

Private policing

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MIRZA SHAFI

A distinguished American political scientist, Harold Laski once said that the study of politics was about who gets what, when and how. Similarly, we observe that the study of private policing is about who, how, to whom, and when in absence of any check on their performance by the relevant authorities.

Throughout the ages, policing has been done under an enormous variety of auspices -- national and local governments, revolutionary and non-revolutionary parties, neighbourhoods, churches/mosques, landowners, workers, peasants, businesses and professional associations. Even more interesting, varieties of policing are complexly mixed; it is not a modern phenomenon, but seems to have been

common in other historical periods.

Societies of very diverse sorts -- as different as classical capitalism and socialism -- are affected by similar policing imperatives, specially the need to make it effective and legitimate. At the same time, differences in social structure affect the forms that policing takes.

However, public and private policing never wholly supplant one another. Indeed, the distinction itself becomes problematic in many circumstances, especially in the US and other advanced countries. Public and private institutions there cooperate, sometimes interpenetrate, and often share modes of operation.

Yet, in these countries, authorities are discovering that for public police it is always better if compliance is achieved through ordering, whereas private police must

achieve the aim through various deterrents.

It is important that right now, after a decade of their existence, we ask questions about what private policing means for civil liberties and privacy, and for social control in general. We will not talk of its pervasive international character, but about nationally based organisations for private duties within our country.

It must be kept in mind that nowadays private policing has alerted us to the fact that the development of this phenomenon has been changing the very nature and objects of policing itself, such that an appreciation of the character and meaning of policing can no longer assume that it is most typically about crime, law enforcement, or punishment.

Rather, policing must be understood more broadly as quintessentially about order, and

the myriad ways in which it can be established and maintained.

The "police" are no longer simply large men in somber uniforms who run around trying to catch criminals.

We must understand that private policing is nothing but the involvement of the private sector in assisting the state in maintaining public order. And this ideology of policing is in conformity with the vital liberal premise that the state is an encapsulating authority that monopolises the definition of peace.

Our private space covers our person and our property and their extensions, which we perceive as our territory. Two things are involved here: one, our bodies are the residence for our unique identity as a self. I am my home and it is irreducibly a private place. Therefore, our private personal space is with us when we go about, and we expect others to respect its boundaries.

Good governance through enforcement of laws ensures the respect for another person's private space. People look to the law and its public enforcers to protect them against illegal intrusions into their private spaces, whether

those intrusions are into their homes or occur when going about in private or public places.

Etiquette protects our privacy in consideration to human rights of each and every individual. When this is not enough, people look for protection to more formal rule systems and their enforcement agencies. Where VIPs are concerned, the government may detail extra agents for their protection. Finally, general people may also privately employ protection against intrusion, or rely upon privately organised protective and security agents to do so.

Privacy and the law

Privacy encompasses those places, spaces and matters upon or into which others may not normally intrude without the consent of the person or organisation to whom they are designated as belonging. The Holy Qur'an in Surah Nur or Light (27-29) says: "O ye who believe! Enter not houses other than your own, until ye have asked permission and saluted those in them: that is the best for you, in order that ye may heed..."

In advanced countries, both public and private police systems pursue both compliance and

deterrence objectives. The public police are formally organised around the deterrence objectives -- detection, arrest, and punishment; and informally, around a peace-keeping model.

In contrast, private policing is formally organised around maintaining private order and preventing its disruption. Their role in enforcing criminal law is normally limited to mobilising the public police, and because they cannot readily turn to a body of law or to legal rules and procedures to legitimise their actions, they normally justify their actions in terms of management practice rather than legal authority.

The security guards who work as the first-line guardians in private residences, properties and their extensions, must be:

- Managed by experts both in administrative and security matters, -- at least 30% of ex-reserve personnel in their ranks and almost all supervisors and inspectors must be by security oriented persons.
- Of average physical and mental state.
- Put through an approved training course before employment for

duties, and get regular lectures on security matters to remain up-to-date.

Their duties involve warning the owners against theft, arson, loot etc, and, therefore, they must know how to "read" a person while dealing with visitors or persons who come in contact with them during the course of duty. They, working very much in the public eye, must be smartly dressed and alert at all times, immediately developing an uncanny ability to spot any malefactor.

They must have curiosity and keen sense of observation, and look for out-of-the-ordinary behaviour and gestures in people around their duty place.

Their training must cover not only a full range of laws concerned with their duties, but also such ancillary training as first-aid, life-saving, unarmed combat and (to some) the proper use and care of firearms.

