

'Good Governance Is Good Process'

Nations and international institutions need to concur on governance objectives

D N GHOSH

THE accentuation of the process of globalisation in the last quarter of the past century has brought up several complex issues of political and economic governance. The efficacy of the institutional structure, the nature and quality of the decision making processes within the global institutions are being increasingly questioned. Are these institutions capable of steering market driven forces of globalisation towards a more egalitarian and broad-based economic and social development? What are the governance needs of the world economy and polity and how do these institutions measure up to expectations for coherent governance?

These basic concerns had been the theme of a major project, sponsored by the World Institute for Development Economics Research (WIDER). The outcome was *Governing Globalisation—Issues And Institutions*. The introductory essay by Deepak Nayyar, the editor of the compilation, sets out with remarkable clarity, the global governance issues that confront us today. Several discerning researchers and scholars have thought through positively on the governance issues of a host of wide-ranging institutions, covering finance economy, trade, investment, services and even peoples.

In the concluding piece, the editor sums up their findings and conclusions, highlighting the holistic approach underlying the project. This, as distinct from many other institution-specific reform studies, makes the book unique. The most visible manifestations of today's concern emanate from cross border movements in global finance, investment and trade. The Bretton Woods institutions have failed to come to grips with the systemic risks associated with these movements.

In fact, as Joseph Stiglitz argues, (though less polemically than in his book *Globalisation And Its Discontents*), these institutions have got trapped within the logic of the Washington Consensus, with



Illustration by SHYAMAL BANERJEE

structures, particularly in the area of representation and transparency. These have been extensively discussed and analysed by Jong-Il in his longish essay, *The Bretton Woods Institutions: Evolution, Reform And Change*. Do we have to move beyond the existing institutions? Perhaps.

The Financial Stability Forum (FSF), established by the G 7 countries, is a recognition of the need for better consistency, surveillance and consultation of national economic policies, but this, at best, as has been convincingly argued by Lance Taylor, is a makeshift arrangement. He makes out a case for a World Financial Authority (WFA), with the power to enforce and act, federal in character, with common principles and values, with converging national codes enforced by national authorities to attain common goals.

Yilmaz Akyuz and Andrew Cornford strike a different note. In an informative discourse on different aspects of capital flows to the developing countries, they argue that, considering the complex technical and legal problems involved in the establishment of WFA, it would make more sense to work towards strengthening the existing institutions (note in this context the evolution and acceptance over time of Basle standards for financial supervision).

Crossborder movement of

while preparing for painstaking negotiations, on with the tougher issues that are still eluding consensus, namely on International Monetary Fund conditionalities, adequacy of emergency funding and capital account management.

