

Heading Flood Signals

With the onset of the monsoon the country has been experiencing flash floods or what can be called localised ones. But this time their visitations at several places — from Sylhet to Jamalpur to Gaibandha — at the same time are indicative of something ominous to happen. Floods, like earthquakes, have a pattern of striking certain geographic — in this case deltaic — basins, making their rounds after a few years' almost regular gap. That pattern may have been upset for the worse, thanks to the global warming maybe. Which means the gap may have been shortened. There is another palpable relationship between floods. When China or India, particularly eastern parts of it, suffer flooding, Bangladesh follows suit almost immediately.

And one only has to keep a tab on the worst floods the Huan province of China has been going through. Then Assam has also been in the grip of quite severe floods. It is not yet known how the early warnings of floods are being received by our experts but the fact remains these are being sounded all around for us to pay heed to. Scientists of China and elsewhere are busy looking for a clue to the Chinese flooding — whether this has anything to do with the warming of the earth. We do not propose to our scientists that they undertake such an ambitious task, but we certainly can ask them to work on a modest programme to predict as correctly as possible whether we are facing a threat of floods of the 1987 or 1988 magnitude or even worse.

That will help. This is not the USA, Germany, the Netherlands or even tiny Belgium — each of which has experienced severe floods in recent times. Their resources to fight natural calamities are far greater. The need for all-round flood preparedness has not received the attention it should have in our country. It was only after the consecutive years' (1987 and 1988) flooding that the government moved to protect Dhaka city by embankment. What about the rest of the country? Saving Dhaka may be helpful for administration and even for mounting relief operation in the flood-affected areas, but it also means that the onrushing waters are going to wreak greater havoc on the localities around the city. The important thing then is to alert our people, who have small means to fight such disasters, well in advance. In that case they can take adequate preparation in their own ingenious ways to get over food and other crises.

So far the signals are disturbing. Already as many as three lakh people are reported marooned. The casualty figure, although low — only two dead now — will surely increase with either the floods turning worse or even the waters receding. Food shortage, crisis of pure drinking water and medicine in the wake of floods invite a host of diseases. Timely measures, however, can help obviate the problem. We hope the authority will not be wanting in preparedness to meet any eventuality and will lessen people's sufferings.

Road-digging Chaos

Today one needs a mendicant's patience to pass through the city streets. Whereas traffic jams previously used to be seen at certain points of the roads network these now make routine appearances extending over subsidiary roads and alleys bringing the entire city's traffic to a virtual standstill. The time differential between the peak and lean flows of traffic is all but gone, replaced by an all-day-long congestion.

The total chaos in the traffic is the result of deep fissures cut along the roads by the T&T to lay digital telephone cables for the most part while on the sides the WASA has been at work in its capacity as the sewerage and water supply authority. The road-digging had started a few months back to meet up the budgetary requirement of utilising funds within a financial year — the proof of taking up a project seemingly sufficing the purpose instead of meeting the physical targets. The mounds left on the sides of most dug-up stretch and the half-done bricklaying are signs of abandoning the mandatory repair-work half-way through in the blasting, blinding rains. It is understood, however, that after a protracted discussion with the Dhaka City Corporation, the T&T had entered into a contract with the DCC for repairing the roads they were to dig to lay a few lakh telephone connections soon after these have been installed — the roads all done up to their previous state. Never mind the fresh carpeting of streets done at a great cost prior to the taking up of the latest road-digging project.

The haphazard and untimely digging of roads every year goes on compounding the water-logging problem of the city bringing in its wake sewerage blockages, environmental pollution and spread of water- and air-borne diseases. The digging has certainly been a factor in making the metropolis increasingly flood-prone by the year. Untimely work has also proved expensive and poor in quality.

There can be a three-pronged strategy to get past this horrendous state of city development affairs: first, we insist on having a single development authority to draw up schedules for development activities keeping the whole city and its people in view as far as the convenience, productivity and efficiency of the society go. Secondly, the budgeted amounts need to be made available to the specific agencies — WASA, T&T, PDB and DCC — well before the start of the construction or installation season so that projects can be taken up at the latest by October. Thirdly, work must be undertaken on a graduated scale meaning that only on full completion of a part of a project should another portion of it be taken up. This principle of doing work in blocks has to be unfailingly applied specially where road digging is involved. Doing night shifts and avoiding the by-pass roads are the rule of thumb followed elsewhere. Let the affair be handled in a way that development activity does not become a public inconvenience apart from creating an impression that hurrying through meant money-making by a deliberate design.

