SOCIAL SCIENCES
IN
ASIA

Edited by
Yogesh Atal

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CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION : Yogesh Atal 7

ONE
The Asian Conference

2. WELCOME SPEECH : M S Gore 27
3. INAUGURAL ADDRESS : Sukhmoy Chakravarty 31
4. PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS : Malcolm S Adiseshiah 39
5. RAPPORTEUR-GENERAL'S REPORT : D R Rajalingam 49
6. VALEDICTORY ADDRESS : S Nurul Hasan 63

TWO
Country Papers

7. AFGHANISTAN : Wali Mohammed Rahimi 69
8. BANGLADESH : S A Qadir 87
9. CAMBODIA (Khmer) : Nhok Thaisith 97
10. INDIA : Yogesh Atal 109
11. INDONESIA : Miriam Budiardjo,
    Kamanto Soenarto and Djafar Assegaff 141
12. IRAN : Gholam-Abbas Tavassoli 159
13. NEPAL : Gopi Nath Sharma 173
    NEPAL—A SUPPLEMENT : H R Chaturvedi and T A Menon 177
14. PHILIPPINES : Julia V Calixto 185
15. SINGAPORE : Cheng Siok Hwa 203
16. SOUTH KOREA : Byong-In Suh 219
17. SRI LANKA : D R Rajalingam 229
18. THAILAND : Choompol Swasdiyakorn 241

THREE
Miscellany

CONFERENCE PARTICIPANTS 255
AASSREC EXECUTIVE 257
CONTRIBUTORS 259
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS 261
INDEX 263
in changes in the social system. As nations, we have to live in dignity and in harmony with our neighbours. Towards all these objectives the social sciences can make a meaningful contribution. I hope the plans initiated by this Conference will contribute, in the years to come, towards the attainment of the objectives.
Country Papers

7. Afghanistan : Wali M Rahimi
8. Bangladesh : S A Qadir
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18. Thailand : Choompol Swasdiyakorn
SOCIAL SCIENCES are fairly established in Afghanistan. The students get exposure to the frameworks for the analysis of social phenomena from the very beginning of their career, right from the elementary school stage. At the school, they are taught social studies; at college, specialised courses are offered in various social science disciplines. The term 'social studies' is widely used and understood at the elementary and secondary school levels. Social Studies may be described as interrelated set of subjects which have largely replaced the more traditionally segmented subjects such as geography, history, civics and so forth. This term, invented in the United States, entered the curriculum vocabulary in Afghanistan in the 1950s. It is, however, not uncommon to find teachers and educators using social studies—ejtemaiat—to refer to history and geography in the broader sense. History, geography and civics at the elementary level, and the first two subjects plus economics at the secondary level—all as separate subjects—have been essential parts of school curriculum, at least from the onset of modern education in Afghanistan. They were taught in all schools. Even students were divided into those studying arts (ejtemaiat), and those studying sciences (natural sciences and mathematics) at the secondary level. Other subjects such as philosophy, education, law, and psychology, were also in-
cluded in their curriculum. These subjects as well as history, geography, economics, and civics were independent of each other. The course was designed with a view to introducing the students to the essentials of these disciplines. Interrelationships between the disciplines was, however, not emphasised. This pattern is followed still in all the school curricula.

The development of social sciences in Afghanistan has been closely linked with the developmental activities of the Afghan government. The university in Kabul was founded in 1932. Seven years after its establishment, social sciences, such as political science, public administration, government and law were introduced. Later, economics and sociology were added. The crucial role of the social sciences in the overall development of the country necessitated the establishment of other faculties or schools within the university.

The development of the university has been piecemeal. It started with the faculty of Medicine; now it has twelve independent faculties. Almost the same pattern was followed in the second university set up in Nangarhar province in eastern Afghanistan. There also, the school of Medicine was created first. In Kabul university, social sciences began to be taught in the faculty of Law, which gave birth to the faculties of economics and Islamic Law. Within these faculties, a core of social sciences was created. These sciences grew as independent departments which were put together in a School.

