

Confusion, Once Again

Confusion once again centered round the sighting of Shawal moon. The announcement over Radio and TV heralding Eid-ul-Fitr came late as a vast majority of people were preparing for another day of fasting and in many mosques the jamaat for Tarabi was held as usual. Those who relaxed for the Eid on Wednesday were suddenly caught on the wrong foot and sprinted for last minute shopping paying penalties for their naivety to the guilts of greedy shopowners. Due to the last minute announcement of Eid the traditional Eid Mubarak could not be offered to our dear readers, patrons and well-wishers. We extend, though late, a warm Eid greetings to you all. Even in this age of extraordinary scientific developments, the sighting of moon and calculations of the lunar months remain as primitive as ever. We would like to appeal to the government, Islamic Foundation and other related organisations and wise people to sit together to find out a more scientific, realistic and acceptable solution to this perennial problem.

At the end of the month-long Siaam, the people of Bangladesh are faced with the horrendous prospect of political acrimony between the opposition combine and the government. This is the Eid gift the politicians are offering to the people. The citizens of the country are already scared about the prospect of an uncertain future after the Eid holidays. As the opposition parties are sharpening their preparations to attack the government, the latter, on its part, is also preparing to reply 'befittingly'. The net result will be the loss to the economy. A sense of uncertainty and lack of confidence among the ordinary law abiding citizens has set in. The postures the politicians have taken against each other and the degrading vocabulary they have been using to defame each other, all testify to the disturbing, even turbulent, times ahead after the festival. It seems that no amount of Siaam, sacrifice and discipline of the holy month of Ramadan have had any sobering effect on the psyche of our politicians. We have had enough of their tirades in the name of the people's right to vote and food. We have had enough of their rhetorics in the name of the citizens. All these have turned out to be lies or half-truths. For God's sake, get a hold on yourselves, try to realise the predicament of the ordinary law-abiding, taxpaying citizens and behave like caring human beings with love and compassion for your fellow beings.

We pray to the Almighty for an Eid gift — the sanity of our politicians.

Combating Lead

The effects of lead poisoning in humans, particularly children, have been known for decades. Substances which cause lead to pollute the environment including soil and water, are also not unknown to health establishments around the world. Yet, lead poisoning remains one of the most serious health hazards in urban areas of most countries. Against this backdrop, a forthcoming conference on "Lead Poisoning Prevention and Treatment" scheduled to be held Feb 8 next in the south Indian city of Bangalore, has come as a welcome signal that the world may be finally waking up to the dangers posed by this invisible menace. The conference, sponsored by the World Bank and three US non-governmental organisations, expects to bring 300 experts, government officials and civil society representatives together to address this critical issue.

For Bangladesh, the importance of the conference can hardly be over-estimated. In recent days, the effects of lead poisoning on children as well as adults have been dramatically exposed in reports released by experts. Exposure to lead can cause a range of health problems. These include high blood pressure, anaemia, loss of energy, infertility, kidney diseases, hypertension etc. Exposure to high levels of lead can cause coma, convulsions, and even death. Doctors fear that there may be no permissible limit of exposure to lead. This means that lead poisoning has to be either prevented through eliminating sources of lead pollution or by putting in place treatment facilities. It is expected that the conference, which has the backing of the World Health Organisation, will lead to concrete plan of action to address this issue in the developing world.

For Bangladesh, there is no scope to take the conference lightly. The population of all major urban centres, particularly Dhaka, is already severely affected by lead poisoning, especially due to the leaded variety of fuel used by motor vehicles. Being a major victim of lead pollution, Bangladesh needs to take a pioneering role at the conference and press hard for global efforts to address this issue. For the results of the conference to have real, lasting impact on Bangladesh policy and actions, the government machinery needs to build a close working relationship with others working in the field.

Welcome End to DoE Slumber

The Department of Environment's (DoE) plea to all city services organisations to not provide any new connection to buildings that do not have environmental clearance certificate suggests that the department has finally come out of its deep slumber. We hope that the DoE call will initiate an orchestrated move towards enforcement of Environment Conservation Act 1995 and Environment Conservation Rules 1997.

We believe that the show-cause notice served to Basundhara, a leading real estate developer, will send a strong warning for other housing firms that have so far made light, if not mockery, of the environment-related law of the land. The department's long-drawn indifference towards formulation and enforcement of environment-related laws is indeed solely responsible for the fact that none of the city buildings has ever obtained clearance certificate in this regard. We expect them to immediately figure out ways to mitigate the negative impact the extant, approved and under-construction buildings may have on environment.