A Dangerous Drift

The attempts to wreck a reception being accorded to the country's premier poet Shamsur Rahman by the Samudita Sangskritik Jote at the Rangpur Press Club on Friday read venomously tendentious. Coming in the wake of the Sylhet incident of a similar nature, the Rangpur one raises the spectre of never missing the opportunity of attacking a powerful symbol of free thinking in Bangladesh that Shamsur Rahman is. Today it is him; tomorrow it may be others who hold dear the belief in the emancipation of intellect. Obscurantism is bad in itself, but it is proving far worse through strong-arm tactics, vengeance and violent obstructionism against forces of sanity, pluralism, modernism and progress owing their convictions to the Liberation War which gave us our immutable texture and character as a nation.

What happened in Rangpur revolving around the reception for poet Shamsur Rahman is a classical example of a riotous situation brewing from before to the full knowledge of all concerned and then breaking loose into open clashes in which at least 40 persons were injured. The cultural Jote had originally chosen the Public Library premises as the venue to greet the poet, but with the alliance of Jamaat-Shibir and other fundamentalist groups announcing a programme to hold their meeting on the same location at the same time the local administration imposed a 24-hour ban on assembly to avert troubles. But in our view, there must be a straightforward administrative rule that discourages, in the first place, the very announcement of any reactionary programme in a shameless bid by a group to foil any previously arranged meeting of another group or party. The permission has to be given on a first-come-first served basis in categorical terms.

Since the issue touches on some fundamental principles of the Constitution there is no way we can make a short shrift of it. The cultural group's right to assembly and give a reception was sought to be negated by the zealots. Furthermore, their freedom of speech and thought came under attack. And what sends quite a poignant message across is: the political use of religion has come to such a pass that it now threatens to curtail the innate right of poet Shamsur Rahman to move freely in Bangladesh and share his quite well-known views with his audience. It's time we found an anti-dote to this dangerous intolerance of dissenting opinions.

The Western countries, in observing the 50th anniversary of the UN, are clamouring for its reform. Some of them do concede that it has done some good work but the credit is given grudgingly. The Washington Post in an editorial on June 29 accurately reflected the somewhat patronizing attitude when it said, "It (the UN) does international public tasks, sometimes well, sometimes badly, mostly irreplaceably. President Bill Clinton and others have been pointing up the United Nations' usefulness in peacekeeping, non-proliferation, health and refugee matters and other spheres. These American well-wishers ... plead for spreading and deepening UN reform." There is a barely concealed threat that unless it reforms itself their support cannot be assured. What do these Western well-wishers mean by reform? Is it only administrative efficiency that these western patrons are seeking? Obviously not, because the top officials in charge of administration and management in the UN headquarters are mostly from developed countries who have been appointed to these positions to carry out these reforms. Clearly these great powers have other things on their minds.

It is of course natural that a particular nation should look at the UN from the point of view of its national interests and the Americans should not be faulted for doing what others are also doing. For the great powers the UN is good if it serves their interests. But the small and medium-sized countries and particularly the developing countries, cannot have the same perspective. They must see the UN as the unique body which has provided them a forum where they can make themselves heard and once in a while and at least collectively, assert their views. This would not have been possible if the UN was not there. For very small states, the membership of the UN is the most tangible and convincing evidence of their independence and sovereignty. It is not a water-tight guarantee against aggression but it is certainly a factor that an aggressor would have to take into account when it plunges into an aggressive war. The case of Iraq's aggression against Kuwait is an example. Of course one may say that Kuwait's oil played a more important role than its UN membership but no one can deny that the membership gave the international community a convenient

venue for their intervention. But far more important for the developing countries is the support that the UN has provided to them in their struggle against poverty and backwardness. The victorious Allies set it up as a mechanism to deal with the security problems of the post-war world. Little did they realize that over the years it would assume characteristics which they neither envisaged nor bargained for. For instance, the economic and social goals enshrined in the Charter seem to have been of secondary importance to them but with the passage of time it is these activities of the UN which expanded steadily and have had a profound impact on the evolution of the global economic and social system. In fact, having faced a blind alley in the area of peace and security owing to the paralysis of the Security Council, the UN found for itself increasingly involved in the economic, social and humanitarian fields.