Social sciences are taught traditionally in separate faculties, and within each faculty by specific departments. Today there are five faculties in Kabul University offering programmes of Social Sciences and Humanities. They are the faculties of Law and Political Science, Letters and Humanities, Islamic Law, Economics, and Education. In these faculties, students major either in an individual social science discipline, or in a group of social science disciplines leading to a degree of Bachelor of Arts.

Teaching in Kabul University is conducted through departments. Although all faculties have departmental structures, they do not have the same functions. In some—such as the faculty of Education, and the faculty of Letters and Humanities—students major in a department; in others, departments function only for instructional purposes, offering courses but
not having students. The departments of the faculties of Economics, Law and Political Sciences as well as the Islamic Studies are of the latter type. For example, students major in national economy or business administration in the Faculty of Economics and take courses in seven departments, all belonging to that Faculty alone. A similar situation exists in the Faculty of Law and Political Science. In this faculty, students major in Law or Political Science while obligatory courses are taught by six departments.

Social science faculties with their major functions and the social science departments are shown in the following chart:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Faculty</th>
<th>Major Functions</th>
<th>Departments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Law and Political</td>
<td>Training of Lawyers, Administration, and</td>
<td>— Public Law</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>Political Scientists</td>
<td>— Private Law</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>— Economics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>— Islamic Law</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>— Criminal Law</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>— Political Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>— General Economic Policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>— General National Economy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>— Social and Economic Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>— Statistics, Mathematics and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Econometrics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>— General Sectoral Economics, and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Banking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>— Private Sectoral Economics and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Islamic Law</td>
<td>Training in Islamic Law, Islamic Studies, and</td>
<td>— Religious Jurisprudence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>— Islamic Law</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>— Islamic Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>— Arabic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Education

| Letters and Humanities | Training high school teachers and researchers in cultural areas and national languages | Social Sciences:  
(i) History track;  
(ii) Geography track  
- English Language  
- Professional Education  
- Science and Mathematics  
- Geography  
- History  
- Pushto  
- Dari  
- Arabic  
- German  
- French  
- Journalism  
- Philosophy of Social Sciences  
- Inst. of Geography  
- Inst. of Linguistics  
- Inst. of Anthropology  
- Inst. of Fine Arts |

Faculties and departments at Kabul University have emerged before being fully and sufficiently staffed. This has caused avoidable dispersal and diffusion of efforts. Moreover, because of the absence of interaction between the faculties, many subjects have two or more departments one in each faculty. With proper coordination, this needless duplication can be avoided and teaching and research can be better organized.

Social science curriculum in Afghanistan has been determined by the demands and needs of the country arising from time to time. Education at all levels is financed by the State, and institutions are run by the government. Therefore, the courses reflect, in a way, the priorities of the government. Courses such as public administration, political science, and law were seen to be closely related fields and were the main foci of the curriculum in the Faculty of Law and Political Science.
A decade ago, and prior to the division of powers (into three parts) in the country, much attention was paid to political science and public administration in the curriculum; now more attention is concentrated on law—private and Islamic. Introductory courses in sociology, anthropology (cultural and social), and in general psychology (with an emphasis on applied aspects) were included in the curricula of the schools of Arts and Social Sciences. The curriculum of the Faculty of Economics has been broadened. Much attention is focused there on theoretical as well as applied aspects of economics and its allied fields. Students received instruction in the fields of general national economy; general economic policy; statistics, mathematics and econometrics, social and economic development, general sectoral economy and banking, private sectoral economy and management. A quick glance at the social science courses taught today in Afghanistan would reveal that comparatively lesser attention has been paid—intentionally or unintentionally—to sociology, anthropology, psychology, and population studies. Curriculum development has been very slow in this regard. Some faculties do not even offer any courses in some of these disciplines.

