OMING as it does from the enchanting pen of a person who combines in himself the roles of both a practitioner and analyst of Bangladesh foreign policy this book is a milestone publication for more than one reason. For the first time we are presented with a mine of inside information relating to our foreign policy of a crucial period by someone who himself was the Minister for Foreign Affairs during those years. Again, unlike the Western tradition we do not normally come across examples of personalities writing about experience of their stints in power. There are examples of such works, but few and far between. Perhaps the explanation for such a laxity is that we revel in the gift of the gap than in that of the pen. Again, whatever such works available are mostly laden with undue emphasis on the first person, and thus with factual basis and objectivity painfully missing. In such a context, the book Bangladesh in International Policies by Professor Muhammad Shamsul Huq stands out as a remarkable departure.

Basically an educationist and educational administrator Professor Hug's impressive credentials did not even have remotest relevance to the job he had been asked to perform. His induction into the realm of diplomacy was almost a chance-happening, and which had all the appearance of ad hocism, a characteristic that Professor Hug himself considers a marked feature of Third World governance. But that Professor Huq rose equal to the challenge and piloted

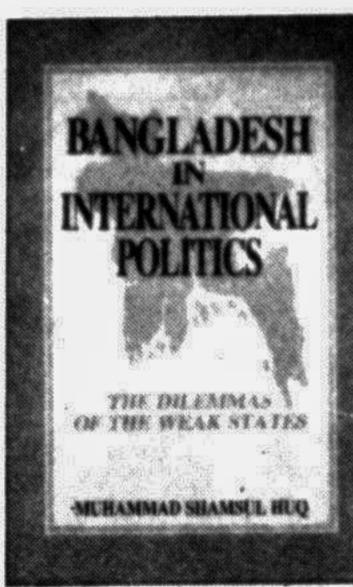
BANGLADESH FOREIGN POLICY

A Period Unravelled with Candour and Clarity

Bangladesh foreign policy with desired skill and adrottness under the most trying of circumstances are amply testified by the success story that was Bangladesh foreign policy during his tenure and the discussion presented in this book.

Not merely a fact based chronological account, the book is designed within the framework of a well-planned research work with relevant organizational discipline. I believe Professor Hug has adopted an historical approach in presenting facts and analyses. On countless occasions a reader comes across sentences like, situation x "is placed in perspective when considered in the context" etc. Moreover, the discussion begins with a chapter that is aptly titled "Roots of Bangladesh". Again, each scenario is traced to its deepest background and discussed in broadest details. As a Understand Professor

Huq has made persistent effort to get across to his readers at least three specific hypotheses. First, small and weak states of the Third World are found to be constrained in so many ways as they go about the arduous business of achieving foreign policy objectives. Second, despite such constraints these states can both react and act as international actors provided there is right type of leadership and guidance backed by required perception and vision. In this



sense, foreign policy appears to be a domain wherein there is hardly any scope for ad hocism, and the conduct of which involves a craft mastery over which can be achieved either through patient training or deep commitment. Third, repeating the oft-heard axiom it is rightly suggested that success in foreign policy of a regime depends entirely on the successful management of the domestic front. All these three hypotheses have been tested by the esteemed author as the takes the reader on a much coveted journey through the myriad events in the external relations of Bangladesh during the period under dis-

Book Review

Muhammad Shamsul Huq, Bangladesh in **International Politics** (Dhaka: The University Press Ltd, 1993) pp, X+364, Price Tk 400.00.

> Reviewed by **Prof Syed Anwar Hussain**

Besides the valuable information that is gleaned from this book and for which we are beholden to Professor Huq what strikes a discerning reader is the tenor of the discussion and underpinnings of the same. It appears to me that not merely for the sake of laying bare some inside informa tion that the book has been painstakingly written; the real purpose is to convey some messages. Indeed there are quite a few instructively relevant messages. In conveying these messages Professor Hug has indeed afforded us an opportunity to share his perception of foreign policy and diplomacy. To him diplomacy is more than a profession; it is indeed a vocation, and not simply a dreary business.

