

## Police need modernising

Not a day to spare

POLICE have in recent times found it difficult to rein in the criminals, particularly the outlawed political extremists. In an interview with the *Prothom Alo*, the IG of police said that with their older-vintage guns the police were hard-put to cope with the criminals using the latest-make weapons.

The outlaws in the southwestern region have killed several policemen in the last few months. In at least one case the policeman could not launch a counter-attack, as the damp bullets in their rifles did not fire and the assailants made good their escape. So it became evident that the attacked policemen were not only using crude and outdated weapons but they did not even know that they were carrying -- dead ammunition! What could be a more convincing proof of poor preparedness of the law enforcers to face armed miscreants?

Not that the police bosses, nor by the same token, the government were in the dark about their weaponry strength vis-a-vis that of the clandestine operators in some southwestern districts. But they either underestimated the strength of the outlaws or were strapped for cash in equipping their men. Some precious lives were lost, as policemen themselves became the victims of violent crimes.

There can hardly be any second opinion that the police are neither well-equipped nor well-trained to face the challenge posed by organised criminals. It is no longer a secret that criminals have managed to procure deadly assault rifles and other weapons a point made clear by the way they opened fire on two police officers in a city hotel a few weeks ago.

We feel that police must have the firepower to effectively counter criminal activities, but at the same time they need modern training and the right kind of motivation. Police should have a social commitment and an understanding of and respect for human rights.

Police must also have modern communication gadgets and an adequate number of vehicles at their disposal to operate successfully. Regrettably, in the remote areas police have little mobility as they face an acute shortage of transport.

The government has to take note of the latest incidents and adopt a plan to modernise the police force as the most crucial part of its anti-crime campaign.

## Yet another step towards East

A new-look Dhaka-Hanoi ties

AFTER China, Thailand and Myanmar, the government has found another ally in Vietnam in what could be described as its venture towards East. Prime Minister Khaleda Zia herself said to the Vietnamese Foreign Minister, Nguyen Duy Nien when he called on her that her government is trying to strengthen relations with all of Bangladesh's neighbours. The sign of a new found friendship between the two countries was evident from the formal opening of the Vietnamese Embassy in Dhaka during the FM's visit. It is an expression of friendship between two countries which have been champions of freedom struggles in this part of the world.

There are quite a few things the two countries can exchange and share to their mutual benefit. For example, Vietnam's success stories in agriculture, aquaculture and horticulture can be replicated in Bangladesh. On the other hand, our literacy, immunisation and, above all, poverty alleviation programmes could interest Vietnam a great deal. And all these exchanges of experiences are poised to take place by virtue of the renewed bilateral ties between the two countries with the establishment of embassies. There is no doubt that Vietnam's support to Bangladesh for its membership in the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations would only strengthen the existing bilateral relationship.

There is another aspect to Vietnam profile which could be of interest to us. The country has had something of a success in attracting FDIs. Maybe we can exchange notes with Vietnam on the subject to acquire a fuller understanding of the kind of policy incentives they had offered to attract foreign investors together with the areas identified for investment. One thing is for sure -- taking advantage of the strengths of two friendly countries would only mean prosperity, progress and better future for their peoples.

## Stabilisation force in Iraq

KAZI ANWARUL MASUD

AFTER careful thoughts Indian government has refused to accede to the US request for sending troops to Iraq. Indian cabinet committee on security after deliberating on India's longer term national interest, concern for the people of Iraq, long standing ties with the Gulf region as a whole and growing dialogue and strengthened ties with the US responded that India could have considered deployment of troops in Iraq if there was an explicit UN mandate for the purpose. India, however, expressed its readiness to contribute to the restoration of infrastructure, to meet the medical, health, educational, communication, and other civilian needs of Iraq.

Reacting to the Indian decision, a spokesman of the US embassy at Delhi said that though the US had hoped for a different decision it would not affect the transformation of US-India relations to a strategic one and India would remain an important strategic partner for the US.

