

Bangladesh-India Trade Imbalance

Politics driven Bangladesh-India relations have been in a limbo for sometime now. Will trade driven relations between the two countries show better prospects? Much depends on how farsighted, creative, and sincere the business leaders of the two countries prove themselves to be. This is perhaps what the MCCI chief was talking about when he said to the visiting delegation of Confederation of Indian Industries (CII) during its just concluded visit to Bangladesh, that "it is essential for the representative trade bodies to have understanding and farsightedness on development issues." Some may think that it is asking too much of our business leaders, for, after all, can they look beyond their "bottom line"? But we say, why not. With global relations turning more on economics, and less and less on politics, may be the leaders of our trade bodies will end up showing more enlightened self-interest than our politicians have been able to.

With Bangladesh's export to India, for the '92-93 period, being at US dollars 9.8 million, and India's at US dollars 342 million, clearly there is a strong case for taking some urgent steps for changing this adverse balance of trade. If we consider the so-called unofficial trade, an euphemism for smuggling, then the trade deficit will more likely be about US 1 billion dollars. The fact that India's economy is far larger than ours, and that it is also far advanced than ours, are two of the obvious reasons why we have such a large trade deficit. But the fact that there are some very discriminatory trade practices followed by India and that there is an absence of fairplay in the economic relations between our countries, are two of the not so obvious reasons for the existing trade deficit. Saifur Rahman — true to his reputation (hoping that he is not getting carried away with that image) — came out clearly in favour of fairness in trade, and cited specific examples where India was practising unfair trade with us.

Our business leaders raised two very pertinent points with the visiting representatives of CII. First was that of greater access of Bangladeshi goods to the Indian market, and the second, that of joint ventures in Bangladesh with provisions for buy-back into India. This was, as our Finance Minister pointed out, particularly suitable for the north-eastern states of India, the only area with a meaningful scope of success. This point is of utmost importance for the future development of Bangladesh-India trade relations. Here we are talking about a specific market, whose potential can be explored to the mutual benefit of our two countries. Joint ventures, located in Bangladesh, for export to the northeastern states will give us access to new markets, thereby creating conditions for the expansion of our production base. This will benefit the Indian consumers by giving them products at a competitive price. The second important issue deals with giving the Bangladeshi products greater access to Indian markets through special tariff arrangements, for a specific period of time. This arrangement is necessary to give our industries the critical boost at the current stage of our development. The move to set up a task force to identify joint venture projects, is a very important step to bring down our trade negotiations from generalities to the very specific. The most important challenge before the Task Force is to identify Indian partners for the joint venture projects, and convince them to invest here.

We commend the initiatives taken by the business leaders of the two countries, and going by the pragmatism and goodwill shown during the latest MCCI-CII talks, hope that steps will soon be forthcoming to lower the existing trade imbalance between Bangladesh and India.

Accountability in Sport

Bangladesh made an ignominious exit on Wednesday evening from the SAF Games soccer tournament. The outcome shocked the entire adult population of this nation into wishing that our football stars had better died en bloc in shame. This was a measure of the disgust which the nation felt on the unbelievably poor and absurdly inept showing of the Bangladesh side thrown out of the contention only after playing two matches. And look at their own undoing in the easiest of the groups, No India and no Pakistan, and still Bangladesh goes out in everlasting shame. When they drew with puny Maldives everyone was certain that would be made up in their outing against Nepal. And what happened. It was not the decisive solitary goal that alone was disappointing. The whole of the match, indeed all of their two matches did not show they were in serious business.

So this is the price we are paying dearly for feeding our people with the endlessly harmful idea that we can ignore our incompetence in track and field and swimming and in fact all aspects of the Games, except shooting as long as we were good with the football. A nation of football-maniacs, our people were an easy bait for that. Now what is left of the Games for those maniacs — in fact for the whole nation?

If that was a wrong thing to feed the nation with correctional measures should commence right now. We should now rather than be indifferent to the fates of the remaining days — concentrate our attention on every item with all rational anticipation. And disappointed in any or most or all of the remaining events, should we feel the same sense of outrage that we felt in case of football — an outrage compelling our sport managers to account for each failure.

