Identity by Birth or by Choice?

NE of the most frequently cited phrases uttered by John F. Kennedy was "ich bin ein Berliner," on the occasion of his 1961 visit to the city which had been recently divided by an East German wall. "I am a Berliner," he said to the tumultuous acclaim of his audience there as well as in the whole world. An act of solidarity and perhaps even of courage was imparted to him. that a man so removed from the difficulties of living in a tortured city should say that he too felt that he shared its citizens' agonized fate.

No one questioned his right to do that, or to say that he hadn't lived in Germany long enough. Similarly when the rebellious Paris students in 1968 proclaimed loudly that "nous sommes tous des juifs," (we are all Jews) as a way of expressing their solidarity with the Jews who had been deported and exterminated by the Nazis, no one that I remember argued with their right to do so, or criticised them for taking on another identity for the moral purpose of accepting and assuming the sufferings of fellow-humans.

So it has been with many people throughout the world including those in Arab countries - whose feelings of compassion and moral solidarity with Israel's Palestinian victims has caused them in effect to choose to become Palestinian. The late Egbal Ahmad. Indian by birth, Pakistani by nationality, always referred to himself as one of "us", a Palestinian by choice if not by birth.

Yet so distorted and reprehensible has public discourse become about the Middle East so influenced by Western Zionists, that even to admit to being a Palestinian by birth has long carried the stigma of delinquency and even criminality. I recall quite clearly in my own case that when I had completed my first university degree and had begun study for my PhD. when asked I would identify myself as an Arab quite consciously, that is, purposely avoiding the problems of explaining that I was really Palestinian, from Jerusalem, and so

It is, I willingly concede, to the everlasting credit of the PLO in the years between 1968 and 1982 that its emergence made it possible for all Palestinians to identify themselves as belonging to one people, in effect a nation, albeit one in exile and dispossessed. And during the intifada that sense of proudly belonging to an identity bravely fighting for its own preservation against efforts made to extinguish or deny it spread everywhere.

In Prague resistance to oneparty rule was often visibly in evidence on the intifada Tshirts worn by young demonstrators. That was also true in South Africa during the last days of apartheid in 1990-91: to be a Palestinian in revolt

by Edward Said This is not merely a geographical wish or demand. It is at least five things more. It is the right to have one's own abode. It is the right to remain there. It is the right to repatriation. It is the right to compensation and restitution. It is the collective right of association (we want to be Palestinian where we want to be) and of residence. It is the right to coexist on an equal footing with Israeli Jews.

against Israeli occupation soldiers was in effect to give greater depth and meaning to the struggle against racial discrimination.

It is surely one of the ironies of history that the Palestinian people's greatest historical enemy - the Zionist movement and its more militant ideologists — was energized precisely by the same idea, that one can strongly assume one's identity as a Jew rather than quietly submit to assimilation as a Polish, Russian, American or British citizen.

Most histories of Zionism show that for the movement's organizers the greatest problem was to persuade Jews in the diaspora that their identity as Jews by birth was not enough: they had to take on the additional national identity of Jews "returning" to Zion for their natal origins to fulfil themselves. And so it has been recently with Palestinians who for years after 1948 were subsumed (willingly as well as unwillingly) into the melting-pot of whatever country they resided in, until, given an opportunity

to take on the choice of being a

Palestinian for purposes of po-

litical struggle, they did so in

the years since 1970. This does not contradict Rashid Khalidi's thesis in his recent book on Palestinian identity where he argues that one can discern a distinct national Palestinian identity that goes back well back in history through the culture, civil society, and political rhetoric. The point to be made in addition is that identity by choice is a political commitment to be Palestinian as an active commitment not just to the establishment of a separate state, but to the more significant cause of ending injustice and liberating Palestinians into a new secular identity able to take its place

within contemporary history. The pressures against making that choice today are increasing on an hourly basis. One of the principal objectives of the Oslo process so eagerly embraced by the US and Israel is a paradoxical one since it implicitly accepts (and then annuls) the notion that Palestinian identity is in principle an identity based on more than narrow nationalist grounds.