A random sampling of such messages from this book proHug himself (P. 93).

The author of the book addressing the Pienary Session of the 35th UNGA on 29th September, 1980.

duces a list on top of which appears human factors in diplomacy. The role that human factors can play in diplomacy is amply discussed in the

Humane approach by one party is most likely to be reciprocated by the other party. The Indira Government that followed the Janata

section on Indo-Bangladesh re-

lations. Which talking about

Bangladesh water-sharing

agreement of 5 November

1977 Professor Hug shows

how the aborted formal negoti-

ation between the two coun-

tries was miraculously salvaged

by Ziaur Rahman in a hurriedly

arranged farewell meeting

with Jagjivan Ram. Of course,

behind-the-scene spadework

had been done by Professor

the background of the Indo-

ent reasons to adopt a tough line with Bangladesh. But a patient and humane approach by Bangladesh bore desired fruits. In the backdrop of a near naval confrontation between India and Bangladesh centering round the South Talpatty Island Bangladesh Foreign Minister paid a visit to New Delhi and signed agreement that defused the situation. In a relaxed situation the Bangladesh Foreign Minister was received by Indira Gandhi; and what followed thereafter is most interesting. It was indeed a pleasant surprise to see the iron-lady holding up a plateful of pastries for the Foreign Minister with the words, "We specially ordered these for you because, I was told, you have a sweet tooth". (PP.114-115).

Government had many appar

Much has also been said in this book about informal approach to diplomacy. In 1977, for example, Bangladesh Foreign Minister, during a courtesy call on the President of Pakistan secured 50,000 bales of cotton by casually broaching the need to the latter (P. 115).

The virtues of informal diplomacy have been adequately stressed by Professor Huq in the following works, "informal consultations with neighbours and other friendly countries formed an integral part of Bangladesh diplomacy

in conducting her external relation and proved extremely useful in deepening mutual understanding and trust, essential in reconciling divergent viewpoints and interests and reaching a mutually acceptable accord on unresolved problems and issues. Time, patience and restraint are other elements that I found profoundly influenced the course and outcome of political negotiations between sovereign states" (P. 97).

A lively debate persists as to whether there is any place for moral scruples in diplomacy. It is heartening to see that Professor Huq takes his place on the positive said in this debate. As he writes, "Trust begets trust; goodwill generates goodwill. This is as much true between individuals as between nations" (P. 103). It is doubly heartening to see that as Foreign Minister he endeavored to practice diplomacy with pronounced moral over-

The book has two distincfive characteristics. First, much of the inside information relating to Bangladesh foreign policy of a specific period is unravelled with candour and clarity. Second, it also lays bare the inner self of the man who bore the burden of conducting this foreign policy with exemplary zeal and commitment.

As I finish reading I emerge with the incluctable conclusion that, not only researchers and readers would find the book invaluable, but Foreign Minister and diplomats of Bangladesh would also find it a rewarding exercise to use the book as a guide.

A Telepress Conference between the United States and Asia

Continued from page 10

something dealing with business, or anything else — to take the time to find the people who are what the story is about and essentially ask them what happened.

I mean, it sounds pretty simple, but that's really what the goal of good reporting always is, should be, and that should resolve, as well as you can resolve, the question of onesidedness or who's telling the truth, if you could find out what the people involved, what happened to them and what they say. Let them tell the story.

Then you're not in a position to say "One side said this, the other side that" or "didn't say that" or "would say nothing." You basically let the people involved tell the story in their own words, and that's about the best that you can do.

DEDMAN: This is Bill. I would add that it might help us, certainly in this country it would help us, if more often we abandoned the appearance of omniscience, if we explained more in our reporting what we know and what we don't know.