Registration of the security services

Presently, all private security services are performing their services as any other trade, by having a trade license from the DCC. In fact, considering their importance for

maintaining private order, they might be required to cooperate and supplement the public police in maintaining public order, and in investigations where the public police is handicapped. Their working must be approved and supervised by the Ministry of Home Affairs.

In advanced countries, five forms of interdependence between the two are observed:

- Joint public/private investigations.
- Public agents hiring or delegating authority to private police.
- Private interests hiring police.
- New organisational forms in which the distinction between public and private is blurred.
- Circulation of personnel between the public and private sector.

Except for a few security services, which are controlled and supervised by ex-defence personnel, the rest are only supplying labour in the name of security guards, and drawing commission. That could be the reasons for murder, loot arson etc in many places having those security guards.

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Instrument of injustice

They chastise to further their own "interest," at the core of which is to ensure the superiority of US and her allies at the expense of all others. Iran is strategically placed to challenge the supremacy of a major ill of our world, Israel. Sadly, the UN has proved itself to be a force, an instrument of these nations, to be used to legitimise their actions. This way, they use the UN and its various organs to cause suffering, injustice and carnage around the world. The UN is no longer a force for good guarding the peace and stability of our world. In fact, it is now an instrument to legitimise injustice, a weapon for oppression and global dominance for a few.

TALHA J. AHMAD

IN recent years the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) has become synonymous with three issues -- the war in Afghanistan, the invasion of Iraq and the nuclear program of Iran. Although I am sure UNSC undertakes a lot of other very important tasks, it seems on the surface to be driven by a specific group of nations united by a common agenda.

The invasion of Iraq proved UN to be almost ineffectual against powerful nations not adhering to their commitment to the UN. The US, for example, has defined its responsibilities in terms, which suits it. With Iran, the US proved the UNSC to be an organisation, which ultimately will come to take US agenda as one of its own, be it somewhat watered down.

The latest round of sanctions planned against Iran is just yet another example of that, making the UNSC an instrument of injustice, which causes hardship in the lives of ordinary people in relatively less militarily powerful

nation. One, of course, may feel that I have been a little harsh towards the UN and am ignorant of the important role it has played over the years to keep order in the world. For this reason, it is a must that I put some fact in the lines below to support my assertion. Here, I only intend to take the matter relating to Iran.

What are the issues involving Iran? A rogue state? A nation led by fanatics? A power determined to

destroy our world through funding extremists and terrorists? Let us look at some facts to find the answers. But, first, we must look at the issue of nuclear proliferation and Iran. It is alleged that Iran is intent on making bombs using nuclear technology, which it must not be allowed to.

Although Iran screams loud and clear to claim that its technology is for peaceful energy production purposes, and shows no clear sign

of making any bombs, the US and some European countries have continuously been demanding that Iran stop enriching uranium. Iran's understandable refusal gives reason to these nations to call for sanctions and use their influence to get the UNSC to pass a resolution to this end.

The question is, how is it logical for nations already equipped with lethal weapons that include powerful nuclear bombs, to decide that Iran does not have the right to possess nuclear technology and know-how for the purpose of producing electricity? Why should they be allowed to raise suspicions against an independent nation that has neither shown any sign of producing such bombs, nor has acted aggressively?

Every nation should have the right to develop nuclear technology. Even if we assume that Iran is going to make bombs, why must the nations possessing nuclear bomb have the authority to demand that Iran stop possessing nuclear enrichment technology just because they suspect it to be making bombs? Does that sound fair? Or just? To me, it sounds plainly illogical and clearly prejudicial.

Of course, one of the reasons used to support the arguments to stop Iran from having nuclear technology is that Iran is an "unstable" nation whose leaders cannot be trusted or relied upon. This assertion is demeaning and must be seen as insulting to the people of Iran.

The people of Iran, in respect-

able numbers, far more than in many western nations, turn out to vote to elect their leaders. The leaders of Iran are elected by their people legitimately. No one must have the right to question the wisdom of a people who have a long history of civilisation.

For fear of lengthening this piece, I shall refrain from many more arguments, which can be placed powerfully to prove the prejudice and hostility shown unjustly towards Iran. What I shall say to end, however, is that Iran is on the wrong side of a self-proclaimed "force for good," which takes it upon itself to discipline whichever nation steps outside the limit set by these imperial arrogant powers with a desire for global domination.

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The UN is no longer a force for good guarding the peace and stability of our world. In fact, it is now an instrument to legitimise injustice, a weapon for oppression and global dominance for a few.