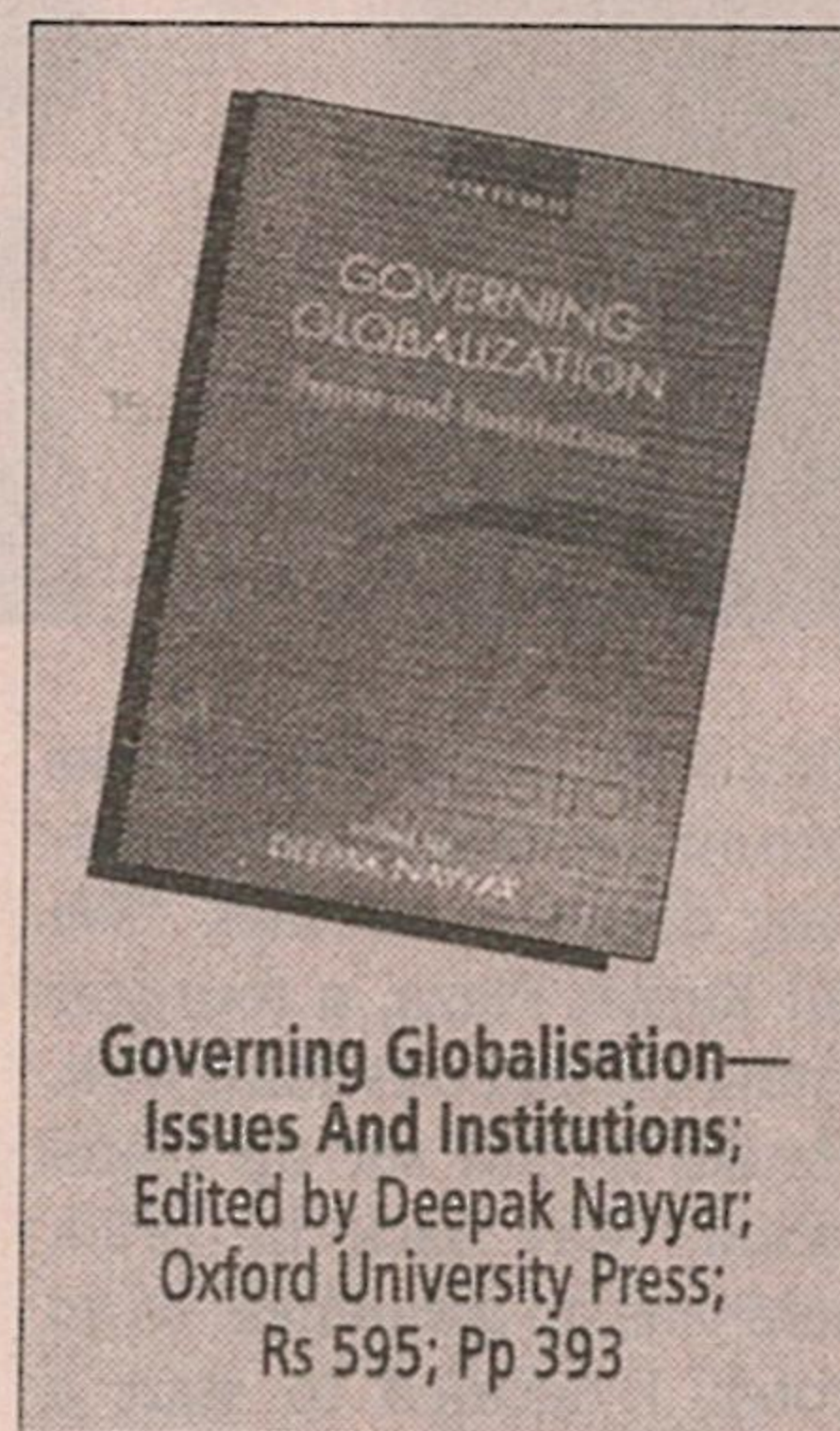
Governing globalisation is not global governance. It aims to bring about congruence between the governance objectives of international institutions and those of the nation states. In a thought provoking essay (*Nationalism And Economic Policy*), Amit Bhaduri brings into sharp focus the kinds of dilemmas that a nation state faces in a globalising economy, dilemmas between equity and efficiency, between business interest and sovereignty perception, business values and cultural traditions.

entire range of goods and services.

When we talk of reforming existing institutions, we are talking of something more than perfecting the techniques of management or for more transparency or for better coordination. Reform would involve, in essence, a qualitative change in the power equation within these organisations. Decision is a matter of choice and choice is a function of the exercise of power. The rigidities that we encounter are fundamentally rooted in power structures within the institutions. The processes through which changes can come about is the theme of the essay by Devesh Kapur.

In a perceptive essay on economic governance and negotiation processes, G K Helleiner pleads for greater activism on the part of the developing nations. "Governance," as he puts it, "is not simply a matter of designing an optimal system... but a communicative and consultative process through which disputes are resolved, consensus is built and performance is continually reviewed. ... Good governance is good process."

