

No Violence, Please

By the time this leader comes out, the hartal called by the opposition BNP is likely to be on. As a staunch opposer of hartal called on this or that pretext, we consider this one to be an unfortunate development of our national politics. Even without going into the merit of the issues that we are told, have prompted the BNP to call the hartal we can question the intention of this extreme political move. Sure enough, such political programmes are a democratically recognised form of protest. But then to call a hartal a party has to build up on the contentious issues and take the people along so as to claim it enjoys their support for such a measure. The BNP did none of it — except holding a couple of public meetings — and is using the last resort as its first political move. This is proof enough that the party hardly cares about public support for its hartal programme. Public mood, we must say, is reflected rather in the appeals for restraint made to the opposition by different bodies like the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industries (FBCCI) and Bangladesh Garments Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA).

Yet the government has no right to come down heavily on the opposition. We urge caution on both parties — more so on the government because it has at its command the state power which most governments tend to use as a repressive means. There is likely to be provocation of all kinds and it is the government's duty to avoid violence. The arrest of BNP leaders, needless to say, has been ill-advised. This only points to future violent confrontations between the two sides. Now the government will indeed have to go extra lengths to convince people that it does not mean to be repressive. Similarly, the BNP will have to adhere to some fundamental principles in that it will not resort to violent means or intimidation to make its point.

The point we want to make here is that no one — government or opposition — ought to take people's support as guaranteed. Better put it to test at the court of the public. Let them make their own choices. It cannot be a case of imposed hartal nor, for that matter, should the government be treating it with highhandedness. People must have the option to support or reject such protest programmes. The bottomline obviously is to maintain peace and order. On this count, the administration needs to be firm but not repressive. Politics cannot and must not play with people's lives.

PM's Pakistan Visit

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's visit to Pakistan is set against celebratory moods prevailing both in Islamabad and Dhaka. Pakistan has festivity in the air for the golden jubilee of its independence while Bangladesh celebrates the silver jubilee of her birth as a nation. The two countries have come thus far in their trysts with destinies and their fraternal concern for the Muslim Ummah is reflected as Pakistan hosts the extraordinary OIC summit coinciding with her 50th birth anniversary and Bangladesh attends it to be a part of the historic event.

The head of an Awami League government visiting Pakistan carries a significance of its own for historical as well as contemporaneous reasons. Historically, it represents a proof of maturity in the inter-state relations and in co-eval terms it provides an opportunity for removing misgivings that may arise from pursuit of policies consequent upon change of government.

In his attitudes towards Bangladesh Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif has been highly forthcoming as was evidenced through the views he aired during his earlier tenure as PM about taking back the Biharis stranded in Bangladesh. He is certainly more flexible towards Bangladesh than his predecessor Benazir Bhutto could be credited with.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has the opportunity on a person-to-person level to explain the concept of sub-regional grouping to her Pakistani counterpart reflecting her utmost sincerity on Bangladesh's unwavering commitment to SAARC.

With new governments coming to power in India, Pakistan and Bangladesh, the regional environment has acquired a new, upbeat conduciveness towards placing South Asia on the road to peace, cooperation and prosperity. In the present atmosphere, Bangladesh is ideally suited to play an effective role in bringing India and Pakistan closer to each other. For her to do this, she needs to have an equal measure of confidence from both New Delhi and Islamabad which hopefully will be forthcoming. Our fervent appeal is that the potentially congenial new mood in South Asia better not be sacrificed at the altar of prejudices.

Wall up in the Minds

The news that 37 students and outsiders have been killed on the premises of Dhaka University since the birth of Bangladesh literally shows the tip of an iceberg. The skeletons in the cupboard will be far greater in number if the death tolls exacted by student violence in other universities and educational institutions were put together. Then what about the gouging of eyes, cutting of tendons, lacerations, bruises, and other variegated forms of terrorism perpetrated on the campuses. And, who ever heard of the goons being punished?

While the warriors fought and snipe shots rang out, innocent students screamed and ducked in mortal fear of death. The resulting mental shock, exacerbated all the more by the loss of academic hours could, in another clime and country, have landed the university authority and the tormentors on courts with huge monetary compensations sought for the victims and given to them as well.

