

The CTBT End-game From Charlatantry to Cynicism

Praful Bidwai writes from New Delhi

The CTBT should be signed because it is a worthy restraint measure and will help India return to the global disarmament agenda; not because it will legitimise nuclear weapons. It is bad enough that India nuclearised. It is even more worrisome that its nuclear policy is being hijacked by charlatans.

NOW that the government has ritually consulted political parties on the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), three things can be said. First, there is no consensus. Most non-BJP parties are either ambivalent or opposed to the CTBT. Second, the government will probably go ahead and sign the treaty. Third, many "strategic experts" are drumming up support for it in what passes off as a "debate".

Nothing testifies to the trivialisation of our strategic discourse as eloquently as this "debate". This bears a sharp contrast to 1996, when in an ironic twist of history, India, the CTBT's pioneer, became its fiercest opponent. The debate then was steeped in hawkish nationalism. But it had a reference to doctrines and principles, most important, to nuclear disarmament.

Today, that reference is glaringly absent. The current debate is solely about (presumed) interests, as understood by our nuclear policy elite. Specifically, it is about how this elite wishes to harmonise its interests with the US Administration.

Yesterday's CTBT opponents have turned into its pitiable apologists. Most plead for it not on merits, but because it will legitimise India's nuclear weapons—however detrimental that may be to global nuclear abolition. Consider this:

Σ In 1996, these warriors for "principle" presented the CTBT as an extension of the NPT, and expression of "Nuclear Imperialism". (K. Subrahmanyam, *The Times of India*, Jan 24). He

stressed the CTBT's irredeemable intrinsic flaws. Today, he admits the treaty is not unequal and discriminatory: "There is a sense of undue fear about the intentions of the US and other industrial nations". (TOI, Dec 13, 1999).

Thus, the "imperialists" have suddenly undergone a metamorphosis while all references to the CTBT's flaws have vanished.

Σ In 1996, the typical editorial caption read: "CTBT a Trap". "Stay Firm on the CTBT". "Stop the CTBT Talkshop". Most papers played up Ms Arundhati Ghose's "bold", "principled interventions" in the Conference on Disarmament (CD) but failed to note a shift in India's stand from "universal principles" to the "national interest". Some went into raptures over her "not now, not ever".

Today, the typical caption stresses "consensus", "realism", and unleashes tirades against "The Great Indian Cussedness" (*Indian Express*, Dec 18). It counsels us "to eschew... rhetoric... and make a cold assessment of India's options" (*The Hindu*, Dec 12). This concedes the earlier assessment was less than sober.

Σ Even more breathtakingly inconsistent is nuclear hawk C. Raja Mohan, who described the

CTBT as a treaty "designed" to preserve the hegemony of the nuclear weapon powers...and place a qualitative cap on the nuclear potential of India". (*The Hindu*, June 13, 1996)

Now the same "analyst" admonishes the CTBT's opponents for rejecting "the one instrument which would restrain India from further developing its nuclear weapons, the CTBT" (Dec 9). The CTBT was bad in 1996 because it put a cap on India's nuclear capability. But it is good today precisely because it puts such a cap!

This is not the rational argument of an analyst, but the cheap rhetoric of a charlatan or salesman—an insult to reason. To commit this insult, Raja Mohan distorts the rationale for India's 1996 CTBT rejection. He makes two false claims. India abandoned its "moral approach" to politics—i.e., "realistically" embraced cynicism. And second, India's December 1995 attempted test was aborted due to public disclosures, "external pressure and internal doubts".

Thus, "having failed to test, New Delhi began to compensate" by condemning the CTBT. But why "compensate" if there were "internal doubts"? Raja Mohan condemns his own strategic brotherhood. The drumbeat of opposition...

US "nuclear hegemony". Their arguments are expedient, instrumental and extraneous to the treaty's content: e.g. signing will help improve relations with the US; and that having tested, India may as well fall in line. Even less convincing is the plea that has mastered non-explosive testing with its May 1998 (explosive) tests.

