

A big vote for cold showers



FAREED ZAKARIA
writes from Washington

India's recent election. The Bharatiya Janata Party lost, so the conventional wisdom goes, because it did not pay attention to the losers of economic reform. Its policies left behind hundreds of millions of poor Indians living in villages, and a democratic government must address their concerns. It's a powerful argument -- except that it's not true.

First, there's the small matter that India's economic reforms have not left behind the rural poor. Over the last 15 years, poverty has declined

won by a large, diverse coalition of parties -- many of them regional parties with regional agendas -- that espoused many different ideologies. In some places reformers lost, in others they won. It is impossible to read into this messy election a single national message. But like soothsayers reading chicken entrails, political elites have used the vote to trumpet their own message of choice. And some influential leaders in the Congress party and its hard-left allies still believe in the old gospel of state

non of a party elite's reading what it wants to from election results has happened across the aisle as well, with the BJP drawing from its defeat the message that voters wanted more Hindu nationalism.)

If there is one persistent message in India's many elections over the last decade, it is "Throw the bums out." Indians get easily disillusioned by incumbents. Most Indians don't like their government and keep voting in a new bunch of politicians in the hope that they will fix it. Day-to-day, Indians confront a government at all levels that is intrusive, bossy, ineffective, and corrupt. Perhaps this is why Indians have among the lowest rates of tax payments in the world.

Manmohan Singh understands all this. In his first speech to the country he spoke of the need to reform the state itself. He also understands that the government can and should spend more in areas like education, health care, and infrastructure. But to do so, he has argued in the past, it has to be less involved in running factories and airlines. Above all, he knows that the only way to cure poverty is to grow the economy.

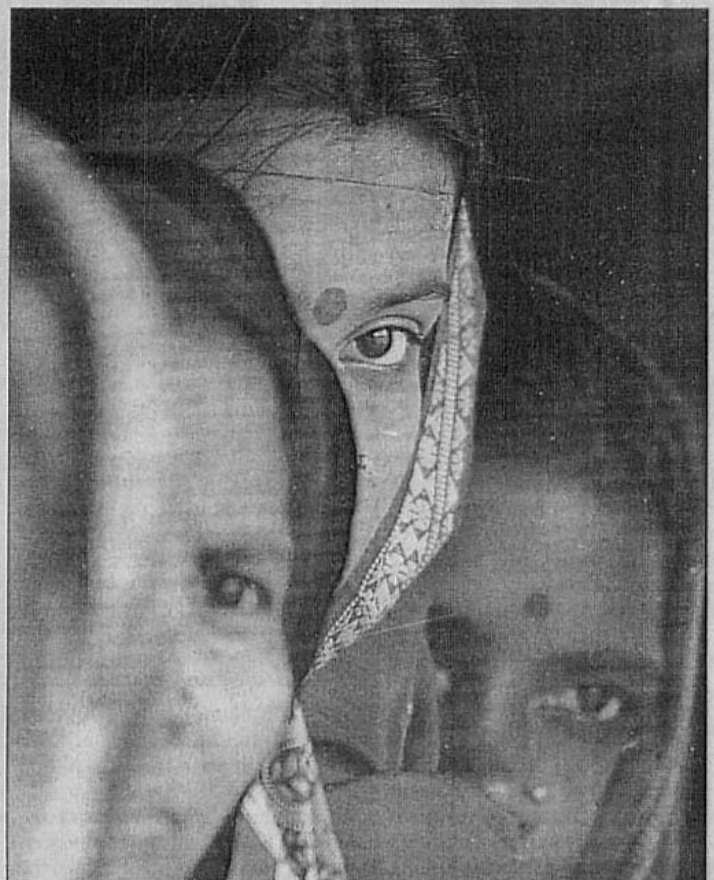
There is an emerging democratic model of economic reform. It encourages government spending as investment (in human capital and infrastructure) but rejects subsidies (of goods or jobs). In Brazil and South Africa, populist governments have been able to pursue sensible economic policies. In Brazil, President Lula freed up some money by pruning defense spending, which has allowed him to direct some resources toward the poor. In South Africa, programs like rural electrification have been both popular and spurred economic growth. "There are ways to spend money intelligently on the poor that have very good results for the economy," says Stanley Fischer of Citigroup and formerly of the IMF.

