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Conflict Resolution Challenges in Sudan and India: A Comparative Analysis of Two Case Studies

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**CONFLICT RESOLUTION CHALLENGES IN SUDAN AND INDIA:
A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF TWO CASE STUDIES**

BY

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A THESIS

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2006

In Loving Memory

Of

My father

D. O. K. Agonga

(I know you're always watching over your children)

For

*Always stressing on the importance of Education. I hope I've
made you and my family proud and hope to continue doing so by
the Lord's Grace.*

Because We Can, We Must

..... Bono

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

To my Mother

All the love, sacrifices, and life you've given me, made me who I am today – Thank you!

My Siblings and All my family members

Your love, support, diehard believe in me, makes me who I'd love to be - Thank you!

The Mesham family and Mishi

Love, support, faith, believe, trust - All of it, saw me through with less angst daily –
Thank you!

Dr. Michaela Hertkorn

Your unwavering support and believe in me, in stress, panic, confusion and emptiness –
Forever Thankful!

Dr. Patricia Kuchon

Knowing you was truly a blessing; your great wisdom made me a stronger person
– Thank you!

All my friends

Parpeter, Suzanne, Ruth, Carmen et al., your love, support and believe in me helped me
happily trudge on, through it all
– Thank you

Thank you Lord for ALL the blessings!

ABSTRACT

The research focuses on two countries, one in Africa, one in Asia with regard to the challenge of conflict resolution. Sudan and India arguably share similar characteristics, such as domestic cultural differences, their unity in diversity, diverse religious beliefs and some common historic experiences. These issues will be explored and discussed in detail.

The thesis compares conflict resolution approaches applied in theory and practice to internal disputes and intra-state conflicts in both, Sudan and India.

Some of the questions explored are: How do actors (governments, non-state actors, civil society, nongovernmental organizations etc.) address issues that may cause or aggravate conflict, such as the disparity between society's so called 'haves and have-nots'? Does the existence of different languages matter? How does ethnicity affect intra-state conflict(s) in Sudan and India? What about 'culture' and 'identity' as factors for intra-state conflict?¹ What are other, alternative explanations for causes of conflict (such as leadership, good governance, or the absence of it, external factors etc)?

Given the similarities of historic experience in Sudan and India – both, for example were former British colonies – this cross-continental comparative analysis aims at drawing important conclusions, whether and to which extent history leaves a lasting mark on the ability of countries to deal with internal conflicts in a more or less constructive way.

¹ Terminology relevant to this thesis will be defined further in chapter 2, under Methodology – section 2.1

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>Heading/Sub-heading</u>	<u>Page No:</u>
ABSTRACT	4
TABLE OF CONTENTS	5
INTRODUCTION	6
1.1 Explaining Conflict in an African and Asian Context	6
1.2 Caste System in Contemporary India	9
2. METHODOLOGY	10
2.1 Terminology Taken into Consideration	10
2.2 Theory Taken into Consideration	13
2.3 Brief Historical Background	17
2.3.1 Sudan	17
2.3.2 India	20
3. UNITS OF ANALYSIS	22
3.1. Conceptual Framework - Ethnicity, Identity and State	22
3.2 Incorporation of Religion and Military Rule in State Governance	24
3.3 Nature and Patterns of Ethnic Conflicts	26
3.4 The Nature of Governance and the Political Systems	31
3.5 Good Peace or Bad Peace?	35
4. CONCLUSION	30
5. OUTLOOK	49
5.1 Sudan	39
5.1.2 India	41
6. BIBLIOGRAPHY	45-48
7. APPENDICES	49
7. POLITICAL MAPS OF INDIA & SUDAN	49
7.1. Map of Sudan	50
7.1.2 Statistics - Republic of Sudan	51
7.1.3 Map of India	52
7.1.4 Statistics - Republic of India	53

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Explaining Conflict in African and Asian Contexts

With regard to both Sudan in Africa and India in Asia, there are two suggestions of probable causes of conflict that emphasize the relative significance of class and ethnicity as sources of group mobilization and conflict. However, it cannot and should not be assumed a priori that intra-state conflicts in Sudan, as the Sub-Saharan African example, and within India, as the Asian example, occur mainly along lines of communal or ethnic cleavage, even when opposing groups invoke communal symbols. Otherwise, it cannot be assumed that communally based conflict is concealed class conflict. It is an open question, whether conflict derives from communal identifications, economic interest, political associations, or some combination thereof.² Very good: one can see the made changes right away!

An important task is to identify theory that is relevant in one exemplary African context, and that is applicable to the Indian context. Theory in that sense helps to specify the circumstances, in which different sources of group formation and inter-group hostility play a crucial role, and how they affect the processes and outcomes of conflict.

There are arguably various key elements of conflict in Sub-Saharan Africa, and India too, that can be used to examine the impact of conflict on poverty. These seven key elements concern the scale of conflict; uneven social and geographical impact; historical variations; embedded ness of conflict in social, economic and political structures;

² Deng, Francis M., Zartman, William I., Eds., "Conflict Resolution In Africa" (Washington D.C., 1991), pg., 157

transformations in the political economy of war; survival of the state; and the global and regional interconnectedness.³

Long-term conflicts seem to be common in Africa and thus cannot neatly be separated from peacetime periods and their intra-society development. The Republic of Sudan according to the *Ecumenical Review* article; can be described as a microcosm of Africa in terms of its ethnic composition and socio-cultural identity. Cultural pluralism in the Sudan is reflected in the scattered linguistic and culturally autonomous ethnic communities, which emphasize common descent, customs and memories of a shared history, and which share similar physical characteristics/features. Distinguishable from that is an arguably dominant Islamic-Arab community which claims, its values and life style as the core culture of all Sudan.⁴ As will be explained below, a political leader with so-called sectarian roots and sectarian aspirations would in all likelihood work for sectional interests, thus increasing the risk for tensions between citizens that are either on 'insiders' or 'outsiders' of the power circle.

India in the words of *A.N.Panda* is a plural society with many vertical and horizontal divisions on the grounds of birth, religion, culture, tradition, language, and economic condition. Every group in India; seems to have its own distinguishable/identifiable its own peculiar culture, tradition, religion, dialect and lifestyle. It is this distinctiveness that makes different groups consider themselves as being different from other groups and that makes groups want to preserve their separate identity.⁵ This, according to *Panda*, is what arguably makes the Indian society a conglomeration of several thousand identities. It is this very issue of identity formation

³ Luckham, R., Ahmed, I., Muggah, R. and White, S. 2001, 'Conflict and Poverty in Sub-Saharan Africa: An Assessment of the Issues and Evidence.' IDS Working Paper 128, Institute of Development Studies, Brighton

⁴ The *Ecumenical Review*, "Ethnicity and Nationalism in the Sudan", pg., 207-8

⁵ A.N. Panda, "Politics of Ethnicity and Regionalism and the State in India", *Ethnicity, Identity and the state in South Asia* (Colorado Springs: International Academic Publishers Ltd., 2002) pg 31

that led the author of this paper to ask the crucial question, to what extent approaches that were applied to the study of intra-state conflict, by conflict studies scholars throughout the 1990s, are of relevance to understand today's geo-political and geo-strategic challenges.

Evans and Newnham on the other hand break down nationalism in two. First, is to identify an ideology and secondly to describe a sentiment. "As an ideology," the author's state, "nationalism seeks to identify a behavioral entity – the nation, and thereafter to pursue certain political and cultural goals on behalf of it, e.g., national self-determination. In the second usage of nationalism, it is a sentiment of loyalty towards a nation, which is shared by people. The elements of cohesion are provided by factors such as language, religion, shared historical experience, physical contiguity."⁶

The author of this paper will also argue that India is still a traditional society, where in addition to the trends of globalisation in contemporary India⁷, so-called primordial characteristics mentioned above still play a significant role. Further, the ascribing status of an individual determines his membership in a social group (within the caste system), thus rendering, the complex problem of ethnicity arguably more complex.⁸

⁶ Evans, Graham and Jeffrey Newnham, "The Penguin Dictionary of International Relations" (New York: The Penguin Group, 1998) pg 346

⁷ Contemporary India as used in this research is India characterized by globalization, but also by primordial characteristics

⁸ A.N. Panda, "Politics of Ethnicity and Regionalism and the State in India", Ethnicity, Identity and the state in South Asia (Colorado Springs: International Academic Publishers Ltd., 2002) pg 31

