

## Turkey's abortive coup

*It is a victory for elected governments everywhere*

WE rejoice at the failure of the attempted coup in Turkey, thwarted with the help of the people, the first of its kind perhaps in recent times when the armed coup-makers submitted to an unarmed public. We express our solidarity with the Turkish people and compliment them for keeping high the flag of democracy in their country. And while we rejoice at their victory we share with them the agony of the lives lost in the incident.

It must be stated without ambiguity that the military has no role in politics whatsoever in any country; attempting to overthrow an elected government is no way of protecting democracy – ostensibly the motivation that stimulated the coup leaders in Turkey to embark on the unsuccessful venture.

The failed coup, we are sure, will strengthen Recep Tayyip Erdogan's hands which we hope will encourage him to be more inclusive and consensual in governing the country. So far, however, it must be said that Erdogan's method of running the country has left much to be desired. His attempt to consolidate power through constitutional amendments, crackdown on free press and redesigning the high courts, more than 2,700 judges have been dismissed immediately after the coup, betray his tendency to relapse into more autocratic mode of governance.

It is our hope that Erdogan will use this opportunity to give democracy in Turkey true meaning. Democracy cannot work if there is a prevalence of absolute power in the hands of one individual, which apparently Erdogan is trying to achieve. One of the essential prerequisites for democracy to flourish is to ensure checks and balance between all the organs of the state, more so when there is absence of a strong opposition.

## Number crunching of casualties in road crashes

*Why?*

THE confusion over the death count in road crashes during Eid holidays is unwarranted. Bangladesh Passengers' Welfare Association claimed 155 people were killed in road crashes between July 1 and July 9 across the country while the government put the number at 42. Does that anyway reduce the severity of the problem? Even 42 deaths is 42 too many. Why should there be even one casualty if that can be avoided with some implementable measures?

As disturbing as it may sound, the trend is not new. According to a WHO estimate, the actual number of deaths yearly in road crashes in Bangladesh may be around 20,000, one of the highest in the world, although the numbers released by various authorities in the country are much lower.

It's not just the numbers. The reasons behind such a high number of deaths are also 'unclear.' According to the Accident Research Institute, almost always, it is the driver who gets the blame although their research identifies other factors as well such as the condition of roads, and vehicles and carelessness of pedestrians. Police stations should have specialized, well-trained units to investigate the real reasons behind the crashes. Journalists too can play an important role by producing reports that are more analytical and objective rather than emotional, they recommend.

Instead of splitting hairs on the matter the authorities should take measures to ensure that the number of road accidents and casualties are brought down to zero.

# Ramifications of terror attacks in Bangladesh



MACRO MIRROR  
FAHMIDA KHATUN

At a time when Bangladesh has broken the 6 percent growth trap and has begun its journey towards achieving a faster growth of about 7 percent, and at a time when Bangladesh has achieved the status of a lower middle income country with a per capita income of USD 1314 in 2015, it experiences the greatest shock in recent times. This has suddenly changed the perspective on Bangladesh. The ruthless killing of 20 lives, including 17 foreigners at the Holey Artisan Bakery of Gulshan in Dhaka on July 1, 2016, by terrorists has brought new realities for Bangladesh. A country which boasts to be a moderately Islamic country, holding the values of Islam yet being tolerant to other religions and a country that is reputed for its warmth and hospitality towards foreign nationals, has come under the global radar due to the brutality of recent terror attacks. While the grief for the lost lives is going to make a permanent place in our hearts, the implications of this painful episode on other spheres of lives cannot be ignored either.

Economic development of Bangladesh is apprehended to bear the brunt of this incident. Countries which lost their citizens on that horrifying night - Japan, Italy and India - are all important partners of Bangladesh's development. Japan is the largest bilateral donor for Bangladesh. In 2015, the country disbursed USD 366 million as foreign aid. Recently, Japan signed its 37th Official Development Assistance Loan Package for Bangladesh, which amounts to USD 1.65 billion, the largest ever in the history of Japan's ODA to Bangladesh, at an interest rate of 0.01 percent and repayment period of 40 years, including a 10-year grace period. About 230 Japanese companies have invested in Bangladesh, mostly in export

processing zones; the investment amount is equivalent to USD 250 million. Japanese support and investment are in sectors such as disaster management, infrastructural development including power plants, deep sea port and metro rail. Tragically, the seven Japanese who were killed during the Dhaka terror attack were working for Bangladesh's metro-rail development project. Bangladesh's exports to Japan were worth USD 615 million in 2015, of which the share of RMG was USD 448 million.

As for Italy, it is one of the important export destinations for Bangladeshi products, particularly readymade

which kills people across the globe – Dhaka, Istanbul, Paris, Nice, Iraq.