To look back at recent history is to note that throughout the seventies and eighties being Palestinian meant being in the forefront of several liberationist struggles, not the least of which were those that went far

beyond the Arab world, in

places like South Africa, Latin

America, Ireland and elsewhere

cent encounter with a Maori

intellectual from New Zealand,

who came up to me after a lec-

ture and proceeded to inform

me in detail how much the

struggle for Palestinian rights

has meant for the Maori

movement for at least three

decades. I have encountered the

same enthusiasm in places like

India, Korea and Ireland, by no

means among extremists but

rather in the writings and prac-

tice of civil libertarians, secu-

larists, women's groups, for

whom the very idea of Pales-

tinian identity signified far more than a simple ethnic na-.

tionalism. It meant acting

against the forces of religious

obscurantism, gender discrim-

and the like.

ination, economic inequality

Palestinian identity was be-

hind the 1982 Israeli invasion

of Lebanon during which Ariel

Sharon's aim was scarcely as

limited as just destroying the

PLO's negligible military

threat. Recall how one of the

first things his troops did when

they entered West Beirut in

September of that year was to

steal the PLO Research Centre's

archives, a symbol of what in

effect Palestinian identity had

become in terms of sheer intel-

break the back of this larger no-

tion of identity, to drive Pales-

tinians back into their Gaza

and West Bank towns, villages,

clans where they could be encir-

cled, confined, cut down to size

both by Israel and the US on the

one hand and, most

lamentably, by their own na-

tional authority. That effort

and aspect of Oslo has suc-

ceeded, but the centre of atten-

tion has now shifted to the 4.5

million Palestinians who still

remain in exile, and whose per-

sistent stubbornness in ex-

pressing their identity by

choice is symbolized by the

right of return they continue to

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(we want to be Palestinian

where we want to be) and of res-

idence. It is the right to coexist

This is not merely a geo-

maintain.

Oslo was designed in part to

lectual and moral potency.

Clearly the potency of this

I can testify to this in a re-

in Europe, as well as Asia.

Quite clearly the Palestinian Authority symbolizes the defeat and abridgement of most of these rights. The burden for the rest of us - and here. I do not speak only of Palestinians by birth — is to resist the attempt to cut us and our ideas down merely to matters of birth and actual residence whose final arbiter is Israel. Thus current "international" plans to resettle the vast majority of refugees include sending them to places like Iraq, Canada, the US, even Jordan, as well as pressuring countries that have large Palestinian communities (eg. Lebanon) into giving Palestinians citizenship and residence

on an equal footing with Israeli

where they already reside. Although official Palestinian rhetoric today insists on the right of return, the Authority's past performances on matters of stated principle does not provide a convincing precedent Besides, Israel's position since its inception in 1948 has been flatly to deny Palestinians any thing like a right of return while insisting on the absolute right of any Jew anywhere both to "return" and to unconditional Israeli citizenship.

In such a situation then to choose Palestinian identity means in effect to resist what the final status Oslo negotiations will have to offer. This is not just a negative thing. It means insisting on the national and political rights that have been denied to us as a people by the British (one mustn't forget that the Balfour Declaration of 1917 offered Jews political rights as a nation whereas it promised Palestinians only religious and civil rights) and later by Israel and the US (and, it would seem, most of the Arab states). It also means that we stand firm on the matter of identity as something more significant and politically democratic than mere residence and subservience to what Israel offers us.

What we ask for as Palestinians is the right to be citizens and not just numbers in the ultimately losing game being played by the Oslo participants. It is worth pointing out moreover that Israelis will also be the losers if they accept the narrow-minded and ungenerous definition of the Palestinians as a subject people confined to a "homeland" being manipulated by their government. In a decade there will be demographic parity between Jews and Arabs in historical Palestine. Better that we accommodate to each other sooner rather than later as full members of a bi-national secular state than to go on fighting what has been de-meaningly called a shepherd's war between feuding tribes. To choose that identity is to make history. Not to

choose is to disappear Courtesy: "The Dawn" of Pak-

Why Armies Still Bite the Bullet and Bury the Ballot

Pakistan's military coup spotlights the role of the military in the political systems of many developing countries, where guns and butter are often still entwined. But as a Gemini News correspondent argues, the overthrow of Nawaz Sharif's government has differences from other military takeovers.

Gareth Jenkins writes from Istanbul

ILITARY might remains the ultimate arbiter of political power in a number of developing countries in the post-Cold War era, as Pakistan's recent coup demonstrates. But Pakistan is different from other nations that have been subject to military takeovers within democratically elected political

systems. While almost all governments in Africa, the Middle East and Asia see elections as necessary for political legitimacy, many still depend on the support or tolerance of the armed forces for political power.

