

Ironically, it appears that nearly 64 years after George Orwell wrote about omnipresent government surveillance in his novel 1984, the fictional assertions have come true. "Big Brother" is indeed watching us!

→ ACH time I return to the United States from an extended trip to Bangladesh, my senses need to re-adjust to the environment. It's not merely the change in the landscape but the shift in culture and attitudes. The most perceptible difference is the perva-

sive silence and solitude which stand in stark contrast to the noise and frenetic activity in Bangladesh. I miss the bus-

tle of Dhaka; especially the sudden ringing of the door bell and a friend's laughing voice announcing a surprise visit. Unfortunately, that rarely happens here because in the West the boundaries of "privacy" are very narrowly defined. While neighbours and friends welcome you with warm smiles, they rarely drop by for an informal chat or engage in intimate personal conversations, since that is considered an intrusion into your private life! This time my homecoming to a "privacy-conscious America" has

received a jolt from the revelation that the government has been eavesdropping into the private lives of ordinary American citizens! The whistle blower is a former CIA and National Security Agency (NSA) employee, Edward Snowden. He provided information to The Guardian and Washington Post that the US government is conducting a surveillance programme for monitoring telephone calls of all Americans! Shocking as the news is, it is doubly disquieting for people like me, who were convinced by the moral tone of President Obama's recent counterterrorism speech underscoring the need for reviewing national security policies that impinge on civil liberties!

To support his accusations, Snowden presented a secret order of the US Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court. The order requires leading US phone company, Verizon, to provide the NSA with information on all phone calls in its system. According to Guardian's Glenn Greenwald, "the communication records of millions of US citizens are being collected indiscriminately and in bulk -- regardless of whether they are suspected of any wrongdoing."

Ironically, it appears that nearly 64 years after George Orwell wrote about omnipresent government surveillance in his novel 1984, the fictional assertions have come true. "Big Brother" is indeed watching us!

The Snowden leak has triggered a raging media debate. He defended his stance by asserting that his actions were solely motivated by the intention to inform the US public of the government's secret scrutiny of their private lives. He also claims that he has disclosed only what he thought would serve public interest, accusing the NSA of conducting "the largest program of suspicionless surveillance in human history."

Snowden's critics have accused him of compromising US security, arguing that security interests override privacy interests. They also make the point that since much of the information on emails and Facebook is made available for commercial purposes, the government's use of similar data cannot be considered to be an egregious violation of privacy. But the fact is that Google and Facebook provide relevant consumer information to companies with the knowledge of users. What is scary about the NSA programme is its secret and predatory nature.

Moreover, as most of us know, disaggregated information can only reveal some aspects of people's personalities and activities, but is not holistic enough to draw definitive conclusions. Hence it can be distorted and misused.

Human Rights and Civil Liberty Groups claim that the phone surveillance programme violates both the First Amendment rights of free speech as well as the Fourth Amendment's protections against "unreasonable " searches and seizures. The US government has countered this accusation by stating that the program is being conducted with adequate legal safeguards. This clarification has, however, failed to assuage the concerns of many ordinary citizens whose private lives are being pried upon and that, too, within a legal framework. The issue is not that most people have nothing to hide, but that phone monitoring is a violation of the right to privacy which is so dear to Americans. Since surveillance inhibits freedom of speech and actions, it could stifle democracy. The debate between liberty and security is longstanding and many

nations continue to grapple with this internal tension. However, given that the United States has always championed freedom and democracy, Snowden's revelations, in many ways, have exposed the hypocrisy of the system. Whether Snowden will be remembered as a hero or a traitor, only history will tell. But the more important question is: Will the United Sates be viewed by future generations as a nation that compromised its liberty for security, based on assumptions and not proven tangible benefits?

Benjamin Franklin warned: "They who can give up essential liberty to obtain a little temporary safety, deserve neither liberty nor security."Admittedly, modern technology has created new realities and greater opportunities for intrusion into citizens' private lives. However, US National Security Policy makers need to reflect on Franklin's sagacious advice...it is relevant for all times!

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Olympic Day

JACQUES ROGGE

HE International Olympic Committee (IOC) is widely known as the organisation behind the Olympic Games, but far less is known about its work towards bringing the joy of sport to people who could never aspire to compete on a global stage.

Guided by the belief that sport is a human right, the IOC supports a wide range of initiatives to encourage sport and physical activity for people of all ages and abilities. One of the most popular events is Olympic

Day, a global celebration that commemorates the founding of the modern Olympic Movement in Paris on June 23, 1894. Nearly four million people in over 150 coun-

tries took part in the Olympic Day activities last year, and expected to increase this year. In some ways, Olympic Day is the polar opposite of the Olympic Games -- it is a celebration of inclusion that is open to everyone, and there are no set requirements for the featured activities. Although Olympic Day Runs have become a

popular annual event in communities around the world, other activities have included tricycle races, group exercise sessions and backyard games -- whatever it takes to get people moving. Some countries have incorporated Olympic Day activities into the school curriculum. Others have added concerts and exhibitions to the sports activity.

