Chapter 11

Impact of the SAARC on the Govt. and Citizen of India.

( Theoretical and Behavioural)

The impact of the establishment and development of SAARC on the people and Government's of the member states is realized after studying its impression on various aspect of the political and social institutions in the South Asian Region. The impact of the SAARC is studied analytically, theoretically and behaviourly and then the conclusions are derived; they are expressed in the following sub chapters with special references given to Government and citizens of India.

The South Asian Region is geo-politically one region; is geologically known as Indian Plate; is also known as Aryawart, Hindustan or Indian-sub-continent. It has many sovereign states located in it. After the departure of British power from Indian Sub-continent India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka became independent. Nepal and Bhutan were sovereign and independent states. Maldives islands were located in the Indian Ocean. East Pakistan became independent and sovereign Bangladesh in 1971. The seven states are the major components of South Asian region. Each has a political system different from the others. The seven states are having different political ideology, political institutions, governmental machinery, different languages and cultures. Yet they were and are the subjects of the ancient Aryawart or Indian Sub-continent. Geographically the members of SAARC belong to one region divided by national boundaries but homogeneously linked with each other by natural atmospheric conditions & natural phenomena like Himalaya and rivers flowing through this region namely Sindhu, Brahmaputra, Gandak etc.
Today’s India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka have common history of British Raj. Nepal and Bhutan were and are land locked states and totally depended upon India for every thing. Nepali, Bhutanese and Indian people share the cultural, religious, social and economical affinity with each other.

Behaviour study of the Government and the people of the region can be summed up as SAARC is a regional organization of the India and its borderly states. India being centre core and other member states are on the periphery even though theoretically they are treated at par with India but in reality they can not be equal to India in any sphere of the activity under taken by the SAARC. India possess something more than what they have is a psychological sentiment of the six remaining states. If we make further behavioural observation of their diplomatic and governmental staff one has to conclude that even today they suffer with 'Indophobia'.

After realizing India’s impact on other member states of SAARC the researcher has measured the impact of SAARC on Indian Government, it’s agencies and citizen.

i) Impact on Legislature:

India is a federal state. Central Government deals with the SAARC through its foreign ministry and various foreign agencies controlled by the Prime Minister and the Foreign Minister. Sansad regulates India’s involvement in SAARC.

The legislature submitted in LokSabha and RajyaSabha related to SAARC was discussed thoroughly and analytically in the related committees of both
houses and then only decision is taken on the basis of the report submitted by the related committee.

At the time of the inauguration of the SAARC Indian Sansad was matured and capable of dealing with the responsibilities bestowed upon it by the constitution makers of the India.

Sansad successfully guided Indian Government in taking course of action in relation to international organization and institutions. When the question came up regarding policy formulation towards new up coming regional organization of the South Asia; the members of the August Houses of the Sansad unanimously approved the move initiated by the ruling party. Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi's legislature related to the SAARC was up-held by the members of the LokSabha and congratulated Rajiv Gandhi for his move in uniting various Governments of the region; long awaited dream of uniting people; and cultures of the subcontinent. The success of Rajiv Gandhi is based upon the foundation work carried by him in this regard among would be member states and their citizen.

LokSabha and RajyaSabha members realized their responsibility towards the people of the South Asia region and therefore, did not obstruct or objected to any legislation related to the policy matter, working or financing the SAARC. The committees of both the Houses completed their work on each and every legislature related to SAARC in given time. Their approach to SAARC legislature was always positive and humanitarian. Indian Sansad liberally contributed in establishing and implementing all the action plans of the SAARC and granted permission to all the governmental agencies to help various bodies of the SAARC in realising their objectives. Lok Sabha and RajyaSabha and their committees related to SAARC and its activities applied positive attitude in realising Meteorology Action plan's responsibility.
Meteorology Department of India provided technical know-how and expertise required in building infrastructure and offered financial assistance etc. All the necessary arrangements to establish Meteorological stations in the member states were liberally approved by both the Houses of the Sansad and even enquired the progress made in this regard to the Government of India; time and again the Foreign Ministers and the Prime Ministers who attended SAARC meetings, Summit and other conferences and participated in the decision making process of the SAARC reported their participation and contribution in this regard to both the Houses. They were questioned and cross-questioned on many occasions, and were instructed by the Houses to actively take initiative in implementing various welfare schemes in the remote areas of the member states. India is a lead state and therefore should initiate essential services to such areas which never thought of or availed very few facilities. The members of both the Houses of Indian Sansad were moved by the pathetic condition in which the natives of the some of the member states lived. The foundation work carried out by the SAARC with the assistance of Government of India duly approved by the Sansad is recognized by the benefited natives of the member states. The changes brought in the life style and upgradation of the standard of living of the people of the SAARC region and their continuous participation in the SAARC activities are appreciated by the members of both the Houses of Indian Sansad. Since creation of SAARC the Sansad of India and its members became aware of their neighbour states and their citizens. Now the Parliamentarians of India's scope of thinking and its implementation enlarged to the limits of Indian Peninsula, thus the national borders gave way for geographical borders and people living in it. These peoples uplifting became one of the concern of the Sansad of India.
II) Impact on the Executive:

The executive authority of India has implemented the decision taken by its legislature to participate in the establishment and working of SAARC to achieve the aims and objectives as they are to be declared in its charter.

