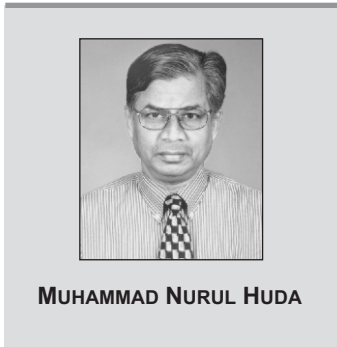


Historical determinants of policing



MUHAMMAD NURUL HUDA

THE differences of Police structure and styles of operation come into clearer focus when seen in largely different socio-political context. One such context that is interestingly instructive relates to colonial policing.

The antithesis of civil policing, as epitomised by the 'London Bobby', was the Royal Irish Constabulary. The latter became a model for a very different style of policing throughout the British Empire. This force was characterised by the intake of officers who were housed in barracks segregated from the local population and patrolled in armed quasi-military columns. It was a style of policing that would culminate in a police force out of control. In fact, the force rapidly turned into an armed gendarmierie.

The common policing problems that colonial police shared arose from their task in imposing an alien authority upon rebellious native populations. Since those native populations did not comprise citizens, the colonial police were free to impose their authority without trepidation.

Experience shows that police structures are determined by political settlements and the practices thus built. Police structure, in developing societies, particularly, is affected by the perceived threats to the political order. The greater such threats, the more centralised is the

STRAIGHT LINE

In the sub-continent, we are having, what one may describe as near colonial policing of divided societies. The police in transitional societies like ours often appear as disconcerting spectacles of hapless meat in the sandwich, squeezed by the intransigence of two opposing groups and compelled to use force to implement whatever decisions they take.

police system. In fact, the challenges to the political legitimacy of government in such societies act as the most dominant facilitators of police centralisation.

Historically speaking, in France, Spain and Italy reactionaries (usually monarchists and clerics) and secular liberals struggled over political citizenship for most of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, with many violent changes of regime. States such as Germany, Austria and Japan evolved in the direction of incorporating limited citizenship rights within authoritarian regimes. In Japan and Germany although democratic regimes were imposed, elements of the previous political culture remained. In fact, the different political traditions continue to influence the structure of policing in continental Europe.

The political turmoil of, and following the French revolution, did not usher in a more civil style of policing. On the contrary, the consequences of the revolution were to activate subsequent regimes to create a police apparatus which would ensure protection from the revolutionaries. The French police system still bears the hallmarks of its centralised, militaristic and authoritarian origins.

In Spain and Italy, there have been ventures to shake off an oppressive past in the police systems but still the police there remain tainted by their association with Fascist regimes. Policing in Germany continues to be unequivocally regarded as the arm of the executive. The outwardly remark-

able tenacity of policing structures should not be a surprising spectacle. Even when colonial and other oppressive regimes are overthrown, those structures of policing tend to remain. In Zimbabwe the colonial policing system was retained virtually unaltered by the post-colonial regime. Closer at home and elsewhere in the subcontinent things are not very encouragingly different.

Policing in the United States by contrast was and remains an intensely local affair in which every tier of government lays claim to its own police force. In USA professional policing was first introduced in the real seats of political and economic power New York and Boston.

The fragmentation of policing in America reflects traditional skepticism towards central government. Police establishments there have grown along with growth in central government but in ways the reflect traditional concerns at the concentration of political power. In USA, at the federal level, there is a plethora of police agencies.

In Netherlands there is an interesting pattern of local fragmentation, reflective of traditional power relationship. This relationship is marked by the notion of 'pillarisation', in which conflicts between deeply divided social groups were avoided by each living largely separate lives under a liberal state umbrella.

