

BNP's New Platform

BNP chairperson Khaleda Zia, in her opening address in yesterday's conference of national solidarity, said this was to forge unity among nationalist forces in order that this unity may protest Bangladesh's sovereignty. Well, by calling the host of parties that warred against the emergence of Bangladesh during the Liberation War nationalists, the leader is throwing herself together with the party into that logical fallacy of *reductio ad absurdum*, reducing both to absurdity. And she is charging these communal anti-liberation parties with protecting the sovereignty of this nation!

What can having Jamaat-e-Islami and the two Muslim Leagues and the one-man parties of Peer Char Monai Shafiqul Alam Prodhon and ASM Solaiman as allies and a platform give BNP that it doesn't have now? The indiscretion of this odd show can only exact a hefty price from BNP. How can Jamaat protect our sovereignty, when it killed, raped and worked in league with our enemies to abort our birth? But the worst would not come from an apparent BNP step towards an obscurantist stance. It will come from the resulting neglect of what was to have been BNP's true service as the big party it is.

BNP could dare AL and beat it on things that could address the multifaceted challenges of the third millennium — in education and technology, business and the sciences, environment and opening up to the world. If AL had to have all its emphasis on the nurture of Bengali culture, BNP could offer the nation the bands in the name of globalisation of everything.

The nation has seen the performance of BNP under Khaleda in government. Now is the time for Khaleda and her party to demonstrate their worth in opposition. Their governmental stint was not too bright and if now their spell as opposition is, all of it, spent on dislodging a government and offering no leadership and no new hopes to the nation — where will the nation put this party?

The solidarity conference is held to forge a communal thrust — all the parties in it save BNP using religion for political ends with harrowing results. Why should BNP walk backwards to join up with these discarded and discredited motley of opportunists and collaborators? Is it ready to use Islam the way Jamaat does it? If yes, then it will have moved away from its original plank. If it doesn't want to be secularist, there is no compulsion for it to be a *Masjumi* either — it can go the Mahathir way. The party needs to be forward-looking and instead it is succumbing to a medieval mindset. Why?

And what can its virulent, hatred of India mean? Nothing but isolationism which they could not themselves practise when in power. Because in the post-twentieth century world of universal inter-dependence, isolationism has no place. It is not practicable.

This latest tack BNP is trying is unfortunate. Almost half of the nation puts its faith on this party and not for nothing. It must deliver — now as an opposition — conceivably the most powerful opposition. So far it has been very visibly oblivious of the responsibilities and advantages of this new position.

A Meaningless Hope

Is it in good taste to promise that the city's water-logging problem would be over by 80 per cent even as rainwater, from just a short-lived drizzle was making pools of several city points? And as to when that imponderable good thing would happen, the WASA officials giving the good news were not sure and explicit. What price this open-ended solace?

Full functioning of all the storm sewers in the city forms the basis of the optimism aired by the officials. Against this only one problem that may remain has been cited — blocking of the city sewers because of the city dwellers' bad habit of throwing solid garbage into them. How can one be sure of the former and an early improvement in the latter so that 80 per cent of water-logging will be gone in the foreseeable future? We have no doubt meaningful strides are being made to end the problem. But what chance does this sewers-only answer has against real big interminable showers which is a regular fare here in monsoon?

Filling up big natural and man-made water reservoirs like ponds continues in the city. Road and building construction continues to be water-unfriendly. And what has happened to the talk of digging *dighis* and even canals in the city to give rainwater some place to go? Let the sewer work proceed but the bigger and basic answers must also be taken up.

What clogs the city sewers more than the polybags? If the bags are not wholly banned by the time the present government completes its first year in power, this talk of ridding the city of water-logging will all be meaningless.

Promising

The formation of a committee to suggest ways for quicker disposal of cases is exactly what the doctor ordered for the notoriously tardy judicial process of the country. The proposition for creating Metropolitan Sessions Court at Dhaka, Chittagong, Rajshahi and Khulna sounds very timely in view of the great increase in the rate of criminal activities in the urban pockets and the enormous pressure it exerts on an already overtaxed legal system. The idea appears practical enough to bring about a touch of speed and efficiency. With areas demarcated for the criminal offences in and outside the metropolis there is no reason why the courts will not dispose the cases faster than before.

