# The Baily Star

Dhak a, Friday, August 20, 1993

### **Punish These Law** Breakers

Yesterday, most of the national dailies carried front page pictures of hawkers breaking up cars. Why? Because they were protesting. What were they protesting about? The recent City Corporation's action of evicting them from illegally set up shops at various busy city intersections. The obvious question is, what was the relationship between their protest action and the owners whose cars they damaged. Even if they had grievances against the government to vent, is destroying public property the way to do it? Who is going to answer these questions?

This is a most disturbing trend that we see emerging in our political life. Damaging public and private property by this or that group to register protest cannot be permitted under any circumstances. We would like to declare our unequivocal opposition to this trend, and we condemn all those who indulge in it.

But we are also convinced that mere pious words, and moral pontification will have no impact on the minds of people who find such vicarious pleasure in destroying other people's property. Severe action must be taken against these people who take up the law in their hands at the slightest pretext. As things are going now, it gives the impression that when one or two people break the law, it is a crime. But when a few dozens commit violence, it is overlooked. We are convinced that repeated instances of culprits of public violence not being punished have given all sorts of wrong signals about the efficacy of the law enforcement bodies. This has led to more instances of mass car breaking.

The impact of such outburst of violence on civic life has been devastating. Owners of buses, trucks and private cars operate under constant fear and intense strains, not knowing what lies next for them. These incidents of meaningless violence in the streets give an extremely bad image about the country leading to all sorts of negative stereotypes. It is anybody's guess as to whether incidents like those of yesterday will help us attract foreign investors to come and put their money here.

We urge the police to take some immediate and effective steps against the recurrence of such incidents. We would like to suggest the formation of a special task force to respond immediately to such situations and take preventive actions against them. Technology is currently available - mobile phone, wireless and walkie-talkie — to our police force to keep in constant touch and respond to emergencies. They also have the necessary logistics to handle any violent situation. What is lacking is the idea and the will to do something about it. The rampage that now goes on for hours in the open streets, cannot be permitted to continue any more.

Firm hand of the law must be made to appear supreme. All sorts of lawlessness must be severely dealt with. Not only our civic life, but the prospect of our economic development, including attracting foreign investment, depends on how effectively we handle the law-breakers.

### Congratulations for a Fantastic Loser

Our sincere consolations to Bronze Queen Merlene Ottey of Jamaica. She is the best woman sprinter of the world if consistency of performance at top and the length of it is considered — and also her talent and tenacity. She has been fancied, not unreasonably, by experts to win at least one Olympic gold and several world-meet championships. But till Wednesday her records stand at eight bronzes and two silvers in Olympic and international meets.

Unlucky Ottey has, however, done something rare and more memorable than winning a gold, on her Stuttgart run on Tuesday which gave her the silver. Gail Devers of US and Ottey, together with the officials of their respective national teams, were unsure of the outcome at the end of the race. Repeated showing of the photo-finish on the gigantic stadium screen failed to make a clear case as to who was the winner. But the jury gave the race to Devers at 10.81 seconds and timed Ottey at a hundredth of a second later at 10.82.

The Jamaicans protested. And the jury relented and timed both at 10.82. But the gold was confirmed for Devers. The unpleased Jamaicans maintained that "Devers' face had crossed the line first but Ottey had won because her torso was ahead." When the split-second photos are all there to show what actually happened — the Jamaicans' claim of Ottey's torso crossing line before Devers' seems to be irrefutable.

The debate is now on what wins a race — the head or the torso or any other part of the body that crosses the line first. The jury seem to have acted on the third point which is what should appeal to most sport enthusiasts as well as to common sense. But to dismiss the position that 'torso is the body more than any other extensions of it - heads and hands and legs' - is not easy either. The Stuttgart decision sets a precedent but doesn't formulate a principle which should be the business of the IAAF to do without delay.

