

Himalayas : Handle with Care

A major confrontation between developers and ecology conscious experts is brewing up in the foothills of the Himalayas.

The only hitch is that the proposed dam sits on an earthquake zone. Experts say, this area is bound to suffer a severe earthquake during the life time of the dam.

On the one side of the project are the politicians, developers, engineers, sub-contractors and the huge and powerful lobby of those who are likely to profit from the construction of the project.

What it all means is that there are considerable amount of scientific data and substantial accumulation of expert opinions to make a strong case to reconsider the desirability of this dam.

There is a lot to be learnt from the Tehri Dam episode. In most developing countries the so-called development lobbies are much stronger than the emergent eco-lobbies.

Himalayas is a natural heritage, common to mankind. For those in the South Asian region, the health of the Himalayas is naturally a matter of concern.

We urge the Indian authorities to heed the scientific advice and take a second look into feasibility and desirability of this dam.

The Meat Switchover

How much meat does one need on one's daily dish? The eighties have been a rather meat-wary decade, and things tend to draw the starting decades of the next millennium to be madly looking for substitutes of meat.

Still, an answer to our question couldn't be all physiological. There's an element of culture involved, in however small an amount.

Man does not eat only to fill the stomach and kill the hunger. He eats also for the pleasure of it — and there comes the case of culture.

Two decades of Pakistan and the subsequent two decades of independence have seen a massive switching over by the Bengalees of Bangladesh to meat eating.

We are now being told that this has been a rather unfortunate act of choice. A vegetarian dish is dietically far superior and safer than a non-veg one if only because man — as one among the primate branch of the land mammalia — was not physico-organically cut to be flesh eater.

The dangerous meat switchover has been one reason why fish resources are being allowed to be depleted without provision of future replenishment.

We are fashioning a nice little hell for us to live.

OBSERVERS of George Bush's on-again-off-again commitment to curbing the international arms trade have been repeatedly taken aback by his administration's contradictory policy initiatives on this issue.

This gap between the rhetoric of restraint and the reality of arms-export-business-asual is rooted in an ongoing political over the future of the US military-industrial complex.

While the State Department is pressing for a system of multi-lateral arms export controls that could yield long-term security benefits in regions of conflict, US defence contractors and their allies in the Pentagon have been vigorously promoting foreign military sales as an economic antidote to a declining domestic military budget.

Despite the patriotic fervour and pro-military attitudes

Post-Gulf War Arms Bonanza

The conflict over the future of the US military-industrial complex explains the zig-zagging decisions of the Bush administration on the arms control issue, writes William D Hartung, senior research fellow at the World Policy Institute of the New School of Social of Social Research in New York.

spawned by the Gulf War, the major US military contractors are painfully aware that there can be no return to the halcyon days of the Reagan era, when all three military services were making large scale purchases of a virtual industry wide list of new aircraft, missiles, ships, and armored vehicles.

By 1996, Pentagon's spending on the acquisition of new weapons systems is slated to fall to a full 50 per cent below the levels of 1985, the peak year of the Reagan military buildup.

And in an irony which the contractors are keen to exploit politically, many of the weapons systems that were prominently featured in the Gulf War — including the M-1 tank, the F-15 fighter plane, the Apache/helicopter and the

Patriot missile — are being dropped from the US defence budget to clear the way for the development of the next generation of high-tech military hardware.

Rather than seriously exploring diversification into commercial markets in the face of this domestic defence budget crunch, most US contractors have chosen the path of least resistance, seeking foreign orders to keep their production lines up and running until the next batch of Pentagon production contracts comes around.

This new export push was clearly on display at the Paris Air Show, where US firms pitched their wares with variations on the theme of 'how my weapons won the Gulf War.'

and missiles devastating Iraqi targets to glossy brochures and fact sheets highlighting the performance of key US systems in Operation Desert Storm, the underlying message was clear: no self-respecting Ministry of Defence can afford not to buy its fair share of this 'combat proven' US hardware.

In a new twist, the Department of Defense and the uniformed military services served as virtual partners with industry in promoting the sale of US arms at this year's show. Not only did the Pentagon shoulder the cost of flying a full array of the Aircraft of Desert Storm to Paris, but the pilots who had flown them in the Gulf were brought along as well, to tout the performance of US systems in the war of the benefit of potential customers.

Pentagon officials are clearly not expecting limits on arms transfers to take effect any time soon, and in the interim they are gearing up to offer an unprecedented degree of marketing assistance to US military contractors in the battle to dominate world markets.

This drive for exports is an effort to subsidize and sustain the vastly over-sized military establishment that is the legacy of Ronald Reagan's US\$ 2 trillion defence spending binge of the 1980's. If President Bush is serious about restraining the arms trade, he should put his top policy makers on an economic strategy for reducing the dependence of key contractors and communities on military spending.

In a promising development, Secretary of State James Baker recently went on record in support of the conversion of military industries to civilian production. In the Soviet Union that is no doubt a worthy objective, but it is time for the Bush team to put together a plan for the demilitarisation of the US economy, involving retraining of workers in defence industry, financial incentives for military firms to enter commercial markets, and the promotion of civilian exports instead of arms sales.

