

The Environment

An India-Pakistan Conference on Environment -- the first of its kind -- was held in Lahore from December 13 to 15. This special section includes a report on the conference's proceedings, excerpts from a paper read by Dr. Pervez Hassan, an interview with the head of India's Centre for Science and Environment and an article on the link between poverty and environmental problems.

Sharing knowledge

By our staff reporter

THE THREE-DAY India-Pakistan Conference on the Environment which concluded in Lahore last Friday was unique in several ways.

It was the first organised meeting between representatives of non-governmental organizations between the two countries in the field of environment, and it was interesting to see delegates from both countries operating on the same wavelength. None felt any inhibition in underlin-

ings of this kind, economists, social scientists and legal experts are capable of talking in practical and concrete terms about problems with which they feel really involved.

In large numbers

Third, the conference refreshingly showed the large number of intelligent, articulate and committed young people that work in our academic and development institutions but many of whom have

and voluntarily devoting their time and energy. This fact was acknowledged by Mr. Anil Agarwal of India's Centre for Science and Environment -- which, together with the World Conservation Union (IUCN), Pakistan, sponsored the Lahore Conference -- who thought that Pakistan had an edge over India in this respect.

Fifth, the conference fully brought out the link between politics and the environment, between environment and democracy. The advances made by India in the field, particularly the popular movements there such as the Chipko agitation, owe much to the uninterrupted democratic politics in that country and the consequent strengthening of mass consciousness of civil rights. The legal framework being gradually evolved there to protect the environment was also forcefully outlined.



ing the historical and geographical linkage between the two neighbours. It showed also how much can be done in tackling common problems, bypassing the respective governments, who may, because of various political compulsions, not always be willing to deal even with pressing issues.

Second, the conference brought out the fact that despite some of the academic waffle inevitable in gather-

shunned publicity or preferred to write their own little tracts rather than newspaper articles and are therefore not wellknown. There is much talent waiting to be tapped, if only the various governments could look over the heads of party loyalists.

Fourth, the conference revealed how many of Pakistan's senior economists and other professionals are deeply interested in environmental work, to which they are willingly

Lastly, the conference began on time, almost --not a mean achievement in terms of the drill that has come to mark such events.

Begum Bhutto

It was inaugurated by Senior Minister Begum Bhutto, who talked of man's ability to increase his own misery by interfering with the environment. She emphasised the need

for sustainable development, and pointed out that complex social, economic and political issues were intermixed with this in both in India and Pakistan. But this very complexity, the Minister said, underlined the need for exchange of information and co-operation.

Her inaugural address was preceded by the reading out of a message from the President, who also urged the need for information co-ordination for contiguous areas like India and Pakistan.

Mr. Qasim Ali Shah, Minister of State for the Environment -- the first in Pakistan's history --, hoped that the conference would help in the framing of a practical environmental policy.

Dr. Kamla Chaudhry spoke on behalf of the Indian delegates and said that the two critical issues for the 1990s were reduction of poverty and the preservation of natural resources, both of which were linked. She said India and Pakistan should understand the international economic forces working against their interests and which aggravated problems like environmental degradation. She said: "We must learn from each other rather than from Washington or anywhere else."

Dr. Pervez Hasan, Deputy Chairman of the IUCN Environmental Law Commission, Pakistan, and one of the moving spirits behind the conference, said: "We have a common history, a common geography, and I hope that common solutions will also be found to common problems."

In his keynote address, he referred to the growth of environmental consciousness in Pakistan and said that this had emerged "as a reaction to the neglect of our decision-makers" while pursuing development planning.

SAARC Secretary-General Ambassador Bhargava spoke particularly of the link between environmental degradation and natural disasters. He said a SAARC strategy was under preparation that would be con-

sidered at a summit towards the end of 1990.

Panel discussions

After the inaugural session, which was chaired by Syed Babar Ali, the conference went into panel discussions and set up working groups. Papers were read on several popular conservation projects already familiar to Viewpoint readers. The projects included the Chipko movement in India -- in which forest dwellers of Uttarakhand clung to trees to save them from the axe in a humble, non-violent protest -- and the self-help project in Karachi undertaken by Dr. Akhtar Hamid Khan, who regretted the fact that everyone remembered Orangi as the place where Karachi's trouble had

cial gain.