Tragically, the portents for armed violence among students have only grown over the years. The rivalry between major student wings of national political parties has now combined with infighting within their cadres. Stuccoed walls around the campus perimeter cannot prevent all these, there must be walls in the minds of patrons and proteges.

Reforms for Facing the Twenty-first Century

Any irrational decision in any sector will be automatically penalised by the world's competitive supplies while the rational decisions will be rewarded by opportunities of selling the products abroad. The essential guiding criterion for survival of any activity in the economy will be the hard-headed calculation of efficiency.

ONE of the most important events of the coming years that is going to change the whole structure of the economy of Bangladesh is the global trade pattern of the twenty-first century. The challenges of that century which is only three-and-a-half years away are formidable. The Multi Fibre Agreement (MFA) will vanish, tariff barriers all over the world will be cut drastically, favoured treatment of any country by others will disappear, subsidies on industries, especially on export industries, will be eliminated, flow of short- and long-term capital will take place across countries without much hindrance, and the world trade will be freer and open. The global market will be fiercely competitive, or one can say, that it will be a Darwinian world where the strongest will survive and the weakest will die out.

What does Bangladesh Have to Do?

If Bangladesh, the weakest in the global scene now, has to survive, there is no doubt that its competitive strength in quality production, trade, and marketing techniques and strategies will have to be substantially improved from its present state. The existing efficient industries will have to be modernised with new machinery and state-of-the-art technology, new lines of industries with comparative advantage will have to be developed and the sick and inefficient ones will have to be closed down. Constant vigilance will have to be maintained on the cost-effectiveness of input uses, financial intermediation process, non-inflationary growth and exchange rate flexibility. Appropriate monetary and fiscal policies will have to be adopted to promote the country's overall efficiency. Any irrational decision in any sector will be automatically penalised by the world's competitive supplies while the rational decisions will be rewarded by opportunities of selling the products abroad. The essential guiding criterion for survival of any activity in the economy will be the hard-headed calculation of efficiency. Anything produced inefficiently will be high priced and will be replaced by a cheaper one from abroad. Domestic economy will be totally integrated with the ruthlessly competitive market in the outside world. There will, of course, be the need for vigilance by every government against dumping, non-tariff barriers and other malpractices of trade and finance by other countries.

It is in this perspective that one sees the need for reorienting the intensity of work efforts, time use, skill acquisition, technological adaptations and resource use for achieving greater efficiency in all sectors of the economy. Regulatory and management structures of the economy will have to be dismantled and remodelled. Proper incentive mechanism will have to be built, and constantly be rebuilt in the light of changing market signals, into all economic activities so that people's economic behaviour becomes justifiably income- or profit-oriented and not dependent on grants or subsidies of any kind. The mentality of making easy money without putting in hard work will be automatically punished by mak-

ing sick the activity, institution or the industry in which these people work. Such challenges of harsh market discipline calls for drastic reforms in almost every aspect of the social, psychological and economic structure of Bangladesh now.

However, as for financial weaknesses calling for reforms, Bangladesh economy suffers from three major sources of sickness: (a) State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs) and some other budgetary items, (b) the financial sector including the capital market, and (c) the over-staffed and under-performing government administration itself.

Reform in the Budget

It is now a common knowledge that the SOEs have been causing a heavy bleeding of national resources to the tune of Tk. 2.5 billion (over \$ 600 million) a year. This simply cannot be on for decades and the best policy is to privatise these as soon as possible. It is heartening to see that the government has now adopted the policy of privatising against its initial policy of 'trying to improve their efficiency first, and if it failed to achieve that only then it would privatise them but would pay compensations to the workers.' However, what the government must realise is that



INSIGHT
by
Kabir U Ahmad

if these industries cannot be privatised, including the employee purchases, then these should be stripped down and their assets sold in pieces. It will save the economy from a huge annual loss of Tk. 2.5 billion a year which could otherwise be invested in more profitable industries.