India has a head start with a private sector that is bursting with energy and inventiveness. Its new government could embrace this model and soon show the world that you don't have to be a dictatorship to move from poverty to plenty. But to do so it must push forward disciplined, reformist policies. Will it? For now, I'm going to bet on that young man who got up at 4 a.m. to take a cold shower.

Fareed Zakaria is the Editor of Newsweek International.

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The Bharatiya Janata Party lost, so the conventional wisdom goes, because it did not pay attention to the losers of economic reform. Its policies left behind hundreds of millions of poor Indians living in villages, and a democratic government must address their concerns. It's a powerful argument -- except that it's not true.



Voted with a hope for economic reform?

from 39.1 percent to 24.1 percent in cities and from 39.4 percent to 26.4 percent in rural areas. More broadly, the Indian election was narrowly

socialism -- that brought India forty years of stagnation -- and want to see it resurrected. (The phenom-

Rickshaws are an early 21st century solution

Let's think before we destroy them

FARID BAKHT

ULTIMATELY, like you, I do not want to see rickshaws on the streets of Dhaka in 2015. Rickshaw pullers will also tell you that they do not want to make a living in such an inhuman way. But they have a right to live, don't they? They have a simple demand: "If you want to get rid of us, fine. But give us an alternative way of working first."

This isn't about mobility. It's a life and death struggle for jobs and income. Banning rickshaws today and getting rid of them from Dhaka will make the traffic situation worse! No, this is not a typing error. Please read on with an open mind. Until now, you have been fed the propaganda against rickshaws. Reading this newspaper means you probably own a car or certainly ride in one. So you know the solution. It's been written in countless articles and letters. Get rid of rickshaws and the streets will be smooth? Think how many pictures (perhaps even in this newspaper) you have seen of rickshaws causing huge traffic jams. You have seen it with your own eyes. But what have you really seen?

Did you see how much space a rickshaw takes while carrying two passengers (plus the driver)? We drive private cars. If you take the maneuvering space into account, each car takes the space of 4 rickshaws and mostly carries just one passenger.

The government is making a massive mistake by implementing the flawed Dhaka Urban Transport Project (DUTP). A mistake that will be devastating for millions of people.

Rickshaw-pullers (citizens and voters too) are being removed from so-called VIP roads. This will extend to other roads. So passengers will not want to use rickshaws for many journeys. 200,000 rickshaws cannot just survive in narrow streets. This is therefore death by a thousand cuts.

Simultaneously, we are encouraging private car use. By lowering import duties, the middle class can buy cars. Cheap credit is now available. One cannot blame the new middle class people from wanting to own a car.

Our opinion formers are under a huge illusion. They think that motorisation equals modernisation. The more motor vehicles we have clogging our streets, the more modern we are! This is not modern thinking.

The new innovative strategies worldwide are to curb car use, strengthen public transport, and encourage people to use cycles.

