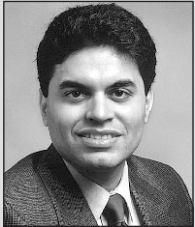


Like a country without oxygen



FAREED ZAKARIA  
writes from Washington

I might seem obvious to say that Baghdad is in bad shape, but that's the first thing I noticed when I was there recently. I don't mean the effects of bombs and mortars. I mean it just looks shabbythe poorest oil-rich capital I've ever seen. It reminded me more of a South Asian or African city than the capital of what was for decades the world's second largest petroleum exporter. Saddam Hussein built grand palaces for himself, more than 50, including one in Tikrit that reportedly has over 250 buildings. He made sure that there were excellent roads so that his Army could move freely across the country. And that's it. But there is little evidence of the oil wealth anywhere else. Add to Saddam's ruinous reign 13 years of sanctions, three wars and an insurgency, and you have a country that is truly devastated.

Moving around the city also brought home a comment from Harvard's Joseph Nye. "Security is

like oxygen," he used to say. "You tend not to notice it until you begin to lose it, but once that occurs there is nothing else that you will think about." In Iraq today, everyone thinks about security. That's especially true of Americans, other Westerners, and anyone involved with the Iraqi government. The insurgency targets them specifically and brutally.

The week that I was there began with the car bombing of an American aid worker, Marla Ruzicka. Two of the

arranged for them to be driven to Jordan. Along the way, they were stopped on the highway and robbed of all their possessions.

This lack of security is an obstacle to all progress in Iraq. Reconstruction efforts falter, institution-building takes a back seat and anti-corruption efforts fail as the government centralises and keeps on a war footing.

For much of the first year of the insurgency, the United States insisted that it could be handled purely by

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people I met with the then Prime Minister Ayad Allawi, and the Sunni leader Mishan al-Jabbouri were targets of assassination attempts. The day before I left, three of our next-door neighbours, highly trained security professionals, were gunned down on the road to the airport.

Security is also the paramount concern of ordinary Iraqis. They don't face much of a threat from insurgents, though there is some targeting of civilian Shiites, but they live in an atmosphere of general lawlessness in which criminals and gangs flourish. A few days before I arrived, one of our security guards (an Iraqi) decided that things were getting too risky for his family (his mother, father, and sister), and he had them pack their bags and

military means. "Bring them on," President George W. Bush said in July 2003. "We have the force necessary to deal with the security situation." The administration's oft-expressed view was that the violence was the work of a small group of dead-enders. Later, officials claimed it was fueled by a handful of foreign terrorists. They refused to accept that there was a political dimension to the insurgency, which fed off the anger of Sunnis as they saw themselves being displaced from power, disbanded and de-Baathified.

The United States learned the hard way that military means alone wouldn't work. It was mightily helped in its political outreach by Iraq's interim prime minister, Ayad Allawi, who

opened up some communication with insurgents. This strategy worked at dividing the insurgency and defeating it in Fallujah and Samarra, among other places.

The link between the political situation and the violence can be seen most clearly in recent events. The elections produced a downward trend in the violence. There was hope of a political breakthrough, especially given that the Shia announced that they would give Sunni leaders important posts in the new government. But for the last month negotiations were deadlocked, incoming Shia politicians talked about purging the military, and Sunnis worried about their future. Violence spiked.

This is unfortunate because there is good evidence that the insurgency was losing steam and that Sunnis were joining the mainstream political movement. Important clerics have urged Sunnis to join the army and police force. Political parties have said that they would contest the next election. And the rash of suicide bombings, often killing ordinary Iraqis, make the insurgents less and less popular.

Now it is the United States that is preaching the message of inclusion to the new government. Donald Rumsfeld pressed the incoming regime on this when he visited Baghdad last month. Yet it is not simply a matter of including Sunnis in the government, Ayad Allawi told me. What's important are the policies the government follows. If Iraqis engage in de-Baathification, displacing people from the ministries and other such moves, it won't matter if there are Sunni ministers. They will simply be discredited.

But the United States has more limited control over the new government in Iraq than people realise. One of the most important Shia politicians, Hussein Shahristani, responded to Rumsfeld's advice by saying, "Thank you, but Iraqis know better what to do." An American official in Baghdad told me that his greatest fear was that the new government would have to learn from its own mistakes. "Much better to learn from ours," he said.

Fareed Zakaria is Editor of Newsweek International.  
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Quintessence of a soldier

A tribute to Wing Commander Enayetullah

AVM MUMTAZ UDDIN AHMED  
(Retd.)

AN April summer evening (27 Wednesday) brought the terrible news. A bright star had just fallen; an indomitable warrior had finally given in to the inevitable destiny of every living being. Wing commander Enayetullah was a warrior in the true sense of the term. Having fought many battles in his life, he fought the last battle like a gallant soldier. But this time it was not an external enemy, the enemy was inside him. Undaunted, he fought the lonely battle until he could fight no more.

It is not an easy task to write about a man of so many qualities; and all his traits would require volumes to describe. Wg Cdr Enayetullah belonged to that category of men whose deeds will be remembered with reverence for a long time. He had a multi-faceted personality, not just merely a man of action, he was a creative artist, a perfectionist, a visionary, a man engaged in a diversity of pursuits. He had an intellectual mindset and he loved to read.