We have so long been fed with the fable of our subcontinental superiority in soccer. It is not that it was a baseless canard spread by quarters interested more in the matter of lucre than sportsmanship, or even gamesmanship. Even informed people thought we commanded and created a better than the other SAARC countries — we were more modern and up-to-date, so to say. This we believed in spite of our earlier SAF debacles. Now it is precisely in that department of the game, we have failed to make even an average presence. What's amiss?

Let this shock wake us up to the reality of our pitiable sporting situation. In a country ruled for long by autocracies of this or that kind, sport has been singular in being pampered all over. It is clear that money cannot buy everything. Specially when spent foolishly. With democracy returning to the nation's political denouement, let all in the sporting arena start being accountable.

West must Take Blame for Rise of Zhirinovsky

by Derek Ingram

The sudden emergence of the maverick rightwinger Zhirinovsky with nearly more than one-fifth of the seats in the new Russian Duma or parliament has raised fears of a fascist dictatorship. The backlash is not surprising, given the suffering of the ordinary citizen as economic reform is imposed. The West is suddenly worried by a situation, argues Gemini News Service's Editor, that is largely of its own making.



VLADIMIR ZHIRINOVSKY
Rabid nationalism

Russians have seen their country fall apart not gradually but in just a few years.

These days history is speeding up. Empires of old usually collapsed gradually, sometimes almost imperceptibly. The Roman Empire disintegrated over centuries, the British Empire over several decades.

Today a Russian can look about him and consider that in ten years his country has turned from superpower into, in effect, a Third World country. And demoralisation at home plus loss of international influence and power equals nationalism.

The immediate reaction in Europe has been shock that Russia is seen as a reincarnation of the German Weimar Republic of the 1920s, Zhirinovsky a Hitler arising from the chaos. The immediate chilling vision is of Zhirinovsky or his like with a finger on the nuclear button.

If this should become a reality the Western powers will have only themselves to blame. Mikhail Gorbachev, and Boris Yeltsin after him, pleaded many times for greater economic help to buttress Russia as it changed to a market economy. Massive amounts were required; paltry sums offered.

The argument always was: get the reforms in place and we will give you the money. The challenge that faced the

world in 1990 was not unlike that which it faced in 1945 when the whole of Europe lay in ruins as a result of World War Two.

The response then was the Marshall Plan — the huge United States aid programme which dramatically re-equipped western Europe. The prosperity of Europe that came in the 1960s was the result of the \$17 billion given between 1948 and 1952, mainly to Britain, France and West Germany.

In those days there was a motive beyond the improvement of people's living conditions — the Soviet threat. The Berlin blockade began in 1948 and marked the real beginning of the Cold War. Western Europe had to be made stable and the Marshall Plan was the tool for the job.

No such threat to US power existed when the Soviet Union collapsed. The challenge had gone. Demanding the reforms first and the money later put Moscow in a Catch 22 situation. The amounts have not been enough — to some extent, it is

true, because the US and western Europe have themselves been in recession. However, if a power threat had existed the US would surely have found the money.

Instability in Russia seems likely to continue. Events may not lead, as has been quickly concluded, to the kind of situation that followed in Germany in the 1930s. Patterns of political evolution may bear their similarities but history never repeats itself in exactly the same way.

Zhirinovsky wants to put the Russian empire together again and has dreams of our Russian soldiers washing their boots in the warm waters of the Indian Ocean. In this modern world there is no way that can happen. He could create mayhem, but the 14 other republics that once formed the Soviet Union have tasted their independence and will not give it up again. Russia is desperately weak and uncoordinated.

The vote for his party is more likely a vote of protest against

living conditions and a pandering to racist and other base instincts. It is nonetheless threatening and worrying — all the more so because similar sentiments are welling up in much of Europe.

The new caretaker Prime Minister of Hungary following the death of Josef Antall is Peter Boross, who is an admirer of Admiral Horthy, Hungary's wartime fascist leader, and attended his public reburial last September.

Neo-fascists and communists are collecting most of the votes in Italy's elections as the old Christian Democratic order dies in disgrace. The right is asserting itself in France and anti-semitic and anti-black sentiments are growing there. The same is happening in Germany on an even more worrying scale. In Britain and several other European countries these trends are also on the rise.

