JAMILUR RAHMAN

## Safeguarding national interest

## International conditionality and our responsibility

MONG the international institutions, The World Bank and IMF (virtually a redundant organisation with no specific job it was created for, after major currencies went floating against gold in 1972) want to offer us golden axe to cut our legs. There have been about 1,560 sick industries, if not dead by now. They suggest us to close our loss-making industries to ensure our dependence, instead of providing any encouragement for taking those industries and state-owned enterprises to profitability before disinvestment. Privatisation is not always a cure. Time should be ripe enough for private sector to build capability and maturity to handle large enterprises with responsibility. How USA bailed out her ailing companies like Chrysler and Lockheed, and U.K. salvaged Rolls Royce is well-known. It is an irony that the industrial revitalisation process that was started by Ziaur Rahman is being reversed to deindustrialisation by Begum Zia's administration. The ravaging high interest rate (at the insistence of World Bank since many years ago) and miserably devalued currency (mostly under IMF pressure) also have deterred local investments in productive sectors for a

It seems IMF now has chosen to work together with the World Bank to raise directly or indirectly such noneconomic issues as environment protection, labour working conditions, labour unionism, subsidy, energy pricing, sector-wise reform, administrative reform, inward foreign investment rules, intellectual property, free trade, container cargo scanning before shipment to some destinations and many other matters, not at all related to the mandate given to those institutions time of loan negotiation, which need not be in agenda. They gather industrial, social and economic market intelligence for use by the industrialised countries, and sometimes want to chastise us if there are any practices not

N the annals of political history,

Bangladesh stands out uniquely

as having lived under three flags

in one century. But quite reasonably

Bangladesh could have escaped the

second flag if only the leaders had the

vision to realise the political absurdity

of holding together the two parts of the

country separated by some twelve

hundred miles on the basis of religion

only. In 1971 when Pakistan split apart

creating Bangladesh, it was clear that

the way India was divided in 1947 was

not the fitting solution, the author

efforts of the great Bengali leaders

which achieved its cumulative finality

in the achievement of Bangladesh the

author would rank their contribution

in the following order, " If the first

runner in the relay race of the Bengali

nationalism under Muslim leadership

was Sher-e- Bangla Fazlul Huq, the

baton changed hands to Suhrawardy,

then to Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur

Rahman, the last runner who crossed

victory line in pegging the flag of a new

state on the political map of the

official documents of the pre-Partition

days, which were not available for a

long time, the author placed the rising

position of Suhrawardy close to the

ranks held by Jinnah and Nehru. He

said; "On the eve of Partition of India,

Suhrawardy, the premier of Bengal

came to the political spotlight of India

as the architect of the possible third

independent state, the Free State of

Bengal, side by side with India and

Pakistan with support of Viceroy Lord

Mountbatten and Jinnah." In 1947, the

Bengali Muslims under the leadership

of Suhrawardy failed to fulfil their

dream of becoming the masters of the

undivided Bengal, but it became true

to a large extent in 1971 under the

leadership of Bangabandhu Sheikh

Mujibur Rahman when they achieved

the independence of Bangladesh, a

part of Bengal.Suhrawardy did not

succeed to achieve his dream of united

Bengal, but his vision was " most

statesmanlike", mentions Nicholas

Mansergh in his book, The Transfer of

*Power.* History, to be correct, has yet

remained rather uncharitable to

The author has made a constructive

 $perceive\,Surhawardy\,as\,a\,statesman.$ 

Sifting through the classified

Commenting on the collective

remarks in his prefatory notes.

Now WTO is there and any of our serious right attempts are likely to be pre-empted. Our own lobbyists might make the government sign unnecessary papers or pacts prematurely without proper understanding of the underlying mechanism and implications of the present globalisation campaign that will weaken our position in taking development initiatives. The small amount of foreign exchange we are earning by export is practically lavished on luxury and non-essential import, of course, except for some

Bangladesh is a small country in size

but it is not small in population which is about 114 million or so, accounting for one of the highest population density (of over 900 persons per esq.) in the world. The per capita GDP is less than US\$400 even after more than 30 vears of independence. The total outstanding foreign loan is US\$16,276 million (as of 2001-2 fiscal year) as against annual(2001-2) export of US\$5,986 million and import of US\$8,540 million, accounting for merchandise trade deficit of US\$2,554