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Bird flu control strategy

If bird flu is now endemic, the government should now re-think its control strategy. Previously, the government policy was to cull all chickens within a 1 km radius of infected farms, and to restrict transport of poultry in the surrounding areas to prevent further spreading of the virus. However, this strategy assumes that the disease is not endemic. If the virus were not endemic, only random migratory birds visiting Bangladesh from bird flu infected countries such as China, India, Indonesia and Vietnam could spread the infection. In that case, new infections would be random and sporadic, and could be stamped out by culling.

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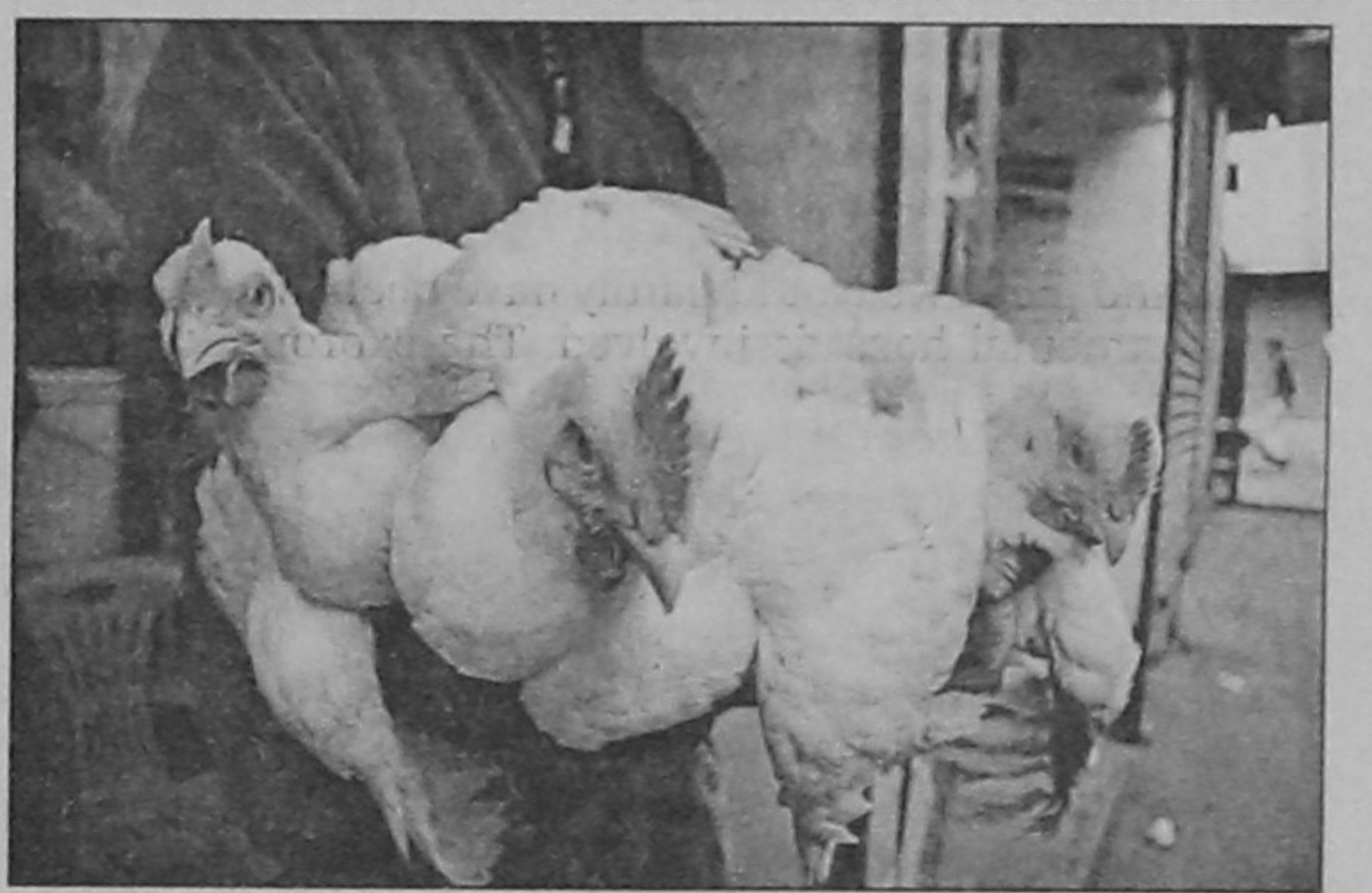
ACCORDING to the latest news reports, avian influenza (commonly referred to as bird flu) has spread to at least 20 districts in Bangladesh. This should be a wake-up call that tells us that the H5N1 bird flu virus is now so widespread that different strategies are needed to deal with it.

