

Playing with share scam

Come out unedited report

IT is a strange position that the finance minister has taken -- to get an investigation done into the stock manipulation but not to publish it. Stranger is that the same report that the finance minister is trying to keep away from public eye so steadfastly is being published everyday in every newspaper. The question then arises why this secrecy with a report that millions have been waiting for with the hope that the real culprits behind the scam would be exposed.

The finance minister's rather simplistic explanation that the reputation of the people named in the report is valuable and therefore should not be tarnished without proper check is appreciable but not enough to justify the secrecy. The people who were in the committee are of high professional integrity and wisdom, and when they had named anybody in the report they must have not forgotten the accused persons' reputation that might come under clouds. So whatever they have done have been done with full knowledge of the implications and with judiciousness. Let the probe body and not the government take the onus of their investigation.

What would remain of the report if it is edited? In our view, the report will lose its fundamental thrust as it is full of names of both individuals and companies who had done dubious deals.

The report, we believe, should stand on its own. Any attempt of the government to tinker with it will amount to withholding information from people.

It is understandable that many of the actions of these persons mentioned in the report are not illegal per se. They had done many of the things under the existing law as one of the named persons has already told the media. But mention of such deeds is important as this only shows the gaping holes in the law that need to be plugged immediately. Moreover, one's actions can be covered by the law but it still would not exonerate him from the charge of manipulation if his willful actions lead to artificial price inflation. So we need this probe report to be published officially and in full.

Publication of the report in its entirety has now become a test of credibility for the government. Any kind of deviation would only make people wonder whether entrenched interests are being shielded.

Disgracing Lalon devotees

The fanaticism should stop

THIS time the mystic singers, whom we call 'baul' in Bengali, have become the target of wrath of some self-appointed saviours of religion. It is alarming that a section of the so-called religious figures, who are nothing but fanatics, would arrogate to themselves the right to determine who is a good or a bad Muslim.

It was an appalling report that appeared in this daily yesterday that some fanatics in Habashpur of Pangsha Upazilla in Rajbari forced some Lalon devotees to shave off their hairs and moustache to, what these extremists termed, "make them conform to Islamic ways." They were also forced to express penance in a local mosque and made to promise to shun the path of Lalon.

The bauls, who are mystical musicians and devotees of Lalon, a renowned mystic poet of Bengal, have been living in their own traditional ways, seeking the Truth in their own ways and living a life of mendicancy since the time of the great mystic poet and singer. And so far, nobody has treated them in the manner that they have been treated in this instance.

We have been observing with a good deal of concern the rise of intolerant and extremist behaviour on the part of some people in the name of Islam that border on bigotry and chauvinism. We also noted with alarm the harassment meted out to two female journalists by another religious organisation very recently. And the latest act is not only a blow to religious tolerance and the teachings of Islam, it is also a blow against our tradition and culture. These are outrageous acts that should not only be con-

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

April 12

1633

The formal inquest of Galileo Galilei by the Inquisition begins.

1861

American Civil War: The war begins with Confederate forces firing on Fort Sumter, in the harbor of Charleston, South Carolina.

1927

April 12 Incident: Chiang Kai-shek orders the Communist Party of China members executed in Shanghai, ending the First United Front.

1955

The polio vaccine, developed by Dr. Jonas Salk, is declared safe and effective.

1961

Soviets win space race, The Soviet Union beats the USA in the race to get the first man into space and Yuri Gagarin becomes a national hero.

1971

The Bangladesh provincial government in Mujibnagar is set up with Tajuddin Ahmed as Prime Minister. In the evening, the Prime Minister addresses the nation over clandestine radio and spells out the need for armed struggle against Pakistan.

1975

US pulls out of Cambodia. The US has admitted defeat in Cambodia and removed its remaining embassy personnel from the capital, Phnom Penh.

1980

Terry Fox begins his "Marathon of Hope" at St. John's, Newfoundland.

2002

A female suicide bomber detonated at the entrance to Jerusalem's Mahane Yehuda open-air market, killing 7 and wounding 104.

Deaths

1945

U.S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt dies while in office.

