T J HOEVER wrote that

to write under cover; no name.

He has written in a manner to

make a nationally respected

figure, Justice M. Habibur

Rahman, to take umbrage at

this piece, clearly meant to hit

open his mouth in self-defence.

measure to counter this cow-

ardly attack on him, amount-

The recent move by the

present government to appoint

an Ombudsman, an office stipu-

lated in article 77 of our consti-

tution, is highly suspect. An of-

fice that has remained vacant

for 26 years, which no govern-

ment felt it necessary to fill,

and which none of our 'gurus'

like the World Bank and IMF

had, 'pressurized' any of the

successive governments, in-

be a redundant one.

cluding that of Begum Zia, must

urgency, prompting Sheikh

Hasina to fill the post? And

how come, the initial choice of

Justice Kemaluddin Hossain

later fell on Justice M. Habibur

Rahman? surely Sheikh

spondent's piercing intellect

discovers the reason in a mo-

ment, because, to him, it is so

transparent. Justice Rahman

in his role as the Chief Advisor

to the Caretaker Government of

President A.R. Biswas, saw to it

victorious in the election. The

worse, it was stage-managed, in

support of which claim are ap-

provingly quoted all the wild

allegations of BNP leaders and

'many independent observes

L place on October 3 has

ended with many surprises. The

anti-immigration and "racist"

party of Ms. Pauline Hanson

failed to win a seat in the House

of Representatives (Lower

House), although it won a seat

in the Senate (Upper House)

Even Ms. Pauline Hanson was

not re-elected as an M.P., let

alone other nominated

candidates of Hanson's One Na-

tion Party. At the time of writ-

ing, the present ruling Coali-

tion (Liberal and National Par-

ties) with the conservative

Howard (59) has just scraped

ber Lower House to form a gov-

ernment). The final result could

not be announced because the

postal votes within and outside

the country need to be counted

that Awami League came out

victory was fortuitous. No.

The special corre-

Hasina has her good reasons.

Why now? what is the

ing to libel.

correspondent:

only a Special Corespondent.

piece apparently

thought it wise or safe

assumptions,-his interpreta-

tion of the election results of

June 1996 for example. I can

offer no salve to his bleeding

heart, and can only advise pa-

tience and fortitude till the next

election, which will hopefully

be overseen by another Chief

Advisor to the President, an-

other head of a third care-taker

government, more fair minded

than the last one, and sharing

some of President A.R. Biswas'

firmness, and administrative

acumen. Many of us, however,

have a different image of the

poor fellow, and still vividly re-

call the shaken, pale-faced

Biswas in the television screen.

some people should be nervous

at the thought of an Ombuds-

man appearing on the scene.

There are many a skeleton in

the cupboard, and it will be a

bad day for many when these

the nervousness and anxiety be-

ing articulated in such a vicious

manner as one finds in the

piece printed in Holiday in its

September 25 edition. It is a

cowardly attack on a highly re-

spected man, cowardly because

anonymous. It is vicious be-

cause it takes recourse to char-

acter assassination of the worst

kind. The writer finds Justice

Rahman's occupancy of No. 10

Minto Road objectionable.

What will he say about Begum

Zia's occupancy of the Canton-

ment residence, the official res-

idence of her late husband.

The anonymous writer.

ernment?

What is distressing is to see

start to be revealed.

One can understand why

by Zillur Rahman Siddiqui

One can understand why some people should be nervous at the thought of an Ombudsman appearing on the scene. There are many a skeleton in the cupboard, and it will be a bad day for many when these start to be revealed.

him helow the belt. He has man's 'failure to discipline' the taken full advantage of his wayward officials who had knowledge that Justice Rahjoined hands with other rebels, man, in his position, could not and had appeared on the 'socalled Janatar Manch' and the nor could he take any legal fact these pro-Awami officials were allowed to function in various capacities during the election was crucial in ensuring I would summarise the main Awami League's victory in the points raised by this special

(who are they?). Justice Rah-

It is thus that Justice Rahman, though a good jurist but having proved both biased in favour of Awami League, and inept as an administrator which he was condemned to be by virtue of his profession, had ingratiated himself with the winning party, and its leader.

Shiekh Hasina. Justice Rahman, as a reward for services rendered, is enjoying certain privileges contrary to established rules. For example, he has been allowed indefinite occupancy of his official residence, and he, presumably at his own request, is still being guarded by security. The Special corresponded assumes all this, and prefers not to refer to his source of information.

