" or

open its arms to diversity, and allow its societies to evolve. For international institutions the options are "persist with rules that adhere to particular cultural and legal tradition," or "recognize, respect and promote the products and resources of their cultures." And last but not least, YOU and I: Do we stick to our own identities in isolation (if that were even possible) or see ourselves as "part of an interlinked humanity", the much quoted, "global village?"

*"I do not want my house to be walled in on all sides and my windows to be stuffed. I want the cultures of all lands to be blown about my house as freely as possible. But I refuse to be blown off my feet by any." -- Mahatma Gandhi*