Dhaka, Wednesday, September 3, 1997

A Historic Opening

There is both economic and political significance of the opening of transit route between Nepal and Bangladesh. As for the economics of it, given the level of our current trade — about eight million US dollars for each — there is not much to be looked forward here in the immediate future. However, in the long term, there could be significant growth here leading to increased benefit for both sides. But for that to happen, we need to modernise Mongla port and improve the road route upto the border. Meanwhile, the news of strike at Mongla should serve as a rude reminder that no matter how many treaties and agreements we sign, nothing will happen unless we manage our house better.

There is now new scope for direct co-operation between our two countries in a manner that never existed before.

The political significance of the opening of the transit point at Banglabandha — rather a curious name for a point of an opening — should not be lost to anyone. For Bangladesh, this opening literally gives us a third 'neighbour'. The mutuality of interest between our two countries is well known. Now through a meaningful co-operation in the economic field, we can perhaps give a practical shape to the idea of transit as envisaged in SAPTA. Minister Tofael Ahmed was right in terming this as development within the SAARC framework and not as a part of the still ill-defined sub-regional or growth quadrangle concept.

The opening of this transit also marks a sea change in Indian thinking in this regard. Having opposed for the last 21 years — since '76 — India finally saw the wisdom of withdrawing any impediment from enhanced co-operation between Nepal and Bangladesh. We are aware that the transit now permitted is constrained by many restrictions by India, which we hope will be relaxed as the experiment proves beneficial to the whole region.

A Case for PM's Intervention

It is not yet fully clear whether the series of internal explosions at Magurchhara were due to errors of human judgement or of lapses in duty. But the loss and suffering issuing from the Magurchhara Leak at the moment stand to surpass those caused by the cyclone-tidal bore strike on the Dooms-Monday of April 30, 1991. All of these are being caused not by nature but by human failure to comprehend the size of the challenge compounded by a resulting failure to stand up to it. A failure both of comprehension and imagination.

Sylhet simply was abandoned to feud for itself where there was no scope for any private even regional initiative to do so. For it was genuinely a nation-sized challenge. A disaster is not only an agent of dislocation, misery, suffering and death. It is a great opportunity to stand by the people and win their heart. The government has roundly failed to come to any help of the distressed people of Sylhet and in equal measure it has hurt itself.

The government was never asked to feed or clothe anyone mutside of Kamalganj. The distress in Sylhet stems, all of it, from being cut off from Dhaka and indeed the whole of the nation for over two months now. This has dashed the Sylhet economy to unknown depths affecting all in every conceivable way. There is there now a feeling of being bottled up and then given a good and relentless hiding. All of it could be avoided if only government cared to do all in its power to ensure that communication of Sylhet with the rest of the nation did not diminish by an inch in terms of both travelling and goods movement. This is a tall order all right but nothing so impossible.

The government could increase the frequency of flights to Sylhet. The BR could continue its Tk 50 bus run between Sylhet and Kamalganj. The government could press into service right kind of ferries to complement the service of the weaker bridges. It could as well throw real tough Bailey Bridges for heavier goods vehicles. And bolster existing bridges. There could in fact be numerous other ways to cope with the situation and maintain the communication at normal level.

There is still time to mend it all. Some people have very correctly appealed for direct intervention by the Prime Minister. She has on many occasions come down to do far smaller and yet wonderfully helpful things than this. The all-in deployment of government capacity and the urgency with which it must be done to restore links with Sylhet to normal levels — are things that call for the

Prime Minister's determined will.

We expect her to respond with her heart in it.

Timely and Weighty

Monday's CPD (Centre for Policy Dialogue) arranged concourse on the future needs of country's textile industry has caught our notice not only for the many good suggestions put forward by people of both experience and expert knowledge but also because of the timeliness of it.

With a new global trade order destined to set in less than ten years time following the abolition of tariff barriers and quota system in 2005, textile industry, more precisely the ready made garments (RMG) sector requires a real good look in order to sustain the progress it has made.

