

Dhaka, Saturday, June 22, 1991

## Unification of the Koreas

South Korean President Roh Tae Woo has raised new hopes for the unification of his divided country. This is a familiar talking point in both Seoul and Pyongyang. However, this time Mr Roh has mentioned a time frame for the realisation of the shared objective of the free-wheeling capitalist South Korea and the orthodox communist North. According to the South Korean leader, the division could well end by the middle of the 1990s and certainly "will not last beyond this century."

This projection is optimistic. However, there are no reasons why President Roh who made the forecast at his cabinet meeting on Monday should be either indulging in wishful thinking or misleading his own public on such an important issue. One should, therefore, take the prediction with the seriousness it deserves.

Whatever may be the basis of Mr Roh's statement, outside experts have noted that both Pyongyang and Seoul continue to send mixed signals to each other, instead of moving steadily towards creating a framework for the unification of the two Koreas. Much to the discomfort, bordering on anger, of North Korea, the South has now established good working relations with both Moscow and Beijing, once the staunchest allies of Pyongyang. The admission of South Korea to the United Nations is once again a live issue. North Korea has responded to Seoul's moves by announcing its own plan for the membership of the world body. All these moves suggest that the two Koreas are still going along their separate paths. On the other hand, in a positive gesture, North Korea has agreed to sign a pact that will open its secret nuclear plants to international inspection, a move that has been welcomed in Seoul.

The two sides undoubtedly recognise the importance of the reunification of the two Koreas, an emotional issue that touches the lives and hearts of tens of thousands of divided families. But, as seen from outside, there is yet to emerge even a minimum consensus on the nature of unification that Seoul and Pyongyang may accept as a practical proposition. There is a hint that President Roh may favour the merger type that has brought the two Germanys together, through a collapse of the communist system in the East. Surely this is not what President Kim Il Sung of North Korea has in mind. For him, to agree on the end of his Korean type Socialism, the controversial legacy to his country that has defied the wind of change, seems almost thinkable. At this stage, Mr. Kim may want nothing more than a confederation in which the socio-economic systems of the two Koreas are preserved.

It is of course unlikely that the 79-year-old President Kim can be around to see through the whole process leading to the unification of the divided country. Maybe this is an important factor in President Roh's calculation. In this context, the South Korean leader may well be right in assuming that, with Mr Kim no longer running the show, people of North Korea will move faster towards a complete merger with the South, even under an initial confederation framework. In this sense, the collapse of the communist system in the North may be only a question of time. What is needed is patience in Seoul and Pyongyang as well as serious efforts on both sides to avoid provocative moves. Instead, governments in the two Koreas should pay more attention to building understanding among their peoples, to promoting exchanges between members of divided families and to opening up trade channels. Once these measures are successfully implemented, the unification of the two Koreas may take place in due course, perhaps even within the time frame suggested by the South Korean leader earlier this week.

## That Lurking Suspicion

There is a very widely held belief in Khulna and Rajshahi Divisions that the whole region, more so its people, have been subject to unmitigated discrimination amounting often to neglect without a sign of improvement anytime this side of the century. It's a matter of mores to where one belongs as also to one's taste to subscribe or dismiss this somewhat subjective and eventually injurious assessment.

Even if one is generous enough to grant that nothing done deliberately to degenerate the quality of life and society or of economy or ecology of that half of country, a hundred thousand and one proofs can however be cited of that believed neglect. Not that the other half never cared to know of the feeling. There has indeed been unflinching efforts to negate it with some very positive and solid good — the East-West Connector being a stupendous monument to that. But the suspicion lurks, it never goes out completely. And that's how when we read that (The Daily Star, June 20) about 20 per cent of tubewells are out of commission for long in Dinajpur — 1840 to be precise — and people of the 13 upazilas have for years been suffering for want of drinking water, one tends to ascribe it on the misfortune of the place being the 'traditionally neglected' Dinajpur. This happens even while the informed ones know what an humanly impossible task has been fulfilled sooner than scheduled by the tubewell people or the Public Health Engineering Department in the matter of making pure drinking water available throughout the islands and areas devastated by the April 29 tidal bore. By universal agreement the PHE should be credited with being a little more conscientious and industrious folk than government departments usually come.

Why can't Dinajpur tubewell failures be taken as quite a normal part of the whole national performance in everything? Thousand contrary things stand in the way. Things such as illustrated on the same page of the same newspaper's same issue. Train derails for third day. That for a heading for the regular horror story that says in effect that on the Rajbari-Kushtia shortish patch of the vast Western Railway Zone four trains were derailed on last Sunday and Monday. And the next day one single train was derailed twice, once near Pangsha and the next time while approaching Kushtia.

