

## Freeing Occupied Land

Successive days' stories on illegal occupation of government lands within the city area only focus on a perennial problem. In the first attempt, a self-proclaimed peer tried to grab a piece of land inside the children's park adjacent to Syedabad bus stand under the banner of a mosque. Resorting to a most vicious trick, the peer supported by his organised gang erected a makeshift structure under the name Syedabadi Majbhandari Bangabandhu Jame Masjid. Thankfully this ill attempt under the garb of religion was frustrated by the timely action of the Dhaka City Corporation (DCC). The signboard was pulled down and the structure demolished. In another such attempt a two-unit tin-shed college was erected on three bighas of land in Badda overnight by local people led by the secretary of the Gulshan thana Awami League.

The land is part of the 60 acres to be allotted for rehabilitation of the local people who had been affected at different times by Rajuk's acquisition of land in the area. This is rather intriguing. When the very land has been set aside for the local people's rehabilitation, what desperation led them to go for this illegal occupation? Out of 1,000 plots, 600 have been earmarked for allotment among the victims of acquisition and the rest 400 for Rajuk employees. The seed of discord has to be found there.

Yet this is no excuse for the local people to take the law into their own hands. If the Rajuk is blameable for dilly-dallying in handing over the plots to them, they may have genuine grievances but not enough reason for them to go the extra way. The scheme is ready and if they have complaints, they could collectively seek redress through appropriate channels. What they have done is a crime calling for punishment. The authority must follow the rules to tackle the situation. At the same time it can be a test-case for the Rajuk to evolve ways and means to free lands from illegal occupation. Stretches of land all across the city have been unauthorisedly occupied. Freeing these lands can be part of a strong campaign for establishing the rule of law. This done, the lands can at some places be used for construction of small-unit flats for low-paid employees, elsewhere they can be left open, turned into playgrounds or parks. Is the Rajuk ready to take up the challenge?

## The Moral of Hiroshima

Yesterday the world observed the Hiroshima Day. A seminar was held in Dhaka to remember the harrowing obliteration of the thriving Japanese city, Hiroshima, on the morning of August 6, 1945. From Einstein's energy-matter equation to the atomic bomb used in Hiroshima — mankind has travelled to a capacity of obliterating itself — just in 40 years. What then is keeping man away from destroying not only his own species but the unique phenomenon of life itself? The obvious answer is it is the peculiarities of international situation that pushed mankind to go for the bomb at a certain time and it is another set of international equation profiles that is stopping nations from using nuclear bombs of either fission or fusion type to further national cause. There is, however, a less obvious thing, the moral aspect, that has so far balked at the use of the ultimate weapon and hopefully will go on balking as effectively.

The first popular history of the atomic bomb, Brighter Than Thousand Suns by Robert Jungk, was subtitled, "A Moral History of the Atomic Bomb". Why did Leo Zilard persuade Albert Einstein to get president Roosevelt to order the making of the bomb so that Nazi attempts to do the same could be pre-empted? Then was the time for all good men to rally round the cause of reaching to the bomb before Hitler.

It is a moral stigma that still hangs over Harry Truman and his government that Hiroshima was atom-bombed on August 6 and then Nagasaki on August 9 at a time war was over with Germany and Japan was seeking peace at any price, surrender to start with. The dubious decision was followed by indubitably foolish and downright bad actions of building up the cold war and the two super-powers' hell-bent race for a balance of terror through an attempted supremacy in nuclear deterrence.

An apologist for the American action in early August, '45 might say that Hiroshima and Nagasaki played an important role in that these taught the whole of mankind to beware of this literal hellfire on earth. Is it true that all of us have truly learnt our Hiroshima lesson? Perhaps not.