Very rarely in a news report will one see a paragraph that says, "it could not be determined"; "The Times was not able to learn"; or "We heard this conflicting account and this other conflicting account and these were the pieces of evidence that seemed to suggest the first was correct and these were those that weighed in for the second." Very often we seem to feel as though we need to choose one.

The other suggestion might be to be more supportive of our competitors. In this country, where there are so many outlets of news, we're very competitive. Where there are one or two or two or three outlets of news, it might be good to be more supportive of each other.

What I mean is, when one newspaper or television station might report something that advances the knowledge of a story but doesn't completely get the whole nut, often the other newspaper will try to knock down the story or will ignore it because it didn't come upon it first.

If we wouldn't be so petty and would each try to advance the story in our small way and not require the blockbuster fact to get on the front page, then what you have is a pincer (phonetic). You have two news organizations, however small their resources might be, working together.

I read - is it true? I read that there were three television channels. How many television channels do you have in Malaysia?

MATHEWS: Three. Two government owned and one privately owned

DEDMAN: Yes. For 18 million people. And in New York City, in the Metropolitan New York city, which has 18 million people, there are 150 television channels. Now, a lot of them are junk - the Psychic Friends Network for the Home Shopping Network — but there are more outlets for news.

If I were a government official and my garden hose was leaking in one place, that would be a smaller irritant than if it were leaking in ten places. LUBIS: Bill and John, I have a question for you, because we

are sitting here in a room full of young journalists of Malaysia and from some other countries, I think, and they are very cager to hear about investigative reporting. Would you be so kind as to tell us basic essentials or tech-

niques of investigative reporting as you do and what kind of ethical guidelines do you have in hand to do this kind of reporting?

NEUMANN: First, I should say that again, since we have so much freedom in the United States and do not have any written-down rules that newspapers must follow or even that newspapers among themselves agree to follow with regard to either procedures or ethical conduct, you know, just the way it is, it's pretty much up to each individual newspaper to make those decisions.

I think it's generally accepted among most responsible reporters, in terms of ethics, that newspaper reporters should never lie, that reporters should never claim to be somebody that they are not when they're doing their story.

That's not to say that doesn't happen, because it does happen. There are reporters who will go out to, say, to a hospital and act as if they are an employee of the hospital or maybe even get employed and work at the hospital in order to

Tiger, Tiger, Burning Out

tiger reserves have lost about

lungs of India," says Indian

wildlife expert Valmik Thapar.

made this the most serious

moment in tiger conservation

and the conservation of all bio-

diversity that lives under the

A review of Project Tiger

released by the environment

and forests ministry admits

the scheme suffers from sev-

eral flaws including poor

wildlife management and

"political and bureaucratic

Conversationists say Project

Tiger may be the victim of its

own success if impoverished

peasants living near nature re-

serves realise that tigers get

more care from the govern-

ment than human beings.

tiger umbrella."

constraints".

"The declining habitats have

"These wilderness areas

1,175 sq. km of green cover.

Continued from page 9 In Bangladesh, nearly all the 250 big cats that inhabit the Sundarban mangroves in the where the tiger lives are the Ganges delta were killed for sport between 1948 and 1971 before hunting was banned.

These days, there are only a few of the animals left in Asia's former tiger territories. Thailand and Malaysia have a total of 1,500 big cats while the Indonesian island of Sumatra with a population of

In India, tigers are also threatened by the increasing human and livestock population in the areas around their forest habitats. Since Project Tiger was launched, India's population has increased by 300 million and its livestock by 100 million leading to increased demand for firewood,

timber and pastures. The forest survey of India's latest satellite surveys reveal

But in general we, as reporters, present ourselves as reporters and when we interview people, we tell them that we're from a newspaper and we're working on a story.

investigate the conditions there, if there's wrong-doing or

As far as procedures that we use, they really are pretty basic and again, it's really matter of hard work and time. But there are a tremendous amount of records that are publicly available in the United States, locally in courthouses and local public buildings in cities.