Perhaps, the more encouraging thought from the human rights point of view is the one that seeks to resurrect a legal provision of the eighties. Under that provision an accused would be automatically discharged in case of failure of certain category of court in disposing a certain type of criminal offence. In a country known for frequent violation of human rights due to the exercise of undesirable influence on the administration by the party in power, we think this is a good provision to be put back into effect. Courts promise to be better equipped for the provision. Along with this the committee would do well to suggest some ways and means to improve the number and quality of the legal education centres. The 'accountability' aspect promises to address that part in a considerable way.

Water Resources Development: A Regional Rationale

by Syed Muhammad Hussain

Reaching equitable water-sharing agreements is a key to averting conflict over water in any water-scarce river basin. Moreover, such agreements are needed not only to optimise economic benefits and to secure agricultural production but also to safeguard ecological functions.

In one of the most complex river systems in the world, Bangladesh boasts of a network of about 230 rivers and their tributaries with a total length over 24,000 kilometres. Three major river systems i.e. Ganges-Padma, Brahmaputra-Jamuna and Meghna cover the surface of Bangladesh. Rivers in Bangladesh carry high silt-loads. Environmental degradation and soil conditions upstream have aggravated the siltation problem in most rivers flowing into the country. The sediments carried by the rivers subjected to coastal dynamic processes generated mainly by river flow and tidal and wind actions, lead to accretion and erosion in the coastal areas of the country.

These rivers drain a 600,000 sq miles of catchment area and only 7.5 per cent of the basin lies in Bangladesh. With the exception of the southernmost hills and narrow belt of hillocks in Sylhet and a few patches of Plio-Miocene terraces, Bangladesh consists of a low-lying deltaic plain where these rivers drop at an average rate of only 0.06 feet per mile as they pass from India to the Bay of Bengal. It is estimated that this catchment area generates some 1000 MAF of run off annually all of which passes through Bangladesh. The result is that extensive floods often associated with river bank erosion occur annually; the river channels shift over considerable distances and there is substantial siltation of river beds which in turn amplifies flood risks. The rivers in Bangladesh carry an annual silt load of 2.4 billion tons. This implies that 18.5 per cent of total sediment in the world is annually transported through Bangladesh, which occupies about one-thousandth of the land in the world.

In an excellent paper, Sandra Postel, Director of Global Water Policy Project in Cambridge, Mass, USA, points out: 'A new politics of water scarcity is emerging at local, regional, national and international levels as tensions rise over limited supplies, unique among strategic resources, water not only courses easily across political boundaries, it also gives upstream regions a distinct advantage over downstream neighbours.' And as we all know how Bangladesh has suffered being in the downstream end of the flow not only in regard to the Ganges, but also in relation to the flows of Brahmaputra and other trans-boundary rivers. And because of India's heavy diversions, the Ganges runs virtually dry during the dry season, causing a saline front to advance across the delta which is, damaging coastal mangroves, and fisheries. Her article goes on to expand on this — in South Asia, for example, Bangladesh suffers from India's unilateral diversion of the Ganges at the

Farakka barrage, and the failure, since 1988, to reach an agreement on how to share the Ganges during the dry season. In 1993, the dry season flow into Bangladesh was the lowest ever recorded. As river beds dried up and crops withered, the north-western region suffered greatly. The Ganges-Kobadak Project, one of this poor nation's larger agricultural schemes, reportedly suffered an estimated \$25 million in losses.

Reaching equitable water-sharing agreements is a key to averting conflict over water in any water-scarce river basin. Moreover, such agreements are needed not only to optimise economic benefits and to secure agricultural production but also to safeguard ecological functions. In the Ganges basin for instance, some minimum flow must be provided to the delta to prevent the further advance of a damaging saline front. Ideally, this environmental allocation would be agreed to by all the countries in the basin — Nepal, India and Bangladesh and would be made part of Bangladesh's allotment.

