

CORRUPTION REVISITED

Necessity of Survival Links up with Greed for Riches

by Muhammad Azher Zafar Shah

During the past two decades, since the liberation of Bangladesh, there has been regular and extensive condemnation of corruption...

Of course in our under-developed economy, with the population boom outstripping the limited resources...

cure monthly wages that are commensurate with the requirements of physical survival and social status...

In this blatantly unhealthy social environment and regressive economic condition, what is the antidote for the curse of corruption?

greed, which would require a fundamental reform of the economy and the society...

than a half decade ago, and the passage of time has proclaimed the defeat of the 'jihad'...

The termination of corruption is intrinsically linked with the eradication of poverty and greed, which would require a fundamental reform of the economy and the society.

The majority of the population is unemployed or underemployed, and many of those who are working...

To be a member of the upper-class, one must, by definition, be wealthy...

Individual values, where morality would be the yardstick of success, rather than materialism...

Under the current negative conditions prevailing in our country, this prescriptive write-up may justifiably be described as idealistic...

The revolutionary measures to combat corruption effectively shall not be undertaken by the contemporary decision-making elite...

The writer is Assistant Professor, Department of International Relations, University of Dhaka.

Homage to Martyrs

As we pay our homage today to our intellectuals who were killed during the Liberation War...

Most of our people would probably answer this question in the negative. But ours is a more qualified one...

However, sadly enough, this achievement is obscured by our failures in many different fields...

What is undoubtedly most tragic is the situation that exists in our universities with which so many of our murdered intellectuals were so closely associated...

Notwithstanding the seriousness of the situation, this paper will never say that we have reached the point of no return...

As Algeria runs headlong toward multi-party democracy, Islamic forces are the greatest threat to the ruling party...

Righting the Wrong in Education

Please, help increase the literacy rate to make the independence of our nation meaningful...

The President very naturally went on to stress the importance of 'educated' people in the fashioning of a self-reliant society...

This nation has long continued to be charge of the 'educated' people — almost exclusively...

ISLAM has always been a key unifying factor among the Arab Maghreb countries of North Africa...

Soaring unemployment and economic hardship, especially among youth, have prompted millions to flee to Europe...

In Tunisia, where Islamic parties are banned, a president who once headed the secret police is channelling his energies into crushing the Islamists...

In Libya and Morocco, the decades-old regimes of Colonel Moammar Gaddafi and King Hassan II owe their longevity in part to near-total repression of Islamic activists...

It is more than a decade since the Islamic revolution that swept away the Shah of Iran...