It's a combination of reading through the records on any given story and then, in addition to that, and very importantly, interviewing as many people as possible on all sides of the story to find out what the truth of the story is.

DEDMAN: Supporting what Jonathar. said, I would clarify one point which is that often reporting is derided or criticized if it is based on anecdote.

Someone will say, "Oh, that's merely a story; that's merely an anecdote. You just have one case of that." And I'm sure it's what Jonathan is saying, is that often we use the anecdotes to tell the story, but we use them to exemplify patterns that we found, sometimes statistically or by our observation of patterns of a large number of cases, such as a pattern of pollution by a particular company or a pattern of failures in a particular manufacturing facility or a safety or health safeguard.

Many of the items that he's discussed are available in a couple of books I'd like to mention and from an organization I'd like to mention in the United States that has members in other countries, called "Investigative Reporters and Editors." In a moment, I'll give you the address of that. Jonathan has been active in their meetings, and I serve, for two years now, on its board of directors.

It publishes a book called "The Reporter's Handbook." It's a guide, primarily, to documents and sources that are available in state and local governments and in the federal government here and in the States. Many of those may not apply in your countries, but they could give you an idea of the types of sources that might be available behind the scenes as hitting singles, hitting short hits that pry loose a little bit of information.

These stories can tell the bureaucrat, can tell the person who's fraud to talk to you, that they have an ally, that there's someone interested. If you work on a story quietly for months, no one may know you're working on it, and the person with the key piece of information may not come lorward.

ALI: Time is running out, so, as far as I'm concerned, I'll have the last question. But I might go into an entirely new area, and I hope it doesn't take too long to give me some kind of an answer.

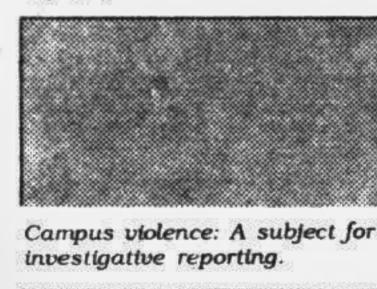
In this part of the world, in the developing world, we are very much concerned about putting North-South relations on a just and equitable basis. We have written a lot on problems of protectionism in trade. We have written quite a lot on the unfavourable assistance or aid climate in the world, our concern about what's happening in Somalia, Ethiopia and, of course, Bosnia.

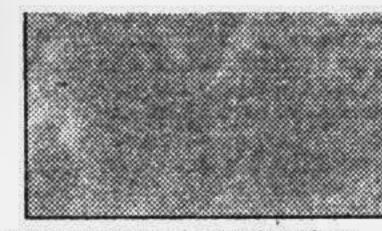
On some of these issues, we get the feeling that not enough is being written in the US press or, for that matter, in the press in the West, and certainly not in the form of investigative reporting. We now hear that the new Administration in the United States — the Clinton Administration — is also talking of protectionism - higher tariff duties.

I wonder if there is any concern - I'm sure there is concern. But is there enough writing in the US press on issues which would give us in the South the feeling that we are on the same side?

NEUMANN: I'm afraid my answer to you is not going to be reassuring. I don't think there's nearly enough reporting in the United States press on the issues that you're talking about, and I'm not sure at all how you resolve that problem.

I think that the reason for it is pretay simple. Most of the foreign reporting that we do and most of the times we send reporters out of the United States is largely directed by what the current presidential Administration says is a news even in the world, or what the State Department and the United States points to as what a news story may be.





It's pretty unfortunate, because there's no doubt that there have been large areas of the world - particularly in Africa, particularly in Southeast Asia - that the United States press has almost entirely ignored because the Presidential Administration in the United States has chosen not to make a news event out of it, for whatever reason and, in many ways, the press in the United States is very reactive. We pretty much follow what the President tells us to do.