In the sub-continent, we are having, what one may describe as near colonial policing of divided societies. In a divisive society where

- divisions appear as fundamental, real policing can be affected by the following deviations:
- There will be instances of selective enforcement of the law in favour of the dominant group.
 - One would witness visibly disturbing discriminatory practices that would limit the exercise of the rights of the numerically smaller groups.
 - There will be political partisanship in upholding and enforcing the distribution of political power by allowing unequal rights to political protest; the use of coercive measures to inhibit the forces of political change and opposition; and direct police involvement in the political process.
 - Visible lack of autonomy from the political system.
 - An absence of effective mechanism of public accountability.
 - Relatively unrestrained use of

- force.
- A dual role arising from responsibilities for ordinary crime and internal security.
 - Polarisation of attitudes towards the police and their conduct.
 - Harmful diffusion of policing functions by the ruling political group with so-called volunteer groups and other compatible agencies being drawn into a policing role.
- The police in transitional societies like ours often appear as disconcerting spectacles of hapless meat in the sandwich, squeezed by the intransigence of two opposing groups and compelled to use force to implement whatever decisions they take.

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Open-pit coal mining : Bangladesh perspective

DR. AFTAB ALAM KHAN

AN open pit coal mine may contribute four, five, even ten times more than an underground coal mine do in energy production. This is an example sighted from Germany. However, the controversy lies with different scenario which is often overlooked while advocating for open pit mining in Bangladesh. The first line of comparison between the two should be drawn based on the principal condition with the same level and standard. If the level and standard between the two are different then the comparisons made are not likely to sustain.

Bangladesh and Germany are two countries with marked differences from cultural, socioeconomic, physiographic, geomorphic, hydrogeologic, and overall geologic points of view. The North Rhine Westfalia (NRW) coal mine areas in Germany do not possess any catchment area like Tista fan in Bangladesh. Neither, it possesses such thick groundwater bearing formation like Dupitila in Bangladesh directly overlying the coal beds. Sand, clay and gravel layer overlying the coal bearing

formation in NWR converges towards a valley not even 10 km wide and eventually is directed along the valley gradient towards Netherlands occupying very negligible land in NWR, Germany. The NE-SW geological cross section of NWR coal mine area clearly exhibits its subsurface geological condition which is markedly different from Bangladesh coal field region. The coal field regions in Bangladesh are characterised by more porous and permeable thick groundwater bearing layer directly overlying coal bearing formation and diverge radially along multiple river valley systems occupying around 50 percent of the valley covered region. In addition, around 30 percent and more area of the Tista fan will be affected by massive groundwater depletion.

Both surface and subsurface gradients in the North Rhine Westfalia (NRW) coal zone are directed to only narrow linear zone along Rhine river valley; while, both the surface and subsurface gradients of Bangladesh coal field areas are directed radially along Sib-Bamai, Atrai and Little Jamuna river valley systems. It is reported that the NRW mining area is pumping out 550 million cubic meters of groundwater annually where open

pit mining is likely to start and very interestingly this mining area is not characterised by or linked to any such region like Tista fan and thick Dupitila formation. Hence, it is apprehended that if an open pit mine is started in Bangladesh that would require dewatering many folds higher than that of NWR open pit mine area.

Boropukuria underground coal mine is pumping out around 15 million cubic meter of water annually from a water bearing formation at around 300m depth which is markedly sealed at the top by an impermeable shale/clay layer separating overlying highly porous and permeable Tista fan sediments and Dupitila formation. Thus, the present dewatering at Boropukuria underground mine is being managed for the water discharged only from the coal bearing formation. An obvious question arises that how much water shall be required to pump out when an open pit mine face alongwith the entire Tista fan and Dupitila coal field areas will be opened?

An article/company brochure published by RWE Power AG (www.mining-technology.com) states, "Rheinbraun has developed sophisticated dewatering programmes that can handle up to

1,200Mmm³/ly of groundwater with-out affecting neighbouring communities' water supplies". However, it did not mention actually how much of water is being managed by dewatering and from flooding in actual field development.

The writeup has projected the positive sides of an open-pit coal mining in NRW, Germany but it has perhaps overlooked the article published in Natural Resources on March 21, 2007 by Steffen Winter (http://www.spiegel.de/international/germany) where it was written "Germany has little oil or natural gas, but it does have large reserves of another resource: lignite. However its extraction through open cast mining is highly controversial -- and can lead to the disappearance of entire villages". It further states that "the excavators used at the mining facilities have devastated an area equal to 182,000 soccer fields, wiping at least 244 villages and neighbourhoods off the map".