The formation of SARC and later on the modification in its name(SAARC) was due to the insistence of member states to knit seven member states and their people into one homogeneous entity.

SAARC declaration, its charter, its action plans and its Summit Conferences had and are having impact on the government of India's policy towards its bordering states. Executive of India established bilateral relationship with the neighbouring states and tried to collaborate with them to make healthy and friendly relationship. These efforts were restricted up to the Governmental machinery level and society at large was not included in these bilateral relations. Bilateral relations were manned by the Indian Foreign Services under the management, guidance and control of the Foreign Ministry and its political and bureaucratic executives. The very first impact of the SAARC on the Cabinet and the Secretariat of India was realized when they learned that the opportunity has came to convert their dream of building bridges among the societies of would be member states of the SAARC.

Smt. Indira Gandhi, Rajiv Gandhi, Chandrashekhar, Narsimha Rao, Deve Gawda, I.K. Gujral and Atal Bihari Vajpayee with their Foreign Ministers, Foreign Secretaries and number of experts and officers worked to realize the dream expressed in the objectives of the SAARC.
Finance Ministers of India made provisions since 1985 in their budgets for expenditure on SAARC. Meteorological Department of India and its executives planned the structural functional infrastructure of the 'action plan on Meteorology of the SAARC'. Meteorology Department of India provided technical know-how, tools and machines, material, experts and scientists etc. to the SAARC. The experience gained by the executives and experts of India while working in the other six member states of the SAARC enriched their knowledge of the Indian Sub-continent. It helped them to gain and monitor advanced information regarding atmosphere and the changes occur in it and its effect on area.

Progress and development made by SAARC brought the member states closer to each other resulting in establishment of cordial relationship among them. The impact of SAARC on the Head of state and other executives is analysed in the light of the side tracking of the problematic questiones and working together in such areas where no contradictions or doubts exist; for example, the starting of Delhi-Lahore-Delhi Bus by the Government of India and the declaration of Atal Bihari Vajpayee to travel in the inaugural run from Delhi to Lahore is well received by the Prime Minister of Pakistan, Nawaz Sharif and his response that he will travel along with Atal Bihari Vajpayee on his return journey to New Delhi. Begum Sheikh Hasina, Prime Minister of Bangladesh discussed with the Chief Minister of West Bengal, Jyoti Basu to start Bus service between Calcutta and Dhaka and back. This offer is well received by the West Bengal Govt. and is finalised. India is linked with Bangladesh by this bus service to provide travelling facilities to the citizen of both the countries. This is a visible impact of the SAARC on the executives of the member states, this impact has forced them to think for the welfare of their citizen. Thus enlarging their vision and geographical integrity of the region, and forcing them to think nature has not divided them but the artificial
boundaries has separated them from each other. Regional Organization in the form of SAARC has forced the executives of its member states to come to gather and work for the children of the Indian subcontinent by collaborating with each other to improve their standard of living thus eradicate their poverty, increasing their life span, providing them with all essential commodities and facilities, and installing happiness in their day-to-day existence. SAARC has offered them the opportunity to be one with the region and work for the welfare of the region by their devoted work and guidance.

III) Impact on the administration:

Establishment of the SAARC and thereafter its growth and development had and is having very cordial relationship with the central administration of India. The use of infra-structure by the administrative and managerial administration of the members states in the launching and establishment of various organizational set-ups and action committees is a product of the co-ordination of their governmental administrative agencies which resulted in the successful functioning of SAARC in achieving its target in a given time and with the available resources.

