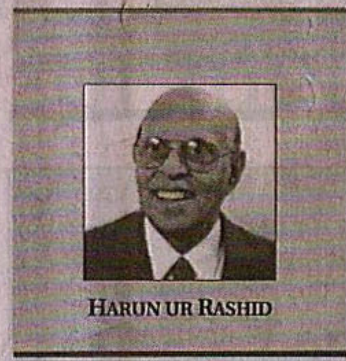


President Musharraf's bold initiative



HARUN UR RASHID

President Pervez Musharraf of Pakistan has often embarked on an uncharted and unconventional way in expressing his views. His comments on the state of Islamic nations have earlier aroused a lot of interest among Muslims and non-Muslims. He has been always found to be forthright and frank in his views, similar to those of former Malaysian Prime Minister Dr. Mahathir Mohammad. Recently in the UN General Assembly he spoke an "iron curtain" falling between the Islamic world and the West and the reasons thereof.

The Kashmir dispute has not only poisoned the relations between the two but also has a deep impact on security situation in South Asia as a whole. South Asia has been a troubled region since 1947. In that tense and insecure environment, economic progress has been stalled. The statistics show that although South Asia covers only 3.3 per cent of the surface area of the world, 50 per cent of the world's poor live in the region. Many analysts blame primarily the Kashmir dispute as the principal stumbling bloc in achieving economic progress in the same way as the South East Asian nations have succeeded.

President Musharraf's new ideas

It may be recalled that the internationalisation of the Kashmir dispute was not made by Pakistan in 1947. It was Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the first Prime Minister of India, who referred to dispute to the UN, despite the opposition of his mentor, Gandhi and Home Minister Balram Prasad Sahasrabudhe. Later, Nehru reportedly regretted that he had allowed the then Governor General Lord Mountbatten to persuade him to make the reference to the UN.

In recent days, the President of Pakistan came up with new ideas to break the impasse between his country and India on the Kashmir dispute. It is a bold and brave step for Pakistan. President Musharraf reportedly has offered 3-stage formula to break the stalemate in negotiation.

The past stance was that Pakistan

wanted a plebiscite in Kashmir in accordance with the resolution of the UN Security Council, while India considered Kashmir as a part of India and Pakistan an aggressor. President Musharraf reportedly has ditched the holding of a plebiscite as it is not acceptable to India. He also has refused to accept the Line of Control (LoC), as agreed in July 1972 at the Simla Conference between Prime Minister Indira Gandhi and Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, as the "permanent border" of the two countries.

He further said: "Change in status

and religious groups want to unite themselves and live together.

It appears that depending on the religious and ethnic commonalities of people, the borders of the seven regions of Jammu and Kashmir will be re-demarcated. Once the process is complete, demilitarisation will take place in the territory. It implies that there will be no regular and paramilitary forces stationed in Jammu and Kashmir. Only law enforcing agencies such as police will oversee the law and order. Prior to that it is assumed that demilitarisation will

mandate. President Wilson conceived the idea of a mandate in governing or administering a territory under international supervision (mandate). During the First World War, the victors conquered the colonies of Turkey and Germany. President Wilson, an idealist, proclaimed that the victors, namely the US, Britain, France and Russia, would not annex the colonies, rather they would be placed under the control of the League of Nations. It was based on the principle that the people within the colonies would be administered

Although some actions have been adopted in this regard by Pakistan, Indian-administered Kashmir is still subject to violence by militants. India suspects that Islamic militants still are able to easily cross the border to India's territory.

Second, the realignment of seven regions of Jammu and Kashmir may not be palatable to India as it compromises India's secularism. The 1648 Westphalian Treaty created nation-states, abolishing the Holy Roman Empire. Since then, the nation-state system is a fact of political life across the world.

Furthermore, no nation-state is homogeneous in composition of its nationals within its territorial boundary. Statistics seem to indicate that probably not more than 5 per cent of all states in the world have populations that are considered homogeneous. Modern nation-states comprise numerous ethnicities and religions.

Third, the idea of independence of Kashmir seems to be a "no-go" area for India. Kashmir is the only Muslim majority territory within India's secular state. If India surrenders Kashmir, its secular position appears to be seriously compromised.

