

SWARAJYA

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INDO - PAKISTAN AGREEMENT

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INDIA HAS once again demonstrated her desire for peace and amity with her neighbours by responding to the Pakistan Prime Minister's call for improvement in Indo-Pakistan relationship and reaching agreement on some major issues. The expeditious manner in which the agreement was concluded at Islamabad in three days from 12th to 14th May reinforces the view that there is no Indo-Pakistan issue, however complex or acrimonious, that cannot be solved with goodwill and mutual accommodation.

It may be recalled that in the wake of India's recognition of Bangladesh, diplomatic relations between the two countries were snapped on 6th December, 1971, and that the two countries were utilising the good offices of the Swiss Embassy for looking after their interests and communicating with each other. After the hijacking of the Indian Airlines Fokker Friendship aircraft and its destruction in Lahore, India banned overflights by Pakistan on Indian territory. When Pakistan preferred a complaint against India to the International Civil Aviation Organisation, India filed a counter-claim against Pakistan including, among other things, damages for the destruction of the Indian aircraft. The Simla agreement of July, 1972, which was hailed as a positive step towards normalisation of Indo-Pakistan relationship failed to justify expectations. Though India released over 90,000

prisoners of war and returned the occupied territories in pursuance of the Simla Agreement, Pakistan's response was sullen and there was hardly any improvement either in communication or in trade as envisaged. Even as late as May last year, Pakistan declined to withdraw her complaint from the ICAO, which, India insisted, was a condition precedent for any negotiations on overflights. Nevertheless, when the Prime Minister of Pakistan opened the door for negotiations by resiling from the position he had taken on the question of withdrawing Pakistan's complaint to the ICAO and stated in his letter to the Prime Minister of India dated 27th March that, "in order to impart to the normalisation process the impetus that it needs and in keeping with our sincere desire to improve relations with India, we would be prepared to go to the length of withdrawing Pakistan's case from the ICAO", the Prime Minister of India responded quickly and generously. It is possible that in the context of the change in Bangladesh administration, Pakistan's need for an air-link with that country is more urgent and that once over-flights have been agreed to, the progress towards normalisation of relationship might slow down. It will be naive to imagine that either the Prime Minister or the External Affairs Ministry had not contemplated such possibilities before taking the decision to resume negotiations and reach

accord. By readily accepting Mr. Bhutto's invitation for resumption of talks and discussion, Mrs. Gandhi has demonstrated to the world India's readiness to normalise her relationship with her neighbours and work for peace in the region.

The recent agreement provides for the withdrawal of Pakistan's complaint and India's counter-claim from the International Civil Aviation Organisation by a joint letter and the resumption of air-links and overflights simultaneously. As a matter of fact, Mr. Bhutto overflew Indian territory on his way to North Korea on 19th May demonstrating to the world that the two countries are keen on normalisation of their relations sincerely and expeditiously. The agreement does not provide for transit traffic between India and Pakistan for goods transported by road. However, such goods will be brought to the Wagha-Attari border by the respective countries and transhipped to the other side, restoring the rail link between the two countries. Both the countries have agreed to make arrangements for warehousing, bonding and customs clearance on their respective sides. The agreement also provides for repatriation of detenus and others still remaining untraced. Finally, India and Pakistan have agreed to re-establish full diplomatic representation, to exchange envoys very shortly and to grant each other's Missions the courtesies and facilities in accord-

ance with the Vienna Convention on diplomatic relations.

Pakistan's change in attitude towards India and its desire for good-neighbourly relations have always been suspect, but, on this occasion, the world events and the shifting currents of international relationship point to the fact that Pakistan may have been influenced by her friends to modify her attitude and seek a durable

friendship with India. The neighbouring countries have welcomed the accord and hailed it as a step towards peace in the region. The United States and Iran, two close friends of Pakistan, have given unstinted praises for the agreement. One may, therefore, hope that the present agreement will lead to greater co-operation and understanding and freer flow of trade and commerce between the two countries.

THE 'BRAIN DRAIN' DEBATE

S. NARAYANASWAMY

WE HAVE discussed 'Brain Drain' to the point of creating the suspicion abroad that we have a limited supply of brains in this country and a sizable ratio thereof presently functions outside the country. What time we are discussing the theme in all its nuances, young boys and girls of fine calibre are continuing to besiege the visa-issuing-cells of Consular Offices clamouring to go abroad and waving admission letters from well-known British or American universities or from employers who are impressed by their academic performances or credentials. The Consulates, Embassies and High Commissions are not particularly reticent about their countries' views — namely, they are already choking with the permitted quota of overseas students from India and are not keen on more Indians going over. The latter-day increase in the number of filters and forms, indemnities or guarantees they have introduced as part of visa procedure, make their Governments' views far clearer than anything the Con-

suls may be caught saying in an unguarded moment even in private conversation.

TWO ASSUMPTIONS

Our talk about 'Brain Drain' involves two queer assumptions and one major failure to act purposefully. The first assumption is that too many people of high intellectual calibre have left this country and presumably those who are left may be more or less deemed the unusable left-overs. Every time an Indian abroad gets a national award of the emigree country or an international award; every time his special work or research-finding is splashed by a zealous newspaper or periodical, we rejoice for three minutes, but keep talking of 'Brain Drain' for the following three days; with members of Parliament shooting off interpellations and supplementaries — which sometimes create the impression that the country has been pumped dry of brain-power and technological talent. Nothing is farther from the truth, but this talk has, nevertheless, gone on for too long.

LACK OF ENOUGH OPPORTUNITIES

It is good to remember that for every one young man who has gone abroad and has had colourful feathers stuck in his cap by the University or the Research Centre he works in, there must be more than 99 people of similar calibre in India, who are opportunity-starved and who, had they a chance, would acquit themselves equally creditably. Only we have a peculiar perceptivity in such matters — that we need external

opera-glasses to locate or identify high merit in our inconspicuous looking un-fussy young people — particularly if they are modestly endowed with the world's good. I am aware such an admission will make many let off a scream of remonstrance. But it is well-known that a majority of literary-minded Indians started reading Rabindranath Tagore's poems and plays with great avidity after the Nobel Prize was awarded to him. This was more than half-a-century ago. We have been a free country for about 29 years. The improvement in our receptivity and in our collective concern in the matter of recognizing merit when it functions within the country has, it will be admitted, been minimal. Nearer home, the renowned Astro-Physicist, Prof. Chandrasekhar, who is today a full-fledged American citizen, despite his early notable academic record, was offered a secondary job carrying a modest three-figure salary at Kodaikanal Observatory, which helped him to decide on pastures remote for his great work. We have put a great deal of horse-power into the outcry that eminent men should be asked to come back.

TALENT MUST BE PICKED UP AND USED

What is important today is not to try and dislodge those who are well-berthed elsewhere. They do not have facilities for carrying on Fundamental or Applied Research in India to correspond to what they are currently used to, if they took us at our word and came. On the other hand, we have to do more diligent talent identification among our boys and girls who are still hoping for domestic opportunities, before talent gets armed with a visa and unobtrusively quits the country. Despite all this tedious and platitudinous debate on 'Brain Drain', we have done little to provide to our boys and girls of undoubted merit, the research or job opportunities they so frantically seek. Despite expansions of some horizons, the meritorious but disheartened numbers within the country are on the increase and feel bottled-up. In our Research Laboratories and Centres in India, there are

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