Meanwhile, shall we only console Ottey? She has this time beaten her Olympic victor Gwen Torrence to third place. And equalled the time of the winner. What a fantastic loser, we congratulate you Marlene.

TE ongoing polarisation of various parties and hectic organisational activities coupled with a series of street movements, at times accompanied by violence, has warmed up the political arena during these humid days of August.

Gathering of some radical parties and forces around vet eran politician Dr Kamal Hossain for launching a new party is the most significant political development of recent times that has stirred the opposition camp. The Awami League's ext ensive programmes along with a hartal to observe Bangaban dhu's death anniversary and the ruling party BNP's pre paration for their forthcoming National Council have also marked the recent political sce-

A mini convention of former Foreign Minister Hossain and his allies, held from August 12 to 14, reached consensus to form a new political party on liberal democratic lines, which is likely to be floated from the National Grand Convention (NGC), scheduled in Dhaka from August 27. Kamal heads the NGC's preparatory committee that includes some dissidents from Awami League (AL). representatives from the Communist Party of Bangladesh (reformists), the National Awami Party (NAP), Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD-Straj), Gano Azadi League and other organisations.

Some individuals are also in it. The process of forming a new party, branded by its organisers as the 'third force' in politics, was initiated in June last year when Kamal, the then presidium member of the AL, launched Bangladesh Democratic Forum (BDF). The BDF was a platform of like-minded politicians from different parties along with a group of intellectuals who joined it as individuals. The purpose of the Forum, which had a non-partisan character, was to identify and discuss national problems.

From the very beginning, the AL hierarchy did not approve of this independent move of Karnal that finally resulted in his dropping from the party presidium during the AL council in September last year. However, he was included in the newlycreated Advisory Council of the party. Kamal, who held a posi-

breakup of the Commu-

nist Party of the Philipp-

Ines (CPP) is expected to

hasten the decline of one of

Southeast Asia's last

attnamidatalyua major group

in the party, the Manila-Rizal

province regional committee,

announced it was breaking

away from the central commit-

tee headed by founding chair-

man Jose Maria Sison. It is be-

lieved to have one-third of the

The committee controls the

communist movement in the

Philippines capital, adjacent

Rizal province and surrounding

provinces. The committee was

in the vanguard of the urban

terrorism campaign in 1987-91,

when more than 200 policemen,

soldiers and government offi-

cials, including an American

military adviser, were assassi-

The group now accuses

Sison, a university professor, of

rigid dogmatism and abso-

lutism, someone in danger of

being swept aside by the fast-

changing tides of world com-

The move of the Manila-Rizal

committee, considered the most

sophisticated and talented in

the CPP, did not come as a sur-

prise. Party unity began fraying

media have seen an exchange of

slander between two groups:

those carrying on the fight

Since December, Manila's

back in 1986.

nated by left-wing guerillas.

party's 15,000 members.

insurgencies. ....

# Kamal's Move Adds New Dimension to a Turbulent Political Scene

by Chapal Bashar

tion in the presidium for a long time, declined to become an advisor, and virtually disassoci ated himself from the AL activi ties. All these were the outcome of Kamal's strained relations with the AL hierarchy that started during 1991 parliamentary elections. Kanual was critical and vocal about certain strategy of the party which was disliked by the leadership. However, neither Kamal resigned from the AL, nor the party expelled him. This uneasy state remains unchanged until today.

Afterwards, in March this year, the preparatory committee for the NGC was formed and district level committees were also constituted for the purpose. While doing such organisational activities, Kamal had to face resistance from his old AL associates in Faridpur. In other districts, he was, however, undisturbed.

Meanwhile, some developments have also surfaced in the camps of Kamal's major allies - the CPB and the NAP. The CPB was split in two groups reformists led by Saifuddin Ahmed Manik and the hardliners headed by Mujahidul Islam Selim. The CPB (reformists) took the official decision to go for a broad-based liberal party with Kamal and other like minded forces while its hard liner counterpart vowed to maintain separate entity holding left politics. Both the groups have already amicably divided the party assets and now sharing the Purana Paltan headquarters, which the party had been using since after the liberation.