The greatest concern about what has happened in Russia must be about the possibility of the nuclear arsenal falling into the hands of a man like Zhirinovsky. Alarm bells must be ringing in the Pentagon and alarming scenarios being discussed. If — for all the wrong reasons — greater economic help is now forthcoming for Russia from the West the spectre of Vladimir Zhirinovsky may remain just that.

Appropriate Leadership Influences Organizational Development

by M A Samad Talukder

ORGANIZATIONS permeate all levels of our lives. We come into contact with many of them daily. In fact most of us probably spend most of our lives in or are affected by organizations.

Organizations exist as they can accomplish things that individuals can hardly achieve. They pursue goals and objectives that can be achieved more efficiently and effectively by the concerted action of individuals and groups. An organization, from other perspective, may be viewed as a pattern of roles and a blueprint for their coordination.

Since organizations are run by people, understanding the behaviour of people in organizations has become increasingly important. This addresses several management concerns: such as productivity, the quality of work-life, job stress, and career progression.

The effectiveness of any organization is influenced greatly by human behaviour. Individuals are the most important resource common to all organizations. And each individual has a unique state of perceptions, personality and life experience; different capabilities for learning and stress; and different attitudes, beliefs and aspiration levels. Managers of organizations must view each employee or member as a unique embodiment of all these behavioural factors.

In organizational management some people must perform the role of leaders, while others must play the role of followers. Mid level managers must perform both the roles, because they have both super-ordinates and subordinates. Organizations have systems of authority, status, and power, and people

in organizations have varying needs from each system. Groups in organizations also have a powerful impact on individual behaviour and on organizational performance.

Distinction between Management and Leadership

The basic distinction between management and leadership is, management directs the actions of others, while leadership influences the actions/behaviours of others. A manager's power is derived from the authority vested in the position by the organization; it is primarily a decision-making process required by the organization to realise its objectives. A leader's power is given by the subordinates to a particular person regardless of his or her position in the organization.

Managerial influence is usually a function of the degree and type of power the subordinates assign to their manager. But is power assigned by the subordinates? Bases of power are — 1) Coercive: Fear of punishment for non-compliance; 2) Reward: Ability to offer rewards, recognition etc; 3) Legitimate: Derived from position in the organization; 4) Expert: Based on special skill or knowledge; 5) Reference: Based on special traits (charisma); 6) Information: Possession of or access to information; 7) Connection: Special relationship with important person(s) in organization.

Performance is more a personal function of an individual than the power assigned him/her through the organization. Organizational effectiveness vis-a-vis leader's effectiveness is a function of both performances (outputs) and satis-

faction (intervening variables). An effective manager is a planner, organizer, director and coordinator.

Management is an organ of institution and the institution, whether a business or a public service, is in turn an organ of society, responsible to make specific contributions and to discharge specific social functions. Management, therefore, cannot be defined or understood, let alone practised, except in terms of its dimensions of performances and the demands of performance on it.

To enable an organization to perform its functions and make contributions, management must accomplish three tasks simultaneously: 1) define the specific purpose and mission; 2) make work productive and the worker achieving; and 3) manage social impacts and social responsibilities.

All the components (typically people and machines/devices) of an organization work together to achieve a common goal.

We know that the role of leadership is to influence the action/behavior of people. Therefore, the selection of leaders is a crucial step in the life of any organization. Gilmore presents a variety of suggestions about how a new leader can effectively "connect" with the existing staff of an organization.

Characteristics of Leadership

The simple formula for leadership is: L (Leadership) = VCH (Vision, Communication, Hard work).

VISION: The question might arise: What is vision? In many ways it is simply the presenta-

tion of an alternative future to the status quo. It is based on the belief that the status quo is not good enough. Status quo managers may be necessary and appropriate in some situations only.

COMMUNICATION: Simply having a vision is not good enough. One must communicate it over and over again to those both inside and outside the organization.

HARD WORK: It is most important that all the individuals profiled in leadership and innovation must work hard and long hours.