Olympic Day does not look like the Olympic Games, but there is a strong connection. Both are rooted in the belief that sport and physical activity are essential elements of the human experience. Both bring people together. Both seek to inspire others to engage in sport. Both provide a platform for promoting Olympic values. Because Olympic Day typically attracts

young people, it is also an opportunity to raise awareness of the Youth Olympic Games -- a unique event that combines sport, education and cultural programmes. Other IOC initiatives promote grassroots committee.



Jacques Rogge

sport in communities that would otherwise have had few options for organised physical activity. The IOC has also joined forces with international organisations, such as the United Nations (UN), to use sport as a tool for development, conflict resolution, HIV prevention and other positive social goals. A three-year IOC collaboration with the UN

High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) is bringing the joy of sport and the benefits of education to a refugee settlement in Namibia, where 40% of the population is between 10 and 30 years old. The project uses sport to educate participants on healthy lifestyles, gender equality and the prevention of pregnancy and The list of similar projects is long. All of the

IOC's varied activities in this area are guided by the belief that sport is for everyone, not just the elite athletes at the Olympic Games. The Games will always be the centrepiece of the Olympic Movement, but every human being, regardless of ability, can benefit from sport and physical activity.

Gold medals are great, but health is its own reward. So whether you are an Olympian, a weekend athlete or someone whose connection to sport is mostly via television, we encourage you to get active on Olympic Day. Enjoy whatever level of physical activity fits your ability. If you do, you will be a sure winner.

The writer is President of the International Olympic

Bangladesh-South Korea: Enduring friendship

There should be reforms in the trade regimes so that tariff barriers are

minimised to enhance consumer welfare of both the countries.

Mahfuz Kabir

OUTH Korea has been a good friend and development partner of Bangladesh for long. This year, they are celebrating the anniversary of their diplomatic relations of four decades. South Korea has extended significant cooperation and support to Bangladesh since early 1970s. A strong development partner of Bangladesh, South Korea opened its embassy in Dhaka in early 1975, more than a year after the establishment of diplomatic relations in 1973. Bilateral relations cover a wide range of areas that includes trade, investment, infrastructure development, human resource development, and science and technology.

From almost similar socio-economic performance back in early 1960s, South Korea emerged to be an 'Asian Tiger' in early 1990s. It speaks volumes about the country's developmental ambition to become an East Asian economic powerhouse. Its GDP crossed \$1 trillion in 2011 with a per capita GDP of \$22,424. It entered the elite club, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), in 1996. It is amongst the countries highly integrated with the world economy.

It has emerged to be an important potential destination of manpower export of Bangladesh. Bangladesh-South Korea bilateral trade reached \$1.76 billion in 2011-12. From a meagre \$22.86 million in 2005, exports to South Korea were worth \$209.7 million in 2011-12 and \$226.9 million in July 2012 to May 2013, which implies 123% growth per year.

In terms of volume, imports also increased considerably by the same period, from \$446 million to as high as \$1,551 million, with annual average growth rate of 41%. South Korea occupied the 3rd position as import source of Bangladesh surpassing Japan, Singapore and Hong Kong. The bilateral trade as the share of total trade with the world shows a growing trend, from 6.82% in 2000 to 9.44% in 2011-12. Thus, Bangladesh economy is becoming gradually more integrated with South Korea's, and increasingly opting for South Korea as its major import source.

Bangladesh maintains a small basket of exports to South Korea. 35.07% of export receipts come from raw hides and skins (other than fur skins) and leather (HS code 41), followed by woven garments (29.22%). These two contribute

nearly two-thirds of the country's export basket to South Korea. Knitwear is also in the list of top three, but its export share is considerably low -- only about 9% of total exports. Only ten commodities at HS-2 code contribute more than 97% to the total export basket, ranging from minerals, food items, footwear, tobacco, toys, and raw leather. Tanned or crust hides and skins of bovine (HS 41044900) earns about 34% of the total exports, followed by woven garments (men's or boys' jackets and blazers) and copper waste and scrap, which are together worth more than half of the total export receipts.