Fourth, the concept of the UN mandated territory appears to be in the same category of an idea of an independent Kashmir and therefore the idea does not advance progress in negotiations.

Finally, only the joint control of Kashmir remains an idea that needs to be further fleshed out, if in principle it is accepted by India. However India's opposition political parties in parliament are so strong against the Mamnoon Singh government that they are likely to oppose tooth and nail to accept any of the suggestions of the President of Pakistan.

Conclusion

President Musharraf, despite the rejection by the powerful Islamist alliance, Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal (MMA) in Pakistan, may be able to see through his proposals, only if India agrees. Although credit must be given to President Musharraf for his bold ideas to resolve the territorial dispute, it seems that they may not cut political ice for India.

One fact is important to note that whether in the current political environment, the Congress-led government will be politically strong enough to sit with Pakistan and consider the 3-stage formula on Kashmir. It is noted that Nehru (a Kashmiri Brahmin) called Kashmir his "spiritual home." Will President Musharraf's ideas be acceptable to Nehru's granddaughter-in-law, Sonia Gandhi, the Congress Party president and head of its parliamentary party? It is a \$64,000 dollar question.

Barrister Harun Ur Rashid is a former Bangladesh Ambassador to the UN, Geneva.

BOTTOM LINE

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could be independent status, condominium which includes joint control, it can be UN mandate. We'll have to sit down with legal experts who can give their opinion on what other status are possible.

What does this 3-stage formula mean?

Let us examine briefly the outline of his proposals. Although details have not been reported, it appears that the Pakistani president wants to begin negotiations on a "clean slate" with no past baggage. This implies that both countries must abandon their stereotyped stance.

What is commonly called Kashmir is properly known as "Jammu and Kashmir." Jammu's inhabitants are overwhelmingly Hindus, while the northern part, known as Kashmir, is predominantly Muslim. There are also many ethnic groups living in Jammu and Kashmir. The territory has been a melting pot since Alexander, the Great, conquered it around 330-327 BC. The Mughal Emperors loved holidaying in Kashmir while they ruled India from 1526 to 1757.

The 3-stage formula begins first with a process in determining the religious and ethnic make-up of the seven regions of Kashmir. It is noted that out of seven, five regions are currently within the Indian-administered Kashmir, while the other two are in the Pakistani-controlled Kashmir. What appears to be in the proposal is that once the religion and ethnicity of the people of the regions are identified, the people belonging to the same religion and ethnic group may live together harmoniously, as it is commonly acknowledged that the same ethnic



Musharraf, Farooq and Frank

first take place on the LoC.

Once the two processes are complete, various options would be considered as to how the territory would be governed. Musharraf has suggested three possibilities: (a) independent status of the territory, (b) condominium, meaning joint control or rule over the territory, and (c) UN mandated territory.

Independent status of Kashmir does not need any explanation. An example of condominium or joint control may be cited. For example, Andorra, sandwiched between Spain and France, over the Pyrenees Mountains, is jointly ruled nominally by both Spain and France. They jointly are recognised as the Heads of State of Andorra and the administration, headed by a Prime Minister, is elected by the people.

UN mandated territory

The third option is suggested that the territory would be placed under a UN

by mandated states in a way so that they develop themselves to govern an independent territory at the end.

Under the UN Charter, the concept of mandate has been re-designated as "Trust Territories" in Articles 76 to 79. The charter is very specific about the role of governing the trust territories. It provides, among others, that the administering foreign power is entrusted to promote the political, social, economic, educational advancement of the inhabitants of the trust territories and promoting their progressive development towards independence (South Africa was the trust territory for South West Africa, presently Namibia, which became an independent nation in 1990).

India's response?

It is most likely that India, before considering the 3-way formula, wants to see cross-border terrorism completely stop from Pakistani side of Kashmir.

Fostering socio-economic progress in Pakistan

In South Asia, the progress achieved through development has remained limited to the upper 20 per cent of the people. Pakistan is now engaged in efforts to raise the living standard of the common man, and all SAARC countries, that face the same challenge, can learn from each other.

