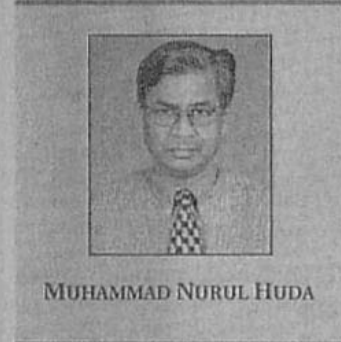


State action, civil society and human security



MUHAMMAD NURUL HUDA

THE concept of security, especially human security, is relevant for regions like South Asia where states like Bangladesh are still grappling with issues like nation-state formation.

The state is the primary actor in international relations and territorial security of the state is privileged over the security of the individual.

Conceptual notions Human security concepts identifies and considers environmental pollution, hunger, poverty, violent social and political conflict, economic imbalances, drugs, organised crime, discrimination on grounds of gender, religion, race as threats to human security.

action for all.

There is a need to seek a balance between the political and economic aspects of human security. Coherence in conceptualising human security will help in channelising research and action in related areas.

There is perhaps a need to make distinction between issues that lend themselves to state action and those that fall within the realm of social reform.

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the problems will be addressed with the result that the phenomenon of gender discrimination will remain a grave concern despite exhortation of gender equality in state policy.

Human security and state security Since there are differing priorities of human security in different regions, the debate on state security versus human security becomes pertinent.

such a scenario, the state itself becomes a threat to human security perpetrating crimes against its citizens. Here, the state is unable and often unwilling to cope with the market forces.

The main concern should be to establish the credibility and legitimacy of the state and its institutions. This may be achieved by a pragmatic and implementable policy, institutionalised approach and a sincere and transparent implementation by credible people.

major areas of concern for governance are provision of basic civic amenities, public distribution system, health, communications and transportation, housing, education. People must feel and see government and not just hear of it.

The anti-state and pro-civil society debate originates from the lack of faith in the capacity and intention

employment of forces to prevent transborder terrorism and for confronting the insurgent-smugglers nexus.

Our strategy in tackling internal security has been purely of crisis management. Structural changes are required in decision making process to ensure independent functioning of law enforcement agencies and a holistic policy incorporating political, economic and law and law and order aspects.

The desired course

In the absence of an alternative arrangement, the argument to move away from state capacity can actually be counter productive as it may result in the breakdown of existing structures of representation and governance.

State sovereignty is a reality of the contemporary international order and strategies to achieve human security must contend with this reality. Debates that ask for distancing away from the state do not contribute much either to the concept or strategies of human security as they predicate the achievement of human security on the marginalisation of the state.

Muhammad Nurul Huda is Former Secretary and IGP

STRAIGHT LINE

In the absence of an alternative arrangement, the argument to move away from state capacity can actually be counter productive as it may result in the breakdown of existing structures of representation and governance.

where there is a stress on mechanisms of managing political and economic issues through cooperative approach, in Bangladesh the issues of territorial sovereignty still predominate. Unfortunately, the processes of nation building are still in progress in our situation.

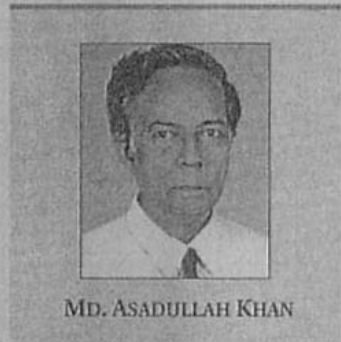
of the state to ensure the security of the individual. While the anti-state discourse expresses the popular discontent with the state of affairs in the country, the accompanying argument or posture of moving away from state needs closer examination.

Economic development and security management are essential ingredients of governance and while good governance is a prime requirement everywhere, it is a key element in a volatile environment.

There is no denying that politics have eroded the law and order machinery, law enforcement capacity and the legal framework to deal with security situation.

Our response to every internal security situation must not be an escalation in the type or number of security forces. The point to be understood is that increase in numbers or types of forces is no substitute for efficiency.

Is the country heading towards a disaster?



MD. ASADULLAH KHAN

THE unilateral appointment of Justice M.A. Aziz as CEC and two other commissioners of the EC, one belonging to the commission itself in some capacity and whose unflinching loyalty to some power blocks has always been an epic story and the other, a retired judge of the High Court, who after retirement, people allege, had become too much aligned to the ruling alliance's activities, had, to certain extent, shattered the hope of a free and fair parliamentary election in the country.

defence these high-ups in the government have are very potential in the sense that his is a constitutional position and the government has hardly anything to do unless he resigns himself.

People are inclined to think that this is a signal clear and open to all except CEC Aziz himself. Appallingly, confrontation, as people now see is the oxygen of his existence.

With the EC again violating the Supreme Court verdict relating to preparation of voter list, it is courting public wrath that might erupt in a violent storm engulfing the whole country.

its present form and set up fly thick and fast, the last thing people could expect is not a fair election. With election due in January, 2007 after the tenure of the alliance government expires in October next, voter list, as experts opine, must be ready by November which seems to be a Herculean job for the present EC to complete in just five months from now.

Nevertheless with dialogue on reforms of the EC and caretaker Government grinding to a halt, it seems hardly possible that elections could be held in January, 2007

The country has burst into protest rallies demanding a credible election with all the political parties participating in it in a spirit of accommodation. Before the protest degenerates into a vicious game of violence, good sense must prevail.

