

Towards integrated water management The Dutch experience and its relevance for Bangladesh

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BAKLADESH must put in place good water management practices with a sense of urgency to face challenges of ever-increasing water crisis. The integrated water resource management in the country requires technical and financial capacity to control and regulate the water resources system. It also requires proper participatory and institutional arrangements in managing its water resources. The Dutch Ambassador J L IJermans, regarded as a proponent of democratic water control mechanism, favours decentralisation of water management to local and regional level.

He also supports an overhaul of the legal framework for water management in the face of growing problem of acute water pollution, degradation of water quality and water shortages.

IJermans, a well-known water expert, has given a lecture on "Integrated Water Management: The Dutch Experience and its Relevance for Bangladesh" at an international seminar, organised by the World Water Forum of Journalists (WWFJ) and Forum of Environmental Journalists of Bangladesh (FEJB) on March 21 at the Jatiya Press Club.

The Dutch experience is more relevant for Bangladesh because the Netherlands, where the history of organised institutional water management dates back to the beginning of the past millennium. More so because a system has evolved in the Netherlands that is both functional and flexible to adapt to the ever-changing requirements of social and economic developments.

There is a water crisis today has been the overwhelming, unanimous conclusion of the World Water Forum that was held exactly one year ago in The Hague. In the present day world, the problems of too much, too little or too polluted water are increasing at a rapid rate. These problems have become particularly severe for the developing countries, adversely affecting their agriculture, fisheries navigation, drinking water supply and sanitation. Water resources management is no more just a challenge, it is a declared crisis. In the words of the World Water Forum, "It is a crisis of managing water so badly, that billions of people and the environment suffer badly and prospects at the longer term are grim."

According to IJermans conditions in Bangladesh are no exception to the deteriorating situation of

the water resources system referred above. In the past decades, major investments were made in building infrastructure of different kinds, affecting the management of the water resources. Around half of the floodplain in the country is now covered by flood control projects, some with a component of irrigation. Urbanisation has started to take off and a network of roads has been constructed to meet the ever-increasing demands for communication between different parts of the country. These developments have had widespread effects on the water resources of the country.

It is true that the flood control projects provided many rural households with opportunities of

quotas are established and enforced, water quality standards are maintained through a proper licensing system (backed up by appropriate monitoring and control), pricing of water is done with adequate attention to social conditions and 'ability to pay', land use zonings are set and enforced for drainage capacity of roads already built and to be newly built in the country.

An effective water resources management would involve co-ordination between and among all relevant agencies, the Dutch envoy points out adding it would also ensure involvement of all stakeholders in the steps relating to deci-

experience with integrated water resources management was built up over the last thirty years. In these countries, the problem was not so much an absence of good management practices of the individual management agencies per se. Rather, it was one of ensuring the right co-ordination among the highly specialised agencies and their communication with the real stakeholders through a formalised democratic control mechanism, he argues.

In the case of the Netherlands, where the history of organised institutional water management dates back to the beginning of the past millennium, a system has

water quality due to the increased levels of pollution of surface water. In 1970 the Surface Water Pollution Act came into force as the first modern environmental law of the Netherlands. It was the starting point of a huge program of building water treatment plants all over the country. The programme was and is financed according to the polluter-pays principle and is executed by the water boards.

a third and final change was the overhaul of the legal framework for water management. A ground water extraction act was adopted in 1981 in order to regulate ground water extraction. A new water management act saw the light in 1989, defining a central planning structure starting with a National Policy Document for Water Management and Provincial Plans based on this.

Implementation and elaboration of these plans is done to a large degree by the water boards, the Dutch envoy says adding, Integrated Water Management in the Netherlands is nowadays a combination of top-down planning by the central government and bottom up planning and implementation by local water board.

Constant change and legal reform, he adds, an adequate cost recovery mechanism, a combination of central planning and decentralised implementation and management as well as growing attention for water quality are some of the major lessons which can be drawn from today's Dutch experience on integrated water management.