In the light of above and of the well known history of the long drawn-out talks between Bangladesh and India on sharing of the Ganges waters and of other common rivers, Bangladesh needs to develop a comprehensive strategy to resolve this vital issue of almost life and death import to Bangladesh. Bangladesh has a well-documented claim for a fair and equitable share of waters of the Ganges and she has over the past 8 years (since 1988 no agreement has been reached on the sharing) made some tentative moves to bring India to the negotiation table and to high-profile the issue at the international level. These have not produced any tangible movement forward. Due mainly to the half-hearted nature of the efforts and to almost no follow up diplomatically or otherwise. A well charted strategy has become overdue before the cause could be effectively pursued bilaterally and on an international level. Bangladesh has lost valuable years as India has gone ahead with her fairly aggressive moves in strengthening cooperation in water resources projects with Nepal. In the strategy that Bangladesh should consider to outline rather urgently, the main element obviously will be the undeniable, and fairly well documented, domestic needs warranting an equitable share of the Ganges water in the lean season. The other elements should include the regional dimension of a cooperative approach. In this context, Nepal's

role and the scope for Bangladesh-Nepal cooperation and understanding will be relevant.

A Nepal-Bangladesh Joint Study Team was set up pursuant to Nepal-Bangladesh summit level discussion of 2nd October, 1988. This team was mandated to make recommendations regarding measures for mitigation of the incidence of floods in the future and exploitation of the water resources of the region through multiple and optimal use. Accordingly, the Joint Study Team prepared a 'Report on flood mitigation measures and multipurpose use of water resources' in November, 1989. On the basis of available information and data, exchange of expertise and experience and indepth discussions, the Joint Study Team recommended in its Report that Bangladesh and Nepal could have meaningful cooperation in the fields of flood mitigation, harnessing of water resources of the region, studies research and investigation. The Joint Report further recommended that the joint cooperation between the two countries may be carried out under the aegis of a Joint Bangladesh-Nepal Technical forum which would work on a continual basis.

It is in the mutual interest of the two friendly neighbouring countries that the recommendations of the Joint Study Team are followed up and translated into reality. To that end, the primary task that both the countries could accomplish right now, is to set-up a Joint Bangladesh-Nepal Technical Forum. The Joint Technical Forum may comprise experts from both the countries and could be headed by the Secretaries concerned of the two governments. The broad Terms of Reference could be decided upon by discussions. The trans-Himalayan tributaries of the Ganges, emanating from Nepal like the Karnali, Mahakali, Kali Gandaki, Seti, Kosi, etc., contribute about 71 per cent of the total dry season flows of the Ganges and about 40 per cent of its annual flows. Bangladesh has always been stressing the need for construction of storage reservoirs on the Nepalese tributaries like the Mahakali, Karnali, Sapt Kosi, Kali Gandaki, Seti, Trisuliganga etc., for augmenting the dry season flows of the Ganges as well as for generation of huge and cheap hydropower for the common benefit of all the co-basin countries of the Ganges. Nepal also strongly advocates this concept.

In December, 1991 India and Nepal reached decisions for jointly

harnessing and developing the water resources of Nepal through the Karnali, Panchesar, Sapt Kosi and Burigandaki multipurpose reservoir projects. Major elements of the Indo-Nepal accord need to be scrutinised closely because it involves Bangladesh's vital interests too. The first official visit of Nepal's Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba has achieved, inter alia, an apparently acceptable solution to the Tanakpur problem, with Nepal being assured of doubling of allocation of power and irrigation facilities by India.

However, the question regarding the Nepali land being used by the Indian's for this project of India and then making available almost under compulsion some additional facilities to the sovereign owner of the project land will perhaps surface now and then. Be that as it may, India has now got a huge door open for developing hydel power resources on the major rivers flowing out of Nepal as indicated earlier. Again, these large projects are expected to be located basically at the Nepal-India border as the rivers flow down into India, the lower riparian state. While India will naturally control the outflow because of her investment, her greater requirements and obviously because of her overwhelming presence in relation to Nepal's continuing national exercise would be to arise out as much return from these projects as possible. While power could be supplied upland, Nepal could start worrying about her increasingly diminishing share of irrigation waters for her own agricultural needs in upper reaches of these major rivers.

Both the laws of gravity and India would be against and not necessary in that order. In this context, Bangladesh as a lower riparian to India faces a different set of arguments as to why India's wide variety of needs outweigh the essential, life and death dependence on waters from the Ganges, the Brahmaputra and the other rivers.

Bangladesh gets her share at Farakka during the dry season out of the flows from rivers flowing out of Nepal which contributes about 71 per cent of the dry season flows of the Ganges. Bangladesh would naturally be concerned at such developments in harnessing of the water resources of these rivers with which Bangladesh's interest is directly linked. Bangladesh, like Nepal, strongly feels that if water resources of the trans-Himalayan tributaries of the Ganges emanating from Nepal are to be

harnessed and developed, it should be jointly done with the full consent and active participation of all the co-basin countries. It is necessary to recognise the fact that an issue which is essentially multilateral can never be fruitfully pursued on a bilateral basis. Therefore, any programme of harnessing the water resources of the tributaries of the Ganges in Nepal should be undertaken on a co-operative basis by Nepal, India and Bangladesh together.

