

Date	Tuesday, December 11,2007, 10:40-16:10
Place	Building 19, Room 314
Presenters	Md. Shanawez Hossain; Figi Giarfina; Phunyanuch Pattanotai; Kyuwon Kang; Tomoko Matsumoto; Thomas Papanastasiou; and Olga Nagy, Graduate Students, Graduate School of Asia-Pacific Studies, Waseda University.
Title	Dialogues with South Asia
Moderator	Mr. Yasushi Katsuma, Associate Professor, GSAPS, Waseda University
Participants	Ms. Shahina Hanif, Coordinator, Simorgh Women's Resource and Publication Centre, Pakistan; Ms. Abantee Harun, Lecturer, Independent University, Bangladesh; Mr. Devraj Humagain, Researcher, Martin Chautari, Nepal; Ms. Priyanka Kakodkar, Senior Special Correspondent, New Delhi Television, India; Mr. Siddartha Das, Design Consultant, India; Mr. Harindra B. Dassanayake, Colombo Institute for Advanced Study of Society & Culture, Sri Lanka; Mr. Phurba Thinley Sherpa, Co-Founder, Voluntary Artists' Studio, Thimphu (VAST), Bhutan; 30 PhD and MA Students from the Graduate School of Asia-Pacific Studies, Waseda University.

First Session: International Human Rights vs. ``Asian Values``

1. First speaker Mr. Shanawez spoke on the indigenous human rights issues of Chittagong hill tracts (CHTs), Bangladesh from the so-called 'community interest' perspective of 'Asian Values'. The main issues addressed included how this claim of larger community interest can pave the way for violation of many other smaller communities' human rights. And how international initiatives can also be intentionally mis-directed by the local authorities if there is no conditionality to safeguard human rights in the development projects. On the basis of his research, he proposed for human rights-based approach in development projects.
2. Second Speaker Ms. Figi spoke on the human rights issues of Muslim society in Indonesia from Asian values and international human rights perspective. The main issues addressed were how dual practice of Sharia law and constitutional law creating human rights violation among different ethnic groups in Indonesia. She emphasized to have a common ground of human rights where all ethnic groups will have equal opportunities.
3. 3rd speaker Ms. Phunyanuch presented about international human rights vs. Asian values in Thailand's perspective. On the basis of various human rights abuses in

Thailand she explained how difficult it might be for ASEAN nations to have a regional human rights mechanism. And it is not only Myanmar but internal issues of many other countries will also be the major problem in this regard.

4. 4th speaker Ms. Kyuwon discussed the death penalty issue of South Korea from international human rights perspective. She explained that South Korea still not ready to abolish death penalty though it is found it failed to reduce crime as the highest punishment. But abolishing death penalty in Korea would hold lot of weight in regional Asian countries to influence others.
5. 5th speaker Ms. Tomoko spoke on the Refugee issues of Japan from human rights ground. She showed that though every year number of refugees increased in Japan still it far below international level. Complex internal law, language barrier, and negative perspective of a portion of Japanese society are the main reasons behind such lower rate. But Japan should come out of these issues to solve the need of increased human resources.

Second Session: `Poverty and Development in Asia`

1. First speaker Mr. Shanawez discussed about poverty and inequality issues in Bangladesh. On the basis of household survey data he explained how Bangladesh is reducing both income and human poverty with economic growth. But at the same time inequality increased in both sector among different income groups and regions. And a significant portion of economic growth effect is lost due to increased inequality. And in many cases it is the poor people, woman, and children who are the most vulnerable. He proposed for more group and area targeted strategies to fight against poverty and inequality.
2. 2nd speaker Mr. Thomas spoke on corruption issues in the infrastructural sector in Indonesia and role of accountability mechanisms in the community driven development projects. He showed that corruption might be a problem of incentives in economic, cultural, political and social issues. Legitimacy might be an important instrument to fight against corruption as it increases accountability by increasing the involvement of stakeholders and ultimately by empowering them.
3. 3rd speaker Ms. Olga spoke on importance of preserving a Tibetan historical building in Ladakh, Kashmir, in India. It is the place where Alexander Csoma de Koros, a Hungarian scholar lived and compiled the first Tibetan-English dictionary in 1831. Many people aren't aware about this historical place and it's almost ruined. Describing its historical importance she explained how a small project can save this place.

Third Session: `How South Asia Fit in the Discourse on ``Asian Regional Integration?`

Asia itself is very multicultural and within Asia South Asia is the most diversified in many terms like identity, culture, and ethnicity etc. For example, within India we can find so much diversity which we can't find even in many whole continents. So, unlike Europe, for Asia these diversities might be the first problem in mainstreaming South Asia in Asian regional integration.

Like East Asia, South Asian countries are also coming up with various regional integration tools. These combined regional efforts will create equal opportunities for many less powerful South Asian countries to survive in an integrated Asia. So, all though still there are many problems than prospects for South Asia to be fit in the discourse of Asian regional integration right now but combined efforts from both sides show us certain opportunities to bring South Asia in the discourse of `Asian Regional Integration.`