## Runs and Ruins

If Brian Lara's epic 375 is the sun Sanath Jayasuriya was to conquer, then this explosive batsman definitely failed yesterday when a delivery, in a rare deviation from pattern, defeated him to write a tearful end to an otherwise outstanding effort. Nevertheless, there are quite a few almost unassailable feats Jayasuriya and his side Sri Lanka achieved in the just-concluded first Test match against visiting India. Notable among them is definitely the highest aggregate in an innings of a Test eclipsing England's 59-year-old record total of 903 against arch-rivals Australia, highest partnership for any wicket and Jayasuriya's 883 runs in just seven matches that robbed Lara of the distinction of being the highest run-getter from the minimum number of matches, the left-handed West Indian having made 730 runs from nine innings.

With his grand triple century, Jayasuriya has made his critics eat their own words— people who felt the bloke is too cut out for slam-bang over limit matches to make any impression at the more demanding and enduring level of Test cricket.

The match itself was however a travesty of a contest and the Sri Lankan authorities have not done the dying culture of Test cricket any service by preparing such a batsman's paradise.

Pitches in the sub-continent have had a tradition of being a heaven for batsmen. Only recently Pakistan broke away from this hated tradition and duly met with the results for their success in ensuring a semblance of balance between the ball and the bat. The other countries of the sub continent must take this cue for their own good.

Let not five-day matches, as one former cricketer observed, die under the mountain of statistics.

# UF Has Learnt to Live Together

Congress would like to be in power or lead a coalition. But how to do it has been its problem, particularly to appease some anxious aspirants waiting in the wings. The party can stall a government decision if it feels so strongly about it.

mer Bihar chief minister Laloo Prasad Yadav feels indebted to Congress for its support to his wife, Rabari Devi, in securing a vote of confidence as the state chief minister. He may also come to an understanding with the party at the time of a mid-term poll.

But what does Congress do meanwhile? It cannot sit idle, crossing the t's and dotting the i's. Basking in the glory of a dependent government is one thing and running the government is another. Keshri also finds his flock restive. His problem is that the mathematics of numbers does not work in his favour. In a house of 545 members, Congress has only 146. Even if the DMK and Tamil Maanila Congress were to support it — and even if Mulayam Singh and Laloo Yadav are in his bag — Keshri would remain short by nearly 70.

On the other hand, he finds that Congress is in no shape to face the electorate so soon, especially when the taint of corruption has not worn off. He sees a bit of revival of the party in Karnataka and Maharashtra. But the Congress Waterloo has been the Hindi-speaking states. The party has not retrieved any ground there.

Therefore, both Congress and the BJP look towards developments within the United Front. Their hopes are up when on a particular day one con-

stituent of the UF feels irritated and makes a threatening statement. But when analysed, it turns out to be an ego problem or at best a misunderstanding, which is sorted out. On another day, some other worked up constituent is up in arms. Again the crisis is nothing but a storm in a tea cup. The media also realises that it has made mountain out of a mole hill.

There is nothing to suggest that the UF is disintegrating or

stituents more patient and more accommodating. They have learnt to live with one another. They still play to the gallery and try to take stand which may be popular but not realistic. Ultimately, they apply their mind to arrive at a solution and find one.

Prime Minister Inder Gujral says that there is not a single decision which has been taken on vote either in the UF's steering committee or in the Union

snipe at it almost daily — but they will never damage the UF beyond repair. There is no altruistic motive. They just do not want either the BJP or Congress to come to power at the Centre. The UF helps them stall them. The communists are as much stuck to the UF as it is to them.

Congress has reportedly tried to persuade them to stay neutral as they did during the regime of Indira Gandhi when her government lost a majority in the Lok Sabha in the wake of split in Congress in 1969. The communists have not yet been taken in by the argument. How can they have any understanding with a party which is fighting them at every inch in the states of West Bengal, Kerala and Tripura?

The Laloo Prasad Yadav episode has hurt the UF in the sense that his government was continued without any decision for several weeks. The UF looked divided and helpless and, at times, a reluctant supporter to his stay. The replacement by his wife has not lessened the ignominy. The UF looks compromising. It has damaged its image in the process.

