

Fine-tune the Responses

After the dissolution of parliament the general expectations are that the government will freshen up its approach to the question of a non-partisan caretaker government and the opposition will withdraw their agitational programmes.

Just a few hours before the PM's address to the nation presaging the parliament's dissolution night before last, Awami League and Jamaat had announced their 12-day programmes for demonstrations beginning from November 28. The tougher elements of the plans are an indefinite countrywide shutdown of rail, road, waterway and air traffic from December 7 and a march to the PM's secretariat on December 9.

On the other hand, the Prime Minister's speech remained non-committal on the basic question of forming a non-partisan caretaker government before the polls. Her oblique reference to that contentious issue was yet another iteration of the offer for talks.

Since there has been a qualitative change in the political setting after the dissolution of parliament, Begum Zia is now widely expected to unveil her plans, if any, to ensure participation of all political parties in the polls. After all, despite all the agitation, she has very nearly completed her tenure and that should be satisfying to her.

Dairies Doing Better

When economic or industrial productivity is in question, we hardly qualify to be super achievers. But at times our achievement may be quite impressive. After decades of miserable performance, the country's dairy sector is at last recording an upswing.

If the country could reduce its annual import of powder milk from Tk 450 crore to Tk 100 crore over a period of five years — which, the report says, it has done — this is a remarkable achievement by any standard. However, the good news may not be entirely unblemished. We do not know how this has been achieved. Whether people are consuming the same amount of milk they used to do in the past or the reduction of import is at the cost of less consumption of the item.

The crux of the problem, therefore, lies here. We need to add more milk to our diet. The skyrocketing price of milk powder may have forced us to go for more and more dairies. But it is still far too short of retaining our old habit of almost a regular intake of milk or a milk preparation. Yet the development of dairy in the private sector has shown a way out.

Why This Slide?

The number of black sheep in the police department seems to be on the rise despite its understandable anxiety to weed them out for an improvement of the image which has lately taken a dip. Some Bangla newspaper reports, of late, have highlighted an attempted blackmail of a businessman by a police SI and an ASI who allegedly detained him in a house to be photographed with a gay girl.

While appreciating the prompt action against them, we cannot help being surprised at the brazen-faced villainy by police personnel who were supposed to be catching other people doing it.

The police image brightens but rarely, it seems, through the exemplary pieces of work by the likes of armed constable late Sharif Ahmad of Khagrachhari who preferred dying to keeping mum over the rape of a girl. But they must know that they are expected to do good to the people in a work-a-day life.

We really need a package of police reforms in place. In the meanwhile, the right tenor must percolate the lower levels from the top.

THE assassination of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin has evoked strong and emotional reaction in many parts of the world. Given the importance attached to Israel by the United States and other Western countries the international news media has given the tragic event very extensive coverage.

Predictably, the funeral eulogies were full of praise for the fallen leader's great achievements. He was a brave soldier in the battle field but even a braver soldier of peace. No-one questions that the Nobel Peace Prize that he and Yasser Arafat jointly received was fully deserved.

What was the task that Yitzhak Rabin had taken upon himself for which he was so ruthlessly gunned down by a Jewish extremist? He wanted peace for the people of Israel. He wanted an accommodation with the Palestinians whose land was occupied by Israel against all canons of law and justice.

Rabin had courage. He had vision, and he had commitment to peace. And, standing here, I commit before you, before my people in Jordan, and before the world, myself to continue to do the utmost to ensure that we shall leave a similar legacy.

What was the task that Yitzhak Rabin had taken upon himself for which he was so ruthlessly gunned down by a Jewish extremist? He wanted peace for the people of Israel. He wanted an accommodation with the Palestinians whose land was occupied by Israel against all canons of law and justice.

Assassination of Yitzhak Rabin Menace of Religious Obsession

The Rabin murder case should be an eye-opener for the people of Bangladesh who must not harbour the illusion that they will escape the onslaught of these religious extremists. The nation must remain on guard against the danger looming on the horizon...

