

World Bank's Requests

The World Bank feels that the ADP should be unburdened of the politically motivated low-priority projects and that decisions of administrative and technical nature, pending since the days of political crisis, ought now to be taken by the caretaker government. The last-named are required to facilitate project approval, fund disbursement and implementation of the ADP in the reform-oriented core areas.

The World Bank seems keen on projects where most of the conditionalities — laid down by it and agreed upon by us — were fulfilled with just about one or two left to be redeemed to complete the cycle and ensure the IDA credit flow. In this category fall the WASA project and the micro-credit programme. There should be an early resumption of negotiations stalled in the uncertain political climate.

Some downsizing of the Annual Development Programme looks like an inevitability given the sharp, rather irreversible, decline observed in the recent months in the rate of ADP implementation. The first ones to be jettisoned are obviously the projects taken in hand out of a sheer political or constituency-based motivation at the expense of economically weighty considerations deserved by other projects.

It is certainly within the right of the caretaker government to review the ADP projects in its purely administrative capacity. And, so far as the economic policies go, it has the added advantage of accelerating the implementation thereof with the full knowledge that all the political parties have been professedly wedded to privatisation and free market precepts.

The caretaker government is inherently capable of being fully objective in its assessment and analysis of economic conditions and in the formulation of measures to improve them. On the economic side it is visibly well-manned with the prospect of hitting the nail on its head.

On the monetary side we keep faith with the caretaker government that it will maintain the required credit discipline without being unsympathetic towards the sectors in a dire strait. It will be so much the better if a review of all the recently sanctioned loans yielded an economic accommodation to the hard-hit businessmen and industrialists. And, of course, we are looking forward to a drastic fall in the avoidable expenses of the government.

The caretaker government's biggest limitation is time, so that all concerned must be forthcoming to enable it to optimally utilise its short tenure.

Students Must Behave

Youthful exuberance and a matchless moral courage have always been the university students' forte. It is because of these they could lead during all the national crises from the front. A few aberrations in recent times have, however, put the entire student community in a very poor light. What is most worrying is the increasing trend among students to act irrationally and unlawfully. In one such case, more than 200 students of Khulna University went berserk and held the vice-chancellor hostage in order to compel him to withdraw a disciplinary action order — he had served — against 13 students.

The students' concern for their erring classmates on a penalisation row is somewhat understandable but what is most despicable is their unbridled reaction to the disciplinary action. Instead of peaceful demonstration, they have resorted to a show of force, intimidation and ransacking. By doing so they have not only held the institution in contempt but also become a party to unlawful acts.

In the face of intimidation the VC remained firm and shown a lot of character. If the VC stands by the action he has taken and is willing to go by the rule to punish the demonstrating students, he should have all the support he needs from the administration as well as different quarters of society. The students surely had before them other peaceful and legal ways to register their protests. Even if the VC had made a mistake in taking the decision against the 13 students, the students had no right to take the law into their own hands. Going about the matter in a sober and apologetic manner, could have helped reverse the action or at least lessen the severity of it.

How unstudentlike their behaviour was that they deemed it fit to hold the VC in confinement as the riot police stood by. This is just abominable. Police must act in such a situation and the students must give a better account of themselves.

A Hero's Departure

That separatist Chechen leader Dzhokhar Dudayev is dead has been confirmed by various sources. His death has come as a tremendous blow to the independence movement of Chechnya. More than that the on-going peace negotiation between Russia and Chechnya now looks uncertain — on one extreme the leadership now can go into the hands of someone more radical and uncompromising than Dudayev; on the other, it can bring in a more pliable leadership for an early settlement.

Boris Yeltsin has already sounded that his government will go ahead with the peace process, Dudayev or no Dudayev. How Russia makes peace with Chechnya now will be closely observed by the world at large. But without paying a fitting tribute to the man who wanted to take Chechnya out of Russia's control, any solution to the republic's long-standing problem will seem incomplete.

That Dudayev sought to liberate the Chechnyan homeland is enough testimony to his love for his countrymen. In fact, he was the epitome of Chechnyan spirit of freedom. The way he got killed looks suspect. At the time he was talking to a peace negotiator over satellite telephone that this happened. Was it an accident or an act of deliberate planning or sabotage? We will perhaps never know. Will the Russians ever answer? In any case, he must be shown the respect he deserves.

Jumbled Election Scene

In the absence of institutions, persons who seek to make any contribution want to be in parliament or the assembly. There is practically no attention paid to any activity other than politics. The media is particularly to blame. Its obsession with politicians has made others feel that parliament or the state legislature is the only place which will make them heard.