ENIGMATTERS



MOHAMMAD ALI SATTAR

eran, who worked in the Indian army as a truck driver observed a four day hunger strike last week to protest against corruption. His stand forced the UPA government to accept his demand for a new and tougher law against graft. He has been taking firm position against corruption and campaigning for people's right for a long time now. His standpoint compelled the authorities to take measures or pass bills against corruption and take action against erring individuals.

Recently the India Today Conclave also came up with serious deliberation about corruption in India's body politics and on the higher tables of society. Indian PM Manmohan Singh, who attended the deliberation found it very to maintain 'Mr.Clean' tag and had to say a few words to defend himself and the image of his susceptible government.

Lalit Modi of the Indian premier league (IPL) fame was sacked by the BCCI for his impure dealings in the multi-billion dollar cricket tournament, Shashi Tharoor had to quit his ministers office for his alleged involvement in supporting his wife to get a business favour and lately the 2G scam severely dented the image of the Prime Minister and his UPA government. Add to it the three year old cash-for-vote scandal, which puts an indelible mark of immorality on Manmoham Singh's clean slate. Rajiv Gandhi had a harsh time with the Bofors scandal. An Indian columnist terms the UPA government as the most corrupt ever.

India is rising. But a part of it is also rotting. The stench of corruption is ever present. It is heartening to see somebody rising to the occasion each time when things get too far. Anna Hazare is the man of the moment. His fight is still a lone battle. For we have

not yet come across any name from the politician who lent his support to his cause. Anna's images in the newspapers with MK Gandhi in the background reminds one of Gandhi's days with the British. India certainly has a new leader who appears to be giving birth to a new breed of generation who would not be easily buoyed by corruption.

And then there is the communal politics which poses a serious threat

Today, corruption has inflicted us so severely that we don't have the force of reasoning in us. We lost the power of judgment. The will to speak for the right cause has almost vanished. We lost our minds.

to the secular ideas of the state. BJP often makes wrong headlines for its controversial stands. LK Advani is not receptive to ideas that do not suit him. Young Varun Gandhi appears to be a non-negotiable individual. Bal Thackarey believes in intolerance. So we have people who, by their own rights, influence things and do not allow a comfortable ride to the others.

In Bangladesh, like India, we also have corruption in almost all spheres. We are so steeped in corrupt practices that this has become the norm. Today we have almost forgotten a life or a system where there's no corruption involved. Like India we also have our media that comes down hard on any information that involves corruption.

Corruption has found many definitions in our social set up. Like India we also have people who criticize the unethical and immoral practices and raise voices against financial malpractices by individual or institution. But these groups are so small that they are mostly not heard. Their genuine concern dies down as wrong-headed clamor.

Unfortunately, we don't have politician who would either go on hunger

We are in severe drought of an ideal political party with an ideal leader who would dare to raise his voice against corruption or fast unto death for a right cause. We should recall Maulana Bhashani, who would go on hunger strikes to protest any wrong doing by the ruling government. He also organized a long march to Farakka protesting the building of the Farakka barrage by India.

Latest news of the Stock Market



LISA ZADOR

strike to protest against corruption. Rather it's the other way round. We are involved in corrupt practices collectively. We have syndicates in all spheres. We have accomplices in all sectors; we have protectors in all fronts, that's e how we get away even with the severest crime.

Corruption has spread far and wide. From the consumer market to the stock market the rotten souls and minds have been mercilessly fleecing the hapless people. They are in mad race for minting money by way of winning a work order for a multi million dollar power project or a flyover contract. Down to the Upazilla level they are involved in mindless corruption. They are strong because they are the political and social elite.

debacle was a shocker, but more frustrating has been the Finance Ministers stand on withholding the names of the individuals and institutions from making them public unless he is convinced. What does this imply?

Today, corruption has inflicted us so severely that we don't have the force of reasoning in us. We lost the power of judgment. The will to speak for the right cause has almost vanished. We lost our minds. Only a corrupt mind involves in vice. How should we guard our minds and souls from the plague of corruption? Let's all try and find the answer.