Apart from SOEs, there are other heads of expenditure in the budget like Railways, Post Office, T&T, and Cooperatives etc, which incur substantial losses almost every year. Even under Education, there are unjustifiable Grants costing heavy amounts every year. It is also time to ask questions about expenditures on secondary schools where teachers sell examination questions in public and thousands of students are expelled from examination halls every year for cheating. A hard look at the annual losses in the budget shows that about \$1.3 billion a year could be saved if all these losses could be cut out.

Reform in the Financial Sector

The second most inefficient sector of the economy is the financial sector including banking and stock market. The 'default culture' that has ruled the banking sector over the last two decades has driven the banking system as a whole to a state of sickness. Tk 1500 crore (over \$ 3 billion) have remained unrealised for over a decade and banks would have collapsed had the government not infused fresh capital or bonds every year. This situation simply cannot go on and the banking sector has to realise this huge amount from the defaulters. Otherwise, it cannot perform its

normal job of financing the industrial development of the country.

Apart from the loan default, there are many private industries which have turned sick because banks could not lend sufficient amount of working capital at the right time. Even now the lending rate of banks is around 15 per cent per annum, which is too high for any new industry. There is a need for drastic reform of banking laws and practices if efficiency has to be restored in this sector.

Further, the recent crash in the stock market has compounded the crisis of the financial sector as a whole. Unless it is delicately handled and its problems are satisfactorily solved, confidence will not be restored. There is a need for major reform in the management and regulatory structures of the securities market.

Reform in the Administration

Most of the government departments are over-stuffed, under-performing and cost escalating. There is a need for streamlining the administration by making it lean and efficient. There are various recommendations but nothing gets implemented. Today or tomorrow, the government will have

to get down to implementing at least some of the recommendations to save the tax-payers' money.

However, the mismanagement of office-time by the officers and employees in the administration has been causing not only a waste of national resources but also creating a hindrance to the implementation of projects and thereby slowing down the speed of development of the country. Three aspects of this time-mismanagement are worth careful examination: (i) Officers and employees are paid for certain number of hours per day but they render much less amount of time to their office work; (ii) holidays and furloughs are too many in the year which is another reason for delay in the completion of tasks, and (iii) wrongly scheduled weekends are cutting out effective trading days with the outside world which hurt the country's foreign trade. These need further elaborations.

In all the SAARC countries, government employees work for between 40 and 42.5 hours per week except Bangladesh where the total weekly office hours are nominally fixed at only 39 hours from 8 am-2.30 pm per day with 15 minutes of prayer break; Saturday-Thursday, from 9 am-5.30 pm; Monday-Friday, in Pakistan it is 42.5 hours (from 8 am-4.30pm; Sunday-Thursday, which has recently been changed to Monday-Friday); in Nepal, it is 42 hours (from 10 am-5pm, Sunday-Friday). Compare this pattern with those in some developed countries like Japan and the United States. In Japan, it is 40 hours a week (from 9 am-5pm, Monday-Friday) and in

USA, it is 42 hours (from 8 am-4.30 pm; Monday-Friday). Almost all these countries have half-an-hour lunch-break in the mid-day.

Some observations on Bangladesh office time management are in order. In the first place, 39 hours is the lowest number of weekly hours prevailing among all the South Asian countries. No one knows why the time schedule in Bangladesh should be so liberal which makes it expensive to the country. In the second place, all these countries have moved to 5-day working week except Bangladesh. Finally, what is most important, the office attendance culture of Bangladesh is perhaps the most aberrant and non-compliant one in the whole sub-continent. No one comes to office at 8 am. Most of the officers and employees come at about 9 am and leave by about 1.30/2 pm making the effective working hours to only 4.50-5.00 per day which brings the total weekly hours to barely 30. This would be lowest number of weekly hours perhaps in the whole world. There is no sense of moral obligation with employees and officers to put in the contracted number of work hours, and as a result, there is a huge waste of money incurred by the government every year. There is a need for contractual and organisational overhaul here. One recommends that the work schedule of 9 am-4.30 pm for 5 days from Monday to Friday with a 2-hour Juma prayer-break on Friday and 9 am to 1 pm on Saturday be introduced so that officers and employees would be working close to 40 hours per week effectively.