1.2 Caste System in Contemporary India

A caste system is a social system where people are ranked into groups based on heredity within rigid systems of social stratification. Nowhere is caste better exemplified by degree of complexity and systematic operation than in India. The Indian term for caste is *Jat* and also *Varna*, which generally designates a group varying in size from a handful to many thousands.⁹

Infact, *Lotus Sculpture* actually denies that true caste systems are found outside India. The caste is a closed group whose members are severely restricted in their choice of occupation and degree of social participation. Marriage outside the caste is prohibited. Social status is determined by the caste of one's birth and may only rarely be transcended. Certain religious minorities may voluntarily constitute a quasi-caste within a society, but they are less apt to be characterized by cultural distinctiveness than by their self-imposed social segregation.¹⁰

However, Indians seem to have become more flexible in their caste system customs. In general urban people in India are less strict about the caste system than people in rural areas. Sometimes in villages or in the cities there are violent clashes, which, are connected to caste tensions. Sometimes a so-called higher caste would strike a lower caste that dares to uplift its status. Sometimes the so-called lower caste tends to get back to its next higher caste.¹¹

According to *Luckham* and *Muggah*, conflicts cannot be seen as exogenous to relief and development activities. As will be shown below, conflicts produce new forms of vulnerabilities and inequality, which need to be dealt with in policy responses to foster post- war reconstruction and conflict prevention. For instance, armed conflicts change

⁹ "Castes in India" http://www.lotussculpture.com/bronze_sculpture_caste.htm

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid.

power relations, create new economic incentives and reorder society, especially gender relations. Also, donor interventions and humanitarian aid in war torn societies have sometimes reinforced the negative impacts of conflict. The US intervention in Somalia for instance, suffered leakages that reinforced the war economy.¹²

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 Terminology Taken into Consideration

The definition of the following terminology was crucial to the overall line of argument of this paper. Therefore a thorough explanation is given for a clear and concise understanding according to the author's usage in the paper.

Ethnic nationalism as defined by *Graham Evans* and *Jeffrey Newnham* refers to the sentiment of belonging to a group identified by ties of ethnicity as well as, or in preference to those of the nation state.¹³ To the authors, most states are on the one hand in fact multi-national or multi-ethnic, leading to potential ethnic nationalism. On the other hand, *Evans* and *Newnham* point out that ethnic nationalism may lead to expressions of irredentism as a sentiment, or as an ideology or secession as political goals, in which case it becomes a movement or political tendency,¹⁴ as are the cases of both Southern Sudan as well as in the Northern and North Western parts of India.

The term 'ethnic' or 'ethno-political' conflict and violence as defined by *Padhi* and *Baral*, denotes fighting over issues related to cultural identity. This can include

¹²Luckham, R., Ahmed, I., Muggah, R. and White, S. 2001, 'Conflict and Poverty in Sub-Saharan Africa: An Assessment of the Issues and Evidence.' IDS Working Paper 128, Institute of Development Studies, Brighton

¹³ Evans, Graham and Jeffrey Newnham, "The Penguin Dictionary of International Relations" (New York: The Penguin Group, 1998) pg 154

¹⁴ Ibid. pg 154

disputes regarding group identity, nationalism, language, religion, citizenship and other aspects of culture such as myths, traditions, and norms. However, ethnicity in general refers to certain significant social and cultural traits, which in subjective terms separate one group from the other. It may relate to racial, linguistic, religious and other socio-cultural distinctiveness of the group in question.¹⁵

In addition, as the *Ecumenical Review* points out, nationalism, though often portrayed by liberal theorists as a universal ideology emphasizing equality and human rights, nationalism can plausibly be seen as a kind of particular, which denies non-citizens or culturally deviant citizens full human rights and in extreme cases, even denies their membership in the community of humans.¹⁶

According to the *Ecumenical Review*, it is however argued that nationalism ultimately needs to be recognized/characterized as a particular form of ideology, since it defines cultural and social boundaries on behalf of a community, while excluding those who do not fit in. Notably, nationalism requires cultural uniformity in certain respects, with the national radio, television and newspapers mobilizing to influence public discourse. The central problem is that nationalism disqualifies culturally distinctive groups from full participation while simultaneously promoting their assimilation by its tendency towards cultural homogenization and by framing every political question from the perspective of the state.¹⁷

Evans and *Newnham* further define conflict as “a social condition that arises when two or more actors pursue mutually exclusive or mutually incompatible goals. To the

¹⁵ Padhi, Subhendu Sekhar and J.K. Baral, “Ethnicity, interaction and modes of conflict: A case profile of the Koya tribals and the Bengali refugee settlers in Malkangiri (Orissa)”, *Ethnicity, Identity and the State in South Asia* (Colorado Springs: International Academic Publishers Ltd, 2002) pg 291

¹⁶ The *Ecumenical Review*, “Ethnicity and Nationalism in the Sudan”, pg., 207

¹⁷ The *Ecumenical Review*, “Ethnicity and Nationalism in the Sudan”, pg., 207

authors, conflict behavior can be observed as war – both as a threatened outcome and as an existential reality, with bargaining behavior short of the violent idiom. In addition, conflict can also serve positive functions, specifically consolidating group cohesion and enhancing the position of a leadership, thus making it chimerical to think that conflict can be eliminated.”¹⁸

However, *Coleman* and *Deutsche* define conflict as a naturally occurring phenomenon with both constructive and destructive potential. Engaging in conflict can generate anxiety in people who associate it with negative or violent outcomes (i.e., fight or flight). The authors state that a constructive process of conflict resolution is similar to an effective, cooperative problem-solving process. Thus perceiving a conflict as a mutual problem to be solved greatly increases the possibility of satisfying, constructive outcomes for all concerned. There frequently seems to be a two-way relationship between effective cooperation and constructive conflict resolution. Good cooperative relations facilitate the constructive management of conflict; the ability to handle constructively the inevitable conflicts that occur during cooperation facilitates the survival and deepening of cooperative relations.¹⁹

Meanwhile, the *Ahfad University for women* in Omdurman defines conflict resolution as a process of decision-making whose objectives are to handle, manage, settle or resolve conflict in ways that enhance the values of human rights, democracy and peace, the international relations sees it another way.²⁰ These authors look at conflict resolution as a highly challenging approach to the analysis of the causes and solutions to

¹⁸ Evans, Graham and Jeffrey Newnham, “The Penguin Dictionary of International Relations” (New York: The Penguin Group, 1998) pg 93

¹⁹ Coleman, Peter T and Morton Deutsche, “Co-operation and Conflict Resolution”, The International Centre for Co-operation and Conflict Resolution: Teachers college, Columbia University http://www.knowgangs.com/school_resources/menu_022.htm

²⁰ “Culture of Peace: The concept within the Sudanese context”, Durria Mansour El-Hussein, School of Family Sciences, Ahfad University for women, Omdurman, pg. 16

conflict situations. Further, in order to achieve resolution, it is thought necessary for the parties to redefine their relationships in such a way as to perceive either that they can realize their goals without conflict, or that they can redefine their relationship so that their goals no longer conflict.²¹

Thus, the aftermath of conflict resolution – peace, is the existence of the absence of conflict, and usually increases the state of harmony between people where law and order exist. This in turn makes peace a prerequisite for sustainable development that is usually desperately needed in post conflict areas. Through development, these nations may pass from a stage of poverty, backwardness and ignorance to a stage of hope and decent living; from a society of unemployment and hunger to a healthy advanced society in which peace and security prevail. This entails aspects such as, accepting differences and diversity amongst the different groups, as well as not imposing one's thoughts, beliefs and feelings but instead striving to share them peacefully and non-violently.²²

2.2 Theory Taken into Consideration

The context in which conflict occurs is another area that has to be examined. Conflict theory is important in this regard because it enables the reader to compare, analyze and understand better the author's conclusion after all the past writings on India and Sudan and what they really are today, in addition to their possible future outlook. Today's Africa, arguably more than any other continent, is afflicted by material scarcity and economic stagnation, and although ironically, some parts of Africa are actually quite rich in natural resources. However, most theories of civil conflict and conflict

²¹ Evans, Graham and Jeffrey Newnham, "The Penguin Dictionary of International Relations" (New York: The Penguin Group, 1998) pg 94

²² Culture of Peace: The concept within the Sudanese context", Durria Mansour El-Hussein, School of Family Sciences, Ahfad University for women, Omdurman, pg. 16

management assume that societies have slack resources that efficient governments can mobilize to deal with social problems, demands, and threats, both internal and external. Political violence can be forestalled or suppressed only if governments make effective use of their authority to reallocate and deploy resources.²³