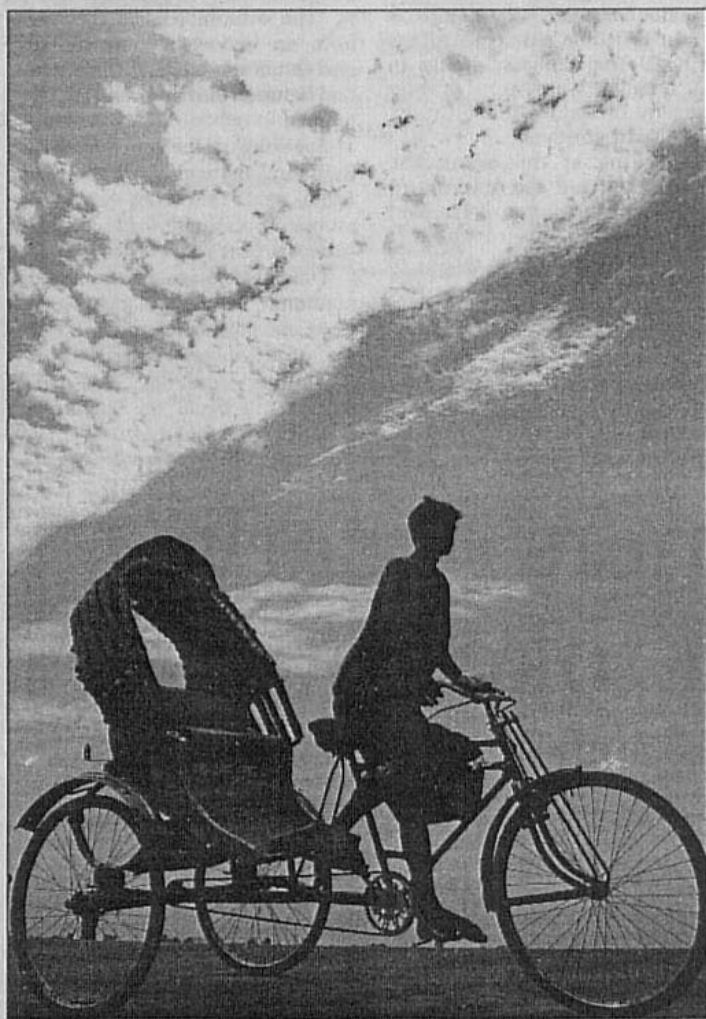
We want to leap into the motor age when others, far ahead of us, are thinking another way. In the 21st century, they see a place for the cycle. I am not suggesting we all start pedaling! Socially, the middle class would die rather than be seen on a bike. But we already have cycles -- tricycle rickshaws in place! So why not use them?

If you have driven in the cantonment, you may have noticed there is a rickshaw lane on the left. Have you seen how disciplined they are? In fact, all vehicles operate in a disciplined manner (out of fear?). So if traffic can flow properly in the cantonment with rickshaws and cars on the same road, why cannot it be done on the VIP roads? Is it more to do with the failure of the traffic police or our own prejudices?

What's the size of the rickshaw economy in Dhaka?

Every day rickshaws make seven million passenger trips, covering eleven million miles. That is double what the London underground

Provide an alternative in the villages or small rural towns, and you won't have so many rickshaws. That should be the goal for 2015. Until then, improve their performance and let them continue to provide a vital service for the majority of Dhaka's population. How do the authorities think they can replace this industry overnight? Many rickshaw-pullers are married to garments workers. With the impending closure of garment factories from this winter, this will be a double whammy to two of the largest sectors in Dhaka.



does. 200,000 rickshaws ply the streets of Dhaka, in two shifts. This means 400,000 pullers plus 30,000 rickshaw owners and 50,000 ancillary workers, mechanics, etc. Then there are thousands of restaurant workers dependent on rickshaw pullers and other service providers in slums, etc. A rickshaw generates Tk 200 per day which translates to Tk 6,000 per month, i.e. \$100 a month. Thus, 200,000 rickshaws produce an income of \$20 million a month or \$240 million a year. Add Tk 50 rent per rickshaw per day: that means \$60 million a year. And the ancillary mechanic sector accounts for \$30 million a year.

So the directly-related rickshaw economy in Dhaka is a \$330 million turnover or almost Tk 2,000 crore industry.

If one believes the higher estimate of 400,000 rickshaws in the city, then the size of this economy could reach \$500 million a year. More than the World Bank gives per year.

The real causes of traffic jams are badly trained traffic police, not enough roads, too many unplanned shopping centres and businesses with no parking space, and hardly any footpaths.

Let's not make rickshaws extinct. Let's come up with an integrated strategy with a role for cars, cabs, buses, trains, CNG rickshaws, pedal rickshaws and pedestrians.

Short term actions

Separate cycle lanes on main roads
We have a working model in the Cantonment. All VIP roads must be renamed as main roads, each with a rickshaw lane.