What is needed is a social science curriculum policy with emphasis on local and national issues and problems to help and speed up the development of the country.

Methods of Teaching

The traditional mode of formal lecturing is the main method of teaching in almost all social science courses. No opportunity is provided for discussing the subject matter and issues relevant to the topic of the lecture. Very rarely students bring up problems and questions for discussion. By the very nature of the method, it is one way communication—the professors read or expound their topics and the students listen. Lecture sessions last 40 to 50 minutes depending on the season of the year; shorter in winter and in fall, and longer in spring and in summer.

The method of lecturing prevails in both introductory and advanced courses in all social science disciplines. Usually, the entire course is taught by one lecturer.

The onesidedness of lecturing, often monotonous and boring
with almost no variation in topic treatment, is the main factor causing the students to be passive, and sometimes unattentive, listeners. The students concentrate on note-taking rather than on listening and comprehending, particularly when they feel, or are sure, that the instructor bases his examination mainly on what he had lectured.

In the absence of standard text books in the vernaculars (Dari and Pushto) the lectures cannot be properly supplemented by the printed matter. Thus, the student per force takes recourse to class notes. It is because of this that large number of professors and instructors follow a "lecture dictation" method of teaching. This means that they just dictate their lecture notes. It is harmful, for a major portion of the time at the disposal of the lecturer is spent giving the dictation. Where the text books exist, students are not encouraged to read any additional materials; the students follow the prescribed text rather tenaciously and remain blissfully unaware of the recent developments in their field of specialization. Outside reading and written home assignments are the least occurring learning experiences in the teaching of social science courses in Kabul University and other institutions of Afghanistan.

It is rare to organize any seminars for the senior students. There is no occasion when the students can meaningfully participate in an academic dialogue. They are always at the receiving end.

Teaching of social sciences in Afghanistan leaves much to be desired. The conventional method of lecturing, absence of dependable text books in the vernacular, lack of opportunities for discussion, absence of provision for home work and for field assignments are some of the features which make teaching of social sciences very poor. Pedagogic innovations are badly needed so that properly trained cadre of social scientists can be produced within the country. This needs to be immediately done.

Social Science Teachers

Most teachers in the social sciences come from the university itself; after completing their undergraduate studies in Afghanistan they go abroad for graduate work and return to teach in the University.
The minimum requirements for the recruitment of teachers, is a better grade Bachelor of Arts degree.

In Afghan society, teaching at the university level is considered to be very prestigious and the university teachers are paid more than other officials in the civil service. University positions are, thus, highly coveted. However, Afghan scholars with higher degrees and foreign qualifications seek employment outside the university, in the government and abroad. They are given top administrative positions in the government. The university, thus, becomes the victim of 'brain drain'.

There are six academic ranks for teachers in Kabul University. They are: Pohand : Professor, Pohanwal : Associate Professor, Pohandoy : Assistant Professor, Phanmal : Senior Instructor, Pohanyar : Senior Assistant Instructor and Pohyals : Junior Assistant Instructor.

The University does not employ foreign professors and experts in its regular cadre; they join the University in teaching and advisory capacities through contracts and affiliations. Appointments of foreign professors are made for two-to-four years, depending on the performance of the visiting scholar.

Social Sciences in other Institutions of Higher Education

In addition to Kabul University, there are other institutions teaching social sciences as separate disciplines offering courses that cover some aspects of social sciences. These institutions are: (a) the Institute of Industrial Management, and (b) Higher Teachers’ Colleges.

The Institute of Industrial Management was founded in 1961. It has a three year programme after secondary education. In this Institute, courses are offered in economics, business administration, law, financial management, geography, accounting, and the related fields. More than 65 per cent of the teaching hours are devoted to courses of this nature with considerable emphasis on their application to country’s needs.