The great powers tend to judge the UN in the light of its usefulness to them, many of them publicly say this without any apology. Despite the rhetoric of the Charter they like to downgrade and often ignore the economic and social goals of the UN. However, the Charter opened up vast possibilities of expansion when it reaffirmed "Faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small." Today the UN is a potent force for global coordination, change and progress in diverse fields such as human rights, environmental protection, refugee relief, health, welfare of women and children, human settlement, labour rights, food and agriculture, science and technology, education and culture, trade and development, population programmes, human development, industrial development as well as pressing social and economic goals such as poverty alleviation.

Most of us have got so used to

United Nations at 50: A Tribute

Most of us have got so used to the UN that we often do not recognize how profound has been its influence in our thinking. For example, if famine strikes a country, who is called upon to organize famine relief? If refugees start fleeing across a country's border, who is expected to swing into action to give them food and shelter? If a new disease breaks out somewhere for which there is no known cure, who is expected to undertake the global effort to find a remedy?

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prize but whose work have had the most profound impact on human civilization. These days regional cooperation has become very fashionable but the very identity of these regions was not known before the UN began the process of inter-country exchange and cooperation. The Asia-Pacific region was, till the forties, divided into the British, French and Dutch colonial empires and there was virtually no contact between them. The UN established a regional forum for them

organized the Earth Summit — the world conference for working out a global action plan? The UN is today involved in not just peacekeeping and security but the entire range of human endeavour. Indeed the world we live in has changed beyond recognition in the last fifty years as a result of the activities of the UN. It is not easy to single out areas of achievements of the UN because it has been operating in so many fields. Nobel Peace prize has been awarded five times to the UN; the UNHCR received it in 1954 for its assistance to European refugees, UNICEF in 1959 for its work in helping save the lives of the world's children. ILO was awarded the prize in 1969 for its progress in establishing workers' rights and protection. The UNHCR got it a second time in 1981 for its assistance to Asian refugees and in 1988 the United Nations peacekeeping forces were awarded the coveted prize. There are many other agencies which may not have received a Nobel

and facilitated the growth of a regional sense of identity and solidarity. The Asia-Pacific region, for instance, has seen the birth to three regional organizations, namely ASEAN, SAARC and APEC. In broad terms it is the UN and its regional arm, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) which has fostered friendship, understanding, exchange and cooperation over the years among the countries of this vast region and brought them close to each other. Let us take the case of refugee relief. The UN has provided relief through the UNHCR and other agencies to more than 30 million refugees world-wide since the end of World War II. Today there are more than 19 million refugees, primarily women and children, who are receiving food, shelter, medical aid, education and repatriation assistance. The people of Bangladesh have first hand experience of such assistance since the Liberation War when millions received

assistance from the UN. Even now the UNHCR is an active partner in repatriating the Rohingya refugees. In a 13-year campaign the WHO made the planet free from small pox. UNICEF and WHO have together launched a campaign for universal immunization of the children against polio, measles whooping cough, diphtheria and tuberculosis. In 1974 only five per cent were immunized, to date the rate has reached the eighty per cent level. The UN has led the global effort to reduce population growth rates. In the developing countries there used to be six births per woman in the 1960s but today the rate is only 3.5. In the vast seas and oceans of the planet, might was right from the dawn of history. The UN Convention on the Law of the Sea is a landmark achievement for mankind.

The list is indeed long and impressive and I will close this article by touching on the area of human rights. Since adopting the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948, the UN has helped enact more than 80 comprehensive agreements on political, civil, economic, social and cultural rights. By investigating individual complaints of human rights abuses, the UN Human Rights Commission has focused world attention on cases

of torture, disappearances and arbitrary detention and has exercised enormous pressure on repressive regimes to improve their human rights record. In fact, the world has changed in fundamental ways since 1945 and much of it is due to the dedicated work of the United Nations, the specialized agencies, the regional commissions and many bodies and entities functioning under the UN umbrella.

Instead of harping in its shortcomings it is time for mankind to pay a tribute to the UN and all those who worked so hard to uphold the Charter and implement a programme of global cooperation which has no parallel in history. There is probably a need for reform as the Western countries are demanding and every dynamic organization needs change and improvement in its mode of operation and in its programmes. But in our eagerness to improve the UN we must not permit the great powers to make it yet another instrument of their foreign policy. Nor should we follow them in failing to pay the tribute that the UN so richly deserves.