Justice Rahman is pictured as both weak-kneed, and indecisive as an administrator It is a great good luck of the nation that President A.R. Biswas was there, the king-pin of the administration, to save us from 'another military coup' ! Apparently, the Special Correspondent, while making this claim on behalf of the Savior, is posted with knowledge denied to the rest of the world.

7. Justice Rahman's continued occupancy of No. 10 Minto Road House is heavily underlined and produced as an evidence of some schemes being secretly hatched which will straighten every thing, retrospectively, all the irregularities involved in this. The scheme, however is clear enough,-to install Justice Rahman as Om-

He has proved himself

budsman.

the right man for the office. He has served Awami League well, in his capacity as the Chief Advisor to the care-taker government. And now that presumably the sole purpose of having an Ombudsman is to carry on the political vendetta against BNP. and to ensure the safety of progovernment culprits from the mischief of law, Justice Rahman is being asked to wait in the ante-room, till the moment arrives for him to assume the office of the Ombudsman. Already, he is doing the groundwork for the next stage of his career, the Presidency, in 2001, as and when the present incumbent. Justice Shahabuddin

Ahmed retires. 9. The special correspondent feels sad, that by his action and conduct, and also perhaps by allowing himself being used as a pawn in some body's Ball Game (a slang word. incidentally, in an otherwise well-written piece) Justice Rahman may prove himself to be the victim of his one man

demolition squad. The special correspondent has spared no pains to give himself that role, without waiting for Justice Rahman to be overtaken by his nemeses.

I do not feel encouraged to enter into an argument with him in respect of his political

while making a number of absurd statements regarding Justice Rahman's motives and future intentions has alluded to private opinion of his friends. Who these friends are, one would like to know. Further, do these friends share the opinion of the writer regarding the frailties, lapses, hopes and designs of Justice Rahman?

As far as I know, and I claim to a know little bit. Justice Rahman is a prisoner of circumstances. He would value his freedom, more than any thing else. He has a most unblemished past, and he has set a rare example of public service, when called upon to do so. Future history will tell us whether it was he, the indecisive head of the caretaker government, or the redoubtable A.R. Biswas, who steered the nation through the rough waters of April-June, 1996. The special correspondent has done a grievous wrong to an honorable man, but I don't expect him to apologise. Our special correspondent

started with the issue of Ombudsman and ended up by virtually decrying one whom he took to be the possible, even probable incumbent of the post Justice M. Habibur Rahman. This is what can be called a twopronged attack. Apparently, he dislikes the concept and disbelieves the man. As for the con cept, he fears, that since parliament will be the fountainhead of all the activities of an Ombudsman, he will have to depend entirely on the will of the majority party. This is entirely a very personal, a very limited view of the role of the parliament, and the role of an Ombudsman, born of extreme cynicism, and a cynicism that owes its origin to a jaundiced view of the entire Ball Game (his own words) of governance a jaundiced view that finds a hero in A.R. Biswas, and a villain in Justice M. Habibur Rahman. No wonder, he needed the subterfuge of anonymity.

though she has the gift of a house for her personal use in Gulshan, gifted by a BNP gov-

Floodplain Occupation in Dhaka

Natural Hazards Perspectives

by Dr. Md. Rashed Chowdhury

NTATURAL hazards research findings explain the reasons of persistent floodplain occupation. So far, natural hazards research have described seven reasons as the answer to 'why do people live in the floodplains'. These reasons are i) they (people) do not know about the hazard and are unduly concerned; ii) they know about the hazard, but do not expect a flood; iii) they expect a flood, but do not expect to suffer a loss; iv) they expect to suffer a loss, but not a serious one; v) they expect to suffer a serious loss and have therefore undertaken, or are planning to undertake, some actions to reduce the loss, vi) they expect to bear a loss but see this outcome as an acceptable cost of enjoying the locational (environmental) benefits; and vii) they had little or no choice in location and/or have little or no choice but to

While individually these reasons may be valid (most researchers have identified one or more of these reasons), not all reasons will be applicable to floodplain occupants at all times. Researches on flood hazards indicates that although many floodplain occupants are willing to be relocated, the lack of opportunities, choice and government incentives has prevented them from moving elsewhere.

