

Toll Collection

Roads of Bangladesh are becoming infested with toll collectors, which is making both road travel and goods movement extremely hazardous.

This is not the first time we are writing about this phenomenon. Nothing seems to nudge the government into action in this direction.

There is still time to act. We think whatever is the reason and extent of political rivalry in other areas, leading political parties can still reach a consensus about eliminating the criminal elements from the party folds.

Mayor, Honour the Scouts

Recently a lot has been said about the condition of the city. Almost all newspapers have written about the urgent need to control the traffic and clean the city's garbage.

This paper, in conjunction with the Scouts and BUET, had the honour to initiate the "Save Dhaka, Clean Dhaka" campaign last year.

Given the scouts' own tradition of community work, what they did for "Save Dhaka, Clean Dhaka" campaign was not surprising.

We would like to suggest to Mayor Hanif that he should organise a special function to honour the scouts. Some sort of badge of appreciation could be thought of.

Of Crimes and Stinginess

A rickshawpuller, tired after reaching a passenger from Parulita to Gazaria Bazar in Narsingdi district, was sleeping on his vehicle.

About the same time as the Narsingdi murder Ashoke, a young man, was beaten to death in Bhangra thana by a group.

It is not that the whole society has been criminalised and rid of human sensibilities. In Hajiganj, three persons joined together to save the Kabodak Express from a certain accident.

This good story however ended on a not so good note. A bevy of top Railway officers came out handing cheques to the gallant three in newspaper photographs.

THEY are affluent. The countries where they have settled find them useful and they occupy leading positions in medicine, engineering or business.

Partly, it is psychological, partly real. Selective, scant information they get tells them that their community in India is meted out an "indifferent treatment".

The real part of their grievance is the series of instances of discrimination. Some of them and their friends have been manhandled by airport functionaries in Delhi and Bombay.

That was more than a decade ago explain many Sikhs I met abroad. We were upset and we made no secret of

The Sikhs abroad should realise that any political party in Punjab will have to convert itself into a regional party, admitting the Hindus into its fold.

But they still have to give up their demand for autonomy if not separation. Some interaction with the Sikh leaders from India will help.

It is, however, naive to imagine that the mere easing of travel restrictions will retrieve the Sikhs abroad. They will have to be convinced that the mistakes committed in the past were accidental or circumstantial.

But the nub of the problem is their realisation that the situation on the ground has changed. That Punjab has regained peace needs to be conveyed properly.

The Sikhs Abroad

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Nonetheless, I wonder whether the Sikhs have assessed what the amendment would entail. They might lose the concessions they enjoy at present.

The Sikhs abroad have a point when they say that the Rajiv Gandhi-Harchand Singh Langowal accord has stayed on paper alone.

BETWEEN THE LINES

Kuldip Nayar writes from New Delhi

government is a temporary phenomenon and can be replaced in elections. The country who even act against a government as those who support it.

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sentral parts of democratic system of government, a particular community cannot be assured of permanent power.

The Sikhs abroad, living in the societies which keep religions separate from politics should know it better. No religious community in India is superior to another.

The Sikh community as a whole, particularly Sikhs living outside Punjab, did not assert themselves and stand unequivocally against violence and secession.

Poverty Eradication : Programmes and Proposals

There have been programmes undertaken over the years to alleviate poverty. Both Government and NGO initiated projects tried to cover considerable number of target incumbents.

their drive to remove illiteracy and create employment opportunity for the poor in villages and towns.

It is heartening to note that girls and women are now coming in increasing number in the labour market and in public and private establishments.

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violence-infested, corruption-riddled, indiscipline country of 120 million people who have been struggling for survival with human dignity and economic comfort.

The overwhelming gap between approximately 40 lac economically solvent families (family of five persons) and the majority rest is not likely to disappear in near future.

Normally, the super-rich, the rich and other economically solvent segments do not demonstrate any attitude to

wants and needs vary in different environments. In Bangladesh, we generally identify wants and needs in terms of essential food, clothing, healthcare, vocational qualification, accommodation, job opportunity etc.

The successive Five-Year Plans of the past decades notably suffered from over-dependence on foreign aid, loan, grant etc.

Bangladesh needs to take insightful development plan under the aegis of its parliamentary system of government, so that in course of the next 2-3 decades a substantial number of the have-nots may go above the poverty line.

The National Development Plan in the context of Anti-poverty commitment of the government may have due consideration for the following components:

Administrative inefficiency, corruption, lack of technical know-how and national determination were responsible for our slow growth.

programme to the higher secondary stage will, indeed, encourage further girl enrollment in formal education.

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part with their resources in somebody else's happiness and welfare. That is why the role of the state and NGOs becomes critically important in poverty alleviation.

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On Awami League

Sir, One of the main reasons behind Awami League's success in the 1996 general elections was the support of the extra thousands, who felt a change was a must and that Awami League after a lapse 21 years would be the fittest to run the show.

The other reason for Awami League's triumph was the two very sensitive and touchy concepts — a) light oppression on women and b) out terrorism/criminals. Unfortunately, it is now increasingly appearing that their commitments were rather a mere political stunt or in other words a vote-winning campaign than a sincere one unless they can prove and justify their claims soon.

Whatever it was, the innocent masses really craved and heavily felt the need of protection against oppression on women and terrorists/criminals.

Rule of Law

Sir, Rule of law is the fundamental condition for a civilised society. To ensure rule of law, it is to be ensured that law will take its own course.

During the tenure of the BNP government the former President H M Ershad failed to secure bail in any single case on the court of law.

It indicates that either BNP did not allow law to take its own course in the process of trial of Mr Ershad, or now AL is allowing law to take its own course.

Fake astrologers and palmists

Sir, It is heartening to note that the government has recently taken a plan to crack down on the mushroom growth of fake healers who cheat people in the name of 'magic cure'.

In this connection we like to say that there are many astrologers and palmists in and around Dhaka city. They have

got big big academic degrees with their names. Most of the degrees are seen to be obtained from abroad. They also possess big big titles like emperor, king, expert, masters etc.

By selling these fake stones these palmists and astrologers are making huge amount of money. They claim that they can foretell the fate of human beings and state affairs.

An appeal to BUET teachers

Sir, The BUETTA's ultimatum to the Vice Chancellor to resign has drawn our attention. We are concerned about the situation developed.

The situation is not that grave that such an extreme action must be taken. Movement by the teachers forcing their own VC to resign goes against their own interest and tarnish the image of the university.

While there could be some lapses from the present VC which could be corrected by good cooperation by his colleagues, the VC possesses of course some rare qualities too.

even a Jr staff — duty-bound. We feel very much for the goal name of the university for the academic atmosphere and for the hundreds and thousands of students who are our own wards.

During his first tenure as VC two convocations were held after many years. The graduates of BUET were given their much desired original certificates during those convocations.

We feel, sincere efforts by all concerned to improve the situation and a compromise would be the best remedy.