The potential of expansion of export always lies in selective industrial products that any country has special, natural or well-prepared advantage in. As to Bangladesh, we failed and are failing to build up our capability in any sector that can earn us sufficiently to invest in any such potential area. May we ask the government whether it will do the hard and learned homework required, or remain comfortable with lip service and superficiality?

essential commodities. We have been failing to set aside enough foreign exchange for investment. After liberation, there were restrictions on import of automobiles larger than 1200 cc. to keep the import cost low. Ziaur Rahman himself rode 1200cc cars. We used to assemble cars and other vehicles at Gandhara Industries (now Pragati Industries) long before liberation, when South Korea and Malaysia that now make several types of vehicles, did not think of assembling, not to speak of manufacturing automobiles. We may think of Singapore, if not Japan, to build our confidence as to what a nation can do if and only if it happens to be endowed with willing eadership. I think, we are moving backward too fast and creating big road blocks on the way to desired prosperity knowingly, or out of ignorance, or for

million (2001-2002), which is met by Bangladeshi expatriate remittance of US\$2,501 million and foreign loan of US\$963 million, and foreign grant of US\$479 million, showing a balance of US\$365 million after adjusting payment for service and investment. The cumulative disbursed grant since 1971 to June 2003 is US\$18,458 million, while the borrowing in this period is US\$20,694 million. Irresponsible fiscal and monetary management brought down the average exchange rate of US\$1 = Tk7.3 in 1971-2 to Tk57.9 to a US Dollar, a 693.15% devaluation, which could not be imagined if Ziaur Rahman's administration could continue for a decade or more. We could convince him of adverse effect of unnecessary devaluation under pres-

With a jugglery with figures, the

portraved to be healthy. By no measure, this state of economy can have potential of supporting any real development. The export items like readymade garment, frozen fish, leather, tea and jute products, which amounts to US\$5,389 million, accounting for 90  $per\,cent\,of\,the\,export,\,has\,limited\,or\,no$ substantial scope of expansion even if Bangladesh concludes Free Trade Agreements at this stage of technological and industrial capability under present world scenario.

The potential of expansion of export always lies in selective industrial products that any country has special natural or well-prepared advantage in As to Bangladesh, we failed and are failing to build up our capability in any sector that can earn us sufficiently to invest in any such potential area. May we ask the government whether it will do the hard and learned homework required, or remain comfortable with lip service and superficiality?

Mismanagement of education institutions and exploitation of students for political purpose has been a cause of tremendous drainage of foreign exchange for studies abroad at even school and college level i.e. text book level. We can improve our educational quality to international standard, if not higher, in at least nontechnical fields easily and can even reverse the flow.

The domestic and foreign undesirable TV programmes of violent and indecent natures are adding to violence in the society and causing social and cultural pollution. These can be checked for the sake of social health and order, without curbing rightful press freedom. Degradation in social value system is an irreparable loss to the society which money cannot compensate. Let us make our hard decisions and take responsibility for future wellbeing of the society.

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# Opposition finds a lot to pounce on

WEEKEND NOTES

T has been a turbulent week. People demonstrated against custodial deaths; law enforcers themselves faced charges of mugging; and the much lamented

price-hike continued to bother buyers in general.

The price spiral has clearly forced the government to its 'back foot'. The commerce minister appealed to the traders to refrain from 'cut-throat' profiteering, but the loud appeal has not made much of an impact. It sounded like a last-ditch attempt to put a lid on the soaring prices of essentials --some of which have already made a premature exit from people's list of daily necessities.

Not surprisingly, extortionists and middlemen have been held responsible for the unusual shooting up of prices. If that were the case, a pure law and order approach will be necessary to curb the illegal activities. But it is not clear what the law enforcers are doing to set things right.

For obvious reasons, the price-hike is seen by the opposition as an opportunity to add steam to its anti-government tirade. So the government continues to take the

Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina has said the prices cannot come down when the government 'takes charge of business', instead of devoting itself to the welfare of people. Her rhetoric is laced with references to some other 'reversals' that the government has suffered since coming to power in 2001

That said, law and order remains a greater worry. Even a cursory glance at newspaper reports should reveal how the situation is going from bad to worse. And there has been a public outcry against the slide. The death of a young man in Khilgaon Police Station brought the locals to the streets and the police administration had to go for a wholesale withdrawal of its personnel from the station. Things were only made worse when an allegation of mugging was brought against some policemen

Now, the charges that police are facing are grave enough to elicit a quick response from the government. It has made an interesting move-- inter-departmental agencies have been asked to keep an eye on the cops. The step amounts to installing a kind of control-mechanism to watch the activities of police, though it is not known what the decision-makers are precisely trying to achieve.