Bangladesh, since long, has been carrying out studies about the potentials of augmenting the dry season Ganges flows through storage reservoirs in Nepal. In fact, back in 1986, with the assistance of expatriate consultants a 'Proposal for augmentation of Ganges flows from reservoirs in Nepal' was developed and its proposal was based on studies with data and information on Nepal, available from published books and reports. With relevant data and information authenticated and obtained from Nepal, Bangladesh's proposal could be further concretised. In this context the Indian proposal of a link canal across the northern part of Bangladesh for trans-basin transfer of waters from Brahmaputra to augment the Ganges water availability at Farakka, was, for well-known reasons, not found acceptable. Now even Brahmaputra's historic flow into the lowest riparian Bangladesh is facing a threat of being disturbed and reduced with the Tipaimukh barrage on the Indian side on the one hand and of sizeable diversion/withdrawals at the upper reaches in China to augment the flow of waters in the Arun river.

It may be mentioned that Arun III is a megaproject for Nepal and as the World Bank's promised package funding in association with a number of donor countries has apparently suffered a setback, Nepal is suffering towards India for assistance in implementing this 205 MW hydel project. China, on the other side, is reportedly considering a large scale irrigation project for Tibet with Arun waters. They may, to help Nepal and to show a friendly gesture to India with which trade-offs actively consider diversion of waters from Brahmaputra at the high upper reaches into Arun to allow sufficient flow to sustain Nepal's Arun III project downstream.

OPINION

Purbachal Model Town

MAS Molla

Urbanisation is another name of 'civilisation'. Human beings prefer to be civilised, hence intend to live in urban areas. They forget the saying, 'God made the villages and man made the towns'. And God's creation is certainly superior to humans'. However, from few decades back it has been clear that urbanisation destroys the natural environment in very many ways. Therefore, urbanisation may also be termed 'Destruction of Nature' and we, the environmentalists hold the view that the intelligent man (*homo sapiens*) should acquire more intelligence and foresight for protecting the natural ecosystems of our mother earth so that our successors may also survive here.

The increasing population necessitates making and enlarging towns by men. For this, urbanisation is inevitable. Then what is the answer to these dual problems? The obvious answer is limited and localised urbanisation so that nature can withstand the ills of our so-called civilisation. Added to other harmful conditions, the continuous large cities or megacities of the world, e.g. New York, Los Angeles, London, Tokyo etc. have developed photochemical smogs over them. The smog is a rather permanent thing that inhibits the sunlight to reach the earth's surface. But if there are towns scattered in between natural habitats that always include green plants, the situation remains sustainable.

Dhaka city established in the early seventeenth century (to be precise 1608 AD) has been expanding 'in a never ending line'. Now many speak of its being a megacity by 2000 AD. The city now holds over 8 million people in only about 140-square mile area. The density of population is about 60,000 per square mile. Dhaka is now literally bending down. It is simply impossible for her to harbor so many people who have to or intend to live here. For this reason, the government of Bangladesh has taken up measures to establish a number of towns near Dhaka city. The Purbachal Model Town project is one of them.

The proposed Purbachal Model Town project covers an area over 6000 acres and is situated about 10 km north-east from the centre of Dhaka. The area is beyond the river Balu that flows from the Turag (at Tung) and into the Sitalakha (at Demra). This narrow river constitutes the eastern border of our capital city. Of the proposed town area, over 1000 acres contain a Shal forest which is a government property. The public properties produce enough fruits, vegetables, timbers and rice. Some vegetables are exported to foreign countries. The local people lead a

It is necessary for Bangladesh to monitor such developments and assess their adverse impact on the quantum of water that finally crosses into Bangladesh. And obviously on such likely scenarios, Bangladesh has to develop her own strategy and approaches for negotiations to ensure upholding of her long-term interests in this exceedingly vital field.