The Torah over civil law. The seeds of religious obsession was sown in his mind in these schools. In the Bar Ilan University's Institute for Advanced Torah Studies, he learned that the highest blessing is to do a task that others find too difficult.

There is also a doctrine mentioned in some Jewish scriptures that permitted a person to kill his pursuer before the pursuer can kill him. Yitzhak Rabin's murder was no ordinary crime. The killers probably believed in all these bizarre but venerable doctrines to justify the murder.

will be struck by the resurgence of religious obsession. One may use terms such as fundamentalism in describing the phenomenon but the central point to bear in mind is that the inspiration for violence comes from the mind, from belief in laws and commands held superior to civil law.

country like Japan is not immune to the virus of religious obsession where a fanatical sect has emerged with obscure but very dangerous and murderous agenda against the society. The Rabin murder case should be an eye-opener for the people of Bangladesh who must not harbour the illusion that they will escape the onslaught of these religious extremists.

Will the removal of Yitzhak Rabin from the helm of Israel change the course of history in the Middle East? From all accounts it seems that the Rabin's successor Shimon Peres is as committed to the peace process as his fallen predecessor.

ON THE RECORD

by Shah A M S Kibria



shared the prevailing belief that Mr. Rabin had hijacked the government from its people. According to Rabbi Aharon Katz, Amir's teacher, "In a place where there is no one else, try to be a man".

Yigal Amir obviously tried to live by the standard set by his mentor by carrying out the commands of the scriptures to save the Jewish people. It was religious obsession and not the sudden impulse of a mentally deranged man which was behind the conspiracy to assassinate the prime minister.

It is not a mere coincidence that Anwar Sadat, the martyred president of Egypt, was also assassinated by people obsessed by religious fanaticism. They did not like Sadat's bold initiative for peace with Israel though in hindsight one can see that Anwar Sadat had made the correct geo-political and historical assessment that Israel-Palestine accord was the central condition of real Arab-Israeli peace.

Idiots and Maniacs

Pinch of Salt

by Chintito

to be put on only when the vehicle or its occupants are in a peril. Actually, the foreigners do not mind at all. They soon find out that indeed the whole country is in all sorts of danger.

Using the hazard lights to signal that one is going straight has other dangerous possibilities. Often both the sidelights do not work. So, while the driver thinks he has put on a signal to say to the world that his Vehicle-ship is going straight ahead, it could be that only his right sidelight is blinking.

The roundabout, or moar as it is called here, is meant to allow cars to change direction. It is a very critical spot and requires extra attention of all drivers. But, this is the one place where our behaviour is the worst.

everyone is stuck. Then there are the ones who are in a hurry and they will cut a roundabout without going round it.

We can hardly blame our drivers, most of them illiterate. The ones who can read are no better. The ones with neckties and surrounded by the ambience of conditioned air are perhaps the worst.

It does not help to consider that the driver ahead of you is an idiot because he is driving very carefully and that the driver behind you is a maniac because he is honking to get past you.



ANGLADESH can be proud of many records and specialties. One distinguishing character that separates its cities from all others is that street red lights or the facing palm of the traffic police do not carry the universal meaning of STOP.

Another major problem with traffic management in Dhaka city, nay Bangladesh, is the traffic signs practically littered all over the streets. What do these signs mean? Why are they always fixed in that typical leaning position?

schoolchildren crossing the street? Responses to these queries may be diverse but there's conformity in ubiquitous violence.

Our drivers forget that the horn is not a toy to draw everyone else's attention. Some drivers, as has been said before in these columns, honk every time they breathe in and breathe out.

Drivers in our streets consider it cameo stuff to switch on both the sidelights when they want to go straight. Any driver from where these cars come would think that the whole country was in some sort of danger.

LATE Yusuf Ali Chowdhury, more widely known as Mohan Mia, dedicated his life for the people. Active both in the social and political arena, he always placed the national interest at the forefront.

Khan saheb Mojuddin Chowdhury, father of Mohan Mia breathed his last when he was just 18 years old. At that time, Mohan Mia was a student of Class Ten. His elder brother Lal Mia was engaged in Congress politics.

