South Asia

COMMENTARY

SAARC sans terrorism

FTER many a hiccup, the SAARC summit scheduled for 4-6 January may Ifinally happen at a difficult time in the entire region's history. There is an epic war going on in the Hindu Kush, and within each of our borders there are bitter insurgencies and separatist struggles. George W. Bush has set the agenda for the whole world by letting the cat out of the bag to catch the terrorist but it would be a mistake for the SAARC summit to get carried away on terrorism. There is a serious worry that the SAARC agenda will be hijacked by heads of government suddenly finding the one area where they can agree and thereby squelching the aspirations of minorities and oppositional political groups in each of the seven countries of the region.

The American need to find the perpetrators of the terror acts of 11 September and bring them to book is valid, and South Asia too is duty-bound to help find those who helped execute the plan to kill thou-sands of innocents at one go. But it is another thing to try and take advantage of the American war against terrorism to ease one's own burden by accessing a political cover to do what you

Look out over the political landscape of South Asia, and you find governments all-toowilling to try and finish the 'terrorist' problem once and for all. In Nepal the government has finally declared the Maoists a terrorist group and the army has been directed out of the barracks on a search and destroy mission. Sher Bahadur Deuba's government has passed the Terror-ist and Disruptive Activities (Prevention and Control) Ordinance (TADO). In India, the BJP-led government is keen to pass the Prevention of Terrorism Ordinance (POTO), as successor to the infamous Terrorist and Disruptive Activities (Prevention) Act (TADA), which was a much abused antiliberties legislation. The BJP has declared that those who oppose POTO are anti-national.

In Sri Lanka, where it has long been the attitude of the establishment that the 'terrorism' in the north and east be contained by the strongest measures, the Peoples Alliance government of Chandrika Kumaratunga breathed fire in the runup to the parliamentary elections of 5 December. Known for its commitment to pluralism and resolution of the Sinhala-Tamil ethnic conflict through negotiation, the agenda of the PA is now, in the words of a well-known Colombo analyst, "to define itself in a discourse of anti-terrorism as well as Sinhalese patriotism."

Bhutan feels cornered between the Indian my and the Bodo militants who are hiding in its southern jungles. Bangladesh has just come through a violent general elections ever, and the bomb blasts and mass killings that marked the electoral campaign are of the kind that will steel any middle class to 'hard action'. In Pakistan, the seething inter-ethnic and sectarian divides seem to be on the backhurner for the moment only because of the Afghanistan matter, and General Pervez Musharraf will likely find that once the Americans leave he will have massive problems of militancy on hand, which he will likely try to suppress with a heavy military hand, not

having a political card to play It would thus seem that the summit of SAARC will bring to Kathmandu prime ministers and presidents, each for his or her own reasons, more than willing to agree on the need to tackle terrorism with military determination, and more likely than not their role model will be George W. Bush. It is our belief that this would be a waste of time, and extremely inappropriate. While the irrationally violent must always be tackled with a firm nand, the governments should not misuse SAARC for this purpose. Each governmen already is more than powerful with the tools o governance and war to tackle the insurgencies within each country without having to coordinate their activities at a regional level. By the looks of it, South Asia's weak 'civil society' must step up its decibel level to convince all 'POTO-inclined' governments that the social, economic and identity-based sources of militancy will have to be addressed before 'terrorism' will disappear.

We know it will not happen at this SAARC summit, but we look forward to such a gather ing of leaders in the future when the individual polities are sufficiently mature to allow their leaderships to discuss the ground-level issues of representation, democracy, pluralism, identity, and social and economic exploitation. Only when the SAARC leaders are ready to discuss these, should they (and the organisation) be considered mature enough to discuss

By arrangement with the Himal South Asia

Indo-Pak

Between war and peace

The international diplomatic dimension will be as important as the military moves that India and Pakistan may make in the next few days.