The main function of this Institute is training of high level public and business administrators. In addition, the Institute also trains teachers for some vocational high schools, such as the School of Commerce and the School of Public Administration.
Higher Teachers' Colleges functioning as teacher training institutions for middle schools in Afghanistan, teach only history and geography courses in their two year programme after secondary education.

In other institutions offering training programmes after bachelor's degree, such as the School of Public Health, little of social sciences is taught.

Social Sciences at the Primary and Secondary Levels

A survey of the teaching of social sciences will not be complete without stating their position at the primary and secondary levels of education. At present, no more than six hours per week are devoted to the teaching of social sciences (history and geography at the primary level; history, geography, and economics at the secondary level).\(^1\) This constitutes about 10% to 15% of the teaching hours per week. It is worth mentioning that more attention is paid to the teaching of natural sciences (35%) and to the teaching of languages (e.g., Pushto, Dari, English and Arabic) at the secondary level. Languages constitute about 40% of the total teaching hours per week. In two vocational schools of Commerce and of Public Administration, social science courses account for approximately 65 per cent of the total teaching hours.

Social Sciences in Technical Education

Social sciences have also entered the curriculum of technical institutions, particularly at higher level. These institutions teach social sciences in order to equip their students to deal with social situations effectively and satisfactorily. With the exception of the faculty of natural sciences, social sciences are recognized by, and taught in, the schools of agriculture, engineering, medicine, and the Institute of Polytechniques. The School of Agriculture offers courses in economics, management, statistics, and education. Social sciences such as economics, management, psychology and accounting are among the electives at the School of Engineering. The Institute of Polytechniques gives instructions in Islamic civilization and culture,

\(^1\) Economics is taught in grade 9 and history and geography in grades 4-12.
economics, industrial planning, and in management. Social sciences have also entered the schools of medicine and of public health. The term social medicine has gained currency. Social sciences have not yet entered the programmes of technical education at the secondary level.

Some knowledge and understanding of relevant social sciences is essential to all applied scientists. The technical know-how should be supplemented with the social know-how. It is mainly due to this reason that employment opportunities are available more for those who have some social science orientation, in addition to their professional skills.

Social Science Manpower

Reliable statistics are not available about the manpower situation in Afghanistan; this is more so in case of social sciences.

The data gathered by the 1971 Progress Report, published by the Ministry of Planning, gives a rough picture of the country’s manpower position. The report enumerates all those senior social scientists who have done their post-graduation (MA) and doctoral work in foreign universities.

The data relate to 1968; they are reproduced below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fields</th>
<th>PhD</th>
<th>MA</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Business Administration</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economics and Statistics</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geography</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Relations</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linguistics</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Administration</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sociology, Psychology and</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anthropology</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>66</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>226</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To a large extent, the development of social science manpower depends on what the institutions of higher learning, particularly the universities can offer. Kabul University, for
example, has the faculties of Economics, Education, Law, Islamic Studies, and Letters and Humanities; these faculties have produced adequately qualified professionals, who are now engaged in their respective fields of specialization. The following table shows the social science manpower educated in the country; all of them have received education upto BA degree only. The table does not include those graduates who have received their degree from abroad.

**TABLE : 2 SOCIAL SCIENCE MANPOWER TRAINED IN AFGHANISTAN (N=4,350)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institutions</th>
<th>Graduates</th>
<th>Year when course was founded</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Economics</td>
<td>595</td>
<td>1962</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>637</td>
<td>1962</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institute of Management</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>1962</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Islamic Law</td>
<td>512</td>
<td>1952</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letters and Humanities</td>
<td>1,194</td>
<td>1,946</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law and Political Science</td>
<td>1,212</td>
<td>1,939</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**The Status of Social Scientists**

In Afghanistan, social scientists are adequately recognized. There is no evidence to indicate the supremacy of natural scientists over social scientists or a better recognition of particular social science discipline as against the other. They are not differentially treated even in top level appointments.