Mohan Mia's approach towards bringing about social change through education was very much pragmatic. With a view to make the society economically self-reliant, he adroitly thought and conceived of starting 'Baitul Aman' agricultural and industrial education project in Faridpur town.

Though at this tender age he had to shoulder the onerous responsibility of maintaining the big zamindari, his pioneering role in the spread

In Memorium Putting People at the Forefront

by Mashiar Rahman



of education did not meet with any setback. It is incredulous and visionary that such a sophisticated and benevolent project could have crept in his mind as early as in the year 1945 which speaks eloquently of his higher degree of perception and not the least a forward-looking outlook.

Mohan Mia remained as Chairman of Baitul Aman for the long 13 years (1938 to 1953), which is remarkable for many reasons. He took bold steps in the construction of roads, digging of ponds, setting up of madrasahs and charitable medical dispensaries.

district, previously within the Goalundo subdivision of Faridpur, was a den of Malaria and Kalajar. Due to Mohan Mia's concerted efforts, Rajbari got rid to these menaces.

It is deemed imperative to recall that Yusuf Ali Chowdhury though played a leading role in the framing of 1956 first Constitution of Pakistan, he was the only MNA in the constituent Assembly who was not a signatory to it since he firmly believed that the Constitution did not properly and equitably reflect the rights aspiration of the people of the then East Pakistan.

There has been widespread misgivings that Mohan Mia was the villain in the tragic episode that was enacted in the erstwhile East Pakistan Provincial Assembly in 1958 that cost the life of late lamented Speaker Shahed Ali. To speak the truth, it was not Mohan Mia but Rsaraj Mandal who caused grievous injury to Shahed Ali by hurling paperweight at his forehead and he succumbed to the injury after being admitted to the hospital.

He did not lose hope when all the access were in the adversary's hand.

In the year 1956, the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan comprised of 80 members with 40 seats each from the two wings. Yusuf Ali Chowdhury was also elected as an MNA in the then Assembly. And with his personal initiative he helped make Hamidul Haq Chowdhury and Justice Sattar later President of Bangladesh, as members of the Assembly.

When the first sitting of the Assembly was held at Murree in West Pakistan, there was a long stalemate and impasse relating to the formation of a central government since none of the political parties got a determining majority.

It is said that talent and brilliance are not enough to make a man achieve the real goals. These yield results if they are augmented with the qualities of aggressiveness and resistance power. Mohan Mia maintained this stand against all odds fighting desperately and bravely even when things looked positively grim.

He set up a branch of Anjuman-e-Mufidul-Islam which did a pioneering job for the burial and cremation of Muslims and Hindus alike. To say the least, Mohan Mia ranks most distinguished amongst the great men who did not bow down in the face of any resistance intimidation and opposition.

To evaluate it realistically, his death itself is insignificant since it is deemed as an inevitable process when none, as a law of nature, can escape from its icy hand.

Mohan Mia's mausoleum will forever stand out with the brilliance of a shining beacon in the eternal evaluation of time. In fact, every house in Bangladesh and not only in Faridpur is his mausoleum and his sacred memory will always remain enshrined in the heart of every Bengalee.

medicare centres. To impart religious teaching, he founded 'Mojuddin Madrasah' of high school standard. He also established 'Halima Girls' School' after the name of his mother for the education of girls.

The goal of his life was to serve humanity at large which he cherished till he breathed his last. We have many things to learn from the life of this great man.

He set up a branch of Anjuman-e-Mufidul-Islam which did a pioneering job for the burial and cremation of Muslims and Hindus alike. To say the least, Mohan Mia ranks most distinguished amongst the great men who did not bow down in the face of any resistance intimidation and opposition.

To evaluate it realistically, his death itself is insignificant since it is deemed as an inevitable process when none, as a law of nature, can escape from its icy hand.

Mohan Mia's mausoleum will forever stand out with the brilliance of a shining beacon in the eternal evaluation of time. In fact, every house in Bangladesh and not only in Faridpur is his mausoleum and his sacred memory will always remain enshrined in the heart of every Bengalee.