C. RAJA MOHAN

HE RELATIONS between India and Pakistan may have reached a decisive fork in the road - one path leading to war and the other to peace. If Pakistan does not quickly respond to the demarche delivered by India last week to shut down the operations of the terrorist organisations on its soil, India would be compelled to use force against it. A Pakistani retaliation would lead to escalation and a military confrontation. However, if Pakistan does crack down on Jaish-e-Mohammad and Lashkar-e-Taiba, a fullfledged peace processs could soon begin between India and Pakistan. If Pakistan curbs cross-border terrorism, India might be willing to initiate a full-fledged negotiation with Islamabad on all outstanding issues - including on Jammu and Kashmir and nuclear confidence-building measures. As India and Pakistan teeter between war and peace, the ball is in Gen. Pervez Musharraf's court. How he plays the ball will depend on his assessment of the American diplomatic role in the present crisis

The attack on Parliament has breached the threshold of tolerance in India for the proxy war against the nation from across the border. The terrorist activity against India by groups based in Pakistan and nurtured by the Pakistani military establishment has increasingly become bold. The attack on the Red Fort in Delhi, the Assembly in Srinagar, and Parliament now reflect the determination of these groups to wage a full-scale war against the nation. In the face of these attacks, India has repeatedly warned in recent months that its patience has limits. Having told Pakistan, in effect, "stop, or else", the credibility of the Indian state is now at stake. If there is no effective action from India in the coming days, its words could be seen across the border as empty rhetoric. That would suggest India will keep absorbing the pain rather than face the consequences of hitting back against terror-

ists and their sanctuaries across the border. It could signal to the world that India is deterred by its own fears of an escalation of tensions with Pakistan. Failing to respond effectively will make the nation vulnerable to even bolder acts of violence. Act then, India must. Meanwhile Gen. Musharraf has threatened serious repercussions if India does take strong measures. The reference is clearly to the possibility of nuclearising the conflict between the two nations.

India is not unaware of the potential nuclear escalation involved in the present confrontation. But there is a growing belief in New Delhi that the time has come to call Pakistan's nuclear bluff. If it does not. India places itself in permanent vulnerability to cross-border terrorism from Pakistan. Ever since the nuclearisation of the subcontinent in the late 1980s. India has exercised considerable military restraint vis-a-vis Pakistan. It has stopped using the legitimate right of hot pursuit in responding to cross-border provoca-tions. In the Kargil war, despite Pakistan's aggression across the Line of Control, India had consciously limited the military operations to its own territory and fought the war with one hand tied behind the back.

India is now confronted with the possibility that its restraint in the face of nuclear escalation is taken as a fundamental weakness. India must deal with the possible assessment in Pakistan that its nuclear capability has foreclosed all conventional military options in responding to cross-border terrorism. If nuclear weapons have blunted India's responses. Islamabad might believe it is free to conduct a long-term proxy war against India. This view in New Delhi cannot be dismissed as a worst-case profile of Pakistan's policy. It represents a rational assessment of Pakistan's behaviour since the late 1980s. It is by no means accidental that cross-border terrorism has increased with the introduction of nuclear weapons into the subcontinent.

After the Kargil war, India realised the importance of regaining strategic space between low intensity conflict and a full-scale nuclear war. Recognising that wars will be imposed on it in spite of the restraint. India began to debate conventional military options under the concept of a "limited war". India could no longer rule out the prospect of a conventional war with Pakistan under the nuclear shadow. But the idea of a limited war remains problematic. Limited military operations could indeed be undertaken; but no planner can promise they will not escalate to a

Is a war then inevitable? Not necessarily The intensification of military tensions between India and Pakistan inevitably brings in the international community, in particular the United States. The driving force behind the international diplomatic intervention is the objective of containing a war between India and Pakistan that could escalate to the nuclear level. Since the late 1980s, when nuclear weapons became a reality in the Subcontinent, the U.S. has repeatedly involved itself to defuse the conflicts.

The international diplomatic dimension will be as important as the military moves that India and Pakistan may make in the next few days. In the winter of 1986-87, when the Pakistani Army responded aggressively to the 'Brass Tacks" exercises being conducted by the Indian forces, Washington became active diplomatically. The U.S. again came into the picture in May 1990, when Indo-Pakistan tensions began to build up over Kashmir. A high level team of officials came from Washington to the region to pull the two countries apart. During the Kargil war, the U.S. intervened to force Pakistan to withdraw unambiguously and unconditionally from across the LoC

This time the U.S. involvement comes amidst its own larger war against international terrorism. Washington has acknowledged India's right to self-defence but has urged caution in taking military action. But American diplomacy has, however, unfortunately drifted towards secondary issues calling for cooperative investigation by India and Pakistan into the attack on Parliament last week. This is like asking the fox to inquire into the raid on the chicken coop. The world is not unaware of the activities of LeT and JeM on Pakistani soil, with the full support of the Pakistani military establishment. The U.S. also knows that until it put Pakistan on notice after September 11 Gen. Musharraf was not prepared to change course on Afghanistan and cooperate with the international community in the war against nternational terrorism.

