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REGIONAL AFFAIRS

Officer Assesses Ground Capabilities in Gulf

90AE0260C Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew
19 Aug 90 p 10

[Article by Yig'al Lev: "The Ground Forces Will Not Have a Central Role"; interview with Major General (Res.) Avigdor Ben-Gal; place and date not given]

[Text] [MA'ARIV] How will the Gulf war appear from the viewpoint of the American ground forces command?

[Major General (Res.) Avigdor Ben-Gal] The ground army will not play a central role in the war. The Americans do not intend to conquer Iraqi territory.

[MA'ARIV] How will the ground battle develop?

[Ben-Gal] The ground forces will be used mainly to destroy quality targets, that is: communications stations, commands, airfields. Helicopters will land elite units for hit-and-run operations.

[MA'ARIV] And the American armored fist?

[Ben-Gal] It will remain on Saudi territory for purposes of holding off Iraqi armored incursions and in order to defend the oil installations.

[MA'ARIV] If that is the case, the ground forces will, in effect, remain outside of the game.

[Ben-Gal] The American intention in the Gulf war is not to take territory, and certainly not Iraq. The goals will be to destroy the ground-to-air missiles, to hit economic and military targets, to disrupt the Iraqi army's command and control system, and to spread demoralization.

[MA'ARIV] How will the Americans take Kuwait from Iraq?

[Ben-Gal] For this purpose, the Arab forces will be used, Saudis and Egyptians. Not American forces. They will operate after the completion of the destruction of the Iraqi force.

[MA'ARIV] How long do you estimate that the battle will last?

[Ben-Gal] It is a matter of four to five days.

[MA'ARIV] And how will it be concluded?

[Ben-Gal] Either when Saddam Husayn's regime falls, or when it asks for a cease-fire and gets out of Kuwait.

[MA'ARIV] When will the war break out?

[Ben-Gal] Within a week, at most. If the Americans do not act within that period, the coalition of the armies of the U.S., the NATO alliance, and the Arab states will break up.

Egyptian General Says Gulf War Impossible

90AA0338A Cairo AL-AHALI in Arabic 29 Aug 90 p 7

[Interview With General Muhammad Fawzi, ex-Minister of War, by Riyadh Sayf-al-Nasr in Alexandria; "General Muhammad Fawzi in Frank Interview With AL-AHALI: Military Confrontation Between United States and Iraq Is Impossible; U.S. Plan for Presence in Gulf Was Prepared Last March; U.S. Forces Incapable of Liberating Kuwait; Iraqi Assault on Kuwait Is Mistake; Detaining Hostages Is 'Master's Blow,'" First Three Paragraphs Are AL-AHALI Introduction; date not given]

[Text] General Muhammad Fawzi, an ex-minister of war, asserts that military confrontation between the United States and Iraq will not materialize despite all the manifestations of the troop concentration that encourage the belief that war will erupt at any moment. This is due to the destruction capabilities possessed by each side. Thus, war means destroying both sides together.

The ex-minister of war believes that the United States does not want a direct confrontation with Iraq but seeks to achieve its objectives by influencing the adversary's (Iraq's) resolve so that he may back down from the steps he has taken. This is what is called in military science the "strategic deception approach."

In the three-hour long interview conducted with him by AL-AHALI at his residence in Alexandria, General Fawzi presented a new vision which merits debate. He said: The U.S. plan to establish a military presence in the Gulf was prepared last March after the United States had discovered Iraq's intentions and ambitions in the Gulf. Preparations to confront these ambitions were made early. As for the Saudi invitation to the U.S. forces, it is, in the opinion of the ex-minister of war, a mere formality providing a cover for the event.

Gen. Muhammad Fawzi asserts that the Arab and foreign forces present in the Gulf region operate under the U.S. military command.

[Sayf-al-Nasr] Will war break out?

[Fawzi] It never will.

[Sayf-al-Nasr] All experts have asserted that there is no other way.

[Fawzi] I disagree, and I have my justifications.

[Sayf-al-Nasr] What are these justifications that motivate you to exclude war?

[Fawzi] The United States is constantly declaring that it has come to defend Saudi Arabia and that it will not go to war unless Saudi Arabia is exposed to danger. Iraq declares that it will not attack Saudi Arabia. This means that a direct confrontation (combat) between the Iraqi and U.S. forces will not materialize. The status quo will remain unchanged in implementation of the strategic deception plan which has been launched by the United

States and whose objective is to exploit the U.S. air and naval superiority to force Iraq to back down without fighting.

There are other reasons, including the fact that war will destroy both sides and that after their numerous wars, the U.S. people do not want direct military confrontations that cause loss of life among their citizens.

[Sayf-al-Nasr] What is the impact of this frozen situation on Iraq?

[Fawzi] Iraq is standing fast against the deceptive strategy steps and the psychological warfare launched by the United States since the outset of the crisis. It is also enduring the blockade and its consequences in the hope of holding dialogue with any influential international party to seek a peaceful solution without war.

[Sayf-al-Nasr] Which party is likely to perform this role?

[Fawzi] I believe that the Soviet Union has a big opportunity to mediate.

Who Will Liberate Kuwait?

[Sayf-al-Nasr] Who will liberate Kuwait?

[Fawzi] I assure you that the U.S. forces are incapable of liberating Kuwait for a simple reason, namely the lack of ground troops capable of performing this task.

[Sayf-al-Nasr] Why do you ascertain that there is a premeditated U.S. plan for a permanent presence in the Gulf?

[Fawzi] This is not a matter of opinion. Last March, the United States issued a paper listing its objectives in the Middle East, namely: To secure Gulf oil, to move it in the interest of the major industrial countries and to support the regimes ruling the Gulf. A third objective was added in the wake of the crisis, namely to ensure the safety of foreign citizens. The United States realizes that Iraq is lying in waiting to obstruct the achievement of the U.S. aspirations to seize Arab oil.

[Sayf-al-Nasr] What battles? [as published]

[Fawzi] It suffices that the U.S. Central Intelligence [Agency] got Iraq embroiled in the war with Iran. The United States had also wagered that Iraq would lose the war, which is not what happened. After the cease-fire was established between Iraq and Iran, the United States entered to back up Iran with its political and military weight on the pretext of regional balance between the two powers, disregarding the fact that Iran had been defeated and that Iraq had triumphed. The United States also agreed with Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Kuwait to increase oil production in an attempt to lower oil prices, thus affecting Iraq's development plan. The matter developed into the international anti-Iraq campaign in the wake of [Iraq's] execution of the British spy, as well as other campaigns launched because of the scientific development in the production of chemical missiles. Iraq

uncovered the plots of the United States which has helped the Gulf states against Iraq. All these precludes motivated Iraq to seize Kuwait, because Iraq believes that it is historically entitled to Kuwait's oil.

[Sayf-al-Nasr] What is your assessment of Iraq's invasion of Kuwait?

[Fawzi] I do not at all approve of this approach, and I consider the step to be completely wrong. Iraq could have gotten all the oil it wants without resorting to the invasion method.

Operations Theatre

[Sayf-al-Nasr] Let us move to the theatre of operations to acquaint ourselves with the military situation.

[Fawzi] Insofar as the United States is concerned, the U.S. forces that have participated in operation desert shield consist of the rapid deployment force which is protecting the Dhahran base. This base is where the U.S. forces are primarily concentrated. These forces include the 82nd Brigade which has 120 Apache helicopters. This is in addition to two mechanized infantry divisions. These forces total 40,000 troops. As for the marine infantry, they have come from naval bases inside and outside the United States. These forces amount to nearly 60,000 troops. This is in addition to the reserve forces, of which 50,000 members have been called up. There are also assisting forces, including AWACS planes which constantly supply the command of the theater of operations with strategic information.

In addition to the rapid deployment forces, there are the naval forces of the Seventh Fleet which includes four aircraft carriers with a total of 300 fighter planes. This fleet has been entrusted with the command of the naval forces in the Indian Ocean, the Gulf, and the Red Sea. These forces also include 50 warships of various types from 12 countries participating in operation desert shield.

As for the air forces, they consist of 44 bombers and reconnaissance planes deployed in the NATO base in Turkey and 500 more British and U.S. planes deployed in Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Bahrain. This is in addition to squadrons of B-52 bombers which represent the strategic reserve for the air forces participating in operation desert shield. These squadrons are deployed in the United States.

Arab Forces

[Sayf-al-Nasr] What about the Arab forces?

[Fawzi] These forces contribute indirect assistance. They are symbolic forces. There are 5,000 fighters from Egypt, 1,200 from Syria, and 600 from Morocco. These forces have been deployed in Saudi Arabia as a political cover.

[Sayf-al-Nasr] Will these forces depart when their mission is completed?

[Fawzi] It is my estimate that these forces will remain in Saudi Arabia and the Gulf even if the Iraqi forces withdraw from Kuwait.

[Sayf-al-Nasr] Under which command do the forces participating in operation desert shield operate?

[Fawzi] Under the U.S. command. This command has been rushed from its headquarters in Florida to command and control management of the combat operations and to lead the British, French, and Arab forces. All these forces operate under the U.S. banner.

Combat Expertise

[Sayf-al-Nasr] Let us move to the other side, meaning the Iraqi forces. What is your assessment of their efficiency?

[Fawzi] We must acknowledge that Iraq has armed forces that have had an eight-year combat experience. These forces are assisted by air forces that cannot be taken lightly, in addition to three brigades of medium-range missiles which have extraordinary capability to use chemicals. A total of 170,000 troops have been concentrated along the main axis in the south—Kuwait.

Iraq is considered to be politically strong because it possesses two fundamental elements:

The ability to destroy the region's oil wells with any possible means.

The ability to kill the foreign nationals, numbering more than 7,000.

[Sayf-al-Nasr] But this use of the hostages has enraged the entire world?

[Fawzi] If you are talking of law, then such an act would be in violation of the rules of the law. As for military action, it is considered a "master's blow" because it limits enemy action and prevents expansion and entrenchment of the crisis, especially since the United States cannot sacrifice the hostages.

[Sayf-al-Nasr] If war breaks out, what are the axes that pose a threat to the Iraqi forces?

[Fawzi] The main axis comes from the south, either Saudi Arabia or the Gulf. The secondary axis is from Turkey. These are axes that employ air forces because the U.S. forces do not have ground troops.

[Sayf-al-Nasr] What is your assessment of the degree of the combat capability of the two warring parties?

[Fawzi] The U.S. ground forces do not possess combat capability in desert warfare, excluding the 82nd Airborne Brigade which has trained with Arab forces, as in the case of the Bright Star exercise with Egyptian forces. Moreover, the temperature which rises to 45 degrees celsius in the shade is something new to which the U.S. soldier participating in the desert shield theatre of operations is not accustomed. Thus, the U.S. forces generally

are not balanced organizationally, and there are no non-U.S. forces on which one can rely to make up this deficit.

[Sayf-al-Nasr] What about the Iraqi forces?

[Fawzi] Iraq's ground forces, air defense units, and missile units enjoy combat capability. As for the naval forces, they cannot keep pace with the other forces quantitatively and qualitatively. We must not ignore the combat capability Iraq gained from eight years of combat in which three generations of recruits participated. The Iraqi military command gained broad experience in a 1,200-kilometer battlefield.

Who Will Win a War

[Sayf-al-Nasr] What are the results you expect if a military confrontation does take place?

[Fawzi] Should combat break out between the two sides, it will be destructive to both. Iraq is capable of destroying most of the oil wells existing in the Gulf states.

[Sayf-al-Nasr] How?

[Fawzi] The matter requires no more than assigning a combat task to two surface-to-surface missile units and a single squadron of MIG-29's to carry out a single mission, namely to destroy the Saudi and UAE oil [wells]. The success possibilities are no less than 100 percent. The consequence will be destruction for both warring sides.

[Sayf-al-Nasr] Perhaps you are dropping the density of the forces existing in Saudi Arabia from your calculations?

[Fawzi] Absolutely not. Regardless of how dense the forces defending a precious target are, this density cannot prevent penetration by a single aircraft or a single missile from any inlet.

[Sayf-al-Nasr] What is Israel's position?

[Fawzi] It has been completely excluded. The operation is a U.S. operation which Israel has nothing to do with.

Egypt's Position

[Sayf-al-Nasr] What is your assessment of Egypt's position toward the crisis?

[Fawzi] Egypt, the leader and the possessor of a glorious military history, of vigilant human forces, and of a sensitive strategic position, has lost the opportunity to make the right decision at the right time for the Egyptian people.

[Sayf-al-Nasr] And what is this decision?

[Fawzi] The decision to send 50,000 troops from its armed forces to the combat theatre in order to defend Arab principles and implement the Arab League charter

(prevent aggression between Arabs), thus becoming the prevalent force in the theatre and the alternative to the U.S. force which has been rushed to Saudi Arabia and whose lead troops have already arrived there. The consequence is that it has now become difficult for Egypt to make any gains when the crisis is ended.

[Sayf-al-Nasr] Did not Egypt have any option but to send this immense number of fighters to the theater of operations?

[Fawzi] Egypt should have declared at an early time that it is opposed to the presence of U.S. forces in the region for the first time since the departure of the British occupation.

[Sayf-al-Nasr] What is your interpretation of Egypt's tardiness in taking such a position?

[Fawzi] It is my opinion that Egypt lost its decision-making in the Arab world when President al-Sadat turned over this decisionmaking to the United States on 20 October 1973 and declared that the October war was the last Egyptian war and when he reaffirmed this declaration with Henry Kissinger on 7 November 1973. The new reality was later recorded in the Camp David documents.

National Security

[Sayf-al-Nasr] What is the impact of the military confrontation in the Gulf on pan-Arab security?

[Fawzi] Do not ask me about pan-Arab security because this security cannot be achieved in the absence of Arab unity. Do not ask me about the pan-Arab gains made by Egypt since 1952. Do not ask me about the Arab solidarity which was achieved in the 1960's, and do not ask me about the recently-established Arab blocs. The U.S. movement is a real setback for the Arabs coming together.

[Sayf-al-Nasr] What is your vision of the Arab region's future after the crisis ends, whether by war or peacefully?

[Fawzi] Regardless of war and peace, the U.S. forces will stay in the Gulf, and they will remind us of the strength of the British colonialism at the end of the past century and the beginning of this century. The question that dictated itself to the fathers and forefathers is resurfacing: What shall we do vis-a-vis the new colonialism?

Sagacity must now include the Egyptian people's interests in the coming solution. Though it is difficult to foretell future changes, the compass that leads us to the safety of shore is the compass by which we give the Egyptian people's interest priority over any other consideration.

ISRAEL

Israelis Analyze Effect of Television on Gulf Crisis

90AE0260A Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew 19 Aug p 10

[Article by Rafa'el Man: "A Live Broadcast From Baghdad"]

[Text] Saddam Husayn has the appearance these days of someone who is losing his nerve in the face of the international seige that has been imposed on his country. But there are signs that, even in these hours of pressure, he is demonstrating calm and is carrying out several sophisticated moves that may aid him in the coming stages.

One of those moves is the way in which he is handling the American media, and his decision to allow the senior representatives of American television to enter "the lion's den" in Baghdad.