Aside from poultry farms, avian influenza has infected large numbers of backyard poultry (*deshi murgi*), as well as various birds in Dhaka Zoo. It is even killing local crows. Taken together, the above facts indicate that all measures to control bird flu have failed, and that the bird flu virus is now endemic. A poultry disease is said to be endemic when such a large population of local birds that it is impossible to eradicate carries it.

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However, this strategy assumes that the disease is not endemic. If the virus were not endemic, only random migratory birds visiting Bangladesh from bird flu infected countries such as China, India, Indonesia and Vietnam could spread the infection. In that case, new infections would be random and sporadic, and could be stamped out by culling.

However, once bird flu is



endemic, the virus will always be locally available to create new outbreaks; it will be carried not only by migratory birds but also by local backyard ducks, *deshi murgi* and crows. The greatest risk is from ducks, since waterfowl have naturally high immunity and are thus able to survive infection and continue transmitting the virus wherever they go.

Culling chickens on infected farms is still necessary to protect farm workers, who are the most at risk as they are constantly in contact with live chicken. But once the virus is endemic, transport controls can no longer stop the spread of the disease. Regardless of transport controls, there will always be infected birds everywhere to provide new sources of infection. In this situation, transport controls will only cause needless losses to farmers unlucky enough to have their access to markets cut off.

It is alarming that the situation

has reached this level. This means that the conventional means of stopping the spread of bird flu through culling and transport control have failed in Bangladesh. Once bird flu is endemic, vaccination of poultry is the only avenue left to prevent outbreaks and possible human infections.

Until now, vaccination has been deemed a last-ditch resort, which would only be used once the conventional method of culling and transport restriction had failed. However, we have to face reality. The reality is that bird flu is now almost certainly endemic in Bangladesh. In that case, the only way to control the damage it causes is to encourage widespread vaccination of all farmed and backyard poultry. In that case, the government has to allow bird flu vaccines for poultry to be imported and used by the industry and backyard farmers.

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Transport system for Dhaka city

QUAZI MOYED RASHID

I was very excited when I heard about a Metro network in Dhaka. However, my enthusiasm has been somewhat dampened since reading the article on the front page of the Daily Star of January 8. Although a total cost of Tk 6200 crore was mentioned, and an outline plan of the metro network was published, I could not find any other relevant information about the project. I could not be sure whether a detailed feasibility study was carried out prior to making an estimation of the total cost. A feasibility study must include initial land and traffic survey, survey of the traveling public and major business locations, soil test, and also a list of existing public and private transport routes.

I had the opportunity to attend the recent presentation by Dr. Mahbubur Rahman for Bapa at Dhaka Press Club, and read news articles by various reporters. I also read comments by a few Dhaka city residents, mainly by Md. Ashraf Hossain and recently by Tawfique Ali (Jan. 18), in the Daily Star.

Having worked for the London Underground for the last 41 years I thought it would be wrong of me not to give my views of the subject.

From my experience I can

confidently say that without incorporating the views of various technical experts and the traveling public, analysis of the existing traffic and transports, and addressing environmental issues, a new public transport system cannot be sustainable.

I welcome the presentation by Dr. Mahbubur Bari with regard to environment and the Dhaka city transport system. I fully agree with his comments that banning fuel free transports such as rickshaws from Dhaka city is not the solution to the problem of city transport, and the policy to give private cars priority over more fuel-efficient vehicles is wrong. However, I cannot agree that only rickshaws can carry more passengers than the London Underground. London city was built long before the underground railway system came in place. The world's first underground railway was built in London to relieve traffic congestion. It has never been a policy in London to replace one form of transport with another without creating an alternative. As the roads in London are quite narrow and lots of historical and heavily constructed buildings exist, and since there is no viable possibility to widen the existing roads, the decision was made to construct underground railways.

However, London still has its problem of traffic congestion, even though congestion charge has now been introduced for private vehicles entering the city boundary between 7:30am and 6:30pm. The average speed of a road vehicle in London city is 10-15 mph at present. Traveling time from the border of the city to the inner city has increased tremendously during the last 10-15 years, but that does not mean that the driver of a vehicle can jump traffic signals or drive on the wrong side of the road just to be faster than other drivers. Although more buses have been introduced on London roads they cannot move as easily as taxis, commercial vehicles, or cars. Hence, bus lanes have been introduced wherever possible.