Congress, which was at one time ahead of the BJP, has suffered in the wake of a revolt by the Tamil Nadu unit. The West Bengal Congress has not challenged Rao but it is not happy over his selection of candidates. In fact, Congress is facing several mutinies in different parts of the country.

Opinion polls gave Congress 180 seats before such developments took place. Now the tally may drop considerably. It is significant that G Moopanar, who led the revolt against Rao, has been suspended, not ousted from the party. Probably, Rao has his eyes on the post-election period when he will need every rebel to swell his party's strength.

The BJP can have the satisfaction that none of its units, not even the faction-ridden Gujarat, has seceded from the party. But that is in name alone. Otherwise, it is also wrecked by dissensions despite the intervention of the disciplinary RSS. Another point that the BJP does not realise is that caste identities have eclipsed religious entities. By adopting *Hindutva* as its goal, it is living in a world of its own. Apart from scaring Muslims and liberal elements in the Indian society, the slogan does not serve any purpose.

The Janata Dal, or more so the third force, held the ground before the elections were announced. A non-Congress-non-BJP government

seemed a possibility. The miracle may still take place but that will be despite the Janata Dal, which is disintegrating. If ever the situation is retrieved, the credit will go to the communists, who may string different regional parties together to keep Congress and the BJP out of power.

The problem with the third force or the national front is that it has primarily existed on paper. It is neither national nor a front. For the last several months it has never met.

dynastic pulls. It has adopted wives and sons of ministers, who carry the stain of *havalas* on their khadi.

At the last minute, names have been changed because of dictation by the mafia or the money bag. Perhaps, India should develop a method whereby a party holds an election, like primaries in the US, to find out who among its candidates has the largest following. At present, only the party president counts.

Such being the material,

BETWEEN THE LINES

Kuldip Nayar writes from New Delhi

Whatever the front's importance, it declined abruptly after the death of former Andhra Pradesh chief minister N T Rama Rao, who was its president. No one has taken his place.

In the face of non-descript options before the nation, the election looks like an exercise which voters, perforce, have to go over. They are indifferent and cynical. And whatever enthusiasm was there, it has been squeezed out by the selection of candidates. Some of them have a criminal background. Some have defected from their parent body to get nomination. Congress beats all. It continues to follow the

structure that may merge cannot be but faulty. It is too early to say which party will occupy which part of the structure. But there is no doubting about its ricketyness. It may collapse after one year or so, necessitating a mid-term poll.

One cannot pick on the candidates because they reflect the quality of leadership. The criterion of political parties is loyalty, not merit. I know of several persons who were not given tickets because they are too bright, too straightforward, too clean. One party chief has even spelled out his aversion: 'The educated create prob-

lems and it is better to leave them out.'

Yet, this does not explain why there has been so much dissension this time. Even the most loyal have taken no time to cross over to another party or form their own group if they have been dropped from the Lok Sabha polls. The units have broken away. There are two reasons for it.

One, the quality of leaders or, what is called the high command, has come down. They are not tall enough. Nor have they any base to impress. Circumstances seem to have thrown them up. Most of them do not deserve to be where they have reached. Their connection with business houses or the mafia groups are known to the partymen. And they are as much after power as any time-serving politician. Their word has no moral authority.

For the first time, a state unit has felt so alienated by the leader's arrogance that a new entity has come to assert itself. This has happened in Tamil Nadu where an old Congress leader, Moopanar, has decided to go it alone. This has also happened in UP to the Janata Dal, which has been reduced to mere name in the state.

The other reason is the weakening of institutions. Apart from the media, parliament or the state legislatures are the only forums which have any clout. Indira Gandhi was the one who killed the institutions because she

wanted to wield power all by herself. Rajiv Gandhi, of even lesser mettle, did not understand what the institutions meant. Narasimha Rao knows their importance but has not retrieved them because it would have meant lessening his own authority.

In the absence of institutions, persons who seek to make any contribution want to be in parliament or the assembly. There is practically no attention paid to any activity other than politics. The media is particularly to blame. Its obsession with politicians has made others feel that parliament or the state legislature is the only place which will make them heard.

The Supreme Court has tried to revive at least the institution of independent investigation. The CBI was freed from the control of the prime minister, but sadly only for the *havalas* cases. The agency has to be made independent if politicians are to be punished. For that matter, the police force as such has to be cut from the apron strings of ministers. The Police Commission had in 1978 proposed an independent council to supervise the police. But Mrs Gandhi did not agree to the suggestion. Nor has any other prime minister differed with her after assuming power.