(ii) Annual official holidays in Bangladesh are now 20, but unofficially it goes up to about 28 days if one takes into account the over-stays during the two Eids and other vacations. India has only 15/16 days while Pakistan has only 20 days and Japan has only 9/10 days. There is no justification for so many extra holidays at tax-payers' expense. The government should enforce a maximum of 20 annual holidays.

(iii) The current week-end schedule (Friday and half of Thursday) is hurting the trade with foreign countries. Thursday and Fridays are working days in the outside world with which Bangladesh has maximum amount of trade. Saturdays and Sundays are working days in Bangladesh but are weekends in the outside world. Thus, in effect, Bangladesh loses 4 working days in trading with the outside world. Realising this, the Islamic State of Pakistan has recently moved to Monday-Friday working week. It is simply foolish for Bangladesh to stick to its present week day and week end schedule. It should immediately move to Monday-Saturday weekday schedule as stated above.

To conclude, Bangladesh will not be able to compete successfully in the emerging world of the twenty-first century with such wide-ranging and deep-seated inefficiencies and resource wastes in all its vital sectors. It should introduce drastic reforms in all these sectors to restore efficiency if it wants to succeed economically in competition with its giant competitors in the world. The quicker it introduces these reforms, the better prepared it will be to face the next century.

Mong Raja Mompre Sain died in 1984 leaving behind his widow Rani Nihar Devi and only daughter Rajkumari Unika Devi and her children at Manikchhari Rajbari. Rani Nihar Devi became Mong Raja in 1984 and died in 1991. The Autocratic regime of Ershad, then in a conspiracy to break the long standing tradition and custom of the Raj family, appointed one as acting Chief, who is not a member of the Raj family. Raj Kumari Unika Devi, the legal and rightful successor of the late Raja, submitted a writ in the Dhaka High Court and in 1995 Judgement was given by High Court to appoint Rajkumari Unika Devi as Mong Raja, as per the custom of the family.

It may be recalled that late Mong Raja Mompre Sain was a valiant freedom fighter and rendered his services to the Mujib Nagar Government, during the Liberation War. He helped thousands of fleeing refugees to India by giving food and shelter. The Raja also donated money to the Liberation War Fund. He and the Raj family went to India and took an active part in the liberation movement. He was made the Tribal Advisor by Bangabandhu in 1972 and in 1975 the Governor of Khagrachhari District. He was a Senior Member of BKSAAAL. The system of Tribal Chiefs of Chittagong Hill Tracts is governed by their long standing tradition and custom and is not an elected post.

People and the nation look forward to the Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, to maintain the long-standing tradition and custom of succession of the Mong Raj family and restore due rights to Rajkumari Unika Devi, as Mong Raja (Mong Chief).

Rajib Roy
Manikchhari Raj Bar, Kha
grachhari.