Unfortunately, the Bush administration's approach to date, as evidenced by its proposal to get the Export Import Bank involved in subsidising foreign military sales, is headed squarely in the wrong direction.

Unless George Bush is willing to take concrete steps to curtail the political and economic clout of US military industry and its bureaucratic allies in the Pentagon, his new, tentative steps toward limiting the arms trade are destined to fall victim to the pressures of old fashioned pork barrel politics.

Body Orientation Makes Communication Effective

A traditional administrator is different from a development administrator in goals, process and behaviour. A traditional administrator is alleged to be non-communicative and non-interactive. A modern administrator is required to be communicative for an effective administrator is an effective communicator.

Conscious or consciously. Conscious use of body language is the result of body orientation. This orientation is acquired through training, personal education or meticulous observation. An administrator having received body orientation is able to make his communication effective, attractive, and persuasive.

and attractive it has to be combined with bodily communication or NVC whose role is complementary. Facial expressions, gestures and postures are made consciously or unconsciously to reinforce the verbal behaviour of the administrators.

A modern administrator needs to listen actively to what his client is saying. Listener-administrators who do not look at the client-speakers are regarded as rude, indifferent and disinterested. Using eyes for gaze is an NV reinforcer. If eye-contact is not maintained mutually, the administrator-listener both feel ignored and isolated.

istrator indicating a forefinger during conversation or public speaking reflects his critical 'parent ego' and authoritative behaviour. A balanced movement of hands and chest can make an administrator's oral presentation lively, natural and palatable. Legs and feet also reflect emotional expressions as well as mental make-up, signs of tension generally appear in the lower parts of the body.

Feedback is an essential loop in the chain of communication. An administrator can both provide and receive feedback verbally and non-verbally. Non-verbal feedback is provided by bodily gestures and postures. Recognition is a positive feedback that can be provided by patting on others' shoulders or by posing a smile on the face or by shaking hands without any verbal expression.

Rebellion Mounts in New Zealand Government

NEW Zealand's maverick Maori Affairs Minister, Winston Peters, has defied pressure on him to resign as conflict deepens in the country over the conservative government's increasingly unpopular economic policies.

Peters, the most outspoken cabinet critic, has refused to remain silent as Prime Minister Jim Bolger's beleaguered government prepares for its first budget. He has rejected a call from Maori Council chairman Sir Graham Latimer, that he should be dumped from his portfolio.

Until recently New Zealand was rated one of the world's most peaceful and socially progressive countries. That changed when first a Labour government, then a conservative one, chose to meet an economic crisis with monetarist solutions. The 'user-pays' and free market policies appear to have created an alarming social crisis.

Among the dissidents is former prime minister Robert Muldoon, who has called for an economic policy with a 'human face'. He has bitterly attacked some of his government's policies — such as trying to eliminate the internal deficit during a recession — as 'extremely foolish', and has hinted that he may vote against the budget over the pension policy.

Penioners have taken to the streets to demonstrate against a government which was elected by a majority of 28 in the 97-seat parliament on a 'decent society' platform. In April tens of thousands of citizens took to the streets to protest against drastic welfare cuts and the employment Contracts act which strips trade unions of their traditional role in labour relations.

media personalities gambol about demonstrating how they could not live on welfare benefits. Throughout the country there is a sense of rising anger. One of the country's most perceptive political commentators, Bruce Jesson, has warned: 'This looks to be a very unstable government — as unstable as the Labour government it replaced and for the same reason. The policies it is pursuing do not represent a consensus of opinion within the National Party, but amount to a coup by a New Right group within the government.'



Letters for publication in these columns should be addressed to the Editor and legibly written or typed with double space. For reasons of space, short letters are preferred, and all are subject to editing and cuts. Pseudonyms are accepted. However, all communications must bear the writer's real name, signature and address.

BCCI and after Sir, Much has been written regarding the BCCI closure in Bangladesh. True that BCCI was closed in UK and other European and South East Asian countries, but was this all necessary for us to do? To the best of our knowledge Bangladesh is not a free currency zone.

10 days to arrive at such a decision? Then again, why Agram Bank and not the BCCI itself to open a window at the Bangladesh Bank or elsewhere at least to receive the export documents if not for transaction of any other business? If such a crisis as that of a bank's closure affecting the business, commerce and lives of individuals find such no responsible reaction from the administration, one starts wondering whether the people's other expectations are going to be fulfilled at all!

It appears from the recent Budget that a 10% deduction will be effective from income on dividend. But the Finance Minister continued to stress poor domestic savings while presenting the budget in the same utterances as had been made by his predecessors starting from the Pakistani days. Under the backdrop should it not be appropriate not to deduct income tax from dividend income of small amounts.

Two questions: Whether the Attorney General uttered such words as appeared in the newspaper? And if he didn't, why then he should tender an unqualified apology even in the face of threat or pressure? The matter needs judicial enquiry and clarification.

human rights states that 'the accused is to explain any circumstances against him at any stage of enquiry or trial may be taken into consideration by the Court.' M Zahidul Haque Assistant Professor, Bangladesh Agricultural Institute, Dhaka-1207.