The real crisis will begin the day Congress feels that the UF is supplanting it in the eyes of the electorate. The party can afford to wait for its turn. But it cannot brook a situation where it begins to become redundant.

The moment the UF begins to earn good name, Congress will begin the demolition programme. Congress can also initiate the move if and when it feels that it can come back to power or draw old Congressmen back to the party.

The argument is that if the party could accept Krishna Kant, once Congressmen, as the vice-presidential candidate, why can't old Congressmen return to its fold. The logic is not convincing. Yet some in the UF are flirting with the idea of effecting an electoral alliance with Congress at the next polls.

The communists are dead against it. So is Andhra Pradesh chief minister Chandrababu Naidu, whose Telugu Desam is in direct fight against Congress. The communists may like the UF to fight the election as a group, with their support from the outside. This, no doubt, keeps out Congress and the BJP. But is the UF combination viable? And if and when it wins a substantial number of seats, can it depend on the support of Congress, which it would oppose in elections?

The fear of the BJP coming to power may work then as it has worked now. What the UF has to guard against is its inner contradictions. It may sound repetitive but the danger to the UF has been from within, not without. At present, former prime minister Deve Gowda and Janata Dal president Sharad Yadav are bent upon yawning distances. Their opposition to Inder Gujral is persistent and open. This can create problems for the UF.

## BETWEEN THE LINES

Kuldip Nayar writes from New Delhi

that a new set up at the Centre is in the offing. The mills of rumours are busy overnight and everything happening within the UF becomes the grist for their propaganda. But there is nothing concrete so far.

What is not realised is that a group of 14 parties is bound to have differences. But they are necessarily insurmountable. This is what is happening within the UF in the past one year. That it will break up is a sheer wishful thinking. True, it remains tentative and tenuous as it was at the time of its foundation. But its looseness is probably its strength. Ever new problems have made the UF con-

Cabinet. Everything is decided unanimously. He says that he has served many governments but has known none other than the UF which goes into every aspect of the problems and reaches an agreement after a full discussion. Inherent contradictions of the UF may come to the fore at times. But all of its constituents are aware that they, regional parties, have begun to count in the country. They do not want to be vassals of the Centre as they have been in the past. This cements their relationship.

The key is in the hand of the communists. They may not be happy with the UF — and they

# Dos and Don'ts in Managing People

by Dr. Salehuddin Ahmed

MANAGEMENT throughout the World is known as a science. However, in reality it is more an art than a science. Because Management primarily deals with people and people are varied. Every person is different. Management has two aspects: (1) Materials Management, (2) People Management. If you know what materials are required in what quantities, where and when, materials management should not be so difficult. However, to manage people is the most difficult and crucial matter. You may have all the materials you need lined up to achieve something, but if people are not managed well, if your team does not work, everything will be useless. So to manage people, you need to be a 'supersuperman'. You have to have all kinds of qualities: e.g. you have to be a psychologist, an economist, a politician, a diplomat, a very articulate communicator, a negotiator, a motivator, a decision maker, a finance person, a conductor, a leader, a listener, an acceptable personality and what not! The issue of personality is so very important, that the higher you grow in the ladder of Management, the more matured, patient, polite personality you need.

However all aspects of a manager cannot be covered here. The intention is to highlight on the behavioural issues. This is the most important aspect of Management. If you read books and articles on human behaviour, you may come across many such issues and we do not have time to read all those. If you write another thesis on the behavioural side of a manager, nobody will have the time to read it. Real good managers are all too busy. So if we want something to be read and internalised, it has to be short, precise, concise and in 'bullet' form. Therefore from my experience of working as a manager in a development organization for the last 18 years at different levels, I thought I should write in point form the basic values of a manager in managing people — some basic behavioural dos and don'ts. This should be relevant for any manager, at any level and in any organization whether government, non-government, non-private or private. These are very basic and down to earth and based on real experience.