Several social issues came up -- such as the changes brought in Pakistan's northern areas by the building of the Karakoram Highway and the effect of migration on the environment: people moving to work in another city or town, it was argued, had no commitment to the environment of the host city. It was stressed that there should be local solutions to environmental problems, and the lack of data on populations uprooted by the building of the Mangla, Tarbela and Chashma dams was regretted. The possible effects of the Kalabagh Dam were ably discussed by Dr. Junaid Ahmad, who pointed out that the foreign consultants had asserted that there would be no environmental problems in the immediate vicinity but failed to reckon

with the effects hundreds of miles away -- like the possible submersion of Nowshera.

M.C. Mehta from India outlined the legal advances made by environmentalists in India and said that a number of writ petitions had been successfully moved in the high courts, and the remark of retired Justice P.N. Bhagwati -- who joined the conference on the third day to deliver a masterly exposition of the legal aspect of environmental work -- that the right to life should include the right to clean air was quoted and re-

quoted. Pakistani activists were urged to use the legal weapon.

With regard to urban preservation and upgradation, the word "plaza" may not have been mentioned, but the point was made that the spoilers of city environment were often financially and politically powerful people, and that the sanctity attached to private property was basic to the problem of the deterioration of our cities.

Desertification

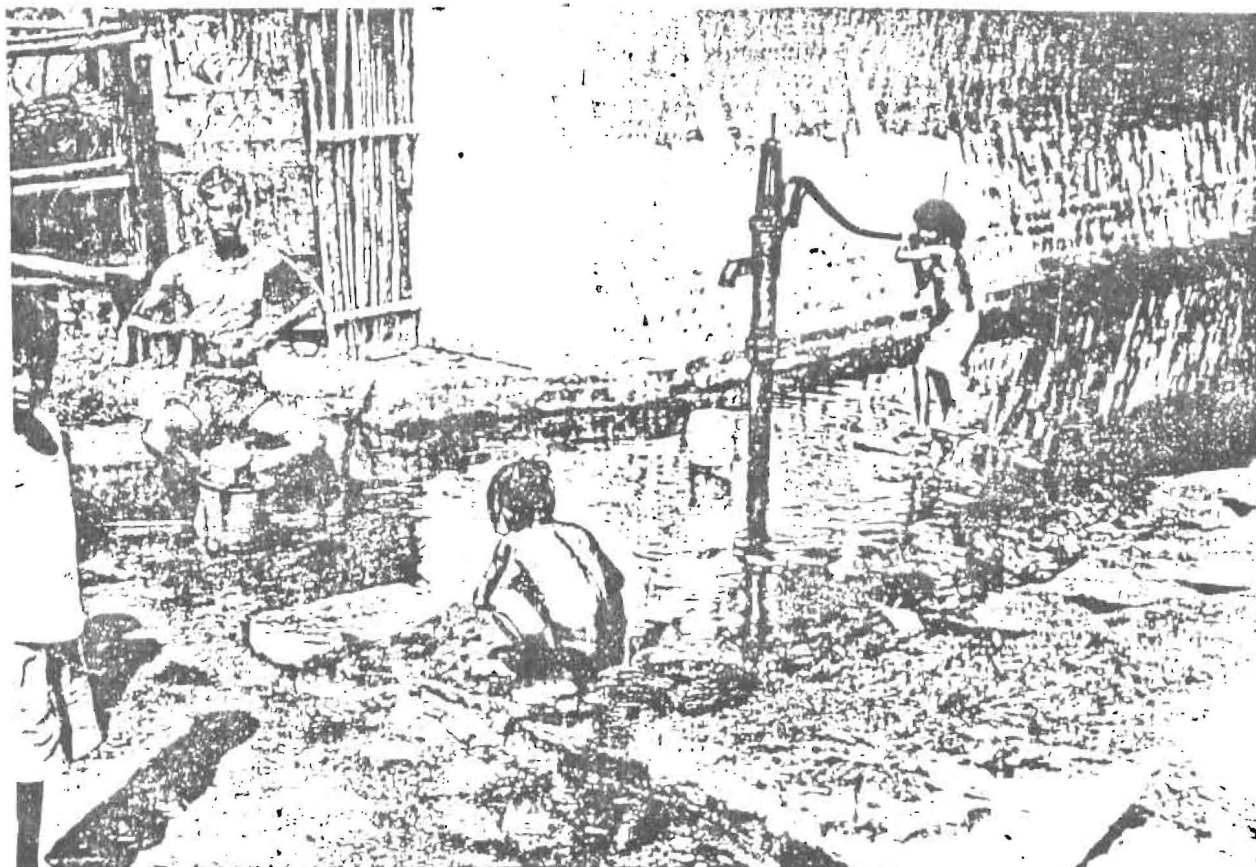
Desertification too was touched upon and the market forces pressing upon desert economies, with particular reference to Thar, outlined. The need for a framework for the un-