Presently, employment is not a major problem in Afghanistan. Social scientists get jobs relatively easily in government offices and civil services. Most social scientists are the graduates of Kabul University. However, social science graduates with foreign degrees stand better chance of employment as well as recognition. Among social scientists in this country, sociologists, anthropologists and psychologists are yet to establish themselves in Afghanistan.

**Social Science Journals and Books**

Journal is an established medium of communication among professional social scientists. Several journals are published in Afghanistan. Their content is both informative and thought-provoking. Their orientation is national rather than local. They are mostly multidisciplinary. A large number of these
journals deal with some aspects of Man's social behaviour in a rather descriptive and informative style. Others publish findings of some investigation done in Afghanistan.

The various journals contribute to the dissemination and preservation of social science knowledge in Afghanistan. Also they are forceful means in the development and promotion of social science literacy.

At the present, more than 40 journals are published in Afghanistan. They can be categorized into three classes:

1. Purely social science journals meant for professional groups. They are: Abad, Afghanistan, Afghanistan Bank, Arians, Terbiate, Geographia, Folklore, Hoqooq, Iqtesad, Qaza, Sharaiat Wazhma, and Wesa.

2. Semi-social science journals aiming at the general audience. These journals are: Auqaf EnKeshaf-i-Muhal, Irfan, Kabul, Mermon, Paiani Haq, and Shera.

3. Journals on social problems and issues. They are: Herat, Helmand, Ketab-khana, Nengarhar, Sera Mishat, and Zhowandoon.

Parallel to the development of social science concept and teaching, there has appeared in the last few years a considerable number of publications mainly in the form of text books in the fields of history, geography, economics, statistics, education, sociology, psychology, administration, and political science. No information is, however, available to show the exact number of these books in different disciplines.

Social Science Research: Some Issues and Problems

In Afghanistan, the role of research has been recognized in planning national development programmes. But this is only "in principle" as it were, for research has so far not been utilized for this end. Research is, however, not altogether absent. We may here describe the present pattern of social science research.

Research work in social sciences is carried out mainly in educational institutions. In addition, the Bureau of Statistics of the Ministry of Planning, and the Central Statistical Organization also conduct research.

Kabul University is the only academic institution in which
some social science research is conducted. Research in this institution is carried out by the staff on the faculties of social sciences and of humanities. Besides, the University Research Centre is active in promotion and coordination of research. Research in the other two institutions namely, Bureau of Statistics and Central Statistical Organization is carried out, with the assistance of various foreign countries. Their researches cover a very wide field.

Present situation on the research front cannot be described as satisfactory. There is paucity of trained people, and of funds to support social science research.

Even in the Kabul University, where most of the social scientists are located, the picture is not very encouraging.

The social science faculty, in the year 1973, consisted of 165 persons, of whom 28 were PhDs, 53 MAs and the rest (82) BAs. The number of university graduates in social sciences holding BA degrees totals up to 4,000. But in the absence of a post-graduate programme, they are not fully trained in research skills. Thus there is lack of trained personnel capable of carrying out social research. In all the institutions of higher education only the Faculty of Education offers courses to orient its students to research techniques. Moreover, there is a lack of indigenous material which can be used for teaching. The main bulk of adequate and relatively up-to-date material can be found in foreign languages—English, German, French and others. This material is beyond the reach of the students and the young researchers who lack facility in these languages.

There are only a few social science institutions in the country. They depend entirely on government for funds and other necessary support. These institutions are ill-equipped; they lack machines and personnel and suffer from inadequacy of funds.

There is no special allocation of funds for social research in the governmental budget. Nor is there any other source to fund social research. There is a research centre at the University supported by funds—least stable—received from foreign organizations and foundations. Domestic fund forms only a small portion of research support.