The NAP in its National Committee meeting held on August 6, adopted a decision with the support of majority of 31 members led by General Secretary Pankaj Bhattacharya to merge with the party in the offing, while 29 others, including party president Prof Mozaffar Ahmed, opposed the proposal. While Pankaj-led NAP is

in the process of merging with the new party, Prof Mozaffar categorically said that he was not going to quit NAP, which means he would continue with the political line he had been following for over three decades.

The Ganatantri Party (GP) is still undecided about joining the proposed party, though efforts from Kamal's camp is on to bring them in the process. The GP's council is scheduled to meet during third week of the current month where a decision in this regard might be taken. However, new party's mentors are optimistic about having at least a group of GP with them.

Two smaller parties, JSD led by Shajahan Straj and Cano Azadi League, founded by late that Kamal's party will cause damage to AL's organisation and might spoil its support to some extent which will ultimately benefit the ruling party BNP during the next elections.

Interestingly, there is no visible reaction in BNP about Kamal's move. There is little doubt that the ruling party is enjoying the rift in its major rival party. However, Kamal maintains that his organisation will act as mainstream in the politics since both the BNP and the AL failed to do their task for

This is not the first time that the AL is facing desertion of some party members led by a senior leader. The AL experienced similar situation in 1957 at least ideologically.

The AL, the biggest opposition party bearing the heritage of over four decades, is concerned at the recent developments and has geared up its organisational activities to face the new challenge. The party had drawn programmes to observe the death anniversary of Bangabandhu, as a part of which, a countrywide half-day hartal was called and observed on August 15 peacefully. However, during the afternoon of hartal day, the city centre of the eapital was shaken with frequent blasts of bombs and tear gas shells when the clashes erupted between the supporters of AL and the rightist alliance NDA in which police had to in-

The AL has also planned a massive rally on August 20 at Manik Miah Avenue in the city where the leaders are likely to announce fresh programme of movement on political and economic demands. It is natural that AL will strive for a big show on that day keeping in view the forthcoming Grand Conference of Kamal and National Council of BNP.

Meanwhile, another development has been cropping up as a natural sequel of polarisation. The CPB (hardliners) and the Five-party, a left alliance, are already in touch to go for unified movements. The leaders of Workers Party, the biggest component of Five-party, have already discussed possibilities of forming a left front with CPB (hardliners) and other left groups. The NAP led by Prof Mozaffar, is most likely to join hands with these left forces. So, the possibility of a unified left force, bigger than before, is likely to emerge, however, not .....

HE preparation for BNP's September 1-2 National Council continues in full swing. This will be the fourth council of the party founded by late President Ziaur took place in 1989 when the BNP was on the street fighting for democracy. Now the fourth one is being held in a different scenario, the party is back to power with its Chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia as the Prime Minister. The country was under presidential form of government when BNP was in power for the first time. The BNP has returned to power after nine

Rahman in 1978 while the

first and the second council

were held in 1980 and 1981

respectively when the party

was in power. The third one

years, but the country has now a parliamentary system. The switch-over to this system was possible through consensus between the BNP, the AL and others in the parliament.

The changed system of government has also necessitated the amendments of BNP's manifesto which stands for presidential form of government. Clause 8 of the BNP's manifesto says that a president elected by the people can safeguard the democracy as well as the democratic stability. An elected president can bring an end to autocratic process, the manifesto said. Under the changed circumstances, the BNP will have to replace this clause with an amended one.