### Dos

1. Listen to your staff and people.
2. Be on time to office no matter at what level you are.
3. Attend meetings on time, if you cannot go, please inform.
4. Treat people as human beings with dignity no matter what level s/he belongs to.
5. Talk to people. If you have relatively free time call in any of your staff, discuss. They can give you knowledge and they will also feel important.
6. Take the help of information technology. There is nothing to be afraid of it. If you don't know, get somebody to do it for you, but use it.
7. Transmit organisational values to the bottom.
8. Make periodical visits to the field.
9. Be a learner, no matter at what level you are.
10. Talk less when you are conducting a meeting. Let others speak more than you do.
11. Have faith in others' decision making power and let others decide. Let people make mistakes.
12. Treat staff as adults.
13. Practice what you preach.
14. Treat all staff equally, whether women or men. Be fair,

be neutral.

15. Be tough without being harsh.
16. Have an open door policy in the organisation. Anybody from any level should be able to meet you, if need be.
17. Appreciate someone when s/he has done something good. Don't keep mum.
18. Provide direct feedback to your staff about his/her strengths and weaknesses with solid logic.
19. Make people aware about logic and rationale of organisational decisions.
20. Use 'we' more than 'I'.
21. Speak clearly and loudly. Cross check if people have understood you.
22. Go to the desks/offices of your junior colleagues to discuss a point instead of calling them all the time.
23. Have a sense of proportion in everything, anything too much is bad, whether it is food, talking, playing, travelling whatever.
24. Build your junior staff. They are your future leaders. Give them enough time. Remember staff development is a manager's prime responsibility.
25. Empower staff to take on responsibilities.

### Don'ts

1. Do not shout at people or use bad language (calling names). Remember that you also have someone above you. If s/he shouts at you, how would you feel?
2. Do not discourage a person to speak in a meeting without valid reasons.
3. Do not put off someone in front of others. Especially in meetings you cannot ridicule or insult someone.
4. Do not encourage flattery and 'oil'ing. Do not accept unnecessary presents from your staff.
5. Do not use your staff for your personal work. If you have someone meant for doing your personal work, only use him/her, not others.
6. Men should not tease women staff. You should be double careful in saying things to a woman staff. Be extra careful about your gestures, postures and comments towards women.
7. Do not treat your staff as children.
8. Do not take all the decisions under the sun yourself. Let people make mistakes and learn.
9. Don't be indifferent. When someone is talking to you, please be attentive. Encourage staff to talk to you.
10. Staff should not be afraid of you. They should be encouraged to share their thoughts with you. Do not create an aura around you that people do not feel comfortable to face you. Use your smiles to do that and talk nicely to people.
11. Your spouse should not be involved in your official decision making. Office problems and home problems should not be mixed up.
12. Worries and problems should not be reflected in your face and discussions. Be calm, do not panic, but take cool headed required actions. Panic will never solve problems, even if it is an earthquake!
13. Do not favour people in your team. You will lose respect and neutrality.
14. Foul talks should be totally avoided.
15. Do not make promises beyond your capacities. Do not make false promises which you know you cannot fulfil.
16. Do not call people using 'signals'. It is very degrading.
17. Do not give more importance to men than women. Treat them equally.

The writer is Director Programmes, BRAC

## OPINION

# Whither the Ministry of Labour and Manpower!

Hedayat Ahmed

Recently, a leading Bangla daily, has come out with a heart rending story of how a group of glibly Bangladeshi youth were cheated by some unscrupulous manpower recruiting agents.

The report says that three recruiting agents were granted license to export Bangladeshi manpower to Saipan, a tiny island in the Pacific. The report makes a special reference to the fact that the ministry of labour and manpower acted in undue haste and granted permission to these recruiting agents to send labour to that country. Due diligence was not exercised by the ministry while processing the case nor the antecedents and past performance of these agents were verified. No effort was made by the ministry to carry out any check about the employment situation in that tiny island. Thus, several thousand job seekers have lost their savings and now counting their days in agony and total despondency. The report further states that presently there are 1350 Bangladeshi workers at Saipan, mostly without any regular job.