More interestingly it states that "Central German Brown Coal Mining Company (Mibrag) has been owned by US investors -- Washington Group International and NRG Energy -- since 1994. There's no shortage of money, and the firm is used to dealing with public resistance: The Company has been trying to access the coal beneath the town of Heuersdorf in Saxony since 1994. The citizens protested, but then the so-called "Heuersdorf Law" was passed by Saxony's state parliament, stating that the village -- which is 709 years old -- has to be vacated by 2008. The dead buried in the cemetery will be moved to new graves and the church will be rebuilt elsewhere".

Germany is a net energy

importer, with its total energy consumption exceeding its production by a very large margin. Germany presently ranks as the world's 5th greatest energy consumer, accounting for about 3.4 percent of the world's annual energy consumption. Germany has consumed approximately 4 million gigawatt-hour electricity in the year 2003 against only one third of its own production in comparison to Bangladesh's approximately 50 thousand megawatt-hour of electricity only. A comparison on other components is listed on the table. With such differences, how could an example of benefit out of an open pit mining be brought to justify the same for Bangladesh?

It is undoubtedly true that Bangladesh is heading towards a major energy crisis in the days to come. But the reserve of coal supposed to be recovered even by open pit mining will contribute only a pond if not a drop in an ocean. Hence, it is very sincerely recommended that we must explore multiple options undertaking massive search for oil, gas and coal, wind energy in the coastal belt, small scale hydro-electricity in the hilly terrains, solar energy, coal extraction by underground mining only from the known deposits, and if possible, import of gas from Shwe Gas Field on the Arakan coast in Myanmar to get rid of apprehended crisis.

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The holy month of Ramadan is here again

KAZI AULAD HOSSAIN

THE holy month of Ramadan is here again. The Muslims all over the world must have accorded a hearty welcome to this greatest lunar month of the Islamic calendar for this enables the Muslims to observe "Siam" (Fasting) besides other concomitant duties as enjoined by Almighty Allah in Ayat (Verse) 183 and Ayat 184 of Sura (Chapter) Baqara of the Holy Quran. In Ayat 183 Allah "Rabbul Alameen" (Lord of the worlds) says: "O ye who believe Siam (Fasting) is prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you that you may (learn) self-restraint".

The grand edifice of Islam stands on five very strong pillars ("Rokons") viz: (i) Kalma (Faith), (ii) Salat (Formal daily 5-time prayers), (iii) Siam (Fasting), (iv) Hajj (Pilgrimage), (v) Zakat (Poor's due). So Siam or Fasting is one of the five strong pillars of Islam on which the chosen religion of Allah, Islam stands. We should, therefore, know the meaning, significance and lessons of Siam. We should also endeavour to understand and appreciate why Almighty Allah has prescribed fasting for certain hours from dawn to dusk for a period of thirty days during the holy month of Ramadan.

It may be mentioned here that Siam is an Arabic word which means fasting and fasting means abstinence from food and drink. But when considered or judged from the point of view of Islamic terminology the connotation of Siam is something else, something basically different from ordinary fasting.

In Islam Siam is not simply self-denial nor it is self-torture. If a Muslim simply restrains himself from food and drink for certain hours every day for a period of thirty days and does not simultaneously glorify his Creator, most Benign Allah, Who has conferred on him innumerable gifts, and does not supplicate Him during this holy month of Ramadan for his guidance so that he can, in the very words of Almighty Allah, "Walk in the right way", then his fasting or Siam is of no use to him. Now let us see what Most Gracious Allah declares in Ayat 184 of the Quran. In this Ayat Almighty Allah says: "Fasting for fixed number of days, but any one of you is ill, or on a journey, the prescribed number (should be made-up) from days later. For those who can do it (with hardship) is a ransom the feeding of one that is indigent. But he that will give move of his free will it is better for him. And it is better for you that ye fast, if ye only knew."