Unless there is strong and unremitting pressure from the U.S. on Pakistan, Gen. Musharraf will have no incentive to curb the activities of terrorist groups. Dismantling the infrastructure of terrorism in Pakistan is not a favour to India. It is about Pakistan taking a different path towards political moderation, economic modernisation and regional harmony. It is about maintaining a stable nuclear relationship between India and Pakistan. It is also about creating the right atmosphere for a peace process to unfold. The framework for such a peace process was nearly negotiated between Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee and Gen. Musharraf at Agra in July. If Pakistan ends support to cross-border terrorism, India will have no objections to reviving that framework

If the U.S. is serious about waging a longterm war against terrorism, reducing the nuclear danger in the subcontinent, and promoting a peace process in the subcontinent, it should focus on the primary issue of terrorism emanating from Pakistani soil with state support. If the U.S. emphasises the secondary questions of the mechanism of investigation into the attack on Parliament, Gen. Musharraf will know he can get away with sponsoring LeT and JeM. In the Middle East, Washington has publicly pressed the Palestinian Authority to crack down on the extremist groups. Hamas and Islamic Jihad Why can the U.S. not demand the same from Gen. Musharraf to shut down LeT and JeM?

This piece first appeared in yesterday's issue of The Hindu of

Jayalalitha's return

ZAGLUL AHMED CHOWDHURY

HE verdict of the Madras High Court clearing former Tamil Nadu chief minister Jayaram Jayalalitha of conviction in corruption cases by the Lower Court has come as a shot in arms for the controversial supremo of the AIDMK regional party in the Tamil Nadu. The former movie actress-turnedpolitician is popular in her state but has often been accused for maintaining luxurious lifestyle and in the process, she faced corruption charges and was convicted in two of them. This prevented her from seeking election in the state assembly polls recently.

But Jayalalitha did not hesitate to become chief minister after her party won a landslide. Her becoming chief minister drew criticisms since she was not a member of legislature and more so because her nomination papers were rejected due to her conviction in the corruption cases. But the Supreme Court of India ruled that her chief ministership was improper because of court indictment and she had to resign fuelling speculations that her political career might have received a setback. But the ruling of the high court setting aside the lower court's conviction has once again brought her

This has cleared the decks of her taking over at the helm of the government again. Jayalalitha, the popular politician and chief minister of the important state more than once, has now bounced back in the political arena when many had almost written off her top role in the Tamil Nadu state. As chief minister a few years ago, she was wellknown for her lavish life and often used to be called as "Imelda Marcos of the East", an euphemism of corruption and high-flying lifestyle of former first lady of the Philippines Imelda Marcos.

As chief minister Jayalalitha too was known for her comfortable style. The number of quests and cost of a marriage festival of her adopted son was a matter of talks in India in those days since it was simply unbelievably enormous. She is also easily identifiable for her penchant for costly sarees and other form of luxury. This was one of the factors for the defeat of her party in the elections that followed more than five years ago when rival DMK won. But the DMK and its leader chief minister Karunnanidhi over the last five years lost popularity giving way to revival of Javalalaitha's AIDMK party which made a clear sweep in the last state polls.

Jayalalitha was not a legislator but was willing to take up the position of the chief minister as the constitution permits a nonlegislator to head the government provided he or she becomes a member of legislature within six months. But her matter was different because conviction. The issue went to courts and finally the Supreme Court ruled that she

couldn't continue as the chief minister without being a member of the state assembly and as a convict in corruption cases.

Indeed, this had been a momentous judge ment which made many politicians in India sit up. While becoming chief minister, Javalalitha had argued that people had given a massive mandate in favor of the party which she leads and this should be seen as verdict of the people against the conviction that the court had handed down. This argument finally could not convince the court which found no rationale in the position that a win in the elections or popularity can upset or obviate the convic-Jayalalitha resigned immediately after the

verdict. Many eyebrows were raised when was sworn in as the chief minister despite the conviction. Her own willingness to head the state government was seen by many as an irresistible greed for power. Because of her total ascendancy in the organisation, none really questioned her plans. The decision of the then governor of the state Fatema Bibi to appoint her as the chief minister was also not without controversy. But eventually, Jayalalitha had to go and this was expected But the verdict reversing the lower courts conviction, although least expected, sent iubilation among her supporters who danced on the streets and distributed sweets.