The DoE initiative calls for sustained monitoring which, according to one top official, seems highly unlikely for the department with its limited resources. As a compromise they have decided to monitor only the firms involved in construction of multi-storied buildings. It will certainly leave a big hole in the whole system. It is about time the government realised that environment protection should top its agenda and more efforts should be directed towards this end. We may have wasted plenty of time in slumber. We have no time for long-term plans, we need immediate action.

University Governance under Attack!

Let university administration come to closer scrutiny by the parliament so that revisions could be injected if and when needed. Bangladesh universities need to be relatively more outward looking than they happened to be so far.

THE administration of universities, at least in our part of the world, has long been subject to severe criticisms. We are accused of grooming a style of governance that hardly goes to cater to the needs of modern-day university education. Back home, I have also to bear some of the brunt of the arguments against our university administration since — fortunately or unfortunately — I happen to be a part and parcel of my university administration. But travelling to Europe, I am surprised to see that allegations against universities for their dismal performance also know no bounds.

In an article published recently a member of the European Parliament — Mr. Linder — takes a closer and albeit critical look at the factors that contribute to the growing failures of the European universities vis-à-vis American universities. (Herald Tribune, 15 January 1998). According to the author, the most dangerous weakness of Europe lies in its ailing universities and their dwindling competitiveness. Compared to what is available in this part of the globe, the US has the world's leading industries — from high tech to fast food and from Wall Street to Hollywood — as well as some of the best citadels of learning e.g. Harvard, Stanford, Chicago. "If you know the names of Sorbonne, Heidelberg and Bologna," says Linder, "it is because you are a cultivated person" And in the search for the reasons as to why majority of the Nobel Laureates come from the US, Linder lands with more than one reasons. But he ranks the system of governance as the prominent one.

As I glance through his arguments, I find some similarities in the realm of university governance between Bangladesh and Europe. Quite akin to our system (and in sharp contrast to that of the US), Euro Universities are parts of a monolithic, government-run national system. Allegedly, these institutions suffer from a lack of clear-cut intents and initiatives to do better, to grow competitive and to derive the best out of tax payers' penny. On the contrary, because of the diversities in governance, the private and non-profit American universities tend to enjoy more freedom and are engaged in competition and takes tax-payers' pains seriously.

In Bangladesh, the chief executive of the university is called Vice-Chancellor (VC) Here in Europe, he/she is called a Rector. Rectors in European universities are not appointed (or dismissed) by the university board but typically are chosen through politicized process in which one leagues, students and non-academic staff vote on a nominating list from which the government makes its choice. To be a Rector requires an accommodating spirit rather than entrepreneurial ability". In Bangladesh also, barring very few exceptions, you probably need more ballots than merits for a becoming VC. The entrepreneurial sagacity, allegedly, is submerged by the supremacy of the ballots.

But then some subtle differences between Bangladesh and Europe are in sight. In Europe, for example, "university boards are usually made up of political appointments, curricula are decided by the parliament. The rector and board are not free to establish new departments, professors are not created by university board but by the ministry of education. The system for making faculty appointments are heavily regulated. Faculty salaries are determined through government

decrees and longevity matters more than merits... Academic freedom does involve freedom of thought but not freedom to take action. Not at all happy with what is happening in the name of university governance, the critics of the system seem to argue that "in this kind of environment, new ideas are not rewarded. There is need to persuade not just the rather impotent board, but also professors who are as keen on privilege as any other trade union member. If the great industrial corporations were to appoint their chief executives the way European universities do, they would all soon be out-competitive and have to close down. European universities are surely being out-competitive but they do not go bankrupt. The public coffers are still open and students do not have much choice". Admittedly, Bangladeshi universities enjoy relatively more freedom in the area of various selections, curriculum development and financial matters than those of European universities.

Tony Blair's proposal to introduce tuition fees in universities is considered by some quarters as discrimination against the poor. "Complacent professors and political ideologies may declare that universities are different — that they cannot be looked upon as vulgar business". Accepting the argument as true, Linder asks universities to raise standard and be competitive so that they can beat American universities.

There are arguments on both sides of the aisle: elected vs. selected executive for the universities. Our experiences tend to show that universities where selected VCs are posted, are performing no better (worse) than those with elected VCs at the helm of university affairs.