I think we've been very irresponsible, as a country, the press has been very irresponsible in not covering very important stories about, not so much countries, but about people who are suffering, who are suffering unjustly, in countries and around the world, that the United States press rarely writes

DEDMAN: I would add that, on an encouraging note, that there is some shift now, I think, particularly because of the end of the Cold War, from American foreign correspondents who were primarily diplomats - that is, they lived as diplomats; their sources were diplomats; and, often, they may not have even known the local language -- to having reporters who are more trained in economics now.

You will see, I think slowly, perhaps over a generation, a slight — a change in the emphasis of the American foreign correspondents being more willing to challenge official versions of events. One can do that now without appearing to give away the country in the Cold War, can go out into the field and report, not just what the embassy says is happening, but what is actually happening in the country there.

MATHEWS: Bill and Jonathan, sorry, that wasn't the last question. We have been joined here by another member of the Kuala Lumpur panel. He is Dr Shamshudin Rahim. He is currently the head of the Department of Communication of the National University of Malaysia. He's like to now ask you a question.

RAHIM: Bill, I am interested in what you are doing currently. You are developing a curriculum for teaching (inaudible) reporting in the newsroom and journalism schools. Could you elaborate on this? And do you foresee any major changes in the teaching of journalism in US universities?

DEDMAN: There has been some slight movement, in fits and starts, toward what one might call precision journalism there's a book in this country by that title — discussing, in a way, journalism as a science, applying some social science techniques, which will not always answer the journalist's questions, but can sometimes answer them more accurately than a political approach, for example.

The main area, at this point — most journalists are English

majors or some other non-technical major. We don't tend to be engineering or computer science majors. In many ways, that's good, and we may have a more humanistic approach because of that.

But we may also lack skills in dealing with numbers so that we aren't fooled, and skills in dealing with a computer. So we have a long way to go in raising our skill levels and

in overcoming our resistance, sort of a cultural resistance that says, "Oh, I don't need to know how to use the computer. I go out and talk to people and write stories." MATHEWS: We have one question now from the floor. He

is Ismael (phonetic) Mustafa (phonetic), who is editor of "Al Time" (phonetic), that is Radio-Television Malaysia. MUSTAFA: Bill and Jonathan, I'm picking up from what

you just said before the last question, that is, about the media following the President and a change of emphasis, and not to follow what the embassies say. We in Malaysia just had the opportunity to read a review of a book about American journalism. One point that attracted

my attention was how the American media, instead of being independent and objective, they appeared to have been toeing Washington's line of thought. An example given in that book was when Saddam Hussein entered Kuwait, it was described as "naked aggression"; but

when American entered Nicaragua or Republic of Dominica and a couple of other Central American countries, it was deemed to be legitimate. And the book termed these as "double speak."

What are your views on this? Is there a possibility of the media being guided by the Pentagon or State Department? NEUMANN: I think everything you just said is true. Double

speak, yes. Guided by the Pentagon and White House, yes. I go beyond that. I've seen very little reported at any point, in some cases nothing written about the situation in Tibet, for example. It's because the White House has never chosen to make Tibet an issue.

The same is true, I'd say with many countries in Africa, that the Administration, the American Administration, simply for their own economic and political reasons, have chosen not to say anything publicly, and so the newspapers say nothing and most Americans know nothing about what's going on in

many countries. I think we're way behind and woefully irresponsible when it comes to covering many areas that are not frequently in the

DEDMAN: I would agree with Jonathan. I would also say that we often do not stick up for our own interests. Today, for example, February 12 here is the fourth anniversary of the death sentence, of the imposition of the death sentence on Salman Rushdie, an author who was widely read in this country, an author who has historical ties to India, to Britain

and, therefore, by connection, to Malaysia. MATHEWS: Well, we have come to the end of ties very interesting session. Bill and Jonathan, would you like to add to add anything to what you've already said?