Children act as reindeer at the Naturama School, Pinner, Middlesex, which aims to fuse creativity with environmental awareness.

been but no one acknowledged that once the slum had been renewed, unrest in the locality subsided.

During the paper-reading sessions and the discussions that followed, many points were thrown up. For example, how women depend most on their immediate environment for sustenance and therefore suffer most from environmental degradation. How development could encourage degradation was highlighted by a speaker from India who said that when 40 years ago there were only 300 kilometres of roads in Himachal Pradesh, no one bothered to cut trees because there was no way of transporting the timber for sale; now, with roads all over, trees were being felled in large numbers for commer-



A breeding-ground for diarrhoeal diseases: a Bombay slum where waste-water is in contact with water used for drinking and washing.

could, I submit, include the following:

(1) **Support for national conservation strategies** -- As noted, Pakistan's experience in formulating its National Conservation Strategy has been a happy one. We should open a dialogue in this regard with India and benefit from its efforts and experience in evolving its conservation strategy.

(2) **Regional environmental secretariat** -- India and Pakistan should institutionalize their response to environmental matters by supporting the setting up of a permanent SAARC or Pakistan-India Secretariat for Environmental Affairs. This Secretariat should provide support to the various national efforts and help evolve areas for regional co-operation. Such a secretariat, among others things, could prepare and implement plans for disseminating environmental awareness with particular emphasis on grass-root levels; provide a data base encompassing well-researched and systematically collected information on various environment related fields; develop regional standards of pollution control including emission

levels for industries and automobiles; develop training programmes for the region's environmental administrators and scientific manpower; collect and disseminate information on national legislation on environmental matters; prepare model statutes in specific areas such as wildlife protection and marine pollution; collect, receive and provide information regarding certain national environmental efforts; and publish a journal highlighting the sub-continental efforts and problems in environmental fields.

(3) **Support to existing regional efforts** -- India and Pakistan should strengthen the efforts of the South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP) already active in the region.

(4) **Trans-boundary activities** -- Efforts should be made to highlight activities that have a trans-boundary environmental impact. Such activities could be co-ordinated to effect optimal protection to the region's shared resources. People of both the countries should be made to realize the common legacy and their ability to pollute each other's environment. The rivers are one com-

mon resource which could be saved from pollution by the joint efforts of the co-riparian States and their peoples. Similar joint efforts can be made in other areas.

(5) **Environmental impact assessment** -- Particularly when an activity in one country is likely to have a direct affect on the environment of a neighbour or on the region, such activity must only be undertaken with due consideration of the interests of the affected parties. The Environmental Impact Assessment of projects should develop a regional rather than merely a national perspective.

(6) **Project financing** -- A salutary development in recent years has been the increasing emphasis against environmental degradation in the lending policies of international and regional financial institutions such as the World Bank, International Finance Corporation, Asian Development Bank and Eximbank of Japan. A condition in the lending arrangements is that the project being financed shall be designed constructed and operated so as to avoid adverse effects on the environment. This trend, if encouraged, will ap-

Nation 17-12-89

SAARC does not discuss contentious issues—Bhargava

By Our Staff Reporter

LAHORE—Secretary-General of South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), K. K. Bhargava has observed that discussion on bilateral problems and contentious issues at the SAARC forum would be counter-productive.