Beneath the Surface

by Abdul Bayes



The criticisms then should hover around as to whether there should be 'too much democracy' as prevailing now in the camps as opposed to 'too little or no democracy' on the other side of the fence. Our founding fathers presented to us 1973 Act with the basic assumption that we would not make misuse of the rights and obligations enshrined in the Act and thus create an academic environment that breeds democratic norms and along with that a productive education system. But unfortunately, we do not seem to have lived up to the expectations of our founding fathers. We are frequently blamed for lowering our academic standards, involving too much in group politics and using our students as 'stooges' to grab power. This kind of specific allegations are not generally found in the cases of European universities. However, after 26 years of its existence, an evaluation of the system is, probably, overdue to see whether the Act helped us to grow competitive and contribute to the socio-economic and technological uplift of the society for which three million people laid their lives in 1971.

Universities are breeding grounds of future leadership of a nation. If that ground fails to grasp the changing needs of the society within which it has to perform and of the globe of which it is a part, we are doomed to fail in ensuring a better society that the founding fathers of the Act dreamt of. Let university administration come to closer scrutiny by the parliament so that revisions could be injected if and when needed. Bangladeshi universities need to be relatively more outward looking than they happened to be so far. Let us step into the next millennium with a newer vision for the universities.

OPINION

Tarnished Image or Increased Transparency?

Monirul I Khan

Reading the opinion of Dr Sabrina Q Rashid (17.1.99) on the recent sexual harassment of a female student by a male teacher at Dhaka University I was seriously trying to dig deep into the problem and as a sociologist trying to link it up with the larger fabric of society. There was one obvious reason for doing so — I also teach in the same university. Not denying that one has to take note of such act (s) with requisite concern. There are at least two dimensions for serious concern — moral and professional. Moral dimension indicates the expectation of society from the teachers at different levels and the professional notion implies the quality of education catered in different educational institutions. Duly highlighted in the pointed opinion indeed.

When this particular incident was first reported in the newspaper I asked a senior and respected professor of the English Department about the occurrence of such incident in the past. He nodded his head positively. The inner message is: such incident took place in the past but remained unearthed. This did not surprise me much

at least for one reason — immoral practice is universal phenomenon what varies is its degree. Following this argument one might say the recent DU sex harassment incident has actually not tarnished the image in the sense that it never happened before rather indicating the increased transparency of the reality. I did not find solace in what was said by the professor or am making a case to defend the behaviour of my colleague. Rather I would draw reader's attention to a wider issue of 'over all moral degradation' of our society.

Pleasing enough to note that Medical Colleges are immune from such a vice but disquieting enough to read the story of an Asma at the innocent victim of doctor's sheer negligence. Shocking all the more is to read a doctor hitting the head of a nagging patient on the wall. Earnest request is not to misread the above examples as casting vitriol by one profession at another. It is to remind two things: one, increasing crude materialism is disintegrating the founding fabric of society at different levels and two, minimum significance of

ideological practices.

Two important domains of the practices of ideology are politics and religions. Unfortunately both are greatly deviated from it and turn, sadly though, as useful means to material gain. Again there is little scope to sound Platonic in this matter. Didn't we hear of selfish politicians of deceitful guru before? Of course we did. What is new in the present context is the practice of materialism in an ideological vacuum. Materialist societies of the West could not ignore it in the way of Christianity and social welfare axioms particularly in post World War era. Unique in our situation is the 'anarchy' of the ruling class and their lackeys. Indulgence and motivated silence are now widespread.

The question is how to change it. A complex matter indeed it is to change the society. There are several ways — both tested and untested. Some are rooted in politics and some in religion. At this juncture in our country, it might start from civil society but of course not in a partisan manner. There is urgent need for dialogue on it right now.

To the Editor...

Iodine overdose

Sir, I would like to ask the authorities concerned if we in Bangladesh are adding the right amount of iodine to our salt. I was forced to reflect on this topic after I chanced upon a feature in an Indian magazine *Femina* related to the above subject. In one of its back issues, August '98, a lady narrated her four years ordeal caused by iodine overdose. Initially her symptoms were, among others, heavy head, boils and pimples, decreased concentration, over sleeping, irritability, and impatience. (These were the very symptoms I had been experiencing lately). Her problem worsened to excessive itches, pains blurred vision etc. Doctors and specialists could not diagnose her problem. One day she suspected that iodised salt might be causing these and after stopping its intake her troubles simply vanished.

Having nothing to lose by trying the same, I switched to normal salt and my problems also disappeared. Now I wonder if an overdose of iodine was the cause of my symptoms. Are the manufacturers adding iodine too liberally? In that case it could be extremely harmful as surplus of iodine can disrupt the delicate chemical balance responsible for regulating different functions of the human body.

