

"The chief problem with trying to do everything at once is that we end up doing very little at all."

Dr. Bjorn Lomborg, the President of the Copenhagen Consensus Centre, a top ranked think tank and one of TIME magazine's 100 most influential people, shares with Amitava Kar the idea of sharpening the SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals) targets to a much smarter, more effective list.

Please give us a background of the Bangladesh Priorities Project which you launched during your visit to Dhaka earlier this year. What are the objectives?

We will engage Bangladeshis across the country to discover their views about the biggest challenges facing the country. Through this process, which will include readers of The Daily Star, along with NGOs, decision makers and businesses, we will collate a list of the top challenges for Bangladesh.

For each of the challenges, we will engage with some of the world's and region's top specialist economists, who will establish the smartest solutions along with their costs and benefits.

Using cost and benefit analysis is an innovative approach in terms of prioritising development solutions in Bangladesh, where this has not been used before.

With the new economic evidence, we can engage the country in talking about how Bangladesh and donors could best approach each of the challenges, whether healthcare or education or pollution.

We will ask Bangladeshi thought leaders, youth forums, and decision makers, to use the research to identify their priorities for investment.

With knowledge of what we can achieve with every taka, the project will focus attention on some of the smartest solutions for Bangladesh.

You commissioned research and cost-benefit analyses on 22 diverse topics of development, and were trying to redefine some of the SDGs for effectiveness and efficiency, whittling them down to a couple of dozen, down from the 169 goals set by the UN. Has that come about?

The SDGs will replace the Millennium Development Goals and influence the flow of more than USD 2.5 trillion over the next 15 years, so it's vital that we get them right.

The United Nations' process has so far created an unmanageably long list of 169 very broad global development targets. All 169 targets are well-intentioned, but setting out to balance 169 competing objectives is wrongheaded. Some achieve a lot more than others. The chief problem with trying to do



Dr. Bjorn Lomborg

PHOTO: S K ENAMUL HAQ

everything at once is that we end up doing very little at all.

More than 80 economists at the Copenhagen Consensus Center analysed the United Nations' plans and identified the targets' costs and benefits to society. This showed that focusing on the 19 most effective targets would achieve four-times more good.

The United Nations is still debating its priorities, and will set the final list in September. We continue to engage with ambassadors and governments to share the results of our research and promote the idea of sharpening the SDG targets to a much smarter, more effective list.

Would you share with us some solutions for Bangladesh?

Identifying solutions is a process where we

will be working with many different Bangladeshis, through our partner BRAC, as well as with academics, donors and NGOs and politicians. We will of course share the solutions - and all of our new research - with Bangladesh and the entire world during Bangladesh Priorities.

What kind of partnerships have you been able to build in Bangladesh? What do you need to make this project a success?

We are engaging with a really wide range of Bangladeshi stakeholders, which we think is vital. I'm really excited by the level of local interest in the project, and the new research that will create smart solutions to the biggest challenges facing the country. Our partner is BRAC, not only a Bangladeshi development success story but also a global

leader and pioneer in creating opportunities for the world's poor. We will be working very closely with BRAC - and the rest of the development and policy community - to ensure that this research informs and improves the Bangladeshi conversation about priorities - and to make sure as many voices as possible are part of this vital discussion.

We would be excited to consider other partners across government, development and civil society, so I encourage those interested to get in touch via our website.

What was your motivation behind founding the Copenhagen Consensus?

I founded the Copenhagen Consensus Center in Denmark more than a decade ago because I believe that some of the world's biggest

decisions made - how to improve the lives of the most needy and destitute - must be much better informed. Too often today, these decisions are made based on irrelevant things like media attention. What I set out to do with Copenhagen Consensus is to provide an answer to the question: how can we do the most good with our spending?

The Center has worked with more than 100 expert economists, including seven Nobel Laureates, to look at smarter ways of spending money on everything from climate change to healthcare. We first establish the costs and benefits of different ways of spending money - if you imagine development priorities as a menu, what we do is make sure that each item on that menu has a price-tag and description attached. Then we go the next step and explore which investments should be prioritised and which ones should not.

Today, the Center is internationally recognised for using economic science to identify the full range of social, environmental and economic benefits of competing investment choices, and for injecting rational facts into heated policy debates.

THE NOBEL LAUREATES' GUIDE TO THE SMARTEST TARGETS FOR THE WORLD 2016-2030

BJORN LOMBORG

Countering law enforcement delinquency

How can citizens be involved in this process

STRAIGHT LINE

MUHAMMAD NURUL HUDA

A Bengali daily editorial highlights the contentious issue of complaints of corruption and irregularities against police, and the propriety of enquiring organisations that are supposed to look into such allegations for remedial action. Reportedly, police leadership has taken serious exception to the

Emerging political reality, ground conditions relating to the complexion of services and also the facets of inter-services rivalry, perhaps, cannot be brushed aside in trying to appreciate the reported action and reaction.