In addition, group conflict as another aspect of conflict theories, usually involves the mobilization of people based on several overlapping identities: ethnicity and class, class and political association, ethnicity and political association – sometimes all of the above three mentioned. Political association is often the key element: demonstrations by workers, riots by ethnic minorities, and secessionist movements typically follow from mobilization by leaders who make selective political appeals to communal and class groups and use the organizational tactics of modern political movements.²⁴

According to the British Department for International Development (DFID), there are four main categories explaining so-called mass political violence generally and more specifically in relation to revolutions. First are so-called volition theories that emphasize the importance of discontents, cultural and ideological dispositions, and rational choices in the making of political violence and revolutions. According to the authors in question, of these theories, the state of mind of prospective leaders and participants are the critical variables, though there are sharp differences among them in the relative importance they give to deprivation, alienation, political beliefs and personal and strategic calculations.²⁵

Structural theories on the other hand, place/put causal emphasis on tensions created by patterns of social relations. Some of these theories emphasize disruption of

²³ Deng, Francis M., Zartman, William I., Eds., "Conflict Resolution In Africa" (Washington D.C., 1991), pg., 157-8

²⁴ Deng, Francis M., Zartman, William I., Eds., "Conflict Resolution In Africa" (Washington D.C., 1991), pg. 177-8

²⁵ http://www.grc-exchange.org/g_themes/#international

relations between value systems and environment, characterizing disturbances as 'dysfunction' or 'disequilibrium'. For example, the contradiction between the most educated in the country, in this case Africans/Indians and the desire for the so-called high-status positions is an example of a widespread 'dysfunction'. In most of these cases, the achievement of a set of values is frustrated by material and political constraints.²⁶

Political process theories explain political violence by reference to the characteristics of political institutions and those who challenge them. These theorists treat revolution as 'the ultimate' political conflict and the magnitude of resources that interest groups bring to bear – to the point where normal political processes for conflict mediation and resolution fail, and the political system is violently split apart.²⁷

The most general approach to the explanation of group violence based on communal cleavages is to interpret it within the context of broader theories of political violence. For instance, according to the DFID article,

*“a basic principle of volitional and structural theories as applied to communal conflict is the emphasis on inequalities among groups. The greater the inequalities, the more likely the disadvantaged groups are to take collective action. This is particularly likely if the inequalities are reinforced by custom and legal barriers established by dominant groups”.*²⁸

Applied to the (Sub-Saharan) Africa context it can be observed in the form of elites' desire to obtain and remain in power at all costs. In India, the same feature seems to be displayed in form of a the caste system whereby those in the lower caste can never advance and outdo the higher caste groups, no matter what the case/issue may be independently from the situation. Denying the opportunity to reduce inequalities is a particularly potent source of grievance(s).

²⁶ Political systems: Political analysis
http://www.grc-exchange.org/g_themes/#international

²⁷ Political systems: Political analysis
http://www.grc-exchange.org/g_themes/#international

²⁸ Ibid. pg., 181

According to *Luckham* and *Muggah*, a thorough understanding of the causes and dynamics of armed conflict in a particular country is vital for designing governance approaches that will not exacerbate violence. Conflict is inherent to all societies and arises when two or more societal groups pursue incompatible objectives. It is a dynamic process that leads to changes, positive or negative. Certain forms of conflict are essential for developmental change, such as democratic debate in parliament. However, violent conflicts occur when the institutions that manage conflict in society (such as political systems, informal institutions, or the justice sector) are no longer able to accommodate different interest groups through negotiation, compromise and grievance resolution.²⁹

The same authors further state that different analysts accord varying importance to the following groups of causal factors: inequalities (political, economic, social, 'grievances'), identities (mobilizations of groups with shared social identities), political factors (crises of state legitimacy, weak state institutions), economic factors (economic motivations for engagement in conflict, 'greed'), political economy (where access to resources is determined by violence), international factors (trade, regional instability, development assistance).³⁰

Note should be taken that these factors do not act alone and it is rather the dynamics, or interplay, between the factors that is important. For example, political and economic inequalities can enable elites to manipulate cultural identities into violent conflict. And even though natural resources may not cause the conflict, they may prolong it, and are often central to the political economy of war.

To *Luckham* and *Muggah*, poverty and inequality are often cited as both causes and outcomes of conflict. Whether or not conflict becomes violent may depend on the

²⁹ Luckham, R., Ahmed, I., Muggah, R. and White, S. 2001, 'Conflict and Poverty in Sub-Saharan Africa: An Assessment of the Issues and Evidence.' IDS Working Paper 128, Institute of Development Studies, Brighton.

³⁰ Ibid

type of inequality and the way it is created. However, grievances can become particularly severe where there are 'horizontal inequalities' between the opportunities and access to resources of different identity groups. The governance causes of horizontal inequalities can include unequal legal and citizenship rights, or discriminatory public spending and services.³¹

The two author's further stress that conflict is a major determinant of poverty; and poverty remains the major course of conflict. Armed conflict has affected over half of the countries in Sub-Saharan Africa over the last twenty years. Analysis of the linkages between conflict and poverty remain inadequate, including the effect of conflict on economic, social and political structures. Understanding these linkages is essential to bring peace and development.³²

2.3 Brief Historical Background

2.3.1 Sudan

Historically, Sudan's internal problems began under colonial rule when the present political boundaries of Sudan were demarcated and became recognized internationally. Exploiting the differences between South and North, the British colonial power, as superior partners in the dual regime with Egypt, decided to administer Southern Sudan separately from the North with only high-level political and administrative contacts, while barring social, cultural, commercial, educational, and even personal contacts. When the policy of separate administration was no longer useful for British policy/colonial rule, Southern Sudan was nominally integrated into the national

³¹ Luckham, R., Ahmed, I., Muggah, R. and White, S. 2001, 'Conflict and Poverty in Sub-Saharan Africa: An Assessment of the Issues and Evidence.' IDS Working Paper 128, Institute of Development Studies, Brighton

³² Ibid.

administration.³³ In the words of *Ahmad Alawad Sikainga*, contrary to his above given information,

*“it is a Northern elite post-independence propaganda, as the British Empire did not create the political, cultural and religious differences between the peoples of the South and the North. In fact, the British were always in a serious quandary over what to do with the South, whether to cut it off from the rest of the country or keep the country united with a special political arrangement for the South.”*³⁴

The author further states that, instead, the British Empire relinquished their rule in the Sudan without doing either. Thus in the light of political relations that developed between the South and North after Sudanese independence, it seemed plausible to Sudan’s Northern elites to claim that the British had done greater political damage to the Southern Sudan than the North had done.³⁵

Sudan arguably entered the 21st century mired in not one, but many civil wars. What had been characterised in the 1980s as a war between North and South, between Muslims and Christians, and between ‘Arabs’ and ‘Africans’, has after nearly two decades of hostilities, broken the bounds of any North-South conflict. Fighting has spread into theatres outside the southern Sudan and beyond the Sudan’s borders. Not only are Muslims fighting Muslims, but Non-Muslim Africans are fighting Africans too. A war once described as being fought over scarce resources is now being waged for the total control of abundant oil reserves. The fact that the civil war, which has been composed of these previously described interlocking struggles, has continued for so long, far outlasting the international and regional political configurations. At one time, these configurations seemed to direct and define civil war. According to *Douglas Johnson*, this could be a testimony to the intractability of the underlying causes of the Sudanese conflict. There are now a number of declarations by various parties that a lasting peace

³³ Daly, M.W., *Ahmad Alawad Sikainga*, “Civil War in the Sudan” (London: British Academic Press, 1993) pg. 28

³⁴ Daly, M.W., *Ahmad Alawad Sikainga*, “Civil War in the Sudan” (London: British Academic Press, 1993)pg. 28

³⁵ *Ibid.* pg 29

will be achieved only through addressing the ‘root causes’ of the war, but there is as yet no general consensus as to what those root causes are.³⁶

From the perspective in the aftermath of September 11, 2001, the following aspects need to be taken into consideration too. They are of particular geo-political relevance, given Sudan’s strategically important location in Eastern Africa.