The amount of grants requested and approved for 130 research projects from 1967-72 is shown in Table 3.
TABLE : 3 FUNDS FOR RESEARCH

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Project No.</th>
<th>Funds granted (in Afghan currency)*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1967-68</td>
<td>1—25</td>
<td>Afs. 177,717</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1968-69</td>
<td>25—44</td>
<td>Afs. 206,916</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970-71</td>
<td>54—92</td>
<td>Afs. 448,266</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971-72</td>
<td>93—130</td>
<td>Afs. 369,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gazetteer</td>
<td>Afs. 145,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Afs. 1,441,149</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Afs is Afghan currency. There are 60 Afghanis to a US dollar.

According to a report published by the University Research Centre, out of the 130 research projects, only 20 projects fall within the fields of social investigation. On an average, the cost of each project comes to about Afs. 15,000. There are, in addition to the above, more than 150 projects, which have been completed by university teachers, in various social science fields.

It is amazing that no attention has been paid to the question of research priorities. Researchable themes of national significance have not been identified. No working relationship exists between research institutions, university departments of social sciences, University Research Centre, Bureau of Statistics, Central Statistical Organization, and the users of research.

There is a purpose behind any creativity and so is behind research. Prior to the establishment of University Research Centre and the provision of grants made for research projects, members of the University staff were carrying out research projects with a view to ascending the academic ladder. Their researches have unfortunately served no other purpose.

At present, the participation of the Kabul University is the least in the study of social problems, and the problems of national development of Afghanistan.

It would be remembered that Kabul University which is the major and more developed institution of higher learning does not have facilities and programmes for graduate training. There
are very few Afghans trained abroad in social sciences. There is general lack of research initiative.

Professional Organizations

Institutional social science investigation, in its cultural and historical perspectives, began in 1921 when the first scientific association was founded in Afghanistan. This association was called "Historical Association". Later it was redesignated as "Afghan Historical Society". This Society has been responsible for historical and cultural investigations on Afghanistan. The Society, for realization of its main objectives, performs the following functions:

1. Investigations on historical, cultural, and geographical perspectives of Afghanistan.
2. Compilation of a history of Afghanistan from pre-historic to the present times.
3. Collection of documents and reliable data on historical eras of Afghanistan.
4. Investigations of Afghan folklore and collection of data on other cultural aspects of Afghans.
5. Establishment of relations with cultural institutions and scientific centres.
6. Publishing the findings in its periodicals (Arians and Afghanistan) and/or in other forms (books, pamphlets etc.).

At present, the Society publishes two journals. In addition, it has published over 105 volumes in Dari, Pushto, and English and over 13,500 articles on history, culture, geography, and other aspects of the social life in Afghanistan.

There are other institutions engaged partially in social science investigations in Afghanistan. The following table shows these institutions with the type of functions they perform:
### TABLE 4 PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Function</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Year of Establishment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Afghan Historical Society</td>
<td>Research</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>1921</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. British Institute</td>
<td>Research</td>
<td>Non-Governmental</td>
<td>1973</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Institute of Anthropology</td>
<td>Research &amp; Training</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>1966</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Institute of Geography</td>
<td>Research &amp; Training</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>1967</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Institute of Linguistics</td>
<td>Research &amp; Training</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>1967</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Pushto Academy</td>
<td>Research &amp; Training</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>1938</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. University Research Centre</td>
<td>Research</td>
<td>Governmental</td>
<td>1964</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Centre for Curriculum and Text Book Development</td>
<td>Research &amp; Training</td>
<td>Governmental</td>
<td>1968</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Four of these institutions are within the university concentrating on research and teaching; others are outside of it, engaged in some applied research.

All the institutes and research centres, with the exception of the British Institute, are governmental.

**Research and Government**

Afghan government has, in a way, realized the role of research as a means of action contributing to the overall development of the country. For this reason, some type of research—such as general surveys for solution of practical problems—have been carried out under sectoral programmes at the ministerial level, to meet the needs and objectives of the government. In this regard, research activities are specific to the sector such as commerce, industry, education, etc. For this
purpose, there are research units—departments or directorates, in all ministries bearing titles of research and statistics, statistics and planning or research and planning, etc. engaged in research.