My association with this great soul spans almost my entire career in the air force. I was a Flight Cadet in the Academy about to start my flying training. The PAF Academy had just received T-37 jet trainers from the USA and the man designated to ensure its proper induction and training process was the than Flt Lt Enayetullah. A Bengali was a rare commodity in the PAF but we were greatly surprised that a Bengali instructor was the man in charge of the project. The mere sight of this man spellbound me when I saw him for the first time. He was immaculately dressed and had a strong personality.

Wg Cdr Enayetullah almost single-handedly launched the T-37 programme. Pilot's handbook, better known as Dash-one, Standard Operating Procedure (SOP), Check list, Patter book were personally written and compiled by him after meticulous scrutiny. Through his

sheer hard work the first batch of five flight cadets passed out on schedule, which initially appeared to be impossible because of the many administrative delays. The word 'impossible' was not in his dictionary and he took the task as a personal challenge.

Perfectionism was his hallmark and he maintained this trait throughout his life no matter where he worked. He never compromised with his principles for which his superiors and colleagues often misunderstood him. However, he was a man of vision who firmly held on to his conviction and was capable of breaching the bastion of superior authorities with his convincing arguments. He would never deviate from his ideas.

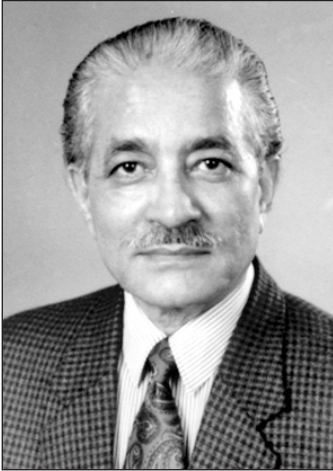
I got him as my instructor in the Jet Conversion Unit in Mauripur for flying in T-33 aircraft. From my little experience of the flying instructors, I found them quite tolerant of students' mistakes. At times they overlooked small errors, perhaps thinking that they would disappear with more experience. But not this instructor who demanded perfection from the very outset. He discovered that my rudder pedals moved while I applied the toe brakes. Somehow, my performance fell short of his demands. Instead of correcting my mistakes on board the aircraft, he decided to teach me practically on ground. He got two single seated sofas facing each other. He extended his feet against his firmly placed feet, which he asked me to assume, to be radar pedals. He would make me do that exercise for hours together at a stretch.

He was very fond of doing instrument flying with the students. This required the student to fly mission under hood, looking at the dials and gauges on the instrument panel. For some unknown reasons, he would make us fly on Radio Direction Finder (RDF), an outdated and cumbersome procedure when modern navigation aids with alternative systems were otherwise available. RDF method was never prac-

ticed during those days but he would insist on that procedure on every instrument flying sorties. I was able to attain a good standard on RDF flying under his watchful eyes. That skill helped me return safely to base on a hazy late evening during the 1965 Indo-Pak war.

Wg Cdr Enayetullah had the distinction to command a fighter squadron in the PAF. This was a great honour for a Bengali officer in an alien environment. If I remember correctly, only two other Bengali officers, namely, Sqn Ldr MG Tawab and Sqn Ldr A U Ahmed had achieved such honour before him. It speaks volumes about this man's professional acumen. He was a manifestation of a distinguished career. This was a matter of pride for every Bengali officer serving in the PAF during those days. Within a short time, his squadron won the Command Flight Safety trophy, Top Gun Trophy and the Best Fighter Squadron Award, thereby adding further laurels to his command.

After repatriation to Bangladesh, Wg Cdr Enayetullah led a team of fighter pilots to the USSR to carry out conversion on Mig-21 aircraft. And I was part of the same team comprising of 12 officers. The Soviet training system was not as good as the western system with which all of us were accustomed. Wg Cdr Enayetullah was not satisfied with the elementary training that was scheduled for us. The Russians turned a deaf ear to all his arguments. Series of meetings with the local air force commanders produced no tangible results. Finally Wg Cdr Enayetullah stood up from his chair and threw the syllabus towards the Russian Commander and shouted that the Bangladesh contingent would go back to their country unless the syllabus was appropriately modified if the syllabus was not modified appropriately. He also added that the matter might be sorted out between comrade Brezhnev and Sheikh Mujibur



Rahman. His concluding remarks acted like a catalyst as an air force general was dispatched from Moscow on the very next day to sort out the matter.

There was another commendable achievement of Wg Cdr Enayetullah during our stay in the USSR. The Bangladesh contingent was to put on Russian uniform during the training period as per an agreement between the two governments. He felt it was not befitting for the BAF officers to put on foreign uniform and prevailed on the Russians to scrap such provision. Only a towering personality like Enayetullah could convince the Russians with such assertiveness that upheld the honour of the Bangladeshi officers.

Bangladesh Air force will always remain indebted to Wg Cdr Enayetullah for helping lay a strong foundation to transform it into a formidable fighting force. His name will remain engraved among the pioneers of the BAF who had toiled with their sweat to put the air force on its proper track. Farewell, my teacher. May Allah bless your soul.

The writer is a former Chief of Air Staff, BAF.

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