In Bangladesh, IJermans points out, a number of similar developments and principles can be detected. The recent adoption of the National Water Policy, the process, of reform of the water sector institutions, the role which is being given to local government bodies, the new BWDB Act and the formulation of a new Water Act are steps ahead in a process of continuous change. The Netherlands, he says, considers such change as essential and contributes to these processes through its development co-operative programme and through the expertise and capacity of private sector companies involved in the water sector.

Major challenges will however always lay ahead. For both Bangladesh and the Netherlands, he says, climate change and sea level rise represent such a new Challenge which can only be addressed by constant updating of our knowledge, adaptation of our policies and institutions and new investments.



J.L. IJERMANS

In the past decades, major investments were made in building infrastructure of different kinds, affecting the management of the water resources. Around half of the floodplain in the country is now covered by flood control projects, some with a component of irrigation. Urbanisation has started to take off and a network of roads has been constructed to meet the ever-increasing demands for communication between different parts of the country. These developments have had widespread effects on the water resources of the country.

building their homesteads in areas that are relatively safe from inundation. These projects also enabled higher levels of crop production in many cases. However, these initiatives, and certain other infrastructure built on different pads of the country, have resulted in a number of problems as well. Flood levels in the open floodplains have gone up, groundwater at several locations has been over-exploited for irrigation, drainage congestion and water logging have become more common, migration routes of fish have been disrupted and fish habitats damaged in many places, waterway navigation has been obstructed, the quality of water has deteriorated in general and many areas of the country have become more drought-prone. There has been a growing recognition of this problem and the relevant quarters in the country view these problems as a challenge to be addressed with a sense of urgency.

It is to be noted that the technical challenges in improving the performance of the water resources sector of Bangladesh can be met only if good management practices are put in place. In this context, it would be necessary to ensure, among other things, that groundwater extraction

evolved that is both functional and flexible to adapt to the ever-changing requirements of social and economic developments. This system is quite dynamic in nature and is able to continuously evaluate the performance of the Water Resources System of the country. The developments in the water resources sector in the Netherlands during the last thirty years can be considered as the unfolding of its attempt toward integrated water resources management.

He highlights some of the major changes that took place in the Netherlands over the past decades:

- the system of decentralisation water management at local and regional level by the autonomous stakeholder-controlled water boards has been reformed; the number of these water boards was reduced from 1000 to 57 in order to enhance the effectiveness and professionalism. However, the board members are still elected as representatives of those who have interests in the local water management activities and who have the obligation to finance these activities.

- a new and important aspect of water management which arose in the sixties was the concern over

Washington needs to rein in its foreign policy offensives

ABDUL HANNAN

IF the continuing detention of the US surveillance plane and its 24 crew in China for more than 10 days over the mid air collision of the plane with a Chinese jet fighter resulting in the loss of the Chinese pilot has sent any message to the United States which has made loud noises demanding immediate release and return of the plane and the crew, it is that discretion is the better part of valour and that stridently arrogant and high handed behaviour in international relations is inconsistent with today's multipolar world, no matter if the principal actor is a superpower. Apparently the crisis was resolved only when the United States climbed down and said 'very sorry' to China. However, Sino-US relation which has high economic stakes for both the countries does not make any sense for muscle flexing and brinkmanship by either side.

Yet, the current Sino-US diplomatic row did not come out of the blue. There was rising distrust and tension in the relation over the reported US sale of sophisticated weapons and battleship and the provision of theatre missile defence to Taiwan. China was also sore about American allegation that it was assisting Iraq in laying the fibre optics to improve its ability to detect and target intruding British and American aircraft. Apparently, the new Bush Administration has abandoned its strategic partnership with China so assiduously built up by President Clinton. The National Security adviser Condoleezza Rice, a hardliner has made no secret that she sees China as a potential threat and argues that US should never be afraid of confronting China when its interests collide. If the Bush Administration has learnt any lesson from this Chinese rebuff, it will clearly need to mend its diplomatic fences by conducting carefully crafted foreign policy with tact and restraint, decency and ethics, vision and statesmanship.