Import items are more diversified as top ten items (HS-2 level) contribute about 76%. They include iron and steel (25.1%), followed by ships, boats and floating structures (14.7%), paper and plastic items (13.7%), boilers and machinery (5.7%), and minerals. These items play a crucial

ture, energy, RMG, textile and ICT. The new areas of investment include jute and leather. Recently, Samsung group expressed high interest to invest in Bangladesh for manufacturing Smart Phone, which would generate employment for 50,000 people. South Korean Trade-Investment Promotion Agency

interested to increase its volume of investment in infrastruc-

(KOTRA) opened its office in Dhaka in 1978. South Korean entrepreneurs came to the country to set up garment factories in the late-1970s in accordance with Multi-Fibre Agreement (MFA), which provided unique opportunity to Bangladesh to establish RMG industry. The boom in Bangladesh's RMG industry, which mostly drives its economy, is due to initial training from Korean Daewoo Corporation back in 1979.

Bangladesh is Korea's priority partner country when it

role in Bangladesh's manufacturing sector, domestic value comes to development cooperation as it is the fourth largest Trade and investment would be the most important areas that should be harnessed in the near future to build on successes so far in the four decades of economic partnership.

addition, and export to the critical export destinations.

Bangladesh also witnessed significant flow of FDI, both 100% and joint venture, which are highly employment intensive in nature. It is also becoming an important source of remittance, albeit of small annual manpower export. Moreover, South Korea provides considerable foreign assistance, which is mostly in terms of loan.

The stock of FDI from South Korea has been increasing steadily. From \$162.23 million in end-2000, it increased to \$ 436.5 million in June 2012. Thus, it grew at around 169%, and annually on average by 14.7%. At end-June 2012, FDI inflow from South Korea was \$46.34 million, which was the 2nd among the top investing countries. Majority of FDI in January-June 2012 came to textiles and apparel (about

South Korea has already invested considerably in the Export Processing Zones (EPZ), energy, RMG industry and infrastructure development sectors in Bangladesh. Now it is

HENRY

recipient of Economic Development Cooperation Fund (EDCF) loan from Korea. Karnaphuli EPZ in Chittagong, the first private EPZ in Bangladesh, expects to attract investment of \$1.3 billion from South Korea when it is fully operational

There is a growing trend of manpower export to South Korea. Since Bangladesh already has government to government (G-2-G) agreement with the South Korean government, workers can be exported with low migration cost. Between 1994 and 2012, the total manpower export to South Korea was 27,581, which was 0.35% of total export.

Under Korean International Cooperation Agency (KOICA), bilateral MoU was signed on June 16, 1993. Under this MoU, \$31.44 million was granted for 16 projects up to June 30, 2012. Ten projects worth \$17.14 million have already been completed. South Korea has also been offering generous support to Bangladesh in voluntary service and training for long. Korean volunteers and physicians come and stay for around two years under World Friends Korea. It covers health, rural development, ICT development and teaching of Korean language.

It is believed that Bangladesh has huge untapped export potential to South Korea, which should be realised through removing behind and beyond the border constraints. As Kabir (2013) shows, the long-term untapped export potential is as high as 46%. It means that Bangladesh can increase export to South Korea significantly by removing behind the border constraints such as infrastructural and institutional barriers.

Trade and investment would be the most important areas that should be harnessed in the near future to build on successes so far in the four decades of economic partnership. There should be reforms in the trade regimes so that tariff barriers are minimised to enhance consumer welfare of both the countries. In doing so, there is a need for preferential market access of Bangladeshi products to South Korea through further liberalisation, which would help in reducing the mounting trade deficit disfavouring Bangladesh. The other key recommendations for further strengthening bilateral relations and building on past successes would be as follows:

• Increasing KOICA's grant;

· Attracting investment in research and development

 Utilising opportunities in Korea in education and HRD. Further training facilities should be explored in agricultural R&D, bio-technology, ICT, light and heavy manufacturing, and extraction sectors;

Strengthening cooperation in science and technology;

· Establishing heavy manufacturing plants with support from Korean technology and big manufacturing industries; · Addressing institutional problems, like entry and insti-

tutional barriers; • Strengthening G-2-G cooperation in manpower export for exploring further opportunities;

· Reducing risks and uncertainties as well as confrontations to reap maximum benefit to facilitate attainment of double-digit growth and developmental targets.

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by Mort Walker

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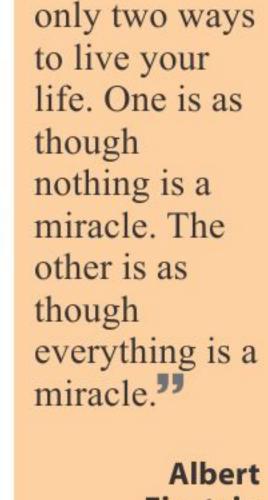
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Yesterday's Cryptoquip: IF A HOPPING EASTER ANIMAL IS FANATICAL ABOUT SOMETHING, COULD YOU SAY IT'S A BUNNY RABID? Today's Cryptoquip Clue: B equals Y





by Don Tranchte



QUOTABLEQuotes

There are

Einstein