But the 1990s have seen a shift in the pattern of military involvement in politics. Military regimes like those in Myanmar and Pakistan are now rare. Military interventions driven by political ideology, such as the left-wing and right-wing coups of the Cold War period, have almost disap-

peared. In Latin America, recent military challenges to the civilian authorities in Argentina, Chile and Brazil have tended to focus on immunity for offences committed under past military regimes, rather than attempting to overthrow elected governments. Even so, few Latin American governments feel secure enough to risk antagonising the military

Some, such as Chile, fear civil unrest and reopening old wounds, as is evidenced in its opposition to General Augusto Pinochet's extradition from Britain to Spain. For others, a coup remains a real, if diminishing, possibility.

In March, Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez triggered a storm of protest when he proposed lifting a constitutional ban on military involvement in politics. Chavez himself has proved such fears are not groundless: he came to prominence in 1992 when, as a paratroop commander, he headed a bloody but unsuccessful coup.

On the whole, the military in the developing world tends to be an instrument of power, subordinate to a strong individual or faction, and used to establish or maintain an authoritarian government rather than being a power in its own right.

Most Middle East governments rely on military power rather than popular support. Several - including Syria, Iraq and Libya - are headed by former successful coup plotters

Power from the barrel of a gun Military regimes Large measure Myanmar of military Pakistan independence Russia Official role for/ the military Many Indonesia authoritarian Turkey regimes depend on military to Military and civil Civilian retain power, organisations authorities affaid including inextricably of antagonising most of Arab the military integrated world and many China N.Korea Argentina Chile west and central. Cuba Vietnam Bolivia African countries;

while others, such as Egypt, are led by men who have worked their way up though the mili-

Traditionally, most military coups have replaced one autocratic leader with another rather than, as in Pakistan, overthrowing a democratically elected government.

Coups often appear to enjoy considerable support domestically, even though toppling an elected government tends to trigger condemnation in the West. This is partly attributable to opponents of the overthrown government, such as the declaration of support for Pakistan's coup by former prime minister Benazir Bhutto. But the main reasons tend to be abuses of power by the elected government, where there is often a large gap between the theory and practice of democracy, and local social attitudes and values favour authoritarian rule.

Even though many leaders in the West view military intervention and elections as incompatible, in many sub-Saharan African countries such incompatibilities have virtually become part of the same political process.

The low incidence of democratic hand-over of power in West and Ceritral Africa, for example, has made military intervention more attractive as a swifter and more effective route to government - recently demonstrated in Congo (formerly Zaire) and Sierra

Former military leaders,

such as Liberian President Charles Taylor, have used armed force to seize power and. then retain control by being elected as a civilian head of state. In Nigeria last February, Olusegun Obasanjo, who neaded a military dictatorship 2() years earlier, won the elections that

ended 15 years of military rule. What distinguishes Pakistan's coup from recent military interventions elsewhere is that it was conducted by the military as an institution rather than as the power base of a strong individual.

The coup was triggered when Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif tried dismissing General Pervez Musharraf. But the underlying reason was a power struggle between the military and the civilian government exacerbated by Sharif's decision to overrule the advice of his generals and withdraw Pakistani troops from Indian-administered Kashmir after an abortive incursion.

The military's considerable public prestige, economic interest and record of ruling the country for 25 of the last 52 years gave it considerable informal influence and virtual autonomy in security policy.

The closest parallels are probably Indonesia and Turkey, whose militaries continue to exert considerable influence without, as in Myanmar, establishing a fullblooded military regime.

Indonesia's military is assigned a fixed number of National Assembly seats and the doct.rine of dwifungsi (dual function), which gives it a role as the country's defender and as an agent for social and political de relopment, is enshrined in the constitution. But since Presid ent Suharto's 1998 resignation, the system has begun to unravel. Civil and ethnic unrest, combined with the national humiliation of the loss of East Timor - and international disgrace of the army's complicity in atrocities committed there by anti-independence militias - seem set to force the military to either adopt a higher political profile or subordinate itself to civilian authorities.