According to the 9/11 commission on terrorist attacks upon the United States, in 1989, the regime in Sudan, run by a military faction and an Islamic extremist organization called the National Islamic Front, invited Bin Laden to move there.³⁷ He sent an advance team to Sudan in 1990 and moved there in mid-1991. Bin Laden brought resources to Sudan, building roads and helping finance the government’s war against separatists in the south. In return, he received permission to establish commercial enterprises and an operational infrastructure to support terrorism.³⁸

In Sudan, Bin Laden built upon the Al Qaeda organization he had established back in Afghanistan. Al Qaeda had its own membership roster and a structure of ‘committees’, to guide and oversee such functions as training terrorists, proposing targets, financing operations, and issuing edicts—purportedly grounded in Islamic law—to justify Al Qaeda actions. On the other hand, the impact of September 11 on South Asia has been more momentous than anywhere else in the Asia Pacific with potentially disastrous consequences that would dwarf the terrorist attacks on the United States (U.S.). It has also revealed fundamental contradictions in U.S. foreign policy that have caught American diplomacy between two critical allies in the war against terrorism.³⁹

³⁶ Douglas H. Johnson, “African issues: The root causes of Sudan’s civil wars” (Indiana: Indiana University press 2003) pg xiii

³⁷ 9/11 commission staff statement No. 15 The text as submitted to the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States, 16th June, 2004

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Arun Swamy, “East West Centre Researchers: 9/11 impact on asia: from subtle to significant to potentially disastrous” 09/08/2002, http://www.eastwestcenter.org/events-en-detail.asp?news_ID=129

2.3.2 India

With regard to India as important regional and geo-political player in the aftermath of September 11, 2001, the following has been noted. According to *Arun Swamy*, India was among the first countries to announce complete support for a U.S.-led war on terrorism and Indian intelligence has played an important role in identifying militant Islamist groups. In addition, *Swamy* continues, India charged the U. S. with practicing a double standard on terrorism, demanding world support when the victims were Americans, while ignoring and virtually abetting terrorism against India. However, a pair of high profile terrorist attacks on the state assembly of Indian Kashmir and then on the Indian parliament led India to mobilize militarily along its border with Pakistan.⁴⁰

Swamy further states that "The concern that this could escalate to a full-scale war between two nuclear-armed adversaries has led the U.S. to engage in a continuous diplomatic effort to prevent hostilities from breaking out." The author concludes that, "the impact of 9/11 on South Asia has potential consequences that would be more disastrous than any suffered by the U. S. and last well after the U. S. decides to declare victory and go home. Conversely, the impact of South Asia on U.S. policy after 9/11 has been to rob that policy of the clarity of moral vision President Bush articulated at the outset of the war."⁴¹

Almost all parts of India have been affected by ethnic tensions. Although some groups are active, some are dormant. Some have been marginalized while some are yet to

⁴⁰ Arun Swamy, "East West Centre Researchers: 9/11 impact on asia: from subtle to significant to potentially disastrous" 09/08/2002, http://www.eastwestcenter.org/events-en-detail.asp?news_ID=129

⁴¹ Ibid.

emerge. In some parts it is violent and in some, it is peaceful. In some cases it is open and in some it is latent. Language, religion, economic underdevelopment, vested interests and inefficiency and indifference of central leadership, all play their own role to contribute to ethnic tension in the country – naturally leading to regionalism.⁴²

At the end of colonial rule in India, the leaders of independent India decided that India would be a democratic, socialist and secular country. According to this policy there is a separation between religion and state. Practicing so-called untouchability or discriminating a person based on his caste is legally forbidden. Along with this law the government allows positive discrimination of the depressed classes of India.⁴³

The main problematic conflict areas in India according to *Panda* are the following four; The Kashmir problem, which is a legacy of the partition of India in 1947 on religious grounds; ethnic tension in North-East India is seen on both horizontal and vertical levels, and are often accompanied by violence; also, Punjab in the North-West is another area affected by ethnic tension and regionalism; in the South, people resented the adoption of Hindi as the national language of India, making it the first and perhaps most challenging form of regionalism in post-independent India. An equally important, though not main problem in addition to the previous four mentioned above, is the neglect shown to those areas by their respective state governments.⁴⁴

The following section provides a thorough analysis concerning cores aspects that characterise intra-state conflicts in both Sudan and India, and how their respective governments strive to solve and overcome those problems.

⁴² A.N. Panda, "Politics of Ethnicity and Regionalism and the State in India", *Ethnicity, Identity and the state in South Asia* (Colorado Springs: International Academic Publishers Ltd., 2002) pg 31

⁴³ Aharon Daniel, "Caste System in India", <http://adaniel.tripod.com/modernindia.htm>

⁴⁴ A.N. Panda, "Politics of Ethnicity and Regionalism and the State in India", *Ethnicity, Identity and the state in South Asia* (Colorado Springs: International Academic Publishers Ltd., 2002) pgs 31-35

3. UNITS OF ANALYSIS

3.1. Conceptual Framework - Ethnicity, Identity and State

South Asian societies such as India, typically are multi-structured, except the Maldives. Thus ethnic identities formed in each of these countries are based on the caste, language, religion, race and region. In India, ethnicity, as pointed out earlier, takes shape on the basis of primordial characteristics such as religion, language, race, caste, among others. These characteristics differentiate a particular group from other groups in the society and also determine their status. With regard to India, according to *B.C. Upreti*, ethnicity is situational or contextual, making it multi dimensional that it can be used for a collective action.⁴⁵

Upreti emphasizes that ethnicity in Asia is the manipulation and mobilization of group identity against structured inequalities, induced discriminations or power politics. It may be pointed out here that ethnic mobilization does not take place among disadvantaged or minority groups alone. Ethnicity may also be used by the advantaged groups, in order to pressurize the power structure for the fulfilment of their rising aspirations and expectations. It is thus a purposive mobilization of a group of people.⁴⁶

Ethnic conflict in Asia, thus takes place both at vertical and horizontal levels as the plurality of the society is the result of vertical and horizontal division of the society. The minority ethnic groups resist the dominant group's effort to monopolize the social resources and hamper the interests of the minorities. Both the minority and majority group's strive to control the state and its various machineries because control over state means control over the resources of the society. Consequently, tension between the

⁴⁵ B.C. Upreti, "Ethnicity, identity and state in South Asia: an overview" *Ethnicity, Identity and the state in South Asia* (Colorado Springs: International Academic Publishers Ltd., 2002) pg, 14

⁴⁶ *Ibid.* pg, 14

dominant groups and minorities erupts as the former tries to impose its own idea of nationalism and own model of development and progress on the minorities. The minorities consider these as threats to their own identity and culture, so they resist.⁴⁷

State is the most important institution responsible for organization, peace, stability and development within a society. State also is a political identity and an expression of organized power. All states have to invest in the mechanism of socio-political control for their stability and sustenance. It depends upon the nature and ability of the state to what extent this objective can be attained. The state is required to provide equal opportunities to all its citizens without making any discrimination on the basis of ethnicity, groups, communities or regions. However, in multi-ethnic societies like India, even the democratic states have not been able to avoid unequal distribution of power and influence. It has generally been observed that power elite and dominant classes constitute the centre, while the minority groups stay at the periphery. The majoritarian concept of democracy has alienated minority ethnic groups, created ethnic divisions within the society thereby forging maladjustment between state and society. It has posed serious challenges to the process of nation building.⁴⁸ As a matter of fact, these concerns turn out to be the majority of India's main four problems (besides the Kashmir problem) as pointed out by *Panda* in the - historical background.

To *Upreti*, in multi-structured societies, ethnic assertions is in the form of socio-political tensions, autonomy movements and the struggle for a separate political entity have become a widespread phenomenon. Thus ethnic conflicts particularly in the form of secessionist movements have posed a serious challenge to the state. This can be observed in the context of multi-ethnic societies, that as political and economic structures become

⁴⁷ A.N. Panda, "Politics of Ethnicity and Regionalism and the State in India", *Ethnicity, Identity and the state in South Asia* (Colorado Springs: International Academic Publishers Ltd., 2002) pg, 29

⁴⁸ B.C. Upreti, "Ethnicity, identity and state in South Asia: an overview" *Ethnicity, Identity and the state in South Asia* (Colorado Springs: International Academic Publishers Ltd., 2002) pg, 15

competitive, various groups and communities begin to mobilize in order to seek power and resources. Consequently, those groups, which remain underprivileged in terms of seeking political rights and share in social goods and services, begin to assert in order to attain these goals on the basis of their ethnic identity. In this process, these ethnic identities come into conflict with the state as state, is the main actor in social and political affairs. As a result, ethnic competition, cleavages and conflicts become a serious challenge to the state. Therefore, in the multi structured societies interaction between ethnicity and state is important from the point of view of socio-political dynamics particularly in the context of nation-building in these countries.⁴⁹