During the Nepal-Bangladesh Joint Study in 1989 the Nepalese experts provided a list of 30 potential reservoir sites in Nepal and that list has formed a part of the Joint Report. Further data and information on those sites like extent of inundation, population and agriculture affected etc., could be of immense help. Indian authorities have been informed that the key to solution of the problem of augmentation of the dry season flows of the Ganges lies in meaningful cooperation between India, Nepal and Bangladesh.

It may be recalled that the Nepalese delegate at the 2nd GIF meeting held at Istanbul in May, 1992 presented a paper of 'Planned Mega Water Resources Development in Nepal'. Through this paper Nepal reflected her concern for development of the water resources in Nepal and strongly advocated for regional cooperation. Nepal hoped that all concerned countries would demonstrate a spirit of cooperation and mutual understanding of each other's difficulties and requirements in order to put these resources to the best possible service for the peoples of the region. As a follow up to this statement, in GIF and other meetings on this region's water resources development, Bangladesh and Nepal could jointly support the concept of harnessing the water resources for the benefit of Nepal, India and Bangladesh, taking advantage of opportunities and together initiating the process of meaningful regional cooperation in harnessing and development of the Himalayan water resources.

Bangladesh has consistently advocated the need for working for peaceful co-existence and meaningful cooperation among neighbours. Nepal is also a champion of this concept. Through cooperation, the face of this region can really be transformed and the peoples provided with better life.

The writer is Ambassador of Bangladesh to the Kingdom of Morocco.

The views expressed in this article are those of author's and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Government of Bangladesh.

To the Editor...

PM's offer

Sir, Your commentary on PM's offer of open dialogue with the leader of the opposition is timely and very objective. Why this attitude of playing to the gallery without creating proper atmosphere or base for it? BNP is being accused for everything happening in the country. Such accusations are coming from the highest level which hardly leave any scope for the probe body to be neutral in their findings. Officials now-a-days find the word 'sabotage' very helpful to cover their own lapses and failings, be it security or maintenance.

The offer of Deputy Speaker-ship and open dialogue appear to emanate from the same premises with outcome known.

Z Abeeidin
Arambagh, Dhaka.

Freedom of speech in JS

Sir, In the programme *Akter Sangsad* of BTB (12 Mar '97), at many stages, the C&I (Commerce & Industries) Minister was seen prompting the Finance Minister, in a very conspicuous and loud manner. Whatever the Finance Minister tried to say, every time prompting came from C&I Minister. It looked more odd when Finance Minister spelled out those prompting, the prompter jubilantly thumped the table as if he was encouraging the Finance Minister to do so.

At one stage, the C&I Minister kept on harping same words till those words uttered in the Finance Minister's deliberation. I don't think the Finance Minister needed any facts from anyone for which the C&I Minister had to prompt. From these, it appears that even the Cabinet Minister does not enjoy the 'freedom of speech' in the Parliament. So, I am apprehensive of the capability of the MP of our area to project our problems openly in the JS.

If democracy is really in practice, then can the House of the nation be a stage of such drama?

A R Choudhury
Uttara, Dhaka.

BBC telecast

Sir, Like many, I am also an avid viewer of the BBC. The immense benefits that can be eyed from the diversely knit programme cannot be overemphasised. Comparatively, CNN is a pack of monotonous stuff over and over, again. Also, it seems to decline in discussions on scientific matters at length. BBC, on the other hand, is the symbol of a glorious legacy and is the hallmark of quality programmes.

Unfortunately scores of people across the country cannot afford to buy a dish antenna to watch BBC and local TV is our only solace. Even so, many viewers so far made strong appeals to the BTB authorities for extension of BBC telecast time, but the concerned people seem to have turned a deaf ear to this.

I strongly urge in the same chorus to the BTB authority for kindly extending the BBC telecast time considerably i.e. from 1:30 pm to 5:00 pm on the next day. That would enable a busy man to have the opportunity to watch BBC at his convenient moment. I hope that such an undertaking will not be very costly but it would do us all a great favour.

Nahid Ahmed
123, Abmakhana
Sylhet.

An appeal to the PM

Sir, We would like to make an appeal to the Prime Minister to take stringent measures to, save the general public from the menace of the late-night load-shedding. Allow us to, at least, sleep! We are not interested now we want to go deep to dig the main trouble behind the load-shedding. But please help us out from this nightmare. By this time, we are quite used to the menacing long hours of the loadshedding throughout day time. We got used to the good old hand-fans. We try to bury every difficulty which is so miserable at times but go on fanning our kids with the use of lantern at studies which we consider much more important than dining! But we will not be able to bear sleepless nights, for if there's no sleep, there's no work, and if there is no work, there is no production, no input and no output.