In America, they are relating to Ted Koppel's trip to Baghdad (through the mediation of King Husayn) in the context of the sharp competition between the television networks and their stars. This time, Koppel won out over Dan Rather, the stern and experienced announcer of the evening news on CBS. But the competition between the networks, as gripping as it is, is only a marginal aspect of the matter. The essential aspect lies in the fact that Koppel—and, like him, the representatives of the other networks who will follow in his footsteps—may fill an important function if and when a military confrontation breaks out in the Gulf.

Saddam and his advisers learned the lesson of Vietnam, where television played a central role. President Lyndon Johnson understood that the war in Vietnam was lost not when he read the intelligence reports or listened to his political advisers, but when he learned that Walter Cronkite—the veteran announcer of CBS news—had returned from the battlefields and had taken a negative position on the struggle.

The Persian Gulf is not Vietnam, but the power of American television has only increased since pictures of the boys sunk in the mire and blood changed America's attitude to the war. The message that will be transmitted this time by television from Iraq is liable to gradually create fissures in the broad support for military action that President Bush now enjoys.

To this is added also Saddam Husayn's stratagem in rounding up the American and British citizens that are in Kuwait. The holding of these hostages indeed arouses the Americans' anger and intensifies for the moment the will to act assertively towards the Iraqi ruler. But by exploiting correctly the predicament of the hostages and their families—through the media—the atmosphere in the U.S. is liable to change.

With extensive media exposure and stress on the personal-humanitarian dimension of the hostages, as American television knows how to do, the public in the U.S. is liable to shift the focus of the matter and the concern from the fate of conquered Kuwait or the future of the aggressive Iraqi ruler to concern for these individuals.

The opening of the direct channel to the American media by hosting television stars in Iraq and the holding of hostages are two stratagems that George Bush will have to take into account if and when he decides on military action. This does not mean that they prevent him from acting—but the decision will become more complex as time passes.

SUDAN

Planning Minister Discusses New Economics Policy

90AA0283A Khartoum AL-SUDAN AL-HADITH
in Arabic 5 Aug 90 p 5

[Interview with Minister of Finance and Economic Planning 'Abd-al-Rahim Hamdi, by 'Afaf Bukhari: "Equitable Arrangements Will Guarantee Excellent Rights to Laid-off Employees"; Khartoum, date not given]

[Text] The point of entry into this conversation with Finance and Economic Planning Minister 'Abd-al-Rahim Hamdi, which took place in his office in the Planning Agency, was the 3-year Economic Salvation Program's provision to reduce [government] jobs by 10 percent of the total work force—500,000 jobs—in order to lighten the burden of the government's first class of expenditures, namely salaries.

Rationalizing

Because this decision has caused diverse reactions, we asked the minister of finance, "Is it a dispersal of the work force?"

The minister said, "First, why use the expression 'dispersal of the work force'?"

"Isn't this government acting according to the public service laws? Don't the provisions of these laws specify that jobs may be cancelled and employees be given their due afterwards according to the formula authorizing this?"

"If the government has the powers that authorize it to use the provisions of the laws by which it controls its various agencies, what is so strange here?"

"The Sudanese government has been engaging in this practice for more than 20 years. The government has done nothing new now. What we have proposed is a reduction of the excess work force. If each individual confronts himself, he will certainly be convinced that this excess exists. Some may be acquainted with people who hold two [government] jobs. Is it just for some to receive unjustified income? Based on these preliminary

surveys, there are 50,000 excess jobs in the government apparatus. The number may even exceed this figure, if more exact studies are prepared, or it may be less. Nevertheless, the fact remains that there is an excess of employees in the government."

Security Funds

Mr. 'Abd-al-Rahim paused while we raised a question about the measures that will be taken regarding this excess.

He said: "There is more than one solution, and there are a number of measures. We have provided many resources. These will create numerous opportunities for anyone who chooses early retirement from government service or whom the government encourages to retire. These opportunities are in the agriculture and livestock sector, the related sectors of transportation, storage, and transfer, the export sector, and the small industries sector. We have provided hundreds of millions of pounds in financial resources for these sectors. In the agricultural area, for example, it has been decided to establish a fund to finance agricultural and livestock production by various sectors of local investors—small farmers, agricultural graduates, agricultural cooperatives, and the owners of orchards, vegetable farms, and poultry farms. The fund has a capital of 1 million Sudanese pounds.

"Also, a fund with an initial budget of 100 million Sudanese pounds will be established to finance craftsmen and small industries. Hundreds of millions in additional funds will be made available from the commercial banking sector, now that this kind of funding has been freed from credit ceilings. We have provided the necessary guarantees to the investor.

"Work opportunities outside the government apparatus are therefore broader. They will form a naturally attractive area for talents from inside the government apparatus."

Attracting Experience

[Bukhari] "But we fear that this will lead to weakening the government structure through the loss of its experienced personnel."

Mr. 'Abd-al-Rahim replied: "It will pose no danger to the government. We are fully aware of the matter. In the period now before us, we shall in fact need a [large] number of managers, professionals, and technicians both inside and outside of the government apparatus. We have therefore created a national fund with an initial budget of 10 million Sudanese pounds to attract the Sudanese talents needed to lead the development process from inside and outside the country. We have amended the current laws in order to help achieve this goal."

The minister of finance said: "There are a series of other measures. If someone wants to transfer to the private

sector or leave government service and turn to investment—our idea is that the employee will in this case be given a partial salary, depending on the length of time considered appropriate, with this step to precede the actual steps before taking private employment.

“The government intends to remove all administrative, economic, and legal obstacles confronting businessmen and investors. Their activity will proceed in accordance with new policies and measures. For example, the government’s monopoly will be canceled in agricultural and industrial production fields, domestic and overseas marketing, and the economic services area. The government will leave these fields by selling unprofitable government-owned companies, selling government-owned shares in them, or turning them into public joint stock companies in partnership with the domestic or foreign private sector.

“Naturally, the service of a number of employees will terminate as a result. However, the reality will make it necessary for the great majority to remain in service under the new management of these companies.

“As for the minority who lose their jobs, we will work to retrain them. We have therefore established a social responsibility fund with a preliminary budget of 1 billion Sudanese pounds drawn from real resources to give direction by various means and measures. There are programs to alleviate the burden of increased prices for low- and limited-income groups inside and outside the government apparatus. This will insure that the support necessary to retrain the employee in question is given.

“The government has not offset for everyone the loss of his job. However, if someone chooses to work outside the government apparatus, or if the government transfers someone else out of the government apparatus, the government will stand beside them until it redistributes them to other areas.”

Section 26A

[Bukhari] We asked Mr. 'Abd-al-Rahim Hamdi about those whom the government had in fact retired “for the public welfare” under Section 26A and whether they counted among the desired number of employee reductions. Some have mentioned that they number 20,000.

The minister answered: “Another question: Has the government ever stopped applying this section since independence?”

“This section on retirement for the public welfare was used excessively under certain governments and misused under others.

“Under this government it has been used at the rate of .2 percent. We estimate that there have been only 1,000 cases of retirement for the public welfare. One-third of these cases were by decision of the previous government.

The case includes police force jobs. What is now being said about the displacement of railroad employees must be reviewed objectively.

“The railroads used to carry 6 million tons; now they carry only 600,000 tons, while the work force has increased many fold. Why shouldn’t employees be subject to this section, as long as everyone receives his due and finds someone to care and provide for him?”

“Many other government companies are like the railroads. Remember that a study made 2 years ago recommended reviewing the condition of the railroads.”

Open Door Policy

We asked Mr. 'Abd-al-Rahim Hamdi: “The current economic policy to stir the stagnant Sudanese economy and direct it toward production seems to be pushing everyone toward the private sector and the market. Is the market ready to receive this great shift?”

He replied: “We have set policies that will insure the freeing of prices in the agricultural and export fields. We have exempted cotton and gum arabic from this policy until the market widens. When the market widens, it will bear any shift that may occur to it from the interest of investors.

“Indications now are that interest is most intense in the area of agriculture. We expect this to become apparent at the end of the agricultural season. People will then sense this effect.

“We therefore hope that citizens will also move toward production. Without production, the distress will continue. From the government’s side, we have pledged to provide all possible security, tranquillity, and confidence for the investment field. It remains for citizens to move.”

Encouraging Exports

We wanted to use this meeting to bring up with Mr. 'Abd-al-Rahim some observations about certain policies in the 3-year Economic Salvation Program.

[Bukhari] “A policy of encouraging exports has been announced. Fears have emerged that this will allow a loophole through which currency will be smuggled or will leak into the peripheral commodities market at the expense of basic commodities.”

Replying to these fears, the minister pointed out that the program enabled the exporter to obtain up to 40 percent of export receipts for basic exports—to be defined later by decrees of the Bank of the Sudan. For peripheral commodities, this can reach 100 percent. However, this will be in accordance with regulations on imports. Revenue from exports will be used to import inputs for such priority industries as textiles, oils, foods, chemicals, packaging, and engineering industries, inputs and equipment for rain-dependent agriculture, and inputs for the

transportation sector, in addition to the most important building materials. There is nothing to be feared from this policy.

Currency Market

On currency trading and its prevalence and intensified activity outside the Sudan, he said:

"There are regulations to prevent this illegal activity from flourishing here at home. Unfortunately, it is very difficult to establish the same regulations outside the Sudan."

We said to the minister: "The establishment of a social responsibility fund has been announced to offer assistance to those in need, either directly, or by supporting certain basic commodities. How will these commodities be supported, particularly when prices are rising?"

He said: "Yes, the government will support certain commodities. To insure that this support reaches the poor and those with limited income who are entitled to it, we have moved toward regulating commodity distribution outlets by introducing such commodities as sugar and gasoline into the commercial market. We are now going to introduce bread also into the commercial market, so that what the well-off pay will go to the poor who are entitled.

"We will support bread from the social responsibility fund."

[Bukhari] We brought up the idea of transferring the pension administration to an independent organization.

He said: "I personally sympathize very much with any such suggestion. The pension administration would thus become a free organization able to compete and yield profits. But the matter of the decision about turning it into an [independent] organization is subject to other procedures. The relevant officials must submit their proposal."

Investing Funds

[Bukhari] Since the world is teeming with investment company scandals, we decided to bring up the matter with the finance minister, particularly since his economic program includes the encouragement of such companies.

He said: "Investment companies made a serious and responsible beginning in the Sudan. They were under responsible supervision and distributed the profits at reasonable rates, not the cancerous rates that occurred in America, leading to the collapse of all the companies operating in the field and thousands of savings associations, and requiring a \$500 billion program over the next 40 years to save them.

"We made a responsible beginning, so there is nothing to fear. To insure and oversee the experiment and develop it in the right direction, we have decided to include it

under the laws of the Bank of the Sudan. The bank is the one agency legally empowered to regulate companies allowed to accept funds from the public. Until now the idea was that only the banks had this power, but the investment companies are also included under this classification. We have directed the Bank of the Sudan to consult with the officials of these companies and to issue whatever legal regulations it thinks appropriate."

Marginalization of the Central Bank

[Bukhari] The finance minister denied our suggestion that the new economic policy would lead to marginalizing the role of the Bank of the Sudan. He made this clear, saying:

"If there is a decision to free domestic and foreign trade and it proceeds according to the law of supply and demand, certainly a large part of the work of the Ministry of Trade will shrink and new procedures will be applied. Yes, the economic policies and programs are what will decide. But the intention is not to destroy any agency. As for the Bank of the Sudan, under the new economic policies the currency oversight department and the loans department will be transferred. Their role will shrink because it will be transferred elsewhere."

Sudanese-Libyan Integration

On the subject of integration with the Libyan Jamahiriyah, the minister mentioned that integration has covered all areas, not merely the economic one. He said that all parties are concerned that the integration program be serious. He said that the Sudan would pay one-third the cost of oil in local currency.

For its part, the Sudan has undertaken to provide certain basic commodity products that Libya needs and that it imports with hard currency from other countries.

Commenting on a question we asked, the minister mentioned that these commodities include fodder and red meat—"even," he said, "if this calls for supporting these commodities."

"The Libyans will invest their money in the Sudan as a result of these exports, or they will work to export commodities agreed upon by the Sudanese side.

"Sudanese exporters will be paid Libyan dinars for commodities exported to Libya. We have therefore decided to lift customs duties from goods exported and imported between the Sudan and Libya."

What We Grow

We concluded the interview with a question about the slogan now being raised: "We will eat what we grow and wear what we make." The government is clearly concentrating on the first half of the slogan. We asked about the state of industry under the economic programs that have been established.

He said: "There is a commitment to encourage the industries in which we enjoy relative advantages—ones whose raw materials are available, such as oils, soap, etc. We are working toward self-sufficiency in them now and toward exporting some of them later.

"As part of the Economic Salvation Program, we have established a fund to finance small and craft industries. We have not dealt with heavy industries now for the simple reason that they require large investments. Their costs sometimes reach \$.5 billion, which is beyond the means of the government. We have opened the door wide to domestic and foreign investments and have left the area for investment open under the 1990 law to

encourage investment. In it, we provided many preferential advantages for the investor, such as tax exemptions, the application of unified customs categories, granting investors domestically the right to open a free currency account and own the land of projects, granting the right to employ experts of various levels, and other privileges."

Minister of Finance and Economic Planning 'Abd-al-Rahim Hamdi closed by saying:

"We were poor because of bad management and because we were preoccupied with peripheral and parasitical activities. What we are now saying is not in the nature of dreams, but is reality itself. We have to make things move. The Sudan is rich in resources; it merely needs work and production."

BANGLADESH

President Appoints New Military Chiefs of Staff

Army Chief of Staff

90AS0411A Dhaka *THE NEW NATION* in English
2 Aug 90 pp 1, 8

[Text] President has appointed Major General Muhammad Noor Uddin Khan PSC [expansion unknown] to the post of Chief of Staff, Bangladesh Army with effect from August 31, 1990 according to a notification issued by the Ministry of Defence in Dhaka yesterday, reports BSS [Bangladesh News Agency].

According to another notification issued by the Minister of Defence, Lt General Muhammad Atiqur Rahman will proceed on normal retirement from the Bangladesh Army with effect from August 30, 1990 on completion of his tenure of appointment as Chief of Staff, Bangladesh Army.

Life-sketch Major General Muhammad Noor Uddin Khan PSC has been appointed the new Chief of Army Staff. He will take over on August 31, 1990 from Lt General Muhammad Atiqur Rahman who will retire on August 30, 1990.

Born on January 1, 1938 at Monohordi in the district of Narsingdi, Major General Mohammad Noor Uddin Khan joined the Pakistan Military Academy on May 8, 1957 and was commissioned in the engineers on October 18, 1959. After commissioning he held important field and staff appointments including military operation directorate in the general headquarters Pakistan Army.

Major General Noor Uddin Khan attended various courses at different schools of instruction and graduated from the Command and Staff College Quetta. He attended joint warfare course in the United Kingdom and the senior international defence management course in the USA. He also graduated in civil engineering obtaining a first class military College of Engineering Pakistan.

In Bangladesh Army he held various command and staff appointments. Notable among these were director of Military operation army headquarters commander, Infantry brigade and divisions before being appointed the Chief of Army Staff.