In an exclusive talk with *The Nation* here on Saturday, the Secretary-General of SAARC stated that regional cooperation flourished in peaceful circumstances and maintained that the SAARC agenda excluded discussions on contentious issues.

Dispelling the impression that unlike the ASEAN, the SAARC had failed to make any substantial effect, he pointed out the major initiatives and work done in the field of regional cooperation. He said the SAARC had proposed a number of plans to meet the basic needs in the year 1990, of the



people in the region opening new avenues for cooperation among the member countries.

Mr K. K. Bhargava said many important initiatives had been taken in socio-economic and cultural fields. The initiatives included establishment of regional centres for human resources development, cooperation among the countries in reducing environmental pollution and working for the provision of basic needs, he added.

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Bhargava

Continued from page 1

He said the ASEAN had made less progress than the SAARC and pointed out the areas in which the work had already begun. He said the member states had decided to set up a food security reserve for the countries facing famine threat. Agriculture Information Centres would also be set up to help coordinate economic growth, he added.

He said the SAARC was also working on regional concessions for tourism. He was optimistic about the results of these modest steps and improvement in other areas.

He elaborated a number of other fields which required mutual efforts from the member countries, including a joint plan for the provision of clean drinking water for the people.

Referring to cultural links, Mr Bhargava said all member states have agreed to provide closer cultural links. About travel difficulties between India and Pakistan he said he would take up the matter with Indian Government and use his influence to solve this problem.

He said SAARC provided an opportunity for informal discussions and underscored the need for a sophisticated approach to make SAARC a success. He called upon the media to play its role in educating the people about the points the member countries shared with each other. He said media could help in accentuating the development by highlighting good things happening in the respective countries.

The Secretary-General said the problems which divide India and Pakistan when discussed on SAARC platform would be counter-productive. He also stressed that the SAARC should not be made a case of undue optimism in solving the regional issues.

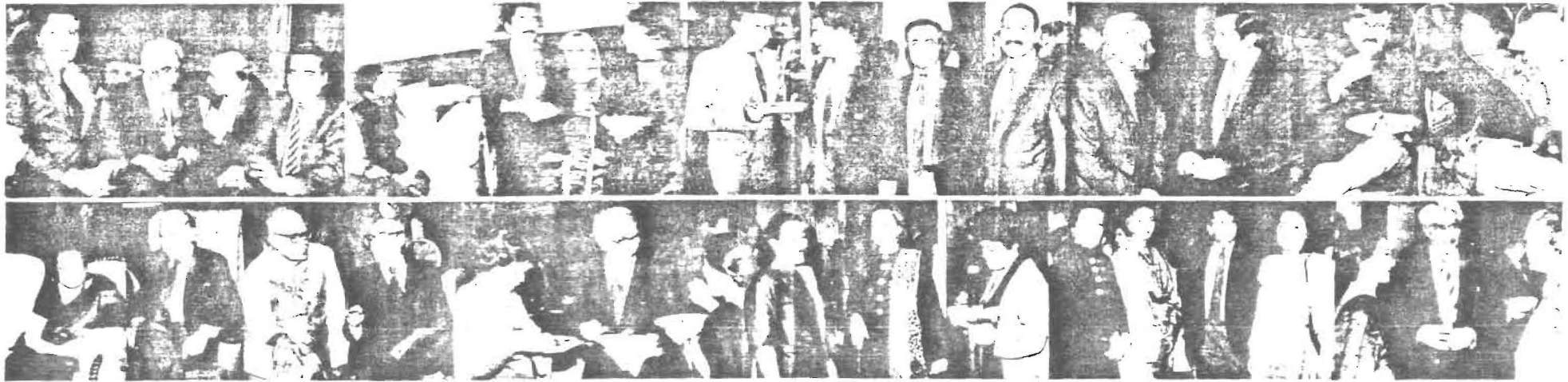
He said India being a big brother realised its responsibilities and has made initiatives to help other countries.

