N this cold and freezing

winter, the hot news is

L the meteoric rise of

LETTER FROM HARVARD

The Rise of Patrick Buchanan

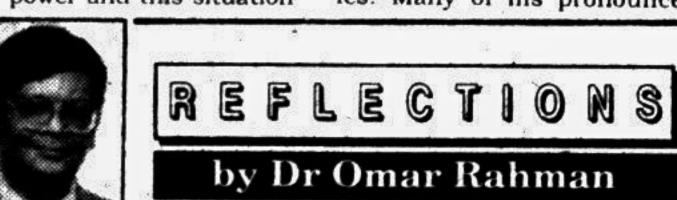
Patrick Buchanan from fringe candidate to potential front runner in the Republican presidential candidate into more technologically sophisticated, capital-intensive nomination process. His recent win in the New sectors. However, although in-Hampshire primary, coupled ternational trade theory says with his strong second place that it all works out in the long showing in lowa has made him run with everyone being better the man to beat. He may yet be off, the American garment Robert Dole's nemesis. worker who has lost his job to In a lack-luster campaign. his lower-paid Mexican coun-Buchanan has injected a bolus terpart is not exactly jumping of excitement, coupled with with joy. So one is faced with more than a tinge of fear and an age-old conundrum, the naloathing. He more than any tional and global economy may other candidate has caught the be improving but significant

mood of sharp economic inseproportions of people (the low curity of middle America in a skilled, the lower educated engaged in smokestack or changing global economy. In a society that has been fed an labour-intensive industries) are unadulterated diet of hope and left by the wayside. optimism, where people have Buchanan has captured this been led to believe almost as a mood of bewilderment, betrayal and insecurity amongst birthright, that every generathe rank and file of America's tion, and every class of society would keep on moving up, the working families (the bulk of last few years have been a the electorate) and has fashpainful revelation. Corporate ioned a vision of the country downsizing, massive layoffs. which talks about putting the withering away of estab-American first. He has artfully laid the blame of this current lished labour-intensive indussituation on (what he charactries have cast a pall on people's perceptions of their futerises as) unfavourable terms ture. The future is no longer in the variety of global trade secure, and forces beyond liberalisation arrangements one's control have profound such as NAFTA and GATT that implications on one's life. the United States of America One of the inevitable fallouts has signed on to. He harkens of an inter-linked global econto a vision of an earlier impe omy is that may of the labourrial World, where America can intensive jobs move to cheaper essentially wave its "big stick"

which would protect American industries without losing its export markets. Buchanan's brand of populism, of course, draws on a long (although somewhat marginal) history of isolationism and imperial fantasies imbedded in the American body politic. After the break up of the Soviet Union, the United States reigns supreme as the only military super-power and this situation

unfriendly, even hostile to the rights of women and minorities (African Americans, Jewish Americans, Hispanic Americans), and the main proponent of a fundamentalist Christian conception of American society.

Buchanan's long career as a columnist, and television commentator has" provided ample ammunition for his critics. Many of his pronounce-



unfortunately leads many on the Right to nostalgic dreams

of an Imperial America. Buchanan's economic vision of America although more sharply drawn and perhaps less free trade oriented than his fellow candidates is not what is causing waves in the political landscape. It is by and large his social vision that has earned him the label of 'extreme". He has been termed by his detractors as a bigot, someone who wants todivide and polarise America. rather than bring it together. He is seen as being particularly

ments on public policy have come back to haunt him. His critics have charged him as being anti-semitic for his comments about Congress being Israeli occupied territory (in the context of the Gulf War). He has been termed a misogynist and out of touch with the modern world, for his comments about women being inherently unable to deal with the pressures of public office. His strong anti-immigrant stance (particularly with relevance to Mexican and Hispanic

immigration) although now

more and more a mainstream

Republican position has not endeared him to the growing Hispanic electorate. His attacks on the welfare system and the undeserving poor have been seen as thinly veiled attempts to stigmatise African Americans.

In short Buchanan has managed to alienate almost everyone except his core constituency, white blue-collar working men and women who make up the bulk of registered voters. He has also kept faith with the Christian Right (perhaps the most powerful lobbying group in the Republican party), by taking an uncompromising stance on opposing the right to abortion under any circumstances and promoting a vision of Christian family values.

Buchanan's ascendancy has come as a big surprise to most commentators and political pundits who has basically written him off as a marginal candidate. His success owes a great deal to two factors. The first is a canny assessment that working people in America are hurting despite favourable macro-economic trends and that the Republican party is increasingly seen as exclusively concerned with catering to big business at the expense of the working poor; secondly an uninspired campaign by Robert Dole, the quintessential Wash-

ington insider at a time when the mood is sharply anti-Washington. Of course, the media emphasis on Dole's supposed weaknesses (his age, his moderation, his unacceptability to the Christian Right) has had an impact as well.

