

Pakistan Society of Development Economists: Secretary's Report

Honourable Mr Ghulam Ishaq Khan, President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Professor Syed Nawab Haider Naqvi, President of the Pakistan Society of Development Economists, Distinguished Delegates, Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen, Assalam-o-Alaikum.

It is indeed a great honour and privilege for me to welcome you all, on behalf of the Pakistan Society of Development Economists (PSDE, for short), to this inaugural session of the Fifth Annual General Meeting of the Society. Such glittering gatherings of national and international scholars of Development Economics are rare in Pakistan and, therefore, most welcome and impressive. I am, therefore, most grateful to you all for your valuable participation in this meeting.

The Pakistan Society of Development Economists is truly a brain-child of Professor Syed Nawab Haider Naqvi, Director of the Pakistan Institute of Development Economics, who is appropriately its President also. Based in the Pakistan Institute of Development Economics, the Society was registered on October 19, 1982 under the Societies Registration Act of 1860. The main objective of the Society was to provide a forum for effective dissemination of the fruits of contemporary research, both here and abroad, among academics, Government economists, researchers and policy-makers concerned with socio-economic matters and development. It also aimed at serving as a bridge of contact between scholars of the Pakistan Institute of Development Economics and those similarly engaged in government, universities and other national and international institutions. To attain these objectives, the Society organizes Annual General Meetings and, in close collaboration with the Pakistan Institute of Development Economics, holds a number of lectures in the Institute's series of "Lectures in Development Economics". Through these meetings and lectures, the Society maintains an active contact with its members as well as with eminent national and international scholars. The Society also plans to award medals and cash prizes to scholars for outstanding research contributions in the field of Development Economics.

The annual general meeting of the Society is the occasion for its Secretary to present his report on the PSDE activities and achievements since the Society's inception, but chiefly since the last annual general meeting. Accordingly I now recount some of the major activities and achievements of the PSDE, particularly since the Fourth Annual General Meeting.

Beginning with 1984, the Society has been regularly holding annual general meetings, generally in the latter half of the year, at which national as well as international scholars present their latest research work in the field of Development Economics. Four annual general meetings have already been held. This fifth meeting was originally scheduled to be held in August last year but owing to a variety of compelling reasons it had to be deferred until now. We sincerely regret the inconvenience caused by its postponement and also feel sorry for the absence of a number of distinguished scholars who had agreed to attend the meeting in August last but were unable to come now. The papers contributed to the previous annual general meetings, together with discussants' reports, have already been published in the Papers and Proceedings issues of the international quarterly journal, *The Pakistan Development Review*, which I am sure have already reached you. Likewise, the papers that will be read at this meeting and the discussants' reports on them will appear in the next Papers and Proceedings issues of that *Review*. The holding of annual general meetings and publication of their proceedings involve enormous effort and time, but I am glad to say that with the generous and cheerful co-operation of the Pakistan Institute of Development Economics, the contributors, and the participants, the Society has been able to accomplish these onerous tasks quite satisfactorily. I am also glad to report that the Papers and Proceedings of the Society have been well received by the community of development economists both at home and abroad.

Far from resting on its laurels, the Society has been making continuous endeavours to improve its performance, to reach out to more development economists, and to promote research in development economics, especially in relation to Pakistan. Our endeavours have borne fruits. This is evident from the ever-increasing numbers of participants in the annual general meetings, of the papers read at those meetings, and of the members of the Society. As I look at you now and recall to my mind the audiences at earlier annual general meetings, I feel gratified by the strides we have made in attracting more and more scholars to our meetings. Then, look at the numbers of papers read at our meetings: they have gradually increased from 28 at the First Annual General Meeting to 40 at this meeting. But more significant than the increase in the absolute numbers of the papers read at these meetings is the proportional increase in the numbers of the contributions made by non-PIDE scholars. In earlier meetings, the papers contributed by PIDE scholars always accounted for more than 50 percent of all the papers read at those meetings; but this time the contribution of non-PIDE scholars has gone up from under 50 percent to 55 percent. This has happened despite the fact that we are holding this Fifth Annual General Meeting now at a very short notice, so that many of the foreign scholars' papers had to be dropped from our programme because their authors were not in a position to be present here on such short notice. Then, again, the membership of the Society has increased significantly over the years, with the result that from a humble beginning in

1982, the Society has now grown into a full-fledged Development Economics organization. The membership of the Society, though predominantly Pakistani, encompasses all the continents of the world and even includes four Nobel Laureates. Its current active members exceed 460 as against 361 in 1986. It is a matter of great satisfaction that among the Society's members, the proportion of paying members, as against institutional members, has shown a notable increase over time – from 200 in 1986 to 278 in 1988 – despite the fact that the Society's membership fee was raised from Rs 100 in 1986 to Rs 200 in 1988. To me, these statistics reflect the success and growing popularity of the Society among the members of the profession.