Speakers unanimously felt that formulation of both short and long term policies is the order of the day. We would like to add that these policies have to be made solely with country's economic

have to be made solely with country's economic prospect in view and not any petty, partisan consideration.

Bangladesh's RMG sector as the discussants so rightly observed, has shown an encouraging degree of success in responding to the demands made by the global market and signs are there that it is inching towards the kind of stability it requires to stand on its own when the preferential facilities will no longer be there.

In order to ensure and enhance this slow but sure-footed advancement, government needs to play a positive role to facilitate the evolvement of an efficient working relationship between the BTMC, private sector and financial institutions.

While taking the initiative in tandem with the private sector to bring here the 'sun set textile industries' from the developed countries, efforts should be made to rev up the linkage industries. One community that calls for innovative notice in this respect is the weavers. Optimal use of weaving community's potential can prove a great fillip to the economy and any thought of giving a boost to the textile sector has to involve this large but increasingly waning community.

Turmoil in Caucasus

With the entry of three giant US oil companies in Azerbaijan, the picture in the Caucasus has taken a dramatic turn.

Soviet Union nearly seven years ago, the Caucasus region, south of the Soviet Union has rarely seen peace. Now that it is well-known that the entire region is incredibly rich in hydro-carbon (it is confidently estimated that the reserve is as much as the Gulf Region), eyes are riveted in the area.

Shortly after the break up of the Soviet Union, liberation movements began in earnest in the former territory. A bloody war was waged by Russia in Chechnya. This took the form of a War of Liberation. In southern Caucasus, ethnic conflicts have been going on in Georgia and the Armenian-Azerbaijan conflict. The American-Azeri conflict has been a particularly bloody one. On the one hand Armenia with a smaller population and territory compared to "Azerbaijan, with superiority in weapon largely supplied by Russia, has managed to occupy nearly 20 per cent of Azeri terri-

The Armenian-Azeri conflict has placed Turkey in a particularly awkward situation. Turkey's land access to the newly-independent states of Central Asia and the Caucasus

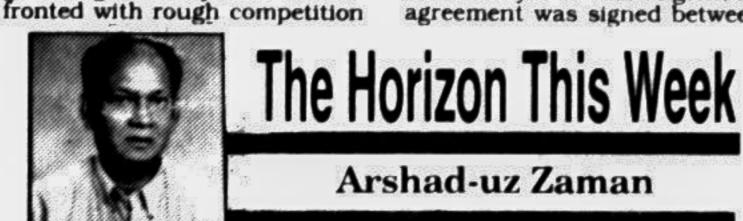
go through Armenia at war with Azerbaijan, ethnically and religiously Turkey is closest. Azerbaijan has fabulous reserve of oil and gas in and around the

Caspian sea.

Oil-hungry Turkey can ill afford to ignore this reality. In the battle for pipeline, which Turkey has been straining all her energies to arrange to let it go though Turkey, she is confronted with rough competition.

th is trouble in Tajikistan and there hardly is a ripple from washington.

It appears now that the US has finally decided to put aside her hesitations and take a plunge in the Caucasus. Nowhere is it more evident than her new-found friendship with Azerbaijan. Very recently during a visit of Azerbaijan President Haider Aliyev to Washington, an agreement was signed between



from Russia, who has managed to keep considerable influence through the Commonwealth of

Independent States (CIS).

The US, which has allowed Russia a free hand in her dealings with members of the CIS has now forcefully entered the oil politics of Caucasia. Indeed until lately whether it was in Chechnya, Georgia or Armenian-Azerbaijan conflict US preferred the policy of maintaining a respectable distance and let Russia arrange the situation as best as she could. Indeed, there

the Azeri President and three giant oil companies. The agreement is worth 8 billion US dollars. The administration of President Bill Clinton in now getting involved in the Azeri-Armenian conflict. This new turn of events is not seen favourably in Moscow. Russian authorities have openly expressed their apprehension at the mounting influence in the region of US and the decline of Russia. This attitude of Russia makes it clear Russia's attachment to her 'near abroad'

doctrine.