Now that Buchanan has become a viable candidate, and a force to be reckoned with, everybody is in a tizzy: It is as if they have opened a Pandora's box and the evil genie has escaped: Mainstream Republicans feel that with Buchanan as their candidate, they are heading to a debacle similar to the 1964 elections, where Barry Goldwater with his extreme conservatism (which ironically now seems quite mainstream) lost in a landslide to Johnson's more pragmatic vision of governance. On the other hand, Buchanan's success is of course welcomed by the Democrats who feel that Clinton with his executive experience, and message of moderation, will in the end be much more appealing than Buchanan's messianic, dark, polarising vision of America.

It is early days yet in this long and exhausting Republican primary season, but it is clear that win or lose, the Buchanan candidacy will have a major impact on the nomination. Even if Dole or some other moderate (Lamar Alexander) secures the nomination, their agenda will have to accommodate to some extent the concerns of Buchanan's constituency.

yields from less inputs is

Maximum Input

Technology (MIT)

augmenting yield. The con-

cept is based on using more

fertiliser in irrigated areas

with higher management

systems that can lead to in-

creasing yield. The current

level of fertiliser use is lower

than other major rice grow-

ing countries. Though it is

part of a management but

MIT can response positively

only in the ideal situation

which is difficult to create in

the small farmer dominated

agriculture both in terms of

socio-economic and techno-

logical point of views.

Moreover, motivating farm-

ers to use MIT in unpre-

dictable yield targets is also

difficult. MIT can success-

fully be adopted in commer-

cial farming environment as

it is based on purchased in-

put technology and needs

considerable investment in

Management

Technology

is a great science and its area

is also vast. Considering the

resource constraints in agri-

cultural development, the

improvement of management

practices is the only option

that presently we have in our

hand to bridge the yield gap

existing between potential

and actual yield. Management

includes input use (fertiliser,

irrigation, seed, pesticide,

etc.), post harvesting process

and some other issues aris-

ing from sowing to market-

ing of the crops. We have ex-

perienced a 30-70 per cent

increased yield of existing

HYVs by better management

rate of variety and crop man-

agement. An unpopular vari-

ety to the farmers could be a

leading variety when the

crop management practices

In our country at present

only 5 per cent quality seeds

is supplied by BADC and re-

maining 95 per cent come

from the farmers' own man-

agement. So, the per unit

yield can easily be increased

simply by improving the seed

supply system and by improv-

ing the quality of the seed.

Similar situation prevails

with fertiliser and irrigation

technology. Water use effi-

ciency in irrigation system is

about 40 per cent and nutri-

ent use efficiency is only 40-

45 per cent. To be less de-

pendent upon energy input.

mixed cropping/multiple

cropping involving a cereal

and legume could be prac-

ticed as leguminous crops

contribute nitrogen to cereal

crops in such combinations.

Thus, great benefit can be

achieved by better manage-

ment practices compared to

having to evolve a new vari-

face any competition from

Rice cultivation does not

ety/hybrid.

are improved.

The management practice

initial stage.

It is also an option of

early to say.

Religious Right Crusades for Total Power

This year's presidential election in the United States could place the Republicans in control of all three branches of government. Such a result, argues a Gemini News Service correspondent, could usher in a chill climate of intolerance spearheaded by conservative revolutionaries who believe they have God on their side.

Mohamed Hamaludin writes from Miami



HE founding fathers of United States democracy, fearful that power could become centralised in the hands of one group. created three branches of

vailing powers. But what would happen if an ideologically-driven party, intolerant of the views of others, managed to seize control of the Presidency, Congress comprising the Senate and House of Representatives and the Supreme Court? Would it lead to a dictatorship of the

majority? There is possibility this year that the Republican Party could extend its control to all three branches. And the party is spurred on towards this goal by a "God and country" alliance of conservative zealots and

right-wing Christians. If the Republicans, who made big congressional gains in the first half of this decade, triumph in November, it would be the first time for more than 60 years that their party has controlled the legislative and executive branches at the same

time. On top of this, the Republicans have the upper hand in the judicial wing because Republican presidents Ronald Reagan (1980-88) and George Bush (1988-92) were able - as a result of vacancies — to install a majority of conservatives in the nine-member Supreme

Court. In Congress, many of the eager freshmen see themselves as carrying on the "Reagan Revolution", named after the elderly ex-president they revere as the father of modern-day American conser-

vatism. They have turned their attention to the domestic agenda now that they no longer have the Cold War drum to bang. They seek to cut down the size of government, especially through eliminating or hacking back federal programmes. such as welfare and health care, set up over the past six decades to serve as a social safety net for the poor, and

The fervent conservatives have formed an alliance with groups such as the Christian Coalition, which, despite a constitutional separation of Church and State, unabashedly proclaim their intention to place God as the central focus of everything that is done in

the country. They give massive electoral support to the Republicans.