Notwithstanding its shortcomings in maintaining peace and security, it has made vast changes all for the better in the way in which we live. Peoples of the United Nations — the international community — live and work and interact with each other. Let us hope that in the next half century this most ambitious experiment in human history, the United Nations will be able to effectively maintain world peace and security, enforce rule of law throughout the world. The vision of the world envisaged in the Charter must not remain just a dream but a reality.

ON THE RECORD

by Shah A M S Kibria



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Life President's Legacy Begins to Vanish

Angels Mtukulo writes from Blantyre, Malawi

Once his word was law. But now Hastings Banda is no more than an ailing shadow of the man who held Malawi in his thrall. Nevertheless, the new government is determined to take him to court on a charge of ordering the death of four politicians.

Malawi: from dictatorship to democracy

Timeline of Malawi's political history from 1964 to 1994, including portraits of President Bakili Muluzi and former President Hastings Banda, and a map of Malawi.

Several doctors have found Hastings Banda's former president-for-life unfit to appear in court, so Hastings Kamuzu Banda will be tried in absentia for allegedly ordering the murder of four political opponents. The case, set to begin on 10 July, is just the latest setback for Banda, whose age is usually given as 90 but who may be several years older. A year after he lost an election to Bakili Muluzi's United Democratic Front (UDF), his legacy is beginning to disappear. His official birthday, 14 May, has been deleted from the country's calendar of public holidays. Kamuzu International Airport in the capital, Lilongwe, has had its name changed to Lilongwe International Airport. Kamuzu Military College is now called the Malawi Armed Forces College. "We do not want public things and property to be personalised," said one Cabinet Minister. Recently, Banda lost a court case in which his lawyers argued against the new government's decision to repossess three state residences which he had registered in his own name. And a Mercedes Benz limousine which he drove on official trips has been taken away. However, it is questionable whether Banda really understands the depths of his own decline. Doctors examining him to determine whether he is fit to stand trial found that he could not remember how long he had been President, his birthdate, or whether he had received major surgery in 1993. "I think it is 11 years. Yes, something like that — but it is more than nine years," said Banda, who was President for 30 years and leader of the Malawi Congress Party. Banda was put under house arrest on 4 January this year, when a commission of inquiry reported that four politicians who Banda's government said had died in a car accident, had been assassinated by police in 1983 on orders from top authorities. "There is no doubt the four gentlemen had been killed by members of the police force on orders from their authorities," said Michael Mtegha, chairman of the 13-man commission. Minister Dick Matenje, Aaron Gadamu and Twaibu Sangala, and MP David Chikwanda died after attending a session of parliament. Although the official cause of death was said to have been a car accident while the four were attempting to flee the country, the car in which they were travelling had no dents or scratches on it and the bodies, according to investigators, bore no visible wounds, fractures or bloodstains normally found on car accident victims. The prosecution alleges they were assassinated because they opposed Banda's proposal to have John Tembo his longtime top aide and

likely heir — as caretaker president while Banda went on a five-year sabbatical. Barely two months later, Banda said publicly that the deaths of the four — especially his nephew, Gadamu — had left him a comfortable man. "Gadamu was a confidant. He campaigned against some members of the party in the Central Region. I am happy that he is no more. I will not tolerate any such behavior and anyone who tries to oppose me will meet the same fate as Gadamu," Banda told a public rally. Such threatening statements kept the matter under wraps. It was only during the run-up to the 1993 referendum on multi-party rule that his rivals in the UDF resurrected it. Banda ignored their call. The UDF took the matter to court but again was unsuccessful. After winning the May 1994 election, Muluzi set up a special commission to look into the affair. After the panel made its findings known last January, demonstrators carried placards through the streets of Lilongwe and Blantyre calling for authorities to "Arrest Banda and Tembo" and "Kill the Murderers." Malawi Congress Party buildings and poverty were destroyed. Banda started losing the grip of his autocratic rule in 1992. That year, Catholic bishops issued a pastoral letter criticising his regime. Trade unionist Chakufwa Chilhana openly challenged Banda to call a referendum to give Malawians a chance to choose the type of government they wanted. Banda then declared that anyone who dared oppose his government would be made meat for crocodiles — a statement that cost him his status as an Elder of the Church of Scotland, the country where he had trained and practised as a doctor in the 1940s. Under growing pressure, Banda agreed to the referendum in 1993, which his party lost. In a further blow, Banda, who was becoming senile, was flown to South Africa for surgery to remove excess fluid from his brain. Although he travelled in secret, word spread and newspaper reports were full of cartoons and satirical articles about him. A three-man presidential council — chaired by Gwanda Chakufwa, who had been imprisoned for 13 years for his opposition to Banda — was sworn in to take charge of the country. Banda resumed power after three months, although opposition parties contended he was incapacitated and would need a vice president to do the job for him. Since losing power, Banda's health and mental state do not appear to have improved. His defence, at trial, will have to go ahead without him. — GEMINI NEWS ANGELS MTUKULO is a Malawian freelance journalist