LONDON, 18 Dec 89

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 16, 1989

The Nation

FOREIGN



Participants at the reception given by Dr Akmal Hussain in honour of Environment Conference delegates.—Staff photo.

PT December 16, 1983

The Pakistan Times, Saturday, December 16, 1983

Conference on environment The miracle at Orangi

FROM OUR SPECIAL
REPRESENTATIVE

LAHORE — "If you had visited Orangi seven or eight years ago you would have found each and every lane in a township of almost one million population filthy, because there was no arrangement for sanitation. If you go there now you will have difficulty in finding a filthy lane."

Thus, Dr. Akhtar Hameed Khan, the head and moving spirit of the Orangi Pilot Project, in his own words and in his own style, in Lahore Thursday evening. He was giving the second of the three lectures organised by the Environmental Protection Society of Pakistan as an extension of the India Pakistan Conference on the Environment currently being held in the city.

Orangi town was built by low-income people drawn from different ethnic streams who had bought state land from DALALS (brokers) and had spent their own money to build poorly designed houses with the help of contractors. The masons had provided for bucket latrines and irregular open drains for disposal of waste water.

The challenge faced by the

Orangi Pilot Project, set up with BCCI support, was to give Orangi a modern sanitation system, that is, flush latrines and covered sewerage channels.

The OPP set up a research and extension centre for devising low cost material and equipped with essential survey staff. However, it was not easy to convert the people to accept the view that instead of waiting for an official agency to provide a sanitation system, the house-owners should provide for sanitation with their own resources and through their own initiative.

The approach to community mobilisation was used to break down the psychological, economic, technological and sociological barriers to upgradation through self effort. It took several months to convince the residents that unless they took matters in their own hands, the absence of arrangement for disposal of human secretion and waste water would continue to pose a serious hazard to health and damage their property. Social groups were raised around one activist per lane.

The break through was achieved when house owners in one lane agreed to give the proposal a try. Once this was done, people living in other lanes quickly followed suit and Orangi became a model of self development. The OPP only provided support services, advice and catalytic agents to social mobilisation while the poor people, who had already built 96,000 houses with their own resources over a brief period of 15 years, were able to invest over Rs. 40 million on giving themselves a modern sanitation system.

Earlier in the day the India-Pakistan Conference on the Environment continued its working sessions. The morning session was devoted to presentation of papers on media's role in environment, strategies for sustainable development and legal rights. The second session of the day was devoted to examination of specific areas of environmental concern.

The post-lunch session was taken up discussion among participants on issues of concern and strategies of mutual cooperation. The participants were divided into six working groups and each group discussed intra region and inter region cooperation in the areas of concern identified earlier. The recommendations of the working groups will be taken up by the conference today (Friday).

The first lecture sponsored by EPSOP was delivered on Wednesday by Mr. Chandi Prasad Bhatt on his pioneering work known as the Chipko Movement.

The third and final EPSOP lecture for the public will be given by Mr. Justice P. N. Bhagwati on Saturday at 11 am at the Karachi Hall of the Lahore High Court.



Dr. Akhtar Hameed Khan delivering his lecture on the "Case study of Orangi Pilot Project" in Lahore on Thursday. — P.T.



INDIA — PAKISTAN CONFERENCE ON THE ENVIRONMENT DECEMBER 1989



LAHORE: An Indian environmentalist, Mr R.L.S. Singh (extreme right) speaking at the India-Pakistan conference on environment, on Thursday at a local hotel.—Dawn photo

Environment protection Electronic media urged to highlight

Dawn Lahore Bureau

LAHORE, Dec 14: Speakers at the Indo-Pak Environmental Conference here on Thursday stressed the need for creating awareness among the masses about the importance of environment protection, saying that the electronic media could play a vital role in this regard.