The right-wing revolution has stalled in Congress over a dispute concerning the balancing of the federal budget - in chronic deficit for years with incumbent Democratic President Bill Clinton using his veto to protect key social programmes.

Conservative Republicans are now focusing on the big prize - the presidency. They see capture of the White House as completing the takeover of the federal government, which they denounce and want to re-

duce, but which they would use to entrench their agenda. They demand two essential requirements of a Republican presidential candidate : oppo-

losophy as the answer to the country's social problems.

Demagoguer is having a filed day. Far eight candidate Patrick Buchaman, a television government with countercommentator by profession, is seen as having the best populist appeal with a message of both social and economic conservatism — taking the Biblical high road on social issues and advocating chopping off most of US relations abroad, or, as he puts it, "taking back our country".

At this early stage, the consensus is that Buchanan's message is resonating well with "Middle America" - the white middle-class that feels under siege.

Buchanan is exploiting, as he did in his campaign four years ago, the uncertainties and insecurities of many Americans during an era of change.

The end of the Cold War and scaling back of the military industrial complex is hitting jobs and causing many of the country's fiscal difficulties. But this does not figure in the Republican equation. US problems are blamed, instead, on moral decline.

Indeed, the one black candidate in the Republican field. Alan Keyes, has campaigned solely on "restoring family val-

Buchanan, meanwhile, unashamedly pitches his campaign to whites. Recent news reports alleged that his campaign's co-chairman. Larry Pratt. has links to white supremacist groups. Pratt has denied it, but has taken leave of absence from the campaign.

No candidate is preaching a message of racial inclusiveness in a country that much of the rest of the world has come to admire as a bastion of diversity after the end of segregation 30 years ago.

The campaign speeches have nothing to do with tolerance for those who are not Christians, who believe in the right to abortion, or who feel that only government can truly ensure that the poor and needy receive adequate help.

The spectra of what could happen if the Republicans did take full control of government has apparently not risen high enough yet to ring alarm bells in the body politic.

Conservative philosophy is going virtually unchallenged. The Republicans only major opponents, the Democrats more broadly representative of the country — see no need to campaign at present because Clinton has no serious chal-

lenger in his party. By late March, there is likely to be a clear indication of who Clinton's Republican opponent will be, and the debate will become truly engaged.

Political and religious intolerance and racial superiority are moving to centre stage. It remains to be seen whether those who are excluded from the conservative formula can unite and form coalitions with less intolerant whites, and whether Clinton will be willing to lead such a charge.

MOHAMED HAMALUDIN is Managing editor of the 'Miami sition to abortion, and com-Times'.

Options for Increasing Rice Productivity level within 20 years. High concept (for example one per rice variety will fulfil our panicle from one seed), inexpectation that is, get more

single biggest problem faced in Bangladesh agriculture is the low productivity of rice. Present production and productivity trends of rice should draw serious attentof the concerned personnel due to several reasons. The country is approaching the next century with unstable rice production system and with decreasing food security both at macro and micro levels. Yearly production of rice, in general, is at the level of requirement only in the favourable weather conditions. Otherwise, the country faces shortage of rice production.

sources of labour and advanced

industrial societies like the

United States have to move

The present rice production scenário shows the declining yield trends in most of the areas whereas input use, mainly fertiliser, is increasing gradually causing narrow the margin of inputoutput balance. On the other hand, Bangladesh will need 34-35 million tons of rice by 2015 AD, which means the production of rice should be doubled from its present

further milestone has

been achieved at BM

Birla Heart Research

Centre, Calcutta, with the

completion of over 10,000

angiography procedures in the

cardiac catheterization

laboratory of the centre says

years since its inception the

cardiac catheterization labora-

tory of the centre has estab-

lished itself amongst the most

well equipped labs in the

country. The Centre has re-

cently acquired another car-

diac catheterization laboratory

with installation of 'Swing Lab'

- the first of its kind in

Asia. The high quality digital

image processing and comput-

erized analysis programmes

make interventional proce-

dures quick, accurate and easy

while giving excellent quality

images for diagnostic purpose

laboratory is not just a diag-

nostic area any more. Proce-

dures to treat certain type of

coronary artery disease and

valvular heart diseases are rou-

tinely undertaken at these labs

by full time Senior Consultant

Dr Anil Mishra, Dr Tarun Pra-

haraj and Dr Shuvo Dutta and

some visiting Cardiologists.

