

## Religiously affiliated NGOs

A probing look necessitated

THE current administration has expended a great deal of effort to bring certain NGOs under their scrutiny. NGO finances have been rigorously examined, and registration and operation of NGOs has come under far more stringent control than at any time in the past.

It is quite ironic that at the same time that it has been exercising such strict control over non-religiously affiliated NGOs, the government has been so lax in its oversight of the religiously affiliated NGOs – specifically Islamic NGOs.

As a result, these entities have been given a virtual free pass, and have been able to run with only minimal governmental oversight and supervision.

There are 34 Islamic NGOs currently registered with the NGO bureau and funded from abroad. However, the oversight over these entities remains negligible. In addition, there are several hundred NGOs that are registered with the social welfare department, which has neither the resources nor the inclination to keep a tab on their activities. These NGOs are barely scrutinised, and little or no record of their activities is maintained.

Finally, there are countless NGOs and NGO-type entities that have no registration whatsoever, and thus no government oversight.

In effect, the administration has permitted such NGOs a virtual free hand. The result is that there is no accurate accounting done of much of the foreign funds that come into the country, or what is done with them, or what the operations of these NGOs are.

This is not to say that all the NGOs are suspect; for, there may be those that are doing a good Samaritan's job; but it is the rapid proliferation of religiously nomenclatured entities that makes one sit up and take note.

Let's not forget, the links between the more disreputably affiliated NGOs, some of which have been already outlawed by the government, and the militant organisations, no longer remain matters of hypothesis.

In light of recent events, now is the time for a comprehensive policy to regulate such NGOs. There is no justification for the fact that they are subject to less scrutiny than regular NGOs. This type of scrutiny should have been undertaken long ago. Better late than never.

## The threat of dengue

Pressing need to contain it

IT is cause for concern that the number of dengue patients admitted to hospitals in Dhaka and some other cities has been on the increase. The disease has broken out rather belatedly this year, but the worst may not be over yet.

As it happens so often in our context, the preparedness to face a menace is relaxed when the peak risk period has gone by and it appears that the malady might not strike in full fury. The DCC's drive against mosquitoes has not gained momentum and it seems they almost forgot that the threat of dengue was looming somewhere.

It is good news that the number of fatalities has gone down in the recent years, thanks to effective management. However, prevention is a much better alternative since the treatment of dengue is very costly and chances of the disease turning into a life-threatening one are always there.

The general level of awareness regarding dengue has improved in the last few years. People are now familiar with the methods of preventing spread of the Aedes mosquito. It is neither costly nor very difficult to keep the homes clean and avoid the risk factors like allowing water to remain stagnant in any container or place for a long time.

But the problem is the drive against dengue has never been conducted with due vigour and seriousness. Sometimes it is the allegation of substandard or ineffective larvicide being used by the DCC sprayers and at other times the rattle of fogging machine was not heard in many localities. So, the campaign against mosquitoes was never an all-out war that it should have been. And this year also, despite the outbreak of the disease, the DCC mosquito demolition squads have yet to make their presence felt.

It is a regrettable truth that a health hazard is allowed to become rather unmanageable before the agencies concerned feel the need for doing something about it. The sting can be taken out of the dengue outbreak only if the anti-mosquito drive is intensified without wasting any more time.

# Stop the blame game and get down to brass tacks



Brig Gen  
SHAHEDUL ANAM KHAN  
ndc, psc (Retd)

investigation and intelligence agencies. We have what we have, in terms of the capabilities of our multifarious agencies entrusted to provide advance information of such eventualities, and their performance and capabilities have to do as much with the resources as with the proper handling of the agencies. While one should not expect a quantum leap in the output of the intelligence agencies overnight, the

cal parties even more regrettably. To see the two major parties trying to make political capital out of the matter, when our very security is at stake, reflects poorly on the political sagacity, statesmanship, and strategic vision of the political leaders. We only make a laughing stock of ourselves when all sorts of ludicrous motives are bandied about to justify the blame that one party puts on the other for the act; this

of the August 17 bombings.

The Indian establishment sees the recent bombings in Bangladesh as a threat to their own security. The Chief Minister of the Indian state of West Bengal has go so far as to articulate his fears to the media in this respect.

Such fears have arisen perhaps because the bombings, along with the pronouncements of the JMB in the leaflets that were found at the bombing sites, in earnest.

No one, least of all the government, can hide behind the excuse of a foreign hand in this episode. If there is a foreign hand behind the bombings, that it could utilise a radical Islamic group within the country to act to its dictates, can neither be a solace nor succor to anyone. What must concern the people at the helm of affairs most is that there is a non-state actor, which can wield its coercive capabilities in propagating its views, with or without foreign support.