The US attitude towards Caucasus is the outcome of her strategic and economic considerations. Experts have estimated that with 200 billion barrel of oil reserve worth 4 trillion dollars, the Caucasus is candidate for taking the place of oil-rich Middle East in the 21st century.

Turkey has been keenly watching these developments in the Caucasus since she has a border with Armenia and has ethnic and many ties with the entire former Soviet Union. The leaders of those countries have made Ankara a must halting place in their trips abroad. The President of the giant state Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev makes it a point to spend summer holidays in the beautiful Antalya town on the Mediterranean.

With the entry of three giant US oil companies in Azerbaijan, the picture in the Caucasus has taken a dramatic turn. While playing her cards Turkey has been careful to keep Russia in good humour while strengthening her economic bonds with the US. In the coming days, we can expect to witness major developments in the oil and gas sector.

Let Wisdom Prevail over Frenzy

by Md Asadullah Khan

Recent events in the country have worried many. Certain groups of people seem to have embarked on a series of initiatives that has generated a feeling that the country is slowly and steadily drifting towards a chaos

HE country has crossed 25 years since its liberation from the Pakistani hordes, but still teeters on the verge of a collapsing economy, administrative breakdowns and growing human misery. Drug abuse, racketeering, zealotry, violence and political warfare virtually keep the civil administration helpless. And, of late, it seems zealots have found convenient bases and are making covert attempts to turn this country into a theocratic state, say, after the model of Afghanistan or Iran that are bleeding and falling prey more to national drift and ideological splintering. So, say sensible citizenry, "There has always been a great fear of a divisive culture gaining ground and now there is an undeniable increase in intolerance, factional clashes, violence and human rights abuse. The feeling is that these developments do not augur well for the country.

The call issued by the IOJ in a gathering at the Manik Mia Avenue on 21st August last has some ominous undertones that should not go amiss. This was, apparently, an attempt to whip up fundamentalist fervour and frenzy. Meanwhile, the orgy of violence and atrocities that still continue to permeate society cannot be lost sight of and steps must be taken to ensure that offenders of human values are brought to justice. However, it sadly appears that those responsible for these sickening acts would walk scot free. People think that cultural fundamentalism - now backed by certain major opposition parties — has little place in the country. Rather the country must guard against any form of "Talibanisation" of its society. Muslims can claim to be proud of their eclecticism and innate capacity for tolerance. It has been revealed in the holy Quran "there is no compulsion in religion" and in the Sura Araaf, Allah has again commandeth the Muslims not to transgress the limits and "to create mischief on earth after it has been set in order but call Him with fear and longing, for the mercy of God is near to those who do good."

Coming back to the utterances made in the Manik Mia Avenue by the scholarly members of the IOJ, one feels that only a fanatic would claim that

he was ordered by God to commit a murder to enshrine a religious value! Such claim will definitely appear to be scary. True, fanaticism disguised as religious devotion seems to be spreading among a section of people. The rest of the nation are genuinely shocked and bewildered when they hear death threats announced on flimsy pretexts. It is typical of fanatics of all shades that the "orders they get from God" are always essentially one order: Thou shalt kill! But people in the country will give them little chance because, they know that the highest command in any religion is — thou shall demonstrate patience in the face of most dreary and dire prospect of being routed.