The Annual Confidential Report

The rule on confidentiality of ACR is quite ambiguous, and in any case, even in officials are not supposed to know what has been written about them in ACRs (unless there are clear, adverse remarks), these are found out in no time, causing embarrassment to the report writers, who may also be besieged with requests for revising the grading. With confidentiality thrown to the wind and "tadbir" intensified, the quality of ACRs has taken a nose dive.

THE Annual Confidential Report (ACR) as an instrument for grading and assessing officials has lost much of its efficacy, in Bangladesh. At least three problems are presently associated with it. Whatever be its quality, there is inordinate delay in sending it, and the consequence of this has to be borne by the officer being reported on, since his/her promotion is likely to be held back in its absence. In fact, I know of many instances where not a single ACR was written on an officer since his/her induction into the government service. Inertia on the part of the reporting officer is the major cause, but there are also officers who feel embarrassed to write unpleasant reports against subordinates, and hence prefer to sleep over ACRs. On the other hand, since there is delay, subordinates find this an opportunity to indulge in "tadbir" not only to expedite the writing of ACR but also to extract the same in superlative terms. This activity is intensified particularly on the eve of promotions, and as a common tactic in emotional blackmail, it is usually argued that since all the others have given the highest grade, there is no reason why the delaying officer should act any differently. So, in the end, the chaff does not get sorted out from the grain — the "tadbirkars" are generally underserving or good grades, but their PR places them higher than sincere and dedicated officers who would shy away from the demeaning exercise of supplicating the boss.

The confidentiality is also totally gone. The rule on confidentiality of ACR is quite ambiguous, and in any case, even in officials are not supposed to know what has been written about them in ACRs (unless there are clear, adverse remarks), these are found out in no time, causing embarrassment to the report writers, who may also be besieged with requests for revising the grading. With confidentiality thrown to the wind and "tadbir" intensified, the quality of ACRs has taken a nose dive. Indeed, if one were to go by the ACRs written nowadays, the level of the civil officers in Bangladesh would appear to be extraordinarily high. I only wish that this was true to real life. Indeed, this phenomenon is comparable to our youngsters obtaining "star" marks in SSC and HSC examinations by the thousands, and then failing to pass the university entrance tests. The consequence is that in the absence of examinations (oral or written) these bogus ACRs have now become the only yardstick to assess officers during the promotion exercise. Ultimately, one ends up with the criteria of seniority only, and not even seniority cum merit, let alone merit cum seniority. Needless to emphasize,

in an ACR form in two of three minutes, whatever time he/she may take in making up his/her mind. Secondly, the ACR should be handwritten and not typed out, and the envelope containing it sealed personally by the reporting officer; otherwise confidentiality will be lost and "tadbir" will take over. Thirdly, the system of countersignature by a higher officer should be discontinued since it has done very little over the years to improve the situation. On the country, it has caused delay, leakage of confidentiality and "misplacement" of ACRs. Fourthly, the annual medical examination should be delinked from

cer may like to consult other supervisory officers in such cases. Seventhly, the first fortnight of the year (i.e. January 1-15) should be officially designated as the time for writing ACRs for the previous year. Unless there is a perfect valid explanation, delay in report writing should be punished. Responsibility for ensuring that ACRs are written must lie only with supervisory officers. The present system of informing officers that their ACRs have not been completed should be discontinued because it leads, as mentioned earlier, to undesirable soliciting. Instead it is the reporting officers who should be taken to task for any negligence in this matter. Eighthly, there is no need to continue the present system of communicating adverse remarks to the officers concerned because, besides waste of time, it also causes bitterness and mutual recriminations. Instead, the officer reported against should not be promoted if there is more than one adverse rating against him for the period under consideration.