The Turkish military has adopted a more subtle approach, exercising its influence through public and private expressions of concern when it feels its core principles, such as secularism and territorial integrity, are being infringed. The military's prestige and the memory of three coups in the last 40 years have proved sufficient for Turkish politicians to comply with the armed forces' wishes without the need for even the implied threat of a military

Pakistan's coup is largely the result of the military's failure to create sufficient prestige among its own politicians to prevent Sharif from trying to call its bluff by announcing Musharraf's dismissal.

takeover.

Toppling the civilian government was probably the easy part for the Pakistani military. Western powers are still prepared to tolerate authoritarian regimes, particularly if they are well-established, but are now less sympathetic to the toppling of democratic governments, however imperfect.

Musharraf's promise to return the country to democracy has bought him a little time, even though he has yet to announce a timetable. But international patience is likely to be limited and neither the economy nor the military, heavily dependent on imported spare parts, can afford a long period of isolation. Pakistan has already been barred from all

Commonwealth activities. Musharraf's challenge is to create a formula for a return to civilian rule that ensures a measure of military autonomy: he must do so before economic hardship and international isolation so irreparably damage the armed forces' prestige that future civilian administrations will call its bluff again.

T QBAL Ansari Khan, nicknamed Henry, was the first **L**among three children of late Ali Amjad Khan - who was elected to Pakistan National Assembly in 1964 - and Anwara Khatoon, the first Bengali Muslim woman member of the Bengal Legislative Assembly elected in 1946. She was reelected in 1954. Born on 25 December, 1934 in a highly educated family with rich political background, Henry saw politics at an early age from very close quarters and naturally got hooked to it. It was in his nature to lead from the front and soon became a student leader by his own merit. A young man of courage and conviction, he took active part in the movement of class IV Employees of the Eden Buildings (Provincial Secretariat) in 1948 and was arrested and later jailed. It was a baptism in politics for Henry as he came back with renewed vigour and led the first batch of the students of Dhaka University on the streets in violation of Section 144 imposed by the

into jail. The seeds of a new political party named Awami Muslim League were sown in their oldtown residence at Khaje Dewan (Bakshibazar) when stalwarts Maulana Abdul Hamid Khan Bhasani, H S Suhrawardy, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and

others met and agreed to form a

provincial government on 21

February, 1952. He was again

picked up by police and thrown

Obituary Iqbal Ansari Khan 1934-1999 By Staff Correspondent

new party in 1948. In the words of former AL leader Ataur Rahman Khan: In fact Awami League was born in that house. Henry's father Ali Amiad Khan was the founder Vice-President of the new party which later dropped the word 'Muslim' to

appear secular.

As a student leader he had wide influence on the community and was involved with cultural activities as well. He was the president of Sanskriti Parishad, the cultural wing of East Pakistan Students' League at Dhaka university. He himself was a powerful stage actor and was instrumental in establishing the first group theatre in Bangladesh Drama Circle in 1956. To prove his worth as a sportsman, he led the Department of Law cricket team to inter-departmental tournament and achieved the championships in 1956. After completing his masters in International Relations and LL. B. in 1957, he joined the Bar and soon made his mark as a brilliant young lawyer. During Ayub Khan's martial law he joined politics and was elected as the joint secretary of the Na-



tional Democratic Front (NDF), an alliance of political parties that opposed Ayub's rule in Pakistan and also the candidature of Ayub Khan in the 1964 presidential elections under

Basic Democracy against Fa-

tima Jinnah Henry took active part in the War of Liberation and suffered tremendously at the hands of

the Pakistani Army in August 1971 when his house was raided and he was taken away. It was an act of providence

that he survived the dying days of the Pakistani military atrocities in Bangladesh.

After the elections of 1973 he took time off active politics and engaged himself in social work through Rotary and here also made his mark as he was soon elected the Rotary District Governor for 1987-88. He turned out to be a highly successful Rotary official in Bangladesh and abroad and actively took part in many international conferences and seminars. Apart from contributing to local journals he authored three books - two of which have been highly acclaimed by readers. The Third Eye and the Babri Mosque drawn attention and make interesting reading. The third book on jokes was written in