As per the constitutional obligations. The constitution further mandates that the parliament shall stand dissolved after expiry of five years, completed on October 28 and unless the country gets involved in a war or faces natural disaster for which holding of elections become impossible, then elections must be held in just 90 days from the day the caretaker government takes charge of the administration.

What people further apprehend is that with elections held in such messy situation through gagging public opinion and with rigging devices that would inevitably follow, efforts to meet constitutional obligations will be a plain farce repeating the sad drama the nation witnessed in Justice Sadeque Brand election in February 2001 and Magura Brand election conducted by Justice Rouf

in 1996. Rather than soothing the festering malaise, psychic wounds and resentment flowing over the country on party levels, it will trigger violence may be in a scale that people fear to comprehend.

The British High Commissioner in Bangladesh Mr. Anwar Chaudhury in his recent meeting with the Reporters Unity has stressed the need for a credible election and a government brought to power in a transparent way that could only spur development and progress, eradicate corruption and root out the seeds of extremist ideas and militancy.

Not unusual in democratic parlance as the cynics in the administration continue to defy all prognosis, the country has burst into protest rallies demanding a credible election with all the political parties participating in it in a spirit of accommodation.

Terrorism and its glorification

SAAD S. KHAN

PROMINENT terrorist Abu Musaab Zarqawi was killed recently in Iraq and the provincial legislature in Pakistani province of Punjab held prayers for him.

The question is which of the attacks was terrorism and which one was an act in self-defence, or is it that both the sides were committing terrorism. In that case, calling terrorism as self-defence would constitute, if not "glorifying terrorism", then at least "abetting and condoning terrorism".

True, neither the Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert nor his Palestinian counterpart Ismael Hanieh, are British nationals, but the immunity of heads of state from crimes against humanity is a story of the yore now.

The new law in Britain, however, is a seminal landmark in humanity's quest for peace and justice. The acrimonious debate in the months between the introduction of this bill in the House of

Commons to its reluctant approval at the House of Lords, sometimes jeopardised the fate of this bill but it is a positive omen that it saw the light of the day as a law.

As for glorifying terrorism and terrorists, one may argue, that the statements of Bush and Blair in support of known tyrants and criminals--- like calling Islam Karimov a "champion of freedom", Tunisia's Benali as "island of stability" and Egypt's Mubarak as "our friend"--- fall in the scope of "glorifying", and thus at least Mr Blair has, by criminalising this glorification, unwittingly put his own post-retirement liberty at risk.

Only shortly after this new terrorism law came into force, a damning evidence came against Blair's personal role in financing terrorism--- No, nothing related to Palestine, Iraq or Guantanamo Bay. It is about Uzbekistan where Blair financed terrorism.

There is no big deal when a government sacks a public servant

RETURN OF MORTAL REMAINS OF BIR SHRESTHA Ft. Lt.

SHAHEED MOTIUR RAHMAN

An appeal

Let this occasion be a turning point

KHOSHED ALAM

AFTER a lapse of long 35 years the mortal remains of Bir Shrestha Ft. Lt. Shaheed Motiur Rahman are about to come to the soil of his dear Bangladesh.

The Ministry of the War of Liberation Affairs, its State Minister Md Rezaul Karim, MP, and his team of officials have made all preparations for smooth repatriation of the remains of Bir Shrestha Ft. Lt. Shaheed Motiur Rahman.

A delegation of six members is already in Pakistan to bring back the remains. Let their mission be a success. The conclusion of the real burial of the Bir Shrestha Ft. Lt. Shaheed Motiur Rahman with proper religious rites in the soil of his own land will be a great achievement.

Can this great occasion of home-coming of the mortal remains of Bir Shrestha Ft. Lt. Motiur Rahman not be a turning point for the nation at this critical juncture? It is hoped that the Honourable Prime Minister will personally receive the mortal remains at Zia International Airport.

I am suggesting this to bring the two main political parties closer which may bring national understanding. Let the leaders of the government rise up to the occasion without having any vanity, or a sense of defeatism at this moment.

The nation deserves masterly handling of the present critical situation in order to ensure smooth holding of the upcoming election with participation of all political parties for stability and national prosperity.

May Allah bless us all and rest the soul of Bir Shrestha Ft. Lt. Shaheed Motiur Rahman in eternal peace.

The author is former Finance Secretary and former Governor of Bangladesh Bank.

into such ruthless apparatus in Uzbekistan--- which is more than the total British aid to Sub Saharan Africa--- that is leading to swelling in the ranks of West-haters.

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True, this glorifying clause can be applied selectively in his own country, when Imam of Finsbury Park Mosque of London, Abu Hamza, gets seven years imprisonment for inciting hatred in his speeches, and Nick Griffin, the head of the nationalist and white supremacist BNP party, is set free for lack of evidence on more or less the same charges of inciting racial hatred.

What happened in the tiny town of Andijan in Uzbekistan last year, when 745 unarmed civilians, most of them women and children, were massacred for protesting against mock trials of 21 local youths for having traded with their counterparts in Kyrgyzstan? It was a crime against humanity.

This means that the United States and its allies are not only condoning terrorism and crimes against humanity but actively supporting and financing it. As for the UK, \$500 million worth of public money has been channelled

The writer is the Middle East Editor of Cambridge Review of International Affairs and a widely read analyst on politics, governance and human rights in the Muslim world.