Furthermore it was men-

tioned in the said feature that in most developed countries potassium iodide is used in iodine salt. Whereas in India, due to commercial interest the preferred compound is potassium iodate, a highly toxic chemical — and studies in Australia have proved that it could cause a high incidence of Thyrotoxicosis.

I request the authority concerned to check if the suppliers are fortifying the salt with the right type of iodine.

Farah Siddique
Bangabandhu Avenue
Dhaka.

Autonomy to BAI

Sir, Bangladesh Agricultural Institute (BAI), Dhaka has completed its 60 years in agriculture on December 11, 1998. And we, attached to the institute have been demanding its independent institutional status for several years. Many committees have so far been formed in the past to review the feasibility of providing autonomy to BAI. Certain declaration and commitments were also made by the previous governments in this regard but unfortunately those have never been implemented.

Well, we in BAI deeply feel that the present status of BAI should be upgraded in the greater interest of the nation. The controlling ministry of BAI, i.e. the Ministry of Agri-

culture has already forwarded the proposal to convert BAI into DU's Agri Faculty to the authority concerned. The Agriculture Minister on a number of occasions made his observation that BAI being an educational institution should run as so under the Ministry of Education, and accordingly she had applied her good office in favour of the proposal to turn BAI into DU's agri-faculty. Now a national level policy decision is needed to decide the ultimate status of BAI.

M Zahidul Haque
Associate Professor, BAI
Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka-1207.

Islam's enemy

Sir, Frequent attacks and long-term embargo on Iraq and Libya, isolating Iran from rest of the world, attack on Afghanistan and Sudan, declaring Syria as a terrorist country, helping the occupant Israel makes it clear that US is dead against Islam and wants to destroy the unity of Muslims.

In fact, Mr Clinton and his puppet UK want to overwhelm the impeachment procedure by attacking Iraq and achieve their heinous interest of destroying Islam by killing innocent Muslims.

Farid
Dept. of Accounting
University of Dhaka

A Management Story

DURING the first week of December 1998, the Ministry of Education of Peru, convened a seminar in the country's capital Lima. The subject matter of the seminar was the problem of spreading education to the remote corners of the vast country of Peru and its management. Officials concerned with the formulation of education policy of the country attended the seminar. So did officials of the World Bank and the European Union, the two organizations that picked up the tab of the seminar and education experts from Peru's South American neighbouring countries of Columbia, Mexico and Chili. We were two from Asia, an Indonesian education consultant and myself, representing BRAC, the organization that I work for.

"Why BRAC?", I asked one of the organisers of the conference. He replied that BRAC with 34,000 one-classroom non-formal primary schools in Bangladesh with 1.2 million students had perhaps the largest private educational network in the world. Although he did not mention, it did occur to me that President Alberto Fujimori of Peru, during his visit to Bangladesh in May 1997, had come to the BRAC Centre and was given a fairly detailed briefing on our non-formal education system. The impressions that he might have carried with him about the quality of our education management, could have had, I suspected, something to do with BRAC's invitation to the seminar and consequently with my being on my very first visit to Peru!

Be that as it may, this write-up is not about Peru or the heights of its Machu Picchu mountains, made famous by the immortal South American poet Pablo Neruda, nor about the magnificent capital city of Lima, still living under the threat of terrorist insurgency. This is about the pleasing experience of being a beneficiary of good management, in management, in unexpected situations, on my long journey from Dhaka to Lima. I narrated this experience at the session of the seminar discussing the importance of good management in an education system, for I believe that the ingredients of good management are universal, no matter what the area of concern may be.

The first serious problem for a Bangladeshi wishing to travel abroad, concerns his obtaining a visa (besides of course arranging funds; which in my present case came either from the World Bank or the European Union, through the Peruvian government). The long and patient queues seen outside the visa offices of foreign missions in Dhaka bear testimony to what I say about visas and my compatriots. The number of people emerging successful out of those queues with visas on their passports is usually quite small. Peru, I was told over the telephone and e-mail, by Signor Zorababel Cancino, one of the principal organisers of the conference, had visa abolition agreements with no less than 85 countries. But alas, Bangladesh was not one of them. One wondered why. Peru has made good economic recovery in the Fujimori years with job opportunities being created in fairly large numbers. It was therefore quite likely, one thought, that the country did not wish to be caught unprepared in staving off an onslaught of job seekers from this distant land!