On its part, Bangladesh has to work hard in bringing back the confidence of investors, development partners and the foreign community. The damage has already been done through worldwide media coverage. Now Bangladesh needs to reassure foreigners working here about their safety. The government has beefed up the security of the diplomatic zone in Gulshan and Baridhara, and other important places, including the Dhaka airport. But there are also foreign consultants and officials involved with projects, who are working at the field

out of Dhaka. Some are considering continuing their operation through regional offices, such as Delhi or Bangkok. We hope that this will not have any negative impact on the size of their operation in Bangladesh. But this obviously is an indication of the insecurity felt by foreigners in Bangladesh. This will have an impact on prospective investors and visitors to Bangladesh. As an important sourcing destination of apparels, the country may face new challenges if buyers do not feel secure to come to Bangladesh, and if they place their orders in other countries.

The shocking revelation of the terrorists' social background has prompted us to reflect on our education system, particularly that of the private universities where some of these terrorists studied. Run like private banks, some of these universities have made education a commodity, through which they can mint money. Many of these universities do not have a registrar or a proctor, and the Vice Chancellor has no say at the board room. Several of these universities have mushroomed through high profile connections without any plans for human resources and curriculum. Borrowed teachers from public universities often find no reason to be an integral part of the university. The curriculum of these universities does not include holistic education that helps students to become enlightened human beings. Instead, they try to cater to the need of the corporate world, sprinkling a bit of everything in the syllabus. It is time to bring an overall change in the education system.

Globally, the impact of terrorism has been manifested through reduced growth, mainly due to higher government expenditure for actions against counter-terrorism and loss of investment. The new reality dictates that Bangladesh has to strategise its security measures with the help of its friends so that its growth momentum can continue.

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garments. In 2015, Bangladesh exported goods worth USD 1,170 million, of which USD 1,070 million constituted of apparels. Italy is also a source of remittance for Bangladesh. On the other hand, India's aid disbursement amounted to about USD 93 million, while exports from Bangladesh to India were worth USD 542 million in 2015. Bangladesh expects these countries to continue supporting its efforts in achieving sustainable economic growth and poverty alleviation in the coming days. The assurance of the prime ministers of the respective countries to work together towards counter-terrorism is the recognition of the fact that terrorism is now a global phenomenon

level. Their safety should also be ensured. We should also be careful in sending out our messages to the global community. While the Prime Minister fears more terror attacks in the country, some ministers are probably trying to show a brave face, dispelling possible negative impacts of the recent terror attacks in Bangladesh.

But the terror attack at Holey Artisan Bakery has been taken very seriously by the diplomatic community and development partners working in Dhaka. Some of them have given their officials the option to send their families to their respective countries, and many officials have already started to move their families

## PROJECT ■ SYNDICATE

# Remaking Britain



GORDON BROWN

BRITAIN will have a new prime minister today – but the country's post-European Union future remains uncertain. Indeed, prolonged delays are likely in implementing the voters' decision to leave the EU.

The first uncertainty is the date when exit negotiations will start. The process should be completed within two years of invoking Article 50 of the Treaty of Lisbon; but the incoming prime minister, Theresa May, has already said she would not want to trigger negotiations until the end of the year.

The second uncertainty is whether the negotiations can simultaneously resolve the United Kingdom's terms of exit from the EU and its future trading arrangements with Europe's single market. While the UK will claim that, under Article 50, negotiators should be "taking into account the framework of future relationships," the EU trade negotiator is insisting that future arrangements can be discussed only after Britain leaves.

The third uncertainty is Britain's negotiating objectives. Will it seek full access to the single market (the Norwegian option), or to part of it (the Swiss option)? Or will it go for the Canadian low-tariff option, or just trade with Europe on the same terms that all World Trade Organization members do?

The fourth uncertainty arises from voters' concerns over immigration and the extent to which any new EU trading arrangement must be conditional on restricting the free movement of workers. The new prime minister has said she would not accept engagement in the single market without a deal on managing migration.

In theory, the Norway option – membership of the European Economic Area – could be stretched to include a Lichtenstein-type protocol on limiting residency permits, or involve use of the EEA's safeguard clause, which might allow restrictions on migration if inflows rose too quickly. But, fearful that others would demand a similar dispensation, the EU would find it difficult to agree to such a change.

The fifth uncertainty is the EU's own negotiating stance, starting with who will lead the negotiations, the European Commission or the Council of Ministers. German Chancellor Angela Merkel has already made it clear that she will not give the Commission carte blanche to negotiate on Germany's behalf. Beyond this question lies another: whether Europe will agree on its final negotiating stance before France's presidential election next spring and Germany's general election next autumn.