It is difficult to say whether the government is doing the right thing to deal with the errant cops. But there is no doubt that it has to do something. People are getting increasingly frustrated with the performance of law enforcers--a point made amply clear by the fact that they are organising rallies and processions to protest 'police excesses'. The direct participation of people in the condemnation of police has added a new dimension to the law and order issue. The protests, regrettably, have not always been constructive. People are taking

the law in their hands, particularly while dealing with suspected criminals. Lynching of such criminals is one sure sign of citizens asking for more than their due role in enforcement of the law. It is neither morally acceptable, nor legally tenable, and can only lead to further brutalisation of society.

The law enforcers are the ones who have to be blamed when mob justice threat ens to blow apart the rule of law. After all, people are reacting violently to crimes only pecause they do not trust police.

The godfather issue is also very much alive. Chief Whip Delwar Hossain has filed a Tk 100 crore defamation suit against three central leaders of the AL. That is one of the countermoves made by the BNP leaders whose political and social credentials came under the shadow of the AL list of godfathers recently. The AL has, however claimed that it is not scared of the legal battles ahead.

The foreign policy of the government came under attack at an AL press briefing on Tuesday. The AL leaders observed that the government's policy has created a situation in which Bangladesh is left with very few friends among the nations. They also claimed that the CHT peace accord and the Ganges water sharing treaty with India, both signed during the past AL regime, brightened the image of the country.

Jamilur Rahman is a Assistant Editor of The Daily Star

lum and methodology of teaching.

Bureaucracy is regarded as a hin-

drance to entrepreneurship, so they

are asking the public to offer sugges-

tion what needs to be changed for a

freer and more deregulated society.

There is a feeling that the government

should loosen up and be less paternal-

istic and get the people to fend for

themselves. The state owned corpora-

tions are being slowly privatised,

accepting the fact, that the state is not

the most efficient owners of enter-

prise, a role that should be taken up by

private sector.

## Singapore: On the remake

T feels a bit strange to think that model like Singapore Inc. has run out of steam. This tiny city-state which has been over the years an envy of many countries is due for an economic overhaul. The old dynamics that was responsible for its enormous success does no longer keep its economic cogs turning. Singapore Inc is no longer an easy sell to the Western world. And what is more bizarre is that it has globalisation to blame -- ironically enough the very concept that it championed since its inception.

When Lee Kuan Yew took over the reins of an independent country in 1965 the odds were that it may not survive. There was no reason to be optimistic then, the country had no natural resources and no manufacturing base to speak of, it had nothing to offer for trade. The only thing going for it was its excellent port facility built by the British -- a conduit for trade and transshipment to other countries in the region. In order to survive they had to build an economic model that was sustainable for the long term, and build it fast to create jobs for a population of two million. This was a tough call and a challenge of gigantic proportions. Lee Kuan Yew, the intrepid founder

and chief architect of modern Singapore had a vision to offer to this fledgling city state.. He realised that the only way the country could survive was by opening up its doors and linking Singapore with mature economies like Western Europe and US. And also to act as an economic hub for the East Asian economies. This was ambitious, especially when he had virtually nothing to begin with, after having just severed relationship with Malaysia. But not for a moment despondent, he set about inviting multinationals to set up their manufacturing entities. He personally went marketing, visiting the head offices and CEO's of global companies and convinced them that Singapore was the right place for them to set up a cheaper manufacturing operations, supported by an excellent port facilities to ship their products out to rest of the world. He knew however that in order to attract the global companies he had to offer, a rule of law, best of breed infrastructure and a disciplined workforce. Singapore needed to provide a comprehensive enabling environment for the international companies, to set up shop. The result was phenomenal, they came in droves because Singapore offered not only a cheaper cost base but also the right physical, legal and financial infrastructure, the best one could find in Asia and readily comparable to Western standards.

Singapore also started building its own industries, there was not much of private capital so the state jumped in with its monetary reserves and helped create impressive corporates like Singapore Airlines, Singtel, PSA Corporation, Singapore Technologies, DBS Bank and more. They were run efficiently and unlike state owned enterprises in other parts of Asia, these corporations made money while keeping a squeaky clean reputation. It used its reserves wisely, built from high savings albeit some of it mandatory and created substantial investment funds like Temasak Holdings and GIC. Today Temasak owns 21 per cent of domestic market capitalisation and GIC manages around US\$100billion of nvestments overseas.