Principled CTBT supporters, like this columnist, have fundamental, irreconcilable differences with its opportunistic backers—the Bomb's apologists. The differences go beyond divergences with non-cynical, if mistaken, CTBT opponents on the Left. The apologists are guilty of intellectual dishonesty, and rationalise India's condemnable decision to join the unequal "discriminatory" global nuclear order — on the side of the discriminators!

The hawks contend that India's basic interests have changed because a particular regime crossed the nuclear threshold, as if this were an irreversible step. They are further distorting our security discourse by anchoring it in cynical realpolitik, arbitrarily defined and whimsically altered to suit the preferences of detente.

The CTBT should be signed because it is a worthy restraint measure and will help India return to the global disarmament agenda; not because it will legitimise nuclear weapons. It is bad enough that India nuclearised. It is even more worrisome that its nuclear policy is being hijacked by charlatans.

Violence against Women and Children Psychological Management of Anger and Aggression

by Tahera Hossain

ONE of the most common causes of violence against women and children is anger and aggression. There is close relationship among anger, aggression, and violence. Violence is an ever-increasing problem in our society. It is one of our more intractable social ills.

because he is angry with her. On the other hand, the husband's attack results from instigation to aggression that was generated by an unpleasant event. Basic concept is anger somatic leads to aggression but not always. Aggression has to do with motor behavior that has a deliberate intent to harm, hurt or injure another person or object. It can be instrumental, emotional or done in the absence of any goal or anger. It can be directed at the source of the problem or it can be expressed indirectly. There are many kinds of aggression as predatory, anti-predatory, dominance aggression, sexual aggression, sex related, internal, irritable, emotional aggression etc.

We have experience of anger in everyday life. Anger is a negative, phenomenological (or internal) feeling state associated with special cognitive and perceptual distortions and deficiencies (e.g. errors, injustice), labeling physiological changes and action tendencies to engage in socially constricted and reinforced organized behavioral scripts (Liz-personal contact, 1997). The negative anger, which leads to aggression, causes serious harm to the victim. Anger has three components such as: cognitive, physiological, behavioral.

When people become angry, they feel frustrated (cognitive), their physiological response is stirred up, i.e. increased heart rate, sweating, increasing blood flow, etc. Then they inflict injury on their own persons or on others (behavioral). Typical episodes of anger are manifested as puns, withdrawal of affection, sulking and so on. Usually, anger has two forms depending on variation in intensity. Mild anger is labeled as agitation or annoyance, whereas strong anger is considered fury or rage. There are so many triggers of anger, such as frustration, loss, stress, time constraint, failure, lack of support, punishment, mistrust, loss of pride, jealousy, conflict, immoral act, blame etc. Besides clinical symptoms there is anxiety, worry, tension, depression, emotional problem, adjustment problem, separation and so on.

Largely, intense and frequent anger gives rise to negative consequences. Suppressed anger is related to a number of medical conditions including essential hypertension, coronary artery diseases, and cancer. Sometimes anger can lead to unsatisfactory marital, parental, peer or workplace relationship.

Amygdala is a part of the limbic system in the brain that apparently facilitates aggressive responses. There are some theories on aggression. From biological perspectives, genes are linked to aggressive behavior and are more likely to be transmitted to subsequent generation. Instinct theory suggests that people are naturally competitive and hostile. Freud believed that people need to express hostile and destructive impulses periodically just as they need to eat, drink, and express sexual needs. Konrad Lorenz (1981) proposed that aggression in all animals, human beings included is instinctive. Frustration aggression hypothesis explains that frustration always leads to aggression and aggression is always the consequence of frustration. Frustration produces anger and readiness to aggress. Cognitive views hold that aggravating and painful events trigger unpleasant feelings. These feelings in turn, prompt aggression. One may respond aggressively to a provocation when she or he magnifies the importance of the insult or otherwise stir up feelings of anger. On the other hand, social learning view holds that aggressive behavior is learned through reinforcement. Environment, consequences, such as television cartoon, films etc. contribute towards aggressive behavior when children and adults are exposed to murders, beatings sexual assaults just by turning on the TV set. Television violence supplies models of aggressive skills and acquisition of these skills, intern, encour-

ages aggression in children. The probability of aggression increases when the models are similar to the observers (Bandura, 1963). Sears et al. (1957) found that mothers who use severe punishment have more aggressive children than those mothers who do not.