The sixth uncertainty is the economic circumstances under which the negotiations will take place. Britain appears to be sliding toward recession as companies put their investment plans on hold. Business pressure on the UK government to move more quickly will thus grow, as a longer wait means a further ebbing of confidence and, in turn, a weakening of Britain's bargaining position.

The seventh uncertainty is whether the UK itself can survive. Lord North is remembered for losing the British union with America. Two centuries on, the outgoing prime minister, David Cameron, may be remembered for losing two unions – with Europe and between England and Scotland. Whereas Conservatives want Scotland to be in a Britain without Europe, Scottish nationalists want Scotland in a Europe without Britain. And with Northern Ireland's Republicans, led by Sinn Fein, demanding a vote to reunite with the south, the very existence of the UK is now squarely on the agenda.

There is one way to lessen uncertainty and risk: The government should quickly announce that it will be negotiating with the EU on the basis of the Norway option of membership of the EEA. And it should make clear that EU nationals resident in the UK are welcome to stay.

This avenue would give Britain what businesses want – access to the single market. While the UK would still have to contribute to the EU budget, it could repatriate responsibility for agriculture and fisheries policies and negotiate its own trade deals (for example, with China and India). Joining the EEA would offer an additional advantage – giving Scotland the level playing field it wants in trading with the 27 EU members.

It is also essential to resolve the vexed issue of migration. Any genuine solution must include a fund to help communities whose health facilities, schools, and other public services are under stress because of above-average population growth. Tougher enforcement of minimum-wage and other legislation protecting workers is needed as well, so that we allay fears that migrants are forcing a race to the bottom. And EEA negotiations should begin on the basis that our membership would include a protocol on migration

fracturing old political loyalties throughout the West.

The result has exposed a Labour Party divided between a leadership that elevates anti-globalization protest above winning power and a Parliamentary group that knows it has to explain how globalization can be managed in the public interest.

But the governing Conservatives are also split on how to respond to globalization. Some believe in a global free-for-all; others believe that Britain should be free of foreign entanglements; and a third cohort wants, like Labour, to be part of the EU, viewing it not as the problem, but as part of the solution to managing globalization. But, because of these divisions, none of the leadership contenders have put forward any proposals that address in any meaningful way the grievances of those who feel left behind.

So post-referendum Britain needs a more comprehensive debate on how it will cope with the challenges of global change and how it will work with the international community to do so. A viable program for managing globalization would recognize that every country must balance the autonomy it desires with the cooperation it needs. This would include coordinated monetary and fiscal policies across the G20



and the ability to use the safeguard clause if pressures grow.

An eighth and even greater uncertainty, however, concerns Britain's future global role. In particular, how will it respond to the irreversible shift in the global economy's center of gravity toward Asia, and to the technological innovations that are revolutionizing industries and occupations – and thus increasing voters' anxieties about their employment prospects and future livelihoods?

The referendum result revealed high concentrations of pro-Brexit sentiment in towns once at the center of the British industrial revolution but now awash with derelict factories and workshops, owing to Asian competition. These areas rebelled against the advice of political and business elites to vote "Remain" and instead demanded protection from the vicissitudes of global change. The "Leave" campaign's very slogans – centered on bringing control back home – aligned it with populist, protectionist movements that are

countries; renewed efforts to expand world trade; new national agendas addressing inequality and promoting social mobility; and a laser-like focus on science, technology, and innovation as the key to future growth.

As long as globalization appears leaderless, anti-globalization protesters will stifle reform, shout down proposed trade deals like the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership and the Trans-Pacific Partnership, and make national economies less open. Now facing life outside the EU, Britain cannot ignore or sidestep these global issues. The UK must now decide whether it will stand up to the protectionist impulse that drove Brexit and what part it can play in making globalization work for all.

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## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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### "Quality of journalism"

This is in reference to the article with the above mentioned title by Kuldip Nayar published in The Daily Star on July 1, 2016. I don't think it would be wrong to say that as far as Bangladeshi media (both print and electronic) are concerned, it's quite well aware of the 'lakshman rekha' (boundary) they should abide by 'voluntarily' or otherwise.

However, Mr. Nayar's last paragraph on UK media brought my attention back to renowned CNN Chief International Correspondent Christaine Amanpour's write up "Brexit: Truth, myths & media" published on June 30, 2016 on edition.cnn.com that explicitly describes how most of UK media outlets looked the other way instead of making the public aware of the real facts while pro-Brexit leaders were dishing out lies and falsehood about EU vis-à-vis UK! The accompanying video of Amanpour debating with Daniel Hannan, a member of EU parliament and a prominent pro-Brexit campaigner is worth watching as it shows how racism has begun to show its ugly head openly.

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