With that being the condition of railway maintenance there it will take a thousand years to heal people of that region of the most improbable of suspicions.

# UN will be Asked to Make Censorship a Crime

Derek Ingram writes from Windhoek

Unesco has just held a meeting of editors and publishers to work out how to expand the independent press in Africa. A similar exercise may be carried out later to discuss diversifying radio and TV, now state-owned everywhere. It is all part of the trend towards multi-partyism, which cannot flourish without a free press. Surprising developments came out of the editors' meeting including a call to outlaw censorship.

publisher scan be helped to set up more newspapers in Africa and break the state media monopoly. The obstacles are formidable in a continent that has few entrepreneurs able or willing to risk money publishing newspapers.

The raising of capital is the biggest hurdle. The seminar heard touching stories of a personal determination to

start publications. A woman editor in Malawi described how her husband sold their car to raise a small loan from the bank to start her women's magazine. A Liberian editor finally got his sister to put up her house as collateral to launch his newspaper in Monrovia, now defunct after the civil war.

Another major constraint

on publishing in Africa is lack of newsprint. Most has to be imported, which means obtaining foreign exchange. Withholding permission for foreign exchange is one of many ways governments impede publication of potentially unfriendly newspapers.

Withholding government advertising is also a weapon used against independent newspapers in countries where, in any case, advertising is hard to come by because of the minimal buying power of so many readers. In many places in Africa papers are often sold and resold, getting cheaper as they get older and their news gets staler.

Up to 10 people may read a single copy of a newspaper and distribution to rural areas is impossible because papers are stolen and sold. Poor rail and road communications mean papers reach the reader days after publication, if at all.

In some areas the situation is quite different. Kenya has one of the most efficient distribution systems and a flourishing independent press, with fleets of vans delivering papers to the coast within hours.

And new papers are appearing or planned all over Africa. In Algeria, now becoming multi-party, journalists working for state newspapers who want to start their own publications, are guaranteed their salaries for 24 months after they have left their posts, cash to buy newsprint, and given

access to national printworks. In Mali, a twice-monthly paper is selling 25,000 copies against the national daily's 3,500. A new daily paper is being planned in Zambia to compete with the two government papers and independent financial papers in Tanzania and Zambia are gaining ground.

The Declaration of Windhoek, as it dubbed, aims to step up the growth of an independent press in Africa. Pluralism is a new buzzword and by that, said the delegates' statement, "we mean the end of monopolies of any kind and the existence of the greatest possible number of newspapers, magazines and periodicals reflecting the widest possible range of opinion within the community."

African states are to be encouraged to provide constitutional guarantees of the freedom of the press. So far few of them do so. One that does quite firmly is Namibia, which has several private newspapers and is soon to have a government newspaper as well.

The Windhoek Declaration calls on international organisations such as Unesco to give priority to funding for independent publications. To this end, it says, it should be a priority in Africa to form truly independent associations of journalists, editors and publishers where they do not yet exist. Governments should also show their good faith by letting those journalists who have had to leave their countries return

home to resume their professional activities.

A number of detailed recommendations were made asking Unesco to work out how obstacles to a freer African press can be removed — most notably restrictive import duties, tariffs on newsprint, printing equipment, word processing machinery, and taxes on newspaper sales. Training of journalists and managers needed to be stepped up, and search for increased funding begun.

The Windhoek meeting concentrated on the print media. A bigger task lies ahead in the radio and television field, since these are entirely in government hands throughout Africa (except in Morocco) and are much wider disseminators of news and views than the newspapers.

The UN is now to be asked to convene a similar seminar of journalists and managers of radio and TV services in Africa to work out how these too, are to be diversified.

If, to those who were so vocal in their condemnation of Unesco a few years ago, all this seems difficult to believe, perhaps to remarks of two Unesco officials made during the seminar puts matters in perspective.

The first came from Henrikas Yuskaitavichus, who is assistant to the Director-General, Federico Mayor. As a Lithuanian, what he said had added point-namely that a prosperous country and a healthy society never will exist without free media.

The other official succinctly summed it all up thus: "The page has turned. It is no good lamenting the past."

— GEMINI NEW

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## Team Orientation Needed for Effective Civil Service

by Syed Naquib Muslim

DYNAMISM, flexibility and complexity characterise the environment in which civil servants of today operate. A traditional bureaucratic pattern is no longer valid and viable for a development-oriented civil service. A modern government is complex not only because of its expanding functional domain but also because maintenance of smooth coordination amongst the diverse cadres and groups has become difficult. In order to achieve development goals today's organization, be it a ministry, or a division of the ministry or an Upazila Parishad, Gram Sarkar or Deputy Commissioner's office, needs to practice team approach for accomplishing their individual respective goals. Rules, programmes, organisational chart are not adequate to provide coordination among various constituents of the government.