The common view regarding leadership is that a person with charisma generally becomes a leader. The charisma is commonly defined as personal attractiveness and dynamism. It is easy to think of many leaders who had charisma, but at the same time there are leaders who had little charisma but nevertheless were competent in guiding and rousing others. Thus it seems that "charisma" alone is not a sufficient condition for leadership. Some other factors must also be present.

Leadership theory stresses two different aspects: group context and situational factors. An ideal bureaucracy is supposed to be a highly rational form of organization. But rationality is difficult to achieve. Emotions and feelings are important parts of any organization, especially in its informal relations.

One of the more important ways to improve bureaucratic performance is through leadership. An organization often would reflect the personal characteristics of its leader. A competent leader must fulfil both ef-

fective and instrumental roles. The leaders must be liked by subordinates but at the same time ensure that tasks are accomplished. These two roles are often in conflict, but may be effectively integrated by good management styles. The tasks of leadership have been made more complicated by the growth of professionalism and use of experts in organizations.

Major Attributes of Leadership

The following are important qualities of leadership: 1) Unwavering courage based upon knowledge of self, and of one's occupation. No follower wishes to be dominated by a leader who lacks self-confidence and courage; 2) Self-control; 3) Keen sense of justice; 4) Definiteness of decision; 5) Definiteness of plan; (A successful leader must plan his work and work his plan. A leader who moves by guesswork, without practical, definite plans, is comparable to a ship without a rudder.); 6) The habit of doing more than paid for; 7) A pleasing personality; 8) Sympathy and understanding; 9) Mastery of details; 10) Willingness to assume full responsibility and 11) Cooperation.

There are two forms of leadership. The first, and by far the most effective, is leadership by consent or with the sympathy of the followers. The second is leadership by force; history is full of evidence that leadership with force cannot endure.

A classic study was undertaken by the late Douglas Murray McGregor of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He described two theories of management and their implications for motivation.

McGregor's theory X basi-

cally has five premises: 1) Most people, by nature, don't like to work; 2) Most people lack ambition and need a club over their heads in order to make them work; 3) Most people prefer to be told what to do; 4) Most people resist to change; 5) Most people are gullible and not overly intelligent.

Theory Y, on the other hand, is more people oriented and has four cornerstones: 1) People do not dislike work but may actively seek it; 2) People do not need the authoritative type of leadership but prefer participative kind of management; 3) People prefer setting their own goals rather than have someone else set them; 4) People do not shirk responsibility but rather seek it.

In view of the above, what appears is that: efficient leadership implies the combination of power, authority and influence, with more than adequate understanding of the existing situation in the organization — a business firm, university or an industry — and in the surroundings. The successful manager not only understands his organization — its rules and regulations, financial conditions, short and long term planning, etc — he also understands his subordinates — their aspirations and problems, assets and shortcomings. The subordinates — both the 'willing to work' and 'unwilling to work' types — on the other hand, must fear, understand, respect and, to some extent, love the manager. The mutual understanding and cooperation between the management and the employees is the most important pre-condition of the successful running of any organization.

Unemployment Begets Murder and Crime

Vincent W Stove writes from Sydney

Almost a quarter of Australian families do not have a single person in the workforce. In certain Sydney areas, unemployment among Asians is as high as 50 per cent.

employment under a Labor Party administration — and a party that has been in power for a decade.

Australian Employment, Education and Training Minister Kim Beazley has stated that the most optimistic scenario for the country's labour scene is an unemployment rate down to 6 per cent by the end of the century.

He was not particularly optimistic about a return to the salad days of full employment which characterised the Australian labour scene for so long following World War II. 'Anything like full employment, however defined, will be desperately difficult to recapture in this country,' he stated.

The government's main contribution to a solution is the unemployment benefit — the

dole — paid to the jobless. Its other attempt to provide a cure is training in occupational skills — but without available jobs, the result is a lot of highly trained unemployed.

An unusual feature of the current situation is that over recent years a lot of jobs have been created. The number of people in employment has increased — but not enough to allow for the increase in newcomers into the labour force.

The extra jobs have been created at the top and the bottom of the income scale. For the big middle income group there has only been a decline in jobs.