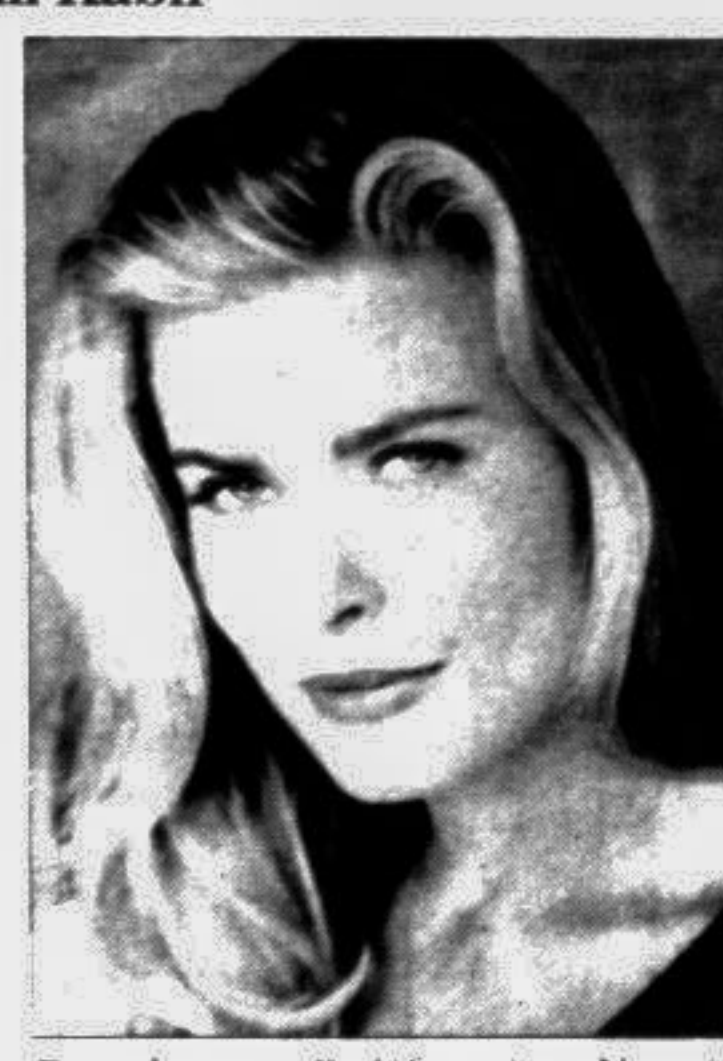
Restoration of right

Sir, The Mong Raja family of Manikchhari, Chittagong Hill Tracts came from Arakan, more than five hundred years ago.

To be a Role Model for Children

by Ekram Kabir

Thirty-year-old internationally-known Venezuela couldn't check her tears while telling about the death of a child she had just witnessed at the ICCDRB, popularly known as Cholera Hospital in Mahakhali on Tuesday last. It was the saddest experience of my short visit to Bangladesh where so much is being done for the children. Indeed, Vendela didn't have the faintest idea about the fate of children in this star-crossed part of the world. Said she, 'I come from a country where there is no poverty, and where every citizen enjoys his kind.'



Southern California Norris Comprehensive Cancer Centre while serving as a spokesperson for the USC Centre for Vulnerable Child. With the UNICEF, she began as a guest of honour at a fund-raising campaign in Houston, Texas, early '96.

Vendela (Thomassen), the pretty, blonde model-actress came to Dhaka as UNICEF's latest 'celebrity spokesperson' to make the UN agency's objectives understandable to people, following the organisation's other 'celebrities' like Audrey Hepburn from the movie-world and Inuran Khan from the sports arena, who visited Bangladesh as 'spokespersons'. This was globe-trotter Vendela's first international visit, representing the UN Children's Fund.

She became associated with the organisation in May last year and according to this UN agency's officials from New York, UNICEF has already benefited from Vendela's active support. The lanky lady was quoted to have said in her UNICEF-prepared resume: 'I am excited about my new role with UNICEF.' But there was sadness around the corner. And this makes one hopeful that her 'excitement' transforms her to 'devotee' at least a part of her showbiz-time in a meaningfully different way. Different because the visit to Bangladesh has already given Vendela the motivation to come back again in October next.

Why did Vendela choose Bangladesh as the first country to visit? Said she, 'Because one of the most important reasons that I wanted to focus on the girl child, and I knew that Bangladesh was taking steps towards helping the girl child and improving her situation. You see, the girl child, it seems, would always be worse-off in almost any country; and I knew that this was a big issue here in Bangladesh and the country was ready to face it. Among other reasons, I've never been in this part of the world.'

The Norwegian model started the girl-child promotional campaign in 1993 by taking part in a series of events to commemorate the Day of the African Child at the United Nations. Vendela is an active member of the University of

Later in November last year, Vendela was at the parliament of children — Young Voices at the United Nations — which was basically a follow up of the CRC ratified in 1990. This was actually a conference which was held by the children' participated by 75 of them from 28 different countries; we the grown-ups were there merely to help out, and of course, make sure that they face no problems regarding accommodation etc., but unfortunately, Bangladesh was not there.'