Indian Administration was asked to cooperate with the various agencies of the SAARC in different regions of the SAARC. This has given them an opportunity to collaborate their skills and administrative abilities with the entirely different ethnic labour force and achieve the results. Therefore, the impact of SAARC is to be stated as follows: “SAARC has provided an opportunity to test their skill and ability in differing conditions, in different times and with the people having no common temperament or affinity with each other. All the seven member states have their independent national identity, culture, language, literature etc.
India being a 'giant' among the member states has all the regional language speaking administrative cadre in its Central Administrative Services. Indian administrative Services made use of English as a link language and therefore, it was and is easy for the Indian administrators to command the local sub-ordinates while working in any other member states territory. This collaboration and co-ordination between member states to execute the planned programme resulted in enrichment of the experience in the administrative cadre of India. Indian administrators and clerical staff working with the SAARC institutions had and are giving and are using their administrative and clerical skill to their best ability and are recognised for it by the SAARC executives thus they brought the honour and laurels for the Indian administrative services.

To man the working of the SAARC, the nation wise quota of staff is allotted to all the member states. The action plans of the SAARC are related to such diversified areas of science and technology. The institutions and organizations established to execute these action plans needed scientific and technological expertise in addition to administrative capabilities. India, in comparison to other member states is scientifically and technologically developed state.

Bhutan, Nepal, Maldives are not at all in a position to provide expertise in this regard. Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Pakistan have chosen specified areas to provide expertise. India is the only member state which is capable of providing expertise in all the areas and therefore Indian scientist, technologists and bureaucrats have upper-hand in their appointments and therefore they out number the quota allotted to India.

India's financial contribution is much more than the total contribution of other six member states and therefore in the field of financial
management of SAARC Indian Finance advisers command more respect in comparison to the advisors of other member states.

In the field of information, sports, games, entertainment and communication Indian administrators and participants dominate the events organised in respective fields by the related committees and agencies of the SAARC. The experts, coaches, event organisers, teams, artists, athletes, players etc. of India are treated as best competitors and challengers by their counterparts from six others member states of SAARC. Whether it is tele serial, dance or drama competition; or sculpture and painting competition; singing or musical instrument playing competition; or athletic event; hockey, football or any other field game, tournament or indoor game tournament the participants of other six member states consider Indians as challengers for the top honours or winners. Therefore Indian in any field is considered to be the 'standard' if they surpass this standard then only they can think about competing in international event. It has created the impact that the Indians are of 'world class' and therefore if this standard is achieved then only participants from other six states can think of competing in open world otherwise they have to improve and developed themselves, if possible under Indian guidance and coaching to be at par with 'Indian standard'. Therefore Indian administrators, scientists, technocrats, coaches, artists, players, athletes have given a standard to the SAARC in each and every field. Therefore it has become a moral responsibility of the Indian participant to upgrade the sub-ordinate standard of other member states.

In the field of research on SAARC Indian Scholars out number the scholars from other member states of the SAARC. The scholarly work carried out by the Indian Scholar is comparatively superior and well received by the international fraternity of the academicians and scholars. India offers opportunity to other member states to
collaborate with it in the research of various fields and also imparts them basic knowledge in numerous new scientific and technological fields.

iv) Impact on the Semi-Governmental Organizations:

The establishment and functioning of the SAARC had and is having an impact on semi governmental organizations of India. Almost all the semi government organizations of India are directly or indirectly related to the SAARC in achieving its aims and objectives. Almost all semi governmental organizations of India are influenced by the functioning of the SAARC. These organizations collaborate with the institutions of the SAARC in realizing its plans and programmes; for example Indian Telecommunication Corporation collaborating with the related Action Committee of the SAARC in establishing telecommunication link in between the SAARC member states, thereby the work load of Indian telecom Corporation has increased many-fold; to meet the increased workload number of officials and workers in staff and line agencies increased along with the increase in the number of machines and tele communication centers. The Indian telecommunication corporation uses INSAT (Indian Satellite) for the benefit of the SAARC.

Indian telephone corporation is working to provide services to the SAARC by linking member states with each other. The impact of SAARC on Indian Telephones Corporation can be ascertained by studying the growth of it, after it started cooperating with the SAARC.

Successful functioning of the SAARC has increased the transportation among its member states. The impact of it on Air India and Indian Airlines can be measured by the growth in passengers and goods transportation after the
SAARC came into being. The linking of Kathmandu with the capitals of six member states by Air has increased passenger transportation and from Kathmandu after establishment of the SAARC Head Quarter at Kathmandu.