The Quaid-i-Azam Lecture and Invited lectures are outstanding events of our Annual General Meetings. The Quaid-i-Azam Lecture, instituted by the Society to honour the memory of the Father of the Nation, is annually delivered by a leading scholar of international repute, based on his seminal research work reflecting intellectual excellence and a deep concern for the uplift of the under-privileged. Four such lectures have already been delivered and the fifth one will be delivered the day after tomorrow by Professor Mahmood Hasan Khan of Simon Fraser University, on 'Development of Rural People: Myths and Approaches'.

The Invited lectures are another attractive feature of the Society's Annual General Meetings. These lectures, delivered by prominent development economists/ demographers from abroad, focus almost exclusively on the social and economic problems of Pakistan, and their topics relate to the broader theme selected for the particular Annual General Meeting at which those lectures are delivered. As the printed programme would show, four such lectures would be delivered at this Fifth Annual General Meeting.

Another important activity of the Society is to organize lectures in Development Economics which are delivered by development economists of established international stature. So far, 11 outstanding economists, demographers and social scientists including Nobel Laureate Prof. Fritz Machlup, well-known world authorities like Prof. John W. Mellor and Prof. Vernon W. Ruttan, and specialists on Pakistan like Prof. Mahmood Hasan Khan, Prof. Gustav F. Papanek, Prof. Ansley J. Coale and Prof. Gunnar Fløystad, as the following listing shows, have been invited to deliver such lectures.

A. Lectures Already Published:

- (i) Fritz Machlup.
- (ii) Fritz Machlup.
- (iii) Ismail Sirageldin.

Lecture on the Theory of Human Capital (1982).
Lecture on International Monetary Issues (1983).
Lecture on Population Policies and Development in the '80s (1984).

Lecture I.

"Population Policies and Development in the '80s: Issues and Puzzles".

- Lecture II. "Population Policies and Development: Puzzles in Middle Eastern Migration".
- (iv) Mahmood Hasan Khan.
Lecture I. "Agrarian Classes".
Lecture II. "Agrarian Transition".
- (v) Prof. Gustav F. Papanek.
Lecture I.
Lecture II.
Lecture III.
- (vi) Professor Vernon W. Ruttan:
Lecture I. "Technical Change and Agricultural Development".
Lecture II. "Towards a Theory of Induced Institutional Change".
- (vii) Professor John W. Mellor:
Lecture I.
Lecture II.
"Agricultural Growth and Employment".
"Research Needs for an Agricultural and Employment Growth Strategy".
- (viii) Professor Ansley J. Coale.
Lecture I.
Lecture II.
(in *The Pakistan Development Review*)
"The Demographic Transition and its Implications for Population Trends in the LDCs".
"Population Growth and Economic Development – Coale and Hoover Re-examined after 25 Years".

B. Lectures in various Stages of Publication:

1. Professor Gunnar Fløystad:
"Free Trade Versus Protection: Static and Dynamic Aspects" (Two lectures)

2. Professor Winfried von Urff:
Lecture I. "The Role of Agriculture in Economic Development".
Lecture II. "World Food Situation: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow".
- C. Lectures Withdrawn by their Lecturers:
1. Professor Jagdesh N. Bhagwati:
Lecture I. "Development Economics: Lessons from Post-war Experience".
Lecture II. "The New International Economic Order: What Next?".
 2. Professor Stephen E. Guisinger:
"Investment Incentive Policies in Developing Countries: A Comparative Analysis".

