



## EDITORIAL

# SASCV: A progressive society to promote Criminology and Victimology in the South Asian Region

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The South Asian Society of Criminology and Victimology (SASCV) is a new registered international association founded (2009) to nurture criminology and victimology in countries such as Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Pakistan, Maldives, Sri Lanka and Nepal. Academics, researchers and practitioners worldwide have joined hands to establish SASCV and share of best practices in the context of South Asia. Literature, religion and cultural practices of this region demonstrate a traditionally rich understanding of criminology and victimology in this region. South Asian literature is replete with stories of victim justice and restorative practices. Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Islam and various Tribal religions played a great role with regard to the concept of justice and non-violence, both at individual and community level.

Colonial period introduced a new and formal centralized criminal justice system dismantling the then existing idea of justice. “Criminality” was determined throughout South Asia by the colonial priorities until mid 20<sup>th</sup> century. The latter part of this century also saw the establishment of new states where ethnic, religious, linguistic, caste, communal, tribal and other identities played a role in institution of constitutions and in the legal sphere of criminal and victim justice. Today, South Asian countries face acute problems of corruption, criminal violence, terrorism, extremism, poverty, environmental degradation, white collar/cyber crimes, violations of human rights, state sponsored terrorism, crime against humanity, individual and collective victimization. In this backdrop, the South Asian Society of Criminology and Victimology (SASCV) has emerged as a novel initiative to assist countries in criminal justice policy making and support victims of crime and abuse of power.

### *Objectives of SASCV*

The South Asian Society of Criminology and Victimology shall:

1. serve as an international impartial, non-political and non-profit making association whose purpose is to promote Criminology and Victimology in the South Asian region (Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Pakistan, Maldives, Sri Lanka and Nepal). These includes promoting educational programmes in criminology and victimology, finding job avenues for graduates in criminology, creating new centers/departments of criminology in universities and colleges and research centers in victimology and advise the governments of South Asian region on policy issues on crime, justice and victimization. This society

will function in close collaboration with other national and international bodies, thereby encouraging the most efficient use of available resources.

2. provide a scientific exchange among its members and others by collecting and disseminating information through publications, correspondence, exhibits, regional and international seminars, symposia, conferences and otherwise.

3. advise, encourage, promote and when requested, assist in efforts to co-ordinate or guide research, development and evaluation activities related to criminology and victimology throughout the South Asian region.

4. advise, guide and support the efforts of those responsible for the criminal justice system and when requested, correlate these activities throughout the South Asian region.

5. advise, encourage, guide and support the efforts of those responsible for the education and training of criminologists and victimologists and professionals allied to criminology/ victimology (Criminal Justice Officials) and when requested, correlate these activities throughout the South Asian region.

### **What SASCV has done since its launch?**

After the successful launch of the website <http://www.sascv.edu.tf> in August 2009, SASCV has forged knowledge partnerships with Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences, Western Society of Criminology, Mexican Society of Criminology of the state of Nuevo Leon, Italian Team for Security, Terroristic Issues, & Managing Emergencies, Victimology Society of Serbia, The International Victimology Institute, Tilburg, and Transforming Conflict, UK. Also American Society of Criminology, British Society of Criminology, World Society of Victimology and Criminological & Victimological Society of South Africa have endorsed SASCV. Thirty International advisors are on the board of SASCV. The website of SASCV within two months of its launch has received more than 1800 hits and more people are hitting the site for information on SASCV. Membership is open now and enrollment has started from all over the world. The International Journal of Criminal Justice Sciences (IJCS) has become the official journal of SASCV. Stanley Yeldell of Rowan University, USA has agreed in principle to institute an endowment in the name of his wife, late Shirley Yeldell. This fund will be utilized for creation of fellowships and medals for victimological research.

### **What other societies and academics feel about SASCV?**

Richard Rosenfeld, the President of American Society of Criminology appreciated: "...*Wonderful news for criminology worldwide*". Mike Hough, the President of British Society of Criminology applauded: *Congratulations on launching the SASCV, and thanks for letting us know... we will include a link to your organisation on our website*". Chris Eskridge, the Executive Director of American Society of Criminology (ASC) wrote: "...*We are delighted to learn of the establishment of SASCV and appreciate your willingness to work with us. Likewise, we will certainly do all we can to help your organization grow and develop over the years. Also our members will be very interested in learning of this exciting development. ...We look forward to working with your organization in every way to promote the professional interests of criminology*". SASCV has become a knowledge partner of Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences (ACJS), USA and vice versa. The President of ACJS Janice Joseph expressed her interest: "...*I am pleased to inform you that ACJS would be happy to participate in the knowledge partnership*".