Cardiologists of the Centre -

The cardiac catheterization

Over a span of about six

press release.

as well.

Yielding Varieties (HYVs) play a pivotal role contributing 15 to 20 per cent yield increases in rice. Existing HYVs which are 33 in number can give of an average 5.0-5.5 t/ha in the farmer's field provided with the best management practices. The average yield of demonstration trials conducted by extension agencies ranges from 3.5-4.0 t/ha whereas the national average of rice yield is about 2.0 t/ha, indicating a big gap between potential and actual yield If we can bridge the exist-

and get the Japans, the Chinas

and whoever is the current

trade culprit to agree to terms

ing gap to some extent we can easily solve the production problem. To meet the country's requirement, we need to increase rice yield from its present level of 2.0 t/ha to 2.6 t/ha. For achieving the goal we should try to explore all possible options that we have. The options are

High Yielding Variety

(HYV) ·Varietal development (biological improvement) is one of the key strategic ele-

Performing 10,000 Angiographies

Coronary Balloon Angiophlasty.

Directional Coronary Atherec-

tomy, Rotablation and Coronary

stent implantation are rou-

tinely performed to clear

blockages in coronary arteries

without the necessity of open

heart surgery, in suitable cases.

Tight blockages in certain

valves are similarly treated

with balloon valvuloplasty in

this lab, thus avoiding surgery.

Highly trained technical staff,

nursing staff and Doctors, who

have extensive experience in

this field perform these pro-

cedures. By next month the

images will be stored on com-

pace discs, allowing better

clarity and computer manoeu-

vision of Paediatric Cardiology

two and half years ago, more

than four hundred cardiac

catheterization and interven-

tions have been performed by

Dr Debashish Biswas on chil-

dren, some of them being only

a few hours old. Life saving in-

terventions such as Balloon

Atrial Septostomy in new

borns and in Balloon Valvulo-

plasties infants are done only

in this Centre in eastern India.

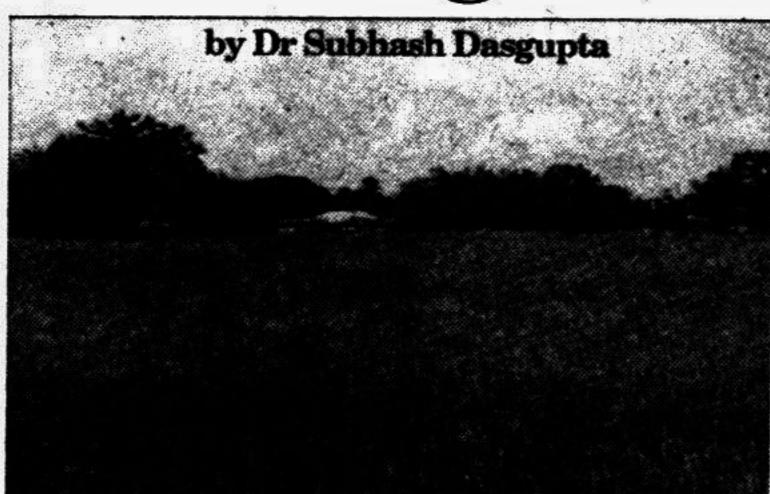
Electrophysiological Study

of Heart

sultant Cardiologist of the Cen-

Dr Anil Mishra, Senior Con-

With the opening of the Di-



ments to increase production. Our farmers adopt modern varieties more quickly than management technologies. Same yield potentialities of released HYVs that have been marked since '80s might be one of the causes of yield stagnation in the country. It also indicates the limitation of traditional breeding approach. Interesting feature is that all

tre performed the first full

Eelctrophysiological Study of

heart in Eastern India on a pa-

tient on 14.02.96. This event

also marks the launch of the

only Eelctrophysiological Study

(EPS) bab in eastern India at

BM Birla Heart Research Cen-

tre equipped with a highly so-

phisticated 36 Channel, fully

computerized EPS machine

Programmable Stimulator and

RF Ablation device. Electro-

physiological study of the heart

involves detailed study of elec-

trical activity and electrical

properties of various tissues of

the heart by placing electrodes

at various sites within heart by

non surgical means, just like

catheters are placed during

angiography. A verity of known

or suspected rhythm problems

of the heart can then be initi-

ated and studied and many of

them can be treated by Radio

Frequency ablation procedures

which the lab is equipped to

nosed symptoms of palpitation.

blackouts and near blackouts

will find an answer to their

problem in this lab. This

should fill a large void in the

detection and treatment of

rhythm problems of the heart

which was existing in Eastern

India due to lack of such facil-

Many of the undiag-

carry out.

the prevailing HYVs have same yield potentialities and their presently realising yield capacity is also almost same, indicating attainment of ceiling in respect of yield in our HYVs.