Indian negative decision on troops deployment in Iraq was partly dictated by assembly elections to be held this year and parliamentary elections slated next year. Not only opposition Congress party but also some elements of the BJP and ruling National Democratic Alliance were opposed to the American request. Images of body bags arriving from Iraq had perhaps weighed heavily against the decision. Some Indian political analysts have criticized the Indian government decision on the ground that while the UN mandate would have enhanced the legitimacy of troops deployment, India they feel, should not have circumscribed the service of their broader national interest and the opportunity to project herself as a major power on the plea of lack of UN mandate. It has been reported that Deputy Prime Minister Advani, Defense Minister Fernandez, Foreign Minister Sinha and National Security Adviser Brajesh Mishra opposed troops deployment while Finance Minister Jaswant Singh favoured sending troops without UN mandate. The fact which possibly swung the decision against deployment was the distinct possibility of Indian troops trading fire with Iraqis opposing occupation thereby causing casualties on both sides and the stabilization operation slipping into counter insurgency. Such conflict, it was feared, would create ill will and hatred among a large part of the Iraqi people.

Indian reluctance as by some others to send troops to Iraq is mainly due to lack of UN mandate which raise questions about military actions by the troops, their chain of

command, and accountability of such actions. The principles followed by the UN Peace Keeping Force are well known which inter alia, provide for obtaining agreement from the country concerned beforehand, strict observance of neutrality, and prohibiting the use of force except for self-defense. China, a permanent member of the security council and a participant in peace keeping force insists on strict adherence to respect of sovereignty and non-interference

Salvador, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Georgia, Panama) or NATO aspirants (Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania etc.). In short, most of the coalition partners have only lent their names and their effective participation being extremely doubtful.

American problem in harnessing greater international support can easily be understood if one glances into the history of NATO led stabilization force in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the UN peace keeping force in Afghanistan. It may

be blessed by the UNSC which make them completely different from operation Iraqi freedom. In the case of Afghanistan International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), the peace mission in Afghanistan, was sanctioned by the UNSC resolution no. 1386/2001.

The ISAF which works closely with the UN and the Afghan government of Hamid Karzai has three principal tasks: - (a) aid the interim government in developing national security structures; (b) assist the country's

Donald Rumsfeld told a group of defense industry leaders that it would be a good idea if the US "provided some leadership in training of other countries' citizens who would like to participate in peacekeeping so that we have a ready cadre of people who are trained and equipped and organized and have communications that they can work with each other". Rumsfeld had not indicated how many US troops would be involved or the size of the international force or who would pay for

Mueller of Ohio State University who studied public opinion in the Gulf war and in the Korean and Vietnam wars thought that the US public opinion would sooner or later demand to know about the location of WMD which Saddam Hussein was supposedly possessed and which was the reason d'etre of the Iraq war. He also thought that the public would be less tolerant of daily post-war casualties.

Iraq war was basically a war on terrorism. Interestingly in a pre-nine-eleven study Ivan Eland of Cato Institute had empirically established a correlation between US involvement in international situations and an increase of terrorist attacks on US interests. He cites Richard Betts, an influential authority on American foreign policy at the Council of Foreign Relations to the effect that American activism to guarantee international stability was paradoxically the prime source of American vulnerability. President Clinton had at one time saw a linkage (which he later rejected) between terrorist activities and the wealth, military power and world wide presence of the US coupled with western values and civilization which inevitably clashed with Islamic civilization and values. When it was pointed out that other western nations with comparable values and wealth were not targets of terrorists Ivan Eland concluded that all terrorist attacks on US interests could be explained as retaliation of US interventions abroad. He advised that in the benign post-cold war political situation US could consider to adopt a new policy that would use military might only as a last resort in the defense of truly vital national interests.

Since the war on Iraq was basically a pre-emptive action to thwart what was then believed to be Saddam Hussein's capability of launching WMD on western targets in a very short time without giving the west sufficient reaction time to retaliate, the present search by the US for coalition partners for occupation of Iraq is unlikely to yield fruitful result.