They demanded that their leader must

stage a comeback to the chief ministership as the obstacles have been removed. And vet Jayalalitha this time did not take any hasty decision. She is waiting whether to become chief minister again. It is possible that she would return to this position by the time this article is printed but she chose to take time. The present chief minister is loyal to her and would relinquish whenever asked by the party chief, who is Jayalalitha. The matter is now within her grip unless things go against her unexpectedly one again. Janata Party leader Dr. Subramanimum Swamy said he would move to the Supreme Court against the Madras high court ruling that favored Jayalalitha. But the process would take time. At the moment, she is at the top once again, Although confined mainly in the state politics, Jayalalitha enjoys tremendous clout in national politicians.

She played a key role in the formation of the first National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government by AB Vajpayee but was instrumental to bring it down later. Her party is not a partner of the present NDA government but has dropped hints that it wants to be closer with the NDA. The topsy-turvy career of Jayalalitha has taken another interesting turn.

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Living history

eyes, it is no surprise that the drafting of the Bhutanese Constitution continues to draw comments. The royal decree announced last week appears to be opening up minds as much as it is instigating debate.

The significance of the royal initiative has been largely welcomed with appreciation even awe - by Kuensel readers. Apart from the traditional channels of communications. mostly word of mouth, the debate has been taken to the internet with observers and "Bhutan watchers" sharing their views.

We expected, and there were, some negative reaction from critics who choose to disregard - even distort - most events taking place in Bhutan. But it is inevitable that there will be skepticism because there are people who do not know and who do not identify with the real

developments in the country. As the world begins to observe, analyse, and comment on issues through various media it provides us broad, often useful, feedback. But, while we welcome constructive comments, it is also important that we understand all these views in their right perspective.

The growing number of internet readers, for example, need to separate rhetoric and sometimes wild remarks from the substantive discussions. We need to make reasoned judgments because many of us are logging on for the first time into a medium which is now being effectively used to disseminate informa-

tion and misinformation. Meanwhile, as the news filters through rural Bhutan, we can expect that the change will be painful for many people. It is not that Bhutanese people resist change. Many people do not see the need for change today because they are happy with the system. This was why His Majesty last week emphasised that the Constitution was necessary for the

future of the nation and the people. The direction is now crystal clear. The policy of decentralisation has slowly but steadily moved the average citizen into the centre of development and governance. The establishment of the DYT in 1981 and the GYT in 1991 has given people the opportunity even forced them - to be actively involved in

the decisions which affect their lives. Since 1998, when His Majesty devolved all

executive authority to an elected government. the Council of Ministers has assumed full responsibility for governance. With this latest royal initiative the Druk Gyalpo has conferred on his people an unprecedented responsibility which, for most Bhutanese, is both an exhilarating and sobering experience.

The kingdom of Bhutan has come a long way through its colourful, sometimes turbulent, history. We have been reminded this week that in the distance ahead lies a future which promises to be equally exciting.

In the open debate which followed the announcement last week, some people questioned the credibility of the drafting committee. But there is a general consensus that the Constitution of Bhutan must be drafted by Bhutanese. In fact, it is seen as a unique concept that the people are asked to draft the

However, most of us are looking forward to the contents of the Constitution, not the procedures. And here, again, we should have no doubts. Last week, as the drafting of the constitution was formally launched, His Majesty the King himself outlined some basic tenets inherent in a Constitution

His Majesty advised the drafting committee that the Bhutanese Constitution must support a dynamic political system which will uphold the principles (not the facade) of democracy and ensure that people enjoy peace and prosperity, justice, and all fundamental rights. It must move with the times. It must go beyond words and ultimately protect the sovereignty of the nation and the well being of the people.

With a Constitution established, the people are given the opportunity to shape the destiny of the country. This is the sacred responsibility that the Druk Gyalpo has placed on his peo ple, based on the premise that he has full faith and trust in their integrity and capability.

As the debate goes on the optimists welcome the future as a challenge, the cynics continue to doubt every move, and many people deal with the anguish of change. But caught up in an important moment of Bhutanese history, all of us have some profound food for thought.