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| The New York Times EXCLUSIVE

Time's up, Gadhafi

CURT WELDON

IN 2004 I traveled to Libya as the head of a bipartisan Congressional delegation to express support for Col. Muammar el-Gadhafi's decision to give up his country's nuclear weapons program. We met with Gadhafi, high-level officials and ordinary people, and I even addressed the annual meeting of Libyan legislators.

Neither the White House nor I wanted to lend support to Gadhafi himself; our goal was to open a new era of engagement between the United States government and American business with the Libyan people themselves.

Seven years later I am back in Libya, this time on a much different mission, as the leader of a small private delegation, at the invitation of Gadhafi's chief of staff and with the knowledge of the Obama administration and members of Congress from both parties. Our purpose is to meet with Gadhafi today and persuade him to step aside.

There is no question that America should play a critical role in helping the Libyans build a new government. Sadly, in the years since my first trip, Washington has squandered many opportunities to achieve that goal without bloodshed. And unless we begin to engage with the country's leaderseven those close to Gadhafiwe may again lose our chance to help build a new Libya.

Despite our stated goal in 2004, and that of two subsequent delegations I also led, America has concentrated on Gadhafi himself. All contacts went through him or his family, who were given too much say over

American-led initiatives. But as we've learned through similar efforts in Azerbaijan and Armenia, the key to promoting reform in a foreign country is to identify and engage with emerging leaders.

Indeed, that's what we intended to

The world agrees that Gadhafi must go, even though no one has a plan, a foundation for civil society has not been constructed and we are not even sure whom we should trust. But in the meantime, the people of Libya deserve more than bombs.

do in Libya. But plans for a coordinated effort between Congress and Libyan legislators to nurture a new generation of Libyan leaders never developed. A plan to bring international nongovernmental organizations into Libya to develop its civil institutions never materialized.

Because both the Bush and Obama

administrations failed to follow up on those initial efforts, today we have few contacts in the country's leadership beyond Gadhafi himself, and we have no strategic plan for Libya after he leaves.

A second element to our plan was to promote engagement between American and Libyan business interests, and thus foster the country's free market. But while American companies have made billions of dollars in Libya since 2004, they have failed to engage with anyone but the Gadhafi regime itself.

On a trip to Libya last summer I met with Ahmed Gadi, an engineer at Al Fateh University. I asked how a recent \$500 million contract awarded by the Libyan government to an American engineering company had benefited his students.

Not at all, he said; there had been no contact at all. The government and the company preferred to keep the deal, and the money, between themselves.

There's nothing wrong with American companies profiting from business with Libya. But did they also consider their larger responsibility to American interests? And where were the White House and Congress in all this?

Fortunately, despite the bombs still dropping on Libya, it's not too late to act.

First, we must engage face-to-face with Gadhafi and persuade him to leave, as my delegation hopes to do. I've met him enough times to know that it will be very hard to simply bomb him into submission.

Simultaneously, we must obtain an immediate United Nations-monitored cease-fire, with the Libyan

Army withdrawing from contested cities and rebel forces ending attempts to advance.

Then we must identify and engage with those leaders who, if not perfect, are pragmatic and reform-minded and thus best positioned to lead the country.

For example, Baghdadi Mahmudi, the prime minister, and Mustapha Abdul Jalil, the head of the rebel National Council, should meet with the United Nations envoy to the country, Abdel Ilah al-Khatib, and work out a schedule for fair elections for a new president and legislature.

They should also create a committee to develop a new governing framework.

Gadhafi's son Saif, a powerful businessman and politician, could play a constructive role as a member of the committee to devise a new government structure or Constitution.

The younger Gadhafi, who has made belligerent comments about the rebels, has his detractors. But he also pushed his government to accept responsibility for the bombings of a Pan Am flight over Scotland and a disco in Germany, and to provide compensation for victims' families. He also led the effort to free a group of Bulgarian nurses in Libya who had twice been sentenced to death.

The world agrees that Gadhafi must go, even though no one has a plan, a foundation for civil society has not been constructed and we are not even sure whom we should trust. But in the meantime, the people of Libya deserve more than bombs.

Curt Weldon was a Republican representative from Pennsylvania from 1987 to 2007.
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