During his colorful military career, General Mohammad Noor Uddin Khan attended various seminars on military affairs at home and abroad and led a number of military delegations to friendly countries.

He visited many countries including the United Kingdom, West Germany, the United States of America, the peoples Republic of China, Indonesia, Saudi Arabia and India.

General Noor Uddin takes keen interest in reading and travelling and plays tennis, squash and golf.

He is married with a son and two daughters.

Navy Chief of Staff

90AS0411B Dhaka *THE NEW NATION* in English
2 Aug 90 pp 1, 8

[Text] President has appointed Commodore Amir Ahmed Mustafa to the post of the Chief of Naval Staff, Bangladesh Navy, with effect from August 15, 1990, according to a notification issued by the Ministry of Defence in Dhaka yesterday.

According to another notification issued by the Ministry of Defence, Rear Admiral Sultan Ahmad will proceed on normal retirement from the Bangladesh Navy with effect from August 14, 1990 on completion of his tenure of appointment as Chief of Naval Staff, Bangladesh Navy.

Life-Sketch

Commodore Amir Ahmed Mustafa was born in a respectable family at Bancharampur under the district of Brahmanbaria on March 1, 1943. His father Janab Mulluk Husain is a retired Deputy Magistrate.

He passed matriculation in 1957 and Intermediate in 1959 with distinction and joined the Ahsanullah Engineering College (now Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology). During his studentship in the Engineering College he joined the Pakistan Navy as a cadet and obtained regular commission in the Executive Branch in the first batch of the Pakistan Naval Academy on May 10, 1963. He was awarded the sword of honor as the best all round Midshipman and obtained B. Sc. Degree from the University of Karachi in the same year.

He served onboard cruiser PNS Babar, destroyers PNS Alamgir and PNS Badar and at the Naval Academy. During the Indo-Pak war in 1965 he took an active part in the Run of Kutch conflict and September war.

He was the first Bengalee officer to join the submarine fleet of the Pakistan Navy and served the submarines PNS Gazi and PNS Shushuk from November 1965 to March 1971. After his repatriation in October 1973 he made significant contribution in building the administrative and operational infrastructure of the then infant Navy.

Ershad Explains Planned National Health System

90AS040A Dhaka *THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER*
in English 26 Jul 90 pp 1, 10

[Text] President Hussain Muhammad Ershad on Wednesday announced the outline of a three-tier health system envisaged in the health policy of the country which included Upazila Health Authority, District Health Authority and eight regional health authorities, reports BSS [Bangladesh News Agency].

Addressing the nation over Radio Bangladesh and Bangladesh Television on national health policy, the President said the main basis of the policy was democracy and participation of the people in it.

He said his government wanted to evolve a system where the people themselves would be able to solve their health problems by exercising their rights. Keeping this in view, he pointed out that the health system had been reorganizing by making the upazilas as the source of all power.

President Ershad said upazila being the nearest administrative infrastructure available to the people, a upazila health authority would be established with representation from different strata of population of the upazila. He said this authority would be headed by upazila chairman.

He said similarly, there would be district health authority which would coordinate all health activities under the jurisdiction of the district. It will also be a democratic organization like that of the upazila health authority, he said.

The President said eight regional health authorities would be set up to coordinate the activities of the districts. They are Dhaka, Jessore, Barisal, Rangpur, Rajshahi, Mymensingh, Sylhet and Chittagong. He said adding, besides, there would be metropolitan health authorities in the cities of Dhaka and Chittagong.

President Ershad said being the apex bodies, the role of the regional and metropolitan health authorities would be to collect fund from the centre as to participate in the discussions with foreign donors on financial matters. At the same time, he said, they would establish a system of accountability to the people on the health services activities at regional district and upazila levels. This would be headed by an officer of the level of Additional Secretary, he said.

He said there would be representation from all strata of population in the Upazila Health Authority committee and as a result there was the opportunity to listen to their viewpoints and accept them in determining health related policy locally. The number of members in the Upazila Authority committee would not be more than twenty-five, he said.

The President said the committee would take up effective steps for the successful implementation of the approved overall health services plan of the upazila. This, he said, would also approve the health budget of the upazila and other activities of the Upazila Health Authority.

He said it would take steps for enforcing the concerned laws on health-care, family planning, nutrition, medicines and environment. This authority would have the power to collect money for the development of the health system, he said.

The President said the yardstick for the evaluation of the accounts of actual health services to the people would be

the improvement in the health condition of the people, increase in the number of recipients of preventive vaccinations, reduction in the rate of infant and mother mortality rates, checking of deaths due to diarrhoea and diphtheria, registration of births and deaths and increase in the number of recipients of family, planning methods.

He said the Upazila Health Authority was a democratic infrastructure and this was aimed at bringing out the health system from clutches of the bureaucratic complexities. He said the Vice-Chairman of the Upazila Health Authority would be a doctor of the rank of Additional Civil Surgeon and there would be doctor representatives at other levels.

President Ershad said the District Health Authority committee would be headed by the District Council chairman who is also a member of the Jatiya Sangsad while the Civil Surgeon would be the Member Secretary to the committee. The District Authority would do the jobs which were not needed to be done by Upazila Health Authority and at the same time special health facilities would have to be introduced in district towns to handle referred cases, he said.

He said these health facilities would have to be maintained centrally in district towns. Use of ambulances and blood transfusion system were the most important among them, he said adding: and a month or week, specialists would be sent to upazilas.

President Ershad said his government is determined to ensure people's basic needs such as food, clothing shelter and health and for that reason he has been working hard for the last eight years. He also said following the pragmatic industrial policy the industrial production has been increasing due to the coordinated efforts of private and public sectors.

He also mentioned the establishment of Gucchagram projects for the well-being of landless, Rin Shalishi Board to free the poor farmers from bondage of debt.

The President said his government believes in democracy not as a belief but also impleted it in pledges and practical steps. In this context, he said many criticize the government in the name of democracy but also impleted it in pledges and practical steps. In this context, he said many criticize the government in the name of democracy but do not present any alternative proposal for formulation of national policy.

Ershad Inaugurates Jatiya Membership Drive

90AS0403A Dhaka THE NEW NATION in English
28 Jul 90 pp 1, 8

[Text] President H. M. Ershad said here yesterday that his government was determined to maintain a democratic and constitutional process for the greater interest of the nation, reports BSS [Bangladesh News Agency].

He said the presidential election announced earlier would be held on time and added it would be followed by parliamentary polls.

Inaugurating a month-long new membership drive by the Metropolitan unit of the Jatiya Party at its Motijheel office, the President said the politics of the Jatiya Party was to ensure peace, stability and progress of the nation and to save the masses from undemocratic forces who wanted to destroy the nation by pursuing negative politics.

President Ershad, who is the Chairman of the Jatiya Party, said the party had already won the hearts of the people and became the strongest and largest political organization having firm base in all areas of the country.

Welcoming the new members to the Jatiya Party, the President said the party had already crores of followers, who being imbued with the ideals of the party were working hard for the welfare of the people. In this context, he mentioned that the Jatiya Party had such a large number of membership now that it would, in fact, alone surpass the total membership of all the political parties.

Such a success, the President said, was mainly due to the positive politics of the Jatiya Party and the achievements of the government, which brought about fundamental changes in the living condition of the people and enhanced the image of the nation abroad.

Referring to the so-called movements against the government and the proposed July 29 rally, the President said people of the country had shown their unflinching support to the government by rejecting those elements time and again as they were against disturbance, chaos and anarchy.

The President said the opposition parties have lost credibility because of their negative politics in the eyes of the people, which manifests at the poor attendance in their meetings. He said the people of the country cannot support them because they have yet to forget their misrule and plundering of national wealth.

Referring to certain news items in a section of newspapers, the President said in categorical terms that there were no internal conflicts in the Jatiya Party. All here in the Jatiya Party are the soldiers of discipline and ideology, he said.

The President also said there was no crisis in the country now. Whatever crisis we had after the devastating floods in 1988 has been overcome, he added.

Health Policy

The President advised the party members to create people's awareness about the new national health policy, saying that the main objective behind the new policy was to ensure medicare to all people of the country. He said his government would no longer expect that doctors

would go on doing private practices and earn huge money at the cost of poor patients in the hospitals.

Describing the policy as a bold step, he said since it was announced to help the poor, the so-called movement of a section of doctors against it would die down in the face of people's resistance. In this context, the President said enough scopes have been given in the policy so that the doctors get sufficient facilities.

Earlier, he inaugurated the month-long new membership drive by selling a party ticket to an elderly teacher, who joined the party yesterday being inspired by his principles and ideals.

Vice-president Moudud Ahmad, LGRD [Local Government and Rural Development] minister and Dhaka city unit chief of the party Naziur Rahman, Jute Minister Sheikh Shahidul Islam, Works Minister Mostafa Jamal Hyder, Land Minister Tajul Islam Chowdhury and senior party leaders including Secretary of Dhaka city unit Shamsuzzaman Mintu were present. The President was earlier garlanded by the party leaders as he reached the party office.

Foreign Minister: Bangladesh Free To Use Tin Bigha

90AS0413A Dhaka THE NEW NATION in English
26 Jul 90 p 1

[Text] Bangladesh nationals will enjoy "unlimited access" through the "Tin Bigha" corridor to the Dohagram and Angorpota enclaves from Bangladesh mainland, Foreign Minister Anisul Islam Mahmud told the Jatiya Sangsad yesterday, reports BSS [Bangladesh News Agency].

Replying to a question from Mr A.K.M. Shahidul Islam (JP-Kurigram), he said it was not true that Indian government would allow Bangladesh use of Tin Bigha only for going to and coming from the enclaves.

The Foreign Minister said all Bangladesh nationals could use the corridor and there would also be movements of goods.

Besides, he said, the corridor could also be used for laying power, water, sanitation etc. connections.

Foreign Investors To Be Granted Citizenship

90AS0412A Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER
in English 1 Aug 90 pp 1, 10

[Text] The Bangladesh Citizenship (Temporary Provisions) (Amendment) Bill, 1990 was passed by the Jatiya Sangsad with a view to granting citizenship and permanent residency facilities to foreign investors, reports BSS [Bangladesh News Agency].

The opposition staged a walkout prior to putting the bill to vote before the House on the grounds that Home Minister Mahmudul Hasan who piloted the bill did not

give reply to the certain queries put by the Opposition members in connection with the bill.

All amendments brought by the opposition members including the proposals for eliciting public opinion or sending the bill to the Standing Committee for further examining the same were rejected by the House.

The statement of object and reasons of the Bill said "The economic structure of Bangladesh was yet to be established on a strong base and the growth of internal resources and industries is really little compared the requirement. Rapid progress for industrialization is imperative for economic emancipation and socio-economic development of the country. Since the country's internal resources are limited, the necessity to attract foreign investment is felt for the gradual growth of the industry. In the present competitive world many countries are now granting citizenship/permanent resident facilities to foreign investors. So, the present Amendment Bill has been brought to grant citizenship/permanent residents to the industrial entrepreneurs which will help speedy industrialization of the country".

Winding up the discussions, the Home Minister Major General (retd) Mahmudul Hasan said the government had followed all the procedures of bringing this bill to the Sangsad. The Cabinet had also approved it, he pointed out.

The main objective of bringing the Amendment Bill was to attract foreign investment. Many countries in the world had provided such facilities for their industrial development.

Opposition criticism

Dismissing the opposition criticisms and apprehensions, the Home Minister said those foreign nationals who would invest non-repatriable 75,000 U.S. dollars would be provided permanent residents facilities. Those who would invest 5 lakh U.S. dollars in the industrial sector or deposit in or transfer 10 lakh U.S. dollars to the investment financing institutions, would be allowed citizenship he said.

Participating in the discussion on the bill Leader of the Opposition A.S.M. Abdur Rob opposed the bill and said many undesirable persons would apply for the citizenship by taking advantage of the provisions of the Bill.

Paper Reports, Comments on Visit of PRC Investment Team

Purpose of Visit

90AS0405A Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER
in English 27 Jul 90 p 7

[Text] Mr Cai Xinghai, leader of a high powered five member investment delegation from China said on Thursday that the purpose of the current visit of his delegation was to explore areas of joint venture investment in Bangladesh.

He showed interest for setting up joint venture projects in sectors like agriculture, machinery and accessories, cotton and linen textiles, knitted fabrics, mushroom cultivation, chemicals, plastic products, leather products, fresh water fish breeding and electronics.

Mr Cai Xinghai said this while exchanging views with the leaders of Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry (DCCI) at the DCCI office on the day. The delegation members also assured the DCCI leaders that they would try to promote economic relationships between the two friendly countries.

Earlier welcoming the delegation, Mr A. S. Mahmud, President of Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry (DCCI) said that the industrial policy of Bangladesh would be further simplified soon to accommodate more opportunities for foreign investment in the country.

Joint Venture Possibilities

90AS0405B Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER
in English 27 Jul 90 p 7

[dollar denominations as published]

[Text] Lack of follow-up action to implement the past memoranda of understanding regarding establishment of Chinese industrial ventures in Bangladesh was regretted in a discussion meeting between the visiting members of Chinese trade and Investment Delegation and the Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry [MCCI] in Dhaka on Thursday.

Speaking on the occasion, Acting President of the MCCI Samson H. Chowdhury said establishment of Chinese ventures in collaboration with Bangladeshi entrepreneurs is imperative for balancing the trade between Dhaka and Beijing. He estimated Bangladesh's trade deficit with China at 80 million U.S. Dollars in 1988-89.

The MCCI listed the following ventures for Chinese assistance and collaboration.

Agricultural Machinery:—Production of agricultural inputs has good potentials. Agricultural machinery including implements such as pumps and pipes for irrigation, tools, tillers, sprayers, transport equipment, machinery repairing services, etc. are expanding areas of industrial opportunities. Chinese collaboration would be most welcome for the production of agricultural machinery and equipment. The market will be around \$50 million per annum as presently import of agricultural inputs is of that amount.

Light Engineering: Potentials for the growth of light engineering industries are promising. Recent linkage arrangements have created wide spread demands for spares and components. Chinese collaboration can play an important role in developing the light engineering industries in to a more diversified, quality conscious, and export-oriented sector. Investment opportunities

exist for production of spares for different industries and automobiles, machine and hand tools and other innovative product lines.

Domestic production can meet only about 35 percent of demand in this sector, U.S. 200 million worth of parts and accessories are imported annually.

Textiles: Textile sector is a promising area in view of large readymade garments industry using imported fabrics worth U.S. \$500 million. Investment in textile industry should be very profitable. Opportunities exist for dyeing and finishing fabrics for the garment sector and producing gray cloth for export and local market. There is considerable room for expansion of the production of cotton and mixed year. There are also scope for collaboration in product diversification and production of high value added fashion products and ladies wear for export purpose.

Fisheries and Mushrooms: Chinese collaboration will be welcome for fresh-water fish breeding and cultivation of mushrooms. Joint venture opportunities also exist for fresh and salt water shrimp cultivation and other fisheries products.

Chemicals: Bangladesh has a fairly large demand for a variety of chemical products which, to a large degree, are imported.