It is not a happy situation. It adds to confusion. It all becomes uncertain. But uncertain politics does not mean an unstable system. There will be pulls and pressures, even horse trading, but all within the precincts of the parliamentary system. Those who know India will not be unduly perturbed.

The Concept of Human Resource Capitalism

by M Najmul Islam

THE new economic superpowers — Japan and Germany — and, increasingly, affluent tiger economies of East Asia dominate the world economic scene today. These countries, though different in culture, language etc., share a few characteristics in common: They are singularly deficient in natural resources, possess a very high density of population (with exception of Germany), have risen to their present status of economic affluence within a relatively short period after the Second World War, and have faced an acute crisis involving their very survival as a nation.

Also, these countries have forced a cut on their defence and other unproductive expenditures for the development of their human resources as a matter of national priority, and insulated their economic process from political pressures. Specially Japan, since World War II, concentrated totally on economic development, considering their population as prime and economic capital without spending a single yen for national defence purpose. Now they are characterised by a relatively higher egalitarian distribution of income and lower level of socio-economic inequalities.

All these countries today represent essentially throughput economies. Human resources with high levels of education and skills constitute their major distinguishing asset. They have largely succeeded in overcoming the intractable problems of poverty, illiteracy, hunger, unemployment, inflation, and population growth. On the other hand, various large and highly resource-rich countries like Argentina, Brazil, Congo, Mexico, and Russia continue to be afflicted by severe economic problems of instability and turbulence.

Japan and Germany were destroyed during the Second World War. Yet within two decades, they were able to reconstruct their national economies and move toward achieving the highest levels of per capita incomes in the world. The examples of South

Korea and Taiwan are, however, more relevant in our context. In the early sixties, they along with India and East Pakistan belonged to the same league of poor nations with per capita income of around US\$ 80. Yet today with their per capita incomes of over US\$ 6000 and US\$ 8000 respectively, both South Korea and Taiwan have left us far behind with our meagre per capita income of US\$ 220. Taiwan also holds the world's largest foreign exchange reserve at US\$ 89 billion, next only to Japan.

How and why our country has been so far left behind? Our people are among the most talented and industrious in the world. They have distinguished themselves in different parts of the world through their ability and achievements. The country is moreover blessed with good resources of

productive excellence, technological strength, economic achievements and social successes. They are also the nation's most basic resource in terms of their knowledge and learning, productivity and skills, creativity and innovation.

Human resource capitalism signifies that our most important national resource is we ourselves — our energy, our intelligence, our commitment to national goal, and our ability to work together in pursuit of a shared vision. Only through the collective energy, intelligence, abilities and vision we, the people, can solve our problems and move forward our economy and society toward a leading position in the arena of global economic competition.

Human resource capitalism thus correlatively also implies

combined role is to foster knowledge and learning, skills and abilities, build up people's values and vision, missionary zeal and reflective patriotism, commitment and dedication.

Human resource capitalism envisions a situation wherein millions of human beings continually do their best at work, and try to improve their performance, day after day. They operate in terms of the nexus of work excellence, duty and commitment and cooperation in every sector of the national economy and society.

The resulting continuous and cumulative increases in productivity, innovation and wealth generation propel the economy and society toward a self-sustaining spiral of growth. Such a spiraling trajectory can, however, take off effectively only when the government,

they constantly seek suggestions and demand large number of graduates from the educational system, as well as bright generalists, because these people are the life-blood of the industry.

This statement of Matsushita brings out the symbiotic relationship of individuals and institutions which characterises the ethos of human resource capitalism. It also serves to differentiate the latter from the American form/brand of capitalism.

American capitalism views workers and employees as 'cost to be minimised', while human resource capitalism views them as assets to be developed, recognised and rewarded. Recognition — little things with high impact. How high? Sam Preston, who retired as executive vice-president of S.C. Johnson (Johnson Wax etc.), had a habit of send-

edge in terms of novel ideas or concepts.

As long as people continue to learn and produce new ideas and insights, and incorporate them into their work, they provide a lasting source of competitive advantage. How do we proceed on the pathway of human resources capitalism toward economic reconstruction and poverty alleviation?