DR MAQBOOL AHMAD BHATTY

PAKISTAN has been richly endowed with resources by nature, but security threats have led to disproportionate expenditure on national defence. In addition, the country has not enjoyed internal political stability, so that there has been a lack of continuity in developmental policies. As a result, despite forecasts in the yearly 1960s that it would take off before the end of the century, it has lagged behind, and the socio-economic indicators, such as literacy, child mortality and life expectancy place it fairly low in the UN Human Development Index.

The present leadership accorded a high priority to fostering socio-economic progress, by seeking to foster an environment conducive to development. The decade of the 1990s had seen Pakistan's annual GDP growth plunge to 3 per cent annum and the percentage of those below the poverty line rose from around 17 in the 1980s to over 30 by 1999. The focus of the policies of the government since 1999 has been on removing the causes that have adversely affected the life of the common man. Its programme of decentralisation, the drive to improve accountability, and the justice system as well as police reforms are aimed at improving governance, better utilisation of developmental funds, and building up the infrastructure for welfare, notably in the spheres of education and health.

The five years since 1999 witnessed many challenges, including the US intervention in the region after 9/11 in its war against terrorism, and serious strains in relations with India, that almost led to a conflict. However, the macro indicators have registered a remarkable improvement, with Foreign Exchange Reserves rising to \$12 billion, exports rising significantly, and the rate of GDP growth doubling to 6 per cent. Despite the rising expenditure on internal security, social action programmes have received increased allocations from the budget, and poverty alleviation is a major objective of government policies.

Socio-economic progress is not only relevant to poverty, it also helps

create an environment conducive to moderation. For long, development was considered as the process whereby natural and human resources are utilised efficiently to improve living standards. As the gap between the developed and developing countries has widened, and poverty affects growing numbers of people, the argument of fairness, and an equitable division of resources is still a powerful tool for those advocating a more just economic order.

However, in the post 9/11 world, which is pre-occupied with the threat of terrorism, the argument that carries weight in the developed world is the relevance of socio-economic development to the war against terror. The mere appeal to humanity, and fairness did not seem to attract resources from the developed countries to remedy backwardness and poverty. However, the fear that economic deprivation may drive desperate people to take to terrorism is proving more effective in attracting attention to the need for economic justice. The other root cause of terrorism is the frustration caused by political injustice in Palestine, Kashmir and other parts of the Muslim world.

For developing countries like Pakistan, where the problems of poverty are exacerbated by the rise of extremism that can turn into terrorism addressing the problem of poverty is the most effective way to contain terrorism. President Musharraf, speaking at the Islamic Summit last year in Malaysia, drew attention to the tendency in the west to link the phenomenon of terrorism to Islam. He came up with the strategy of "enlightened moderation," which would create a win-win situation both for the West, and the Islamic world.

The role of the Muslim world would be to eschew extremism, and militancy, even for just causes, and to adopt the path of socio-economic uplift. The West would provide economic and technical assistance to remove poverty, and use its power and influence to help resolve the disputes in which the democratic and human rights of the Muslims were being violated. This concept, which the President also mentioned in his

address to the UN General Assembly this year, won considerable support.

The strategy of socio-economic development to fight poverty, as well as to contain terrorism and militancy is being implemented in Pakistan. After the first five years, during which Finance Minister Shaukat Aziz helped lay the foundation for economic stability and growth, attention is being turned to spreading the benefits to the common man, by addressing the problems in the social sector. Education, health and technological skills are being promoted, with increasing participation of the private sector, as well as the foreign agencies and governments.

Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz is shortly going to visit all member countries of SAARC, in his capacity as Chairman of the organisation. He will also attend the SARC Summit early next year in Bangladesh, which will take up the implementation of many plans to accelerate the development of this region which contains over one fifth of the world's population. The strategy put forward by President Musharraf is also applicable to the SAARC countries, which face problems of poverty as well as instability arising out of socio-economic deprivation.

The road to social and economic emancipation of the people is a long and tortuous one, in which regional cooperation can play an important role as aid and investment from the developed countries. Though the war on terror has become the first priority in global concerns, victory in this war will be achieved only by addressing the roots of terrorism, which lie in political and economic injustice. In this struggle, the developing countries also must get their priorities right, and focus on improving the social and economic indicators.