Ms Soma Chatterjee, of the Journalists Resource Centre for Environment, Karachi, in her paper on "Environment and the media," said that low literacy rate in Pakistan hindered the growth of environmental consciousness as hardly 26 per cent of the country's population could be called literate. The 17.38 dailies, weeklies, monthlies and quarterlies in 12 different languages, she said, made up a total circulation which equalled only two per cent of the population. The key to future growth of environmental consciousness in Pakistan lay with the electronic media whose immense potential was yet to be fully utilised, she added.

Syed Asghar Qadir, the national conservation strategy coordinator, in his paper on "NCs as a case study," said that there was need to institutionalise the concern for sustainable development in Pakistan which could change the way in which 110 million Pakistanis were interacting with their environment. Public enthusiasm, he said, should be prevented from "slaying into a yawn" by changing the value system of the people and the leadership. The masses should not only be made environmentally conscious but should ensure responsible environmental practice from government, industrialists and other polluters, he added.

Mr Darrel D Monte's paper on environmental journalism and the media was read by another Indian journalist, M. Kalpana, in the absence of the author. The paper was a case study on the making of the state of India's environment reports, and that environment was a major issue in Indian Press, but still a lot was needed to be done.

Mr Bhawar Lal Kohli of India in his paper on "Sustainable development," said that a lot needed to be done to sustainably improve the Thar desert environment in the Indian province of Rajasthan. The desert people of the two countries, he continued, had been living with their stock in the given surroundings for years, but needed such enduring development strategies as could ensure better harmony of the inhabitants with their ecosystem, he added.

Joint discussion was presided over by Ms Thomas Mathew, Secretary-General of the World Wildlife Fund, India, while five environmentalists presented their papers.

Mr R.L. Singh of the Indian Ministry of Forests and Environment, in his address on "protected areas: a case study of the Indian tiger scheme project," related how the Indian environmentalists had fought with their government and secured, as protected areas, 67 national parks, 197 wildlife sanctuaries, seven biosphere reserves and 17 tiger reserves for the future species of the Indian tiger.

Mr Parul Gole, an ecologist, expressed concern over the fact as to how badly the mutant species of geese and cranes needed to be given conserved ecology in India and Pakistan. The naturalist's lecture was ended with slides showing the two endangered species in their varied but changing environments.

Mr Abdul Latif Ran, while deliberating on "protected areas and biosphere reserves in Pakistan," said that Pakistan had less protected environment as against India and initiative was lacking in this regard at the government level. He also dwelt upon the history of environmental legislation in Pakistan and touched upon the process of environmental protections like national parks, forest reserves and others.

The Bombay Environmental Action Group's secretary, Mr Shyam Shrivastava, said that people's protests had greatly influenced environmental conservation campaigns in the two countries. The Indian environmentalist gave details of various environmental achievements of the Bombayites and other Indian citizens which were affected by people's movement.

Mr H.S. Panwar's paper on "management of protected areas" was read in his absence by another Indian environmentalist, Mr Mukharjee.

WORKING GROUPS: Later, the conference participants split into different working groups on forests, migrated species of birds and animals, the ecosystems of rivers and dams, deserts, urban areas, media, law and people's movements. These groups, during the rest of the day, discussed issues of concern and the strategies of mutual cooperation, which would be given the form of conference recommendations in the concluding session.

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NATIONAL



Participants at a dinner hosted by Dr Parvez Hasan in honour of guests of Indo-Pak joint conference on environment. —Staff photo

Pak-India joint efforts to solve environmental problems stressed

BY A STAFF REPORTER

LAHORE — Senior Federal Minister Begum Nusrat Bhutto has called upon the experts from Pakistan and India to sit together to find out workable solutions to the environmental problems hindering the attainment of the goals of sustainable development and meet the threats to the very existence of life on earth.

During the inauguration of the Indo-Pakistan Conference on Environment held on Wednesday, Begum Nusrat Bhutto stressed the Pakistani Government would make every endeavour to take the experts of the region to come closer and find solutions collectively for the betterment of the people of both the countries.

She said the role of the NGOs was vital in the protection of the environment as the efforts of the government alone were obviously not enough for achieving the objective.