A total of 2017 councillors are expected to attend the national council which will undoubtedly boost the organisational activities of the ruling party. The BNP's constitution provides the system of appointing the office bearers by the party's chairperson. So, the speculation about the appointment of a new Secretary General is rife while the names of the aspirants for the post are being widely discussed. Abdus Salam Talukder, the incumbent Secretary General, is reportedly unwilling to continue due to health reasons. As many as five candidates are interested for the post while lobbying for them by the supporters is on. The aspirants are — Barrister Rafiqui Islam Meah, Barrister Nazmul Huda, Tariqui Islam, Abdul Mannan Bhutyan and Olf Ahmed. However, final decision will depend on the Chairperson, and it will not be surprising if a 'dark horse' appears at the last

## BEHIND THE HEADLINES

Maulana Tarkabagish, have decided to merge with the party to

From the AL, with which Kamal worked for long and served the party's government as minister with important portfolios, a stzeable number including some senior members have already joined hands with him. However, a number of intellectuals including Shamsur Rahman, Zillur Rahman Siddiqui and others, who were with Kamal in the Forum, are now keeping themselves away from the proposed party.

While the efforts of Kamal and his allies are on and the party is now certain to be floated in late August, the AL is visibly perturbed about it. The AL central leaders Zillur Rahman, Abdus Samad Azad and others have clearly expressed their annoyance about the move. The leadership believe that the formation of a new party with AL dissidents supported by other groups is the part of a 'deep rooted' plot against AL. They apprehend

this party to form the NAP. Afterwards, Ataur Rahman Khan, Maulana Tarkabagish, Amena Begum, Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury, and some other senior leaders left the AL to float new parties or to join others. In 1983, a big faction of Awami Leaguers under the leadership of Abdur Razzak deserted the party to float BAKSAL, but after eight years they returned to AL merging their organisation

when Maulana Bhashani left

However, this time AL is facing a bigger challenge, since a leader like Dr Kamal Hossain, who contested presidential election with AL ticket, is backed by radical forces having countrywide organisational network and cadres.

It will be a challenge for Kamal too - his political future and existence will depend only on meaningful existence of the organisation he is fostering. The challenge also remains for those who are climbing on a political platform, totally new for them,

# Rebels Split, War Fades — and Ramos Rejoices

Abby Tan writes from Manila

One of Southeast Asia's last insurgencies looks like ending. The Communist Party of the Philippines has split as a result of a breakaway by a younger and influential group, belived to make up one-third of the 15,000 members. The CPP's 23-year-old insurgency reached its height in the mid-1980s. President Ramos intends to go on talking to all factions of the party and keep them divided.



1986 Marcos flees after popular uprising

986 Aquino releases NPA leaders, holds talks 1988 Talks fall, NPA leader Romulo Kintanar arrested

1992 Ramos lifts ban on communists, NPA ideologica 1993 Split in Communist Party of Philippines

through the armed wing, the New People's Army (NPA), and Jalandoni played down the exiles based in Utrecht in the rift, calling the breakaway re-Netherlands, led by Sison and gional committee "small and isolated" and its leader Filemon Luis Jalandoni. Jalandoni is an ex-priest who heads NPA's Lagman "an impostor."

The insurgency has lasted 23 years, reaching its height in the mid-1980s when its strength was put at around 30,000. The left began to lose steam due to harsh taxation of peasants, internal leadership problems and the collapse of world communism. The Filippino insurgents became ideological orphans.

Many followers blame Sison for what has happened. He founded the party, patterned on Maoism at the height of China's Cultural Revolution, to wage a country-wide guerilla war.

Lagman, a former student activist, represents the younger CPP leaders. They lack the intellectual flourish of Sison's generation, but Lagman seems to possess political realism and ideological flexibility. His open rebellion is seen as a rejection of Sison orthodoxy.

What had precipitated the rebellion was Sison's attempt to block ideological progress of the left in the face of changing world and domestic circumstances. From his exile, he ordered a "rectification" last year, which was really a purge of dissidents, and ordered the movement to return to the countryside to re-wage the guerilla war.