According to a first prize winner book "Ar Raheeq Al Makhtum" (The Sealed Nectar) written by Saifir Rahman al-Mubarakpuri the exact date of revelation of first three Verses of 6,666 Verses of 114 Suras (Chapters) of the Holy Quran (96:1-3) is Monday, 21st Ramadan night. August 10,610 AD with Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him) exactly 40 years, 6 months and 12 days i.e. 39 Gregorian years, 3 months and 22 days old.

Again, it was during this holy month of Ramadan (the month of heat) it was the usual practice of Muhammad (SM) to retire to cave

Hir of the mount An-Noor for meditation and it was on the 27th night of Shab-e-Qadr (the Night of Honour) of the month of Ramadan revelation unto him began for the first time (620 AD) and such revelation continued for a period of long 22 years, that is, till 632 AD.

Despite Muhammad (SM) being an unlettered Prophet ("Ummi Nabi") he was nevertheless the greatest of all men of all times and leader of all the Prophets (Pubt) Almighty Allah has sent down to this mundane world for the guidance of mankind. The 2nd or the 3 following Ayats of Sura Ala of the Quran moved and overwhelmed the "Ummi Nabi" to preserve the holy Quran in writing.

(1) Read thy Lord is the most Noble

(2) Who taught by the pen

(3) Who taught man what he did not know

As Prophet Muhammad (SM) knew the whole holy Quran by heart it was not at all difficult for him to dictate each of the 6,666 Ayats of the holy Quran to the scribes who also learnt the Quran by heart for its proper preservation. Such preservation of Al-Quran clearly and unmistakably indicates its authenticity.

As the three aforesaid Quranic Ayats were revealed in the holy month of Ramadan, the position of Ramadan is unique in comparison to other 11 lunar months. And Ramadan is here again. Let us grace it with observance of Siam.

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The George Bush countdown clock

CHARLES LARSON

MORE than a year ago, a friend gave me a keychain called the "Bush Countdown Clock," with the number of days, hours, minutes, and even seconds until the end of George Bush's presidency. As I write this -- watching the seconds fly by -- the clock tells me that we've got 493 days until the end of our National Nightmare -- until the end of the world's nightmare. I'm in the camp that believes that George Bush has done more damage to the world than just about anyone since World War II.

The good thing is that my feelings about George Bush are currently shared by almost two-thirds of the country. That much has the pendulum shifted against the man's stunning earlier popularity. Encouragingly, many Americans have finally wakened up, taken their heads out of the sand. The terrible news is that we still have 500 days to wait when he can continue to do significant damage to the world -- in spite of the recent defections from his administration of Carl Rove and Alberto Gonzales. (The rats have begun to abandon ship?).

One of the faults of the American constitution is that we can't have a quick election to get rid of a terrible leader. We have to wait it out, and that means ever fearful that he may make another disastrous move.

What can he still do?

First and foremost, there's the war in Iraq, which will not result in a significant withdrawal of American troops before George Bush leaves office -- perhaps none at all. If nothing else, President Bush understands that once the

American troops leave, Iraq will be in even a worse state and he doesn't want that to happen on his watch. Like an earlier American President named Richard Nixon during the Vietnam War, George Bush will drag out this debacle as long as possible for his own gain. Like other megalomaniacs (one thinks of Robert Mugabe in Zimbabwe, for example), George Bush is willing to destroy as much of the world as is necessary to implement his own vision. And if that means attacking Iran, so be it.

It is that possibility of an encounter Iran that is so frightful, because if George Bush can orchestrate a situation where he can convince Americans that Iran is a serious threat to them (as he did with Iraq), then his popularity with the average American will suddenly prevail and cowboy diplomacy will return. One more major terrorist event on American soil might engender such a situation.

Thus, the first reason why 500 days seem like an endless time. Second, the economy. George Bush and his neoncon pals convinced Americans right from the beginning that taxes should only be paid by the poor and the middle class. Enormous tax cuts for the wealthy; no sacrifice asked of the nation to pay for the Iraq war, which will certainly

cost us two or three trillion dollars by the time that all of the bills have been paid for it at the end of this century. Even convincing the head of the Federal Reserve that we could have our cake and eat it too, as the mortgage collapse currently tells us. The bigger the distortion, the easier it is for people to accept it, as one of President Bush's antecedents

clearly understood.