It is as much a mistake to assume that the target was a particular party or the government as to think the bombing was designed to reap political benefits by the ruling alliance. The target was the state. The sooner the political parties reconcile to this truth, the more quickly would we move towards ensuring the security of the state. Please stop hurling accusations at each other and get down to brass tacks. That is what the nation expects of our political leadership.

The author is Editor, Defence and Strategic Affairs, The Daily Star.

**E**VERYTHING appears to have gone quiet after the record-breaking blasts of the 17th. Apart from some arrests made after the blasts, very little progress seems to have been made in the investigation. This is as per the recent comments to the media, by a representative of the ministry of home. The mastermind behind the crime remains as yet unidentified. People are left to wonder and speculate. And many among those, given to having their thoughts wander, are compelled to draw a parallel with the London bombings. While there is difference of opinion on the causes of the bombings, the remarkable coalescence of the political parties in the UK, cutting across the political divide, to determine the courses of action, and the quick identification and arrests of the alleged perpetrators and those with links to the bombings, by the law enforcement agencies, are worth emulating.

The comparison is made stark by the very apparent dissimilarity of the actions following the bombings, on both counts, the political as well as the performance of our

common perception about the political parties is that they might have done better than what we have seen of them thus far in addressing the situation.

Forgive me, but it appears that neither of the two major political parties seems to have comprehended the strategic, political, and economic significance or the long-term ramifications of the August 17 bombings. Had it been the case we would have been spared the sorry spectacle of the mutual blame game that commenced very soon after the first hour of the bombings and which continues till today. The doomsayers are not very wrong when they point out that the whole episode has the potential of impinging on the security and national interest of the country. This is what makes the political blame-game between the politi-

cal parties even more regrettably. To see the two major parties trying to make political capital out of the matter, when our very security is at stake, reflects poorly on the political sagacity, statesmanship, and strategic vision of the political leaders. We only make a laughing stock of ourselves when all sorts of ludicrous motives are bandied about to justify the blame that one party puts on the other for the act; this

of the August 17 bombings.

The Indian establishment sees the recent bombings in Bangladesh as a threat to their own security. The Chief Minister of the Indian state of West Bengal has go so far as to articulate his fears to the media in this respect.

Such fears have arisen perhaps because the bombings, along with the pronouncements of the JMB in the leaflets that were found at the bombing sites, in earnest.

It is as much a mistake to assume that the target was a particular party or the government as to think the bombing was designed to reap political benefits by the ruling alliance. The target was the state. The sooner the political parties reconcile to this truth, the more quickly would we move towards ensuring the security of the state. Please stop hurling accusations at each other and get down to brass tacks. That is what the nation expects of our political leadership.

But as for now, what the JMB has been successful in doing is put our country in the most disadvantageous position strategically. It would be iniquitous not to weigh our losses alongside the possible gains of the perpetrators. Therefore, all manners of partisan perception must be eschewed in order to get to the mastermind, as well as to devise ways and means to offset the damage.

Insofar as the strategic milieu and our security is concerned, it would do well for our policy planners as well as the opposition to take note of the reactions of the media and the political viewpoint that emerged from our big neighbour soon after the blasts. These will have to be viewed in a holistic manner rather than exclusively against the backdrop of investigations must get to.

But as for now, what the JMB has been successful in doing is put our country in the most disadvantageous position strategically. It would be iniquitous not to weigh our losses alongside the possible gains of the perpetrators. Therefore, all manners of partisan perception must be eschewed in order to get to the mastermind, as well as to devise ways and means to offset the damage.

Insofar as the strategic milieu and our security is concerned, it would do well for our policy planners as well as the opposition to take note of the reactions of the media and the political viewpoint that emerged from our big neighbour soon after the blasts. These will have to be viewed in a holistic manner rather than exclusively against the backdrop of investigations must get to.

But as for now, what the JMB has been successful in doing is put our country in the most disadvantageous position strategically. It would be iniquitous not to weigh our losses alongside the possible gains of the perpetrators. Therefore, all manners of partisan perception must be eschewed in order to get to the mastermind, as well as to devise ways and means to offset the damage.

Insofar as the strategic milieu and our security is concerned, it would do well for our policy planners as well as the opposition to take note of the reactions of the media and the political viewpoint that emerged from our big neighbour soon after the blasts. These will have to be viewed in a holistic manner rather than exclusively against the backdrop of investigations must get to.

But as for now, what the JMB has been successful in doing is put our country in the most disadvantageous position strategically. It would be iniquitous not to weigh our losses alongside the possible gains of the perpetrators. Therefore, all manners of partisan perception must be eschewed in order to get to the mastermind, as well as to devise ways and means to offset the damage.