But unfortunately, the increasingly belligerent foreign policy initiatives used by the Bush team including Colin Powell and Ms Rice do not offer any comfort or assurance about international peace and stability in future. One characteristic that has emerged in Bush foreign policy is the tendency to offend old enemies. Apparently, the Bush Administration is in the grip of a hangover of cold war phobia about a conspiracy theory of a secret team of old enemies old there including

China, Russia, North Korea, Iraq and Iran, to harm the United States. It has turned volt face to Clinton's successful efforts of reconciliation, normalization and warming of relations with erstwhile adversaries.

The Forceful plea for a national missile defence shield for America by the Bush Administration is emerging as a defining factor for Bush's international relations despite opposition from Beijing and Moscow and dismay and concern expressed across much of Europe including many American allies about the move which is detrimental to disarmament and arms control efforts. The Bush Administration has effectively sabotaged conciliatory approaches to North Korea pursued by President Clinton with patience and perseverance, denounced the 'sun shine policy' of South Korea towards North Korea and frozen contacts

Washington would do well to remember that Russia retains the second largest nuclear arsenal in the world. The hardened US stance would only facilitate the current rapprochement between Beijing and Moscow and deepen Sino-Russian strategic understanding posing a potential challenge to American interests in Europe, the Pacific and central Asia.

George W Bush made a display of his congenial hatred of Saddam Hussain when barely four weeks into his beleaguered Presidency; he ordered the air strikes of defence installation around Baghdad by 24 US and British aircraft killing four persons and wounding many. The international community including many Arab countries and some US allies were outraged at this sudden unprovoked and unwarranted attack. The Bush Administration cynically dismissed it as a routine

violence. Violence will end only when Israel ends its occupation. It is not a policy of equidistance to invite Sharon, a notoriety of Sabra and Shatila massacre of Palestinian refugees, to Washington for talks with President Bush and not invite Yasser Arafat. It is not even handed justice by the Bush Administration when it vetoed the Security Council resolution to send a UN observer force to protect Palestinian civilians from violence in the occupied territories. It is no justice when the secretary of state Colin Powell while briefing Congress in March said that "President Bush was committed to moving the US embassy to the capital of Israel, which is Jerusalem". Such a statement is undoubtedly against the spirit of UN resolutions 242 and 338 which declared East Jerusalem as part of occupied territories and which are to be vacated. Under Security Council resolution

no Clinton who quietly walked away after listening to Hasina's arguments for 50 years of gas reserves before any gas export. Arm twisting by way of threats of cuts in aid and garment imports is a distinct possibility.

But why is this isolationist, unilateral and bizarre foreign policy of President Bush? How much of it is a reflection of his inferiority complex, insecurity and nervousness out of his disputed presidency with a waver thin majority of votes approved by the Supreme Court and not by the popular vote? And how much of it is an effort to put up a brave face to impress his people about his effectiveness as a President and shore up the questionable legitimacy of his Presidency? But one thing is certain that his extremely reactionary, combative and illiberal foreign policy cannot have the support and mandate of the overwhelming majority of the people of America.

The French statesman Richelieu's concept of *raison d'etre* that the interest of the state justifies the means to pursue them has always been repugnant to the Americans. American leaders have always claimed to be fighting in the name of principle, not interest. Hence their fascination with Wilsonian idealism about the underlying belief in the harmony among nations and the essential goodness of man a passionate internationalism, an example of spiritual leadership which no material or military power can provide for the fulfilment of American ideals of democracy, freedom, justice, human dignity and progress for mankind. In a post cold war world today there is no geo strategic confrontation or ideological challenge before America.

So, there is no reason why President Bush, far from acting with the saintly glow of his liberal predecessors, should behold hostage to his personal interest or personal moods allowing his policy to be distorted by personal insecurity. His policy is clearly out of step with the vision of a new world order so beautifully proclaimed by his father, President Bush Sr., who saw "a vision of new partnership of nations that transcends the cold war, a partnership based on cooperation and collective action, a partnership united by principle and rule of law, a partnership whose goals are to increase democracy, prosperity and peace".