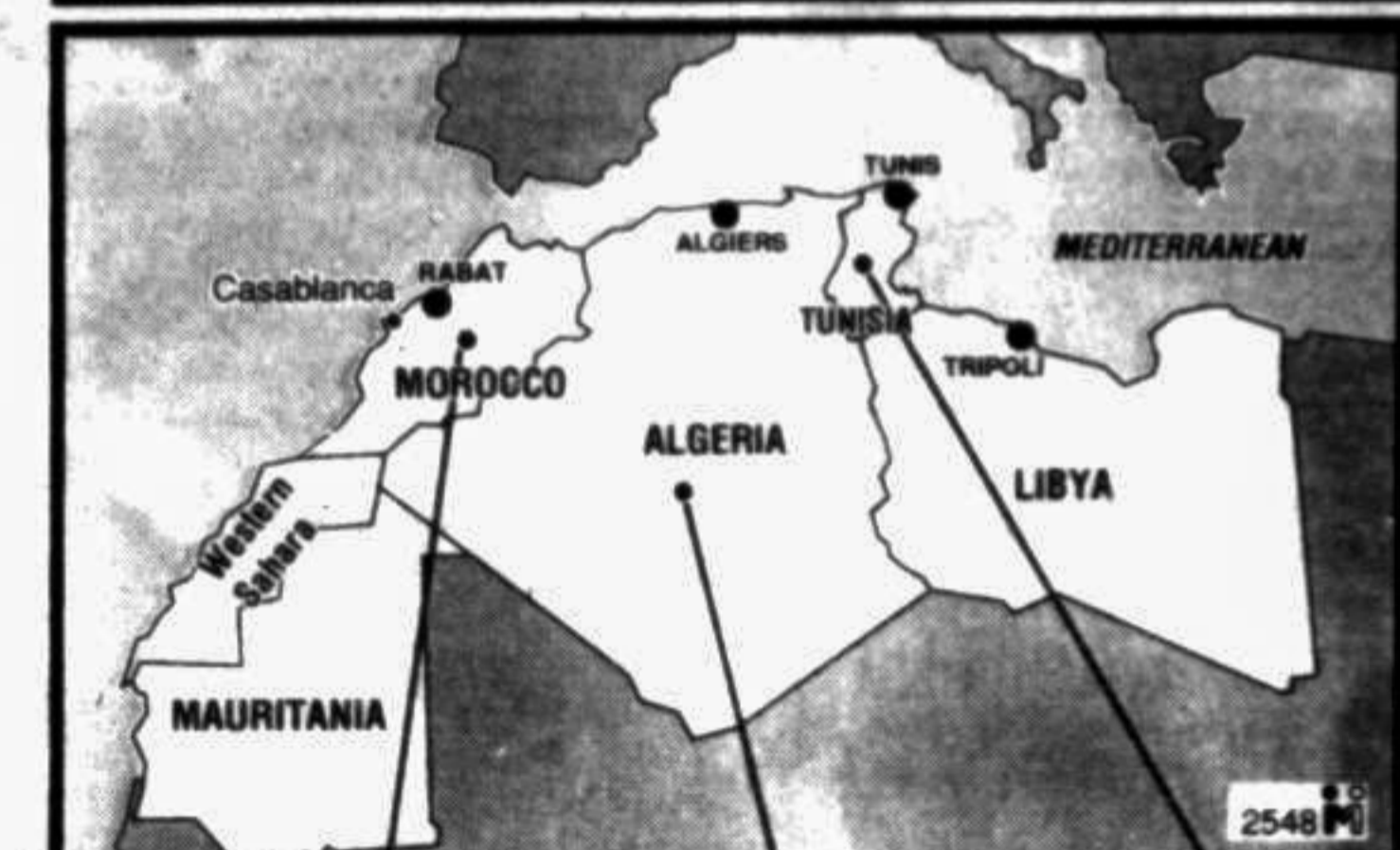
But in North Africa it seems only a matter of time until secular post-independence regimes have to share power with Islamists...

In Algeria, the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) was legalised only after a brutal clampdown of bread riots in 1988...

Many FIS supporters are bearded, devout Muslims seeking an Islamic republic...

"People don't necessarily follow FIS because of ideology, but because it gives them hope..."

Islamic revival



FIS is notorious in the West for its insistence on Islamic traditions — the veiling of women...

FIS took 54 per cent of the vote in local elections in June 1990...

Martial law was lifted in late September and the interim government of Prime Minister Sid Ahmed Ghazali has moved to meet some FIS demands...

In the end, the legislative elections were cancelled and the country clamped under

Bourguiba, who ruled Tunisia from independence in 1956 until his overthrow in 1987...

The bane of Bourguiba's presidency was the Islamist movement. Initially, he allowed it to operate as a counterbalance to equally threatening leftist forces...

Former secret police chief Zine el Abidine Ben Ali toppled the near-senile Bourguiba in 1987...

Ben Ali's response has been: "No liberty for the enemies of liberty..."

Today the Ennahdha movement is in disarray. Some members were accused in March of torching a government party building...

Next door in Tunisia, long the most secular Arab country, the government has given no hint of conciliation with the Islamist movement...

Under President Habib

"set up a religious power," claiming it had infiltrated the administration...

Mourou predicts power, or a share of it, will eventually come. He stresses that he seeks not an Islamic republic...

The secretary in his law office did not wear a veil.

In Libya, Colonel Moammar Gaddafi does not hide his contempt for Islamists...

Gaddafi infuriated traditionalists in 1980 by altering Libya's Islamic calendar...

In February 1987 Gaddafi's regime publicly executed nine people — three of them soldiers — for membership in Islamic groups...