Chemicals worth U.S. \$190 million are imported yearly to meet the needs of local industries such as food and agro-processing, tanneries and leather, soaps, cosmetics, detergents, paints and varnishing, printing and packaging, and textile processing. Opportunities for joint venture investment are very good in these areas particularly because of fairly large local demand. Joint venture opportunities exist also in petro-chemical industries and for the production of cement.

Electronics: Bangladesh has proven that it can produce labor intensive electronic products at internationally accepted standards through current contract work with major Japanese companies. Joint venture collaboration in various electronic products will be very rewarding.

Details of Battle With Indian Border Forces

90AS0408A Dhaka *THE NEW NATION* in English
21 Jul 90 pp 1, 8

[Text] Following Wednesday's heavy exchange of fire between the intruding Indian Border Security Force (BSF) and the Bangladesh Rifles [BDR] troops at the border areas of Asalong in Khagrachhari, situation was quiet in last two days without further untoward incident.

According to reports reaching Dhaka, the local battalion commanders of the BDR and the BSF held a flag meeting immediately after the incident and reached understanding, though verbally, to restrain their activities and maintain peace at the border area.

Incidentally, Wednesday's BSF attack on BDR was in violation of the understanding reached at the meeting between the chiefs of the BDR and the BSF in Delhi in March last. A large number of BSF personnel had attacked twice—once in the morning and later in the afternoon on Wednesday—to give cover to Indian nationals who tried to cultivate paddy lands in Bangladesh territory.

More than 500 Indian citizens, many of them members of so-called Shanti Bahini tried to occupy a patch of 85 acres of paddy land in the order area, the BSF personnel opened fire on the BDR camp from across the border. But they immediately withdrew when the BDR personnel returned the fire.

Again in the afternoon, the BSF troops with heavy reinforcement launched mortar and heavy machine gun attack on the Bangladesh side. The BDR repulsed the attack, sources said.

According to reports reaching from the bordering area, two Indians were killed in the exchange of fire. There was no casualty on the Bangladesh side.

The truce came around 5 in the afternoon when the two sides hoisted white flags and later held local commanders' meeting over the incident. It was followed by a flag meeting at the battalion commander level between the two border forces.

According to official sources in Dhaka, there remained 85 acres of land in Asalong under Matiranga upazila in the Hill Tract district of Khagrachhari undemarcated even after the Indo-Bangla Land Boundary Agreement of 1974. The lands belong to Bangladesh.

The Indian nationals with the backing of BSF try off and on to take possession of the lands by force and create tension locally.

The Delhi meeting between the BDR director-general and the BSF chief had decided to keep the disputed land fallow till its demarcation.

The BSF attack is seen as an act of treachery following the decision at the highest level between the two border forces.

A few days ago, the Indian nationals dug a canal in the undemarcated land with the help of the BSF, which also set up a camp there.

Official sources said that the survey departments of the two countries are expected to take up the work of demarcation in the coming winter season. The sources would not discuss the reason of delay in demarcation though the agreement was signed in 1974.

Results of Indo-Bangladesh Joint Border Conference

90AS0404A Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER
in English 27 Jul 90 p 1

[Text] Rajshahi, July 26:—The two-day Indo-Bangladesh joint border conference ended here today, reports BSS [Bangladesh News Agency].

The conference discussed bilateral matters, including border crimes, smuggling and border boundary pillars between the two countries.

Both the sides agreed to intensify their watch in border areas to arrest crime and smuggling for the benefit of the two countries.

An official sources told BSS that the markets in bordering areas will be kept under strict vigilance to check crimes and smuggling for which patrolling will be intensified by BDR [Bangladesh Rifles] and BSF [Border Security Force] personnel.

The conference also discussed border pillars numbering 70. The pillars include 29 missing, 28 damaged and 13 not erected.

New Political Party by Old Party Breakaways

90AS0409A Dhaka THE NEW NATION in English
16 Jul 90 pp 1, 8

[Text] A new political party styled as Janata Mukti Party has been floated with a call for unity of progressive democratic forces in order to establish an exploitation-free society and a democratic order in the country.

The launching of the party was announced yesterday at a press conference at the Jatiya Press Club in the city.

The main components of the new party are Oikya JSD led by Mirza Sultan Raja, a faction of BSD [Nationalist Socialist Party] led by Mahmudur Rahman Manna, another faction of BSD headed by Mostaque Ahmed and Waresul Hasan Siddique and a section of Sramik Krisak Samagbadi Dal led by Khan Saifur Rahman and Mokhlesur Rahman.

Addressing the newsmen convenor of the new party Mirza Sultan Raja explained its political programme. The Party aimed at establishing democracy based on parliamentary system of government, he said

The party would launch a movement to ensure people's right to vote, he said.

Mirza Sultan Raja said that the party would encourage foreign investment to help build the national economy.

Mr Raja also said that they would take initiative in separating judiciary from the administration to ensure law in the country.

Mr Mahmudur Rahman Manna was made Joint Convenor of the party. Mr Sultan Raja also announced the names of the party central convening committee members numbering 48.

Activists of the newly floated party later brought out a procession.

Report on Meeting of BNP National Executive Committee

90AS0406A Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER
in English 26 Jul 90 p 1

[Text] A two-day meeting of the BNP [Bangladesh Nationalist Party] National Executive Committee ended Tuesday observing that the constitutional process would not be disrupted if President Ershad resigns to pave the way for holding impartial polls, reports UNB [United News of Bangladesh].

The meeting with the party Chairman Begum Khaleda Zia in the chair termed the dialogue offer of President Ershad as a new ploy to mislead the national demand for neutral election.

It asked the people to be cautious about such government device and stick to anti-government stand.

Expressing concern at the country's existing political and economic situation, the meeting said an all-engulfing crisis had gripped the nation as a result of the "misrule" "of the present autocratic" regime.

Painting a gloomy picture of the economic scenario, the meeting said "government patronized corruption and plunder" destroyed the country's economic infrastructure.

Correspondent Writes on Problems of Judiciary

90AS0414A Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER
in english 31 Jul 90 pp 1, 12

[Quotation marks as published]

[Text] The judiciary in Bangladesh exists without the logistic supports that require to cope with the rising number of cases. The Supreme Court at the apex with 25 judges of High Court Division is fighting desperately to clear up the backlog of 35,500 cases piled up over the years after the administration was taken over in 1982 by the Martial Law regime, giving in legacy the concept of 'permanent Benches', now the seats of 'Sessions'. The offices of the erstwhile permanent Benches are being maintained as the offices of the 'Sessions' of the High Court Division and the judges, in term of the Sessions Rules, are holding 'Sessions' there.

The present strength of judges, who hold regular 'Sessions' as well, cannot be expected to dispense justice more swiftly. They are not always concerned with the execution of law alone but also with its application and

interpretation of law. By interpretation they lay down the law of far reaching effects.

In West Bengal (India) with a territory larger than that of Bangladesh, Calcutta High Court has 65 judges to administer justice to its people with no 'sessions' outside Calcutta. The strength of the judges of High Court Division of the Supreme Court of Bangladesh requires to be immediately raised to save the judiciary from crumbling. There are sufficient rooms with other logistic supports at the Supreme Court building in Dhaka to accommodate the full strength of judges. The sessions outside Dhaka lack basic requirements for functioning of judiciary.

The rate of disposal of cases in Dhaka (the permanent seat of Supreme Court) and at the places of sessions, namely Rangpur, Jessore, Chittagong, Comilla, Sylhet and Barisal (erstwhile Permanent Benches) have not improved. The cases awaiting decisions at the places of sessions are: Rangpur 5500 cases, Jessore 4500, Chittagong 3000, Comilla 2500, Sylhet 1500 and Barisal 1500 cases.

In Dhaka (the permanent seat of the Supreme Court), the disposal of the cases including the cases seeking extraordinary remedy by way of Writs is at a snail's pace creating frustration and despair among the litigants.

The High Prerogative Writs known for 'prompt' speedy and efficacious reliefs have lost their intent and purpose. An extraordinary remedy by way of Writ presupposes that the persons aggrieved have invoked the extraordinary jurisdiction (Act 102) to seek prompt, speedy and efficacious remedy. Pending of the Writ Petitions for years together for disposal run counter to every concept of extraordinary remedy guaranteed to the citizens under the Constitution. Such cases are pending for disposal since 1985. There is a rising trend in filing of Writ Petitions. The trend shows: 568 Writ Petitions in 1985, 510 Writ Petitions in 1986, 739 Writ Petitions in 1987, 1820 Writ Petitions in 1988, 1891 Writ Petitions in 1989 and 1626 Writ Petitions till July 29, 1990.

The holding of sessions at Chittagong, Rangpur, and Jessore with 9 judges has reduced the strength of judges in Dhaka, (the permanent seat of the Supreme Court) affecting the pace of the disposal in Dhaka. On July 19, the 'cause list' shows 25 judges presiding 15 Benches (10 Division Benches and 5 Single Benches). But after the departure of 9 judges to hold sessions, 16 judges are now presiding 10 Benches (6 Division Benches and 4 single Benches) in Dhaka. The 'cause list' is disturbed to the agony of the litigants who often find their cases having disappeared from the list.

Four-week stay outside Dhaka of the judges slows down the disposal of cases at permanent seat with no significant disposal at the places of sessions. The sessions outside the capital is not expected to produce the desired result of reducing the number of cases.

Editorial Deplores Unevenness of Press Freedom

90AS0407A Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER
in English 26 Jul 90 p 5

[Text] Freedom of the Press in Bangladesh has been a subject for journalists and academics, politicians as well as members of the government to discuss in seminars and public forums, bringing into focus the imperative need of it for democratic institutions to thrive. A formal installation of democracy through an election (that has been controversial in certain essential aspects) following the end of Martial Law in 1986, stimulated the popular desire for a freer press as a forum for the people's grievances to be discussed and a newfound opportunity for national debate on the people's problems. But this fundamental right constitutionally entrenched has however been pretty tardy to come. The past couple of years can be said to have seen a relative difference with its predecessors in that larger numbers of newspapers have seen the light, to illustrate the claim made by the President on July 21st that "a maximum number of dailies and weeklies were being published in the country during the period of the present government."

In fairness, it may also be plausibly accepted that the press in general is operating with a measure of openness that had not been known during the years of restriction under non-civilian rule. But the fact is parts of the national press seem freer and better off than others. This is so exactly where the tax-payer's interests come in, apart from the rights a free press can enjoy in coverage of news, the expression of views, a fair criticism of the government in office and the exposure of abuses and corruption in the tradition of independent, objective journalism.

It is difficult to say how far the national press has been enabled to rise to these imperatives within frame of operation as open and untrammelled as is in place in the established democracies of the world. To point to this is mainly to emphasize the fact that so far as the claimed freedom of the press concerned quite a little remains to be achieved to make it go down more comfortably with the populace.

The general feeling is: had the press been freer to discharge its obligations to the people by, when necessary, telling even the bitter truth or truths about persons, personalities, policies, institutions and so on the ubiquitous sense of frustration over the mounting abuses in society would have been refreshingly less.

So much for the freedom of the press as an issue in which the government seems so interested and of which a keen need is felt both by journalists trying to function independently and intellectuals and academics trying to use it as a vehicle of their ideas and thoughts including those not always complimentary to the establishment.

There is another important question well worth consideration in this context: The national press looks—and

is—divided into rather two unequal parts—one controlled by government Trusts and the other functioning outside of it. The main point to note about this division of the press is that, in the first place, such a thing is unknown in the democratic countries around the world. For us it is a legacy of years of martial law and was first introduced in the late fifties following the introduction of Martial Law. In the second, the tax-payer's interest (which is synonymous with that of the nation) is linked to the question of financing newspapers and the benefit the country receives by paying for their maintenance.

Incidentally, the greater beneficiary of a free press, in the ultimate analysis, is the government itself—if it cares to see how, i.e. from the increased credibility it earns for itself. Trust papers, ironically enough, have to their credit more a proven record of undermining trust, sometime with disenchanting results, if late General Ayub is a case in point.

INDIA

Delegation Led by Basu on Visit to PRC

90AS0378A Calcutta *THE STATESMAN* in English
26 Jul 90 p 12

[Text] Beijing, 25 July—A five-member delegation of the All-India Forward Bloc, headed by its general secretary, Mr Chitta Basu, M.P. [Member of Parliament] currently visiting China, has been assured by the Chinese Communist Party that Beijing is keen to further improve relations with India and settle the border dispute, reports PTI [Press Trust of India].

Chinese leaders are ready to take "appropriate steps" in this regard and have taken note of the V.P. Singh Government's eagerness to strengthen ties with China, Mr Basu told reporters today.

The forward Bloc delegation has held talks with Mr Qiao Shi a member of the six-man Standing Committee of the Chinese Party, and Mr Zhu Shanqing, deputy head of the International Liaison Department.

The Forward Bloc team included the West Bengal Food and Supplies Minister, Mr Nirmal Bose, as well as Mr Asok Ghosh, Mr D.D. Shastri and Mr Vellappan Nair, all members of the party central committee.

The delegation conveyed Mr V.P. Singh's regards to the Chinese leadership and was asked to pass on the Chinese leaders' greetings to Indian counterparts.

The Chinese side voiced the hope that the Joint Working Group on the border, meeting in New Delhi next month, would produce good results and said China was looking forward to the External Affairs Minister, Mr I.K. Gujral's visit later this year.

The Forward Bloc delegation drew the attention of the Chinese Party leaders to the pending Indian invitation to

the Chinese Premier, Mr Li Peng, to visit India and was told that it was being considered.

The Chinese party leaders questioned the Indian delegation about the durability of the V.P. Singh Government, Mr Basu said.

He assured them that it was stable and would complete its 5-year term because its programmes were in keeping with the wishes of the masses and the clear mandate of the people was for a non-congress(I) government at the Centre. No one can defy that and bring about a change of government, he said.

The discussions also covered India's relations with Pakistan, reforms in China, developments in East Europe and the Soviet Union and other world issues.

Mr Qiao told the delegation that China wanted India and Pakistan to settle all their disputes, including that over Kashmir, through mutual discussions and avoid the path of confrontation. He added that when a Pakistan People's Party delegation visited Beijing recently, it was also told the same thing.

On East Europe, the delegation was told, the setback to socialism was a temporary affair and the Chinese Communist Party believed that socialism would make a comeback though it could take some time.

Mr Qiao voiced the hope that the Soviet Union, under the leadership of President Mikhail Gorbachev, would follow the path of socialism.

China itself would firmly adhere to the socialists path while carrying out the policy of reform and opening begun in 1978, Mr Qiao said.

The Forward Bloc delegation invited the CPC to send a team to attend its 13th Party Congress in New Delhi early next year.

Before leaving China on 3 August, the delegation will visit Dalian in north-east China and the Xiamen special economic zone and Guangzhou in south China for a study of ongoing reforms and further talks with local party leaders.

Papers Report on Meeting of BJP National Executive

Advani Opens Meeting

90AS0379A Bombay *THE TIMES OF INDIA*
in English 22 Jul 90 pp 1, 11

[Text] The BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] president, Mr L.K. Advani, said today that the threat to the stability of the National Front [NF] Government was posed not by the BJP (withdrawing its support) but from within the Janata Dal's own ranks.