Although many communities with different beliefs can
co-exist in countries like
Malaysia, Britain and the US,
here in our country, they regard
each other with mutual suspicion and distrust. But the irony
is that it is not the individuals
in the countries like
Bangladesh and India, often
bolstered as enemies through
media campaign, hate each
other; it's the mob mentality,
which politicians use to incite
fear and distrust against each

Facts about the Taliban victory of Afghanistan are now coming to light. They used money to buy the loyalty of Gen Abdul Rashid Dostam's key commander. The sufferings and humiliation of the ordinary Afghans in their daily lives beggar any description. Could any sensible citizen either in our country or any where in the world find the Taliban tyranny palatable? Could we ever try to know where did that money, jets and tanks that they used come from?

For all the lofty Islamic virtue that the Talibans want to supplant in Afghanistan, they, as reports go, corruptly bought leading opponents within fold, got revenue from even the drug trade, and imposed sufferings on people with medieval mindset. No body should confuse these as Islamic virtues!

It must be brought home to all waging war on a somewhat placid national life that frenzy and brutality of the battlefield are not qualifications to rule a country. Even if they try to inflict their cruelties and divisive policy on the Afghans but in course of time reason will triumph. Winds of change and moderation has already started blowing in Iran.

It is time to think if we should take retrograde steps and put the clock of progress back. As Mahathir Mohamad, who has stayed as the Prime Minister of Malaysia for the last sixteen years said recently. "some people misinterpret the religion. They read only some parts of Quran and they think that is the whole of religion, but it is not. The Quran is very specific about all the things that are around you and understanding the power of Allah." Precisely true, Mahathir has accelerated the development of Malaysia turning it into one of world's economic miracles by pursuing a policy that focused more on charting a future than righting the past.

When we continue to look at our neighbours with suspicion and distrust, Mahathir through his "ASEAN" formula have urged neighbours to concentrate on economic development, on what is good for their people and how to co-operate more closely with each other forgetting differences to achieve that. As a result, the region has become not only prosperous but also peaceful. They have no

Recent events in the country have worried many. Certain groups of people seem to have embarked on a series of initiatives that has generated a feeling that the country is slowly and steadily drifting towards a chaotic situation. For their sermons might have galvanised the discontented in a country mired in political and economic chaos. While most people, especially in the Muslim block profess to be devout Muslims, they do not want to shy away from the path of progress and enlightenment through education, and relentless pursuit of scientific and technological innovations. Most important, they want to be led out of country's political and economic chaos. Religion, sensible citizenry assert is an individual's way of life and when practiced properly, culminates into a social and ethical force that distinguishes the right from the wrong. Tormented and depressed through bouts of misfortune and disasters, and indi-

vidual seeks solace in religion. But religion mired in politics can only be sensitive and complicated. Because, political issues, state authority and acts of Parliament can be questioned and resolved but religious codes cannot be questioned. And that underscores the fact that any effort to mingle religion with politics might spell disasters rather than 'prospect'. Recalling the fact that fundamentalism thrives on poverty, stagnation, backwardness and illiteracy the present government's first prerogative should be focused on solving the myriad of economic problems that fuel opposition complaints.

The country's economic pol-

icy till now has been a mix of shortsightedness, lack of bold initiative and total commitment towards achieving a goal. Increase in the price of petroleum products, as it appears, is not likely to grossly affect common man. Because owners of cars and zeeps that constitute only 35 per cent of the petrol driven vehicles in the private sector are mostly owned by the affluent and 65 per cent of the petrol driven transports are owned by the government itself. Most of the buses, trucks and irrigation pumps are run by diesel and the diesel price has been increased by only 25 paisa per litre. But the major opposition party in the country drumming up support from a section of unwitting public and gullible auto-tempo ownerscum-drivers has unleashed a tirade of attack on the government creating a situation of social unrest and ungovernability of the country. On the other hand, some image-boosting actions of the government done in hot haste without covering the due process however sent a chill of euphoria in the public mind but later people got incensed when implementations were flawed. Increase in price of petroleum products bypassing the Parliament and announcement of a new pay scale without appropriating funds to meet the obligation and failure to offer real and meaningful price of jute to the growers fuel voter resentment and make room for opposition outcry. True, people have had a history of bad government, but they still nurture hope that things are going to get better. Let wisdom prevail over

Art Buchwald's COLUMN COLUMN



Swiss Accounting

THE recent revelation that the Swiss banks had found millions of dollars belonging to the victims of the Holocaust made me realize what great shape Swiss accounting has been in for more than half a century.