Among other things, the former Elizabeth Arden girl did in Bangladesh was that she met a group of local film stars, models and authors. She requested them, especially the film stars, to be the role models for the children as Vendela herself intends to be one. Thanks to the UNICEF for not informing Mrs Freeze (Vendela who is playing against Arnold Schwarzenegger in the upcoming Batman movie) what roles' Dhaka's Johnny-and-Rocky-print-saree faces play.

Wishing strongly to be the 'part' of the movement that Bangladesh has already started, Vendela remembered what Henry Kissinger once commented about the country, and what people still read in the press over there in the West. 'I want to change that image; there is so much good things being done in this country, you have so much going for you,' she said. Her voice trembled with emotion again: 'I feel like I'm going back with a lot of hope. This might be a poor country, but it's not poor in mind.'

Recalling Shamsuddin Abul Kalam

by Razia Banu

I have met him on occasions, but I was not very known to him. Once I was travelling to Barisal with my daughter Nasrin to attend a function. Writers, artists, politicians — many other people were accompanying us on the same steamer. In the morning, I could hear loud voices from the dining hall. I opened my cabin door and saw a huge adda in full-swing, and of course, Mr Shamsuddin was very much there. I quickly closed the door thinking I will be disturbing them. And my poor Nasrin was really very hungry by then.

All of a sudden, I heard a voice calling me: 'Apa, why are you hiding from us and keeping the child hungry? Please come and join us and let me see the child.'

It was Mr Shamsuddin. Many people were sitting there but it was only his sharp eyes that caught a glimpse of my child. I came out from my cabin with a shy smile. He at once took Nasrin in his arms and with care gave her food. I was amazed — he was saying: 'She is just like my 'Camelia'. I felt so sad for him — I could see the pain in his eyes. He was a well-dressed and a very handsome-looking man, a very sad and lovely man.

After a long time, I again met him when he was leaving for Rome. I had not heard anything from him for a long time, and all of a sudden, I found him sitting on my verandah in an easy-chair — very mused and crestfallen.

I had just returned from office and it was noon — and I was surprised to see him sitting there. He looked up and told me: 'I am leaving for Rome tonight. I have come to meet Nasrin.' He also said something about his family but that was almost in whispers — I couldn't follow.

I told him, 'But how can you meet Nasrin now? She is in school and she will come back at 5 pm.'

'I can't meet Nasrin even' — he stood up and left with his head bowed. He has never come to my house before. How could he know Nasrin lives here — God only knows. He again repeated, 'I am leaving for Rome tonight.'

I thought he was not serious; maybe he was feeling upset about something but my husband, who was also present there, told me: 'He is really leaving for Rome. Didn't you notice his face? He seems to be very hurt about something.' While we were travelling to Barisal, Mr Shamsuddin de-

ided he will arrange a picnic and everybody must join. My Nasrin started a tantrum she will go to the picnic. I smudged her: 'You can't go to the picnic alone, I am busy and won't be there, and so you can't go.' On the day of picnic Mr Shamsuddin arrived at the house where I was staying. He told me, 'Everybody is waiting for me — but I cannot go to the picnic without Nasrin — she is a small child how can I leave her behind and go for the picnic. I take full responsibility — please let her go with me.' He left my house happily holding a radiant Nasrin on his lap. In the evening he returned my baby to my care and thanked me with a sweet smile.

It all shows what a loving and caring man he was. There was nobody to look after him when his health was failing — I think he lost all interest in life and just drifted away into oblivion.

But I met him again just for a short while when I had gone to Rome to attend the IPH conference. Mr Waliur Rahman was there to help us.

One day, when we were coming out from the Conference Hall (the Parliament Building) we saw Mr Shamsuddin waiting for us with some of his friends. He was overjoyed to see us. He had come to invite us for lunch. How could he miss this opportunity — so many Bangladeshis together?

Now after all these years, I regret I have, in return, done nothing for him. We realise everything when it is too late. He loved us, came to us again and again but I failed to realise how lonely he was. Now as I am lonely, I understand how loneliness kills a person. When you are lonely, the past keep coming back which may be very very painful. There to be a full when my house used to be full — now there's nobody.