And what is the significance of the Bush Administration for Bangladesh? It had better prepared for tough talking from Bush who is

Reflections on Good Friday

REV MARTIN ADHIKARY

"MY God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" The cry of dereliction of Jesus from the cross was apparently mysterious, yet revealing. This is one of the seven sayings of Jesus from the cross. Christianity is based on the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. Dr Billy Graham has rightly remarked, "The Resurrection of Christ is the fulcrum of Christian theology". But resurrection is the gift of Jesus' death on the cross. And the cross is the commonest Christian symbol. In the Graeco-Roman world of the first century the very idea of the cross was a barbaric, horrific and disgusting one. In his defence of the Roman senator Rabirius, accused of treason, Cicero advocated in the Roman court, "If we are to be threatened with death, then we want to die in freedom; let the executioner, the shrouding of the head and the very name of the cross be banished from the body and life of Roman citizens, and from their thoughts, eyes and ears." The Persians, the Greeks and also the Phoenicians practised it as a manner of executing criminals for worst form of crimes. The Romans took it up from the Persians as a means of capital punishment for sedition and vilest crimes. This was used specially for exemplary punishments of slaves. Roman comedy writer Plautus put these words into the mouth of a slave threatened with the execution: "I know that the cross will be my grave. This is where my ancestors, my father, my grandfather, and great-grandfather were buried."

Christians do not worship the cross. They venerate it because of the Gospel message that it reminds them of. What is that message? The message from the cross is in that it reveals the strength and wisdom of a forgiving and loving God, who in unfolding and outreaching love allowed His son to die that shameful death. Christ emptied himself and accepted the penalty that was due for the sinner and made propitiation for it. He did not exercise his divine power to defy his enemies. It is human to boast of power and authority. The Greek Philosopher Sophocles rightly said, "But hard as it is to learn the mind of any mortal, or the heart, till he be tried in chief authority. Power shows the man." But Christ voluntarily submitted to lustful whims of people. He said, he came to save life, not to destroy it, you have been healed."

God is inflexibly severe in His justice. But He is gracious too. He is so gracious that while desiring to punish sinners He made His son to be the price for our salvation. Because of God's unlimited sovereignty, inflexible justice and unsearchable grace He put our punishment on Jesus, cried out on the Cross of Calvary, "My God, my God why has thou forsaken me?" (Mark 15:34). Sin is always appalling. It appalled totally impeccable and pure God. God could not look to the terrible reality of sin and as such He left His Son alone in the hands of wicked men completely cutting him off from His presence. As God's Suffering Servant he was afflicted and disfigured. This was the God-ordained way to accomplish His mission to the world. We look at Jesus' incarnation, death and resurrection, the three great historical Gospel-events as inextricably linked up together. His death would not have been effective for our salvation had it not been preceded by his glorious birth and followed by his glorious resurrection. We cannot understand one without the others.



Sin, which results, in death, has no power over a believer because of the forgiving merit of Christ's supreme sacrifice. Jesus suffered the tragedy of human predicament that man is so depraved that he cannot save himself from the corrupting power of sin. By dying for us he transformed that tragedy into the hope of new life, that evil into good. So then what is required of us to have reconciliation with God and with Man is to come before God with humility and submission and surrender to Him and crucify and bury our old life of hatred, malice and greed.