She expressed satisfaction over seeing the environmentalists from India and Pakistan together for deliberations on environmental issues common to both the

countries and endeavouring to find their solutions. The very complexity of the problem made the mutual exchange of knowledge, experience and expertise in the region essential. This was more so for countries where river basins, watershed areas and mountain ranges were common.

The Minister said environment had emerged as a major global issue in the recent years. Global warming, destruction of the ozone layer, pollution of land and water, desertisation, deforestation and loss of biodiversity, depletion of soil and sea, extinction of species and overpopulation demonstrated that human demand was exceeding environmental support capacities. Many of these phenomena were the result of human misuses to interfere with the environment and causing massive damage to it. The concern for environment was therefore, genuine and called for a change in our behaviour towards it.

She said countries like Pakistan suffered from problems resulting from natural resources depletion and environmental deterioration along with the problems like desertification, climate change and depletion of ozone layer. As a consequence the country faced environmental problems of poor sanitation in rural and urban areas, drinking water contamination, high infant mortality rates and high rates of ill-health particularly among the women. The high population growth rate was also putting increasing pressure on its natural resources and infrastructure at

the same time. All this necessitated pursuing of more vigorous policies on environmental issues. Begum Nusrat Bhutto said a lot of attention had been devoted to the global environment in the recent past. This had helped Pakistan to acquire better knowledge of regional environmental problems, of an integrated approach and of the need for better environmental management and application of the environmental principles. She said the Pakistani Government was committed to the principles of sustainable development and had been working towards it. She said the Pakistani Government was committed to the principles of sustainable development and had been working towards it.

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Begum Nusrat Bhutto, Senior Federal Minister, addressing the inaugural session of the India-Pakistan Conference on Environment, in Lahore, on Wednesday — PT

PT 14/12/89

Environmental hazards must end

Nation
14/12/89

By Our Staff Reporter

LAHORE While inaugurating the Pakistan-India conference on environment here on Wednesday, Senior Minister Begum Nusrat Bhutto observed that the experts of the two countries should sit together more often to work out the solutions to the environmental hazards threatening the two countries.

The three-day conference is being held by the World Conservation Union of Pakistan and the Centre for Science and Environment of India. Experts from both the countries will deliver lectures during coming sessions.

In her address, Begum Bhutto said the environment as a subject had emerged as a major global issue in the recent years. She believed that acidification of land and water, deforestation, soil loss and extinction of species were the factors which showed that human demand was exceeding environ-

mental support capacities.

She was of the opinion that this problem had occurred because of

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The Nation

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 14, 1989



Ms Kamla Chaudhry addressing India-Pakistan Conference on the Environment. Sitting on the stage are Anwar Din Siddiqi, Dr Mahboob-ur-Rehman, Syed Qasim Shah, Mr Bhargava and Begum Nusrat Bhutto. —Staff photo.

Environmental hazards

Continued from page 1

man's interfering with the natural processes and causing damage to it. "The concern for environment is genuine and calls for a change in our behaviour towards it," she commented.

Apart from unusual climatic changes and depletion of Ozone layer, she said the countries like Pakistan were suffering from issues resulting from natural resources depletion and environmental deterioration due to our peculiar demographic, social and cultural systems. These countries were confronting problems like poor sanitation, drinking water contamination and high infant mortality rates.

"We need vigorous policies on environmental issues," she remarked and added that the government was paying special attention to the growing environmental hazards. She said it was important to know about the research which had already been done by governmental and non-governmental organisations throughout the world.

She said sustainable development was a complex concept and involved ecological, social and economic sustainability. While it might be easy to formulate plans, it was difficult to implement them because the two goals of sustainable development, survival of the people and of the species, were not always compatible. "This very complexity of the problem makes the mutual exchange of knowledge essential," she added.

She believed that the role of the government in this uphill task would not be enough and the contribution of non-governmental organisations was vital for achieving the objective.

Ishaq's message

President Ghulam Ishaq Khan, in his message for the occasion, observed that at the end of the twentieth century the world is confronting a dreadful environmental crisis. "The evidence of this accumulates with daunting speed from desertification in Sahel to forest decline in Europe; from burning South American rain forests to Ozone hole over Antarctica, the list seems endless. In the face of such evidence, awareness of this global crisis has spread from the environmental and scientific fringe to mainstream consciousness," he said.