Team Building, one of the organisational development techniques, is an effective strategy by which coordination among diverse officials and organizations can be obtained. As Peter Self states, "The central problem of coordination is primarily that of reconciling the contribution of diverse tasks and their associated perspectives."

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Team Building is one of those devices by which synergic power and cohesion can be created among the policy-makers, bureaucrats, specialists and generalists and they can be converted into an ideal team for accomplishing set national goals. Team Building is a skill-oriented activity. There is no cook-book approach or push-button system in order to learn these skills. The techniques, skills and attitude required for effective team work can only be

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secured through the process of systematic training or planned orientation.

Experience suggests that the elected public representatives at the national and local level and administrators at various levels of the government suffer from role confusion. Lack of team spirit is affecting desired politics-administration harmony and interdependency. The cleavage between the senior officials and the subordinate employees is widening because of practising a traditional administrative system. The task-orientation and group-orientation existing among the field-level officials

do not seem to meet; they are either more task-oriented than group-oriented or more group-oriented than task-oriented. The balance is missing. Moreover, there exists a misconception about the true nature of leadership function in a group or an organization. Members of the group or organization feel alienated owing to leadership deficiencies or interpersonal incompetence in most of the senior officials

holding supervisory positions in the government offices. Seniors must work as role models and mentors of the juniors. Juniors learn more from interaction with them than from a trainer in a class-room situation.

Team work ideally operates in a friendly, informal, healthy and supportive climate. A team turns into a more group when the leader is not able to motivate the members to get actively involved in the differentiated tasks and cannot generate in them enthusiasm, interest and commitment in accomplishing their common goals. Informalism, role clarity,

goal clarification, systematization, democratic leadership, synergistic relationship and open communication are the basic ingredients for developing an effective team. Communication is the essence of any team work. Ambiguity can be removed, conflicts can be converted into consensus, prejudice and preconceptions can be neutralised through free, frank, open and smooth communication aimed at group

goal accomplishment. Empathic listening is the basic link in the chain of communication. Members of a functional team must listen to one another for pooling their ideas and views and for intensifying the interaction process.

A leader of a team must not indulge in monologues like a Ulysses rather he should create a climate of dialogue. The leader has to acquire verbal, non-verbal and paraverbal communication skills. (NVC) is a neglected area of communication. NVC skills help him in grasping the quirks, idiosyncrasies, mannerisms and

other silent messages that cannot be gathered only through listening. His ears and eyes must act in a coordinated way in order to have complete grasp of the ideas, feelings and actions of the team members. In other words, he must be sensitive to the socio-emotional dimensions of the membership behaviour. Ideally, leadership of a team is based on interpersonal skills and not merely on artificial designation or hierarchy. This has to be appreciated by the civil ser-

able to develop a positive attitude and outlook with which they can handle together the problems they face in the field situation. They have to develop communication skills and improve the capacity for mutual tolerance. Systematic and well-organised training on team development will help in developing team spirit, a sense of sympathy and empathy among the officers through free and open exchange of views and feelings. The members of civil service need to be in search of excellence which consists in reduction of the gap between theory and practice, the ideal and the reality. One of the ways to achieve this excellence is to receive team orientation.

Thus, acquisition of requisite skills through intensive team orientation is an absolute must for effective civil service. Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre has to increase the frequency of organising courses on Team Building and coordination in order to impart requisite skills to the members of Bangladesh Civil Service and the elected public representatives at various levels.

The writer is a Deputy Director, Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre, Savar, Dhaka.

## To the Editor...

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.

### Govt shares in multinational companies

Sir, For off-loading the shares of the multinational companies in Bangladesh presently held by the government, it is really praiseworthy that the present government is thinking to sell those shares directly to the public through the Stock Exchange. The shares of a few multinational companies are not made available on the floors of Dhaka Stock Exchange or in the open market due to the faulty decision of the previous government.

Instead of involving the general public directly as the share holders of such multinationals by selling their shares owned by the government to the public, the government on past occasions transferred the major portion of the shares to the ICB. Thus the general public were directly deprived of these shares. The government failed to provide the public with the shares of those multinationals when such companies sought the permission for Right Issues. A certain percentage of Right Shares, out of government and Foreign Investors' shareholdings could have legally been made available to the public.