In his opening at the BJP national executive meeting, Mr Advani observed that the Chautala episode had gravely

impaired the credibility of the National Front Government and had heightened a sense of uncertainty about its future. The question being raised in many quarters was whether the V.P. Singh government had the capability to last its full term.

The BJP chief's observations came in the wake of the prime minister's assertion at his New Delhi press conference yesterday that his government had emerged stronger from the recent run of events.

That the BJP did not share Mr Singh's perception was made amply clear by Mr Advani when he said it would be unwise on the part of the Janata Dal leadership to minimise the damage caused by the Chautala affair. "It is, surely, an exercise in self-delusion to claim that the crisis has strengthened the ruling party and the government. Indeed, the general perception is that the last word in respect of this murky episode is still to be said," he observed.

As he viewed it, the Centre, finding itself recurringly in the throes of crises like the one just averted, would gradually lose its efficacy in dealing with core problems such as terrorism, secession, communalism, inflation and unemployment.

The government's grip on the bureaucracy would weaken. Its standing in the community of nations would decline. The Singh government might well be faced with a situation in which its very survival would become its principal concern, he added.

In such circumstances, the BJP president said the party study group (headed by the BJP vice-president, Mr S.S. Bhandari, set up at the last party executive meet in Calcutta to draw up a five-star perspective plan) would do well to chalk out a contingency plan for a mid-term poll.

The thinking in the BJP circles is that the party should do nothing to create a situation leading to a snap poll. A BJP secretary, Mr J.P. Mathur, who briefed the press, said, "Our attempt is that we will not let the Singh government fall."

In response to a question, Mr Mathur observed: "We are in no mood to withdraw support to the government."

On the BJP's prospects in the event of a mid-term poll, a national executive member from Goa, Mr G.Y. Bhandare, told TOINS [Times of India News Service] that his party would be the gainer, if there were a snap poll. He pointed out that the BJP now had the advantage of running state governments in Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Himachal Pradesh. Besides, issues such as Jammu and Kashmir, and the Babri-Ram Janambhoomi dispute, on which the BJP made electoral gains in the last elections, were still alive and kicking.

Mr Bhandare expressed the view that the BJP could count on far greater electoral support than in the earlier elections. He reckoned that the BJP would draw more anti-Congress votes than the Janata Dal.

UNI adds:

The present political equations were not to the liking of three sections—the Congress, elements in the ruling party that are unhappy with its present leadership and elements in various political camps that are unhappy with the BJP's present standing in Indian politics, Mr Advani said.

All these sections are keen to destabilise the present equations, he said.

Mr Advani said the support given to the Front government by the BJP and the Marxists, and their firm stand that Mr Om Prakash Chautala must quit was a major factor that influenced the course of events. In fact, it was their stand which proved an effective deterrent against dissidents in the Janata Dal becoming splinters, he added.

He said Madras was chosen as the venue with the conscious resolve of expanding the party base southwards.

Party leaders like Mr A.B. Vajpayee, Rajmata Vijaye Raje Scindia, Mr S.S. Bhandari, Dr M.M. Joshi, Mr Krishanlal Sharma and the Himachal Pradesh and Rajasthan chief ministers, are attending this meeting.

Meanwhile, Mr Advani compared the recent crisis in the National Front government caused by the reinduction of Mr Chautala as the "political Mahabharat of the Janata Dal."

He said that while the television serial ended on Sunday, 8 July, the political Mahabharat of the Janata Dal split over to the subsequent Sunday.

The Yudh (war) had not only a national audience but also the entire world watching how the government formed 8 months ago was going to fare.

Devi-V.P. Nexus alleged:

A BJP secretary, Mr Mathur, said the prime minister, Mr Singh's "evasive" replies on the Chautala issue at his conference yesterday proved the existence of a deal between him and the deputy prime minister, Mr Devi Lal, reports PTI [Press Trust of India].

He said Mr Singh's replies on the election of Mr Chautala as Haryana chief minister had "failed to carry conviction."

The BJP felt there was no doubt over reports of the deal between the prime minister and the deputy prime minister, and the press version of the deal seemed to be correct, he said.

Warning on Ram Temple

90AS0379B *Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA*
in English 22 Jul 90 p 1

[Text] Madras, 21 July—The BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] president Mr L.K. Advani, today warned the Centre that a casual approach to the Ram Janambhoomi issue could prove costly for the country. The Central government should respect popular sentiments and do the needful.

In his opening remarks at the national executive meeting which began here today, Mr Advani pointed out that at its Palampur meeting in Himachal Pradesh a year ago, the BJP had wanted the Rajiv government to recognise the intense feelings of the vast majority of the country's population on the issue and emulate the Nehru government's action with regard to the Somnath temple and to let a Rama temple be built at the "janasthan" site.

The Rajiv government played petty politics with the Janambhoomi issue and paid a heavy penalty for it, he added.

Later, talking to newsmen, the BJP leader, Mr J.P. Mathur, said courts cannot decide on religious faith. It (Ram Janambhoomi issue) is beyond the purview of the court.

PTI [Press Trust of India] adds: Mr Advani urged the Centre to allow the construction of the Ram temple at Ayodhya. He said a casual approach to the matter could prove costly.

The National Front government had sought time from the leadership of the Ram Janasthan movement. The Viswa Hindu Parishad leadership responded to the request positively. It was a matter of regret that the Centre had as yet had made no meaningful move in the matter, he said.

22 July Proceedings

90AS0379C *Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA*
in English 23 Jul 90 pp 1, 20

[Text] Madras, 22 July—The BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] national executive has called for the immediate cessation of hostilities between the Sri Lankan government and the LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] and stressed the need for a round-table conference on the issue.

In a resolution adopted here today, the party also wanted an all-party parliamentary delegation from India to visit the island nation for an on-the-spot study.

The resolution, moved by the party's vice-president, Mr Jana Krishnamurthy, was adopted after some minor changes.

At least 10 executive members took part in the discussion which touched upon the different aspects of the problem and its fall-out in Tamil Nadu.

Expressing its concern at the fratricidal war that was now going on in that country, the party condemned aerial bombing of civilian targets. The Tamil militants should also stop the conflict and resume talks, it said.

The developments were having repercussions on Tamil Nadu. It, therefore, expressed its anxiety and concern at the manifestations of terrorist activities in the state. The state government should address itself to this challenge. At the same time, the Centre must ensure that Tamil Nadu did not become a hinterland of the conflict in Sri Lanka.

The resolution points out that while on the one hand the struggle in Sri Lanka was an expression of just demands for due autonomy and equal rights, it was also essential to fight against wholly unacceptable insurgency and terrorism. The party stood for a united, peaceful and just policy on Sri Lanka.

The party wanted a joint Indo-Lanka parliamentary delegation to visit the Lankan refugee camps in India and work towards creating a situation wherein the refugees were enabled to return to their homes with peace, dignity and honour.

The senior leader, Mr A.B. Vajpayee, said the Centre had failed in preventing Sri Lankan militants from using Tamil Nadu as a launching pad. His reference was to the reported movement of the LTTE in coastal Tamil Nadu.

Describing the National Front Government response as "mulayam" (soft), Mr Vajpayee observed that the Centre was, probably, constrained to be soft on the ruling party in Tamil Nadu. After all, the DMK [Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam] is a constituent of the National Front.

He recalled that during Mr Karunanidhi's visit to New Delhi the Tamil Nadu chief minister had assured leaders of various political parties in the presence of the prime minister that no LTTE camps functioned in Tamil Nadu. There were some men belonging to Sri Lankan groups, but these militants did not carry any arms.

Mr Karunanidhi's assurance that there were no LTTE camps in the state had come one day before the Kodambakkam massacre in which the EPRLF [Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front] secretary-general, Mr K. Padmanabha, and 14 others were gunned down, said Mr Vajpayee.

Stating that the BJP was in total agreement with the government policy on Sri Lanka, Mr Vajpayee said the issue of Sri Lankan Tamils was basically a problem for the Sri Lankan government to tackle. He expressed the view that there was not much the Indian government could do other than exerting pressure through diplomatic channels.

The option of military intervention was closed forever and the LTTE and Sri Lankan government would have to resume negotiations.

There was no case for the LTTE to resort to an armed struggle after it had held negotiations with Colombo in the wake of the IPKF [Indian Peacekeeping Force] withdrawal.

Following the withdrawal of IPKF and the start of negotiations, "we thought a fresh chapter would be opened." The LTTE suddenly gave up talks to resume its armed struggle. In such circumstances, India's capacity to help the LTTE cause was very much reduced.

The integrity of Sri Lanka had to be maintained and the Tamils there should have a place of honour in this scheme of things. Stating that the Indo-Sri Lankan accord should have been given a fair trial, Mr Vajpayee observed that the accord, if faithfully implemented, would have gone a long way in removing the grievances of Sri Lankan Tamils.

In another resolution, the BJP expressed its concern at the continuing denial of freedom of worship and cultural pluralism in Fiji.

The resolution, passed last evening, said it was a matter of regret that the government's expressions of concern had not been matched by suitable international action.

The resolution pointed out that ever since the coup 3 years back, people of Indian origin living there had been denied fundamental human rights.

The resolution said that the move for a new constitution would result in political, economic and social emasculation of the people of Indian origin. This would amount to reverse apartheid of the most condemnable kind, it added.

The BJP, therefore, demanded the Indian government to raise the issue at the forthcoming session of the subcommittee of the Human Rights Commission and also take the matter to the commission in February next. The issue should also be raised in the UN General Assembly.

It wanted financial help to be provided to the people of Indian origin in Fiji and a special cell set up in the external affairs ministry to tackle their problems.

UNI adds:

The party president, Mr L.K. Advani, has cautioned the "dissidents" within the ruling Janata Dal against any "adventurism," taking the support of the two friendly parties—the BJP and the CPM [Marxist Communist Party]—for granted in their efforts to destabilise the National Front Government.

When the Dal leadership was attempting to wriggle out of the Chautala affair, "one section" of the Dal was in touch with the Congress. However, this section "hesitated" to act against the public mandate following pressure from the front constituents, the supporting parties and the public in general.

General Secretary Meets Press

90AS0379D Madras THE HINDU in English
25 Jul 90 p 4

[Text] Madras, 24 July—The Bharatiya Janata Party [BJP] views the recently announced new industrial policy as a truncated one without being set in harmony with the basic differentials.

A profound and clear thinking is required before the government gives final shape to the policy. It must be subjected to a greater debate so that the adhoc features in it are eliminated and what emerges can hold the field for a reasonably longer period.

This was the theme of the document on the new industrial policy discussed and adopted at the 3-day national executive of the BJP that concluded here on Monday.

Dr Murali Manohar Joshi, general secretary of the party, talking to reporters today said that the BJP felt that the four basic principles of India's industrial policy should be modernisation, decentralisation, employment generation and self-reliance. The party believed in harnessing new technologies appropriate to changing requirements. In the long run, growth depended on domestic R&D. Unfortunately, the new industrial policy had failed to link up promotion of domestic technology with industrial policy. The desire was to purchase foreign technology which often was outdated.

The policy did not speak of attracting NRI [Nonresident Indian] resources and talent. Vigorous steps should be taken to create proper environment for NRI investments by removing hurdles.

The National Front Government should come out with a comprehensive document clearly spelling out its investment policy, price, wage, and employment, industrial, technology and foreign collaboration policies. Merely presenting a piecemeal document would take us nowhere. It had also failed to take note of a very large number of sick units in private sector.

The BJP, he said, had always been advocating the debureaucratisation of the industrial sector for reasons of efficiency and healthy entrepreneurship. It has also been demanding the elimination of over-regulation leading to red-tapism and corruption.

Should be holistic: Industrial policy had to be holistic and based on a global perspective, India's fiscal and industrial policies must harmonise with our economic compulsions and the state of international economies. Much deeper thinking regarding the socio-economic goals was required before a comprehensive industrial policy was formulated.

Answering a question, the BJP leader said his party was not against computerisation but was opposed to it in some respects where it sought to reduce employment opportunities.

Is the BJP opposed to multi-nationals? "We only say that the role of multi-nationals must be defined. They could not be allowed to be exploitative. Participation by multi-nationals has to be selective guided by our basic approach to our self-reliance," Dr Joshi said.

The government must also make it clear that the new industrial policy would not discriminate against the indigenous capital in its anxiety to attract foreign capital. Whatever liberties foreign capital was allowed to enjoy should be allowed to the indigenous capital also. Foreign capital without Indian partnership should not be allowed. Areas where foreign capital or technology was allowed should be clearly defined.

In reply to a question on BJP's attitude towards public and private sectors, he said, "we are always pragmatic and not dogmatic about them. We feel that public sector must be made more profitable and to run efficiently. There are areas where public sector has a crucial role to play. We never said that establishments in public sector not providing sufficient return should be scrapped," he added.

Paper Interviews Advani

90AS0379E Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA
in English 24 Jul 90 p 7

[Article by V. R. Mani]

[Text] MADRAS, 23 July—The BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] president, Mr L. K. Advani, said here today that his party would not give any ultimatum to the National Front government to deliver the goods.

In an interview to TOINS [Times of India News Service], Mr Advani said there was no need for an ultimatum.

Asked if the government's nonperformance might tell on his party's image, the BJP chief said, "I do not think my party's image has been adversely affected.... It depends on my work, on my performance in the states in which we rule and in the country as a whole."

He felt the bickerings in the Janata Dal would not reflect on the BJP. It would, in a way, help the people in noticing the differences between the two parties.

Whether it was a strategy not to pass a political resolution at its national executive meeting here, Mr Advani said there were separate reports on different issues. "Over and above all these reports, there is the interim report submitted by the study group (headed by the senior leader, Mr S.S. Bhandari) which is a comment on the political situation. There is no ambivalence (on the question of supporting the Front government)," he said.

Mr Advani denied that he had said (as reported in a section of the press) that a Communist Party had conspired with a section of the Dal during the recent crisis to topple the V.P. Singh government. "I did not mention

the Communist Party at all. All that I said is that during the crisis, a section in the Dal was in touch with the Congress party."

When asked if he would identify that section in the Dal which had contacted the Congress; he said, "It is so obvious. There is no need for naming any section."

On why had the study group had been asked to prepare for a contingency plan for a snap poll, Mr Advani said, "I have told the group to keep in mind this fact that though we would like the present government to last 5 years, it may not last because of its own problems. And if it does not, we should not be caught unawares."

To another question, he said, "I do not long for a mid-term poll. At the same time, when I have asked the group to consider all the possibilities, all the contingencies that can arise, it would be myopic on my part not to anticipate or not to visualise this possibility (of mid-term poll). But that this is a possibility does not mean that it is a certainty."

On whether the BJP would go it alone in such an event, Mr Advani said it depended on the circumstances and how these happened. "Nothing can be said today. But we would like there to be seat adjustments on the basis of reciprocity."

Whether he thought Mr V.P. Singh would be free to act, given the bickerings within the Dal, the BJP chief said he could act on his own. "The differences within the Dal are not so much on policy: they are more pertaining to the share of power. So in matters of policy, he has ample leeway."