The idea of a regional economic hub also came to fruition. Singapore built the right infrastructure to cater to the business and consumer needs of countries like Malaysia, Indonesia and Thailand. It provided efficient banking facilities and trade links. Consumers from the region traveled to Singapore to attend to their medical needs as it offered a high ethical and professional standard of service. Singapore also turned itself into a shopper's paradise

and a food haven. While the husbands



from the region cut their business deals, the wives shopped and dined

All this was created in just over thirty years, not bad. Commendable achievements! So what went wrong Truth is, nothing that Singapore did was ill conceived, just that rest of Asia has caught up with them. Today global companies wanting to set up in Asia ex-Japan, be it a representative, sales or manufacturing entity, has a choice. It could be Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia (maybe) or Singapore in South East Asia or Hong Kong, Taiwan, Korea and the inevitable China in North Asia. They all now offer an acceptable set of infrastructure and a reasonable enabling environment, which for many years was almost a monopoly of Singapore.

When cost becomes an overriding consideration. China wins hands down. large proportion of existing manufacturing operations of global companies from other Asian countries. The shift of manufacturing from Singapore to China has been relentless and is partly responsible for the current high unemployment and low growth. But all is not lost. When it comes to a decision of spreading the risk that is not putting all your eggs in one basket, in this case China, Singapore features well. Despite huge advances in China, it still remains unpredictable, multinationals prefer to cover this risk by considering stable Singapore as a regional headquarter or sometime even establish a manufacturing unit irrespective of its high cost base. High productivity also favours Singapore compared to China Notwithstanding, Singapore has suffered badly from the advent of China as a global manufacturing base.

Other factors that have gone against this city-state is its inability to offer scale in manufacturing, after all it has a population base of only about four million which also restricts potential in domestic market.

So how is Singapore remaking itself? As one would expect, the country has set about tackling this problem with the same intensity and fervour that it had adopted to build a viable nation back in 1965. The leadership openly recognises the need for changes and is constantly having heated but productive public and private debates. There seem to be no attempt to hide or sweep things under the carpet. There is almost a revolutionary zeal and acceptance to re-invent Singapore Inc that would rather face up to the new challenges than be extinct. Nothing seems to be sacred. There seems to be a new found determination, everything that needs changing will be changed. Special highpowered cells have been set up to review, discuss and recommend.

Singapore has accepted that it can no longer be a serious contender for manufacturing. It now wants to be a knowledge based society. So at the high end they are building infrastructure and an enabling environment for creating a hub for research and design Biotech and Infocom are a major focus. As before, the state is providing the initial impetus by investing in physical infrastructure and seeding some of these projects. Multinationals have gradually begun to follow in its footsteps. Business cost has been reduced, through tax breaks, reduction in mandatory pension contributions and depressed market condition

has also seen to a fall in office rentals.

allowed bar top dancing, something that wouldn't raise an evebrow in other open societies, but was a big deal in Singapore. Sexuality was a problem in getting government jobs, but no more, gay community is no longer shunned Film censorship is being relaxed. The government wants to cultivate Sports have been a big deficient area innovation, creativity and entreprefor Singapore, so it has decided to open neurship. They have recognised that up sports school and train and encour-Singaporeans are not very entrepreage world class excellence from a very neurial by nature, a legacy perhaps of early age. Education is also targeted: the schooling system, so they have set Hosting best of breed foreign tertiary about overhauling the school curricu-

> Lee Kuan Yew, who just turned 80 still serves the government as Senior Minister in the cabinet. He is a major influence and is known for his ability to see future trends, after all he got it right the last time. Goh Chok Tong, the current prime minister is scheduled to hand-over to his deputy. Lee Hsien Loong, son of Lee Kuan Yew. Touch, nepotism perhaps, but a first from Cambridge Trinity in mathematics, son Lee is no duffer. He has worked his way up through the political ranks and appears confident and ready to see Singapore through the 21st century. Whether he will out do Dad, only time

institutions offering pedagogic and

curriculum excellence.

ously banned item, is now about to be

freely available. It wants an FTA with

rest of ASEAN and other nations on

bilateral basis: A recognition of a need

to access other markets on competitive

terms, its domestic market being too

On a lighter note they have recently

small for leveraging future growth.