In that perspective, a pragmatic set of measures proposed by S P Sukla towards more accommodating and equitable forms of international trade negotiation and decision makes eminent sense. Antonio Ocampo takes the



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to the availability of economic opportunities for developing nations, but what is worrying them is the basic asymmetry between their developmental interests and the corporate policies of the transnational corporations (TNCs) and in enforcing commitments and obligations towards foreign investors. These cannot be removed, as highlighted by Sanjaya Lall, except under international supervision.

In his concluding essay, Mr Nayyar emphasises that in today's governance structure, the most critical "missing institution" from the development perspective is an international system of governance for transnational corporations. Another critical gap is on cross-border movement of peoples. The case for a set of rules or institutions to rectify a basic imbalance between emigra-

THE BUSINESS OF BOOKS
SRIDHAR BALAN

A Printing Museum

FOLLOWING the Prime Minister's call for a national effort to store and preserve manuscripts, the Union ministry for information and broadcasting has thought of setting up a printing museum in the country. The Indian Institute of Mass Communication (IIMC) was identified as the nodal agency for this project. The IIMC called a meeting of experts from the media, publishing and printing industries to discuss the issues further. At the meeting, it was envisaged that the printing museum would not only record the history of printing and print journalism, but also of the publishing industry both in English and Indian languages.

Examples of other printing museums were cited, and during my presentation, I spoke of my visit to the printing museum in Tokyo. The printing museum had been set up by the Toppan Company on its centennial anniversary and was dedicated to printing. The symbol of the museum was the ancient Chinese character *Kanji*, which meant the verb "to look". And this was what we did, for the next hour. Our tour convinced us that the exhibits had been sourced with a great deal of care and painstaking effort, adding up to an extraordinary experience.

The director of the museum explained that the floor design of the museum and of the exhibits expressed four main concepts, *kanjiru* (feel), *mitsukeru* (discover), *wakaru* (understand) and *tsukuru* (creation). The printing museum depicted the entire history of printing from the earliest forms of stored knowledge, like cave inscriptions and rock paintings to the most modern digital technologies.

During the Edo Period in Japan, printing reached new heights and illustrated blocks were first used and these exhibits too were there. The prize exhibit was an actual page from the

tions. The museum exhibited an actual printed book, 0.95mm in size, which had an entry in the *Guinness Book Of World Records* as the world's smallest book.

Another prize exhibit was the *Encyclopedia Of Birds* by English ornithologist Audubon, which was part of the collection of books presented to the Japanese by Commodore Perry, when he entered Yokohama in 1852. That historic meeting, of course, changed the course of Japanese history. The museum tour ended with a printing workshop, where visitors could experience real printing techniques under master printers. The emphasis was on letter-press printing techniques.

The museum had master printers, who were experts in letter-press. Visitors could not only see them at work, but also watch them passing on these techniques to apprentices. Through this process, the museum has kept alive a form of printing, which has almost become obsolete in many parts of the world. The museum took six years to plan and set up.

There is no doubt that we can set up an extraordinary printing museum in India. The museum could become a storehouse for stored information, from our ancient manuscripts to books printed with the latest technologies. It can also record the history of printing, right from the day the first printing press landed in Goa in 1556, courtesy the Portuguese. We have a rich tradition of printing in Indian languages, some of which pre-date printing in English. The museum can also record the growth of the publishing industry both in English and regional languages. We now rank third in the world after England and the United States as far as publishing books in English is concerned.

It is clear that with dedication and effort, we can source exhibits and artefacts for the museum. What

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Seizure by Robin Cook, Pan, Rs 225

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The Alchemist by Paulo Coelho, Thorsons, Rs 195

The Third World War: A Terrifying Novel Of Global Conflict by Humphrey Hawksley, Pan, Rs 271

Artemis Fowl—The Eternity Code by Eoin Colfer, Puffin Books, Rs 245

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NON-FICTION

I Moved Your Cheese by Darrel Bristow Bovey, New