Nowadays, pornography has the harmful effect of creating sexual arousal, which is subsequently transformed into aggressive behavior and violence. Consequently, women and children suffer sexual abuse.

Clinical psychologists have a significant role to play in the management of anger and aggression. But a thorough assessment of the client's anger and aggressive behavior appears to be necessary before initiating treatment. Commonly used assessment procedures are: structured interview, Self Report, Measure, SCL-90, MMPI-2, Bussey Hostility Inventory, Reaction Inventory, Novaco Anger Inventory, Anger self report, Spielberger State Trail Anger Expression Inventory (STAEI), Multidimensional Anger Inventory.

They use many techniques for anger management such as: Rational Emotion therapy, Logo therapy, Personal construct therapy, Cognitive therapy, Relaxation training, Anxiety management technique, Problem solving technique, Coping strategies, stress training, Frustration aggression hypothesis explains that frustration always leads to aggression and aggression is always the consequence of frustration. Frustration produces anger and readiness to aggress. Cognitive views hold that aggravating and painful events trigger unpleasant feelings. These feelings in turn, prompt aggression. One may respond aggressively to a provocation when she or he magnifies the importance of the insult or otherwise stir up feelings of anger. On the other hand, social learning view holds that aggressive behavior is learned through reinforcement. Environment, consequences, such as television cartoon, films etc. contribute towards aggressive behavior when children and adults are exposed to murders, beatings sexual assaults just by turning on the TV set. Television violence supplies models of aggressive skills and acquisition of these skills, intern, encour-

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The Problem of Traffic Jam: An Anatomy of Causes

by Rashida Sultana

ONE of the major problems that Dhaka city dwellers are facing is of course traffic congestion. Traffic congestion hampers mobility of life itself. Due to traffic congestion, people have to waste part of their valuable working hours in the street, missing important appointments, and it's even getting too tough to take an emergency patient to hospital.

Besides, dearth of modern traffic control devices is one important factor causing traffic congestion. In Dhaka city most of the traffic signals are faulty. And mixed traffic is another curse we are fighting with, rickshaw and other slow and old means of transportation are moving throughout the length and breadth of Dhaka city roads side by side with fast moving vehicles of different sizes. This must be considered as an important factor of traffic congestion.

unofficial sources claim that more than 250,000 rickshaws are plying in the city causing intense traffic problem. Dhaka City Corporation issues registration certificate to rickshaw owners and driving licence to rickshawpullers. According to Motor Vehicle Ordinance 1983 Section-2 Clause-27 police cannot prosecute non-motorized transports stipulating only on the ground of non-mechanised vehicle. And it seems Dhaka City Corporation also is not in a position to limit the increasing number of rickshaws in the city.

transporters, at least 200,000 are rickshaws (Source: UN-ESCAP Draft Report, July 1997). Common rickshawpuller has very little idea about traffic rules and police cannot do much. Thus only increasing mass transport facilities like buses and trains and decreasing the number of non-motorised and private vehicles would help to overcome the traffic congestion to a certain extent.

should cover about 25 per cent of the built-up area of a city, but, unfortunately, this city has got approximately 8 per cent road space.

Population of Bangladesh is increasing and the rate of migration from villages to city is also getting higher. In 1995 Dhaka with a population of 8.5 million was the 23rd largest city in the world. Naturally its traffic has increased as much but the capacity of our roads are not enough to hold this increased size of traffic. So in a simple calculation, inadequate number and size of roads and ever increasing traffic level can be considered as the major reason for traffic congestion.

As per registration record of Dhaka City Corporation, 79,000 rickshaws ply in the city. However,

inadequate number of bus and truck terminals is one of the major factors causing traffic problem. Buses stop anywhere to let the passengers alight and board, obstructing traffic and increasing chances of accident. Temporary shops on footpath are also making traffic problem severe. Moreover developers and builders are keeping their house building materials on the road reducing the existing road space. In an ideal situation, roads

Without effective co-ordination roads are dug by different utility departments almost round the year reducing the road space and increasing the inconvenience of road users.