The SAARC studies are included in the syllabus of the Indian Universities. SAARC is one of the topics to be taught in Political Science at various academic levels. JNU and some other Indian Universities gave prominence to the SAARC studies in their institutes. The scientists, technologists and academicians working in the Universities contributed their share in giving shape to the plans and programmes of the SAARC. Indian universities and IIT (Indian Institution of Technology) made available the required expertise by SAARC and therefore the contribution of semi governmental organizations of India is not secondary to any other organizations.

v) Impact on Non Governmental Organizations:

SAARC is a regional organization of the South Asia in which the involvement of the Governments and the people of the member states is at par with each other. The participation of the people in the SAARC activities in realizing its objectives is analysed to find out the achievement of the SAARC and its impact on the people and Non governmental organizations. Non governmental organization are those organizations of the people of India which contribute their efforts in achieving pre-decided welfare objectives to upgrade the standard of living of the South Asian Community. Almost all non governmental Organizations realized that the efforts of governments are to be supplemented by the non governmental organization to eradicate poverty, illiteracy, diseases, scarcity of residences, short supply of essential commodities and providing drinking water facilities, recreation, games and sports facilities etc. SAARC lacks in providing essential goods and commodities to all its
people. Market facilities or transportation facilities are not available in the remote areas of the region. The institutions of the SAARC sorted out these problems by seeking the help of the Chamber of Commerce of all the member states. The Indian Chamber of Commerce shouldered this responsibility on its own and carried it out through its branches working in the various parts of India.

Indian Medical Association rendered its services to the Govt. of India in providing expertise and technical staff to monitor the SAARC medical services. To eradicate malaria, tuberculosis, and other epidemics Indian Medical Association has rendered its help to the SAARC.

Various non-governmental organizations have contributed in making the life of the SAARC community happy. In this context Indian non-governmental organizations work together along with the non-governmental organisations of other six member states, of SAARC. This working together has created interaction among them in various fields. Its impact on the various areas of non-governmental organizations made these organizations to overcome their drawbacks and deficiencies found in their activities. Exchange of delegations among member states created an atmosphere in which the SAARC could conduct tournaments and championship in various athletic events and games. This regular feature of competition has given an opportunity to the participants to improve their standard and qualify for international competitions.

SAARC has offered the common platform to the literary personalities and associations of the seven member states to come together. Its impact can be seen in the growth of the literature of these states. SAARC has provided one more common platform through the people’s international organizations (Lions, Rotary etc) of the various member states came to gather to express their views and experience.
in the benefit of SAARC community. These non governmental organizations through the exchange of delegates provided an opportunity to the citizen of the member states to familiarise with the differing cultures and civilizations they exist in the seven member states; and thereby provided an opportunity to find out the common traits to built up a new common entity and identity of the SAARC region.

vi) Impact on the Common Citizen of India:

To assess the impact of SAARC on the citizens of India is a Himalayan task because Indian citizen is divided into various states and thereby the impact on them varies. Indian citizen are divided into three states i.e. lower middle and upper to study the impact on them.

The lower strata citizen of Indian society is either ignorant about the SAARC or is less informed person about the SAARC. Further more he has taken very less interest to know about the SAARC and its activities and therefore the impact of SAARC on the lower strata of Indian society is negligible. Indian citizen who belongs to the middle strata of society knows about the SAARC and some of its activities but he restricted himself up to information. He has the knowledge of the SAARC activities but he is not in a position to define or interpret it. This is a clear indication that the knowledge he acquired is an impact of the publicity division of the SAARC.

The upper strata citizen of the Indian Society and particularly that segment of it which is directly related to the SAARC activities; is having academic interest in it; monitors the success or failure of various organs of SAARC or the Action Plans because his interest is involved in it in the form of ideology and money. Almost all the upper strata belonging to the various walks of life is involved in the SAARC activities.
because he considered it to be a duty and responsibility towards humanity. From humanitarian point of view he involves himself in such activities of SAARC, which are directed towards the upliftment of the people of the SAARC region. He is also concerned in integrating the people of the seven members states into SAARC society. In this regard upper strata of Indian Society is always ready to extend cooperation in establishing humanitarian values in SAARC society. To achieve the aims and objectives of the United Nations the SAARC is working along with like-wise organizations to establish one homogeneous human society on which will bring safety, peace and happiness to mankind.

The impact of SAARC on the various organs of government as well as society is crystal clear. Every institution and every citizen of India felt the impact of the SAARC in his day to day life. His material involvement may not be clear to him but he realized that part of his tax payment is diverted to the SAARC by the Govt. of India; as the contribution of India to the SAARC. SAARC has provided an opportunity to the various institutions and people of India to participate in the movement of upgrading the standard of the SAARC community by eradicating poverty, illiteracy and diseases from the region. The sense of duty imbibed on the minds of SAARC related Indians and institutions are analysed to measure the impact of SAARC on them. The level of consciousness about the residents of Indian Peninsula has increased and the duty towards the citizens of six other member states of SAARC has given momentum to the geographical affinity of the South Asian States and their citizens to collaborate with each other to achieve the aims and objectives of SAARC. SAARC has imbibed dynamic thrust among the member states to be at par with developed states and to achieve this they are trying hard.