Ghalib Chaudhuri is a former investment banker. He

### Singapore recently signed a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with the US, enabling unhindered trade to grow between the two countries. A consequence of this, chewing gum, a previ-LAVEANCE DAY

Dr. Rubaiul Murshed

#### All health information to keep you up to date Caring for your thyroid

 $Thy roid\ Disease\ could\ affect\ thousands\ of\ Bangladesh is\ and\ many\ of\ them\ don't$ know it. The disease masquerades as a variety of medical troubles, which are so delicate they can often be missed. Underactive or overactive thyroid conditions may go undiagnosed for months or even years and it becomes known as the hidden disease.

The body contains two kinds of glands: exocrine and endocrine. Exocrine glands secret their products into ducts. The ducts then carry the secretions into body cavities or to the body's surface. Endocrine glands, by contrast, secret their products into the extracellular space. Since they secret internally, the term endo', meaning 'within', is used. Thyroid is one of the endocrine glands and all the endocrine glands together make up the 'endocrine system'. The secretions of endocrine glands are called hormones (hormone means 'set in motion'). The thyroid gland sits at the base of the throat and is the body's trendsetter. It weighs only about 25 grams yet its significance to the body is enormous considering the hormones it secretes are essential to all growth and metabolism. An underactive thyroid refers to a condition where the thyroid gland does not produce enough thyroid hormone. If it's underactive the body function slows down, if it's overac-

Symptoms of thyroid conditions include fatigue (most prevalent), puffiness round the eyes, cold intolerance, cold hands or feet, dry and sparse hair, dry skin, weight gain, poor memory, gradual change in personality, constipation, no stamina, prolonged menstruation, loss of temper or extreme irritability especially after exertion, enlarged neck, trouble waking up in the morning, depres $sion, low sex \, drive, headaches, slow \, speech, \, dull \, facial \, expression, hoarse \, voice.$ 

When a goitre (an enlargement of the thyroid gland) or other symptoms lead a physician to suspect a thyroid condition, blood test will be done to measure thyroxine and TSH (Thyroid Stimulating Hormone) levels in the blood. If there is a problem, treatment involves taking thyroid hormone replacement in the form of a tablet that is often taken daily for life. When the thyroid becomes over-active surgery is required to remove most of the thyroid gland through an incision

There is a simple neck check that you can do for yourself at home to make sure, your thyroid is in good shape'. You take a glass of water and a hand-held mirror. Just take a sip of water, tilt your head back and watch carefully between the Adam's apple (the laryngeal prominence formed by the two laminae of the thyroid cartilage) and the base of the throat. If you see any bumps or bulges, or you have any of the symptoms that have mentioned above, it's a good idea to see your doctor or surgeon straightaway.

Don't exercise just before going to bed or you may have trouble falling asleep;

Next: Stroke: Can this be prevented?

Premier of Bengal

research on Sher-e -Bangla Fazlul Huq and placed his position in Bengal in these words: "After Sirajuddaulah, the last Nawab of Bengal lost his throne, Fazlul Hug assumed the role of the uncrowned king of Bengal in modern times when he held the office of the

After the achievement of Bangladesh, a high watermark of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's statesmanship was reflected when he established himself as the "architect and witness of the

The stature of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was eloquently focused when he, in his magnanimity, granted clemency to 195 war criminals of Pakistan. "There are only a few instances in world history where a surrendered army were shown generosity by an authority, which came to power", the author

Analysing the turmoil periods of Ziaur Rahman and Ershad, the author Zia was asked to play a legitimate rescue role while the country was plunged into a political upheaval, Ershad seemed snatching away, almost stealing a new robe of democracy put on by Bangladesh and asleep

**BOOK REVIEW** 

**Bangladesh Past and Present** by Salauddin Ahmed A.P.H. Publishing Corporation New Delhi in association with Paragon Publishers, Dhaka 367 pages. Taka: 950

in secured home". The stigma of backdoor-entry into country's political arena by toppling an elected government aside, Ershad's lacklustre man management, autocratic and repressive measures" and archaic political style was no match for the popularity of Zia and his political party BNP, although notably both of them originated from the same military establishment . Ershad the longestserving President of nearly nine years was ousted through popular uprising, but the deep scar that he inflicted during his rule in nation's psyche took time to recover.