These three agencies had sent 175 persons of which 50 have not been able to secure any employment. The report further states that a 3-member team under the leadership of the state minister of labour and manpower had recently visited Saipan to evaluate the local situation. The team noted that employment prospect in that island was rather limited.

For those who are not familiar with the location of Saipan (as most of us are), it is a small island of 70 sq. miles in the Pacific, a member of Commonwealth of Northern Mariana States. Its geographical co-ordinates are 15° N latitude and

145° E longitude. It is a US trust territory. Tourism industry is its main economy.

I would like to ask the ministry the following questions:

(i) Why was there reported undue haste in issuing authorisation to the manpower recruiting agents?

(ii) Why did not the ministry carry out a check of the employment situation at Saipan at the first instance?

(iii) What purpose was served by the ministerial visit to Saipan when it was all over?

(iv) What criminal action is proposed to be taken against those unscrupulous agents for cheating innocent job seekers? A mere show cause notice followed by some administrative action is not enough.

(v) The officials in the ministry responsible for issuing authorisation in undue haste (may be for some consideration) should be identified and administratively dealt with.

(vi) What action (s) is proposed to be taken to avoid recurrence of such misdeeds?

I would also like to request BAIRA (Bangladesh Association of International Recruiting Agents) to take action against those who resort to pure exploitation of our unemployed youth and indulge in unethical practices in furtherance of their business goals. As a government recognised trade association, it has a responsibility to the community to ensure transparency in the business dealings and operations of its members. There is no denying the fact that a lot of exploitation takes place in the name of manpower export but one cannot close eyes to such blatant machinations of some agents.

## To the Editor...

### Fire in garments factories

Sir, Fire through electrical short circuits and deaths thereby has come to our garments industries as a common phenomenon. Many suggestions are being published in the dailies as to the remedial measures to be taken. Narrow approaches and in sufficient exit routes have been pointed out as the causes of deaths. However, none has pointed out the causes as to why fire occurs through short circuits.

Being associated with electrical industry I have made

owner will have tough time getting power connection. Such technicians also do not care for any safety regulations or practices, for being in the solid ground of government employment they are little responsibilities to any one. Most of the time the factory owners never know that the fire has been caused due to faulty installations and even if some time some one knows he has no way to catch the instiller.

It would be futile to suggest for imposition of a law against this unscrupulous practice as it is far harder a task to implement any law in our country. It is the factory owners who should be conscious about the matter. They should be aware of their responsibility of the loss of human lives, those lives who have placed their trust in them in lieu of their livelihood not to speak of the factory owners' own financial losses.

It would be my suggestion that the owners should utilise the services of those electrical contractors who have 'ABC' contractor's licence. In case of any accident and the consequent loss thereby the contractors should be used for remedial compensation to make good all the losses, should it be proved that the accident is due to contractor's fault.

Should the garments factory owners take initiative in following the suggested practice, I am optimistic that the electrical hazards in their industries would be reduced to a great extent.

Nurul Bashar  
Khilgaon, Dhaka

### Arsenic Month

Sir, The general secretary of Forum of Environment Journalists of Bangladesh prepared an alert report which was printed in the DS on 21 July.

The report says that 40 million people in rural Bangladesh are now at risk of arsenic poisoning.

Since arsenic is a long-term problem, the government of Bangladesh should take necessary step to prevent it. My suggestion to the government is: declare an 'arsenic month', raise awareness among the people about arsenic by special programme on radio, TV, through dailies etc.

Sheikh Shahjahan  
M Com, Final Year  
Dept. of Accounting  
245, Zahurul Haq Hall  
Dhaka University

### NGOs and national projects

Sir, The recent press reports on the progress of work of the Jamuna Bridge project were informative, thanks to the collaboration of JMBP authority. It is hoped the press would be allowed to visit the site every six months.