The Director of another knowledge partner of SASCV, the Victimological Society of Serbia (VDS), Vesna wrote: *“Thanks... this is great and we would be happy that VDS become your knowledge partner”*. José Luis, the President of the International Association of Penal Law commended: *“...For us it is very important news to know about your activities. We would be very pleased to establish firm relationships with your organization”*. B. S. Raghavan, a former Indian Bureaucrat wrote: *“Congratulations on the launching of the website. A systematic and comprehensive approach to criminology and victimology is an essential basis for the rule of law, and your initiative is salutary in that respect...”*. Marco Lombardi, the Head of Italian Team for Security, Terroristic Issues, & Managing Emergencies (ITSTIME), a knowledge partner of SASCV wrote: *“...It is a pleasure to agree for starting this first relation SASCV - ITSTIME. I hope we will have a good cooperation also in research matter. ITSTIME (my self and some colleagues) have some field activity in Afghanistan, Pakistan and Central Asia that could be of mutual interest...”*.

Marc Groenhusjen, the Director of INTERVICT, The Netherlands, a knowledge partner of SASCV, was generous in his appreciation: *“I am positive the SASCV will play a major part in developing our academic field of expertise in South Asia, one of the most important regions of the world. I have to admit that you are shaping exciting times in your part of the globe”*. Marc Groenhusjen has recently been elected as the President of World Society of Victimology (WSV). The Executive Council of SASCV sincerely appreciates the election of Marc Groenhusjen as President of WSV, and wishes for effective collaboration with WSV, under the dynamic leadership of Groenhusjen.

### **The Road ahead of SASCV: Miles to go**

The 1st International Conference of the SASCV in alliance with the 4th International Conference of ERCES (European and International Research Group on Crime, Social Philosophy and Ethics) is planned to be held in Cochin, Kerala, India, during the month of December, 2010. SASCV envisages the starting of new departments of criminology in the South Asian region by lobbying with the universities and governments. SASCV will encourage research in Victimology among research students by the way of fellowships in Victimology and research centres of Victimology would be initiated by SASCV with international funding. SASCV will also work with SAARC for promotion of criminology and victimology. SASCV has started working towards creation of knowledge partnership with the UNODC Regional Office for South Asia. The representative of UNODC Regional Office for South Asia has also expressed her interest in the activities of SASCV. The encomiums showered by various societies and academics add further responsibility on SASCV to be a successful organization in the South Asian region. SASCV would work effectively towards the growth of criminology and victimology and will make a significant mark in the years to come.

### **The current issue of IJCJS**

The current issue contains five articles and two book reviews. Is the use of trafficking hotspots a useful approach in identifying factors that predict human trafficking at country level? The first paper by Lincoln Fry attempts to answer this question by building upon studies conducted by Bales (2007) and Fry (2009). This study uses the database constructed by the Global Program Against Trafficking of Human Beings (GPAT), sponsored by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime to assess the trafficking hotspots question. Trafficking hotspots have shown some efficiency in identifying the factors that predict

human trafficking according to the results of this study. However, more research needs to be conducted to gather evidence on the usefulness of trafficking hotspots. The second paper by Fasihuddin attempts to analyse the terrorist situation in Pakistan and tries to provide some suggestions to the Law enforcement of Pakistan. This paper also keeps identification of terrorism as the focal point. Though this article focuses only on Pakistan, this will be helpful to the whole of world in general and South Asia in particular.

Crime prevention has been the goal of nations around the world. Several theories have been understood to devise effective crime prevention techniques such as situational crime prevention, neighborhood watch, police patrols, and many more. Is targeted policing one of them? Does targeted policing help reduce crime? Avdi's paper on eight experimental studies on targeted policing analyses and reviews to determine if targeted policing can be used as a form of evidence based policing. The paper looks at the theoretical perspective and empirical evidence related to the implementation of targeted policing.

Juvenile delinquency has been a growing criminological concern today. Law enforcement agencies, sociologists and families are attempting to understand why and what motivates a child to adopt the path of delinquency. In the study on Iraqi delinquents (Younis et.al), four doctors have attempted to investigate the prevalence of psychiatric disorders in a sample of delinquent adolescents in an Iraqi pre-trial detention during sanctions period. Although extensive research has been done on juvenile delinquency, most of the studies tend to focus on countries with more favorable social and economic conditions. This study is one of its kinds as it analyses juvenile behaviour in a country where material deprivation, i.e. poverty and fear of war are essential components of a person's daily life.

Criminologists around the world have proposed plenty of theories to explain the causes of criminal behaviour. The empirical support for most of these theories of crime and deviance has come from the studies of urban growth and social disorganization witnessed in western societies. Very few studies have been done to analyze crime in the Indian context. The Indian society has a very different societal structure than that of the west. Verma and Kumar's paper attempts to explore criminal motivations in India by studying the major reasons of criminality amongst convicted offenders. According to this study, growing urbanization, breakdown of extended family system and lure of consumerism and influence of criminal associates are some of the main reasons for people in India to adopt the path of crime. This study provides evidence that Indian jails are primarily filled with people from low socio-economic strata, from poor, economically disadvantaged background shows that Indian authorities need to pay attention to these findings and examine the actions of the police and criminal justice agencies more carefully.

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