Today, we seem to be facing a serious crisis of leadership and character. Lofty values and inspiring vision as the drivers of our motion and purpose are missing. They have been replaced by an unrestrained pursuit of parochial/individualistic privileges and sectional interests in a situation progressively defined as a zero-sum game. But no nation can achieve its goals and greatness unless it is steered by strongly-held and widely-shared values and vision. Only these can sustain the nation's social cohesion and mobilise its will and energy for socio-economic transformation.

If we fail to recast our education, economy and governance according to the guiding principles of human resource capitalism, we may perhaps never be able to overcome our chronic and intractable national problems.

Human resource capitalism should make us question and re-examine our entrenched perceptions and world views — our coded institutions and our behaviour patterns and our vested interests and narrow self-images. Failure to do so would mean our continuing entrapment in the vicious circle of poverty, backwardness, and social strife. Our will to succeed would, on the other hand, lead to an unending and growing creation of national wealth for all of our people.

The potential of the prospects for the creation of wealth by and for our people are virtually limitless. This is so because the potential of creative and knowledge-rich human resource is itself unlimited and unending.

The writer is Assistant Manager (Commercial), Square Pharmaceuticals Ltd.

As long as people continue to learn and produce new ideas and insights, and incorporate them into their work, they provide a lasting source of competitive advantage. How do we proceed on the pathway of human resources capitalism toward economic reconstruction and poverty alleviation?

fertile land, natural gas and coal, and other minerals, water and year-round sunshine.

Taking these positive factors into account, our failure to overcome our chronic problems of population growth, poverty, unemployment, inflation and illiteracy, becomes all inexplicable.

With respect to Japan and Germany on one hand and South Korea and Taiwan on the other, this failure can be ascribed to our failure in developing and utilizing our most plentiful and valuable human resource. We have failed miserably to develop, mobilise and deploy our human capital. We have failed to create and exploit the virtually limitless potential of human resource capitalism for the creation of national wealth. The roots of the failure go deep into our history and culture. It may be seen both as an ideology and agenda of action.

What is human resource capitalism? As a development ideology and approach it holds that the people of a country are the ultimate source of its

that all social institutions function in a mutually aligned and orchestrated manner for developing and releasing the productive potential of people. The institutions have to internalise within the people, and externalise in their performance, the core norms of work excellence, duty/commitment and cooperation. Each and every institution, individually and jointly, has to play its vital role in this context. The human resources, in terms of their high quality, would, in turn, elevate the efficacy and effectiveness of the institutions and enhance further their capacity to enrich human resource regularly. The relationship between people and institutions is to be not only mutually supportive, but also mutually reinforcing and amplifying. Only thus may the momentum of socio-economic transformation be built and sustained. The core institutions involved in this context are the family, the school, the higher learning and research institute, the world organisation and government. Their

industry, labour and academia i.e. all the wealth-creating entities in the society strive together toward a shared purpose and direction. All of them need to pool together, develop and deploy their collective knowledge, learning, expertise and skills. Japan is the foremost and unexcelled model of such a harmonious and purposeful cooperation. The Japanese model, in turn, has also been adopted by the tiger economies of East Asia including South Korea, Taiwan and Singapore.

During a visit by European and American managers to Japan in 1979, the founder of Matsushita, Konosuke Matsushita, told them: 'Only by drawing on the combined brain-power of all its employees can a firm face up to the turbulence and constraints of today's business environment. This is why our large companies give their employees three to four times more training than yours. This is why they foster within the firm such intensive exchange and communication. This is why

ing little notes, with a bold 'DWD' scrawled across the top, after coming across a sparkling effort. The 'DWD' stands for 'Damned Well Done'. At his retirement party, Preston was stunned. People came up and thanked him for DWDs sent fifteen years before. Recognition is that memorable and that infrequent — even at S.C. Johnson, which has been one of America's top people-oriented companies for decades.

The concept of human resource capitalism is bound with continuing and lifelong enhancement of knowledge skills and learning capabilities of people. This not only amplifies the economic values of human resources for organisation and society, but also provides the only durable sources of sustainable competitive advantage, available to them.

Any innovation and/or invention whether it is new product, new process, new technology or new way of marketing, is essentially a learning process. The latter involves the use and generation of knowl-

sition should also do the wrong things. During that period they should have abstained from their duties on the plea that they were not safe under the BNP government instead of shaking hands with a particular political party. It simply showed ignorance of their ethics or a deliberate love for a particular political party.

I request Mr Rahman to find more details about Mr Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir. I am narrating here another incident about him for your information. Mr Mohiuddin's elder brother Mr Mesbahuddin Khan also was a bureaucrat who retired and joined a particular political party that party's ticket Mr Mesbahuddin became an MP from Chandpur constituency in 1991. In that election Mr Mohiuddin led his brother's election campaign and used government vehicles.