One interesting feature was the involvement of a large local NGO in the resettling of the affected families who were displaced from the working areas. Similarly, the specialist NGOs may also render service in other smaller projects in the public and private sectors. At present, the NGOs are involved in field work, mostly in the rural areas at the poverty level. The NGOs are concentrated in some particular sectors: tree plantation, health, mother and child care, sanitation, education etc.

Now it is time to focus attention in the service and technical training sectors, and also help the small business enterprises to learn the tricks of the trade on how to become successful in small business. This also applies to the small workshops dotted all along the country,

operated by persons with meagre educational background, and lacking R&D facilities.

The research and development centres of a particular trade may be located at divisional or district headquarters, running on a pooled system, sharing the capital investment costs, which a single company cannot bear. Technical training at the lower and smaller level has also to be encouraged using the expertise of the local and foreign NGOs.

For these new ventures, the coordinating agencies have to maintain closer working relationship with ADAB and other NGOs. The factories have to diversify in their field activities, if Bangladesh is to develop quickly at the base, to ensure the presence of solid foundation at the initial stage.

A Zabr  
Dhaka

### Systems loss in garment industry

Sir, Our export-oriented ready-made garment industry is capturing the headlines more for inefficiency and mismanagement than the credible export performance. The spate of fires in the factories has revealed the callousness and indifference to daily routine application of standard safety practices, which should not be there after more than decade of experience.

Safety measures against the outbreak of fires is not a high-tech job. Three agencies are involved to draw up the guidelines for daily operation: The Fire Brigade (technical inputs), the office of the Factory Inspectorate for the enforcement of the regulations, and the apex bodies such as the BGMEA and the Employees' Associations representing the management

and labour codes for the environment input. The implement body is the Management group in each factory.

The Inspector of Factories can nip in the bud all standard practices through regular inspections and punitive actions in the course of daily routine work. Their lapses cannot be condoned, as it involves injury or loss of life, which can be prevented.

It appears that the Management sector is run in an amateurish manner, from the administrative point of view, as the absence of good practices adversely affect personnel or output. Two performance figures are important: the level of professional management, and the production performance figures. Both relate to efficiency. In developing countries, the human systems loss figure is on the higher side; and should come down with experience and strict implementation of regulatory. Self-regulatory practices within the industry have to be encouraged by the government and the apex bodies.

The performance of the apex bodies or associations or unions is not enviable. The area of active interest practised by the office-bearers is restricted to a few items (agitations, demands, concessions, waivers, protests, strikes, hartals — most of it negative, and putting the blame on others). The positive virtues for internal improvement are hardly practised, for example, raising the efficiency, better working conditions, and the enhancement of amenities.

There appears to be a narrow subjective outlook to the operation of the trade and labour bodies. The grey and weak areas have to be exposed through debates, seminars and workshops, to motivate the members, and to

increase the awareness level of the public (via the mass media).

A Husnain  
Dhaka

### Agonies of a mother

Sir, Three years ago I met Neela Chowdhury, mother of the filmstar Salman Shah. I interviewed her from a national weekly. She said that "she had no weapon in her hand to stop organised political massacre and restore healthy atmosphere in the society."

She appealed to the authority in front of the Press Club for punishing the murderer of her son Salman.

Now a question naturally arises: "Is Mrs. Chowdhury really the victim of the circumstances prevailing in the society?" If the relief sought for by Mrs. Chowdhury is not afforded to her, she will undoubtedly be in the state of severe frustration than what she already has experienced.

Mostafa Sohail  
Barani, Dhaka

### Rejuvenating the ageing UN

Sir, It is becoming increasingly difficult to understand and support the US foreign policy, and the way she looks at fat and ageing UN. Annan's slimming recipe is not enough for the US taste for skeleton or bones. Recall the fate of the League of Nations during post-World War I.

Let us try some US peace-keeping force here to control masters, corruption, campus violence, and what not — guaranteed there will be no empty brain for the devil's workshop!

A Pro-UN Citizen  
Dhaka