I am familiar with Swiss banks and always visit them when I am in Zurich and Geneva because Willie Sutton of bank robber fame told me that's where the money is.

Even though the Swiss people have faults like everyone else.

Even though the Swiss people have faults like everyone else. I always assumed that they never made mistakes when it came to keeping track of every last Franc. No bank employee is allowed to eat any Swiss chocolate until the books are balanced. Tellers are revered and presented with Rolex watches every time they open a new numbered account.

I remember meeting the head of the Gross Swiss Bank at the Palace Hotel in St Moritz. He was arguing with a waiter over a 6 centime charge on a cup of hot chocolate.

He told me, "When one is a Swiss banker, one can't be too careful. Little mistakes lead to big mistakes, ad infinitum, until you have to hire an American public relations firm to explain why you made so many blunders."

I said, "I read where you just found \$11 million belonging to

depositors who are no longer with us. How did this happen?"
"Our executive president put the decimal point in the wrong place. For years we thought it was \$11. You have to give us credit for finding it after all this time."

"I do," I assured him. "That's why I enjoy doing business with the Gross Swiss Bank. What do you plan to do with the newfound money?"

"We intend to see that it goes to its rightful owners."
"Pray toll," I said. "What happens when the rightful owners is

no more?"
"It has never happened. People with numbered bank accounts never faileto show up."

"Suppose they don't Suppose somebody did something nasty to them?"

"Then we would have to put their money in Christmas Club Account where they could earn three per cent interest. If you can't trust a Swiss banker, who can you trust?"

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OPINION

Feasting on Myths

Mirza Shafi

The BBC, the other day, televised an exclusive programme on the end of British rule in India with a three-anda-half hours (propaganda) on the Congress party of India, especially with an aim to enhance the myth of Nehru-Gandhi dynasty. BBC in that programme barely mentioned the role of Indian Muslim or the Muslim leader, M A Jinnah. Even Pakistan was hardly referred though the organisation again confirmed that it was Nehru who ordered the annexation of Kashmir in '47, to prove that India was a secular state where people of all religions were safe

to live. The Nehrer-Garathe family? has, by long, entered the zone of myth. As Salman Rushdie stated in the introduction to Pak writer, Tariq Ali's book, The Nehru and the Gandhis, "The continuing saga of the Nehru family, of the vicissitude of Jawaharlal, Indira, Sanjay, Rajiv has been, for hundreds of millions of us, an obsession spanning more than three decades. We have poured ourselves into this story, inventing its characters, then ripping them up and re-inventing them. In our inexhaustible speculations lies one source of their power over us. We became addicted to these speculations. and they, unsurprisingly, took advantage of our addiction. Or: we dreamed them, so intensely that they came to life."

In fact, public expectations in India, with the passage of time, have feasted these speculations and they cooked up all sorts of notions on each character of the family, yet, in real life, as Tariq Ali wrote, had public quarrels between Jawaharlal Nehru and Feroze Gandhi, the death of Sanjay Gandhi in a plane crash, virulent quarrel between Indira and Maneka Gandhi. Again, the race for next generation candidate—

Sanjay-Maneka's Feroze Varun Rajiv-Sonia's Rahul/Priyanka Gandhi — for the leadership of Congress party has already begun as the signs indicate. Therefore, the stories of Nehru and Gandhi that have been provided for the last 50 years are more engrossing than in cinemas. One of the world's largest democracies, it seems cannot function without a member from Nehru-Gandhi dynasty. However, the destruction of the Babri Mosque at Ayodhya in '92 by the Hindu nationalists, the Congress leaders' inaction and again failure to rebuild the same even after a

promise, senior members of the party being involved in state level sandals and the effects of emergency all eroded the support of the Congress party, especially in the rank and file of the Indian Muslims. And so they need vote catchers.