Courtesy: Kuenselonline

Interview

Absolutely secure

Pakistan's president has a new role as a key U.S. ally. But concerns such as Kashmir, nuclear security and the pursuit of democracy haven't gone away

Security is tight around the old prime minister's home, perched on a hill behind the parliament building in Islamabad, where Gen. Pervaiz Musharraf keeps one of his offices. Red-capped security guards use dogs and electronic devices to check for explosives and armed guards stand at every doorway. But the general himself, dressed in a khaki uniform, seemed at ease and spoke confidently when he met Michael Vatikiotis for an exclusive interview on domestic and regional issues.

Are you worried about a domestic extremist backlash against your policy change on the Taliban in mid-september?

No. What is worrisome is more in Afghanistan. Everything is moving well up till now. But there are certain areas of tension--of concern, I would say. We have to make sure that the political environment that will emerge in Afghanistan is such which brings peace and stability and ensures the unity of Afghanistan and is representative of all the ethnic groups. And which is friendly with all its neighbours, which includes Pakistan.

The government has embarked on a programme of transforming the religious schools, or madrassas, which helped promote Islamic militancy. How will

The madrassas were being manipulated by certain extremists. So therefore we saw the strength of the madrassas--the strength is free board and lodging for hundreds and thousands of poor children, which Pakistan can't afford, certainly. That was the better part. The negative aspect was that many of these madrassas were only teaching religious education. We thought we need to utilize the positive and correct the weakness. We have created a curriculum for the madrassas to be adopted by them . . . We thought we should absorb the students in these madrassas into the mainstream of life in Pakistan. I think this will function. I am going to call the religious leaders and take them along

You are set on elections for October 2002?

What kind of arrangements have been made? Will you prepare an autonomous Election Commission? The election commission will be absolutely autonomous. Provincial elections will be held at the same time as the national elections in October next year.

The heads of both mainstream parties, Benazir Bhutto and Nawaz Sharif, are not in Pakistan for the election. Do you envisage a role for either of them?

No. I don't see any role for these party leaders . . . in the next election. Their parties will have a role. It will be a party-based election. The People's Party and the Pakistan Muslim League are two of the important parties and we wish them well

What will be the composition of the planned **National Security Council?**

We haven't decided on the composition. It has to be representative. It has to be a balanced composition which can ensure checks and balances on the function of the government without being intrusive. I don't envisage the NSC having any role in the day-to-day functioning of the government. But certainly overseeing and making sure that the national interest is held supreme at all times by the government.

On broader security issues: Are Pakistan's nuclear weapons and technology secure?

I can say they are absolutely secure. We have no doubt. We have institutionalized arrangements. We have a national command authority, which oversees everything. There are custodial safeguards. The arrangements we have made are totally secure and I'm very sure that there cannot be any proliferation; there cannot be any breach of security; our nuclear and missile assets cannot fall into the wrong hands at all. This I'm very positive and sure of. Now these scientists that we are talking of: These are a few irresponsible people. Whoever has done anything, if we are investigating, then we will move against them--we'll take legal action against them.

What about reports of two Pakistan nuclear scientists who may have fled to Burma?

This is news to me. This is the first time I hear of it. I have no such information. Nobody has told me. I didn't know about it and I have not spoken to anyone on this

[An aide informs Musharraf that the report was sourced to an Indian newspaper.]

India just wants one thing. They want to damage us. Anything they want to do in Afghanistan--the purpose is only one: How to do something which will be against Pakistan, that will damage our cause. That is their sole purpose. They have invited the future interior minister of Afghanistan, Mr. [Younis] Qanuni, there [to Delhi]. They must have planted something in his mouth to say. We are not bothered. I am very sure we want to play a positive role in Afghanistan. Afghanistan has suffered tremendously. We understand their problems. We are their neighbours. Geography, our common history, our common culture and religion cannot be undermined by any

actions of India, I'm very sure of that. On Kashmir: what do you make of Benazir Bhutto's comment in New Delhi about engaging India in negotiations modelled after the India-China

We certainly want to have a negotiated settlement of the Kashmir dispute. That is what we stand for. Kashmir is the main dispute between India and Pakistan, because of which we fought so many wars. It needs to be resolved in a peaceful manner, through a dialogue in accordance with the wishes of the people of Kashmir. This is our stand.