A study was conducted by the author in 1977 in the floodplains of the eastern part of Dhaka with an objective to identify the reasons affecting floodplain occupation in that area. Findings of this research are used to substantiate the applicability of each reason for continued floodplain occupation in the context of natural hazards research. Therefore, each reason is examined in

Reason 1: In Dhaka there are probably very few people who do not know about flood hazard. When asked, 63.2 percentage of the study sample voluntarily mentioned flood as the most important disadvantage in their locality. This group of respondents, therefore, have a high awareness of the flood hazard. However, when respondents were asked

whether or not their locality was affected by floods, 83 percentage gave a positive reply. Therefore, reason 1 is unlikely to be a reason of floodplain oc-

cupation in the study area. Reason 2: Survey results indicated that more than 80 percentage of occupants expects flood to occur in the future. Furthermore, 86 percentage of the respondents are pessimistic, i.e. they expect a higher frequency flooding (1:5) compared to the actual. Reason 2 is also an unlikely explanation for floodplain occupancy in Dhaka. Reasons 3 and 4: The study sample indicated that about 82

percentage of them have experienced serious flooding in the area and a serious loss. However, at present there is a high expectation of lower frequencies (less than 1 in 20) and magnitude (depth of flooding is lower than the plinth height) of future flooding. Respondents are, therefore, do not expecting to bear a loss or expect to bear a minor loss. The household survey indicated that 90 percentage of the respondents believe that future floods will not be serious if the proposed embankment is constructed. Reasons 3 and 4 may, therefore, be likely explanation for future floodplain occupancy in

Reasons 5 and 6: These are two common reasons why people continue to live on the floodplains of Dhaka. At present shallow (depth of water : d<1 meter) to moderate (1<d<2 meter) flooding occurs almost annually. People living in such areas expect to bear a serious loss and have taken various direct and indirect actions to reduce it. There is an expectation that after the construction of embankment there will be no flood or nominal shallow floods for agricultural purposes only, so they expect to bear a loss and accept an unavoidable cost of enjoying the locational benefits of cheap land, fertile soil, proximity to work place and other urban and social ser-

Thus the many advantages of the local area outweigh the perceived risk of flooding. In the survey, when the respon-

dents were asked about the most

important advantage of living in their present area, 70.3 percentage of them indicated various locational benefits as the reasons. These included the owning of land at a cheaper price, proximity to nearby town, proximity to work place, proximity to relatives and public amenities. These two reasons are, therefore, important guidelines and are likely explanation for floodplain occupancy in Dhaka, Bangladesh.

Reason 7: This reason commonly explains the background of persistent rural floodplain occupation in Bangladesh where peasants and land less farmers are mainly the occupants. In the rural floodplains in Bangladesh, high levels of flood hazard awareness exist amongst floodplain inhabitants, yet, the majority continue to live on floodplains because they have nowhere to go. However, the study sample indicated that 75 percentage of the residents are new comer, 70 per cent of which have been resident for less than 10 years. 75 percentage of the respondents bought land from the farmers. Occupation categories indicated that 30 percentage of the respondents are farmer, of which only 20 percent have a house and a piece of land for cultivation. Others (10%) have a house only with farming on rented land. Reason 7 is an unlikely explanation for floodplain occupancy in Dhaka, Bangladesh.

Amongst the seven reasons of persistent floodplain occupation, reason 5 (they expect to suffer a serious loss and have therefore undertaken, or are planning to undertake, some actions to reduce the loss) and reason 6 (they expect to bear a loss but see this outcome as an acceptable cost of enjoying the locational (environmental) benefits) may be treated as the reasons of persistent floodplain occupation in Dhaka.

The author, a Ph.d in Urban and Regional Planning, is an official of the Flood Forecasting & Warning Centre of the Bangladesh Water Development Board. This article has been extracted from a section of the graduation dissertation.