If it is so, our breeding strategy should be re-oriented by seeking opportunities for increase in yield potential of new varieties. The present germplasm collection needs to be enriched with materials having higher yield potential along with other desirable characters. In some areas. HYVs have been giving maximum yield and further improvement in those areas with existing HYVs will be difficult. Replacing HYVs currently in use in such areas by more productive ones, if available, could be a good option for augmenting yield. Further expansion of HYVs in new areas might also not bring expected output from land suitability point of views. Higher yield potential of HYVs can be realised by narrowing the time gap between variety development and its adoption.

Presently, it takes long time and by this time some HYVs could loss their higher production potentialities Development and adoption of location-specific HYV with a commercially viable localised seed supply systems can lead to increasing yield. Development of location-specific HYVs to fit them into the major rice-based crop areas of those areas to make them more viable, stable and productive should be the major rice-breeding strategy. For this purpose a variety having 100 cm height, 100day duration and 100 quintal/ha yield (H100 D100 Y100) could be an ideal one for our situation. Besides,

change in plant-type

distinct parents through hy-

dridisation is called Hybrid. China is the pioneer of this technology and successfully implemented it that helped spur its rice yield even 15 t/ha at the farmer's field. At present, this technology is being used successfully in Vietnam. Possibility of using hybrid rice technology for increasing rice yield is a much talked-about issue of the present time. As a result, both positive

crease in plant populations

and modification in tech-

niques that can lead to in-

creased production should

be considered in developing

Hybrid Rice Technology

seeds (F), obtained from two

Using of first generation

and negative sides of the technology have clearly been surfaced. Hybrid technology demands a strong breeding programme which can be handled in our country only by public sector research institutes. Promotion of hybrid rice technology through private sector initiative is unthinkable, at their present level of development. Success of China and Vietnam in this regard is due to the active role of public sector. In India too, this technology is being expanded through public sector. But in case of crops other than rice and wheat private sector can do lot as it is being done abroad. Works in this line in BRRI is at initial stage and it may take a long time to achieve something commendable.

Another important thing is that for adoption of this technology much more attention should be given in the field level activities which is a difficult task in our situation. Furthermore. huge initial cost for buying seed materials will make farmers reluctant to use them and private sector will never come up if farmers do not buy costly hybrid seeds every year. So, to what extent this technology can help increase rice yield is difficult to predict.

Super Rice Variety

International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) in the Philippines has been working on this technology which will be available to the farming community at the end of this century. Still we shall have to wait at least 5 years to get the technology. Some basic characteristics of super rice variety are: the grain: straw ratio will be 60:40 which is 50:50 in the existing HYVs. Hence higher yield will come from the manipulation of total biomass in favour of reproductive organ. Thus biomass of straw will decrease but its total amount may remain unchanged due to the increase eration in the rural areas.

other sectors causing its lower yields. To make rice production more viable the performance of other subsectors such as livestock. fisheries, forestry, etc. should be promoted within the farming system that will lead to competition with rice cultivation. Priorities should be given to identifying other factor that limit production rather than to develop a new variety through costly breeding programme. A long-term programme on promotion of biological nitrogen fixation by cereals either through rhizosphere association or development of symbiotic relationship with nitrogen fixing organisms should be initiated. Blue green algae. Azolia-anabaena system can play an important role in the effort. Some other means and ways of technology transfer rather than demonstrations to be explored in transferring management technologies.

in the total yield. Following of direct seed sowing wil reduce the employment gen-

Nothing is known yet about the socio-economic consequences of the using of super rice variety. Still it is a modification of HYV concept in favour of yield. But the socio-economic circumstances of the farmers prevailed during the Green Revolution are not the same as of now and it has been changing rapidly in the open market economy. The natural reserves of nutrients in our soil were sufficient which had been used indiscriminately during the HYV periods: But now the soil fertility status is depleting alarmingly. Status of organic matters in the soil is less than 0.5 per cent in some areas. At present our soil in average produces 8 kg of grain from on 1 kg added nutrients which was about 20 kg in the early '60. So, higher yield potentiality in super rice variety might bring very little benefits to our farmers. Whether the su-

James Bond BY IAN FLENDIS CROP HELPS CASTRO DRAWING BY HORAK OF CUBAN SUGAR! IN SUGAR