We feel it essential to make an appeal to the Prime Minister to give standing orders to the areawise electricity offices to consider the late night hours. Otherwise, insufficient sleep may account for the entire nation to ever depend on others.

K Vigar Mohiuddin
Dhaka.

Bangabandhu trial live on TV

Sir, Seeing justice being established is a life-time opportunity in our corrupt world today.

The despicable crime that was committed over two decades ago long forgotten — as if nothing can be done about it.

Now the time has come for the truth to shine upon us and to abolish the lies and injustice in our society.

Broadcasting the court procedures of the Bangabandhu trial will surely be a major

achievement for BTB.

We, the people, are eager to see these criminals are given their due what they deserved. Long live truth, long live justice.

Kashfi Kabir
6/6 Pallabi, Mirpur, Dhaka.

Electricity scarcity vs farmers' dream

Sir, The situation of irrigation in Naogaon district is facing an alarming situation due to the load-shedding and supplying limited electricity. Naogaon is considered as one of the potent paddy pockets of the country. Deep and shallow tube-wells are the main media for irrigation in this region.

The deep tube-wells are run by diesel or electricity. There are almost 6,000 such tube-wells in this district engaged in irrigation projects. About 30 per cent of them are run by electricity and 70 per cent are by diesel.

There are about 100 to 250 bighas of paddy lands that are cultivated in the shade of one Deep tube-well. Till now there is no problem with diesel-driven deep tube-wells, but pain is endless with machineries run by electricity.

Peasants are perplexed for the irregular supply of electricity. Now is the peak season for watering the land. Yet the supply of electricity is suspended for 12 to 15 hours a day. So the supply time is very poor for irrigation and the peasants are passing their days in helplessness.

Shahidul
Naogaon

Billion-dollar service!

Sir, Bangladesh's fat bureaucracy or civil service is providing the nation with a service for which nearly a billion dollars are spent in a year! (\$990 million, which may rise to 1,000 million if the wages are raised). The legitimate question which arises is: what is the actual worth or value of this super state service in an under-developed nation, in terms of efficiency, number of personnel employed, state and corporate losses, waste of time, lack of transparency and fuzzy fixation of responsibility?

The upteenth number of administrative reform committee or commission is in session (as has been the case every decade for half a century); but timeless Parkinson's law prevails: 'Bureaucracy always expands' (never dries). If this hypothesis is correct, then there cannot be any political or administrative solution.

The side effect which is visi-

ble to the public is the huge losses the state-owned enterprises are incurring every month, eating from the public exchequer. The core question is: can the regime control the lotus eaters, or the latter will continue to keep the former in bondage? The labour unions have been thoroughly spoiled by the political adventurers. There are many types of 'protection', good, bad, and vicious — police protection, political protection, trade protection, protection of nepotism, and the most deadly sin: the bestowal of 'misplaced kindness'.

All regimes can be tough, but the specific applications are partial and polarised, due to another protection racket: the 'vested interest'. The politicians do not talk about it while in power, for reasons not difficult to fathom by the man in the street.

One cheer for the billion-dollar civil service. 'Civil Service' displays its own motto through the two key words of its name: 'civil' and 'service'.

Yes, the public expects them to be more civil, and render more service. This expectation, or recognition, is reasonable, to say the least.

A Husnain
Dhaka

Power and privileges

Sir, We are still suffering for the frequent power cuts that have been occurring around Eskaton and other areas. I have heard from other people that DESA has a privilege preference, and that is certain areas are affected with frequent power cuts, but again in the same area, there are many government officials staying. They have no power cuts at all and rather enjoy the privilege given by DESA. Of late, the power failures have become longer and I wonder if DESA have any other ideas about how to increase the suffering of the people.

Why but do we have to suffer like this with the frequent power cuts? For example, when there is a power cut in the Eskaton area for two or more hours and everything is plunged into darkness and total chaos takes place yet one sees Belal Colony — the government officials' houses with power, and just near to that the Nazrul Academy which happens to be in the same area without power.

Why is that? I thought that equal rights to people exist but it is not.

I am sure that many other readers have noticed this trend in different areas. Will the government earnestly look into the matter?

J. Ryan
Eskaton Garden Road, Dhaka