Australians Bury 'Racist' Party at the Polls changed dramatically during HE general election in Australia which took

by Barrister Harun ur Rashid

The overwhelming majority of the Australian electorate have spoken out clearly and loudly against Pauline Hanson and her party and have affirmed decency, tolerance, equality and human dignity irrespective of race and religion. It is good for Australia and for the world.

tion result demonstrated that the magic of Pauline has disappeared from the political scene and she was reported to be in tears when she learnt that she did not win her seat from the constituency - Blair - in Queensland. It is the Lower House, like the House of Com-Prime Minister John Winston mons in Britain, where the Australian government is through with possible 4 to 6 formed or falls. The Senate consists of indirectly elected working majority reducing his earlier 44 seats majority. The members from the constituent opposition Labour Party led by six States and two Territories Kim Beazley (51) has bounced forming the Federation (Commonwealth) of Australia. back and strengthened its seats The question arises as to from 49 to possible 70 in the why did Pauline Hanson and Lower House (75 seats give a majority of the total 148-mem-

her "racist" party fail to garner a seat in the Lower House of the Parliament ? I wish to make a few observations in this matter First. Pauline Hanson's

Party was so exultant with the

victory in the Queensland State as 13 seats of the Lower House election in June last that she appear to be on the cliff-hanger. started to formulate policies on It is important to note that almost every national issue voting is compulsory in Aus-Her Party's original thrust was tralia and failure to vote has a (i) directed against Asian immi penalty by fine or imprisongration, (ii) anti-Aboriginal community and (iii) disap-The very fact that Hanson's Party did not win a single seat proval of foreign ownership of in the Lower House brought a the Australian companies and great relief to an overwhelming business enterprises. These majority of Australians as the limited policies attracted considerable support in the rural ideology of Hanson's Party was dividing the nation. The One and regional areas since the Nation Party of Pauline Hanson rate of unemployment was high became a Party of "Divided and some of the basic services were withdrawn from the rural Pauline Hanson on the day areas as a result of competition of the national poll on 3 Octoand economic globalisation ber claimed that her Party She touched a popular chord would win between 12-15 seats with the Queenslanders who member State's legislature in June. After this victory, she introduced her policies on other national issues, such as tax. budget etc. The policies an nounced on those issues before the election were simplistic and flimsy. The majority of the Australians found out the hollowness of her policies and in particular her tax policy (2 per cent on each transactions, abolishing all other taxes including income tax) became a joke. Her election campaigning was disorganised and frequently she would throw out the media personnel if they would ask searching questions to her or her party stalwarts. Such action badly damaged the image of her party. Furthermore her party's populist and quick-fix policies were not credible to the Australians.

Secondly, the role played by the 11 members from Pauline Hanson's party at the Queensland State legislature has disappointed every one. They could not contribute to the debates in the legislature and were not able to initiate any major policy issue or legislation. Their role is perceived to be a jolt on the dignity and seriousness of the deliberations of the policydebates in the legislature. Their calibre and intellectual comprehension were below the average and the voters in Queensland found that they had elected wrong people at the state legislature. The myth of One Nation Party has finally burst.

campaigned against Pauline Hanson's extreme right wing policies and pointed out that tourism, trade and business with Asia would decline significantly if Hanson's party would win seats in the Parliament The farmers realised that it would be hard to sell wheat meat and wool to Asia given the negative perceptions of Australia. Tourism would decline considerably from Asia to the detriment of its economy. Australia's markets in Asia in farm-machinery could be hit seriously. Australia needs Asia more than Asia needs Australia. This anti-Australian campaign especially by the rural party, the National Party had hit the One Nation Party

Fourthly, Australia is after all a multi-racial country and this process cannot be reversed. It is too late to bring in "white Australia* policy as suggested by Hanson's party. The political economic and cultural landscape in the region and within Australia have changed and Australia's exports to Asia constitutes about 62 per cent. At a time of global economic uncertainty. Australia is required to involve more with Asia in the expansion of its commercial interests. By defeating Pauline Hanson, Australian people wish to send a strong signal to Asia that Australia is not a "racist" country.

Finally, the younger Aus tralians support the multi-cultural society. Australia has

the last 10 years. In every major city, diverse people live harmoniously and culinary delights and cultural functions from Asia and the Middle East are being appreciated by the overwhelming majority of Australians. The younger groups campaigned hard against Pauline Hanson and wherever she went there would be big group of protesters who would shout at her opposing her divided and extremist "racist" policies. This campaign had an effect on the people below the age of 50. Gradually, the majority of Australians felt that at the beginning of the next millennium, her policies were dead wrong and needed to be buried once for all.