Asked what he meant when he said that any casual approach to the Ram Janambhoomi issue would prove costly to the country, Mr Advani initially said, "I mean what I say." But after a pause he added, "It affects relations between communities, it affects the whole climate. After all when the government requested the VHP [Vishwa Hindu Parishad] to give it some time, it was expected that the time would be fruitfully utilised. I do not know what has been done. On the face of it, nothing has happened. So it seems to me a sort of a casual attitude. The VHP responded to the request. It was not easy. At that time there was so much pressure on it (to go ahead with its plans) yet it had the courage to do it (postpone it). And for 4 months they put it off...."

He did not feel that the situation would lead to a holocaust. "The people who are involved in the movement are very responsible.... There can be a solution without bloodshed, certainly," he said firmly.

Didn't he feel that there was little point in propping up a government just to keep the Congress out? It was for two reasons that this was being done. "One, the people should not get the conviction that only a Congress government can be stable. Two, in spite of the shortcomings of this government, even during the brief tenure it has been there, it has earnestly tried to restore vitality to

the institutions which sustain democracy. This is not a small matter. Our principle charge against the Rajiv Gandhi government was not corruption. My principle charge was that it was systematically trying to undermine democracy, democratic institutions like Parliament, like the press, like the electronic media, like the CAG [Comptroller and Auditor General] etc. The government has sincerely been trying to restore health to these institutions. That is its plus point," he said.

Didn't he think, that despite his party's criticism if the government did not pull up its socks, it would ultimately help the Congress which it was trying to keep out of New Delhi? "We will see after 5 years."

Mr Advani said his party differed with the government on several issues. "It is because of this that we are conveying to the people that we are not responsible for it (the shortcomings). If Mr Jagmohan has been recalled, we are not responsible, if the budget has contributed to inflation, it is in spite of the advice we have given to it that you should not increase the price of diesel, not to do this and not to do that," he said.

In view of the reported Pakistani help to secessionists in Punjab and Jammu and Kashmir, would the BJP call for a policy of hot pursuit.... "We do not want a war.... A war will not benefit either country. But at the same time, India cannot afford to overlook that Pakistan has virtually unleashed an undeclared war inside our territories by arming terrorists, by taking them to its own part of the country, training them in subversion, in arms. It is the duty of the government to exercise pressure on Pakistan not to do this. The government could explore the possibility of exerting pressure on Pakistan through some of its foreign friends, on a diplomatic basis or by negotiations. But if it fails to (show result), then the government should seriously consider invoking its right of pursuit, particularly in respect of training camps in POK [Pakistan-Occupied Kashmir] which is legitimately part of India."

Mr Advani said his party's growth in the south depended on the hard work its local units put up. Right now the BJP was not thinking in terms of alliances but concentrating at the grassroots and taking up important issues, particularly that of farmers and youths. The two main issues, he said, had yielded the party considerable support in the last 5 years.

Advani Meets Press

90AS0379F Madras THE HINDU in English
24 Jul 90 p 9

[Text] Madras, 23 July—The BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] president, Mr L.K. Advani, today denied that there was any difference of opinion between him and Mr A.B. Vajpayee on the perception of a contingency plan for a possible midterm poll.

"I wish it were not there. We would like the National Front Government to continue its full term," he said.

The recent political crisis within the Janata Dal of course spurred the BJP to think in terms of a snap poll. He did not think it was wrong to prepare a contingency plan to face any eventuality.

Answering a question at a press conference at the conclusion of the 3-day national executive of his party, Mr Advani said his party would not exert any pressure on the National Front Government in respect of policies to which it was not committed. There had been no change in this stand.

Mr Advani said his partymen agreed that the BJP should continue to support the National Front Government from outside. Experience had vindicated this stand.

The government at the Centre might not have come up to the expectations of the people in the last 4 months. At the same time there had been an earnest effort to restore vitality to institutions which sustained democracy. The BJP's main accusation against Rajiv Gandhi government was that it has systematically subverted the democratic institutions.

The BJP president was of the view that his party would have emerged as the single largest party if it had contested the 1989 Lok Sabha poll alone. At the same time if the BJP had not entered into electoral adjustment with other parties, the Congress(I) would have secured 300 seats. "It is our assessment," he said.

To those who questioned the standing of the party, he would only say that the electorate had clearly shown its preference. He would not, however, preclude other factors that contributed to the party's success.

Reports Denied:

Mr Advani denied reports appearing in a section of the press quoting him as having said that elements in the Janata Dal and a Communist Party had conspired to destabilise the National Front Government.

He had only said that there were some elements within the Janata Dal unhappy with either the BJP or the leadership of the Janata Dal [that] would like to do such a thing. He had never mentioned the name of any Communist Party.

"You can identify the elements in the Janata Dal," Mr Advani snapped when asked to identify the ruling party elements trying to destabilise the Government at the Centre. The Janata Dal, BJP and the Communist Parties now had an equation to keep off the Congress(I).

The BJP president did not see anything wrong in his party directing the cadres to counter the increasing menace of casteism, communalism and criminalisation in Indian politics by awakening national consciousness and observe an anti-communalism week to expose the dangers of the politics of minorityism.

Kashmir Issue:

Mr Advani refuted the allegation that there was a contradiction in his party's stand on Kashmir vis-a-vis training camps set up by the terrorists.

His party's consistent stand had been that war between India and Pakistan would not be in the interest of either country. At the same time the people must accept the fact that Pakistan had unleashed an undeclared war against us in our own country. Thousands of people had been trained in subversion and in the use of arms across the border and these trained people had infiltrated into Kashmir.

The BJP during its national executive meeting held in Calcutta in April this year wanted the government to use diplomatic pressure with countries that could influence Pakistan from keeping off Kashmir. If India could not do it the government must consider destruction of training camps across our border.

To a question as to how the BJP proposed to influence the Centre in dealing with the situation created by the LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] activities in Tamil Nadu in the light of his party's stand that it would not exert any pressure on the National Front Government, Mr Advani said the Centre was very much concerned about what was going on in the State and would not like Tamil Nadu to become a hinterland for the LTTE to carry on its activities. The National Front Government was equally concerned about the impact caused by the influx of refugees into Tamil Nadu.

The BJP president said that an 11-member committee headed by Mr Sundar Singh Bhandari, vice-president, had submitted an interim report on ways and means of consolidating the BJP's gains and strengthening the party in all respects to meet the challenges of the Nineties.

His party proposed to organise districtwise conferences in southern States as a follow-up of the national executive session.

He said the BJP proposed to hold a 3-day study camp commencing from 14 September at Bhopal for party legislators.

Advani in Party Weekly

90AS0379G New Delhi PATRIOT in English
22 Jul 90 p 3

[Text] Bharatiya Janata Party [BJP] President L.K. Advani, has said that instead of mid-term polls his party would favour polarisation of the Congress and other like-minded parties which emerged out of the Congress culture, reports PTI [Press Trust of India].

The BJP would prefer sitting in the Opposition, free from the responsibility of supporting the government, Mr Advani said in an interview with the party weekly PANCHJANYA.

Mr Advani stated that the party was constituting a committee which would prepare an action plan to face any sudden situation, including mid-term elections.

The BJP, he stressed, wanted the National Front Government to complete its 5-year term. But in view of the nature of the government and the Janata Dal infighting, the people had started talking about its stability and the possibility of mid-term polls, the BJP president said.

Mr Advani was not inclined to accept Prime Minister V.P. Singh's view that the Janata Dal had emerged stronger from the recent crisis.

The BJP president emphasised that no democratic institution was strengthened by anarchy and indiscipline.

"This claim is a self-deception," he felt.

The BJP, Mr Advani said, played a limited role in resolving the Janata Dal crisis. "It was only to maintain stability."

He felt that basically the crisis erupted in the Janata Dal because of a power struggle.

"Had we involved ourselves more, it would have provided an ideological cover to the crisis which we did not want," Mr Advani said.

He did not think that there was a deal between the prime minister and the deputy prime minister.

Mr Advani said it appeared that when Mr Devi Lal talked to Mr Singh regarding reinduction of his son as Haryana chief minister. The prime minister made "a mistake by saying that the Haryana legislators would decide the issue."

"By saying that the prime minister provided an opportunity to Mr Om Prakash Chautala to become the chief minister again. It was his mistake," the BJP president said.

To a remark that the Haryana legislators' decision was quite democratic, Mr Advani said Mr Chautala enjoyed the support of party MLAs [Members of Legislative Assembly] even at the time of his removal.

The Janata Dal, he felt, took a stand that Mr Chautala should not be reinstated till an inquiry was held into the Meham incident.

Mr Advani stated that the BJP had expressed its stand clearly by demanding Mr Chautala's resignation.

He recalled that the prime minister had spoken to him about the Chautala issue. The Janata Dal President S.R. Bommai and National Front Chairman N.T. Rama Rao, had come to see him.

They realised that as long as the BJP and the CPI-M [Communist Party of India-Marxist] were solidly behind the National Front Government, the "internal rebels," Mr Advani said.

PAKISTAN

Commentary Criticizes Troop Deployment in Saudi Arabia

90AS0418A Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English
18 Aug 90 pp 4, 7

[Article by Abbas Rashid: "In the Service of Islam or America?"; quotation marks as published]

[Text] The United States, it seems, is trying hard to convey the impression that it had nothing to do with the Pakistan government's deciding, in principle, to send troops to Saudi Arabia. The U.S. ambassador, Mr. Robert Oakley, would have us believe that "the decision to provide support was made by Pakistan alone, in response to a request for assistance from King Fahd." Naturally, however, he approves of the act wholeheartedly. In his view, it "reflects the determination of all the Muslim States to thwart aggression and defend the Holy Places so important to Islam." If Mr Oakley's government had conveyed its concern for Islam's Holy Places to its client state Israel instead of assiduously building it up as a bulwark against the Muslim countries of the Middle East, perhaps we would not be in this mess at all.

The ambassador in his article has also tried valiantly to create the impression that U.S. policy of sending troops to Saudi Arabia and recruiting others to fight on Saudi soil is backed by international consensus and in line with the United Nations Security Council Resolution 661 calling for mandatory economic sanctions. U.S. efforts to use the cover of sanctions to pursue its own foreign policy objectives has been taken serious note of by the United Nations Secretary General who was recently constrained to declare that the sending of U.S. forces to Saudi Arabia had nothing to do with the Security Council Resolution 661.

Now one last quotation from the ambassador's very interesting article: "If left unchecked, Iraq's action would inspire by example other potential outlaw nations to replicate such aggression, secure in the belief there would be likely no price to pay." May one suggest that the ambassador read his sentence again, substituting 'Israel' for 'Iraq'!

Pakistan government's decision to send combat troops to Saudi Arabia is not one that is likely to get much support at the popular level. While there may not be any great sympathy for Iraq in this country, the fact remains that our forces have been committed to fight in Saudi Arabia as part of an enterprise that has been conceived by the Pentagon which has contingents of the 82nd and 101st airborne, America's 'swift intervention' unit, already encamped on Saudi soil. Of course, some of the Arab countries are also sending their troops to Saudi Arabia, but whether one can think of such a force as being 'Islamic'-dominated as it will be led by U.S. officers—some of them undoubtedly being committed Zionists—is a matter for consideration. The Islamic rubric being liberally employed by those who want to sell

this act in Pakistan is also rendered somewhat confusing on the grounds that for all its faults, and its despicable leadership, Iraq, too, is a Muslim country.

What complicates the situation further is that there is no consensus either among the Arab countries or within the international community that foreign troops, from outside the region, have any role in meeting the threat from Iraq to Saudi Arabia. Among other countries, Jordan and Yemen have not supported the move, nor has the PLO. In fact, across a number of Arab capitals there have been popular demonstrations against the landing of U.S. troops and in favour of Iraq which is now, unfortunately, being cast in the role of defender of Arab interests against foreign intervention led by pro-Israeli forces. Again, contrary to the impression that is sought to be created here, members of the Security Council have reached a consensus only on the issue of imposing sanctions against Iraq, ensuring that it is able neither to import the badly needed goods nor export oil. On the other hand, the Soviet Union, one of the key members of the Security Council, has openly criticised the policy of sending foreign troops to resolve the crisis in the Middle East.

Given this lack of consensus on how best to proceed, particularly among the Arabs themselves, rushing into the eye of the storm with combat troops suggests a policy that may please the United States but could well compromise our long-term interests in the Middle East. It is certainly a detraction from a long-standing tenet of our foreign policy, i.e., that Pakistan will maintain neutrality in disputes between brother Muslim countries. The most recent manifestation of this policy was our hands-off approach in the long and bitter Iran-Iraq War even as we clearly signalled our availability to both in a mediatory role. It may have been far more appropriate in this case as well, at least for the time being, to limit ourselves to giving moral support to Saudi Arabia.

Among other things, this would have enabled us to retain a position in which it was possible to undertake a diplomatic initiative for defusing the situation perhaps in conjunction with the efforts being made by King Husayn of Jordan with whom we enjoy an excellent relationship. Pakistan was well placed for such a role. It is not, strictly speaking, a part of the Middle East and hence is not affected by the intra-Arab rivalries and under-currents. Yet, by virtue of its considerable interaction, geographic proximity and bonds of religion with the countries of the Middle East it would not be seen as a complete outsider by them.

The U.S. strategy in rushing troops to Saudi Arabia and, in order to render the act more 'respectable', getting Muslim countries like Pakistan to do the same—albeit on the formal request of the Saudi regime—is in line with two long-standing U.S. objectives in the region. One, ensuring of access to adequate oil supplies. In this case, there was no indication on the part of Iraq that it would actually choke off or even restrict the supply of oil to the industrialised countries. It had, forever, played a

pivotal role in getting the price of oil raised in the recent OPEC meeting. But that was by no means a significant or alarming raise. The real issue for the United States was the threat to the system of Emirates and monarchies that remain an essential feature of the Middle East's political landscape. Unanswerable as these Kings and Emirs are to their own people, it is much more possible for the United States to secure its interests in this crucial area through their good offices and indulgence. Conversely, given their lack of popular standing among their own people, they also come to depend far more on U.S. assistance in times of crisis.

The United States has sent a clear signal to these pliant entities that it crucially guarantees their survival against the winds of change and progress. In turn, it goes without saying, such regimes will continue to guarantee the supply of Mid-East oil, at 'reasonable' prices, to the industrialised West.

The other related U.S. objective in the region is ensuring the security of Israel and adding to its strength. The presence of U.S. troops in Saudi Arabia eventually expected to run as high as a hundred thousand, becomes more understandable in this context as well. Not since the War of 1973, has an Arab country been in a position to challenge Israel's might. The latter's arrogance has been repeatedly illustrated since then in its total disregard of norms of international conduct and civilised behaviour from its bombing of Iraq's nuclear reactor (without provocation) to its ruthless suppression of the Intifada in the occupied territories. It has contemptuously dismissed all peace initiatives and unilateral concessions by the PLO aimed at resolving the Palestinian issue through a process of negotiations and in accordance with the will of the people. An Iraq armed with chemical weapons, capable of deploying close to a million battle-hardened soldiers in the field, possessing more than 5,000 main battle tanks, Scud missiles and a not unimpressive air force, is certainly something for Israel to worry about.