To reactivate the Stock Market and to motivate the common people for investment in shares, the role of multinationals' shares is emphasized in the UNDP Reports on "Securities Markets in Bangladesh". The shares of a few multinational companies were floated during the Pakistan time in Karachi. So the Bangladesh had scanty opportunity to buy the shares. Such companies in Bangladesh are at present on the most advantageous position because of legal protection to them — not to offer shares in future to the public. Government shares of such few companies need to be sold directly to the public. The more the public are involved in the ownership of such companies, the better is the prospect of rich management because the shareholders can express knowledge, experience and suggestions for the betterment of the company at the Annual General Meetings.

One of the purposes of floating Public Issues in recent time is not to make the capital available but to enrich the management as well as the government understanding with knowledge and suggestion by the shareholders from the general public. Likewise the multinationals can train

people in privatisation, investment, modern management, information by accommodating members of general public as their shareholders. As a result, now-a-days there is the practice to dilute the absolute majority shareholding of foreign investors and, to float shares available out of such dilution, to the public. The present government should seriously consider the issue of selling such government shares directly to the public. Selling such shares to ICB or financial institution will never serve the purpose of making people share-minded and reactivating the Stock Exchange.

Abdul Karim,  
Dhaka.

### PDB employees' strike

Sir, The strike called by PDB employees from June 16 for 72 hrs was really a matter to be discussed. It caused an untold suffering to the city dwellers as in most parts of the city power disruption also caused serious scarcity of water. Dwellers in the affected areas were found even scrambling for candles to light their dark rooms in the evening, especially in the old part of the city, but had to pass the hot, humid summer nights without fans.

Many industries situated within and in the outskirts of the city had to suspend production due to power failure sustaining heavy losses. In the absence of electricity the mis-

creants found it a better opportunity to carry on hijacking and other anti-social activities at night. Road accidents were also reported from many areas.

Now, my question is whom should we blame for this suffering — the present government who could not negotiate with PDB trade union leaders or the 30,000 staff and employees of PDB who did not care for the suffering of the people?

As far as the greater responsibility is concerned, I blame government for the suffering of the people, because the day before the strike was called, union leaders met the Minister for Energy and Mineral Resources, and they (union leaders) came out unsuccessful without any settlement. Understandably, the minister who could not fulfil the demands of the leaders, could have taken some time for further discussion on the matter and avoided the unwanted strike and suffering of the people. It appears, the administration did not take any step to stop the strike, and was least bothered about the consequences — suffering of the people. It was but a small problem which the government could not solve. I don't know how this new government will face bigger problems which might come their way and pose bigger suffering for the people. I hope the respected Prime Minister of the country if need be in near future, should look herself into such problems to overcome any lapse of the concerned

ministry and in the interest of welfare of the people.

Rashid Sultan Babbar  
Nawabpur Road,  
Dhaka-1100

### Stop man slaughter

Sir, Within a very short period of taking the reign by Late President Ziaur Rahman criminal activities of Mastaans in Kalabagan, an area notorious for such activities, were completely eradicated. "Runu Murder Case" shows that the venue is now shifted to Mohammadpur-Lalmatia area. The present government should put its feet firmly down to eradicate this evil once for all. It is again BNP that the people had voted for and brought it to power. People do not want to see man-slaughter any more. We have had enough of it in the past decade. Now with BNP in power we want to see an end to it, to our relief and expectation.

Abu M. Faiz  
Dhaka-1205.

### Mission in life

Sir, A recent news item in your daily reports Md. Ali as saying that during the early or the first part of life, boxing was his main ambition, but now, after retirement, his aim in life is to spread the message of religion to the largest number of people possible.

A one time giant in the field of boxing, the former world champion now spends a simple life in his large luxurious

farm in the hills of Pennsylvania.

However, though he intends to spend the remaining part of his life in spreading the religion of Islam, a once-in-a-while stroll to his former training camp is nevertheless refreshing for him.

One of Ali's trainers for two decades Wali Muhammad said that this sort of short trips down the memory lane does the erstwhile champion a lot good.

It makes him feel like in the "good old days", specially now that besides retirement, the boxer is also suffering from the ravages of Parkinson's disease, which slows various faculties — of speech and memory — in a human being.

T. Ahmed  
Gulshan, Dhaka.

### Dustbins needed in Pabna town

Sir, The inhabitants of Pabna town are facing a lot of problems for want of dustbins in the city. As there are no dustbins in adequate number in the town, the inhabitants have to throw their household wastes in open places. As a result, bad smell vitiates the environment and the pollution dislocates normal life in most areas of the town. We are requesting the authorities to mitigate this long standing sufferings of the inhabitants of this town at the earliest.

Ashfaqur Rahman and  
Mirza Mannan Siddat  
Dilapur, Pabna.