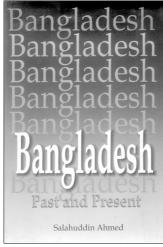
The emergence of Khaleda Zia and Sheikh Hasina, the woman leaders of the two mainstream political parties, BNP and Awami League, marks a watershed in a third world country like Bangladesh with a preponderance of Muslim population. The dynastic lineage, no doubt, was a good launching pad for their entry into country's political stage, but they too in their turn proved their political mettle in no uncertain manner.

The hartal culture, a ritualistic aberration for long in nation's bodypolitic, is 'not only an expensive political strategy, which the country just cannot afford but also a cruelty to an average citizen." It is now a classic storyline in our paradoxical bodypolitic: denounce hartal when in power for its ruinous impact on nation's economy but when in opposition justify it as democratic right. Surprisingly both the political parties, BNP and Awami League display same attitude in similar situations on a number of issues that concerns the

The book is characterised by the author's unerring eye for the current socio-political spectrum of the nation.

deficiency in the development of parliamentary democracy in Bangladesh is that the top agenda of the opposition party is simply to unseat the government without any wellexplained issue or policy and would prefer to settle issues on the streets instead on the floor of the parliament.

The page-turning chapter "Changing phases of the Bengali nationalism leading to the Bengali Muslim identity" is analytically outstanding. The the character of Bengali nationalism over a period of a century. Like any other nation in Asia, the author points out, "The Bengali Muslims are passing through the process of searching for their identity. They are both Bengalis



and Muslims." The author expressed: "One relates to his faith, and as such transcendental, which has no geographical boundary, whereas the other is bound with his ethnicity and country". Interestingly, the author finds some resemblance between the Muslims of Indonesia and Bangladesh in their search for a proper identity. He writes "Since gaining independence both Indonesia and Bangladesh experimented with secular nationalist ideologies. Due to the global effect of resurgence of Islam, the Muslims of Indonesia and Bangladesh wish to combine their appeal towards their indigenous identity with the common ideology of the world Muslim community". The comparative substance of the Bengali nationalism and Bangladeshi nationalism leads the author to conclude: "After the evolution of the Bangladeshi nationalism, the continuation of the Bengali nationalism in the political sense is simply non-existent.

Given the analytical stretch of the book, if somewhat abbreviated, what appears to have slipped of the writer to explain is the impulse to switch over to sun (similar to Japan)from moon as the logo in the national flag.

Liberation from alien rule albeit at a great price was a splendid chapter in nation's history, many of the hopes the people pinned to that gain were yet to

Stumbling on buried treasure desolate aspects of today's society, but there is at the end a speck of hope as the real meaning of freedom emerges. The supreme tragedy of Bangladesh has been the mutual enmity between the two mainstream political parties, BNP and Awami League that puts nation's progress in serious jeopardy. Peace and reconciliation between the two parties are the crowning prize still to be won as the final proof of material widom. To label critics as unpatriotic is past their peak. Surely after inde pendence it was a new dawn, a new script: but whether our leaders could prove themselves equal to the tasks is a question mark with an asterisk. We are in a kind of time wrap. It is time for widespread, sustained and far-sighted

public dialogue, so we can take a hand

to shaping our collective future. High political temperature in the country vitiated by partisan politics with its divisive and corrosive effects on the national psyche clearly denies objective appraisal of the ground realities. The indulgence of the inexactitude that we often encounter in the so called political histories can be corrected and put in context from the plethora of undeniable fact information the book provides. For anyone who regains in the fact that has meant the recovery of the history of Bangladesh this book is like stumbling on buried treasure. The book should be appreciated by scholars who are sensitive to context vet committed to the generalised historical explanations emanating from a case-oriented holistic approach that can better accommodate problems of multiple causation. A book of this genre dovetailing the past and present should squarely help a reader's understanding of the dialectics of the present scenario of Bangladesh in correct

It is a dignified, serious piece of work and the style is engaging. The author narrates the political development without giving in to personal emotions or partisanship, he proves himself a master navigator in the choppy socio-political weather that most often characterises our understanding of history, past or present. The portrayal of political landscape is both compelling and utterly consistent with what we know of the scenario today. The book though is primarily political, it provides well-researched snapshot narrative of the land, people culture and economy of Bangladesh. It does not claim to be comprehensive but it is comprehensible and that is much more important. It is vital that citizens understand the historical forces they experience. The book focuses that aim explicitly. A valuable bibliography containing the names and reference of books and documents are of immense help for further