The only way out of unemployment for some who normally work in middle income jobs is to try to push upwards into the highly competitive upper echelon or to settle for less

in more mental occupations. But there are not enough jobs at the top or the bottom to cater for unemployed middle income earners.

With jobs in the middle income area slowly decreasing, there is a growing gap between Australia's rich and poor — a new development in a country which has long prided itself on its lack of evident class distinction.

Those at the lower socio-economic level once comprised mainly black Aborigines, those immigrants lacking fluency in English, and the poorly educated and unskilled. They have now been joined by the well-educated and highly experienced drifting down from the contracting middle income sector.

Unemployment among Australia's Asian communities is much higher than the national average. In certain areas of Sydney, unemployment among Asians is as high as 50 per cent.

Most of the Asian unemployed have only recently ar-

rived in this country. Their chances of gaining jobs are not good because of low levels of English fluency.

The Sydney Morning Herald reports that the country's unemployed and unemployable are highly concentrated in certain areas and they often come from one-parent families headed by women; they often have serious handicaps, such as illiteracy; many are resigned to living off welfare for the rest of their lives; and unemployment is passed from generation to generation. These unemployed are described as being resigned to spending the rest of their lives without jobs.

While there is confidence in business circles that Australia is slowly creeping out of the recession of recent years, that is not how the country's unemployed see the economic climate. Profits may be up and the stock market may be bullish, but the queues for vacancies are just as long as ever.

There was a time when government ministers were saying that once companies started recording better results, the jobs would follow. But it has not happened. — *Depthnews Asia*

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.

'Sans'

Sir, Your correspondent Mr KR Zakhmi from Khulna vide a letter dt. 5.12.93 expressed his confusions about the word 'sans' and you have already made the same clear to him by writing the meanings of the word 'sans' (just below Mr Zakhmi's letter).

Well, I would like to add a

little to it: 'sans' (sanz; Fr. San) altered L. absentia, absence, (archaic or poetic: without).

John Keats had written a poem with the title 'La Belle Dame Sans Merci' meaning 'The Beautiful Lady Without Mercy'. This poem is one of the most famous poems in English language. It tells the simple story of a Knight who has been deceived and deserted by a

lovely lady and comes to realize, in a dream, that she has deceived many others too.

M Zahidul Haque
Asstt Prof, BAI, Dhaka

Subsidy for poultry and dairy feed

Sir, Cost of chickens and eggs is very high in the country. It is almost out of reach of the common man. Same is the case with milk and milk products. These are much cheaper even in neighbouring India. But there is no reason why there should be a vast difference in their prices. Economic and environmental factors are quite similar in both the countries.

Prime reasons that can be

attributed to the high prices are high cost of poultry and dairy feed and medicines. Government has to spend some four hundred crore Taka in foreign exchange every year for importing milk. Despite this, per capita milk consumption is very low. To bring poultry and dairy products within the reach of common man, it is highly desirable to provide subsidy to poultry and dairy feed and medicine.

The government is subsidizing losing BJMC, BTMC, PDB and many other corporations. Trade unions of these bodies are very strong and volatile and thus perhaps, the government has to give these corporations huge subsidy. Poultry and dairy sectors are very important for

the angle of national health, saving of foreign exchange, providing employment opportunities etc. Hence, government should not hesitate in providing subsidy to poultry and dairy feed and medicine. Because subsidy involved will be only a fraction of the subsidy provided to the sector corporations. Will the Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock ponder over it?

Saleh Ahmed Chowdhury
Dhaka Cantonment, Dhaka.

PSC

Sir, In recent times, it has been alleged that there is considerable anomaly and malpractice in the employment procedures of the PSC. We are really shocked to hear this. It is

least expected of the highest employment authority of our country. In such a situation, our claim to the authority is to bring out the written test results as it is done in university admission tests.

I think, a candidate who obtains high marks in written test, must not be a failure in viva-voce. It will make the process free from any allegation of malpractice.

Rumour goes, that the present authority has great influence on the viva-voce. So, it is time to take a new step for resolving the crisis and exorcise PSC of the alleged guilt, if any.

Mohammed Humayun Kabir
Mirpur, Dhaka