Insofar as the strategic milieu and our security is concerned, it would do well for our policy planners as well as the opposition to take note of the reactions of the media and the political viewpoint that emerged from our big neighbour soon after the blasts. These will have to be viewed in a holistic manner rather than exclusively against the backdrop of investigations must get to.

But as for now, what the JMB has been successful in doing is put our country in the most disadvantageous position strategically. It would be iniquitous not to weigh our losses alongside the possible gains of the perpetrators. Therefore, all manners of partisan perception must be eschewed in order to get to the mastermind, as well as to devise ways and means to offset the damage.

Insofar as the strategic milieu and our security is concerned, it would do well for our policy planners as well as the opposition to take note of the reactions of the media and the political viewpoint that emerged from our big neighbour soon after the blasts. These will have to be viewed in a holistic manner rather than exclusively against the backdrop of investigations must get to.

But as for now, what the JMB has been successful in doing is put our country in the most disadvantageous position strategically. It would be iniquitous not to weigh our losses alongside the possible gains of the perpetrators. Therefore, all manners of partisan perception must be eschewed in order to get to the mastermind, as well as to devise ways and means to offset the damage.

Insofar as the strategic milieu and our security is concerned, it would do well for our policy planners as well as the opposition to take note of the reactions of the media and the political viewpoint that emerged from our big neighbour soon after the blasts. These will have to be viewed in a holistic manner rather than exclusively against the backdrop of investigations must get to.

But as for now, what the JMB has been successful in doing is put our country in the most disadvantageous position strategically. It would be iniquitous not to weigh our losses alongside the possible gains of the perpetrators. Therefore, all manners of partisan perception must be eschewed in order to get to the mastermind, as well as to devise ways and means to offset the damage.

Insofar as the strategic milieu and our security is concerned, it would do well for our policy planners as well as the opposition to take note of the reactions of the media and the political viewpoint that emerged from our big neighbour soon after the blasts. These will have to be viewed in a holistic manner rather than exclusively against the backdrop of investigations must get to.

But as for now, what the JMB has been successful in doing is put our country in the most disadvantageous position strategically. It would be iniquitous not to weigh our losses alongside the possible gains of the perpetrators. Therefore, all manners of partisan perception must be eschewed in order to get to the mastermind, as well as to devise ways and means to offset the damage.

Insofar as the strategic milieu and our security is concerned, it would do well for our policy planners as well as the opposition to take note of the reactions of the media and the political viewpoint that emerged from our big neighbour soon after the blasts. These will have to be viewed in a holistic manner rather than exclusively against the backdrop of investigations must get to.

But as for now, what the JMB has been successful in doing is put our country in the most disadvantageous position strategically. It would be iniquitous not to weigh our losses alongside the possible gains of the perpetrators. Therefore, all manners of partisan perception must be eschewed in order to get to the mastermind, as well as to devise ways and means to offset the damage.

Insofar as the strategic milieu and our security is concerned, it would do well for our policy planners as well as the opposition to take note of the reactions of the media and the political viewpoint that emerged from our big neighbour soon after the blasts. These will have to be viewed in a holistic manner rather than exclusively against the backdrop of investigations must get to.

But as for now, what the JMB has been successful in doing is put our country in the most disadvantageous position strategically. It would be iniquitous not to weigh our losses alongside the possible gains of the perpetrators. Therefore, all manners of partisan perception must be eschewed in order to get to the mastermind, as well as to devise ways and means to offset the damage.

Insofar as the strategic milieu and our security is concerned, it would do well for our policy planners as well as the opposition to take note of the reactions of the media and the political viewpoint that emerged from our big neighbour soon after the blasts. These will have to be viewed in a holistic manner rather than exclusively against the backdrop of investigations must get to.

But as for now, what the JMB has been successful in doing is put our country in the most disadvantageous position strategically. It would be iniquitous not to weigh our losses alongside the possible gains of the perpetrators. Therefore, all manners of partisan perception must be eschewed in order to get to the mastermind, as well as to devise ways and means to offset the damage.

Insofar as the strategic milieu and our security is concerned, it would do well for our policy planners as well as the opposition to take note of the reactions of the media and the political viewpoint that emerged from our big neighbour soon after the blasts. These will have to be viewed in a holistic manner rather than exclusively against the backdrop of investigations must get to.

But as for now, what the JMB has been successful in doing is put our country in the most disadvantageous position strategically. It would be iniquitous not to weigh our losses alongside the possible gains of the perpetrators. Therefore, all manners of partisan perception must be eschewed in order to get to the mastermind, as well as to devise ways and means to offset the damage.

Insofar as the strategic milieu and our security is concerned, it would do well for our policy planners as well as the opposition to take note of the reactions of the media and the political viewpoint that emerged from our big neighbour soon after the blasts. These will have to be viewed in a holistic manner rather than exclusively against the backdrop of investigations must get to.