Even at this point, it may be possible for Israel to win out in a war against Iraq but the cost would be unbearably high. However, what is worse from the U.S.-Israeli perspective is that in future an Iraq led by an ambitious and ruthless leader, supported by many in the Arab World, could even opt for such a war—and win. Israel's interest in the exercise against Iraq is manifest. As Israel's Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir observed recently "Israel is liable to be the next strategic aim of Saddam Husayn."

Clearly, Saddam Husayn's linkage of Israel's withdrawal from the occupied territories to the withdrawal of his own forces from Kuwait is a ploy to take the focus of attention away from his forces in that country and win greater sympathy for himself in the Arab World. Nevertheless, the logic of the point he is making cannot be easily refuted much as the United States and Britain have rejected it out of hand. If Iraqi expansionism is unacceptable, why have Israel's expansionist policies in

the Golan, East Jerusalem, southern Lebanon and the West Bank been tolerated with equanimity by the United States and its allies?

In any case, Pakistan's decision to send its troops to Saudi Arabia stands out also in sharp contrast to the two other Muslim countries in the region with which it seeks to forge particularly strong links, i.e., Iran and Turkey. Not only is there no question of Iran sending its troops to Saudi Arabia to fight under American auspices, it has already indicated its satisfaction, and more, at Iraq's offer to accept the 1975 Algiers accord with Iran, thereby conceding the latter's position and securing its own vulnerable Eastern flank. As for Turkey, despite its long-standing and close relationship with the United States, President Turgut Ozal has so far resisted pressure to contribute forces for Saudi Arabia. And a visit by the Secretary of State James Baker could not persuade him to change his mind. However, now that Pakistan has taken such a decision, the pressure on Turkey to follow suit will increase.

Almost exactly ten years after the U.S. Rapid Deployment Force became operational for the primary purpose of enabling the United States to intervene swiftly in the Persian Gulf, Saddam's aggression has provided the United States with the perfect cover to carry out its designs. It will also help those within the U.S. defence establishment who argue that the securing of American interests in the Gulf requires the presence of U.S. troops in the area itself so as to cut down on the logistical problems involved—or at the very least to maintain facilities in the area that can be made operational immediately, as and when required.

The Pakistan government's decision would suggest that this country has now become a primary candidate for pushing the U.S. strategy in the region. Under General Ziaul Haq's rule, close to 30 new air strips were built in Balochistan. Very recently, there was the announcement of a major U.S.-financed project in Balochistan for building a road to Turbat. Presumably, in the not too distant future, it will be linked to the coast. This could all be seen as the outcome of U.S. concern for the development of Balochistan and the welfare of its people, except that it appears that the United States has an obvious interest—rendered more immediate by recent developments in the area—to acquire a naval base or 'facilities' on the Gulf's Balochistan coast at the mouth of the Straits of Hormuz from where it could police the Gulf.

Pakistan's close military cooperation with the United States in the 50s including the provision of a base at Bada Ber could not help it secure any worthwhile national objective. If anything, it compromised Pakistan's national interest by undermining our non-alienated status and our position on the Kashmir issue. The Establishment today should review its decision of sending our troops to Saudi Arabia in an historical as well as regional context and beware of falling into the trap of becoming, in effect, an operational military component of U.S. strategy in the Persian Gulf. And in

the immediate future, it would, in any case, be well-advised to concentrate its attention on the country's Eastern flank where Indian troops remain in a state of readiness in the wake of the failure of the two rounds of high-level talks between Pakistan and India.

Commentaries View Bhutto Dismissal, Aftermath

Action Termed 'A Plunge in the Darkness'

90AS0401A Islamabad *THE MUSLIM in English*
13 Aug 90 pp 1, 6

[Article by Khalid Akhtar: "August 6 Action: A Leap in the Dark"; quotation marks as published]

[Text] There are no two opinions that Aug. 6, 1990 will go down as yet another bleak day in the constitutional history of the country. There may be many weighty reasons for the dissolution of the National Assembly. But the fact remains that dispensing away with an elected government through a discretionary exercise, even if it is a constitutional one, has not paid in the past, and will not pay in future either.

That Ms. Bhutto tumbled too often and at times made a mess of everything is beyond controversy. But her major fault was that she did not realise that she was the most junior partner and not a senior commander in the power structure. She could never reconcile with this anomaly in the constitutional framework, and inevitably paid the price.

Her thin majority in the National assembly made her position in the 'power troika' all the more vulnerable. What really tilted the balance against Bhutto were the two irreconcilable ingredients—the intense political polarisation and apprehensions about the PPP [Pakistan People's Party]—a legacy of the July 5, 1977 coup and developments thereafter—which made Ishaq Khan and Gen. Beg natural allies. This would explain that it was always two against one.

The real issue at stake was that who among the three—Ishaq, Beg, Bhutto—should call the shots. Bhutto, with people's mandate behind her, thought it to be her sole prerogative. In the end she was to pay dearly for this misreading of the situation. This led her to clash with the army hierarchy on the Admiral Sirohey and Gen. Mehsud issue and with President Ghulam Ishaq Khan on the matter of appointment of judges to the superior judiciary. Her conflict with the GHQ [general headquarters] on delegation of power to the army under Article 245 to deal with the Sindh situation, finally spelt disaster for her.

Bhutto could have survived the anomalies and imbalances in the power structure had she acted with foresight and restraint. It is wrong to assume that it was her confrontation with the opposition that sealed her fate. Her constant and continuous bickering with the opposition, of course, made matters worse for her. But in the

final analysis it was her inability to adjust herself in the 'power troika' that sounded her death knell.

Her close aides never realised how delicately she was placed in the power-sharing arrangements. They unnecessarily maintained a high-profile posture and repeatedly came out with provocative statements which achieved nothing except making their leader all the more 'undesirable intruder' in the corridors of power.

Among Benazir Bhutto's other major failings were her inability to keep intact PPP's accord with MRD [Movement for the Restoration of Democracy] components and the MQM [Muhajir Qaumi Movement]. Had she been able to do that she, notwithstanding her differences with the establishment, would probably have survived her full term in office for her own good and for the good of the country. But unfortunately she did not show enough political foresight in dealing with political matters.

Finally, Bhutto had somehow developed the illusion that President Ghulam Ishaq Khan, whatever might be the situation, would not find it advisable to resort to dissolution of the National Assembly. Here again her top political aides constantly fed her on this illusion. This would explain that Bhutto and her colleagues would not believe that the 'sword of Damocles' was about to strike them till the very last.

America's concurrence to the dissolution has certainly an element of surprise in it. Bhutto had apparently done well with America and had provided the latter no ground for annoyance. However, certain circles feel that Americans did not view favourably Bhutto's "lively diplomacy" on the Kashmir front. Significantly Mr. Oakley in his press briefing with newsmen a few days back aired views on Kashmir which differed sharply with Islamabad's perceptions.

The charge-sheet read out by President Ghulam Ishaq Khan against Bhutto was more heavily loaded with accusations than the one read out by late Gen. Ziaul Haq against Mohammad Khan Junejo. In barely 27 months, history has repeated itself and another Prime Minister has unceremoniously been packed home. Intriguingly, the President made no mention of the opposition which had conducted a high-pitched campaign against Bhutto and her government.

Now the crucial question is where the country goes from here. President Ishaq's subsequent actions have not evoked much confidence in political circles and masses alike. On the contrary, they have substantiated the PPP's charge that Ishaq Khan's move has been solely anti-Bhutto and that there is no other consideration behind it. In any case it will be very hard for the President to explain or justify the installation of 'opposition' governments at the Centre and in the provinces.

What is most disturbing is the talk that accountability of corrupt PPP politicians should precede the holding of election. It is a dangerous proposition to seek extension

in the polls date (some circles in the government are reportedly considering this option) from the Supreme Court. Already enormous damage has been done to the credibility of the superior judiciary by making it sit in judgment on political issues. It is only hoped that the 'malafied practices' of the past will not be re-enacted.

Secondly, it is not within the purview of the caretaker government to undertake the accountability exercise. Its sole 'executive mandate' is to hold free and fair polls on Oct. 24 as scheduled. If it undertakes anything else it will be overstepping its limit. Finally, why should the PPP elements alone be subjected to accountability? The Zia and Junejo eras were equally marred by corrupt practices. Why this selective use of the law?

It would amount to rigging of the electoral process if Bhutto or her colleagues are disqualified from contesting elections on the basis of the dubious exercise of accountability. The masses will not accept the results of such a 'guided electoral' exercise. Has not this tampering with the electoral process in the past cost the nation dearly? As a matter of fact it was this practice of debarring 'undesirable politicians' through such questionable means that cast the first element of polarisation in the nation's body politic.

The tempo in the national politics has already started registering an upward trend. The government has clamped emergency, which in any case is not a good sign. Ms. Bhutto in her last press conference in Karachi has sounded bitter. It is hoped that she will overcome the negative effects of her sacking for her own good and for the good of the country. On the other hand the establishment and opposition must keep it in mind that forcing Bhutto to play on 'Sindh wicket' would be disastrous for the country.

There are some inherent flaws in the government's thinking. If the Sindh situation could not be resolved minus the MQM, it certainly stands no chance of solution without PPP's participation which undisputably is the biggest party to the conflict. Army action in Sindh is fraught with grave dangers. Nobody can predict the turn things will take after such an eventuality.

Worse is the renewal of conflict between the armed forces and the PPP, the two biggest forces in the country. Bhutto has described her sacking as a 'quasi-army coup' against her. It was probably not advisable for the army to come out in battle dress and in numbers in the streets of the capital on Aug. 6. It was an unnecessary show of intimidation.

The army and the PPP must find a basis for co-existence. If they do not, no system and no solution will be durable. The sovereignty of democratic institutions has to be recognised if the nation wants to practise democracy. Similarly, it is highly erroneous on the part of establishment to think that public representatives cannot be trusted with matters concerning 'national security.' In the final analysis it is the masses who provide the only guarantee of national security. On the other hand the

PPP must realise that things have drastically changed since July 5, 1977 and there is no going back to the situation that had existed before Gen. Zia's coup.

These are big questions and will need a lot of debate and intelligent thinking for their resolution. For the time being it is feared that the caretaker government, lacking a popular base and capacity for handling tricky issues, may precipitate the situation. Some have even apprehended the imposition of martial law. Bhutto is one of them. It is feared that the Aug. 6 action may in the end prove a plunge in the darkness, something which the country can hardly afford.

Public Acceptance of President's 'Strong Case' Pondered

90AS0401B Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English
13 Aug 90 p 4

[Article by Syed Alamdar Raza: "Constitutionality vs. Accountability"]

[Text] The National Assembly has been dissolved by the President under Article 58 (2)(b). This is the second time that it has been dissolved under this article—first time the dissolution was made by General Ziaul Haq on 29.8.88. The powers available to the President under this clause are discretionary which can be exercised without the advice of the Prime Minister. The reason for the exercise of the power has to be that "a situation has arisen in which the government of the Federation cannot be carried on in accordance with provisions of the constitution and an appeal to the electorate is necessary." It implies that the President has first to form an opinion that the situation as described above has arisen before he can exercise or not exercise his discretion. This opinion has to be based on material facts and supported by convincing reasons—in other words the opinion has to be objective and not intuitive.

Main Reasons

The main reasons advanced by General Ziaul Haq in his order were as follows:—

- 1) The objectives for which the National Assembly was elected have not been fulfilled.
- 2) Law and Order in the country has broken down to an alarming extent resulting in tragic loss of valuable lives as well as loss of property.
- 3) Life, property, honour and security of the citizens of Pakistan have been rendered totally unsafe and the integrity and ideology of Pakistan have been seriously endangered.

Apparently these grounds have no nexus with the pre-conditions prescribed in the article because although these conditions do show that a serious situation exists, but they do not show that a point has been reached where the Government of the Federation cannot be carried on in accordance with the provisions of the constitution. In

fact, a credibility gap exists as to whether any serious effort was made to correct the situation or these reasons have simply been cited as a justification for dissolving the National Assembly. The dissolution is a very grave step and should be taken in unavoidable circumstances only—i.e., when the machinery of the government has broken down completely, its authority eroded and it cannot be carried on according to the constitution. The order of General Ziaul Haq did not make out a very convincing case for dissolution and as such his decision was not upheld by the Supreme Court of Pakistan vide their orders passed on 5th October 1988.

Details

The order of President Ghulam Ishaq Khan gives detailed reasons for dissolution which are summarised below:

- 1) Efficacy of National Assembly defeated by internal frictions, persistent horsetrading, inducement and corrupt practices.
- 2) The Federation and provinces are not working within their respective spheres and the Federation has skillfully undermined the working of constitutional arrangements main examples being: (i) The Council of Common Interests has not been called: (ii) National Finance Commission not called:
- 3) Violation of Article 97 by implementing Peoples Programme: (iv) Ridiculing the Senate: (v) Corruption and nepotism in Federal Government and its agencies: (vi) Failure of Federal Government to project Sindh against internal disturbances under Article 14 (3).
- 4) Violations of constitutional provisions by the following acts: (i) Ridiculing superior judiciary: (ii) Dissipating the resources of the government for political purposes: (iii) Undermining the civil services: (iv) Government acting under Article 45 without President's approval.

The above detailed charge-sheet shows that the opinion of the President about the dissolution is not a subjective opinion but it is based on material facts and objectives realities. To that extent it satisfies the constitutional provisions.

The main question that, however, remains to be decided is whether these reasons lead us to the irresistible conclusion that: (i) The machinery of government had broken down completely: (ii) Its authority had been eroded: (iii) It could not be carried out according to the Constitution.

The Province of Sindh has been in turmoil ever since the Benazir Bhutto government had taken over. The loss of life and property was immense and conditions of insecurity were the normal conditions. Thousands of persons lost their lives, many more were injured, property worth billions of rupees destroyed or looted, police unable to control the situation, Army called in but not vested with

powers to deal with the situation, many members of assemblies unable to attend the assemblies, dacoits operating boldly kidnapping even VIPs and taking ransom and the Federal Government unable to act decisively. The conclusion was the Government had broken down completely.

Confrontation

The confrontation between the Federation and the provinces had reached the point of litigation, arrests and registration of cases on many issues particularly on Peoples Programme. Is it not the erosion of the authority of the Government that their orders were declared illegal by the provincial government and criminal action initiated?

The violation of the Constitution is the most important and central issue. Here the National Assembly occupies the pride of place. Its prestige suffered irreparable loss when a vote of no confidence was presented. What followed was the MNAs [Members of National Assembly] were herded together, kept at specified places and their sale and purchase became public scandal. There are allegations that even within the Assembly building some members were kept confined and not allowed to vote. This the extreme violation of the Constitution that members do not have the freedom to vote according to their conscience. If this was so, why have the Assembly at all? It is only proper that it has got what it deserved, i.e., dissolution.

Strong Case

Apart from this, the President had given a long list of cases where violation of specific provisions of the Constitution had been committed. I have reproduced those instances above and I would not like to repeat them but each one of those instances is a serious violation of the Constitution. The government acting under Article 45 without the President's approval is the most serious of them.