The world has been fortunate so far with the economy. The American dollar has lost its value against most major currencies in the world, and lately even emerging currencies are gaining as the American dollar becomes increasingly depressed. But what should be so

frightful for the rest of the world is the distinct possibility that with a major American economic collapse (a genuine possibility), the rest of the world will be brought down, too. The United States brought forth a worldwide depression in 1929. A repeat of that is not impossible. Remember those 500 days.

Finally, the environment. With no leadership on global warming coming from the United States, why should the rest of the world change? Although it is true that in recent months President Bush appears to have at least hinted that he is aware of alterations in the world's weather patterns, another year and a half without leadership from the United States about this frightful scenario--and continued debunking of scientific evidence -- can only result in more disastrous consequences in the future. The wholesale pollution in the world -- with the United States contributing 25 percent of it -- cannot afford the 500 days until the end of George Bush's presidency. Time is running out. The war, the economy, the environment. What's going to be left of the world by the time the Bush Countdown Clock reaches zero?

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WTO: Nightmare for LDCs?

BIJAN LAL DEV

THE World Trade Organization (WTO)'s Doha Round has been receiving blows one after another at its sixth year in incubator. An all-out effort was made in June last targeting to reach an agreement before the expiry of President Bush's special negotiating authority on June 30. But the crucial G4 meeting in Germany at this end collapsed acrimoniously due to stubborn differences between the parties. The Group of Four (G4) -- the United States, the European Union (EU), Brazil and India -- sat aiming to reach a breakthrough on slashing farm subsidies but broke up on disagreements over agricultural trade and industrial market access.

The US and the EU are now searching for better landing points after their high-flying in agriculture sector since beginning of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) negotiations in 1948. On the other hand, the developing countries are trying hard to hold a fine take-off position. They have been working hard since 2001 vainly to hit boundaries and without

reducing industrial tariff too much.

Negotiators from the US and the EU said, their Indian and Brazilian counterparts offered nothing new to unblock trade talks that have dragged on for almost six years. The developing world blamed the 'intransigence' of the US and the EU for the failure. Brazil and India said, the US and the EU were demanding too high a price for cutting their trade-distorting farming subsidies signalling their unwillingness to cut farm aid and import duties on agriculture commodities. Brazil recently said it would accept a tariff ceiling of a minimum of 30 percent.

Meanwhile, the Group of 14 EU member states reluctant to reduce protection for their farmers, led by France with strong Polish support, met last month and reaffirmed their opposition to big cuts in agricultural tariffs. Experts feel that in the absence of any headway in multi-lateral trade regime, the web of bilateral or regional free trade agreements will further expand. If it is continued the future will be dictated by technology and demographics than tariff.

Global trade talks have col-

lapsed after hopes were revived about the Doha Round at the 6th WTO Ministerial in Hong Kong in late 2005 following several meetings on various WTO groupings. Countries have missed deadline after deadline in their renewed two-year pursue for a new WTO accord to rekindle hopes of a global trade deal. A trade-off is to be emerged between practicability and ambition. But time is running out to conclude a deal before the US presidential election campaign next year further muddies the already turbid waters.

At this backdrop, Chief negotiators at Geneva put forward compromise proposals to the 150 WTO members in July last in two crucial and hard-fought areas agriculture and industrial goods, in an attempt to break the deadlock. They asked trading nations to mull over the proposals during a summer break and to return to Geneva in September for extensive negotiations to seal an agreement.

The new proposals advocate sharp cuts in the US farm support and in developing country industrial import duties. It would

involve cuts in US agricultural support to below \$16.2 billion a year, compared with a ceiling of \$19 billion allowed now. On Non-Agricultural Market Access issue, it is proposed reductions in industrial tariffs charged by 27 developing nations to less than 23 percent. The proposals are aimed at ending of deadlock in the Doha Development Round of trade liberalisation negotiations, launched at the Qatar capital in 2001 and brokering a compromise among the 150 WTO members.