However, on the other hand, the *Ecumenical Review* states, when nationalism is ideologically opposed to ethnic and kinship ideology, it strives to present itself as just and fair according to abstract principles. It is thus in the interest of a successful nationalism to promote cultural homogeneity in the realms of law and order and economic activity. The battle between nationalist and ethnic ideologies is usually won by the dominant nationalism, which is already presented in the state.⁵⁰

3.2 Incorporation of Religion and Military Rule in State Governance

In Sudan, the divisive factors are arguably, politics, religion, economics, culture and power. Religion and politics stand out as the two main issues and the National Islamic Front (NIF) regime set about altering the nature of the Sudanese army to ensure not only its military victory in the south but also the Islamic nature of its rule throughout the country. In addition, an Islamic militia was organized, whose purpose was to

⁴⁹ B.C. Upreti, "Ethnicity, identity and state in South Asia: an overview" *Ethnicity, Identity and the state in South Asia* (Colorado Springs: International Academic Publishers Ltd., 2002) pg, 13

⁵⁰ The *Ecumenical Review*, "Ethnicity and Nationalism in the Sudan", pg. 207

prosecute an Islamic jihad in Southern Sudan and to protect a so-called Islamic revolution in Northern Sudan.⁵¹

One scholar – *Bona Malwal* writes that one of the reasons the peace negotiations for Sudan kept failing was because the government in Khartoum made it clear what it was going to offer to the South: The South had to accept Islamic fundamentalist rule, or fighting would go on. Thus the South could speak for what it wanted only within this framework as general considerations for what was needed for Sudan as a whole were not on the agenda.⁵² However, the most important reason for the failure of the negotiations seems to lie in the fact that neither Sudan People’s Liberation Army (SPLA), nor the regime trust each other and therefore no serious discussions develop.⁵³ Mistrust and prejudice seem to run deep in Sudan and also seem to have functioned as a core problem at the heart of the Sudanese conflict, and did not just arise with the Islamic fundamentalists. From a Southerner’s perspective, *Malwal* argues that the Islamic fundamentalists use the role of Islam as an excuse with which to disguise Arab racism. Therefore, the same author continues, the South would like the rest of the world to understand that the apparent debate on the role of Islam in the politics of Sudan today is basically about Arab domination of the Sudanese state and not a genuine religious call of duty.⁵⁴

Charles Gurdon believes that “with luck, Sudan could have began the 21st century in perhaps the same position as say India was until relatively recently. In other words, Sudan would have been a decentralized multi-party democracy ruled by a central government but with powerful and effectively autonomous state administrations which

⁵¹ Bona Malwal, “Sudan’s political and economic future: a southern perspective”, *The Horn of Africa* (New York: St.Martin’s press 1994) pg. 94 - 95

⁵² *Ibid.* pg. 95

⁵³ *Ibid.* pg. 96

⁵⁴ *Ibid.* pg. 97

genuinely represent the interests of the regional populations. If this were not the case, then it would be unlikely that Sudan would remain a unitary state and its self-serving politicians would condemn its people to the endless misery caused by continual civil war.”⁵⁵

3.3 Nature and Patterns of Ethnic Conflicts

In the case of Sudan, *Douglas Johnson* states the following historical factors as the products of the causes of Sudan’s recurring civil wars. To begin with, there were patterns of governance which developed in the Sudanic states before the 19th century, establishing an exploitive relationship between the centralizing power of the state and its hinterlands or peripheries; for Sudan - mainly through the institutions of slavery and slave raiding, creating groups of peoples with a lastingly ambiguous status in relation to the state;⁵⁶

There also were inequalities in economic, educational and political development within the colonial states which often built upon earlier patterns.⁵⁷ *Daly* and *Sikainga*, second the author by stating that economically, the British saw nothing of immediate economic interest in the south. They controlled the territory simply because the Nile flows through it. Hence the colonial administration paid no attention to the socio-economic development of Southern Sudan until 1938.⁵⁸ Consequently, the South remained behind not only in economic development, but also in educational and political advancement. After the attainment of independence in 1956, Khartoum was too pre-occupied with Northern economic problems and sectarian party politics to pay attention

⁵⁵ Charles Gurdon, “Sudan’s Political future”, *The Horn of Africa* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1994), pg 114

⁵⁶ Douglas H. Johnson, “African issues: The root causes of Sudan’s civil wars” (Indiana: Indiana University press 2003) pg xviii

⁵⁷ Ibid. pg xviii

⁵⁸ Daly, M.W., Ahmad Alawad Sikainga, “Civil War in the Sudan” (London: British Academic Press, 1993) pg. 53

to the needs of the South. Moreover, neglect on the economic front, combined with an overenthusiastic pursuit of Islamization and Arabicization, resulted in a flight of people to neighbouring countries, open revolts by students, and finally in 1963, in the emergence of the Anya-Nya movement.⁵⁹

Another historical attribute is Britain's decision, which was based on political expediency, to grant independence in 1956 to the whole of the Sudan before disparities in development could be addressed and without obtaining adequate guarantees for safeguarding the interests and representations of Southern Sudanese.⁶⁰

Another attribute may be a narrowly-based nationalist movement among the Northern elite in the Sudan which confronted the issues of the Sudan's diversity and unequal development by attempting to build a national identity based on the principles of Arab culture and the religion of Islam, leading to the re-emergence of 19th century ideas of governance in center-periphery relations;⁶¹

Also, failure to obtain a national consensus in either the North or the South in the 1970s concerning national unity, regional development, and the balance of power between the central and regional governments, is another cause of the Sudan's civil war.⁶²

To *Upreti*, ethnic conflicts were almost non-existent in India during the period of British colonial rule owing to suppressive policies of the rulers, as well as due to lack of development and political mobilization. However, the British policies of communal representation politicized the majoritarian ethnic groups and laid the foundation of ethnic conflicts and separatism in the post-independence India. The British also used caste,

⁵⁹ Ibid. pg. 53

⁶⁰ Douglas H. Johnson, "African issues: The root causes of Sudan's civil wars" (Indiana: Indiana University press 2003) pg xviii

⁶¹ Ibid. pg xix

⁶² Douglas H. Johnson, "African issues: The root causes of Sudan's civil wars" (Indiana: Indiana University press 2003) pg. xix

racial and religious identities in order to create divisions within the society. They also encourage inter-state migration in the region to cater to their economic interests which made social fabric of these societies complex. The policies of the colonial rulers towards the border tribes of South Asia affected their economies and the age-old pattern of existence. The ethnic conflicts in India have much to do with the legacies of the colonial rule.⁶³

In addition, religion according to *Upreti* has proved to be a divisive factor as well. It has not only divided the sub-continent but also created religious animosity, majority-minority conflicts and communalism. For example, the fears of Hindu domination of India have played a negative role in the society in terms of unification, consolidation and solidarity. To the author, linguistic diversities are so immense that the question of national official language has given rise to language movements of different magnitudes. In India, the question of language led to linguistic re-divisioning of states. Thus the question of Hindi vis-à-vis English, regional languages, etc., are potent factors behind ethno-regional movements. Furthermore, the problem of cultural identity is also very prominent. There have been dominant cultural steams but they have not been able to assimilate various smaller cultural groups within the majoritarian cultural steams. The smaller cultural groups thus fear their submergence in the larger culture, hence they have tried to assert on the basis of their distinct cultural identities.⁶⁴

In contemporary India, new tensions were created because of positive discrimination policies based on the caste system. The high caste communities feel discriminated against by the government policy to reserve positions for the so-called backward classes. In many cases, a large number of high caste members compete for a

⁶³ B.C. Upreti, "Ethnicity, identity and state in South Asia: an overview" *Ethnicity, Identity and the state in South Asia* (Colorado Springs: International Academic Publishers Ltd., 2002) pg, 17

⁶⁴ *Ibid.* pg, 17

few places reserved for them. While the so-called backward classes members do not have to compete at all because of the large number of reserved places for them compared to the candidates. Sometimes in order to fill the quota, candidates from the lower classes are accepted even though they are not suitable. Sometimes some reserved positions remain unmanned because there were few candidates from the lower classes causing more tension between the castes. Between the lower castes there are also tensions over reservation.⁶⁵

Consequently, the caste identity has become a subject of political, social and legal interpretation. Communities who get listed as entitled for positive discrimination do not get out of this list even if their social and political conditions get better. In many cases the legal system is involved to decide if a certain person is entitled for positive discrimination.