The President has, no doubt, made a very strong legal and constitutional case against the government of Benazir Bhutto. This will withstand any type of judicial scrutiny.

The question that overrides all other questions is, whether this water-tight case of the President will have public acceptability. It is now the job of the new Prime Minister to convert these legal and constitutional arguments into political arguments and take them down to the grass root level. It is this aspect of the case which will determine the respect and prestige which the Presidents' dissolution order will enjoy in the country in future. Posterity will base its judgment only on this aspect of the case.

'Slave (i.e., Ghulam) Dynasty' Satirized

90AS0401C Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English
13 Aug 90 p 4

[Article by Mustafa Jaferi: "Rise of the Slaves"]

[Text] Noted American humourist Mark Twain once remarked East is east, West is west and the Twain shall never meet. Pakistan, however, is a land where impossibilities distinctly exist not only in the domain of possibilities but also probabilities. If slaves and the likes are considered on one side, the Amirs, Mirs and Mirzas will certainly be placed at the other end of the pendulum. Theoretically, each is an enemy of the other but in this feudal land, a carefully oiled plan could be worked out for sharing power.

President Ghulam Ishaq Khan brought Mr Ghulam Mustafa Jatoi and Mr Ghulam Mustafa Khar to power in the centre while the Punjab Governor nominated Mr Ghulam Haider Wyen as the Chief Minister of the province. This has happened only in the first week of the dissolution of the National Assembly and legislatures in the provinces and no one knows how many more Ghulams (slaves) are waiting in the wings to climb into the high seat of government. In the NWFP [North-West Frontier Province] Governor Amir Gulistan Janjua brought Mir Afzal Khan to power. All this happened while Mirza Aslam Baig, the Army Chief of Staff, benignly looked on extending his blessings to the new set up.

The rise to power of so many slaves (though in name only) takes place exactly 650 years after the original slaves, led by Qutubuddin Aibak assumed the supreme power in the country. Their era is not exactly the golden era of the history of the sub-continent, but very nearly so. In fact it were the original slaves who laid foundations on which the edifice of the Muslim empire in India was built subsequently.

One point of similarity between the rulers of the 13th century and those of today is that on both occasions their country was beset with almost insurmountable internal and external problems. Internally, the young empire had to cope with the Hindu rulers while externally the Mongol threat loomed large.

Today Pakistan faces a powerful hostile India on its southern flank while internal disorder, corruption, opportunism and other forms of social evils beleaguered this nation of 110 million people. Like in the past, urgent and strong remedies are to be found if the country is to come out successfully against the heavy odds that are stacked against it.

Indeed, the current "Slave Dynasty", if it may be so called, has been appointed only as a caretaker regime and is not required to deal with all the problems before the country by Oct. 24, when a new set of people may very well emerge to replace them. However, if the words and the behaviour of Mr Jatoi is any indication, it appears he

has almost unlimited time at his disposal. He talks of accountability, he thinks in terms of cleansing the administration and he aims at creating a utopian state—all in just over two and a half months. How we may accomplish all these objectives within so short a period, he has not cared to outline.

In one of his first public statements, Mr Jatoi particularly referred to the law and order situation in his own native Sindh province and has vowed to restore peace with guaranteed justice to every one. There is no secret, before him, the martial law administration of former President Gen. Mohammad Ziaul Haq and the 20-months-old regime of Benazir Bhutto failed to accomplish this objective in an aggregate of more than 12 years.

Mr Jatoi has spoken of almost every thing except his primary task of holding free and fair election on Oct. 24. His benefactor, the President, on the other hand, insists that this part of the mission will be accomplished on the date assigned. Mr Ghulam Ishaq Khan must be believed when he speaks with solemnity and seriousness about the election. Once before, in 1988, he promised the election would be held on a given date and that those elections would be fair and he fulfilled that promise unflinchingly. He could have perpetuated his own rule, like some of his predecessors, but he never attempted it.

Good intentions, however, alone are not sufficient for the accomplishment of a mission. Mr Jatoi and Mr Khar are both seasoned politicians and they might have unexpected devices up their sleeves. Therefore, if Mr Ghulam Ishaq Khan wishes to emerge out of the whole turmoil as unblemished as in the past, he will have to exercise extra caution.

Indeed, for this a neutral army would be essential. So far, there has been no indication that the army is going to interfere in the process of democracy which was started in 1988 and which, according to the ousted Prime Minister, has been stabbed so willfully. Of course, the President claims he has acted under the constitutional authority he enjoys.

Whether this claim is justifiable or not will have to pass through a stiff judicial process which the ousted prime minister plans to invoke. When Gen Zia dissolved the National Assembly in 1988 he also had claimed to have exercised his discretionary powers under the constitution. However, a Supreme Court ruling called his action illegal, unconstitutional and ultra vires though it did not re-instate the Junejo government on the plea that election arrangements had been made already.

In the present instance what the Supreme Court ruling will be is something for the future to decide but in the meantime, every patriotic Pakistani would wish the caretaker government to perform the duty for which it has been primarily installed—holding free and fair election on Oct. 24.

If the present day slaves could accomplish this mission, they would certainly go down in the history as honest people with the best interests of the country at their heart.

Commentary: Political Structure, PPP 'Blunders' To Blame

90AS0401D Karachi DAWN in English 13 Aug 90 p 7

[Article by Ayaz Amir: "On the Neutrality of the President and the Caretakers"]

[Text] Liberals of all persuasions are wringing their hands in despair at the one-sided and partisan nature of the appointments made in the caretaker establishment erected by President Ghulam Ishaq Khan over the wreckage of the Bhutto government. The selection of Ghulam Mustafa Jatoi as caretaker Prime Minister and the elevation of people like Ghulam Mustafa Khar, not to mention the other IJI [Islamic Democratic Alliance] members, to ministerial rank, they say, detracts from what should have been an impartial exercise. To such bleeding hearts one can only extend one's deepest sympathy.

What do they take politics to be? A mug's game or a morality play? Politics is not about neutrality, no more than war or diplomacy are. It is about power. Machiavelli, although a romantic at heart, had an understanding of what power meant. That is why idealists are so offended by what he wrote. No doubt President Ghulam Ishaq Khan has decked out with constitutional finery his decision to sack the assemblies. In essence, however, his action has less to do with the Constitution than with the enduring realities of power.

In the anguish over the dismissal of the assemblies let us not forget how the PPP [Pakistan People's Party] came to power. The establishment allowed the PPP to take office because of two factors: first, its own disarray caused by the dismissal to Junejo and his assemblies and the death of General Zia; and, second, the fact that the PPP had bagged the largest number of seats in the National Assembly. As there was no getting around that fact, the establishment overcame its reluctance and handed over power to the PPP.

But despite these inauspicious beginnings, had Benazir Bhutto made the most of the opportunity she was getting, she could have tightened her grip on the reins of power. There are plenty of countries, after all, where the transition from dictatorship to democracy has been negotiated successfully—Spain, Portugal, Greece, Argentina, Brazil, and to stretch the point a bit, South Korea. There was no reason why Ms Bhutto couldn't have done the same thing. The establishment was in disarray, the army was discredited and the people were eager for change. But, even as her less blinkered supporters would now admit, she blew her chance.

How this happened is now a matter of history—amateurishness, incompetence, greed, taking everything

for granted took their toll and sapped the foundations of government. That, of course, did not mean that the government should have been dismissed and the assemblies dissolved. For the superior courts in several of their judgments have clearly observed that the dissolution of assemblies can only be countenanced in extreme circumstances. Those circumstances, whatever the President may say, clearly did not exist. Neither the country was on the verge of civil war. Nor was civic life grinding to a halt. Even so the erosion of the authority of the PPP government laid it open to attack from outside. Consequently, the forces that were always against the PPP, and had tolerated its accession to power only with the greatest reluctance, thought that their hour had come. And so they struck. That they also covered their action with a constitutional fig leaf is quite beside the point.

Governor-General Ghulam Mohammad's dismissal of the first Constituent Assembly was a blatant piece of illegality. But the Supreme Court validated it. As it later validated, in the Dosso case, Ayub Khan's martial law and, in the Nusrat Bhutto case, General Zia-ul-Haq's martial law. All under the doctrine of necessity. Liberal hearts hold the judiciary in supernatural esteem forgetting that the judiciary has as keen an appreciation of the realities of power as any other institution of state. The few occasions when it has passed judgment against a dictator, as when it held General Yahya Khan's assumption of power and General Zia's dismissal of the assemblies in 1988, illegal, it has always done so *ex post facto*, when the dictator in question has departed from the scene of his crimes. Otherwise it has bent low, very low, before the doctrine of necessity.

When Molotov was telling Stalin of the People's importance, Stalin asked that famous question, "How many divisions does the Pope have?" Indeed, the reality of power pervades everything (even relations between the sexes as that aphorism 'power is the greatest aphrodisiac' testifies). Although Bhutto won a majority of the National Assembly seats from West Pakistan in 1970, he was brought into power a year later by a section of the armed forces. Benazir had the largest number of seats in the National Assembly in 1988 but she came to power only after a three-cornered deal between her, the top guns of the establishment and the Americans. Constitutional forms were followed but this three-cornered deal was crucial in her election to power. It is no different today. Constitutional forms have been followed in dismissing her from office. To this end chapters and verse have been cited from the Constitution. But her downfall came about not because she had fallen foul of some provision of the Constitution but because the foundations of her government had been undermined.

It is no use saying that the President acted in a partisan manner. In politics one always acts in a partisan manner. The only difference is that things had reached such a pass that the President could give full expression to his partisanship. And the tragedy is that things had reached this stage through no fault or conspiracy of the army but through the failings of the Bhutto government itself.

Hunting for scapegoats on whom to pin the blame for her misfortune, Ms Bhutto has accused Military Intelligence of engineering her downfall. But she is mistaken. The army may have come in on the kill but the truth remains that no conspiracy of the army could have succeeded half as well as the PPP's own blunders in paving the way for its downfall. Like her father, Benazir has been her own worst enemy.

But to say as much should not be to fall into the illusion of dubbing what has happened as constitutional. Educated people in Pakistan have a strange obsession with legalism (which perhaps comes from the fact that lawyers had so much to do with the fight for both Indian and Pakistani independence). Instead of training their eyes on reality, they are mesmerised by the dry text of legal documents. Hence it is that they are forgetful of the fact that constitutions are not divine documents. They are just reflectors of a certain balance or consensus in society. When that balance tilts or that consensus breaks down, a constitution becomes worthless. Yet politicians in Pakistan have always looked to constitutions for protection. Bhutto thought his ultimate protection lay in Article 6 of the constitution which prescribes the death penalty for any action violative of the Constitution. Did Article 6 deter Zia when he set out to tear that Constitution?

Junejo too was guilty of distancing himself from reality when he and his ministers started picking bones with the high command of the army. Would Zia have permitted it that Junejo, who was his creation, should stand up to him in that manner? When the situation was in danger of getting out of hand, Zia dismissed Junejo and dissolved the assemblies. In much the same manner, Ms Bhutto was treading a dangerous path when she let her relations with the army deteriorate. If she was so reluctant to give enhanced powers to the army in Sindh, she should have seen to it that she did without the army's assistance in Karachi and Hyderabad.

Having one's cake and eating it too is difficult in most circumstances; in politics it is usually impossible. Idealists and moralists may decry this situation but unless they can do better than they have, unless political institutions become so strong that they keep a check on the military, the army's political role has to be tolerated. Power, said Mao, flows from the barrel of a gun. Unfortunately, it does so still, especially in countries which continue to live in a Byzantine age. Either politicians should control that gun and sit astride its barrel or learn to live in the long shadow that it casts.

But what happens now, you may ask. The PPP should consider itself lucky if elections are postponed on October 24. That should not only give it a respite but also boost its martyred status. If, however, the caretaker government has the sense to go ahead with the elections, without getting impaled on the horns of accountability, the PPP's rout in Punjab, on current evidence, will be consummated. That will put the finishing touches on the disaster that has already befallen the party.

Interim Government Allegedly Using Secret Service

90AS0401E Karachi DAWN in English 13 Aug 90 p 7

[Article: "A Foretaste of Things to Come?"]

[Text] On Friday evening four senior journalists of Islamabad were picked up by men in plain clothes as they were coming out of the house of an Indian diplomat where they had gone to attend a news briefing. They were brought to the Islamabad Polyclinic, subjected to a humiliating search and photographed Gestapo-style. Later that night drinking charges were slapped on them, after which they were sent to the Aabpara Police Station. The next day they were bailed out by a local magistrate on grounds that no prima facie evidence had been provided against them. The sinister thing in all this is that the men in plain clothes who nabbed the journalists were not policemen. The methods they used, like photographing the journalists, were not those of the police. In any event, Islamabad police officials deny that they initiated the action against the newsmen or that they were even aware of it. Nor, to go by what two federal ministers have said, did they know anything of the matter. All of which leads inexorably to the conclusion that the plainclothes men were from the secret services. If so, there is nothing more reprehensible than that.

For twenty months, the secret services were not visible and, contrary to what had been happening under Martial Law, had been taken off the backs of ordinary citizens. Is it to be supposed that with the installation of the new government they have staged a dramatic comeback? For this is nothing but an act of naked harassment. Clearly, the drinking charge does not stick. So what are the secret services trying to prove? That their presence should not be forgotten? That Indian diplomats should not be visited at home? If that was their purpose there are subtler methods of letting this be known. In any case, if we still believe in democracy, no secret service has the right to stage kidnappings of this kind. And no civilian government should be so feckless as to allow such things to happen right in the federal capital.

Political 'Misuse' of Electronic Media Condemned

90AS0418B Lahore THE NATION in English
22 Aug 90 Supplement p 2

[Text] Ms Benazir Bhutto has served legal notice on Pakistan Television for telecasting news alleging that she sought Indian help to stay in office. The matter will no doubt be legally processed by the concerned parties and if need be by a court of law. What we are here concerned with, however, is the propriety and the advisability of using the electronic media for character assassination of the leader of supposedly the largest political party in the country. The facts of the case are that an Indian newspaper published a story alleging that Ms Bhutto, while she was still the Prime Minister, asked India to attack Pakistan so that the Army's attention could be diverted from Pakistan's internal affairs. The story was published

quite sometime back. The Pakistani gentleman whose name was mentioned in the story, as the carrier of her message to India, had already denied it. He had, in fact, filed a suit for damages against a paper which had repeated this story. Yet a decision was taken in the Ministry of Information to telecast it.

The point is, if the matter was actually investigated by the Ministry of Information and found to be true, was its public broadcast the only remedy available to the government? The allegation, if true, constitutes an act of treason. Any government, convinced of such guilt has for more efficacious remedies at its disposal than the

attempt made on TV to discredit a former Prime Minister who is in the arena for re-election. Secondly, did anyone in the Ministry bother to find out many other implications of broadcasting such a story. Did anyone realise the damage that such news would do to our national interests? The electronic media is a national trust and its misuse for personal and party ends by anyone—be it the PPP [Pakistan People's Party] or the IJI [Islamic Democratic Alliance]—needs to be condemned. May one hope that greater care will be exercised in future by the authorities that be in the use of the publicity media on sensitive matters of national importance.

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