Sison considered the NPA urban insurrection waged by 500 armed killers a mistake because they turned the populace against them. He shut off all

avenues of discussions within the movement. In breaking away, Lagman urged the convening of a party congress to elect the leaders, which it never held since its founding. Political scientist Alex Magno

says: "Sison is out of touch. All the polemical pieces he has produced are, on close examination, a collection of ad hominem statements and name-calling. He reveals no new insight into the political realities of this time."

The secessionist group represents the more influential urban-based leaders. They are informed and organised, with significant influence over fronts in central and southern Philippines. Sison is left with peasant followers. The split was accelerated partly because the Ramos government began to talk peace with all rebel groups - the left, rightwing putschists and Muslim secessionists.

Sison considered the talks trap to divide the communist ranks. In a way he was right. Ramos persuaded parliament to legalise the communists and pass laws granting the rebels an amnesty. Many of the fighters want peace. Lagman's statement reflects war weariness. His group said they were willing to take "the smallest opportunity to seek a peaceful negotiated settlement" and even take

empire." This may be true for

India. Sunny Gavaskar has set.

but Vinny (Vinod) Kambli has

Kambli now has only one

more record in front of him to

level or break. Clyde Leopold

Walcott, one of the three Ws of

the West Indies holds the world

record for scoring the maximum

number of consecutive cen-

turies in Tests. He scored five

centuries in four consecutive

Tests in 1954 (a. 124, 51 vs.

Eng; b. 50, 116 vs. Eng; c. 108

39 vs. Aus and d. 126, 110 vs.

Kandi, as it was totally de-

stroyed by rain, Kambli now

only has to score a century in

his next Test to be the first per-

son to level with Walcott and

enroll his name in another hall

of fame. The way Kambli has

started, I think that he will be

able to join the ranks of the

great Walcott. Late us wait and

If we omit the first Test at

risen.

Ausl

elections. At a clandestine press conference Lagman said: "Our children are grown now. We want peace, but a peace that is the result of the resolutions of the causes of the armed strug-The government could well

part in the 1995 legislative

exploit war fatigue, but because of the simmering dispute within the CPP, only one round of talks has been held in The Hague in the Netherlands. The government seems in no

hurry. Haydee Yorac, chair of the government peace body, the National Unification Commission, said: "There's really no urgency (for talks), but the government must extend the hand to all concerned. She says it will take many

years for the communists to get their act together. All past strategies had resulted from years of internal debate. Yorac points out that the NPA threat is no longer on the same scale as in the 1980s, when battalion-sized guerilla armies overran remote towns and villages.

Sporadic attacks continue but the war is down to a whimper. Many regions have had no guerilla activity for a long time Cadres have taken advantage of the amnesty offer and quietly returned to their farms. The government will go on talking to all factions of the communist party and keep them divided. - GEMINI NEWS

ABBY TAN is a Singaporean journalist specialising in economic and political affairs. She has been based in Manila since 1977.

## OPINION

#### Bureaucracy Evaluation of Mr A Z M Shamsul Alam's

evaluation of the role of our bureaucrats in your August 9 issue has though been brief it is very significant. If I have correctly identified him Mr Alam, himself a seasoned bureaucrat and a very senior civil servant, has surprised us all by his exposition. It is good to be selfevaluative at times and to be reflective of one's shortcomings. Incidentally, Mr Alam's article shall be a corroboration of the usual allergy of the general public with our bureaucrats.

In the current policies of the government, special stress, at least in paper, is given on private enterprise. In practice, however, the growth in the private sector continues to be impeded by bureaucratic intransigence. On this, Mr Alam has been surprisingly blunt when he observes - "many bureaucrats instead of being helpful, generally handicap the growth of the private enterprise in the country". And again, turning to the 'seasonal' politicians seated in the power centre for brief period, Mr Alam ostensibly laments — "In the name of promotion of economic activities, the bureaucrats and politicians try to regulate and even strangulate the initiative of the people.