Henry leaves behind his wife Munira, herself a social worker par excellence, son Asif. a former cricketer of repute, daughter Alia, a caring and loving daughter-in-law Liju and three wonderful grand children - Mehreen, Maisha and Ashnaad to feel his absence and a host of friends and admires to

must have desperate remedies", so goes the saying. And Pakistan has been the constant 'victim' of such desperate diseases', thanks to the 'over-lordship' of the Pakistani political leaders under the cloak of democracy. So, when such disease is diagnosed. the doctors administers the most suitable medicine, however bitter it might be. In Pakistan, army ruled for about half the period of its history since achieving independence in 1947. And who paved the highway for them? It is the 'political follies' of the politicians who always played foul with the fate of the people and used democracy as a 'pawn' in their hands to serve their purpose. Pakistan's history is replete with such instances since the death of its founding father M A Jinnah and the assassination of its first Prime Minister, Liaquat Ali Khan. "Palace intrigues" have become the 'bottom-line' of

politics since them. So whenever things went from bad to worse, somebody had to step in with a 'strong hand' for the 'operation' of the politicians fighting like 'Kilkeny cats for selfish ends. So it is one thing to 'cry out', at home and abroad, for 'killing' of democracy by the army and something else to look into the 'ground realities', in its proper perspective, and understand what had prompted such extreme measures. The coup in Pakistan by the armed forces, headed by Army Chief Gen Mosharraf, is a case in point.

An Apparent Necessity? No sensible person would agree to accept army rule as the 'last word' for a country. As the Pakistan cricket-star-turnedpolitician Imran Khan has said. "Whosoever believes in democracy never likes to see the military coming to power. But the situation here (Pakistan) was different. It was necessary. It was their compulsion." The comments can't just be dismissed as that of an immature politician. Because it speaks a lot about the 'ground reality'. Had it not been so, there would have been adverse reaction in the country. Rather, the Pakistanis, in general, have welcomed the army action, with a sigh of relief. The pain in the neck seems to be gone with the entry of the 'popular coup' to bring about discipline in a

chaotic situation there. Digging Own Political Grave: It would therefore, not be wrong to say that Nawaz Sharif dug his own political grave. Unfortunately, he has entered the 'mouse-trap, that he had set for others. He now finds himself in the hot soup of his own making. He became over-confident, so to say, with, what he often boasted of as "the unprecedented mandate" of two-thirds majority in the parliament, given by the people in the last general election. He was imbued with the idea that with this 'security valve' in his hand, he could es-

Military Take-over in Pakistan Was it a Necessity?

by A M M Shahabuddin

The General, however, knows well he won't be able to put the 'crumbling' economy of Pakistan back on the right track without the goodwill and cooperation of donor countries and international lending agencies, like IMF. It all depends to what extent the military rulers will be accommodating with the 'ideas' of the Western leaders. Only time will show which way they move.

cape unhurt and uncaught with anything he would to do, and the time-serving sycophants. buzzing around him for honey. were busy in flattering him. Virtually "catch me, if you can" became Sharif's slogan.

Kicks Against Judiciary and

Media: Thus equipped with 'unprecedented power', Sharif started behaving like a 'despot' rather than a 'democrat'. He stretched his mighty hands to knock the judiciary, the media and even the army, to serve his ends. He successfully removed Chief Justice Sajjad Ali Shah his political rival, then Presi dent Leghari, Chief of Army Staff Gen. Jahangir Karamat and Naval Chief Monsural Haq. on flimsy grounds. Former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto took shelter in UK in self exile. He was already looking larger than his size when he wanted to run down the media barons by picking on the oldest Urdu Jong Group of Publications and sent to prison renowned journalists like Rahmat Shah Afridi, editor-proprietor of Frontier Post and Friday Times editor Najam Sethi, and his colleague Hassan

Haqqaui. 'Come via Washington'? There used to be a popular yoke in Pakistan (I don't know whether it is still in use that "if you want to stay in Islamabad, come via Washington". To what extent it is applicable to Nawaz Sharif, that he had shown himself. When Kargil crisis was at its peak, Sharif rushed to Washington at the call (I won't say, 'invitation') of President Clinton who held series of talks with Sharif to thrash out Kargil crisis and Clinton all the time was 'on line' with Indian Prime Minister Bajpayee to brief him about the 'progress' in the talks. Then came the fateful July 4 Agreement, which Sharif signed, literally, under US pressure, agreeing to withdraw all Pakistan-backed forces from the Kargil sector on the Indian side of LOC. The Pakistanis took it as a great humiliation and the Army took it as a 'betrayal' as it was not taken into confidence when the agreement was signed in Washington. He went into action, immediately on return home, to call back the

Pakistan-backed "intruders"

from the Indian soil. But he

tried to placate it as a triumph

for Pakistan as the Kashmir is-

sue had drawn the attention of

the international community.