For all the reasons indicated above, out of 12 million Australian voters, 11 million reected Pauline Hanson and her One Nation Party. The overwhelming majority of the Australian electorate have spoken out clearly and loudly against Pauline Hanson and her party and have affirmed decency, tolerance, equality and human dignity irrespective of race and religion. It is good for Australia and for the world. However, since 1 million voters supported Pauline Hanson, the One Nation Party continues to remain a worrying issue for Australia. The Australian people including the conservative government need to work harder to bury the 'racist" One Nation party for good from the political landscape if Australia wishes to forge a stable and cooperative relationship with

The writer is former Bangladesh Ambassador to the UN in Geneva

Rape Survey Aims to Bring Back Respect

Worried by the rising toll of rape, Johannesburg council commissioned a survey to discover the facts. Horrifying stories have been unearthed, reports Gemini News Service, but there is also hope that lessons are being learned that will help curb sexual violence. Alan Martin writes from Johannesburg, South Africa.

VERYDAY I fear rape." says Soweto resident Lerato Moloi. "I'm sick and tired of living this way." Last year her teenage sister

Mpho, joined the growing num ber of South African women who have become victims of sexual violence. While Mpho's rapist remains

at large, she has become a recluse, rarely venturing far from the family's two-bedroom house in the Johannesburg district of Jabulani. "She is still not right," says

Moloi. "She used to be a very outgoing girl.

South Africa's rape statistics are appalling. More than 50,000 cases were reported to the police in 1996. The mention of "jackrolling" — also perversely called "recreation rape", in which victims are abducted and repeat edly assaulted — strikes terror in the hearts of township

With the problem reaching horrifying proportions in some areas, the Johannesburg Southern Metropolitan Local Council commissioned a survey to find the facts behind sexual vio-

Within the survey area lies the central business district, 48 informal settlements, most of the township of Soweto, as well as better-off suburbs. Almost every ethnic and social group is represented.

"What's coming out is really scary, hair-raising stuff," says Marina Penderis of CIETafrica, the organisation conducting the survey. "And this is only the initial stage.

Following months of consultations with community lead ers, CIET fieldworkers entered some of the country's most vioderstanding of rape.

The four-months research. funded by the Canadian International Development Research Centre, included interviews with 3,700 women, 2,100 men, 1,200 high-school pupils, 90 members of the police, and 90 others, including social workers, public prosecutors, magistrates and district sur-

Every six months the fieldworkers return to monitor the impact of the project, those interviewed are regularly in-

formed of the survey's findings. The study represents the most detailed body of evidence of sexual violence in the country. Fieldworkers have been told horrific stories: a priest who raped every girl on his street; the 14-year-old who was jackrolled until she lost consciousness; women so used to being violated that they cease to

think of themselves as victims, Firm findings have emerged that could help communities, police and social workers deal with the problem.

"It surprised me how common rape actually is - three out of 10 women reported being victims of sexual violence," says Neil Andersson, executive director of CIETafrica. "Also, that it doesn't only happen in the poorer suburbs - that two out of three rape victims actually did inform the police.

"Prior to this, the conventional wisdom was that women don't report these events, so little can be done about them," he says. "It seems only a tiny portion of [those reported] actually get turned into cases by police. fewer still are referred to court. and only a tiny fraction get convicted."

Cases get lost, he says, as they are processed, where inefficiency, red tape or corruption can lead to the "disappearance"

of a docket Despite these shortcomings. the police have "appeared open to taking constructive criticism and to changing." says Mzwakie Mgotsi, a CIET researcher who interviewed the police. "They

are looking forward to the re-The survey is unique in not focussing on just the victim or the villain, says Andersson: "It focuses on a third group who are the non-perpetrators, the men

who do not rape." Poverty and the legacy of apartheid are two key reasons cited by CIET fieldworkers for

the pervasiveness of rape. "Over years of constant humiliation under apartheid, male residents of these townships built up a series of violent responses that could not find

release under the previous po-

lice state," says Andersson. "Then, with the political settlement that led to the new dis-

pensation, the full expression of this anger in armed resistance was largely thwarted. "With the new dispensation came new expectations that

couldn't be fulfilled, as the an-

ticipated 'miracle cure' to poverty and unemployment didn't arrive. The endemic violence that characterises these areas is now highly sexualised. and turns against women and children with bitter effect.

Men's attitudes, therefore, must change if anything is to be done about undermining the culture of sexual violence, con-

siders Andersson For this reason, understanding what makes men not rape is

key to being able to change other men's anti-social behaviour, he says.