Ninthly, the Secretaries should not be exempted from assessment through ACRs. Although they have already reached the highest position within the bureaucracy, they also need to be graded so that only the best among them are considered for Cabinet/Principal Secretary, Ambassadorial assignments, post-retirement jobs, extensions, etc. The Cabinet Secretary should be writing their ACR. This will also strengthen his position as a coordinator of the Secretaries. Tenthly, rules and regulations and actual practice regarding ACR in other countries, particularly India, Malaysia, Singapore and Pakistan, should be examined before reforming the present arrangements in our country. Similarly, wide-ranging consultations with government officers and independent public administration experts thoroughly conversant with our experience should be conducted before arriving at final decisions on ACRs. The above suggestions are basically to set the ball rolling.

Making Government Work

by Analyst

such an archaic approach to promotion can only stifle the flowering of merit, efficiency and integrity in government service.

In this regard, I would like to suggest a number of steps for consideration of the government. Firstly, the length of the ACR form should be reduced, to two pages at the most. The main thrust of the new form should be to concentrate on the two most desirable qualities of government servants, namely, efficiency (i.e. practical knowledge, timely and correct disposal of work and writing skills) and integrity (i.e. moral as well as financial). Instead of allocating numbers and then adding these up, a more convenient system would be to introduce four grades, namely A (outstanding), B (good), C (average) and D (poor). In the column on desirability of promotion, there should be appropriate boxes for recommending permanent withholding to promotion, demotion, compulsory retirement, etc. In order to make the picture complete, the column for "pen picture" should continue as at present. However, what is required here should be clearly spelt out through a footnote or separate instruction at the top of the form. In a word, the reporting officer should be able to fill

in sharp contrast to this measure, the present activities of DU VC (and all others involved) is extremely disheartening. In these days, when students compete to get a place in any educational institutions through tough competition, who are these "twenty gems" for whom the VC himself is resolved to get a place in the same even though they did not sit for an exam? We wonder, what quality made them so lucky? Can we not keep education system free from politics to ensure quality education? I Araf, F Ara, Boro Maghbar, Dhaka

To the Editor...

Bengali Muslim ICS and IPS

Sir, I have, with interest, watched to letters column of your paper on the captioned subject. Let the generations forget two glorious personalities, I feel compelled to write the following lines about them. Late Gazanfar Ali Khan was the first Bengali Muslim ICS. He was born in a most respectable family of Sylhet. He did his graduation with Honours from Oxford University and joined Indian Civil Service through competition towards the end of 19th century or in the beginning of 20th century. He spent his service life in the United Provinces of British India and retired as a Divisional Commissioner. Late Gazanfar was a life-long bachelor and spent a quiet retired life engaged in studies and gardening. Late Mohammad Khurshid was the first Indian DIG of Police in British India. After passing entrance examination he started his career as a Po-

lice constable in the last decade of 19th century. Through promotions he rose to the position and retired as a DIG in the third decade of 20th century. His record and glory remained unsurpassed. He hailed from Dhaka district. The writer will be obliged if any reader gives more information about these two celebrities.

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'Twenty gems' of DU

Sir, It is with great astonishment that we are watching what is happening in DU — the Oxford of the East. Recently, we came to know that DU authority is going to introduce integrated course system in order to improve the standard of education. We cordially welcomes this opportune step.

in sharp contrast to this measure, the present activities of DU VC (and all others involved) is extremely disheartening. In these days, when students compete to get a place in any educational institutions through tough competition, who are these "twenty gems" for whom the VC himself is resolved to get a place in the same even though they did not sit for an exam? We wonder, what quality made them so lucky? Can we not keep education system free from politics to ensure quality education? I Araf, F Ara, Boro Maghbar, Dhaka

Politics-free campus

Sir, Our attention has been drawn to a write up, viz, "Plea for Politics-free campus" by an eminent educationist Dr Abu Obaidul Haque. We fully support the appeal and we must thank and congratulate him for initiating such a timely and important is-

ue for the survival of our education system. As per suggestions and steps put forward by Prof Huque for the sake of our national interest, politicians of the major parties, teachers, students and guardians should immediately come to a consensus to make our campuses free from politics which is the prime root of violence, kill-ings, terrorism, indiscipline and prolonged session jam. Why are we not following the strategies in campuses abroad, particularly campuses in India which are completely free from politics? Dr Huque very rightly argued that this is high time for us to do it the sooner the better. A vigorous political and social movement should start immediately in this regard.

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