To *Upreti*, the non-equilibrium created by the process of modernization and development between communities and regions has been an important factor behind ethno-regional movements in all the South Asian countries. Resource constraints, developmental constraints, socio-cultural status of a particular ethnic group and political considerations seem to be the cause of the discrimination in terms of modernization and development of various communities or regions. Where the non-equilibrium and discrimination against an ethnic group has coincided with its distinct regional identity, the problem has become serious.⁶⁶

Owing to the development of transport and communication and expansion of education, the economic resources of a region have no more remained confined to one community or region. Thus, the increased pressure of population on resources and a

⁶⁵ B.C. Upreti, "Ethnicity, identity and state in South Asia: an overview" *Ethnicity, Identity and the state in South Asia* (Colorado Springs: International Academic Publishers Ltd., 2002) pg, 17

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

sense of economic insecurity among the ethno-regional groups has resulted in two situations; I) a gap between developed and affluent communities; and ii) increasing awareness among deprived ethnic groups and a sense of insecurity, which has mobilized such ethnic groups towards so-called aggressive politics.⁶⁷

B.C. Upreti writes that another aspect of modernization and development has existed in excessive economic development and prosperity within a particular region. This resulted in people of that particular region assuming that their fruits of development might have to be shared by their fellow citizens who might live in lesser developed regions – an assessment, like in so many other places (such as Northern Italy or Western Germany) leading to resentment. However, an extreme form of ethnic conflict has expressed itself in the form of separatist movements which seem to threaten national unity and integrity, thus posing a serious challenge to the nation-state, in this case.⁶⁸

In a still developing society – to which arguably both Sudan and India belong (though India to a lesser degree than Sudan), the state has three basic duties to perform; economic growth based on equitable distribution of resources and benefits of by initiating a process of modernization and development; establishment of a democratic political order ensuring popular representation and rights, and consolidation of disparate cultural entities. While modernization and development created discrimination between communities and regions in efforts to achieve these objectives, authoritarianism or political dominance of majority community isolated minority ethnic groups. Consequently, the project of consolidation of disparate cultural identities remained

⁶⁷ B.C. Upreti, "Ethnicity, identity and state in South Asia: an overview" *Ethnicity, Identity and the state in South Asia* (Colorado Springs: International Academic Publishers Ltd., 2002) pg., 19

⁶⁸ *Ibid.* pg, 21

unrealised and ethnic issue got aggravated. The state again comes at the forefront as the question of satisfying these frustrated ethnic identities become prominent.⁶⁹

3.4 The Nature of Governance and the Political Systems

The success of a political system can be judged in terms of its ability to cope with the various challenges it faces. The system should have in built mechanism to understand the needs of the changing time and perceive the future threats to it and forestall them. In short, the political process must be able to deal with conflict in the society, which results from multiple diversities among its members. Evidently, any division of the powers of government on a geographical basis (regional or federal) can scarcely succeed if each subdivision of the state is predominantly inhabited by an ethnic group and there are great differences between the subdivisions.⁷⁰

In Sudan, attempts to provide for well co-ordinated and autonomous organs of state have failed for various reasons. On three occasions the army seized power, abolished the constitution, banned political parties and vested all power in a revolutionary government.⁷¹ However as *Peter Woodward* points out, what is of greater significance after the coup is the extent to which the army remains an institution in its own right, or has been penetrated by the NIF.⁷²

There have been attempts to address the issues from Sudanese political quarters, notably the “New Sudan”, for which the SPLA fighting in the south has proclaimed that it has been struggling. However, it wasn’t the SPLA that created a ‘New Sudan’: rather, the opportunity of Islamic fundamentalists who have at least had a major influence on

⁶⁹ B.C. Upreti, “Ethnicity, identity and state in South Asia: an overview” *Ethnicity, Identity and the state in South Asia* (Colorado Springs: International Academic Publishers Ltd., 2002) pg, 21

⁷⁰ The Ecumenical Review, “Ethnicity and Nationalism in the Sudan”, pg., 212

⁷¹ The Ecumenical Review, “Ethnicity and Nationalism in the Sudan”, pg., 212

⁷² Woodward, Peter, “Sudan: a new political character?” Gurdon, Charles, Ed., “The Horn of Africa” (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1994), pg 79

government since the seizure of power by the last successful military coup in June 1989.⁷³

According to *Woodward*, while capturing the state via a coup has proved possible in Sudan, controlling society has been more difficult. The state itself has limited capacity, and its ability to erogenous population (now over 25million) has always been limited. In addition, political control has never been that assured to any regime and since independence in 1956, there has been a succession of unstable civilian and military governments.⁷⁴

The same author emphasizes that,

*“even relative stability in Sudan has involved the capacity to deploy a mixture of social bases involving elements of class (where intra-elite rivalry is generated for the perquisites of the state), religion (in particular the capacity of Islamic movements partially to transcend ethnic and class divisions) and ethnicity (which as in much of Africa is till a dynamic force).”*⁷⁵

Woodward argues that essentially modern ideological movements (including the Muslim Brotherhood) have what he saw as inherent limitations for such political manoeuvring. He adds that they lack the kind of ethnic and religious links that could spread their influence widely into Sudanese society (in the north at least). However, in terms of class, they might build a body of support (communists from workers, Muslim Brothers from commercial expansion among the petty bourgeoisie) but the base would remain fairly narrow. In addition, an overtly ideological movement would arouse the hostility of other ideological claimants. Sudan had revolutions – most notably the May Revolution of 1969 which produced some change – although arguably scarcely major or lasting ones.⁷⁶

⁷³ Woodward, Peter, “Sudan: a new political character?” Gurdon, Charles, Ed., “The Horn of Africa” (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1994),76

⁷⁴ Ibid. pg 76

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Ibid. pg 76-77

Perhaps the major change in the structure of Sudan has been the adoption of federalism. Federalism debate in Sudan was conceded to the worried southerners at its independence in 1956 that there would be consideration of a federal constitution, though this was soon jettisoned in post-independence constitutional deliberations. However, instead of federalism, whose failure of implementation was associated with the periods of multi-party rule (1956-8, 1965-9), the regime of ex-president Nimeiri pursued regional government, first in the south from 1972 and then throughout the country from 1980.⁷⁷ It's rather interesting to note how so-called multipartyism in the case of Sudan is blamed for federalism failure, while under normal circumstances; multipartyism is the normal way to a democracy. This further confirms the willingness of the Khartoum government to overcome the country's internal problems beginning with the political ones.

According to *Woodward*, the commitment to federalism is put in doubt by more than the apparent practice by the re-organisation of local administration. For instance, in the place of old districts, a smaller number of provinces in each state of the federation. According to reports, many of the new provincial commissioners – appointed from the center – owed their positions as much to religious conviction as to administrative experience. However, at the time, it was unknown if that would have made them effective arms of the Islamic Revolution or ineffective would-be transformers of the Sudanese countryside.⁷⁸

With regard to the economy, *Woodward* argues that the developments of the late 1970s have largely, continued. Also, the 'islamisation' of the economy through the banking and credit system is not new, and was itself an important aspect of the rise of the influence of the Muslim Brotherhood. It is stated that the "islamists may be just

⁷⁷Woodward, Peter, "Sudan: a new political character?" Gurdon, Charles, Ed., "The Horn of Africa" (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994),pg 82

⁷⁸ Ibid. pg 83

perceived as milking what they can from the economy by controlling currency, commodity markets, foreign trade and aid, as did those who ruled before them.”⁷⁹

As people ask themselves why the Sudanese people can't just unite and work together as one, one *Bona Malwal* responds by asking in turn, “If the Somalis, a homogeneous people, could get into such disarray, how could southern Sudan, a highly heterogeneous tribal society which has fought for more than three decades to uphold its African racial and cultural identity vis-à-vis the threat of Arab and Islamic racial and cultural assimilation, hold together as a state? There is a possibility that on the other hand, most southern Sudanese took some comfort from the fact that Eritrea, which like southern Sudan is also a tribally heterogeneous nation, had for all practical purposes become an independent state after the overthrow of the Mengistu regime. This meant that despite the African Unity's (AU) charter, which seeks to discourage any changes in post-colonial boundaries of the break-up of its member states, the door for the creation of new states in Africa had become ajar if not quite totally open.”⁸⁰

Woodward summarises the Sudan case by stating that “it could thus be a safe assumption to make that perhaps the Sudanese civil has had external civil war and support from countries like Ethiopia and Eritrea – directly and indirectly. This in turn could be part of the reason the SPLA in Southern Sudan hasn't given up fighting the Khartoum government is in the hope for an eventual separation from the North, if not in the least, a grant for a federal government.”⁸¹

For India on the other hand, *Panda* argues that to tackle the plurality of the Indian society, federalism has been adopted as a model of a state formation. The different units