Better traffic management

This requires technology (traffic signals) and also better planning, e.g. one way streets (in some cases).

Training for traffic police

There cannot be many complaints about this one. This would be one of the best returns of investment around. In addition, we need to recruit more police.

Private car restraint -- alternative days or timing (similar to restrictions on trucks)

It trucks can be restricted until the evening, why cannot we do so for private cars? Trucks and lorries play a vital economic role. Private cars are used mostly for convenience. Schools and parents should arrange minibuses to pick up and drop off kids to reduce the jams near schools. If businessmen and office managers can go to work via trains and buses in the West and Singapore, why cannot our captains of industry do the same? We need strict restrictions on car movement by timing and area.

Footpaths and over-bridges for pedestrians

In developed cities, most people actually walk to their destination. A lot of the glitterati in Dhanmondi do

not complain when they have to get on a bus or metro in KL or Singapore. So let's make it possible for them and the vast majority of urban citizens to walk here. Freeing the footpaths will reduce the push on to the roads and improve safety. Some areas such as Banani university area can be pedestrianised (only allowing cycles or rickshaws). This will reduce congestion and improve movement. We should build more over-bridges and zebra crossings.

Build four to five fly-overs at junctions

The rail tracks are actually redundant in that they were originally built for a far smaller city. But shifting Kurmitola Rail Station and the attendant track would be counter-productive. So it is better to reduce waiting times at the rail crossings by building fly-overs at those junctions.

Medium term actions

Amass transit bus system

We can build our mass-transit system on regular CNG buses to reduce pollution and get people to where they want to go. Old buses have to be removed and replaced by new CNG-converted ones. The authorities must create modern bus stands with room for waiting in queues and shade from the rain.

By-pass roads for Dhaka

Many vehicles are forced to enter Dhaka to go from North to South or East. With the relocation of many industries outside the capital, it is imperative to build bypass roads/highways to reduce the pressure on Dhaka.

Long term actions

Amass transit light rail system

This could take the form of a mono-rail for the centre, built on the central divider stretch of main roads. This will be expensive and should be limited to Motijheel and Central Dhaka initially. As the city stretches outwards, this should be complemented by a suburban railway for workers who cannot afford the rents of Dhaka. The track is already in place. It needs better stations and more rail stock.

Land use planning

Transportation is all about how one uses our spaces. We have to reduce the distance needed for people to travel. If for example factories are located in Gazipur and low cost housing is created in that locality, it negates the need to travel to Dhaka.

The wider issues

The authorities seem to think rickshaw-pullers will simply pack up and go home. Where's home? The villages? And why do they think they came to Dhaka in the first place? To look for jobs because there is nothing left back home. There has been no investment in agriculture -- the mainstay of the economy. So they have to search for work in the big city. We do not provide a proper education system, so many cannot read or write. So what's the easiest thing to do? Pull a rickshaw.

Provide an alternative in the villages or small rural towns, and you won't have so many rickshaws. That should be the goal for 2015. Until then, improve their performance and let them continue to provide a vital service for the majority of Dhaka's population. How do the authorities think they can replace this industry overnight? Many rickshaw-pullers are married to garments workers. With the impending closure of garment factories from this winter, this will be a double whammy to two of the largest sectors in Dhaka.

Farid Bakht is an activist and entrepreneur.