On the other hand, world community, including 'G-7 group' had earlier advised Pakistan to pull back its force to Pakistan side of the LOC. What a mess he created! First, he said Pakistan had nothing to do with what was going on in Kargil, then agreed to withdraw its forces. But, unfortunately the poor fellow, who did so much under orders from 'high-command' could not be saved from the great fall even by Clinton.

The Last Nail: Again, perhaps to please his friends (not masters). Sharif ventured to put his fingers in hornet's nest when he directly accused the Afghan Taliban-trained terror ists of fomenting sectarian violence and killings is Pakistan and asked Kabul to restrain them and close down such training centres. Simultaneously, order was issued in Pakistan to "monitor" the activities of some eight to ten thousand Madrassas which had links with the Talibans. His cup was already full and the proverbial 'last drop' came to over flow the cup when he hastened to sack Gen. Mosharraf and appointed ISI Chief Gen. Ziauddin as Army Chief. The 'sacked' General 'resurrected' to sack the Prime Minister.

Thus Sharif's miscalculated and haphazard 'running' cost him the valuable 'wicket' when he was 'run-out' by Gen. Mosharraf. (In an earlier article, titled, "Pakistan Buckled by US..." DS 28.7.99, this writer, inter alia, said: "As resentment against Sharif's capitulation" before US pressure in Washington and the humiliation that he had brought to his country, rises in tempo, it is difficult to say how long he would be at the 'crease'. And if he is 'run-out' ... who will be the next batsman?") And it came true sooner than expected "Let the Pakistani audience watch the 'game', till the next 'batsman' comes in. Maybe later than expected this time, who knows?

Agenda of Action: In his nation-wide televised statement, after assumption of power as Chief Executive, the General gave the people his piece of mind, telling them his agenda for action. Although he didn't mention about the 'time frame' for the restoration of democracy in Pakistan, he said that 'this was not Martial Law', it was 'a part of democracy', the constitution has merely been

'put in abeyance', freedom of the press has not been restricted. judiciary will be running as usual. The Gen. has promised that "the armed forces have no intention to stay any longer in charge than is absolutely necessary". He also pledged to return to democracy, a 'true one' and not a 'sham' or a 'label of democracy' which had been is practice till recent past. The General has also extended an olive branch to India announcing an "unilateral military deescalation" along the borders with India, also promising a policy of nuclear and missile restraint.

The Western leaders in Washington, London and Europe, were not, however happy for the omission of any 'time frame' for the restoration of democracy, for which they unanimously insisted on the General to announce.

For some reason or other. the General kept mum on it, for which, as a punishment, Commonwealth, at a meeting of its council of 8', in London, suspended Pakistan's membership and also barred it from the upcoming Commonwealth summit to be held in South Africa Other punitive actions like sanctions, stoppage of loans by IMF and aid-flows from donor countries, are being implemented perhaps to teach the army rulers a 'hard lesson' for ignoring the request for a 'time-

Only Time will Show: Gen. Mosharraf and his colleagues have assumed a great responsibility, by replacing a civilian government, and any lapse or failure on their part would be disastrous for the image of the army of which he happens to be the chief. Perhaps he himself doesn't know when he would dismount from the tiger he is now riding possibly not before the 'Augean stable' is cleaned thoroughly, to return to 'true democracy'

The General, however, knows well he won't be able to put the 'crumbling' economy of Pakistan back on the right track without the goodwill and cooperation of donor countries and international lending agencies, like IMF. It all depends to what extent the military rulers will be accommodating with the 'ideas' of the Western leaders. Only time will show which way they move.

However, one thing has been very encouraging. in South Asian peace context. There was an alarm of anxiety, particularly in India, with the coming into power of the army, about the rising tension in the region. The General's peace offer to India is expected to go a long way to defuse the tension. As voiced in The Daily Star editorial (19.10.99), Gen Musharraf's announcement of "unilateral troops de-escalation along the borders should have a positive vibe with India because it comes from the horse's mouth now."

The writer is a retired UN of-







mourn his death.