My problem lay in the fact that there is no Peruvian Embassy in Dhaka. Why Peru, indeed there are no South American embassies in Bangladesh. Once there used to be Brazilian and Argentinean missions here. They have closed shops and gone away, not before, one dares say, creating vast support bases in this country for their respective soccer teams! Their national flags proudly fluttering in the breeze over hundreds of Bangladeshi

Dallas, a time gap which, even under the best possible circumstances, was not enough for the transfer of my luggage at the Dallas airport to the Lima-bound flight. I was in a quandary and rushed immediately to the American Airlines passenger service counter at the departure lounge. The counter was unattended, but just as my impatience was turning into anger, at what I thought as the indifference of the airlines to the plight of passengers, an official with a sheaf of papers in her hand appeared at the counter and immediately thereupon started concentrating on the papers in her hand. The clock was ticking away and my patience gave in. I announced my name in a tone that must have sounded louder than necessary. But she did not appear to mind.

On the other hand, for a change, my name seemed to have worked wonders. She treated me like a long lost friend and said that she had been working on my schedule for the last few minutes, and that, subject to my approval, had taken some actions regarding my journey to Lima. She said that if I took the delayed American airlines flight, even if I succeeded in boarding in Dallas the scheduled flight to Lima, it would not be possible to affect my luggage transfer. She had therefore taken the liberty of having my lone suitcase unloaded from the aircraft. Since I was the only Lima-bound passenger in that flight to Dallas, it was easy to identify my luggage. She said that the next flight going to Lima on that day was a Delta Airlines flight, that would leave Washington at 8 pm and stopping over at Atlanta, Georgia, would reach Lima at 7 am the next morning. When I agreed that I take that flight, she disclosed that she had indeed done the booking, again anticipating my approval!

She then told me what to do next. I should go downstairs, she said, to the American Airlines luggage carousel to retrieve my suitcase. I should then check in at the Delta Airlines counter where my booking has already been made for the Delta Airlines flight to Lima. The airline-



Frankly Speaking...

by Faruq Choudhury

Official handed over two food coupons to me — a lunch coupon for seven dollars and a dinner coupon for 10 dollars. She said that since my flight was at 8 pm, I could utilise these two coupons at any of the food stalls or restaurants at the airport for my next two meals. She then wished me 'bon voyage'. I regard this an excellent example of good management in an unexpected situation. The airlines official recognised my flight problem when it arose because of the delayed flight, identified the problem areas and came to me having ensured the solution of these problems.

As instructed by the airlines official I went to the baggage collection centre and there indeed was my familiar black samsonite suitcase circling in solitary splendour on the American Airlines luggage carousel. I took it down to find that one needed two dollars to release a trolley. I happened to have only one one-dollar bill in my wallet and I therefore needed change. Leaving my suitcase I approached a gentleman standing some distance away. I narrated my predicament and asked for the change for a ten-dollar bill. The gentleman found it easier to part with a dollar bill to enable me to secure a trolley. Thanking him for his consideration I walked back to the place where I had left my suitcase. But lo and behold! It had disappeared! The suitcase that basically was the root cause of my changing my Lima flight was nowhere to be found. While looking for it in a desperate state I must have attracted considerable attention, for an uniformed armed security personnel slowly walked up to me to ask whether anything was the matter. I told him of my missing suitcase whereupon he described it perfectly and informed me

I recounted my recent experiences to the seminar's concluding public session on 'Management' and said that my presence in it, for whatever it was worth, was the result of good management, starting from the 'Operation Visa' in Washington to the warm reception accorded to me at Lima airport by a placard holding Signor Cancino.

households, during the last World Cup Soccer game spoke of good work that must go to the credit of the two departed missions!

Going back to my visa question, Signor Cancino disclosed that under normal circumstances visa clearance for Bangladeshis takes about three weeks. But invited as I was by the Peruvian Education Ministry, my case was different. Instructions, he said, had been sent to the Peruvian Embassy in Washington to issue me with a visa. I could pick it up from there on my way to Lima. (The reader could rightly worry here about my US visa. Luckily the US visa authorities perhaps do not consider me good enough for a job in the United States, for they have issued me with a multi entry visa of reasonably long validity, which has proved its usefulness on a number of occasions!) But then there was another problem about my Peru visa. I was required to be in Lima on Monday, November 30, 1998. The four days preceding that happened to fall within the long Thanks Giving weekend, when all government offices, including the foreign missions in Washington would be closed. Signor Cancino had thought of that and had made arrangements accordingly. His instructions to me were to go to the Peruvian Embassy in Washington on Friday November 27, at 11 am, and he said that although the day was a holiday, Signor Huegeras, the First Secretary of the Embassy would be there to grant me the visa. However, I should confirm my arrival in Washington on November 26, over the telephone to Signor Huegeras, and he e-mailed to me the First Secretary's home telephone number.

