

Safeguarding national interest

International conditionality and our responsibility

MUSTAFIZUR RAHMAN
Among 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.

up to their wishes or advantages. 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 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.

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 vehicle, did not think of assembling, not to speak of manufacturing automobiles.

Stumbling on buried treasure

second liberation of the country". 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 mentions.

Observantly, he writes: "A serious 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 well-explained issue or policy and would prefer to settle issues on the streets instead on the floor of the parliament.

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".

Opposition finds a lot to pounce on

WEEKEND NOTES

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

cies 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 errand 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.

Singapore: On the remake

GHALIB CHAUDHURI
It feels a bit strange to think that even a very successful economic 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.



The government wants to cultivate innovation, creativity and entrepreneurship. They have recognised that Singaporeans are not very entrepreneurial by nature, a legacy perhaps of the schooling system, so they have set about overhauling the school curriculum and methodology of teaching. Bureaucracy is regarded as a hindrance to entrepreneurship, so they are asking the public to offer suggestion 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 paternalistic and get the people to fend for themselves. The state owned corporations are being slowly privatised, accepting the fact, that the state is not the most efficient owners of enterprise, a role that should be taken up by private sector.

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.



Dr. Rubail Murshed

All health information to keep you up to date

Caring for your thyroid

Thyroid Disease could affect thousands of Bangladeshis 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 secrete their products into ducts. The ducts then carry the secretions into body cavities or to the body's surface. Endocrine glands, by contrast, secrete their products into the extracellular space. Since they secrete 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 overactive it speeds up.

materialise. The book reflects some 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 wisdom. To label critics as unpatriotic is past their peak. Surely after independence 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 warp. It is time for widespread, sustained and far-sighted public dialogue, so we can take a hand to shaping our collective future.

the author made a constructive 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 Huq assumed the role of the uncrowned king of Bengal in modern times when he held the office of the Premier of Bengal.

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.