Concurrent with this strand of thought of trying to find coalition partners and possible establishing of a cadre of peace keepers the US has started discussions with other governments about the possibility of a new UN mandate on Iraq. Secretary of State Colin Powell discussed this issue with Kofi Annan when the UNSC called on President Bush a few days back. A new UN mandate, probably giving the UN a more central role in running Iraq could persuade some of Washington's allies to contribute troops. Pressed by the loss of 147 soldiers in Iraq until now Bush administration may change its "going it alone" policy. Andrew Bennett of Georgetown University and Leonard Steinberg of American University are of the opinion that the "constant drip" of casualties is likely to have an impact on American public opinion.

Professor John

Since the war on Iraq was basically a pre-emptive action to thwart what was then believed to be Saddam Hussein's capability of launching WMD on western targets in a very short time without giving the west sufficient reaction time to retaliate, the present search by the US for coalition partners for occupation of Iraq is unlikely to yield fruitful result.

in internal affairs and opposes imposition of views of a state or a small group of states on the UNSC under the guise of the UN peace keeping operations. UN peace keeping operations evolved essentially to stop hostilities and to prevent conflicts from flaring into broader conflagration. While UN peace keeping operations are not based on any particular theory or doctrine and initially questions were raised about the legality of the use by UN of military personnel in a manner not specifically provided for in the UN charter; over time something close to consensus emerged that these operations can be considered as having a basis, apart from the principle of consent, in the broad powers conferred on the UN and especially on the UNSC by the UN charter/UN Peace Keeping -- Theory and Practice -- Mohammad Arif.

UN peace keeping operations have some essential features: (a) consent of the parties in the conflict in question; (b) requirement of impartiality not only on the ground of principle but also to ensure effective operations; (c) mandate given to UNSC must be clear and unambiguous; (d) military personnel is given by members on voluntary basis and they serve under the command of the UN Secretary General in all operational matters.

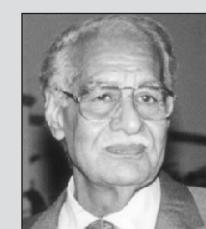
The US claim of operation Iraqi freedom to which forty eight countries have publicly committed their support to enforce seventeen UNSC resolutions is debatable. If one were to go through the list of the forty eight countries one would find only a few significant contributors namely Australia, Denmark, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Turkey, UK and the US. The rest are small island states (Marshall Island, Micronesia, Palau) or troubled states militarily or financially dependent on the US (Albania, Azerbaijan, Colombia, Dominican Republic, El

reconstruction; and (c) assist in developing and training future Afghan security forces. ISAF has complete and unimpeded freedom of movement throughout the territory and air space of Afghanistan. It may be recalled that in December 2001 in an unprecedented move all fifteen EU countries agreed to take part in the UN plan for an Afghanistan peace keeping force.

Iraq as has already been stated is an entirely different case. Anglo-US intervention the teeth of opposition of most of the members of the UNSC has been almost universally condemned. US search for peace keeping force is far from altruistic. With more than half the army's deployable troops now engaged in peace keeping and stabilization operations in Bosnia, Kosovo, Afghanistan and Iraq. Pentagon believes its purely military capabilities are stretched to their limits. Bush administration is now considering the idea of creating a standing force made up of troops from a range of countries but led and trained by the US. Last month Defense Secretary



## Beating around Bush



KULDIP NAYAR  
writes from New Delhi

days earlier: India would miss an opportunity if it did not send troops to Iraq. What opportunity?

Such observations smack of arrogance which does not go down well in a country that waged a struggle for independence for 50 years to free itself from British bondage. America's attitude on the question of sending troops, notwithstanding what it did to Iraq, has been haughty from the beginning.

When Deputy Prime Minister L K

Shin in the Indian constitution to hold a referendum the decision not to send troops would have got an overwhelming support.

There are many reasons for it. People in India are not like the manner in which America and Great Britain attacked Iraq without having the UN sanction. India wanted a proof of their contention that Saddam Hussein possessed weapons of mass destruction. It was on the basis of this that the common man in Iraq was subjected to carpet-

few hours before the resolution for the admission of India was to be passed, Pakistan's Information Minister checked with General Pervez Musharraf, who directed him to make Pakistan's reservation known to the OIC.