This I did, and Huegeras said that anticipating of my call he had stayed home that evening. He confirmed the next morning's arrangement. When at the dot of 11, next morning I rang the door bell of the Peruvian Chancery it was Signor Huegeras who answered the call. It took only a few minutes for the visa to be issued and what initially had seemed like a clock and dagger operation ended happily. A case of perfect management, I thought. Sitting in Lima, Signor Cancino had planned my 'Operation Visa' thoughtfully and everything went like clockwork. I thanked Signor Huegeras and merrily drove back from the Peruvian Embassy, through Massachusetts Avenue, on that bright and crisp November morning to Potomac, where I was staying, not knowing that a good deal more 'management' was needed to ensure my smooth arrival in Lima.

As scheduled, I presented myself at the John Foster Dulles airport on the morning of November 29 for my 12-30 pm American Airlines flight which was to take me to Dallas, Texas. There, after an hour and a half's wait I was to board another flight of the same airlines in the evening reaching Lima, at 1-15 am the next morning. The Lima airport is not quite safe for strangers, certainly not at that hour of the morning, as Signor Cancino had warned me, adding reassuringly however that he would personally receive me at the airport.

I duly checked in at the American Airlines counter for my 12-30 pm flight and just as one was waiting for the boarding call, came the announcement that the flight had been delayed by an hour. While other passengers took the announcement in their stride, my case was somewhat different. The one hour delay would leave me with barely half an hour for my change of flight at

that he had removed my suitcase. He added that anything lying unattended on the floor of the hall was handed over to the police routinely. He showed me where to find it and the security people handed it back to me without any fuss or bother.

The entire incident starting from my asking that benevolent gentleman for change could not have taken more than seven minutes, although the missing suitcase made it seem more like an hour. But at the end of it all I was left highly impressed with the security arrangement at the Dulles airport. A picture of the miserable little ZIA airport with all its perennial confusion and laughable security failures came to mind. The contrast could not have been greater!

I then wheeled my suitcase to the Delta Airlines counter where the check-in hardly took five minutes. The cheerful girl on duty at the Delta Airlines counter even gave me a forward row aisle seat that I wanted and for the second time in the day I was all set for my Lima flight! It was just then that I thought of Signor Cancino in Lima! He would be at the airport at 1-15 in the morning to receive me while because of the changed flight schedule, I would now reach Lima at 7 am by a different airlines.

I rushed back to that cheerful girl at the Delta Airlines counter to recount the likely situation. She listened to me with rapt attention and asking me to wait, disappeared into the room behind the counter. She emerged out of the room after quite a while, with the copy of a fax that she had just sent to the Delta Airlines office at Lima. Explaining my story she had, in the message, underlined the urgency and the necessity of letting Signor Cancino know of the changed schedule to save him a futile early morning trip to the airport and me arriving there with no one knowing about it. The concluding sentence of the message said that the day, ie, November 29, 1998 being a Sunday, Signor Cancino was not likely to be available at his workplace. His residential telephone number would therefore have to be found out by the Delta Airlines, Lima, from the telephone directory! Here again is an example of clear understanding of a problem and of advance thinking and initiative in resolving it.

Upon my arrival at the Lima airport at 7 am, the next day, I was pleased by the reassuring sight of Signor Cancino standing at the airport with a placard bearing my name for identification. He said that he had been informed of my delayed arrival by the airlines well in time, thanks to which he had been spared a time-consuming midnight drive to the airport to meet my earlier scheduled flight.

I recounted my recent experiences to the seminar's concluding public session on 'Management' and said that my presence in it, for whatever it was worth, was the result of good management, starting from the 'Operation Visa' in Washington to the warm reception accorded to me at Lima airport by a placard holding Signor Cancino. I emphasized that it was the utmost importance attached to good management, that had made BRAC programmes including the one on Non-formal Primary Education, successful and worthwhile.

I happen to be an indifferent public speaker usually used to a polite applause as I sit down. But on that evening in Lima, as I concluded, the applause, I felt, was somewhat louder than what mere politeness would call for!