Stiffer penalties and tightening up on well-recognised corruption could reduce the violence, but convincing men of the positive value of not being abusive is the root to long-term success, he suggests: "It needs to be started at a very young age. We found young boys not yet in their teens thinking rape is a game, declaring themselves openly in favour of sexual vio-

Having local movie stars and sports heroes as role-models, instead of gangsters and carjackers, could also change the decisions young people make, suggests Vincent Mashiane, a fieldworker and a founder of Vision of Hope, a support group for ex-gang mem-

"If the economic reconstruction under way in South Africa is to have any meaning for the people living in the area, there is an urgent need for preventive peace-building and psychological reconstruction," says Shan Naidoo, strategic executive for the SMLC's health and social

services department. A change in men's perceptions could also have an impact on economic deprivation.

By acting as a social destabiliser, rape locks communities into a Catch-22 situation: jobs are needed to lift families out of poverty, but investment (the key factor in jumpstarting the lagging economy) stays away, leading to a continuation of underdevelopment.

CIET will launch a second round of interviews in September. While they are a long way from shifting men's perceptions, one positive sign has al-

ready emerged. "A lot of people never talked about rape before," says Thami Mokoena, a fieldworker and counsellor at Women Against Women Abuse. "Sometimes we interview a group of people and

them still discussing rape. "We have this saying. Umuntu wo muntu ngabantu (A person is respected through other people)," adds fieldworker

come back an hour later to find

Tebogo Nkobo. "We have to bring back the culture of respect and uncondi-

tional love. - Gemini News The writer is reporting from South Africa on a fellowship funded by Canada's Interna-

tional Development Research

Centre.

Thirdly, the major parties Terrorism: A Zero-sum Game

ETWEEN the spring of 1983 and the autumn of 1984, terrorism gave a blow to the Americans and their policy in Lebanon. Loaded with 150 kg of TNT, a pick-up truck demolished the US embassy in Beirut on April 18, 1983 killing 63 people, 17 of them Americans, of which most

in the Lower House. The elec-

Nation"

were CIA operatives. On October 23 the same year a truck loaded with 800 kg of TNT blew up the marine headquarters killing 241 people. Bringing the US embassy annexe to the ground was a third suicide attack on September 20. 1984 which left 13 dead, two of

whom were Americans. Shaken by the events, the then US President Ronald Reagan authorised the CIA to train some selected Lebanese security forces to counter terrorism. In March 1985, one year after the last marine was evacuated from Lebanon, a car bomb was planted at Bir al-Abed intending to wipe out Hizbollah spiritual leader Sheikh Fadlallah, a prime suspect. Fadlallah escaped but 81 civilians returning from their prayers met a gory

In a riposte three months later the Lebanese fundamentalists hijacked a TWA flight headed from Athens to Rome. Demanding the release of 700 Shifte prisoners in Israel, the gunmen also demanded an admission from the US for the Bir al-Abed bombing.

The Boeing was steered to Beirut where one of the passengers, a US navy diver, was shot through the head and flung on the tarmac in full view of the world media

The body of the naval diver oozing blood on the hard tarmae signified the triumph of terrorism and the virtual impotence of mighty America. Making terrorism an effec-

tive tool in the international arena are essentially two main factors. The first is modern technology. Modern weapons and state-of-the-art communications enable terrorists to plan and strike in deadly detail using modern explosives and weapons.

gave her 11 seats in the 88-

Ironically, modern technology available to the terrorists in a way renders infructuous the potency of nation states like the US and UK which flout conventional and nuclear superiority, arising again from modern technology

Equally significant in the expansion of international terrorism is the impact of modern communication systems. Television is credited with being one of the main reasons for the shift from rural guerrilla to urban terrorism in the late 1960s.

The presence of media persons and TV cameras in cities guaranteed to the terrorists a large audience without which the desired impact would remain unachieved.

The massacre of 11 Israeli atheletes by Black September terrorists at the Olympic games in Munich in September 1972 has been described as 'terrorism on theatre', watched by 900 million viewers in over 100 countries

Emerging as the visage and symbol of international terrorism was the photograph of a hooded Palestinian on the bal-

cony of the Olympic village. The humiliation and outrage resulted in a metriculously conceived policy by Israel to identify and eliminate those it per ceived to be heading the terror ist outfits under the tutelage of

the PLO. Exhibiting its long arm

by Bimal Bhatia Mossad, the Israeli secret service, reached out to distance places and silenced its "enemies" using booby traps, car bombs and shoot-outs.