Five Islamists are still serv-

ing life sentences in Tripoli after being convicted in 1973 of membership in the Islamic Liberation Party...

Repression has forced Libyan Islamists to keep a low profile. The country has no developed Islamist movement...

In Morocco, where King Hassan II holds the religious title of Commander of the Faithful, the Islamist movement is weak but sometimes serves as a convenient scapegoat for the King...

Most often, rioting has been caused by economic deprivation — not religious fervour — and left-wing opposition is much stronger than that of Islamists...

In February, 30,000 Islamists took part in a mass demonstration in Rabat. Their largest movement — Al Adl wal Ihsan, or Justice and Charity — had previously endured harsh repression...

Islamists who dare challenge Hassan's legitimacy as commander of the faithful often face trial...

Between December 1989 and March 1990, 32 others had been tried on similar charges...

Still in Morocco, as across North Africa, the Islamist movement and parallel opposition forces cannot be arrested forever...

— GEMINI NEWS

ALLAN THOMPSON is a Canadian journalist with the Toronto Star newspaper...

To the Editor...

Letters for publication in these columns should be addressed to the Editor and legibly written or typed with double space...

Housing problems

Sir, We were inspired by the remarks made by the Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia while addressing a ceremony to mark the handing over of deeds of residential plots of Journalists Housing Cooperative Society...

She said that the government was giving serious thought to solve the housing problem in the metropolitan Dhaka, particularly for the people belonging to low-income groups...

Development expenditures in physical planning and housing sector during 1985-90 indicate that total of Tk 550 crore was allocated while total expenditure stood at 1984-85 prices for at Tk 625.86 crore...

commercial buildings, rural and urban water supplies, sewerage and sanitation, city roads and civic facilities...

Needless to say that previous autocratic government emphasized more on pompous and gorgeous establishments

than addressing the needs of the poor people — both urban and rural. It is a happy augury that our Prime Minister has rightly identified the priority needs of the majority of low-income groups facing acute housing and environmental problems...

We want to draw the kind attention of the PM and see actions towards solving housing problems in the cities — Dhaka in particular. The major constraints, inter alia, are the problems of master plan by the government requiring restructuring in laws regulating accommodation plan, land use, granting of housing building constructions, allotment of plots in Government acquired lands and granting of building plans for non-acquired lands in sub-urban areas in Dhaka...

The efforts of the Dhaka Municipal Corporation in developing satellite towns by bringing sub-urban areas under DMC need to be geared up

with forward looking planning strategies on a long-term basis in the perspective of population growth during the years ahead say, for 50 years when Dhaka would be one of the 7th largest populous cities in the world...

The crux of the problem for the newly acquired areas/locations is that these areas are deprived from availing government facilities either as a rural or urban status. The people have been grinding between the dual administration of DMC and union parishad system...

The majority people of these areas are in favour of inclusion within DMC. Would the PM very kindly rise to the occasion and order solution of

the legal questions of rural or urban areas to the primary benefit of the poor residents.

Vox Populi

Universities

Sir, The democratic government has been in power for about a year. During this period most of the university of the country remained closed 'sine die' and a good number of students were engaged either in party politics of who knows, 'unsocial' activities. These universities may be called 'closed universities'...

Now the government is contemplating to establish some 'open universities' under which the students will be taught indirectly through some information media — Radio, TV, press and so on.

However, under the new scheme the government or the varsity authority will no longer require to face the students directly. The volume of responsibilities will also be reduced. The teachers will also get sufficient time to attend clubs and seminars. But what will happen to the 'closed universities'? Should they vanish in the mean time?

Md. Abdul Latif Khairja Jessore

Asbestos

Sir, It was very informative to read an article on asbestos and its use in Ghana, in your Feature page of December 1. In fact, most of the articles on environmental problems are interesting. However, what is usually lacking are instances of environmental degradation within Bangladesh...

I wonder how many people in our country while reading about the use of asbestos in Ghana, are aware of its extensive use here. It is being used in water pipes in Chittagong as well as in other places as roofing material for schools and houses and for many other commercial purposes...

There are several such environmentally hazardous activities being undertaken in the country which should be brought to the attention of the public through your esteemed newspaper.

A concerned citizen