Although there are some large research units such as Kabul University Research Centre, Bureau of Statistics at the Ministry of Planning and the Central Statistical Organization engaged in a wider range of research in the country, yet coordinated and concentrated research programmes and units at the national level do not exist.

The government in its own right finances all research units. Moreover, it draws capital funds from other sources for research purposes. Population and demographic studies including the census of the country at the national level through the Bureau of Statistics, and the collection of statistical indices are among recent developments and measures taken by the government for promotion of social science research.

There is a need for a national policy on science and research.

Research Developments

There are several developments to be noted as indicative of a growing interest in, and capacity for undertaking, research in social sciences.

The University Research Centre and Research Foundation have been developed in Kabul University. The University Research Centre plays the role of counsellor and coordinator for the research activities of the university. The Research Foundation is separate from, but related to, the University Research Centre. The URC is administered by a head and a designated staff. The URF is governed by a Board composed of the representatives of all faculties.

The University Research Centre provides the following services:

1. Advisory assistance for university related personnel from the beginning of a research project.
2. Continuous consultancy to university related personnel on matters pertaining to their research.
3. Assistance in the preparation of research reports for publication.
4. Assistance in the evaluation of all aspects of research.
5. Assistance in obtaining necessary bibliography etc. for research.
6. Coordination of research efforts and dissemination of results of research.
7. Assistance in organizing research seminars in the campus.

The Board of Kabul University Research Foundation is authorized to:

1. Receive gifts (grants) of money for purposes of research.
2. Disburse money received for research.
3. Maintain a separate bank account for such money.
4. Select researchers to whom research grants are to be made.
5. Formulate guidelines for the general operating policies of the Foundation.
6. Formulate policies in regard to expenditure of Foundation funds.
7. Prepare an yearly statement on its working.

A course on research in Social Sciences and Education is now offered in the Faculty of Education at junior level.

The Faculty of Economics is planning to offer a course in research methodology. The main purpose of this course is the inculcation of research mindedness and the establishment of an expanding base of understanding of, and respect for, research. It is designed to help the students write their monographs in the senior classes. A series of seminars has been held, as a part of the programme of the Research Centre, in which a number of interested staff members of different faculties participated. Plans are under way for the continuation of these seminars.

Some of the other programmes of the URC may be mentioned here:

1. The Research Bulletin published by the URC, containing reports of research activities, projects and results in all fields of University interest, will soon be replaced by a monthly Research Journal.
2. The URC is planning to develop positive relations with outside foundations and international organizations to get more grants and assistance, essential for undertaking research.

3. The URC has begun compiling basic social science data. The collection of such data is a significant step in the development of social science efforts.

4. Plans are under way through the URC for exploring possibilities of having overseas research fellows.

5. Demographic survey and population study of Afghanistan is under way through the Ministry of Planning to prepare accurate and reliable information on the population of the country and its demography.

The new trends observable in the country augur well for social science research.
A proper understanding of the development of social sciences in Bangladesh requires one to draw the thread from the time the British rule introduced the Western system of university education in the subcontinent. A university was established in Calcutta in the year 1856, which covered the entire eastern region of the Empire, including the region that now comprises Bangladesh. The University controlled all education, from high school upwards, through a system of affiliated schools and colleges spread all over the region. The number of affiliated colleges offering Bachelor's or Master's degree was, however, quite small. Education in the early years was imparted in the arts, classics, mathematics, and the natural sciences. The department of economics was the only representative of the social sciences during that period. In line with the European tradition of the period of Enlightenment, higher learning was in the realm of philosophy, and Arts degree was being offered for combinations of subjects that could at a time cover the natural sciences, liberal arts, economics, and classics. During that period political science was also included in economics. At the intermediate level, civics was taught as a prelude to political science at the undergraduate level. The BA pass course in economics consisted of three papers: theory and banking,