One does not understand why these known problems are allowed to continue or not effectively solved when it is becoming unbearable day by day.

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The Culture of Negative Politics: A cursory Look

by Alif Zabr

Are we passing through a period of political and moral nihilism? Not enough research has been carried by the local scholars to influence the political leaders through to enhance the awareness level of the thinkers at the intermediate levels (generalists).

THE normal and transparent political evolution of new emerging independent nation was partially suppressed for 16 years, counting from the year 1975, when tragic interruption set in. The normal political movement went underground as the incoming "outsider" (autocratic, military) regimes took over the rein for saving the country from the post-revolution trauma (the independence was gained too quickly in nine months, compared to generations needed to other countries; hence the energy factor comes in).

of hartals by the opposition disorganised the smoothness of this delicate and vital transition period, to reinforce the foundation of nascent democracy, and the whole nation was the loser. The after-effect is the death of political consensus we observe today in form of floating politics without roots or anchor; although many homilies exist in the pages of history.

leashed in more than 170 days of hartals by the AL-led agitators against an elected regime — sowing the seed for the subsequent entrenchment of negative politics.

of a nation subconsciously tries to take the path of least resistance, sometimes groping for the solution of complex forces at work at any point of time, although the methods applied might be unstable and violent. There is erosion of peaceful existence of the basic rights for a peaceful life based on self-style by the individual members of the society.

the higher levels. For example, the traffic chaos in Dhaka city cannot last for a long time, as I inevitably there will be a breakdown point (the time is chosen through automatically-generated feedbacks of the system of chaos), to restore sanity. The disorderly state of politics today is similar. Frustration gives rise to anger, animosity and hatred. The days of imposition are gone; nowadays the information input is to crash beyond the point of no-return.

Some relevant queries arise which cannot be sidelined. Why did the two autocratic, non-politician regimes last so long (74 years)? Why did not the types of disorders we see nowadays did not affect the innocent and the spectators (teal collection organized corruption, indiscipline, open political corruption during these 16 non-political years)? How is it that evil is displayed today in such open and brazen manner? Mud-slinging at the top level cannot be one-sided.

national orientation exercises, led by the politicians. But their input must be ten times more than their output; unfortunately, the reverse is the case. It can be explained partly by acrimonious debates might spoil the study. What is wrong with our cultural life? If we are still suffering from persecution complex these may be exposed for self-analysis.

Another issue for examination is why the itch of history is still bothering us, after so many decades. We just cannot settle down to the task of the time. Too many its and buts are floating. Like bacteria or mosquitoes, pinching the national conscience, and this hesitancy does not seem to bother the top leadership, in or out of the secretariat. We apparently cannot get out of the grip of the past. India and China have a bigger problem of ceasing to be distracted by the glory of their ancient civilizations. Our dhyanu, after 28 years is leading us nowhere.

This negative political diversion opened the doors to cross forces in the well-established institution of the civil service (the military has previous experience in assisting the rulers politically), which later manifested again in 1995-96 in the formation of *mancha*, the open public (political) platform of the BCS. The Awami League, then in the Opposition, was the beneficiary on this occasion.

Also the narrow margin in the voting pattern (37% and 34%) did not leave playing room to either of the major parties (never take the initiative in a cramped or defensive configuration). Third political forces are now building up, as the only option available in the circumstances (deadlock between the major players). Let us hope for the best. The local leadership is on test.

One output of this political erosion is the infiltration of the culture of hartal, violence, and forced blockades even in the non-political sectors. Physical blockade is the natural outcome of the mental blockade, and the resistance to public activities is independent of the mute protests of the silent majority. The game and style has to be replaced with acceptable methods of displaying dissent and opposition. Politics today is a spoiled child, adding to the tantrums of the parents also.

