

Local self-government

Perpetuating political power or delivering service to people?

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SOME form of local government existed in this subcontinent for centuries. This is a matter of record that any social scientist can easily come out with details of.

delegates to Indonesia to study how president Suharto managed to keep his power for so long a time. He then came to introduce local governments, to be headed by some military officers.

dragging students into politics? Will there be any chance for the people to expect justice, and security at home from the administration? The answer is very likely "No".

I studied the subject more or less in line with the Japanese system, which may suit us quite well, though it will need some adaptations. The government, I mean, the lawmakers may consider such a system by amending, substituting or supplementing articles (59) and (60) of the constitution to give it permanency with the following provisions:

The Chairman of a Zila Parishad shall have power of supervision and direction over the Chairman of Upazila Parishad and Municipalities in his district and similarly an Upazila Parishad Chairman shall have such power over the Union Parishads.

Minister may take such corrective measures himself on behalf of the defaulting Chairman. (g) The President may dismiss such a chairman when a confirmatory decision is given by High Court under the provisions of the preceding paragraphs.

dismiss him in pursuance of the preceding eleven paragraphs. (l) Any Chairman dismissed under Paragraph (h) or preceding shall be disqualified for any office of State or any public office of a local public body, for two years from the date of dismissal.

member for grave misconduct or for violation of law by a resolution supported by three fourths or more of their total members and submitted to the chairman of the public entity superior to it or to the competent Minister.

The local government system itself may be of 3 or 4 tiers. But in view of modern means of communication and small size of the country, a 3-tier system may be less expensive and more effective.

observed in Bangladesh and elsewhere. I think, it may sound like too much of an expectation or an idealistic proposition to expect a political party in power to give us a non-party based local governments that will serve the people with full responsibility, and shall discharge their duties strictly according to law and constitutional provisions.

accordance with the principle of local autonomy. (2) There shall be Union Parishad, Upazila Parishad, Zila Parishad, Municipal Corporation, Municipality, and Ward in a Municipality or Municipal Corporation, which shall be the units of administration with their chief executive officers designated as chairman of the respective units unless otherwise provided for by law, elected by people by direct popular vote according to the provisions of law.

remiss in the management or execution of the state affairs within his power, he may warn such a Chairman in writing to take corrective measures in such manner and by such time as he may specify.

graph (e) or (f) shall be appealable in accordance with rules of the Supreme Court. (j) An appeal under the preceding paragraph shall have no suspensive force.

EU enlargement and Irish referendum

Less European attention to Third World needs

KAZI ANWARUL MASUD

IRISH voters' overwhelming endorsement on 20th October of the Nice Treaty paving the way for 13 candidate countries to join the European Union was ecstatically described by Prime Minister Bertie Aherm as "a historic decision about the destiny of Europe and Ireland's continuing role in it".

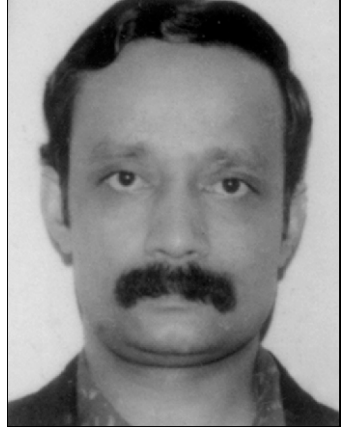
tively to apply the EU rules and policies). EU saw the benefits of enlargement mostly in political terms such as the extension of the zone of peace, stability and prosperity in Europe; increased cultural diversity, interchange of ideas and better understanding of peoples; and further strengthening of EU's role in global affairs.

Rome(1957) establishing the European Economic Community four successive enlargements had occurred: Denmark, Ireland and the UK(1973); Greece(1981); Portugal and Spain(1986); Austria, Finland and Sweden(1995). Studies abound of economic benefits of enlargement. A key academic study estimated -- even in a conservative scenario -- gain of 10 billion euro for EU-15 and 23 billion euro for the new members; increased GDP growth of the acceding members of about 2 percent annually on a cumulative basis. In contradistinction of the Irish no-voters, an enlarged EU may result in a migra-

adthood? Is it because they are Whites, Christians or there are still lurking suspicion about the Russian bear? If Liechtenstein and Monaco can survive and prosper, so can these small entities particularly in a globalized world where spatial segregation is becoming a thing of the past.

ber states"(The Sharing of Sovereignty: the European Paradox). European Commission estimates that enlargement would cost 40 billion dollars from now till 2004. Much of the cost would be channelled in overcoming major disparities in the economies of the candidate countries and the EU member states.

When I met him first at college, he was already neglecting his studies and was chased by literary and dramatic dragons that so many knights clash with without thought of victory or defeat. Akbar just wanted to be part of that bubbling youthhood that gives eternity to those who drink from that bottle.



Late Akbar Imam

University with culture, refinement, dedicated amateurism, friendship and endless cups of tea under shanty roofed tea shops. I was almost immediately into work like many others after campus days but Akbar stayed on a little longer.

His health went down and as he had gone past mid-forties, he had a large number of younger people also competing for the same jobs that he did. He was choosy himself. He had enemies in the industry because of his political beliefs and his party by default was out of power.

In the case of Bangladesh for the past twenty-five years external assistance has filled the gap between domestic savings and investment. Official Development Assistance remaining constant or reduced, expanding gap between domestic savings and investment has to be filled in by foreign direct investment, which is on the decline.

countries of Central and Eastern Europe continued to nurture stable democracies coupled with respect for democratic institutions and values invariably demanded of them by the members of the Union. Winston Churchill was prophetic in despondency in his 1946 Iron Curtain speech when he said, "From Stettin in the Baltic to Trieste in the Adriatic an iron curtain has descended on the continent".

ism. Indeed the European Union's Guidelines on the Recognition of New States in Eastern Europe and Soviet Union of 16th December 1991 went beyond the traditional requirement of statehood as provided in the 1933 Montevideo Convention on Rights and Duties of States which listed four qualifications for statehood: (a) a permanent population, (b) a defined territory, (c) government, and (d) capacity to enter into relations with other states.

Days of livelihoods He was close to his brother Shahriyar Imam and I met him a few times at the tea parlours of Shabagh and he told me that he was trying to run a clearing and forwarding agency. He was about to do well I suppose but none of the brothers were fit for the commercial world of Bangladesh. I heard that it failed.

How will they remember him? I suppose he had many crowds and memories will have been shaped by the phases of his life shared by those but looking back at his life and his torment were like testaments of his age, which was so unforgiving except to those who knew how to succeed under any sun.

Once more, good-bye.