The President believed that to halt massive injury to the earth's environment, mobilisation of political will, international cooperation and financial resources were required. "It requires a vision that transcends borders and subordinates the interest of individual nations to that of humanity at large."

At a micro-regional level, he

were contiguous between the countries of the region, such as Pakistan and India, there was a definite need to exchange information and work jointly to conserve the resources and utilise them with the minimum risk of environmental pollution.

SAARC Secretary General, Mr R.K. Bhargava, in his address, observed that almost all the countries in the region were exposed to these threats which only left behind a trail of human miseries and had increasingly been neutralising their efforts to improve the quality of life of the peoples.

During the Katmandu Summit, he said, the SAARC leaders had expressed their concern over the continuing degradation of the environment and unusual occurrences of floods, droughts, landslides, cyclones and tidal waves in the region. On the request of the SAARC members, a group of regional experts finalised the objectives, terms of reference and the methodology for the study which should be ready for submission to the SAARC Summit in 1990.

He said that a group of national coordinators had already finalised the format for conducting studies at national levels which would subsequently be integrated into regional study and plan of action.

He categorically stated that ecological problems, environmental degradation and natural disasters did not recognise national boundaries in South Asia. An integrated regional approach could also achieve economy of scale, sharing of one another's data, knowledge and research experience and optimum utilisation of scarce resources.

Minister of State for Food and Agriculture Dr Mehboobur Rehman in his address said that Pakistan and India were both facing similar problems. The increasing populations and excessive utilisation of natural resources had started retarding the sustainable development. The area under natural forests was on the decline and wildlife was dwindling and natural areas were shrinking. This indicated that the desirable relationship between the people and resources had been upset.

Apart from being the source for fuel wood, the significance of hill forests in maintaining the productivity of the area by soil and water conservation could not be underestimated.

State Minister for Environment Syed Qasim Ali Shah said environment situation was deteriorating sharply and appropriate steps on emergency basis were required to halt this trend.

Quoting a recent survey conducted by the government, he said that in Pakistan 40 per cent of the area was uninhabited out of which 42 million ton fertile soil was

Indo-Pak environment conference

By ADIL NAJAM

Will Maneka Gandhi come?

LAHORE, Dec. 12: The India-Pakistan Conference on the Environment (IPEC) begins in Lahore on Dec. 13. The first of its kind, the conference will bring together the best environmental experts and activists from both sides of the Wagha to discuss the many environmental challenges that the two countries face.

Most participants, including many names well known globally for their environmental activities and concerns, have already arrived in Lahore, the cultural

Capital of Pakistan. For the next four days it would become the environmental capital of the country. However, the arrival of the conference's most interesting participant is still not certain. Maneka Gandhi, the late Prime



Minister Indira Gandhi's daughter-in-law, who has recently been appointed India's Minister for the Environment and Forests in V.P. Singh's first cabinet has reportedly expressed a desire to attend the conference but her

participation, or otherwise, has yet to be confirmed requiring the clearance of many protocol hurdles.

The organisers of the conference hope that she might be able to arrive by the closing of the conference which is scheduled for the 16th of December and is to be presided over by Pakistan's Minister for the Environment, Syed Qasim Ali Shah. The IPEC which is jointly organised by India's Centre for Science and the Environment (CSE) and the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN) will be opened by Senior Minister Nusrat Bhutto.

About 35 experts from India in-

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Dr. Akmal Hussain, the AKICOR General Manager Shoaib Sultan whose projects in the Northern Areas of Pakistan are an example of how the participatory approach to development can actually be put to practice, Syed Ayub Qutub who is involved in the preparation of a National Conservation Strategy for Pakistan, Dr. Junaid Ahmad and Akhtar Hameed Khan who is architect of the success of the Commila Project and the Orangi Pilot Project.

The Conference will last four days during which a number of papers will be discussed and in depth discussions held on the environmental problems and concerns faced in the two countries and the approaches taken to solve them.

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