Mr Shamsuddin missed his family, especially his daughter, and gradually gave up the wish to live. He wanted to return to Bangladesh build a small hut and live and die here. But that was not to be. I read in Rokeya Khatun's column. He said: 'At least if my coffin comes to Bangladesh — I shall be happy.'

Why did his death went unnoticed, why did we fail to pay our last respect to such a devoted Bangali — a famous writer and a renowned personality? We can't even place some flowers on his grave. He lies abandoned in an unmarked grave, very near the mosque which he saw in making Alas! this is how we honour our patriot sons.

To the Editor...

Physical structure

Sir, The choosing of tall girls avoiding the short girls as brides is surely contrary to humane values. But this mentality or tendency has been cultivated everywhere in our country. Where will the short girls keep their heads on if everybody seeks the girls of average heights or more than that? The beauty or form or structure may not be denied, but are not main and cannot make a person great in society.

On the contrary, virtue and sacrifice make somebody remarkable. History speaks volumes in favour of that. Pritilata and Ila Mitra are still commemorated not for their physical structure but for their contribution to the society. Begum Rokeya was not, most probably, the most attractive but the people of this continent still remember her with respect for her sacrifice. So, inclination to physical structure should be avoided.

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Pollution of kind

Sir, While we all talk of industrial pollution, waste, water pollution and noise pollution; we have a practical example albeit at a micro level that is making our life hell on earth.

Opposite our door located in a quiet lane at Gulshan is a Manpower Recruiting Office of repute. With open support from the then ministers of BNP government they set up their office violating all RAJUK laws and relevant zoning restrictions. We protested in writing, but what can peace loving people do with paper protests against political big wigs!

Every other day the road and the green belt becomes crowded with hundreds of potential exportable persons. With re-

stricted access at Zia International Airport, our home front has become a sort of departure hall for the departing men. Whenever there is a flight scheduled, no less than a hundred families and well wishers gather to see them off at the road. They stay for long hours while minibuses shuttle the passengers to the airport.

The front of our house becomes the lounge, restaurant, restroom all combined. We have to cope with the litter, smoke, noise and hygiene wastes on the road front! It makes our lives miserable! Meanwhile, the agency is expanding and putting another floor over their existing ground floor facilities.

Rumor has it that they are close to the current considers of power. After all who kills the goose that lays the golden egg. The name of the game is cash flow; once you manage that you can manage anything! So much for the touted open and corruption free administration. Do the government or civic authorities care?

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US Veto

Sir, The US veto on the Security Council Resolution terming the proposed expansion of Israeli settlements in the occupied Arab land as illegal and a major obstacle to peace is unique in UN history in the sense that this is, perhaps, the first time when a resolution drafted by several UN members of whom two themselves have veto powers like the US and fully supported by all other members of the Council has been scuttled by a lone US veto. This raises the question whether, after the passage of half a century since the end of the Second World War, there is any justification for the reten-

tion of the veto powers exclusively by the same five powers. The answer is most certainly a big 'No'. In the present-day context, the interest of the UN would be much better served if the veto powers were extended to some more developed and advanced countries and a Security Council Resolution should not be made ineffective unless vetoed by at least 25 per cent of the veto-power holding countries.

In 'vetoing' the Security Council resolution, the US held the view that the UN should allow the parties themselves to resolve their dispute. In other words, the US view is that it is none of the business of the UN to meddle into the dispute between the Palestinians and Israelis. What then is UN for and what other business has the UN? This reminds me of a joke I heard a long time ago. A young and well-built farmer illegally occupied a piece of land belonging to an old and weak neighbour. When the latter tried to dislodge the former, the young man threatened to beat up the old man. The poor old man then went to a court for justice. The Judge enquired of the parties as to why they could not settle the matter outside the court. The young man replied to the Judge: 'You Honour, I was going to do just that when some neighbours intervened and brought was to your court.' This also reminds me of what one cynic reportedly said. When asked by someone what 'justice' is, the cynic replied: 'Justice is the interest of the stronger'. How right the cynic was!

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Restoration of right

Sir, The Mong Raja family of Manikchhari, Chittagong Hill Tracts came from Arakan, more than five hundred years ago.