⁷⁹ Woodward, Peter, “Sudan: a new political character?” Gurdon, Charles, Ed., “The Horn of Africa” (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994),pg 86

⁸⁰ Bona Malwal, “Sudan's political and economic future: a southern perspective”, The Horn of Africa (New York: St.Martin's press 1994) pg. 91

⁸¹ Woodward, Peter, “Sudan: a new political character?” Gurdon, Charles, Ed., “The Horn of Africa” (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994)

of the federation are formed on a linguistic basis, although the constitution asserts India is a so-called 'union of states'.⁸²

India's first method adopted to tackle ethnicity and regionalism, Panda states, is repression using state machineries to silence disgruntled elements. The second response adopted by India is to give financial benefits to the people of the affected areas. But at the same time, note should be taken that the benefits of the grants do not reach the common mass but rather only creates a corrupt elite in the area – politicians, bureaucrats and middlemen. Granting autonomy to the affected area is another response India uses with the believe that if the local people of the area are given power to take certain policy decisions, they will then be induced to participate in the country's political process and end their alienation from the political system of the country. This system failed as it couldn't satisfy all ethnic groups. Creating new states in the affected areas to end ethnic problems and granting a political identity within the Indian federation is the fourth response India uses. This worked partially in dealing with ethnicity and regionalism although the ethnic tension has not ended in the North-East.⁸³

3.5 Good Peace or Bad Peace?

Conflict appears an intractable feature in Sudan, although months of negotiations from 2002 to 2004 brought peace agreements close in a country that had long been experiencing internal struggles. As *Woodward* points out, in fact, peacemaking in Sudan seemed a forlorn hope for much of the 1990s, inspite of repeated efforts. While optimists believe this is because years of negotiations were finally approaching their conclusion in agreement, other scholars think differently. More pessimistic scholars argue that the past

⁸² A.N. Panda, "Politics of Ethnicity and Regionalism and the State in India", *Ethnicity, Identity and the state in South Asia* (Colorado Springs: International Academic Publishers Ltd., 2002) pg 30.

⁸³ *Ibid.* 31-35

years of failed negotiations had shown how difficult it is to make peace; and that while there were particular circumstances propitious for the signing of peace in 2004, the agreements remain tenuous for all the reason that had in fact prevented peace in the past.⁸⁴ However, on the basis of both views, it can be argued that while agreement had not been reached in previous negotiations, the subjects that had been discussed with some progress made in the past were now included in both agreements, meaning that current conclusions couldn't have been arrived at without the earlier endeavours.

Although negotiation in Sudan became much easier as the process developed, *Woodward* argues that there were several concerns that caused limitations to immediate agreements. For example, there was little sign of goodwill emerging between the Khartoum government and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM). This is seen in the parties' reluctance to work together as one team despite the fact that they each could see the advantage in each stage of agreement. Instead, there appeared to be two governments being formed one in the north and another in the south, leading to doubts about the effectiveness of power sharing arrangements, if in fact each party was primarily concerned to manoeuvre for its own advantage.⁸⁵

Another limitation according to *Woodward* was the 'closed' participation in the agreement as negotiations were only between the government and the SPLA, which were undemocratic and had many critics in their own parts of the country. Some opposition groups, though not all had sought to unite in the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) and protested at their exclusion from the process. They were allowed sight of the later stages of the talks, but never participated directly, and were concerned that the promises

⁸⁴ Woodward, Peter, "Somalia and Sudan: A tale of two peace processes", Department of politics and international relations, University of Reading, Reading, UK

⁸⁵ Ibid.

of power sharing once the agreement was signed might be reneged upon by the two signatories.⁸⁶

To *Woodward*, exclusion was believed to be an important factor in the upsurge of fighting in the Western Region of Darfur that worsened as talks progressed. Although there already were longstanding security problems in Darfur, the situation deteriorated considerably when local opposition groups decided that since the SPLA had fought its way to the negotiating table, they too could do likewise. As their successful attacks caught the government off guard and in turn encouraged its local militia allies in operations that killed many and forced hundreds of thousands from their homes.⁸⁷

A further and perhaps very important concern dealt with the time period of the process. Given the transitional period of six and a half years from the signing of the agreement to the exercise of the south's right of self-determination, there would be ample time for the process to be derailed.⁸⁸

4. CONCLUSION

The present situation in Sudan may be summed up in various ways. First, the political, economic and cultural arrangements are not properly adjusted to the needs of a pluralistic society. This is due to the fact that the various Sudanese governments (whether multi-party or one-party democracies, civilian or military regimes), have been consistently biased in favour of Islam. Second, in an Islamic state that also contains non-Muslims, there can be no equality of rights just as there can be no equality of rights in a Christian or Jewish state that also contains non-Christians or non-Jews respectively. As

⁸⁶ Woodward, Peter, "Somalia and Sudan: A tale of two peace processes", Department of politics and international relations, University of Reading, Reading, UK

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Newsweek: India Rising Messy, raucous, democratic India is growing fast, and now may partner up with the world's richest democracy—America
<http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/11571348/site/newsweek/>

stated earlier under units of analysis, the dominant or exclusive role of one religion over others seems to be the problem. Third, discrimination on ethnic grounds necessarily creates a tension between the ‘insiders’ and ‘outsiders’. Finally, in a country inhabited by persons of different religions, languages and ethnic community, emphasis on a bond of social cohesion or identification applicable to a part of the Sudanese society – Islamism or Arabism – dilutes Sudanese nationality, the only unifying bond, to the point of insipidity.⁸⁹

For India on the other hand, its radical nationalists view the secular political system according to *Sharif Shuja*, as a threat to Hindu identity, largely because of the power it allows to India’s 140 million Muslims. Weakening, or even abolishing, the secular state has therefore become part of the radical nationalist agenda. Scholars like *Shuja* argue that this may in turn force Indian Muslim (who are traditionally moderate and supportive of the secular state, even on the sensitive matter of Kashmir) to shift their allegiance from the state to some sort of large international Islamic movement, as many Muslims have done in Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore. Such a radicalization of religious identities is a matter of serious concern in a nation of a billion people that possesses a nuclear arsenal and has had troubled relations with its populous and nuclear-armed Muslim neighbour, Pakistan.⁹⁰

According to *Shuja*, India’s new United Progressive Alliance (UPA) government’s priority is to uphold and strengthen the secular principles embodied in the Indian Constitution. *Shuja* states that as India has always been a multicultural, multi-ethnic, multi-religious society, secular government is not an option but an absolute

⁸⁹ The Ecumenical Review, “Ethnicity and Nationalism in the Sudan”, pg., 213-4

⁹⁰ Sharif Shuja, “Indian Secularism: Image and Reality”, Global Terrorism Research Unit, Monash University, Australia, pg. 38

necessity. Only secularism, with its emphasis on equality and universal citizenship rights, can build a minimally civilized, inclusive, democratic society and ensure equal rights for all citizens, regardless of religion, ethnicity or culture. Secularism must be practiced and advocated vigorously.⁹¹

Along with the central government, the state governments of India also follow a positive discrimination policy. Different states have different figures of communities entitled for positive discrimination based on the population of each state. Different state governments have different lists of communities entitled for positive discrimination. Sometimes a specific community is entitled for rights in a particular state but not in another state of India.⁹²

Panda illustrates that even with all this positive discrimination policy, most of the communities who were low in the caste hierarchy remain low in the social order even today. And communities who were high in the social hierarchy remain even today high in the social hierarchy. Most of the degrading jobs are even today done by the Dalits, while the Brahmans remain at the top of the hierarchy by being the doctors, engineers and lawyers of India.⁹³

5. OUTLOOK

5.1 Sudan

AFRICA'S largest country has long been one of its most troubled. Sudan is a bubbling hotchpotch of sharply different regions, tribes and religions that have been

⁹¹ *ibid*, pg 42

⁹² A.N. Panda, "Politics of Ethnicity and Regionalism and the State in India", *Ethnicity, Identity and the state in South Asia* (Colorado Springs: International Academic Publishers Ltd., 2002) pgs 31-35

⁹² http://www.lotussculpture.com/bronze_sculpture_caste.htm

⁹³ A.N. Panda, "Politics of Ethnicity and Regionalism and the State in India", *Ethnicity, Identity and the state in South Asia* (Colorado Springs: International Academic Publishers Ltd., 2002) pgs 31-35

clashing violently virtually since the day the British colonial administration left in 1956. Various governments at the centre in Khartoum, have tried with scant success to control the periphery. And while a fragile peace signed 2003 between the Muslim Arab northerners, who have always run the show, and the black African (mainly Christian and animist) southerners has just about held, another vicious war, this time in the western province of Darfur, has been threatening since 2003 to tear the country apart yet again.⁹⁴