One of the major challenges for the developing countries is that of ensuring that progress at the macro-level is shared with the great mass of the people. In South Asia, the progress achieved through to the upper 20 per cent of the people. Pakistan is now engaged in efforts to raise the living standard of the common man, and all SAARC countries, that face the same challenge, can learn from each other, as well as other major developing countries, like China.



Diabetic Association of Bangladesh

122, Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue
Shahbag, Dhaka-1000

Invitation for Pre-qualification of Contractors

The Diabetic Association of Bangladesh (DAB) intends to pre-qualify contractors (firms) for the Project "Construction of Multi-storied Car Parking with one Basement for BIRDEM Hospital" at 122, Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue, Shahbag, Dhaka (Details and specification are included in the pre-qualification document).

It is expected that the invitation for bid will be floated in December, 2004. Interested eligible applicants may obtain further information from the office of the undersigned and inspect the pre-qualification document at the address given below during office hours.

The pre-qualification document may be purchased by interested applicants on submission of written application to the undersigned and upon payment of non-refundable fee of Tk 1000.00 (one thousand) only. The method of payment will be cash or pay order in favour of Secretary General, Diabetic Association of Bangladesh, 122, Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue, Shahbag, Dhaka-1000, issued from a scheduled bank of Bangladesh, or foreign bank having branch or link in Bangladesh.

Application must be delivered to the address below at or before 12:00 noon local time, November 30, 2004. The employer reserves the right to accept or reject late applications.

The employer will not be responsible for any costs or expenses incurred by applicants in connection with the preparation or delivery of their applications.

The employer will notify all applicants in writing of the names of those applicants who have been pre-qualified.

AKM Shahjahan

Director (Project)

Diabetic Association of Bangladesh
Telephone No: 8615373

D-1107

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Ministry of Law, Justice & Parliamentary Affairs
Justice Section-2
No. 396 Justice-2/2M-1/2002
Date: 30-10-2004

Notice Changing Time of Tender

Tenders in prescribed schedule under lac sealed cover were invited from bonafide distributors/agents or supplier firms for purchase to replace 2 (two) cars & 3 (three) minibuses (15-seater) declared condemned used by District Judges, which was published in the daily Manab Jamin on 3-10-2004, in the daily News Today on 4-10-2004 & in the daily Jugantar on 16-10-2004. As per decision of the Purchase Committee the tender will be received on 24-11-2004 up to 01:00 hours instead of earlier fixed 21-10-2004 up to 02:30 min. in the tender box kept at Office Chamber of the Purchase Committee Chairman & Joint Secretary (A) (Room No 724; Building No. 4, Bangladesh Secretariat, Dhaka) and the tenders will be opened on the same day at 02pm in presence (if any) of the tenderers.

The authority reserves the right to accept or reject any tender in full or part without assigning any reason.

Riti Ibrahim

Deputy-Secretary (Budget & Development)

&

Member-Secretary,

Purchase Committee

DFP-26220-31/10

G-1054



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BANGABANDHU SHEIKH MUJIBUR RAHMAN AGRICULTURAL UNIVERSITY
Salna, Gazipur-1703, Bangladesh Telephone: PABX (0681) 52020, 52566, 52572

Seed Technology Training Program

Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Agricultural University with support from the DANIDA/SID, Ministry of Agriculture, Government of Bangladesh will run a 3 month Postgraduate Certificate Course on Seed Technology commencing from 12 December 2004. Applications on plain paper are hereby invited from agricultural graduates serving in public and private sectors, and NGOs engaged in seed technology development. Fresh graduates in agriculture may also apply.

Applicant must send a CV detailing his/her academic records (mark certificates/transcripts, certificates, and testimonials etc.), and experience in seed industry (if any) with current job description by November 22, 2004 to the Director (Outreach Program), Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Agricultural University, Salna, Gazipur-1706. In-service candidates must seek release from their employers. Each successful candidate will have to pay a registration fee of Tk 1000/- at the time of admission. The course is fully a residential one and every student will have to stay in the dormitory during the tenure of the program.

Selected candidates will be awarded a monthly scholarship of Tk 3,500/- for covering food etc. No TA/DA will be provided to the candidates for participation in the course.

Director (Outreach Program)

Mobile: 0171-908640

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