

## 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 So it became evident that the attacked policemen were not only using crude and outdated weapons but they did not even know that they were carrying -- dead ammunition!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 Dy 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 her 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

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

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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

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.

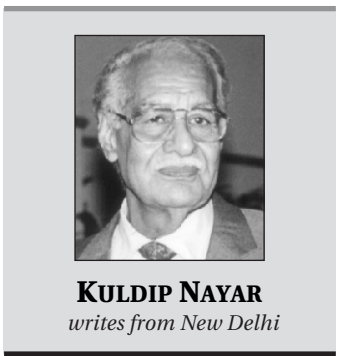
With the completion of IFOR's mandate a Stabilization Force (SFOR) was set up under the UNSC resolution 1088(1996) as a legal successor to IFOR. Like its predecessor SFOR operates under chapter VII of the UN charter. The Stabilization Force has a unified command and is NATO-led under the overall military authority of the NATO Supreme Commander. Non-NATO forces (Austria, Ireland, Morocco, Russia, Sweden etc) have been incorporated into the operation on the same basis as the NATO forces taking orders from the SFOR commander. Non-NATO countries are represented and consulted through the so-called NAC+N (North Atlantic Council meeting with non NATO contributors). The point to be noted here is that both IFOR and SFOR were

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 in 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



DO not know why America does not dismount from the high horse it is riding to ask for assistance like any other country does when it needs it. On the one hand, Washington preaches democratic principles which presuppose equality. On the other, it expects nations to fall into line with America and accept the policies it lays down as the supreme power in the world.

India's decision not to send troops to Iraq has evoked from the American government a reaction which is typical of that sort of thinking. The reaction is patronising in tone and presumptuous in tenor. A US official says that Washington's bilateral relations with New Delhi will not be affected by India's decision. At the same time, he says that America had hoped that India would take "a different decision."

If America believes that India, as a sovereign democratic country, has every right to decide its course of action, then why this observation or the one that India would remain "a strategic partner" of the United States? The assurance evokes doubts. It sounds like going on record for the sake of doing so. US ambassador Robert Blackwell in Delhi conveyed something else a few

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 naughty from the beginning.

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Advani met President Bush at Washington some time back it was clear that America expected India to send its troops. The very first thing that Bush reportedly said was to ask when India was sending troops to Iraq. It was not a request but a veiled fiat.

Advani naturally said that a consensus on the issue would have to be built in the country. Bush brushed aside the plea as if that was only a matter of details which he said a Pentagon team would sort out.

The problem any independent country faces is not whether America

likes its particular decision or not but whether what it does has the backing of its people. Had there been a provi-

sion 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 did 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-

bombing and what not. It now turns out that the intelligence was doctored to suit the wishes of Bush and Tony Blair. Not only that. According to newspaper reports, a high official sold some fake documents to the Italian government about what Saddam was doing. The Italian government shared the information contained in the documents with the US. Can anything be more preposterous than this? New Delhi is also conscious about the sensitivity of the Muslim world. Although the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) has again rejected India's entry, it has not lessened New Delhi's interest in the Middle East in any way. Barely a

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 gainfully 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

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

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policy to stay distant from America. It was not merely the question of saving their jobs but of confidence that New Delhi, although pressured, would never distance itself from India's traditional and independent policy.

By not sending troops to Iraq, India has sent a clear message: The country's foreign policy is not up for sale because America has money to give (contracts were offered for Iraq's reconstruction) or muscle power to flaunt.

The feedback of Foreign Secretary Kanwal Sibal to the government was not positive. When he spoke of the

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 peace keepings 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 raison 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-nineteen 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 interest.

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. Anglo-US combine could consider getting under a UN umbrella which will not only confer legitimacy to their "stabilization force" and help it to be transformed from "occupation force", but may also encourage many other nations to participate both militarily and otherwise in the reconstruction of Iraq. Alternately the path of obduracy if elected to be followed would not only be rejected by the large part of international community but would also be aggressively investigated by the perceptive public at home.

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 Steinhorn 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

Kazi Anwarul Masud is a former Secretary and ambassador

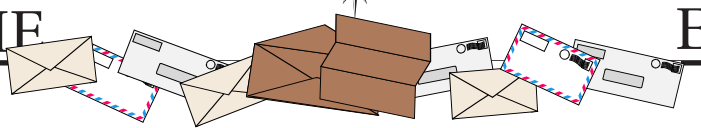
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India's decision not to send troops to Iraq has put the Pakistan government on a sticky wicket. In the course of a recent tour of the United States, Musharraf had in "principle" agreed to send two brigades of Pakistani soldiers to Baghdad. But following 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 line a national consensus is the country's gain.

Kuldip Nayar is an eminent Indian columnist.

# 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 or 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 as 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

lowering the standard of BBA graduates altogether; and with a lower CGPA, students of other institutions have brighter chances of making it to BAT, Lever, etc.

I myself feel that perhaps the question structure of the admission test does not truly reflect a prospective executive's capability, but I definitely do not believe that holding the exams earlier than others is 'pathetic'.

**Musarrat Siddiqi (Arani)**  
IBA, DU

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I am a student of 2002-2003 session. The admission test of IBA in our time was held before that of BUET, Medical and DU. So a lot of us attended the test. I also sat for

the admission test but may be my ability and luck did not favour me that day. I am now studying at BUET in B. Sc. Engineering in Mechanical.

But I observed that about 10-12 of my friends who got the chance in IBA have abandoned it and studying in Electrical Engineering, Computer Science, Mechanical Engineering etc in BUET. Some are going abroad. Had there been a waiting list in IBA, students like us might have a chance to study in such a prestigious institution like IBA. But there is no waiting list in IBA. I think it is cruel.

I had an ambition to study business. Had there been a waiting list, some 10-20 students like me might

get the chance to fulfil their dreams. For me, I am left with the only path like other BUET students who study in BUET, go abroad and never come back again because the job market for engineers in Bangladesh is not very good due to lack of growing industry.

It is sad for me indeed.  
**Muhammad Reaz Mohiuddin**  
B.Sc. Engg. Mechanical  
BUET

### Sending troops to Iraq

India's refusal to be pressured by the Americans, to send troops to support their illegal occupation in Iraq deserves the highest praise. I only hope our own government

can maintain an equally principled stance on this issue.

Only the UN has the right to maintain forces in Iraq. No neutral sovereign state, such as Bangladesh, should get involved until the mounting cost and body count forces the occupiers to turn the country over to the UN and the Iraqi people.

**Zeeshan Hasan**  
Dhanmondi, Dhaka

### SQ Chowdhury pleads

I had decided not to make any further comment on this matter relating to SQ Chowdhury and the Editor of the Daily Star. I am neither a politician nor do I have the

desire to be a member of our National Assembly or a lawmaker for the government ever. As a matter of fact I have developed a real distaste and hatred for most of the people in both the categories. What has now really surprised me is the question raised by SQC's lawyer about the wisdom of Dr. Kamal Hossain as an expert on the Constitution of Bangladesh. Dr. Kamal Hossain is perhaps one of the most brilliant non-partisan legal mind and a subject matter professional this country has so far produced. His creditable track record extends to many developed countries around the world.

As for the case in question, I am afraid come what may the Editor of

the Daily Star has a high public image. It is my firm conviction that should the government not unduly interfere, SQC is bound to learn a lesson by this process. One last thing I strongly believe that induction of SQC in the seat of the Secretary General of OIC would be a shame for majority of the Bangladeshis who stand as witness to the role played by people like SQC and his likes during our war of Liberation. I for one happen to be one directly affected.  
**Shamsher Chowdhury**  
Dhaka