The Khartoum centre, however repressive, is unable to hold things together. It is thus vital that outsiders from Africa, the United States, Europe, etc, co-operate to make peace in Sudan. The government in Khartoum, run since 1989 by an Islamist party that once hosted Osama bin Laden but has since dampened its jihadist sympathies, is mostly to blame for the dreadful bloodshed. Moreover, no one, in Africa or further afield, except perhaps for the likes of al-Qaeda, wants Sudan to fall apart into warring fiefs, as in Somalia, a failed state and potential purveyor of terrorism in the nearby Horn of Africa.⁹⁵

The U.S., which has imposed trade sanctions for some years, and the European Union (EU), which enforces an arms embargo, have been mainly responsible for persuading a reluctant government in Khartoum to come to terms with the southerners and to rein in temporarily, their massacring proxies in the west. But the U.S. and the EU should not have to act alone. While they have sought to isolate and cajole the regime in Khartoum, Russia and China have been rewarded with handsome oil concessions. In a sort of latter-day version of the 19th-century scramble for Africa, India and Malaysia have been granted oil concessions too. In return, these countries have been loath to tell Sudan's government to stop the killing. As a democracy that is rightly proud of its pluralism, India in particular should speak out. Others like the Arab League, true to form,

⁹⁴ Agence France Presse – English, “Tribal violence in Darfur overshadows peace moves, hampers aid” (June 2, 2005)

<http://www.highbeam.com/doc/1P1:104951690/Sudan+guilty+of+gross+abuses+in+Darfur,+not+genocide+UN+report.html?refid=SEO>

⁹⁵ Ibid.

has been disgracefully silent about the murderous behaviour of one of its member governments.⁹⁶

If the Americans and their chief allies were not mired elsewhere, a bigger intervention, with their support, would be in order. But they have neither the capability nor the will for it, and China and Russia would probably block it. The African Union's (AU) 7,000-strong force, with NATO logistical help, is the best on offer. However, Sudan's government is doing its utmost to obstruct it, spending months, for example, holding up the delivery of Canadian armoured cars. More of a fuss should be made about such behaviour and the West should be more generous with its own help: a few helicopters, for instance, would hugely help the AU, which needs the EU and U.S to pay for another 5,000 troops on the ground. Above all, leaders in the West should help stir the world's conscience and not allow Sudan to fall apart again.

5.1.2 India

India sees itself as a rising regional actor, and it sees military power as one element in this process. However, in terms of governance, ethnicity, language, religion, population, and economic might among other things, 'Imbalance' would be a more appropriate term to describe India in that respect. Even though India surely is more advanced than most developing countries, what has to be understood from the outset is that India still has a lot of internal issues to balance out, in its regional leadership aspirations.

Yes, India, with its dilapidated airports, crumbling roads, vast slums and impoverished villages, also is the same India with several Silicon Valleys on one side,

⁹⁶ The Economist Newspapers Ltd., U.S. Edition, "Failure in Sudan - Stop the killing, again;" (December 3, 2005)

three Nigerias within it, with more than 300 million people living on less than a dollar a day. India also is home to 40 percent of the world's poor, and has the world's second largest HIV population.⁹⁷ That is the familiar India. The India of poverty and disease as known to the rest of the world. However, the new India of the future as projected and promised at the 2005 Davos meeting, contains all this but also something new and the change is felt even in the midst of the slums. Several factors can be attributed to this possibility.

One factor is India's growth, which though messy, chaotic and largely unplanned, definitely surpasses the non-existent one of Sudan. Contrary to normal expectations, the growth bottom-up and not top-down and is happening not because of the government, but largely despite it. Further, despite the fact that India neither has Beijing and Shanghai's gleaming infrastructure for instance, nor does it have a government that rolls out the red carpet for foreign investment like China, it has vast and growing numbers of entrepreneurs who want to make money. In fact, no government in democratic India would have those kinds of powers there are in China anyway. Somehow the Indian people find a way of overcoming the obstacles, and bypassing the bureaucracy. In the words of *Gurcharan Das*, a former CEO of Procter Gamble in India "The government sleeps at night and the economy grows".⁹⁸

India's democracy has been a roaring success on another front, and a wonder to behold too. As one of the world's poorest countries, India has sustained democratic government for almost 60 years. This definitely is one of the country's greatest strengths

⁹⁷ Newsweek: India Rising Messy, raucous, democratic India is growing fast, and now may partner up with the world's richest democracy—America
<http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/11571348/site/newsweek/>

⁹⁸ Newsweek: India Rising Messy, raucous, democratic India is growing fast, and now may partner up with the world's richest democracy—America
<http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/11571348/site/newsweek/>

when compared with many other developing countries, Sudan in this case which has had great difficulty doing so. If for instance one asks the question "What will India look like politically in 25 years?" the answer is known to most people: like it does today—a democracy, probably with a coalition government.⁹⁹

Note must be taken that even though democracy makes for long-term stability, it also makes for populism, pandering and delays. Well, is this a problem with democracy? Not entirely as bad policies are bound to fail whether pursued by dictators or democrats. But there are elements of democracy that have hurt, certainly in a country with rampant poverty, feudalism and illiteracy. For instance, democracy in India too often means not the will of the majority but the will of organized minorities—landowners, powerful castes, farmers, government unions and local thugs. (Nearly a fifth of the members of the Indian Parliament have been accused of crimes, including embezzlement, rape and murder.) These groups are usually richer than most of their countrymen, and they plunder the state's coffers to stay that way. It is also ironic, that India's Communist Party does not campaign for growth to lift the very poor but rather works to maintain the relatively privileged conditions of unionized workers.¹⁰⁰ Consequently, as these power plays go on, the great majority's interests—those 800 million who earn less than \$2 a day—often fall through the cracks.

A diverse and complex country like India, with 17 major languages, 22,000 dialects and all the world's major religions, only has democracy as its destiny and cannot really be governed any other way. India's task in this regard is to use democracy to its

⁹⁹ The Economist Newspapers Ltd., U.S. Edition, "Failure in Sudan - Stop the killing, again;" (December 3, 2005)

¹⁰⁰ Newsweek: India Rising Messy, raucous, democratic India is growing fast, and now may partner up with the world's richest democracy—America
<http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/11571348/site/newsweek/>

advantage. The Indian government has recently begun investing in rural education and health, and is focusing on ways to make agriculture more productive. India's belief and hope is that good economics can sometimes make for good politics. In addition, India has since 1993 broadened its democracy to give village's greater voice in their affairs. Most important, village councils must reserve 33 percent of their seats for women. As part of India's bottom-up development, with society pushing the state and not the contrary, women now have a platform from which to demand for essentials like better education and health care.¹⁰¹

If Sudan is to emerge from decades of civil war, it will need international aide long into the future.

¹⁰¹ Newsweek: India Rising Messy, raucous, democratic India is growing fast, and now may partner up with the world's richest democracy—America
<http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/11571348/site/newsweek/>

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APPENDIX:

POLITICAL MAPS OF INDIA AND SUDAN





MAP OF SUDAN



Statistics: - Republic Sudan

Country name: *Conventional long form:* Republic of the Sudan
Conventional short form: Sudan
local long form: Jumhuriyat as-Sudan; *local short form:* As-Sudan
former: Anglo-Egyptian Sudan

Land area: 917,374 sq mi (2,376,001 sq km); **total area:** 967,499 sq mi (2,505,810 sq km)

Population (2006 est.): 41,236,378 (growth rate: 2.6%); birth rate: 34.5/1000; infant mortality rate: 61.0/1000; life expectancy: 58.9; density per sq mi: 45

Languages: Arabic (official), Nubian, Ta Bedawie, diverse dialects of Nilotic, Nilo-Hamitic, Sudanic languages, English

Ethnicity/race: black 52%, Arab 39%, Beja 6%, foreigners 2%, other 1%

Religions: Islam (Sunni) 70% (in north), indigenous 25%, Christian 5% (mostly in south and Khartoum)

Literacy rate: 61% (2003 est.)

Neighbours: Chad and the Central African Republic on the west, Egypt and Libya on the north, Ethiopia and Eritrea on the east, and Kenya, Uganda, and Democratic Republic of the Congo on the south. The Red Sea washes about 500 mi of the eastern coast. It is traversed from north to south by the Nile, all of whose great tributaries are partly or entirely within its borders.

MAP OF INDIA