I welcome the views of Mr. Tawfique Ali, published on January 16 in The Daily Star. He quoted comments by various individuals, including those of Communications Secretary Dr. Md. Mahbubur Rahman. Dr. Rahman stated that a 12 member committee of experts has decided in favour of Dhaka Metro Project on priority basis, even before a feasibility study has been carried out. The question is, when will a feasibility study be carried out, and how much money out of the total cost of \$5.2 billion has been allocated for this study? My question to the transport planning and financial authority is, why not

solicit views and comments from relevant experts, the traveling public, prominent businessmen and others before taking a final decision? I agree with Mr. Ashraf Hossain's statement (published in the Daily Star) that an easy, fast and affordable transport system is vital for Bangladesh. However, I cannot agree that introducing more rickshaws and auto-rickshaws along with more taxis and private cars will relieve traffic congestion and solve public transport problems in Dhaka.

After assessing comments in the newspapers and views outlined in the recent Bapa seminar, my comments are as follows:

- Relying totally on road transport will be disastrous for a highly populated city like Dhaka. Alternative public transport systems, such as Underground Metro and Tramways or Light Railways, should be considered provided infrastructure is suitable and adequate space and funding are available.
- Integrated, diverse transport systems must be considered. Building Metro by sacrificing rickshaws, bicycles and footpaths will not solve traffic problems. The existing provision for non-motorised vehicles such as bicycles and rickshaws must be improved while introducing

other forms of transports. Improvements should be made for non-motorised vehicles for easy accessibility to inner roads.

Without making adequate provisions, it will never be possible to give priority to non-motorised vehicles. Traffic congestion will increase if more and more motorised vehicles share the same lane of a main road with non-motorised vehicles.

Business Report in The Daily Star on January 13 stated: "It is difficult for Bangladesh to make room for non-motorised vehicles since the country does not have enough space." This statement confirms that it is necessary to introduce other forms of environment-friendly public transport systems such as Mass Transit, which can carry lot of passengers at a time and also can reduce the burden on roads. However, this cannot be as a replacement of other form of transports such as bicycles, rickshaws, buses and scooters. It is also necessary not to allow goods vehicles on city roads as through traffic wherever possible. Diversions should be created for this type of traffic, along with the introduction of more and more rail and river transports.

It is essential to make improve-

ments to richshaws so that they become more user-friendly to all types of passengers, such as the elderly, females, children and the disabled, and they should also be easily maneuverable by rickshaw-pullers. Separate provision for rickshaws will always be useful.

We must look at Mass Transit systems in other highly populated cities in the world where infrastructures are very similar to ours.

- More attention should be given to public transport than to the transport for VIPs (Very Important Persons). It is very sad to hear that responsible people in our country call a major road VIP road.
- Public transport should be subsidised so that the general public can afford to travel. Public transports in all major cities of developed countries are subsidised by the government (means public money).
- Footpaths should be created wherever possible, and reinstated on the roads, even if it means demolishing illegal constructions and other forms

of obstructions (including access to and from roadside buildings), which encroach onto footpaths. Private transport should be restricted on the main roads during office/business hours (say between 7am and 5:30pm), particularly if it carries less than four people.

Separate lanes should be provided for non-motorised vehicles on main roads. Slow moving vehicles such as scooters and motor cycles should not use the same lane as higher speed vehicles such as cars/microbuses and trucks/lorries on major roads. Bus lanes should be introduced on bus routes within the city.

- Approval of \$5.2 billion scheme by Strategic Transport Plan (STP) should be given a very careful thought.
- A major project such as underground Metro might need to overcome lot of constraints and, therefore, the project might get delayed and costs may rise. Construction companies (including overseas con-

sultiums) will definitely claim compensation for every item that is not specified in the contract.

In conclusion, I am all for additional forms of public transport, such as underground Metro and/or light railway/tramways, which are capable of carrying a lot of passengers at a time and are also environment-friendly. Emphasis must be placed on public transport rather than private ones. Transport rules of all major developed cities should be adopted. All rickshaw-pullers, bicycle-riders and motor cycle riders must be fully trained along with scooter/taxi, car and bus/truck/lorry drivers, and they must obey traffic rules including pedestrian crossings. International traffic signaling systems should be followed.

Enforcing traffic rules/laws is more important than written or hidden laws, which are always ignored in Bangladesh.

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