It is estimated that the US farm support programme will pay out \$12 billion this year compared with \$20 billion the previous year. The current US offer to reduce subsidies implies a ceiling of about \$19 billion, though, because of restrictions in different categories, only about \$17 billion of that is likely to be usable. On the other hand, WTO's new proposal allows the US to provide \$16.2 billion a year. So in mathematical terms, it is workable. But the US is equally concerned about the EU's tariff reduction proposal for agriculture products. At the post Hong Kong talks, the EU

hinted to reduce tariffs by 51 percent. But the US and developing stalwarts wanted the EU to take on a 64 percent cut in farm tariffs to pave the way to opening their agriculture market.

The WTO headquarters hope that the proposition will form the backbone of further talks over the coming weeks to broker a compromise that must be approved unanimously by the 150 WTO members - preferably before the talks are hampered by fallout from the 2008 US Presidential election campaign.

But both the US and the EU voiced caution about the new proposals. The US has mixed feelings about new proposals to drive ahead shuttering WTO talks. It said, 'a lot of work has been done in the export competition and domestic support, in contrast with market access ... a significant portion on market access is just lacking.' Brazil said, 'this is not a text of convergence. It is a text that will lead to further negotiations.' India said, 'the new formula proposed for a deal on agriculture and industry tariffs is a good basis for negotiations to resume.'

Let us have a look at the impact

of globalisation on poor communities. Out of 50 LDCs, 35 are in Africa, 10 in Asia, 5 in Oceania, and one in the Caribbeans. Most LDCs including Bangladesh have opened up their economies due to the pressure of Bretton Woods institutions. Even if they are attracting foreign investments, most LDCs are not climbing the economic and technological ladder due to brain drain rendering foreign aid largely ineffective. This is sad reality for the LDCs although UNDP explored domestic factors such as illiteracy, lack of infrastructure as causes for aid ineffectiveness.

While globalisation has over the last 30 years expanded trade, increased economic output and created unparalleled wealth in global terms, the LDCs have failed to reap its benefits. Rather they are further marginalised. The population below poverty-line is increasing everywhere. At the mid-way to achieve Millennium Development Goals, it is now certain that most of the LDCs will remain far away from the targets by 2015. The picture is even worse in trade. The share of LDCs in world exports fell from 3 percent in the 1950s to 0.7 percent

in 2000s while their share in agricultural exports dropped from 3.3 percent in the 1970s to 1.5 percent in the 1990s. If the force of globalisation continues on the path of the last 30 years, it will completely sweep away the LDCs.

With the reduction of subsidy to the farmers and support to farm exporters, the global market of farm produce will be increased further. Soaring commodity prices already gasped the poor dwellers. The proposed farm deal will ensure the last nail in the coffin of 1,080 million poverty stricken people across the globe, 82 percent of whom are staying in 50 LDCs. In the Hong Kong Ministerial the WTO members pledged to provide LDCs support under 'Aid for Trade' programme and price support to offset the high import prices for food items.

These issues were also included in the package of Doha Round. In writing, it is a matter of hope for LDCs but the practicability is frustrating as the WTO members not yet realised the commitments they made at the time of founding the WTO in 1995 including allowing duty-free and quota-free access of

all LDCs' products to the developing and developed countries' markets.

A coalition of more than 200 groups ranging from the Africa Trade Network to Action Aid International a few months ago urged the US Democratic lawmakers to withdraw their support for world trade talks, which they say could deepen global poverty. They argued that a Doha deal would not live up to its promises to boost poor economies and combat poverty through trade. But LDCs do not have the strength to remain isolated sticking on the said argument as globalisation of trade and investment is the order of the day. So LDCs should pursue their own strategy at the ensuing talks in Geneva to realise world's commitments so far made in the six ministerial before entering into an agreement on Doha Development Round. Only then Bangladesh and other LDCs could reap the benefits of globalisation and trade liberalisation.

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