In Calcutta, during the Congress party's conference recently, its president Kesri cunningly tried to rope in a member of the Nehru-Gandhi family by asking/offering the post to So-

cently, its president Kesri cunningly tried to rope in a member asking/offering the post to Sonia Gandhi. But the widow knew that the Indian public might not accept a foreign-born as their leader to rule India and therefore, did not react immediately. However, the proponents of the myth and the family want the power back, as one political commentator Ashis Chakrabarti said the other day, "for the game-plan is much bigger. She wants power back in the family and that means firstly Priyanka, may be not this year or the next, but soon. She is the biggest draw. She is the one with the dynastic charisma."

In South-east Asian countries, it seems, the myth plays well. We in Bangladesh also have similar situation and others who want to regain the power must create some sort of myth.

Lothe Dditor...

Night-coach safety

Sir, Almost every next day, we read news about dacoities in night coach. With the development of a nation, the crimes are supposed to decrease, isn't it so? Are we going uphill or downhill by the passage of time? Seems the opposite, because the degrading law and order situation puts up a very bleak picture of the present Bangladeah.

Coming back to safe journeys by night coach, which is desirous of each and every citizen — rich or poor. Mostly it is found that the robbers get up in the guise of passengers, so why not check all the passengers for any lethal weapons as is done before boarding an aeroplane. If need be with a metal detector, as it surely will be worth the trouble taken

Keeping a single guard with a gun is not much use because one guard can be easily overpowered by a gang of dacoits and his weapon snatched away, to be used on the passengers!

So, there should be no weapon inside the coach and the journey should be non-stop, without picking up any passenger en route.

Then, mobile telephone is so common these days that you see them in the hands of rickshaw and baby-taxi passengers even! So why not in the buses owned by big companies. These can be used to inform the police immediately if there is a road blockade by the high-way robbers. Seems like we are back to the 18th century, with the revival of high-way robberies and what not. We seem to be marching backwards while

other nations of the world are marching forwards!

Dr Sabrina Rashid (By e-mail) Dhaka Cantonment Dhaka

Pedestrians of Dhaka

Sir, The recent discussions over the traffic system of Dhaka and various suggestions on its improvement prompted me to write a few lines on this matter giving my views.

First the pedestrians of Dhaka. I understand from various statistics that 60 per cent of Dhakaiyas are pedestrians or those who use their God given feet to move from place to place. But I wonder how the 60 per cent move about. Is there any freeway for the pedestrians of Dhaka to move about? The few footpaths there are, are occupied by hawkers, rickshaw repair shops, paan shops, small restaurants, fruit vendors, tyretube shops, motor-cycle and bicycle shops, municipal garbage dump, storage dumps of building materials for construction of multi-storied buildings, public urinals, et cetera, et cetera et

Cars, auto rickshaws and manual rickshaws are parked in such a way that there remains no space for the pedestrians to even use the sides of the roads. Only place they have is the middle of the road to use at tremendous risk of losing life or limbs.

Motijheel and Kazi Nazrul Islam Road (alias Mymensingh Road alias VIP Road) have been fenced in the middle by very strong, high iron fences so that, cows, goats, dogs, cats and pedestrian cannot cross the roads even if the latter have to catch a bus or a rickshaw on the other side of the road.

The number of unutilised ugly overbridges built here and there are not popular with many old people like me who have to use rickshaw or baytaxi to cross over to the other side of the road.

The other day, out of curiosity, I went for a walk through the underpass on Kazi Nazrul Islam Road (alias VIP Road, alias Mymensingh Road) with the hope of seeing a beautiful clean underpass, a wonder of Dhaka. I need not describe, one has to go and see its plight. To me it looked like one of the dilapidated 100-year-old London underpasses. If the Calcutta underground system may be kept spick and span even surpassing some of London's Tube stations, why can't we? Is it because the underpass is used by the poor pedestrians?