Unstable equilibrium cannot last, as energy-wise, the system loss is high. Nature does not support excess-energy systems, and the laws of thermodynamics come into play, to restore equilibrium. It is an automatic process to build up again from the minimal residual left in the society at the basic levels, and in the nation at

the current political flux diverts attention to some background aspects of the present state of stunted growth of political culture. The politics of intellectual complexities in emerging nations has to come out and fall as meaningful rain so as to make it easier for the lay voters to provide informed support to the political dialogues at all levels. The political social-gap is too much.

Are we passing through a period of political and moral nihilism? Not enough research has been carried by the local scholars to influence the political leaders through to enhance the awareness level of the thinkers at the intermediate levels (generalists).

The indolent and the subjective mind has to be fed constantly with suitable awareness campaigns to make him think and keep him busy. The political leadership have poor feedbacks from the other professionals (excluding sycophancy). This lack of academic interest in topical social issues hampers

the cultural impatience in developing countries, whether in politics or other path-finding mission, is understandable, but the technical development projects (5-Year and PPs) have to look forward for quick completion. The lapses in the established principles are again reflected in the painfully slow growth rates in the various sectors of national development. The political impatience in leadership makes local politics unstable, as traditions and principles are side-stepped for ensuring certain ad hoc deliveries and outputs within tight and limited periods of operation ("make hay while the sun shines" has two sides, as in a coin). The social life has to be sweetened through artificial means (in good faith); the latter circulating in the guise of national propaganda.

In addition to the mandated agenda, the elected regime of 1990 had an extracurricula on hand, of historical urgency, a project which might be identified as the "BMR" of the political institutions of Bangladesh". It was asking for too much, and the regime was not allowed to sow in the whirlwind. The spat

The Awami League received a psychological jolt on the unexpected defeat at the polls in 1990. This defeat could not be digested mentally, and the emotional outburst was re-

These experiments in the life

the command and leadership. Resistance to change will delay the process of cleansing. The subsequent reactions might result in the creation of other forces to bring about some order in the chaos.

Political fatigue is affecting all, in or out of politics. Political nihilism is the epidemic of the time, and the pessimists outnumber the optimists. The Bangladesh electorate has gained considerable experience in political governorship of the abnormal kind. The national politics is passing through a period of navigational lapses if not training, and re-orientation of the other kind. There are many sandbanks in this deltaic region.

Therefore the grasping and awareness sensitivity will improve when the absorption factor of the recipients increase. All politicians are in a hurry, and rather loath to take tutorial classes away from the microphones and public meetings. The local authorities have schemes for implanting the seeds of democracy at the rural level. We are modelling a Bangladeshi version, which is democratic, and illiteracy-proof.

the present status quo of wavering stability cannot be maintained, whether the nation is prepared or not. The resultant force will emerge, and the struggle will continue, till the next rescuers arrive and take firm charge to bring the game to normal conditions of operation and maintenance. Country first, full stop. Let the other legitimate and ethical stops be withdrawn.