Over 30 million Indians are gain-

fully employed in the Gulf and Arab countries. New Delhi's "yes" would

have hurt them. When I met some Indian Muslims recently in Saudi Arabia, the Gulf and Qatar, I found

how proud they felt over India's

"grey areas" in Washington, he was

not referring to the "ambiguities" in

the original UN resolution alone but

also to his perception that Wash-

ington had once again tilted towards

Islamabad after General Musharraf's

visit to Camp David. Bush was

reportedly falling head over heels in

wooing Musharraf. New Delhi might

have felt that it could not change

America's attitude even if it sent

troops to Iraq. Then why do some-

thing which was palpably wrong on

all counts?

In fact, a couple of ministers in the

Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) fought a last-ditch battle not to

take a categorical stand on America's

request for troops. The ministers

wanted to postpone the decision on

the ground of seeking further clarifi-

cation. But Prime Minister Atal

Behari Vajpeyi was not in favour of

deferring the decision, particularly

when public opinion was nearly

unanimous that India should not

send troops to Iraq. That all political

parties, including the BJP, were

strongly against the deployment of

troops negated even the semblance

of support for America.

It is believed that the words "were

to be an explicit UN mandate for the purpose, the Government of India could

consider the deployment of troops in Iraq which might feel annoyed after receiving

India's "no."

The reported view at the CCS was

that America should be assured that India was not against sending

troops but against bypassing the UN, a legitimate body to decide on such issues.

Russia, France and Germany have

been telling India behind the scenes to do its bit to retrieve the pre-eminence of the UN. Whatever America's initial

reaction is, it is sure to take some steps to hurt India. New Delhi should be prepared for it.

India's decision not to send troops to Iraq has put the Pakistan government on a sticky wicket. In the course of a recent tour of the United States, Musharraf had in "principle" agreed to send two brigades of Pakistani soldiers to Baghdad. But following sharp criticism of this announcement, the Pakistan President modified his statement when he returned home. He said that a decision on whether or not to send troops would be taken after a "national consensus" was reached.

Now the only option left for General Musharraf seems to be to tell Washington to provide Islamabad a respectable umbrella under which it could send troops. Before the General made his commitment to the US on sending two brigades, he had said that since the UN was not willing to take the responsibility, options such as involving the OIC and the Gulf Cooperation Council should be explored. But all this is between him and the people of Pakistan. As for India, his new linea

consensus is the country's gain.

Kuldip Nayar is an eminent Indian columnist.

## BETWEEN THE LINES

It is believed that the words "were there to be an explicit UN mandate for the purpose, the Government of India could consider the deployment of troops in Iraq" were added to mollify America which might feel annoyed after receiving India's "no." The reported view at the CCS was that America should be assured that India was not against sending troops but against bypassing the UN, a legitimate body to decide on such issues. Russia, France and Germany have been telling India behind the scenes to do its bit to retrieve the pre-eminence of the UN. Whatever America's initial

## TO THE EDITOR TO THE EDITOR TO THE

## EDITOR TO THE EDITOR TO THE EDITOR

Letters will only be considered if they carry the writer's full name, address and telephone number (if any). The identity of the writers will be protected. Letters must be limited to 300 words. All letters will be subject to editing.

## "IBA (DU) should change"

I am amused by the letter of Ms Samiha.

As a student of the institute (IBA) I have few clarifications to make. Firstly, although the admission test is very difficult and sometimes may not reflect the true ability of students; I do not think it is "pathetic" (as quoted by her) at all. Our admission test is held before the BUET and other Dhaka University exams because our teachers are more concerned with timely passing out and graduation of the students amidst the inevitable session jams. Those who leave IBA for abroad or other institutes are small in

number, maximum ten. Although they do invalidate the seats that could have been filled by more serious students who really want to study BBA, teachers in the viva board keep that fact in mind and choose students accordingly. Passing the "iron test" myself, I know how rigorously they keep asking and stressing on the fact to why IBA should allow the candidate in. And by asking for a "waiting list" Ms Samiha brings along the concept of making rooms for less competitive and "weaker" students who may drop out of the program (or be "kicked out" as it keeps happening); or may remain in the probationary area during their four years. That enhances the risk of