I would congratulate Mr Shamsul Alam for such admissions which though would be unpalatable to many of his colleagues in the government, remain to be considered as a whole truth. But I am taken aback a little when he tells us elsewhere that "the bureaucrats are not alone responsible in our country for their bureaueratic' attitude." He finds the 'attitude' of the people as an equally 'contributory factor'. Arguing on this point Mr Alam holds our people asking everything from the government, and free". And that is how he sees "the bureaucrats assume greater responsibility and guardianship of the administration, economy and the country".

If they (the bureaucrats) assume greater responsibility how then they should be incapable of fulfilling that 'greater responsibility'. Mr Alam could not escape the element of contradiction when he portrays our bureaucracy as "terribly efficient in negative role". Actually this 'negative role' being perpetually played by the majority of the bureaucrats has been the main stumbling block in the progress and upward mobility of our economie development. In this, it would be a sort of political rhetoric to blame the people who have been veritable hostage in the wily grip of an avaricious group of people donning the decettful garb of bureaucracy.

Thanks to Mr Alam and notwithstanding the contradictions for having realised that whatever economic development the people are attaining in our country is not that much because of the bureaucrats, but it is so much inspite of them". So, it is pointless to blame the people or to make a wholesale castigation against the bureaucratic system of administration. Rather there should be an honest realisation of how best we can reorganise ourselves in the light of the UNDP report on administrative reforms handed down to the government recently. Concurrently, let us work relentlessly for the desired transparency.

Kazi Alauddin Ahmed Shantinagar, Dhaka

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#### Code of conduct for Ministers

political arm, the National

Democratic Front.

Str, It is often alleged and is a matter of common knowledge that ministers frequently interfere in the affairs of other ministries in cases of posting, promotion, appointment etc. As a result, it becomes difficult for the officials to act fairly and impartially. Again, officials indulging in this type of irregularities cannot be brought to book because they would quote ministers for their actions. Allegedly postings/transfers of the Ministry of Establishment are often made not on the basis of set policy or guideline but upon overt or covert influence of ministers. Sanctioning contracts, permits, licences etc of different Ministries. Departments, **Directorates and Corporations** are also said to be influenced not only by concerned ministers but by ministers not officially

related to the job. When late president Ziaur Rahman came to know about this type of situation, he issued a circular laying down a code of conduct to be followed by minis-

ters. That circular debarred ministers from interfering into the affairs of other ministries and departments. It worked quite well during his time. The need for such a code of conduct seems to have become essential these days too. I therefore request the Honourable Prime Minister to kindly follow the footsteps of her lamented husband in this regard and allow the administration overcome hindrances, if any, to act fairly and impartially. Our Parliament has also a responsibility in this

Zahidi Ahmed Jafri Fulbari, Sylhet

#### In praise of Kambli

Sir, Through your esteemed daily, I would like to congratulate the Indian batting maestro. Vinod Kambli on his 4th century in five Tests. Out of Bombay, comes a

batsman with a song on his lips and a bat in his left hand, and the critics are dancing to his tune. Indeed, this is "Kambli's theme". The greatest of them

all, Sir Don Bradman and Wally Hammond were the only two batsmen in the entire history of Test cricket who had managed to score two consecutive double centuries. Earlier this year, Kambli enrolled his name into this hall of fame by scoring 224 against England and 227 against Zimbabwe. In the just ended series between Shri Lanka and India, Kambli scored a century in the final two Tests.

The first Test was washed out by rain; otherwise, Kambli would have had the opportunity to make it five consecutive centuries. The retirements of the great batting maestros, Sunil Gavaskar and Viv Richards have been replaced by their successors, Sachin Tendulkar and Brian Lara respectively. But Kambli is the successor to neither.

His batting potency has made him a mixture of Don Bradman, George Headley and Garfield Sobers - three of the best batsmen ever produced.

There was once a saying. "The sun never sets in the British

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