NEUMANN: The one thing that I try to tell our reporters at the "Philadelphia Inquirer" frequently is pretty obvious, which is, when you can't figure out how to do a story, or you're not sure how to move forward with a story, you always try to use common sense.

If the story is significant, and if there's a story to be told, it means that there are a lot of people affected. If not very many people are affected by a story ten, while it may be important to a few, it's probably not a major story. If there are a lot of people affected, that means that there

are a lot of people who know what's going on. It may be that they are the victims, it may be the people who are suffering or people who are dying or starving or who are being taken advantage of in some form. But if the story is significant, there are a lot of people who

know about it, and the answer usually is, go to those people the people who are involved, the victims, the people who are being hurt - and ask them and interview them and find out what they have to say.

Frequently, those are the people that we go to the least while we're so busy going to government officials. I think the truth usually lies with the people who are being affected or victimized.

DEDMAN: This is Bill. I think that's an excellent point. I would just add one other which is, to not forget to document things which are obvious. Often, we are so pressed to find out what's new, and often what's new is transient.

There is a great power in documenting things that everyone knows are true, but they know them in a general sense; they don't know them in a specific sense with names and face and numbers attached to them.

Everyone in Atlanta, Georgia knew that banks did not lend money in black neighborhoods as much as in white neighborhoods, even of the same income. Everyone knew that. Everyone knew that the police took longer to respond to a shooting on one neighborhood than another.

Everyone knew that power was collected in a few hands. Everyone knew that unqualified people of some ethnic backgrounds were moved ahead of more qualified people of other backgrounds in competitions with jobs and schools and families and homes, and all the things that are vitally important to people.

But we forget these things, because they're so obvious and in front of us, and perhaps we should focus our reporting more often on these longstanding, 1,000 or 10,000-year-old problems, which are the ones that lower the quality of life for all of us.

MATHEWS: Thank you. Thank you very much, Bill and

Jonathan. This has really been a very interesting and informative session. Thanks for your time and for sharing all your thoughts and experiences with us.

well as those that are publicly available.

Editors. It's at the University of Missuri.

LUBIS: Thank you very much. I think we would like to be in contact with your organization, as it would be most helpful to the journalists in Asia, too.

The group is called IRE - Investigative Reporters and

DEDMAN: Let me give you the address. It's Columbia, Missuri — C-o-l-u-m-b-i-a, Missouri — 65211.

LUBIS: My other question is, do you always work alone or do you also work sometimes in a team?

DEDMAN: There's a great variety among the different newspapers. Some of the most famous investigative work in this country has been done at Jonathan's newspaper by a team -- Don Barrett (phonetic) and Jim Steele (phonetic) -- who have been working together for 20 years and twice have won Pulitzer Prizes and have probably not even won for their best work, probably have deserved to win, several other times, the most prestigious prizes.

NEUMANN: Three or four or more than that is actually difficult because the story and the thinking behind the story becomes scattered.

Also, we've found that interviews frequently can be very effective with two people if it's done well, if it's done extensively, two people can be very effective in doing interviews and also, if you need to do two things at the same time, you can do it, like have two people, if you need to interview two different people at the same time or if you need to check records and interview the same day, you can do it. So generally, we do team reporting, but that's not to say

that there's anything wrong with an individual doing a story. We do that very frequently, also. DEDMAN: I would add that there's an issue related to the teaming, or it seems related in my mind, which is the time

factor. Often, there's an important decision to be made as to whether or not one is planning a long effort of weeks or months on a story, or maybe just two or three days on a story, gathering up all you can find by that point and then publishing it all in a batch. Sometimes I think we are more rewarded in these large,

long-term stories or series that might come out in several parts over a series of weeks after months of work, get more recognition and fame, but they might not have as much effect or pry loose as much information as if the reporters had stopped every day or every week along the way and had just written what they knew. Again, I'm suggesting an incremental approach - not

trying to hit the home run, in American baseball analogy, but