Apart from intricately

planned and executed covert op-

erations, Israel resorted to direct action. Three days after the Munich massacre, Israel retaliated by bombing PLO bases in Syria and Lebanon. At least 200 innocent people, mostly women and children. perished in an act of vengeance

directed not against the terror-

ists of Munich but targeting

those from whose midst they

General Aharon Yaiv, who became Prime Minister Golda Meir's special adviser on terrorism, admitted that not all the 10 covert killings, meticulously planned by Mossad to average Munich, were necessarily linked to the Olympic mas-

However, the alleged mastermind behind the Munich massacres and the man on Mossad's hit list Ali Hassan Salameh or 'Abu Hassan' was still elusive.

Finally, when the hit-team struck in July 1973 and thought they had gunned down Abu Hassan, they had actually downed the wrong man - an innocent Algerian waiter.

Confessed General Yariv in

an attempt to explain the morality of carrying out such operations: "The morality lies in the situation of there being no alternative. That is to say, you have no better way, moral or physical, in which to handle the problem. That's what we did. We went back to the old biblical rule of an eye for an

Yariv elaborated that he approached these problems not from a moral point of view, but from a cost-benefit angle. In the case of Black September, they had no other choice and it

able. But it was "politically vi-Subsequently there was a melting down on both sides Israel deeply embarrassed by the blunder in gunning down the wrong man in place of Abu Hassan temporarily suspended the "hit-team" activists, and PLO and its factions understood

worked. One could debate

whether it was morally accept-

that terrorism ought to be replaced by politics. Yasser Arafat's speech in November 1974 to the UN General Assembly signalled the -change of heart. "Today I come with an olive branch and a freedom fighter's gun. Do not let the olive branch fall from my hand." Along with Arafat in New York was Abu Hassan who had survived an assassination

attempt. Mossad tracked him down six years after the botched up operation and eliminated him in a carefully orchestrated plan. The reason — apart from being a "terrorist", Abu Hassan because of his political brain posed a greater threat to Israel's security in the long term.

Abu Hassan had realised that the Palestine dream could be achieved with help from Washington. Hassan's contacts were established with the CIA which started cultivating him secretly to avoid offending Israel, which, however, knew all along as to what was happen-

ing with a "terrorist", the al-

When a senior CIA officer was asked about America deal-

leged "mastermind of Munich" he replied saying they had to deal with "all sorts of people". America, with a short-

sighted and convoluted policy that seeks to fuel and subdue terrorism at the same time, will continue to be at the receiving end. It is doing just that in the Indo-Pak context while itself being vulnerable to Islamic fundamentalism, and its nemesis is beginning to catch up. Terrorism has seen no win-

ners, only losers. - PTI/APB Feature

The writer was on the faculty of the College of Combat, Mhow. | lent areas to seek a better un-

Too Busy to Make Babies

recession in procreation among the Japanese could have country's future -- or the lack of it. The paper traces the problem to Japan's male-dominated corporate culture. Yes, that same legendary work ethic miracle.

life expectancy, policymakers year. are awakening to the sobering, and -- dare one say 'uneconomic' -- after-effects of half a century of testosterone divera tough time convincing couples to have more babies. The plunge in the TFR has tremendous implications for economic women. growth. Indeed, Japan is trying

At this rate Japan's popula-

under-15s due to the increase in 222.650 divorces in Japan last

The government has set up a panel to discuss ways to halt the sliding birth rate. Its desperation can be gauged by the sion. The government is having fact that in 1990, finance minister Ryutaro Hashimoto, had suggested abandoning policies favouring higher education for

APAN'S Health Ministry to gear itself for a declining tax has issued a White Paper on base in the future. Last year it the country's low birthrate. introduced new taxes to pay for It indicates that the massive the social security of a greying

profound effects on the tion might halve to 67 million, by 2100. Men have preferred to put the company and profit before the pleasures of family Young women reared in affluence have little incentive for which has made it perform the ensuing boredom of marmiracle after economic riage, according to the paper. Or for bringing up children single-With the news that Japan handed. The average age of has a total fertility rate (TFR) of marriage for women is 26 and 1.39 as compared to 3.59 in the goes up every year. The divorce '50s, and more over-65s than rate goes up too. There were

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