But as for now, what the JMB has been successful in doing is put our country in the most disadvantageous position strategically. It would be iniquitous not to weigh our losses alongside the possible gains of the perpetrators. Therefore, all manners of partisan perception must be eschewed in order to get to the mastermind, as well as to devise ways and means to offset the damage.

Insofar as the strategic milieu and our security is concerned, it would do well for our policy planners as well as the opposition to take note of the reactions of the media and the political viewpoint that emerged from our big neighbour soon after the blasts. These will have to be viewed in a holistic manner rather than exclusively against the backdrop of investigations must get to.

But as for now, what the JMB has been successful in doing is put our country in the most disadvantageous position strategically. It would be iniquitous not to weigh our losses alongside the possible gains of the perpetrators. Therefore, all manners of partisan perception must be eschewed in order to get to the mastermind, as well as to devise ways and means to offset the damage.

Insofar as the strategic milieu and our security is concerned, it would do well for our policy planners as well as the opposition to take note of the reactions of the media and the political viewpoint that emerged from our big neighbour soon after the blasts. These will have to be viewed in a holistic manner rather than exclusively against the backdrop of investigations must get to.

But as for now, what the JMB has been successful in doing is put our country in the most disadvantageous position strategically. It would be iniquitous not to weigh our losses alongside the possible gains of the perpetrators. Therefore, all manners of partisan perception must be eschewed in order to get to the mastermind, as well as to devise ways and means to offset the damage.

Insofar as the strategic milieu and our security is concerned, it would do well for our policy planners as well as the opposition to take note of the reactions of the media and the political viewpoint that emerged from our big neighbour soon after the blasts. These will have to be viewed in a holistic manner rather than exclusively against the backdrop of investigations must get to.

But as for now, what the JMB has been successful in doing is put our country in the most disadvantageous position strategically. It would be iniquitous not to weigh our losses alongside the possible gains of the perpetrators. Therefore, all manners of partisan perception must be eschewed in order to get to the mastermind, as well as to devise ways and means to offset the damage.

Insofar as the strategic milieu and our security is concerned, it would do well for our policy planners as well as the opposition to take note of the reactions of the media and the political viewpoint that emerged from our big neighbour soon after the blasts. These will have to be viewed in a holistic manner rather than exclusively against the backdrop of investigations must get to.

But as for now, what the JMB has been successful in doing is put our country in the most disadvantageous position strategically. It would be iniquitous not to weigh our losses alongside the possible gains of the perpetrators. Therefore, all manners of partisan perception must be eschewed in order to get to the mastermind, as well as to devise ways and means to offset the damage.

Insofar as the strategic milieu and our security is concerned, it would do well for our policy planners as well as the opposition to take note of the reactions of the media and the political viewpoint that emerged from our big neighbour soon after the blasts. These will have to be viewed in a holistic manner rather than exclusively against the backdrop of investigations must get to.

But as for now, what the JMB has been successful in doing is put our country in the most disadvantageous position strategically. It would be iniquitous not to weigh our losses alongside the possible gains of the perpetrators. Therefore, all manners of partisan perception must be eschewed in order to get to the mastermind, as well as to devise ways and means to offset the damage.

Insofar as the strategic milieu and our security is concerned, it would do well for our policy planners as well as the opposition to take note of the reactions of the media and the political viewpoint that emerged from our big neighbour soon after the blasts. These will have to be viewed in a holistic manner rather than exclusively against the backdrop of investigations must get to.

But as for now, what the JMB has been successful in doing is put our country in the most disadvantageous position strategically. It would be iniquitous not to weigh our losses alongside the possible gains of the perpetrators. Therefore, all manners of partisan perception must be eschewed in order to get to the mastermind, as well as to devise ways and means to offset the damage.

Insofar as the strategic milieu and our security is concerned, it would do well for our policy planners as well as the opposition to take note of the reactions of the media and the political viewpoint that emerged from our big neighbour soon after the blasts. These will have to be viewed in a holistic manner rather than exclusively against the backdrop of investigations must get to.

But as for now, what the JMB has been successful in doing is put our country in the most disadvantageous position strategically. It would be iniquitous not to weigh our losses alongside the possible gains of the perpetrators. Therefore, all manners of partisan perception must be eschewed in order to get to the mastermind, as well as to devise ways and means to offset the damage.

Insofar as the strategic milieu and our security is concerned, it would do well for our policy planners as well as the opposition to take note of the reactions of the media and the political viewpoint that emerged from our big neighbour soon after the blasts. These will have to be viewed in a holistic manner rather than exclusively against the backdrop of investigations must get to.

But as for now, what the JMB has been successful in doing is put our country in the most disadvantageous position strategically. It would be in