What kind of assurance can you give that there will be no involvement by the government in promoting violence in Kashmir?

There is no government sponsorship of any such thing. Whatever is happening in India is indigenous--it's by the people of Kashmir. How could it have gone on if it was not indigenous and did not have the backing of the people of Kashmir? Why doesn't India open the border and let international groups like Amnesty International to come and see?

Could a pipeline from Iran passing through Pakistan to India act as a confidence-building measure Absolutely. We're for it. It's India that doesn't want it

because of their own suspicion. Unfortunately there's a lot of suspicion on both sides

This piece first appeared in this week's Far Eastern Economic Review

SRI LANKA

Is there a long-term remedy to election-related violence?

PROFESSOR S T HETTIGE

E witnessed the most violent General Elections in post independence Sri Lanka a few days back. The response on the part of civic organizations, religious dignitaries and peace loving politicians has been to appeal to those who perpetrated election related violence before during and after the polls. A serious analysis of election related violence would, however, indicate such pious appeals would have a very limited impact, if at all.

The purpose of this short article is to propose a more long lasting and sustainable solution if the political leaders, in particular for newly elected leaders who wish to contribute towards such a solution. The analysis based on a critical examination of the motives of those who resort to violence in order to achieve their objectives. It is necessary to point out at the out set that such motivations are very much rooted in the kind of political culture that has flourished in the recent

Therefore, a solution to this problem has to be found in the revamping of this political culture,

As we all know, for some people. politics has become the source of every - thing they value; i.e. wealth, power, influence, privileges etc. In fact, some of the politicians can hardly aspire to the above outside politics, because they have hardly excelled themselves in any thing other than politics. Our political culture today is very much geared to providing politicians with opportunities to have access to what it men-

Politicians are excessively privileged today not only in public perception but also in reality. In fact, it may not be an exaggeration to say that they are the most privileged,

though it is not necessarily in keeping with their contribution to the public welfare. Those who get into high political office have almost total command over the institutions, that come under their purview, the public resources that come under the above institutions, etc. The can often use and abuse almost all that come under their control.

It is also well known that they can have control over the distribution of the public resources, such as jobs. permits, promotions, welfare goods, etc. It has almost become a tradition for many politicians to distribute public goods on a political basis among their supporters and acquaintances.

It is against the above background that winning and loosing elections for many politicians and their followers is a matter of retaining or loosing all that is highly valued and jealously guarded by them. It is also noteworthy that there is the possibility that all what they do when they have power will come to light when they are voted out of office.

Loosing an election for politicians who had built virtual fiefdoms around them consisting of resourceful public institutions, private armies and a large retinue of dedicated dependent followers can be a nightmare of unimaginable propor-

It became evident during election time that some of those who resorted to violence, by and large, belong to the category of politicians described above. In other words, so long as we perpetuate a political culture that breeds the above type of politicians, it will be virtually impossible to arrest the cycle of violence that unfolds before and during elections.

So if we are serious about creating a violence free environment to conduct elections in Sri Lanka in future, peacefully in a free and fair manner, nothing short of a total revamping of the debased political culture that exists today, will help.

Therefore, it is very much hoped that the newly elected leaders will take serious note of this fact and take concrete measures to stamp out election related violence in the country. One of the main reasons for the defeat of the PA at the recently conducted general election was its demonstrated failure to a create conducive political culture as promised in the run up to the 1994 general elections.

Here the new leadership has a major challenge and an opportunity. Some of the concrete steps that the new government may consider taking are:

source of excessive privileges wealth and undue influence. 2 Legislate against the abuse of

1. Ensure that politics is not the

public resources before and during elections. 3. Introduce legislation to pre-

vent the abuse of state media by the ruling party for its political cam-4. Develop and implement

policies that prevent the distribution

of public goods and resources on a political basis (jobs, permits, contract, poor relief etc.) 5. Depoliticise public institutions and state sponsored development

programmes such as Samurdhi. 6. Appoint the Cabinet taking into account the needs of the country. qualifications and capacity of persons selected and do not use it as a

mechanism to bestow privileges,

perks etc. on as many party activists

as possible. The implementation of such programmes will certainly enhance the public image of the government and its leaders, and this in itself will ensure that they may not have to resort to violent and intimidatory

tactics next time around to retain

Courtesy: Daily News of Sri Lanka