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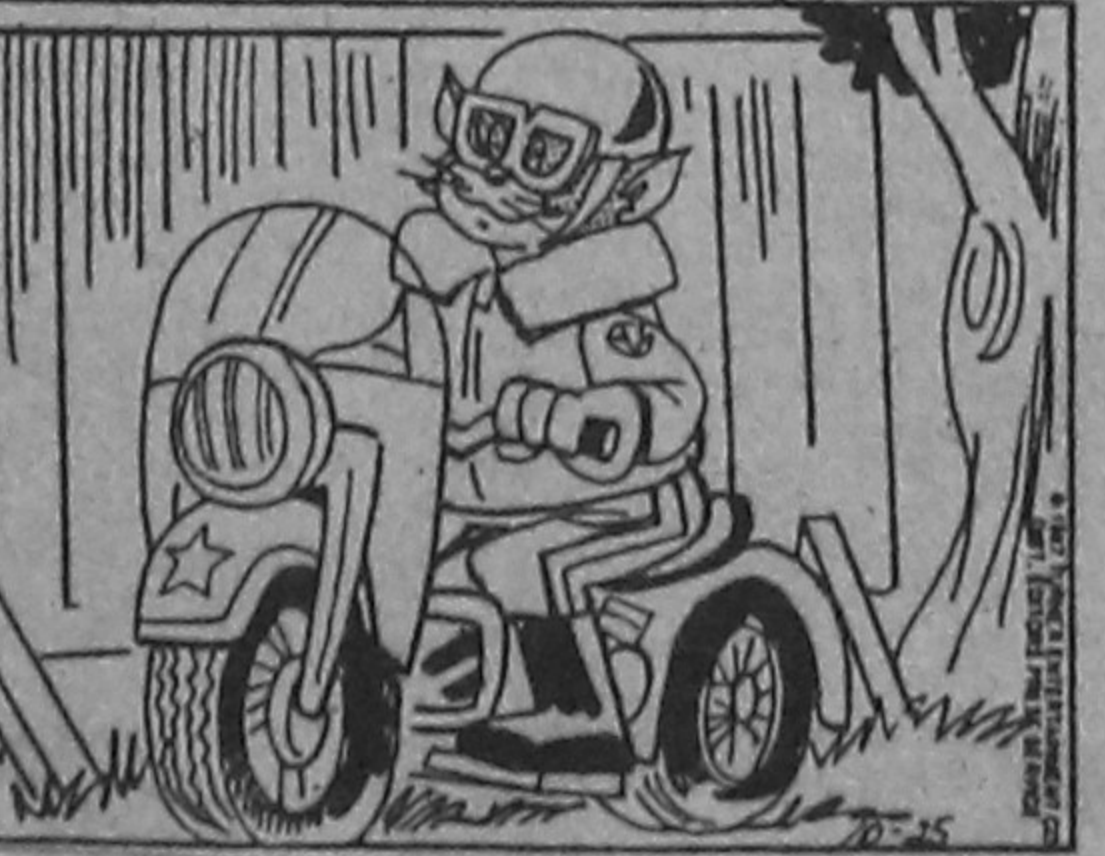
TOM & JERRY



By Hanna-Barbera



James Bond



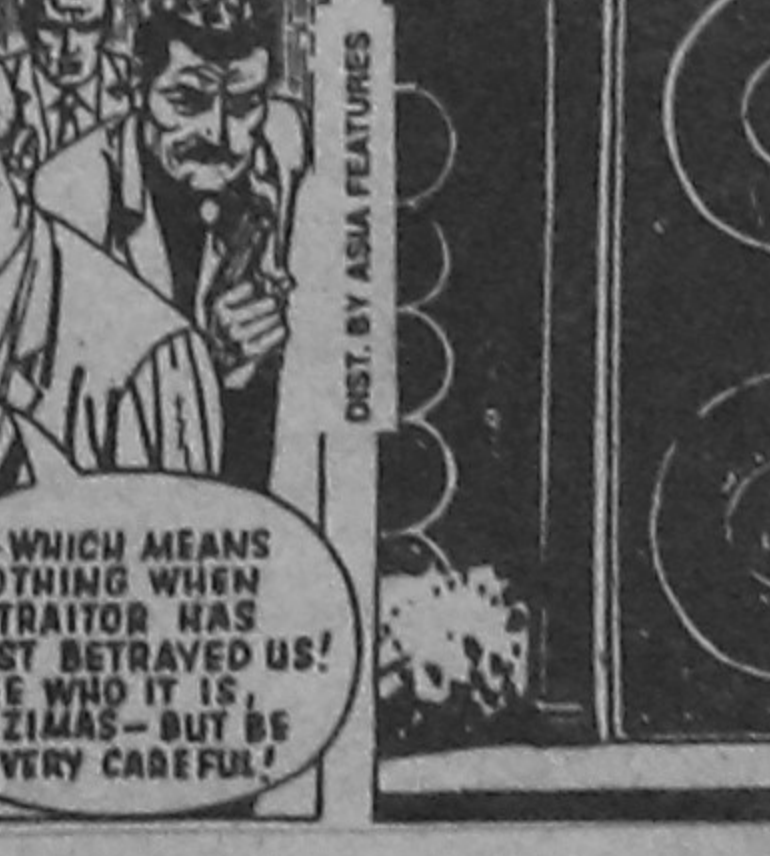
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