While the matter would hopefully be disposed of on its merit, this writer wishes to dwell on citizen involvement in mitigating law enforcement deviations. This dimension assumes significance as citizens are the victims of law enforcement excesses and indiscretions, and thus interventions and actions beyond the formal channel are expected to prove complementary and salutary.

We could possibly dilate on citizen involvement models. Such models refer to organisational accountability bodies, composed wholly or in part of citizens that provide some level of oversight over police operations. Traditionally, citizen involvement models have focused on how police departments investigate complaints filed by citizens against officers. In recent years, some citizen involvement models have expanded their focus to include overseeing use-of-force investigations, issuing annual reports, providing outreach to citizens in the community.

One could refer to external 'citizen oversight' models. These organisations are generally separate from the police department, with offices in a separate location. They often take citizen complaints and perform their own investigations.

Many of these organisations are composed entirely of private citizens, although some also include police personnel.

There is, however, no one universal model of citizen involvement. Rather citizen participation models are organic, emerging from a host of local variables, and the model is largely dependent on the police and the community and the history of the relationship between these two groups.

It is relevant to note that among topics of police excesses, officers' use of force has attracted the most attention. The authority to use physical coercion and deadly force distinguishes the police from other types of organisations. Despite the consequences for citizens when this authority is misused or abused, use of force has only been subject to meaningful organisational constraints only recently.

Concerned citizens could think of specific issues to be discussed in a workshop. For example, a workshop could be convened to discuss how best to collect data on excessive use of force. Participants of such workshops could include police officials, lawyers, researchers, and civil society members. An important issue of concern could be the lack of a single source of information like court records, citizen complaints, police reports that would provide the complete picture of incidents.

It is significant to note that police officers are

the public officials that society has authorised, even obliged, to use force if needed. Ensuring that police officers use the warrant equitably, legally, and economically on behalf of citizens is at the core of police administration.

The experience of a police officer in the United States provides valuable insights: "Challenging police wrongdoing is hard for some: many officers cover themselves in a narrative of heroism, sacrifice and risk whenever their actions are questioned. But, just because a person is signed on to do a dangerous job does not give him or her right to maliciously injure or recklessly take the lives of the people that police officers are sworn to serve and protect. And when an officer stops serving and protecting, he or she should be severely punished both for the violation of that person's rights and the violation of the public's trust."

Law enforcement agencies generally do not make earnest efforts to first acknowledge the pattern of abuse that exists unless they are forced. Policies can be useful but if it is not followed and there are no consequences for failing to do so, it won't help. Insisting on accountability does not make one anti-law enforcement or pro-criminals; it means demanding responsible law enforcement that is serving, not defending against, the community.

The writer is a columnist of The Daily Star.

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QUOTABLE Quote

ALBERT EINSTEIN

Logic will get you from A to B. Imagination will take you everywhere.

CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

- Rope fibers
- Play parts
- Honolulu hello
- Sun Valley's state
- Museum Piece
- "Bolero" composer
- Track part
- Wake up
- Unified
- Near-eternity
- German article
- Made weary
- Paper pack
- Long fish
- Razed
- Say further
- Silent assent
- Brewed beverage
- What karats measure
- Some Father's Day gifts
- Madrid museum
- Tree part
- Cleaner scent
- Banks of the Cubs
- Historic times

DOWN

- Tricky puzzle
- Cultivating tool
- Franklin's wife
- "Tartuffe" writer
- "Modern Family" dad
- Bodily pouch
- First person
- Yielded under pressure
- Letter before iota
- Songs for one
- Streep/Nicholson film
- Dove cry
- Home of the Oilers
- Devour
- Outlaw Kelly
- Skin soothers
- Darling
- Singer Orbison
- Sadat's predecessor
- Cobbler fruit
- Artist Albrecht
- O'Neill work
- Altar vows
- Bull, in Barcelona
- Gym unit

Yesterday's answer

FASTS SAGAS
INLAW AGORA
LEADERBOARD
EAT AILBAN
TRESTLE ONE
WEE JIGS
RADAR BITES
ABET PEG
TIP PEASANT
ALL RAN LEI
TEETERBOARD
ANTER ALIVE
TEENS GENES

KATALYST
Improving business, improving lives

Request for Proposal

Katalyst is a market development project that aims to contribute to increasing the income of poor men and women in rural areas. It does this by facilitating changes in services, inputs and product markets, which in turn increases the competitiveness of farmers and small enterprises. Katalyst is co-funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), the UK Government, and the Danish International Development Agency (Danida). It is implemented by Swisscontact under the umbrella of the Ministry of Commerce, Government of Bangladesh.

Katalyst is looking to finance a project on the following topic:
Mainstreaming Women's Economic Empowerment (WEE) in the interventions conducted in Farmed Fish sector

Katalyst wants to work with a consulting firm who can carry forward the work of implementing gender in fish farming activities of Bangladesh.

Details regarding the Request for Proposal and the templates for submitting the proposals are available at: <http://katalyst.com.bd/category/opportunity/>

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