The state of the present world is so full with corruption, injustice and hatred that the need for making the cross a contemporary phenomenon cannot overemphasised. When on 21st January 1999 Mr Graham Staines and his two sons were burnt alive an Indian daily editorial said, "Jesus is crucified". Yes, Jesus is crucified also when the bodies of innocent little Staines and Ormbs and all those victims of injustice and inhuman atrocities are disfigured and dismembered anywhere in the world. Jesus cries when there is cry anywhere, right now. The cross speaks to us in the midst of all crimes, all tyrannies and oppressions and exploitation, in all situations of injustice and hatred, in every form of neglect and discrimination. W B Yeats wrote, "Can you reach God by tort? He gives Himself to the pure in heart. He asks nothing but your attention." No we cannot find God by our own efforts only. We need to attend to what He says in and through all our experiences, and we need to pay attention to them. "Let my heart be broken with the things that break the heart of God," said Dr Bob Pierce, the founder of World Vision. Some one has rightly observed, "Ours is not an era of split atom, but of split personality". We are divided within our own selves and also among ourselves. We lack integrity. The world needs healing in every kind of human relationship. There is only one way to have that: the way of love and respect for others.

By dying the substitutionary death on behalf of Man he sufficiently satisfied the demand of God's justice and righteousness. The benefit is that a believer can live in right relationship with God and fellow men and be a vehicle of self-love. While his enemies thought they were punishing a rebel, God was dealing the iniquity that was theirs. That's why Jesus cried out as God, the Father forsok him for a while since He could not look on sin. He, who did not personally experience any shadow of sin, was made sin for us. He bore all our iniquities, our sorrows, ills, and pain, and transgressions. Earth has no pain that heaven cannot heal! Because of his passion and thirst for the salvation for Man Jesus suffered all the mocking, the humiliation and torture that were associated with crucifixion. "By his wounds we are healed", so prophesied the 8th century B C prophet Isaiah. In our place Christ endured on his person the curse, the condemnation and punishment that we deserved. Saint Peter to him said thus, "He himself bore our sin in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds

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with North Korea. President Bush has made it clear that he does not intend to share cocktail with Kim Jong Il, the North Korean leader. During his confirmation hearings, General Colin Powell referred to the North Korean leader as a dictator. The threat of attack from North Korea is one of the central justifications cited by the Bush team for creating a missile shield for America. Predictably, the North Koreans are sure rattling again and rolling back their missile and nuclear freeze agreements. The recent successful overtures of South Korea to North Korea reducing tension in the Korean peninsula and holding the potential of eventual unification have now been thrown to the back burner.

The Bush Administration has caused angry reaction in Moscow telling it to expect reduced aid and the anger has been exacerbated by the US blunt action of expelling 50 Russian diplomats from Washington on espionage charges prompting similar measure by Moscow. Besides, Washington rocked the boat by its warning of serious ramifications of relations on a possible conventional arms sale, particularly missiles, to Iran. As a retaliatory measure, Moscow has urged upon the need for an European missile shield. Before humiliating Moscow,

matter. Yet, the attack was not over the designated no fly zone but at the heart of Iraq. It was a brazen act of aggression on a sovereign territory. Needless to say, the Bush team with Cheney, Powell and Rice, assembled from former president Bush Sr's administration, not content with the continuing harsh sanctions against the Iraqi people, is bent upon completing the unfinished job of removing Saddam Hussain.

The Bush Administration has effectively abandoned and stalled President Clinton's deep involvement in peace initiatives in the Middle East for resolving the conflict over the rights of the Palestinians for a homeland of their own. More than 400 Palestinians have been killed by Israeli bullets since the eruption of fresh uprising in occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip in September. Echoing Israeli Prime Minister Sharon, Washington insists on ending violence by both sides before talks between them can begin. Yet, Intefada or uprising by stone throwing children to register protest against Israeli occupation is no violence. The violence what has been described as the "excessive use of force" by the UN Human Rights Commission is being perpetrated by the Israeli forces. So it is palpably unfair to pair down or equate the Palestinian uprising with Israeli

478 any measure that affects the holy city's status is illegal. Bush Administration's seemingly hands off approach to the raging crisis in the Middle East may be an implicit nod to Israel, its closest ally, for a final solution of the question of Palestine unilaterally by application of force.