সরকারী আবিযুল হক কলেজ, বগুড়া

পিজিডি ইন আইটি কোর্স

টেডার বিজ্ঞপ্তি

সরকারী আবিযুল হক কলেজ, বগুড়া কর্তৃক পরিচালিত PGD in IT Course এর জন্য দেশীয় মুদ্রায় (ক) বই, (খ) কম্পিউটার, কম্পিউটারের যন্ত্রাংশ, নেটওয়ার্কিং যন্ত্রপাতি ও অন্যান্য প্রয়োজনীয় যন্ত্র ও যন্ত্রসামগ্রী ক্রেতার জন্য প্রকৃত ব্যবসায়ীদের কাছ থেকে সীলমোহরযুক্ত আবেদন দরপত্র আহ্বান করা হচ্ছে। দরপত্রের বিস্তারিত বিবরণ ও শর্তাবলী সম্বন্ধিত সিডিউল আগামী ০৭-০৭-২০০৪ ইং হতে ২২-০৭-০৪ ইং তারিখ পর্যন্ত পিজিডি ইন আইটি কোর্স অফিস ঢাকাকালীন সময়ে আহ্বায়ক, পিজিডি ইন আইটি কোর্স, সোনালী ব্যাংক, সরকারী আবিযুল হক কলেজ শাখা, বগুড়া-এর অনুসূলে (ক) ও (খ) এর জন্য পৃথক পৃথক ভাবে ৪০০.০০ (চারশত) টাকা মূল্যের (অক্রেতযোগ্য) ব্যাংক ড্রাকট/পে-অর্ডারসহ নিম্নে উপস্থিত হতে অন্তিম ১৫/- টাকা মূল্যের পোস্টাল স্ট্যাম্পসহ নিম্ন টিকানাযুক্ত ঠাণ্ডে ডাকের মাধ্যমে নির্ধারিত তারিখের মধ্যে সিডিউল সংগ্রহ করা যাবে।

সীলমোহরযুক্ত আবেদন দরপত্র আগামী ২২-০৭-০৪ ইং তারিখ ১২টার মধ্যে আহ্বায়ক, পিজিডি ইন আইটি কোর্স, সরকারী আবিযুল হক কলেজ, বগুড়া অফিসের কার্যালয়ে রক্তিম নির্দিষ্ট প্যাকে টেন্ডার জমা দিতে হবে। ডাকযোগে দরপত্র উক্ত স্থানেই গ্রহণ করা হবে, তবে সীলমোহরযুক্ত ঠাণ্ডে দরপত্র অবশ্যই নির্দিষ্ট তারিখ ও সময়ের মধ্যে পৌঁছাতে হবে। দরপত্রের সাথে উক্ত মূল্যের ৩.০% আর্নেস্টমনি ব্যাংক ড্রাকট/পে-অর্ডার আকারে জমা দিতে হবে।

এখানে উল্লেখ্য যে উপরোক্ত নিয়মে আহ্বায়ক, পিজিডি ইন আইটি কোর্স, রাজশাহী বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের অফিস রক্তিম হতে সিডিউল ক্রয় করা ও জমা দেয়া যাবে।

টেডার বাস এদিনই ১২টার পরে অফিস ঢাকাকালীন সময়ে (সম্ভব হলে) উপস্থিত টেন্ডারদাতাদের (যদি কেউ উপস্থিত থাকে) সমুদ্রে খোলা হবে। সর্বনিম্ন দরপত্র গ্রহণে কর্তৃপক্ষ সাধ্য নয়। দরপত্র সম্পর্কে কর্তৃপক্ষের সিদ্ধান্ত চূড়ান্ত বলে বিবেচিত হবে।

প্রক্রেতার ড. মোঃ মজিব উদ্দিন আহ্বায়ক, পিজিডি ইন আইটি কোর্স ও অধ্যাপক

সরকারী আবিযুল হক কলেজ, বগুড়া



Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh

Headquarters, Kurmitola, Dhaka

Ref. No. CAAB/400/2(80)/A(Store)/2003-2004(Part-5)/512 Dated: 19-06-2004

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- Interested tenderers can purchase tender document at Tk 750/- (seven hundred fifty) only in cash (non-refundable) on application in their respective firm's name printed pad from this office & Account Section of the office of this Authority's Director (Finance), CAAB, Head Office, Kurmitola, Dhaka. No tender document will be sold on the prescribed date of opening tender.
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Mohammad Kalam Uddin
Assistant Director
(Administration)
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“রেড ক্রিসেন্ট ডোনার্স ফোরাম” এ যোগদান করে আর্থ মানবতার সেবায় এগিয়ে আসুন

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