Secondly the baby rickshaws and baby-taxis of Dhaka Both to my mind are meant for babies or for pygmies or Gulliver's Lilliputians. I say this because grown-up human beings have to know the tactics of boarding one of those contraptions, whether to put one leg first or two legs first or to put the head first or whether to do the feat of putting both inside at a time. The rickshaws having no spring or shock absorbers jolt the brains of poor passengers causing pain inside their head or their bottom. So difficult it is for sari-clad Bengali

women to get in and get out

without causing a spark or two in the eyes of male on lookers that, it is no wonder that, they have abandoned saris for shalwar kamiz that are more secure and unlikely to cause uneasiness to the poor male pedestrians.

Why the baby rickshaws and baby taxis are not designed and made for a little comfort to their users. I have used both modes of transport in Delhi and I found them relatively more comfortable. I presume that the designs are regulated by their licensing authorities.

And why our rickshaws and taxis cannot be made safer at night by using rear reflectors and lights?

I want to stop here. There are so much to write and nothing is new anyone. Only a serious approach to remedy them is lacking.

God save the pedestrians.

PG Muhammad 20, New Eskaton Road Dhaka-1000

Privatise petrol! Sir. The public have been

well informed and briefed in the mass media on the background about the huge rise in the retail price of petrol, monopolised by the state procurement, distribution, sale, control and monitoring network.

In these days of open market economy, the easiest solution appears to be to privatise the petrol business (not diesel, kerosene, and other awami products), subject to the deliberations in the JS.

There will be two state bene-

fits. directly or indirectly: a lighter BPC administration, and lighter BPC loss due to subsidy. If there is no head, there will be no headache. Give democratic

A query: where is the extensive LPG network to replace petrol in the vehicles? The conversion units sold to the motorists would be subsidised initially, and available on HP (hirepurchase)? LPG business will be in the private sector?

A publicity campaign is called for, including the 'LPGnation' of the ministers' vehicles (optional for the bureaucrats?). Where there is a will, there is a way in (or way out).

A Husnain Dhaka

P

Price hike

Sir, I observed, with dissatisfaction, the basis of the two
major decisions taken by the
present government. First,
when the price of fertiliser was
increased. It was stated by the
government that one of the
main reasons of increasing the
price of fertiliser was to avoid
smuggling. According to them,
the price in Bangladesh is much
cheaper than that of our neighbouring country and the pricehike would stop smuggling.

Secondly, the recent price increase of petroleum products has been clarified by the government is because of price increase in international oil market. The government has devalued Taka for nine times during its 14-month rule. The price increase in international market and Taka devaluation

have mingled together to help price-hike.

Once the Finance Minister mentioned that Taka devaluation would not yield any negative result in our national economy. But we, possibly, do not see this in reality. Now we must pay much more to buy crude oil and all other import items than what we used to pay before the devaluations. Was it really necessary to justify the reason for devaluation in that way?

Motius Samad Chowdhury ABC House, Banani, Dhaka

Lost glory returning fast

Sir. The report of The Daily Star's DU Correspondent in the Metropolitan Page of Aug 8 has horrified me. I am an occasional customer of the DUS. love to halt, for a while, at the DUS to watch our future leaders growing and having snacks there. DUS provides excellent service too. Now, whosoever has/have done the "3 employees of DUS beaten up" must be given exemplary punishment irrespective of caste and creed. Our PM, all the time, has reiterated to punish the "santrashis".

So, our Home Minister must set up an example with courage. Otherwise, the reign of the past will return fast. At that time, Bangabandhu had to utter in the public meeting, to unleash "Lal Ghora" against terrorists, as they went out of his hand.

A R Choudhury Uttara, Dhaka