The unilateral actions of the Bush Administration in total disregard of the canons of international law and morality do not end here. The international community was sooked, worried and stunned when it was told that the Bush Administration was pulling out of the Kyoto protocol it signed in 1997 to curb emission of Greenhouse gas to protect the environment from global warming. Yet, America the superpower, constituting 4 per cent of world population is the super polluter contributing to 25 per cent of world's pollution and climate change caused by greedy life styles of Americans infatuated with automobiles and fostered and other emission-generating 'utilities' fostered and protected by the powerful political-industrial lobbies. There was angry reaction from the EU countries including Britain.

And what is the significance of the Bush Administration for Bangladesh? It had better prepared for tough talking from Bush who is

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কজের নামঃ মতিঝিল এবং দিলকুশা বাণিজ্যিক এলাকার রাস্তার পাশে গাড়ি পার্কিং এর জন্য লীজ প্রস্তাব আহবান।

ঢাকা সিটি করপোরেশন, মতিঝিল এবং দিলকুশা বাণিজ্যিক এলাকায় রাস্তার পাশে গাড়ি পার্কিং এর জন্য এ-জাতীয় কাজে অভিজ্ঞ ও আর্থিক ক্ষমতাসম্পন্ন প্রতিষ্ঠানের নিকট হতে বাংলাদেশ ফরম নং-২৯১১তে সীলমোহরকৃত খামে আর্থিক প্রস্তাব আহবান করা হচ্ছে। টাকার পরিমাণ অংকে এবং কথায় উভয়েই উল্লেখ থাকতে হবে। দরপত্র ক্রয়ের জন্য অগ্রহী প্রতিষ্ঠানসমূহকে তাদের নিজস্ব প্যাডে আবেদনত্রসহ আগামী ১৭/৪/২০০১ ইং তারিখ হতে ২৯/৪/২০০১ ইং তারিখ পর্যন্ত অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে বিভাগীয় কমিশনার ঢাকা, জেলা প্রশাসক, ঢাকা, ঢাকা সিটি করপোরেশনের সকল অঞ্চলের প্রকৌশল বিভাগ, কেন্দ্রীয় হিসাব বিভাগ এবং নিম্নস্বাক্ষরকারীর অফিস থেকে ১০০০ (এক হাজার) টাকার (অফেরতযোগ্য) চালান মারফত ক্রয় করা যাবে এবং আগামী ৩০/৪/২০০১ ইং তারিখে বেলা ১২:০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত নিম্নস্বাক্ষরকারীর অফিসে দরপত্র জমা দেয়া যাবে। ঐ দিন বেলা ১:০০ ঘটিকার সময় সীলমোহরকৃত খাম নিম্নস্বাক্ষরকারীর অফিসে অফারদাতা প্রতিষ্ঠানের অগ্রহী প্রতিনিধিদের উপস্থিতিতে (যদি কেহ উপস্থিত থাকেন) খোলা হবে। উল্লেখিত কাজের আনুসঙ্গিক বিষয় দরপত্রে বর্ণিত শর্ত মোতাবেক অন্তর্ভুক্ত হবে। প্রস্তাব দাখিলের সময় প্রস্তাবিত লীজের টাকার ২.৫% জামানত হিসেবে মেয়র, ঢাকা সিটি করপোরেশনের অনুকূলে বাংলাদেশের যে কোন সিভিলিয়ান ব্যাংকের ব্যাংক ড্রাফট/পে-অর্ডারের আকারে জমা দিতে হবে। কার্যাদেশ প্রাপ্ত প্রতিষ্ঠানকে কার্যাদেশ প্রাপ্তির পূর্বেই লীজের সমুদয় টাকা এককালীন পরিশোধ করতে হবে। এ বিষয়ে বিস্তারিত তথ্যাদি অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে নিম্নস্বাক্ষরকারীর অফিস হতে জানা যাবে। কোন কারণ দর্শানো বাতিরেকেই কর্তৃপক্ষ যে কোন বা সকল প্রস্তাব গ্রহণ বা বাতিলের ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করেন।

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