The contents of 15 lectures delivered by 7 of these authorities covering various aspects of economic development have already been published either in the form of "Lectures in Development Economics" or as articles in *The Pakistan Development Review*. The lectures of the remaining two lecturers, are in various stages of publication and the lectures by other two have been withdrawn from publication by their lecturers. Like the Annual General Meetings, the lectures in Development Economics are also attended by a large number of scholars, professional economists, demographers and policy-makers. These activities of the Society have produced a fair volume of high-quality and internationally acknowledged economics literature.

Ever since its inception, the Society has been trying to hold essay competitions with a view to encouraging young economists to try for professional excellence, and to award gold medals to scholars for outstanding contributions in the general area of Development Economics. However, our preoccupation with other activities of the Society and our concentration on putting the Society on a truly stable foundation rendered it impossible for us to devote our time and attention to these two objectives of the Society. Now that the formative years of the Society are over, we are in a position to attend to them. We have already set up committees for selecting suitable topics for the proposed essay competitions and also to nominate scholars, from amongst the Society's members, for the award of gold medals. We hope that it will be possible for us to hold an essay competition and award a gold medal some time this year.

In the end, it is my very pleasant duty to acknowledge the help of such institution, scholars and colleagues as made it possible for the Society and me to function smoothly and to achieve the success that we have been blessed with. Mr Ghulam

Ishaq Khan the Founding Patron-in-Chief of the Society and our Chairperson at this session, has been a source of inestimable inspiration and support to both the Pakistan Institute of Development Economics and its sibling, the Pakistan Society of Development Economists. His gracious acceptance of our invitation to inaugurate this Fifth Annual General Meeting speaks volumes for his keen interest in the welfare of the Society and for his faith in the usefulness and efficaciousness of the Pakistan Society of Development Economists. Words fail me to thank him adequately.

I must also acknowledge the dynamic and inspiring leadership of Professor Syed Nawab Haider Naqvi, who has helped the Society to grow under his loving parental care: I shall be failing in my duty if I do not express my gratitude to all PIDE colleagues for their assistance in the organization of this meeting. I am particularly grateful to Dr Sarfraz Khan Qureshi, Dr A. R. Kemal, Dr M. Irfan, Dr Khwaja Sarmad, Miss Shamim A. Sahibzada, Dr Nadeem A. Burney, Dr Sohail J. Malik, Dr Ashfaque Hasan Khan, Dr Moazam Mahmood, Dr Soofia Mumtaz, Mr Abdul Hameed, Mr S. I. H. Meshhedi, Mr Annice Mahmood, Mr Ifraz Abbasi, Mr Mohammad Aslam, Mr Zafar Javed Naqvi, Mr M. Shafiq, Mr Liaquat Ali, Mr M. Aslam, Mr Sakhawat Ali Sheikh, Mr Mohammad Afzal, Rana Mukhtar Ahmad, Mr S. M. Mohsin Bukhari, Mr Tahir Hasan Butt, Mr Mohammad Hussain, Mr Amjad Hussain, Mr Laiq Shah, Mr Ghulam Younis Mr M. Azhar, Mr S. Shamim H. Zaidi, Mr S. Naeem Arshad, Mr Shakeel Ahmad, Mr A. Hameed, Mr Chengaz Khan, Mr Raza Ali, Mr Mumtaz Hussain and Mr Dawood for their help in organizational and publication matters. Of course, the secretariat of the Society under the supervision of Mr Ashiq Hussain, Mr Rafiq Safdar and Mr Naseer Akhtar has done a yeoman's job and deserves our full praise.

The Ford Foundation (USA) and the Friedrich-Ebert Foundation (West Germany), by providing generous funds for meeting all the expenses of some of the international scholars attending our Annual General Meetings, have been of invaluable help to the Society, and I wish to take this opportunity to thank them on behalf of the Society and the PIDE. This year, as in the last year, Dr Peter Pintz of the Friedrich-Ebert Foundation, has been instrumental in securing his Foundation's full financial support for all the scholars delivering Invited Lectures at this meeting. I would like to place on record our deep appreciation for his unstinted support and full co-operation.

But, my special thanks are reserved for you all who have gathered here to make this meeting a success with your valuable contributions, deliberations, comments and suggestions. We have tried to provide as many facilities to you as possible, but, if despite our efforts, any inconvenience is caused to you, may I request you to graciously overlook them. Of course, your suggestions for future improvements would be most welcome.