What I feel at that time Mr Mohiuddin should have joined that political party after resigning from the government post like his brother. Then his action could be justified. I agree with Hasina Zaman for her allegation because if one does a mistake, others cannot follow the same wrong our secretaries went wrong there.

Bachchu Goshai, Fazlul Huq Road Sirajganj

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.

Electric supply at Wari

Sir, Over the last three months, the electric supply is continuously playing ducks and drakes with the people at Wari residential area. Very often the light of the house across the same road or the house of the right or left side neighbour is available, but as soon as the power comes to the dark house the same of the house across the road or the neighbour goes off. It appears that the PDB and Dhaka Electric Supply Authority officials and employees are equally enjoying the hide and seek game for a long time and they are all sitting mum.

Due to erratic electric supply and voltage fluctuations not only the bulbs get damaged one after another, but in addition to payment of high rate of electricity bills, we are also required to spend a huge amount of money on purchase of candles, and our water pump machine, refrigerator and TV also need repairs in quick succession.

We do not appreciate nor

deprecate the efficiency and performance of PDB and Dhaka Electric Supply Authority but we feel pity for our utility service and request the authorities concerned to activate the electricity to save the residents of Wari from untold sufferings.

O H Kabir
6, Hare Street, Wari,
Dhaka-1203

Electing Women MPs

Sir, I fully agree with the views expressed in your above-captioned editorial on 19th April, 1996. Women these days are taking important professions including cadre service through open competition. I don't understand why the process of selecting will remain the same after 25 years of independence. Women are now more educated and competent.

There should be, in my opinion, an amendment in the Constitution for direct election of women MPs. The population of the country has increased

manifold but the number of parliamentary seats is still the same.

As a result, one MP needs to represent for a large number of people of his/her constituency. This aspect should also be reviewed.

All the political parties who are going to seek next parliament election should nominate at least 10 women leaders to contest in the election. This will help to improve the women representation in the Parliament.

Mahbubul Haque Chowdhury
153, Lake Circus, Kalabagan,
Dhaka

Partisan approach?

Sir, I do not want to believe that the non-partisan interim government of Justice Habibur Rahman is headed towards this or that political party in running the administration. So far, the Justice has done quite an appreciable job, especially when pitted against the sky-rocketing demands of the country's sick and self-seeking political elements. If the sole objective of the present interim government is to hold a free and fair general election, the recent move to transfer the district and thana level of officials is a step in the right direction, although extreme caution is required on his part to read wood from the forest.

But what about the national level officials who breached the state rules by openly siding with a particular political party?

Leaving aside the political polemics, the action of few of the highly-placed bureaucrats during the last week of March was in clear contravention of the 1979 Government Servants' Conduct Rules which clearly state that 'no government servant shall in public utterance make any statement of opinion which is capable of embarrassing the relation between the government and the people or any section thereof.'

The rules further stipulate that 'no government servant shall take part in, subscribe to, or assist in anyway, any political movement in Bangladesh or relating to the affairs of Bangladesh.'

When the laws and rules of the country are so clear about the expected conduct of the government servants, why the wilful violators of the laws have not yet been taken to task? The Chief Adviser owes an explanation to us — the people of Bangladesh. Appropriate actions on his government's part without any further delay will exonerate him from a creeping suspicion that either his government is partisan or his government is afraid of taking any stern measure against the law violators. Afraid of whom? We can assure him that the vast

majority of people will be with him in dealing with these law breakers, just as they would support him in dealing with any other law breakers.

We would also expect the President of the Republic to use his power and prerogatives to put the 'house of bureaucracy' in order. The nefarious activities of a handful of self-styled 'king makers', if not nipped in the bud, would represent a dangerous precedent for which the nation may continue to pay a heavy price in days to come. Meanwhile, our hope for a free and fair election will remain a mere pipe-dream with these bureaucrats at the helm of state affairs.

Vox Bangladesh
Lalmatia, Dhaka

Civil Servants

Sir, I refer to Mr M Rahman's letter that was printed in The Daily Star on 16th April 1996 under above caption.

I wonder how Mr Rahman defended those 35 senior secretaries about their illegal action during last anti-government movement? They are the government servants and they must maintain neutrality. It was evident that the BNP government was not fair and they did a lot of wrong things which did not mean that the government officials of such high po-